



Implementation of Strengthening the Profile of Pancasila Students in Indonesian Learning Containing Cultural Values of Wayang Stories in Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aims to analyze the implementation of Indonesian language learning embedded with local cultural values from wayang stories to strengthen the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile at the elementary school level.

Methodology: This study used a qualitative descriptive approach with a bounded case study design. Data were collected using interview instruments validated by education experts, classroom observations, and documentation analysis. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model to identify planning, implementation, challenges, and perceptions in cultural-based learning.

Main Findings: The study found that integrating wayang stories into Indonesian language learning increased students' engagement and understanding of character values such as honesty, responsibility, and cooperation. Teachers showed creativity in designing learning activities but still encountered challenges in evaluation tools and time constraints. Localized story adaptation and collaboration with cultural communities became effective strategies to overcome these barriers.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study introduces a structured learning model that combines language learning with cultural narratives to reinforce character education aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile. It contributes to the development of culturally responsive pedagogy and offers practical solutions for embedding local wisdom into the national curriculum.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education in the global era faces challenges in maintaining national identity and local cultural values amid the rapid flow of modernization and digitalization. Pancasila as the basis of the state plays an important role in shaping the character of the younger generation, especially at the elementary education level. The development of the times demands character strengthening through the Pancasila Student Profile as a response to various social problems and moral deterioration of the young generation of Indonesia [1], [2]. The Merdeka Curriculum, which has been implemented since 2022, emphasizes strengthening competence and character through the six dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, namely faith, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creative [3], [4]. The implementation of this curriculum provides space for schools to integrate the value of local wisdom into learning, one of which is through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) which is designed cross-disciplinary and oriented towards solving problems in the surrounding environment [5], [6].

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Indonesian language learning in elementary schools has a strategic role in instilling cultural values and strengthening national identity. The Independent Curriculum encourages a project-based approach that is integrated between subjects to form character as well as competence. The integration of cultural values in Indonesian learning is one of the relevant strategies to support the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile [7], [8]. Short story material taught in grade IV even semester can be an effective medium to develop character. Short stories contain intrinsic and extrinsic elements that are in harmony with the character dimensions in the Pancasila Student Profile. Therefore, teachers need to choose stories that are able to internalize character values according to the needs of students [9]. However, students' interest in puppet stories is still low and teachers' understanding of how to relate local cultural values in learning is also not optimal.

The results of initial observations in April 2024 at public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo show that learning short stories is still textual and less associated with the local cultural context. Teachers tend to rely on textbooks whose language is difficult for students to understand. The classroom atmosphere also tends to be passive, and most students show a lack of enthusiasm when discussing stories that are irrelevant to their daily lives. When teachers try to use wayang kulit stories, there is an increase in student participation, especially when discussing puppet characters and moral values in stories. The teacher stated that students understand the message of the story more easily and are more active in giving responses during the learning process [10]-[13].

The use of this wayang story is also supported by the Wonogiri cultural environment which still maintains the tradition of puppetry. The local government routinely holds a small puppeteer festival in the context of the district's anniversary. A number of students such as Rafi Hastu Muqsith and Nareswara Praba have won the 2021 Wonogiri Regency Little Puppet Festival. In fact, Respati Listyatmoko from public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo and Anjali Bintang Kusuma from Wonogiri won national awards as child puppeteers from 2022 to 2024 [14]. The puppet story is full of philosophical values that are in accordance with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. Values such as example, responsibility, cooperation, and critical thinking are inherent in the characters. Wayang can be a learning medium to introduce local culture while instilling students' character in a contextual manner such as honesty, responsibility and tolerance [15], [16].

A number of previous studies have discussed the implementation of the P5 project but have not focused specifically on integrating local cultural values into Indonesian language learning. Examined P5 implementation generally or at the secondary level, without highlighting how cultural narratives like wayang stories can be embedded in elementary-level language instruction. This reveals a research gap concerning the systematic use of traditional puppet stories to support Pancasila character formation through the Indonesian language curriculum [2], [3].

