

Teachers Challenges in Integrating the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) into Intracurricular Learning at Elementary Schools

Siti Kembang Ati ✉, SMP IT Al Farabi Bilingual School

✉ sitikembang041@gmail.com

Abstract: The implementation of the independent curriculum or *Kurikulum Merdeka* introduces the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, widely known as P5, as a core component of character education in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the specific challenges faced by elementary school teachers in integrating P5 into their regular intracurricular learning processes. Despite the positive objectives of the policy, field observations indicate a significant gap between curriculum expectations and actual classroom execution. Utilizing a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through comprehensive interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving school principals, curriculum coordinators, and homeroom teachers across several elementary schools. The findings reveal three primary obstacles. First, teachers experience difficulties in time management, often struggling to balance the P5 project hours with the demanding cognitive targets of regular subjects. Second, there is widespread confusion regarding the formulation of authentic assessment rubrics for character development, leading to subjective and inconsistent evaluations. Third, limited school funding and inadequate infrastructural resources severely restrict the execution of contextual and collaborative projects. The study concludes that the successful integration of P5 requires more than mere policy distribution. It demands intensive, hands on training for teachers regarding project based assessment and a simplification of administrative requirements by the government.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum, Pancasila Student Profile, Character Education, Teacher Challenges, Project Based Learning

Received November 4, 2025; **Accepted** November 8, 2025; **Published** December 12, 2025

Published by SMP IT AL FARABI BILINGUAL SCHOOL © 2024.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

INTRODUCTION

The educational landscape in Indonesia is currently undergoing a massive transformation with the national implementation of *Kurikulum Merdeka*. A central feature of this new curriculum framework is the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, commonly abbreviated as P5. This initiative is deliberately designed to shift the educational focus from purely cognitive achievements to holistic character building. Through P5, students are expected to develop fundamental values such as critical thinking, mutual cooperation, global diversity awareness, and independence (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan

Teknologi, 2022). In elementary schools, this project is not positioned as an extracurricular activity but is structurally integrated within the intracurricular time allocation, taking up approximately twenty to thirty percent of the total annual learning hours.

While the conceptual framework of P5 is highly progressive, its practical execution at the grassroots level presents a multitude of complex challenges. Elementary school teachers, who have been accustomed to textbook oriented and teacher centered methodologies for decades, are now abruptly required to act as project facilitators. They must design contextual learning experiences that connect classroom theories with real world societal issues (Suryadi & Fitriani, 2024). This sudden paradigm shift has generated significant confusion among educators. Many teachers perceive P5 as an additional administrative burden rather than a meaningful pedagogical tool. Furthermore, integrating these character projects seamlessly into mandatory subjects like Mathematics or Language Arts requires a high degree of pedagogical creativity, which many teachers currently lack due to insufficient practical training.

Previous literature has explored the overarching policies of *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Rahmawati, 2023) and the theoretical benefits of character education in early childhood (Hasan, 2025). However, there is a noticeable scarcity of empirical research that specifically investigates the technical and psychological hurdles faced by elementary school teachers when implementing P5 on a daily basis. Existing studies often focus on the outcomes of the projects rather than the structural struggles of the educators facilitating them.

To bridge this academic gap, this study focuses on identifying and analyzing the specific challenges encountered by elementary school teachers in integrating P5. The research formulates the problem of how teachers manage the project allocation time, design the assessments, and overcome infrastructural limitations. By exposing these practical bottlenecks, this research aims to provide critical feedback for educational policymakers and school administrators to design better support systems and professional development programs for teachers.

METHODS

This research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive analytical design. This methodology is highly appropriate for exploring human perceptions, identifying practical obstacles in a natural setting, and understanding the subjective experiences of educators navigating new curriculum policies (Creswell, 2021). The study was conducted at several representative public and private elementary schools implementing *Kurikulum Merdeka* in Banda Aceh.

Primary data collection took place from March to May 2026 utilizing three specific techniques. First, nonintervention classroom observations were conducted to witness how teachers facilitate the P5 sessions and how they manage student dynamics during project execution. Second, comprehensive in depth interviews were carried out with key informants. The informants included two school principals, three curriculum coordinators, and ten homeroom teachers from various grade levels. These teachers were purposively selected based on their active involvement in designing the P5 modules. Third, document analysis was performed by reviewing the teachers lesson plans, project modules, and the authentic assessment rubrics utilized to evaluate the students character development.