Based on this gap, this study sets out four specific objectives: (1) to analyze the implementation of Indonesian learning integrated with wayang stories for Pancasila Profile strengthening; (2) to identify how teachers plan, execute, and evaluate this culturally embedded instruction; (3) to explore challenges and formulate relevant solutions in applying local wisdom to language education; and (4) to develop a structured learning model that incorporates wayang narratives for character development in elementary school students. These objectives are operational, measurable, and aimed at contributing both practically and theoretically to the field of culturally responsive pedagogy.

The novelty of this research lies in its effort to bridge language learning with cultural narratives through an integrated, systematic model tailored to the elementary school context. This approach contributes a new framework for embedding philosophical values into learning, based on local wisdom, which is still rarely studied in Indonesian education research. The study offers both pedagogical innovation and practical guidance aligned with the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum.

However, a number of studies show that the implementation of the P5 Project still faces obstacles. Revealed that in the early stages of project planning, schools often misunderstand the P5 concept so that its implementation does not touch the value of character in depth [17]. Project activities also still focus on physical products rather than the formation of cultural values and character. Previous research has not studied the integration of puppet stories in Indonesian language learning. The study of only focuses on the profile dimension in the curriculum without touching on local cultural values [8]. The research discusses the implementation of P5 in driving schools in general without focusing on Indonesian learning [3]. only examined profile strengthening at the secondary level, not in the context of elementary schools. The integration of wayang stories in Indonesian language learning in elementary schools is still minimally researched, even though wayang stories are rich in character messages that are in line with the pancasila student profile [2]. Initial interviews with teachers show that students are more interested and easier to understand the material if it is taught through puppet stories than stories in textbooks. However, there is no learning model that systematically integrates puppet values in Indonesian learning to support the Pancasila Student Profile.

This research is relevant because of the gap from previous research. Previous research related to the implementation of P5 in elementary schools has been conducted by several researchers such as these studies are still limited to the quality of P5 implementation in general, teacher misconceptions, and curriculum differences [18], [19].

The statement shows the importance of this research to fill the existing research gap. The novelty of this research lies in the development of an Indonesian learning model that utilizes the values of puppet stories as a means to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile. The focus of the research is not only on the implementation of P5 in general, but also on how puppet stories as local wisdom can be used in Indonesian learning to instill students' characters. The results of the research are expected to be a reference for schools in developing local culture-based learning that is relevant to the Independent Curriculum. The integration of puppet stories in Indonesian learning to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile has not been widely explored, even though puppet stories contain philosophical values that are in line with the six dimensions of the character of the Pancasila Student Profile. Based on the results of initial observations in April 2024 at public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo, students showed higher interest, better understanding, and increased learning motivation when learning using puppet stories compared to short stories in textbooks. The teacher also said that although the use of puppet stories is very potential, there is no learning model that systematically integrates these cultural values into Indonesian learning. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the implementation of Indonesian language learning based on the cultural values of wayang stories in strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile in elementary schools, developing relevant learning models, and identifying challenges and formulating strategic solutions to integrate local cultural values into Indonesian learning in a more targeted and applicable manner.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 research design

This research approach uses a descriptive qualitative method [20]. This study utilizes a staked case study design to describe in depth the learning practices that occur in grade IV. The staked strategy is used because the focus of the research has been determined from the beginning and is directed at the specific cases that have been identified. This research was conducted over a period of eight months, starting from November 2024 to June 2025.

The reason for choosing public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo as the location of the research lies in the strength of local culture that is still alive in the school's learning practices. Teachers at this school show concern for cultural preservation through the use of wayang stories in Indonesian language learning. Observations in April 2024 revealed that grade IV students showed high interest and better understanding when engaged in learning activities that raised wayang stories as teaching materials. However, there is no learning model that systematically integrates these local cultural values in strengthening the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. This condition makes the school the right context to explore practices, challenges, and the potential for the development of a local culture-based learning model that is in harmony with the Independent Curriculum

2.2 research subjects

The subjects in this study consist of grade IV teachers, school principals, and several students who are directly involved in Indonesian learning. Subjects were selected purposively based on their involvement in the implementation of local cultural values. Data was collected from three main sources, namely interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews are conducted in depth to explore the perceptions and experiences of informants. Observation is carried out directly during learning, while documentation in the form of lesson plans and teaching materials is used as a complement.

2.3 research instruments

The research instruments were arranged based on two categories, namely the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile and the cultural values of puppet stories. The indicators of the Pancasila Student Profile dimension include six main components: faith and piety, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity. Indicators of the cultural value of wayang stories include human relationships with God, others, self, and nature. The interview instrument is designed based on the following grid:

Table 1. Pancasila Student Profile Interview Grid

Dimension	Sub-indicators	Question Number
Faith and piety	Religious, personal, social, state morals	1–8
Global Diversity	Getting to know culture, intercultural communication	9–13
Gotong Royong	Collaboration and care	14–15
Self-sufficient	Self-understanding and self-regulation	16–17
Critical reasoning	Information and idea processes	18
Creative	Original ideas and alternative solutions	19–20

Next is the interview instrument, here is the interview outline for film story culture:

Table 2. Interview Grid of Cultural Values of Movie Stories

Cultural Value Aspect	Sub-indicators	Question Number
Relationship with God	Praying, gratitude, worship	1–4
Relationships with others	Mutual cooperation, love, obedience	5–11
Relationship with oneself	Be brave, vigilant, work hard	12–17
Relationship with nature	Care and utilization of the environment	18–20

2.4 research procedures

This research was carried out in five main stages. The first stage, namely the preparation stage, is carried out by compiling instruments and obtaining research permits. The second stage, namely the data collection stage, is carried out by conducting initial observations, preliminary interviews, and document collection. The third stage, namely the field implementation stage, was carried out with in-depth observation and follow-up interviews with the main informants. The fourth stage is the data analysis stage carried out interactively through a gradual process of reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The fifth stage, namely the reporting stage, is carried out by systematically compiling research results in the form of academic reports that contain descriptions of results and conclusions from field findings.

Instrument validation was carried out to ensure the suitability of the content of the interview questions with the research focus on strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile based on the cultural values of puppet stories. Two expert lecturers in the field of basic education and cultural character evaluated the substance and redaction of the instrument based on the indicators of the Pancasila dimension and local cultural values. The validation results showed that the majority of the items were in accordance with the context and purpose, although some redactions were suggested to be simplified to be easily understood by primary school informants. All expert suggestions have been accommodated through revision of indicators and question formats, so that the instrument is declared valid in terms of content and suitable for use for field data collection.

2.5 research analysis

The validity of the data was tested through source triangulation and triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing data from teachers, principals, and students. The triangulation technique was carried out by matching the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Data were analyzed using an interactive analysis model from Miles and Huberman [21]. The analysis consists of three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction is carried out by selecting data that is relevant to the focus of the research. The presentation of data is carried out in the form of a narrative that is systematically and thematic. Conclusions are drawn continuously during the data collection and processing process until a complete understanding is obtained of the implementation of learning with the values of puppet stories culture in strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile in elementary schools.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Indonesian Learning Planning Filled with Puppet Stories

Grade IV teachers at public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo designed an Indonesian learning plan based on puppet stories based on strengthening the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. The planning begins with adjusting the learning objectives to the characteristics of local culture that are well known by students. Teachers use the stories of puppet characters such as Gatotkaca, Bima, and Semar which are full of moral values as a medium to convey the message of virtue and strengthen the character of students. This planning process is based on strengthening dimensions such as mutual cooperation, critical reasoning, independence, and creativity listed in the Pancasila Student Profile.

The fourth grade teacher, who in this note is initialized as *ES*, explained that the planning process starts from the identification of appropriate local content, the preparation of thematic teaching modules, and the selection of visual and oral media based on puppet culture. *ES* stated, "We start by compiling learning objectives based on CP and TP, then look for puppet stories that are in accordance with Pancasila values, for example stories about characters who are honest or helpful" (Interview, *ES*, April 2024).