The gathered data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative framework. This systematic process involved data reduction to categorize the specific types of challenges reported by the teachers, narrative thematic data display, and the drawing of final conclusions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2021). To guarantee the validity and reliability of the research findings, source triangulation was heavily applied. The researchers cross verified the complaints voiced by the teachers during the interviews with the actual teaching documents and the objective realities observed inside the classrooms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The integration of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project into the intracurricular structure of elementary schools has proven to be a highly complex endeavor. The first and most prominent challenge identified in this study revolves around time management and curriculum pacing. According to the national guidelines, schools must allocate a specific percentage of their total learning hours exclusively for P5. However, interview results with the homeroom teachers revealed a profound anxiety regarding this allocation. Teachers reported that dedicating substantial time to character projects severely limits the hours available to teach the core cognitive materials required for midterm and final examinations. Consequently, many teachers subtly manipulate the schedule. They often use the designated P5 hours to catch up on unfinished regular subject materials, reducing the character project to a mere formality performed at the end of the semester. This finding aligns with the research by Suryadi and Fitriani (2024), which noted that teachers struggle to transition away from a content mastery mindset.

The second major obstacle lies in the complexity of the assessment process. Unlike traditional subjects that rely on definitive right or wrong answers, P5 demands an authentic assessment of abstract character traits. Teachers are required to observe and evaluate variables such as a student level of mutual cooperation, critical reasoning, and spiritual awareness during the project execution. Document analysis of the assessment rubrics showed that many teachers are highly confused by the technical descriptors provided by the government. As a result, the evaluations become highly subjective and inconsistent. Several teachers admitted during the interviews that they simply guess the assessment scores based on their general perception of the student rather than objective observational data. This lack of pedagogical competence in formulating and executing authentic assessments threatens the fundamental validity of the character education program (Rahmawati, 2023).

Furthermore, the execution of meaningful P5 activities is heavily hindered by resource and funding limitations. The philosophy of project based learning encourages students to interact with their surrounding environment, create physical prototypes, and organize public exhibitions to showcase their works. However, observations across the selected elementary schools indicated that most institutions lack the financial capacity to support such elaborate activities. Teachers expressed immense frustration because they are expected to facilitate innovative projects without adequate infrastructural support or funding from the school management (Hasan, 2025). To avoid burdening the parents with additional financial requests, teachers frequently downgrade the complexity of the projects. Consequently, the P5 activities are often reduced to simple crafting tasks using recycled materials inside the classroom, which fails to capture the deeper essence of the Pancasila character profile. This reality highlights a critical systemic issue where curriculum ambition is not matched by infrastructural readiness.

CONCLUSION

The integration of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project or P5 within elementary schools presents significant pedagogical and administrative challenges for teachers. While the policy provides an excellent theoretical framework for character education, its field implementation is severely hampered by three main factors. First, teachers struggle with time management due to the conflicting demands of cognitive targets and project hours. Second, there is a widespread lack of competence in conducting authentic, observation based assessments for abstract character traits, leading to subjective evaluations. Third, inadequate school funding forces teachers to compromise the quality and scale of the projects, often reducing them to superficial classroom activities. This study suggests that the Ministry of Education must provide massive, hands on training focused specifically on authentic assessment and project facilitation. Furthermore, school administrators must establish clear financial support systems to ensure that teachers can execute meaningful character projects without facing personal administrative or financial burdens.

REFERENCES

Creswell, J. W. (2021). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Hasan, M. (2025). Optimalisasi pendidikan karakter pada anak usia dini melalui pembelajaran berbasis proyek [Optimizing character education in early childhood through project-based learning]. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Integratif*, 12(1), 45-59.

Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2022). *Panduan pengembangan proyek penguatan profil pelajar Pancasila* [Guide to developing the Pancasila student profile strengthening project]. Jakarta: Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2021). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Rahmawati, D. (2023). Transisi paradigma evaluasi: Tantangan asesmen autentik pada kurikulum merdeka [Evaluation paradigm transition: The challenges of authentic assessment in the independent curriculum]. *Jurnal Evaluasi Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar*, 8(2), 112-127.

Suryadi, A., & Fitriani, L. (2024). Problematika guru kelas dalam mengelola alokasi waktu intrakurikuler dan kokurikuler [Classroom teachers' problems in managing intracurricular and cocurricular time allocations]. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Dasar*, 15(3), 201-215.