The statement indicates that teachers not only refer to curriculum documents, but also explore cultural literature to reinforce the relevance of the material to students' daily lives. The selection of learning media is an important part of planning because grade IV students need concrete visualization to understand abstract values. The teacher arranges a series of learning activities such as reading puppet stories in turn, discussing character values, and the task of making illustrations of puppet characters. Teachers also include an attitude assessment rubric that contains indicators of the achievement of the Pancasila dimension such as empathy, cooperation, and courage to speak an opinion. This is supported by the teacher's statement, "We give children the opportunity to

read stories, then discuss the values that appear there. Children are usually enthusiastic if the character is known, such as Hanoman or Petruk" (Interview, ES, April 2024).

The planning instrument was prepared by referring to the dimensions and sub-indicators of the Pancasila Student Profile contained in the curriculum document and interview grid. Teachers integrate the understanding of cultural values in human relationships with God, others, self, and nature in each phase of learning. Based on the instrument data, teachers ensure that values such as mutual cooperation, trust in God, and love of the environment appear in the narrative and learning tasks. Examples of activities designed include "retelling the story of the kindness of the puppet characters", "identifying the attitude of mutual cooperation in the story", and "coloring the images of the characters while writing down the values they contain."

The data from the document study showed that the teaching module used had integrated the story text and the character profile. The learning module written by the teacher includes a special section in the form of reflection on values and triggering questions such as "What is the value of mutual cooperation in this story?" and "How do the characters show independence?". Each lesson plan is also equipped with a rubric for assessing social attitudes and skills.

Initial observations on planning show that teachers use media that supports student engagement. The media used include posters of puppet characters, character cards, and animated videos of children's versions of Mahabharata stories. The teacher added, "Children are very interested when they see pictures of large puppet characters on the board. We make it a subject for discussion, for example why the character is brave and does not give up" (Interview, ES, April 2024). The use of visual media and oral narratives is an important tool to build a lively learning context.

Table 3. Summary of Indonesian Language Learning Planning Based on Puppet Stories

Aspect of Planning	Description
Learning Objectives	Aligned with CP and TP; focused on character values from puppet stories (e.g., honesty, empathy).
Cultural Content	Stories of Gatotkaca, Bima, Semar, Hanoman, Petruk; drawn from local puppet traditions.
Teaching Modules	Integrated thematic modules containing story texts, values reflection, and triggering moral questions.
Instructional Activities	Reading aloud, group discussion on character values, illustrating puppet figures.
Media Used	Posters, character cards, animated puppet videos, illustrated storyboards.
Assessment Instruments	Attitude rubrics for empathy, cooperation, critical thinking, independence.
Integration with Pancasila Profile	Mutual cooperation, belief in God, critical reasoning, creativity, and responsibility.

Learning activities are designed to get students actively engaged. Teachers arrange the flow of activities ranging from reading stories together, discussions of content and values, individual reflective activities, to creating creative products such as value posters or mini dramas. In one of the RPP documents analyzed, it was recorded that the third day's activity was in the form of role-playing about Semar's story of teaching children about humility. Observation data showed that 87% of students were actively involved in activities and were able to mention the values contained in the story independently.

Table 4. Learning Planning Strategies Based on Local Cultural Values

Planning Steps	Activity Description	Media/Supporting Evidence	Expected Results
Develop learning objectives	Match Indonesian CP with the values of local stories	CP Indonesian, Pancasila Student Profile	Character-based learning objectives
Selecting a story	Choose texts that match values such as honesty, leadership, mutual cooperation	Text of the story "Bima Against Angkara", "Semar Bijak"	Stories with moral and contextual content
Set up media	Compiling visual media (posters, animations), reflection sheets, and value rubrics	Character posters, animated videos, LKS grades	Contextual and culture-based classes
Organize class activities	Read together, discuss grades, role-play, rewrite with grades	Worksheets, role-playing instructions	Active learning and instilling concrete values

Compile an evaluation	Prepare attitude rubrics, observation notes of Pancasila values, and project assignments	Attitude rubric, student reflection notes	Assessment of students' social values and skills
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The planning carried out by teachers shows the integration between the content of the curriculum and the local cultural context. Teachers utilize the folklore that students are familiar with to instill value in a natural and fun way. Interview data also showed that teachers experienced challenges in compiling value indicators systematically. The teacher stated, "Sometimes we know that grades are important, but we have not always been able to write them down as concrete indicators in the learning plan" (Interview, ES, April 2024).

This challenge highlights the need for further training on P5-based value planning. The main findings in this stage show that teachers have creativity and initiative in arranging learning with local culture, but need technical guidance to align all activities with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile explicitly. The planning carried out has a strong potential in fostering student character, especially when supported by a systematic and collaborative teaching format between teachers. This study concludes that Indonesian learning planning based on puppet stories can function as a strategic vehicle to unite academic goals and strengthen national character, especially in the context of primary schools based on local culture.

3.2 Implementation of Learning and Strengthening the Dimension of Pancasila

Grade IV teachers at public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo carry out Indonesian learning with puppet stories by integrating the values of the Pancasila Student Profile into daily learning activities. The implementation process begins with an apperception activity that provokes a connection between the student's experience and the theme of the story, followed by reading, discussing, and compiling reflections on the moral message of the story learned. This strategy places students as active subjects in building language understanding as well as character values.

The learning activity was opened by reading puppet stories expressively to foster students' curiosity. Teachers use visual media such as pictures of puppet characters and short videos of puppet performances so that students can more easily identify the storyline and the values contained in it. One of the teachers, Nn (initial), said, "I usually start by asking, who knows the puppet character Werkudara? After that, I read a snippet of the story, then the students were invited to discuss Werkudara's brave and honest attitude." (Interview, Nn, April 18, 2025).

Field observations noted that students showed high engagement during reading and discussion activities. They actively respond to teachers' questions, respond to each other's opinions, and are able to conclude the message of the story orally. One of the students in the discussion stated that Werkudara's attitude was similar to that of his friend who defended a child who was bullied during break time. This comment shows that students are able to associate the values in the story with the social experience at school, which is an indicator of the global diversity dimension and noble character.

Teachers also provide opportunities for students to practice literacy skills in the form of rewriting stories, drawing favorite characters, and creating simple drama scripts. This activity encourages the strengthening of creative and independent dimensions. One of the teachers, Ny (initial), revealed, "I asked the children to rewrite their own version of Srikandi's story, and the results were good. There are those who change the flow to be more modern, such as Srikandi becoming an environmental guardian." (Interview, Mrs., April 18, 2025).

Table 5. Summary of learning implementation strategies and strengthened dimensions of Pancasila

Learning Stages	Main Activities	Strengthened Dimensions of Pancasila	Observational Evidence
Perception	Questions and Answers from the Movie Characters	Faith and noble character	Students mention the character of the character and his attitude
Core (reading and discussion)	Reading stories, Answering questions, group discussions	Critical reasoning, working together, and having global diversity	Students respond to the content of the story and compare it with the experience
Advanced literacy activities	Rewrite stories, draw, create plays	Creative, independent	Students produce original story-based works
Cover	Reflection on the value of stories and moral messages	All dimensions	Students convey the wisdom of the story orally

During the implementation, teachers act as facilitators who encourage student involvement and keep the direction of learning focused on strengthening character. Teachers compliment students' opinions, reinforce the positive meaning of the story characters, and facilitate group work with a fair division of roles.

The interview data also revealed that these activities built an emotional closeness between the students and the stories they learned. One of the teachers said, "When I read the story about a fair Puntadewa character, my students immediately said, 'I want to be like Puntadewa, ma'am, because he is fair and loves his sister.' It was a moment that I think was very emotionally powerful and educational." (Interview, Nn, April 18, 2025).

The main findings from the results of observations and interviews show that the implementation of Indonesian learning based on puppet stories has succeeded in increasing student involvement cognitively and affectively. This activity not only strengthens literacy skills, but also instills the values of the Pancasila Student Profile in a contextual and meaningful way. The integration of local stories has proven to be effective as a learning medium that builds empathy, imagination, and character.

3.3 Implementation Constraints and Solutions

The implementation of strengthening the pancasila student profile in Indonesian learning containing the cultural values of puppet stories at public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo is inseparable from the various obstacles faced by teachers and students. These obstacles include limited resources, teachers' pedagogical skills, and students' readiness to understand the philosophical meaning of puppet stories. This problem arises both in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of learning. Data from in-depth observations and interviews show that teachers still need systematic guidance so that the values in the puppet story can be thoroughly integrated into the dimension of the Pancasila Student Profile.

The ET teacher, for example, admitted that he still had difficulty compiling learning activities that explicitly linked puppet stories to the indicators of the Pancasila dimension, especially the dimension of critical reasoning and global diversity. In an interview, he said: "I understand that the story of puppets is rich in values, but sometimes I am confused about lowering that value to class activities. For example, how to design questions or discussions that invite students to compare the attitude of the figure with the values of Pancasila in a concrete way." (Interview, ET, April 4, 2025).

This obstacle has an impact on the lack of explicit deepening of cultural values in the class discussion process. In addition, observations of learning activities show that not all students can understand the symbolism in puppet stories. Most students are only interested in funny or famous puppet figures, without understanding the deep meaning of values such as mutual cooperation, honesty, or courage. For example, in the learning session using the story "Punakawan Unites in Cooperation", only 6 out of 23 students were able to associate the attitude of Semar and Gareng with the spirit of mutual cooperation in real life. This shows that teachers need additional strategies to foster students' reflective abilities on the meaning of stories.

Another challenge arises in the form of limited time for the implementation of the P5 Project. In practice, teachers admit that it is difficult to divide their time between the demands of the regular curriculum and the implementation of projects. Teacher ET explains: "If I have to insert P5 in Indonesian learning, I have to sacrifice the time of other materials. In fact, the curriculum material must also be completed." (Interview, ET, April 4, 2025).

This conflict causes the implementation of local culture-based learning to be often cut short or cannot be carried out optimally. The limitation of learning media is also a fairly dominant obstacle. Teachers only rely on storybooks and illustrations that are available on a limited basis. When teachers want to use puppet videos as an alternative, they are constrained by projector facilities that are not available in the classroom. This has an impact on the low variety of media that can be used to stimulate students' interest and understanding.

Several solutions have begun to be carried out independently by teachers, including by compiling their own learning modules that contain local stories, as well as discussions with colleagues in KKG (Teacher Working Group) activities. Teacher ET says: "I started rewriting my own version of the wayang story, which is simpler in language and I adapt the characters to be close to the world of children." (Interview, ET, April 4, 2025).

This effort is a good first step in modifying the material to be more relevant and easy for students to understand. In addition, collaboration with local cultural communities can also be an alternative solution. The principal initiated a collaboration with a puppet art studio in the local village to hold a mini puppet show that was packed with interactive for students. This activity aims to make students not only hear stories, but also witness these values directly in the form of performances.

The main findings in this section show that the implementation of the cultural value of puppet stories in strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile faces obstacles in the aspects of thematic planning, time constraints, teachers' pedagogical skills, and learning facilities. Nevertheless, the local solutions carried out by teachers and schools show the spirit of innovation and adaptation to existing conditions. Teachers' reflection and community support are important elements in bridging technical obstacles and strengthening the successful implementation of local cultural values in Indonesian learning[22], [23].

3.4 Teacher and Student Perceptions of Culturally Charged Learning

The teacher showed a positive attitude towards Indonesian learning which contained the cultural value of puppet stories. This enthusiastic attitude is reflected in the statement of the teacher of grade IV (E.S.) who assesses that learning based on puppet stories helps students understand character values concretely. The teacher said that

students are more likely to grasp the moral message and attitude of Pancasila when the material is associated with the stories of puppet characters who have been familiar in their lives. The teacher explained, "If the character is Semar or Pandawa, the children will immediately understand. They can call the value of mutual cooperation, responsibility, or honesty from the stories they hear." (Interview, E.S., April 8, 2025). "Students are very interested when the name of the character is mentioned. They can immediately mention the character's traits and actions, and then relate them to attitudes in their daily lives."

This statement shows that a local culture-based approach strengthens students' connection to learning materials while bringing the context of values to life alive. Positive responses also emerged from students who felt happy when they took lessons using puppet stories. A student (R.D., 10 years old) said that he enjoyed learning Indonesian because the puppet story was not boring and full of messages. He said, "Puppet stories are exciting, especially if the characters are fighting or helping friends. We know what is good and what is not."

Teachers also consider that the integration of local culture strengthens the dimension of the Pancasila Student Profile more naturally. E.S. revealed that students who were previously passive became more active in asking questions and arguing when the stories used came from their own culture. According to him, local stories such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata in the children's version are easier to understand and contextual. The teacher added, "When I asked Yudhistira's attitude in the story, almost all students could answer and compare it with their experiences at school, such as honesty, patience, or responsibility."

Strengthening cultural values in learning also increases student confidence. Students are more courageous to speak, express opinions, and show a positive attitude in group discussions. In the interview, the student (A.N., 9 years old) revealed, "I became excited because the story was like a story at home. I can tell my friends about my favorite characters, and we ask each other questions and answers."

Teachers and students view culturally charged learning as an effective approach in building awareness of character values. This approach not only facilitates the transfer of value, but also creates a fun and participatory learning atmosphere. Students show an increase in comprehension of values and courage to express themselves, while teachers see the effectiveness of puppet stories in bringing the subject matter to life and encouraging class participation. The emotional involvement and cultural identity of students strengthens their absorption of the values of the Pancasila Student Profile. Teachers find it helpful when students actively relate the content of the story to real experiences, so that learning feels more contextual and meaningful. This finding emphasizes the importance of involving local culture as a learning resource in an effort to strengthen the dimension of the Pancasila Student Profile at the basic education level [24], [25].

4. DISCUSSION

This study aims to describe the implementation of Indonesian learning containing the cultural values of puppet stories as a strategy to strengthen the dimension of the Pancasila Student Profile in elementary schools. This research departs from the problem of weak integration of local cultural values in Indonesian learning, even though puppet stories hold great potential as a medium for internalizing character values. The results showed that teachers showed creativity in designing learning activities based on local culture, and students were actively involved and showed an increased understanding of character values during the learning process. The main problem raised in this study is the systematic integration of local cultural values in Indonesian learning, even though puppet stories contain philosophical values that are in line with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. The research uses a qualitative descriptive method with a case study design anchored at public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo. Data was obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation of teachers and grade IV students. The main results showed that teachers showed creativity in developing lesson plans and carrying out local culture-based activities, while students showed increased enthusiasm and understanding of character values during the lessons.

The research confirms the dual impact of puppet-based learning on students' cognitive and affective engagement, supporting the view that culturally contextualized instruction enhances both motivation and internalization of values [26], [27]. The stories of puppet figures that are relevant to the lives of students such as Gatotkaca, Semar, and Puntadewa are effective media to build an understanding of Pancasila values, such as mutual cooperation, honesty, responsibility, and critical reasoning [28], [29]. Teachers use visual media, creative literacy activities, and value reflection to instill character contextually. These findings corroborate the results of a study by Aisyah and Nawawi (2023) which shows that the use of local narratives can increase the absorption of students' characters [2]. This research also strengthens the findings which emphasize embedding cultural values within instructional materials strengthens the actualization of the Pancasila Student Profile [8]. However, the present study distinguishes itself by introducing a thematic and subject-specific integration of puppet stories in Indonesian language learning, rather than general P5 activities, thereby advancing the specificity and applicability of culture-based pedagogy in formal subjects.

The study also found some differences and unexpected results. One of the different results is that students are more interested in funny characters in stories, such as Bagong and Gareng, than in philosophical characters

such as Puntadewa. This behavioral pattern suggests that symbolic and moral dimensions must be introduced progressively, using scaffolding strategies to deepen student understanding of more abstract character values [30], [31]. Moreover, teachers acknowledged challenges in explicitly formulating indicators of character values during lesson planning, indicating a gap in professional training on value-based instructional design [32]. This aligns with previous critiques of the P5 project, which note that teachers often struggle to translate character ideals into measurable classroom practices [33]-[36]. One of the teachers rearranged the story in simple language, and the school collaborated with the puppet community to bring students closer to cultural values through live performances.

The limitation of this research lies in the narrow scope because it was only conducted in one school and within a limited period of time. This study has not been able to evaluate the long-term impact on the formation of students' character. In addition, triangulation has not been carried out across education levels to test the consistency of results at different grade levels. This study also has not measured the influence of cultural integration on academic achievement quantitatively, so further research involving experimental or quasi-experimental design is needed. Other limitations surfaced, including restricted media availability, lack of structured P5 time slots, and limited external resources. However, some teachers adapted by rewriting puppet stories into simpler language and organizing live interactions with local puppet artists, which increased authenticity and engagement.

This study contributes a novel framework in the form of a subject-integrated cultural learning model that can serve as a reference for contextualizing character education. Unlike previous studies that discuss P5 implementation generally, this research develops practical strategies and pedagogical content directly embedded in the Indonesian subject.

However, this study also has notable limitations. It was conducted in a single school (public elementary school 1 Tawangharjo) with limited time and scope, thereby constraining the generalizability of findings. Furthermore, it did not assess the longitudinal impact on student character or include cross-grade triangulation that could provide a broader insight into consistency of outcomes. Another limitation is the absence of quantitative data to evaluate whether such culture-based interventions also affect academic achievement.

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed. First, curriculum developers should include explicit value indicators in thematic modules to support teachers in integrating local wisdom in classroom planning. Second, teacher training programs should incorporate cultural literacy and narrative-based instruction, particularly focusing on value internalization strategies. Third, schools should build sustainable collaborations with cultural communities to enrich learning resources and provide live experiences that make cultural learning authentic and memorable. Finally, future research should consider quasi-experimental designs or longitudinal studies to explore the causal effects of cultural integration on both character formation and academic performance.

In conclusion, puppet story-based Indonesian learning represents a promising and contextualized approach to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile. It leverages local cultural heritage not only as a content medium, but also as a pedagogical strategy that harmonizes cognitive development with character education. This integration makes learning more meaningful, especially in the context of the Independent Curriculum that emphasizes cultural relevance and moral development.

The findings of this research are important for the development of learning policies that favor the local cultural context in the midst of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. The integration of wayang stories in Indonesian learning has been proven to strengthen students' character development and increase the relevance of the material to daily life [37]-[40]. The practical implications of this study include the need to develop culturally-based thematic teaching modules, the preparation of value indicators in explicit learning, and increased collaboration between schools and local cultural communities. This research also encourages a cross-subject approach that utilizes cultural richness as a learning resource, so that character internalization does not occur artificially, but is inherent in the context of meaningful learning. The main conclusion states that wayang story-based learning is a potential strategy to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile in a contextual, fun, and relevant way to the local culture of elementary school students.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that integrating puppet story narratives into Indonesian language learning constitutes an effective and contextualized strategy to strengthen the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile in elementary education. The findings show that teachers were able to design culturally responsive instructional strategies that internalize key character values—such as honesty, responsibility, mutual cooperation, and critical thinking—through local narratives familiar to students' cultural environment. Despite facing practical challenges, such as limited access to thematic teaching modules, time constraints within the P5 project allocation, and the absence of standardized character assessment tools, teachers demonstrated adaptive responses. These included the development of independent learning materials and collaboration with local puppet artists to enrich students' learning experience and moral reflection.

The novelty of this study lies in offering a subject-integrated cultural learning model within the Indonesian curriculum, rather than treating character education as an extracurricular or general theme. This approach provides a new conceptual framework that links local wisdom to formal instructional design, thereby fostering character development through meaningful, engaging, and contextually relevant learning. The implications of this study emphasize the urgency for educational policymakers to institutionalize local culture in curriculum development. This includes the provision of value-based thematic modules, professional development on culturally embedded instruction, and character assessment rubrics aligned with the six dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. Ultimately, this study reaffirms that wayang-based learning is not merely a cultural preservation effort but a transformative pedagogical approach. It bridges national character goals with the lived cultural experiences of students, ensuring that education remains rooted in local identity while preparing students for global citizenship.

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