Original Research Article

*Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (P5) Implementation as Part of Merdeka Curriculum at Ariya Metta Vocational High School Tangerang

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ABSTRACT

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| The Merdeka Curriculum, a significant educational reform in Indonesia, prioritizes the cultivation of Pancasila values in students. One important component of this curriculum is the Project to Strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile (*Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (P5)), which allows schools autonomy for its implementation of project-based learning experiences connecting with the relevant values or themes that have been suggested on Regulations of Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (MoEC) No. 56/M/2022. This study aimed to find out the practical implementation of the P5 project at Ariya Metta Vocational High School in Tangerang City, Banten Province, as referred to in the Merdeka Curriculum policy. Using the qualitative method, the data was collected through online interviews with 2 teachers and 34 students who had completed the project. The results showed that Ariya Metta Vocational High School implemented a project that raised the theme of local wisdom – Cina Benteng, as it is relevant to the cultural traditions that develop in the surrounding area. By conducting direct demonstrations and deepening their knowledge through seminars, students understand and deepen the cultural values contained in these traditions. This is in line with the principles of the P5 project, namely Holistic, Contextual, Student-centered, and Exploration. |

*Keywords: Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5), Merdeka Curriculum Implementation, Indonesian Educational Policy, Cina Benteng*

1. INTRODUCTION

There are many reasons why a nation tries its best to improve its education, and one is that with good educational systems, a nation can develop good human capital. The rapid development of the world, especially in the field of technology and the dissemination of information, creates a unique challenge to any education system that potentially risks student development. For example, the development of *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) is like a double-edged sword; its capacity to facilitate information access is juxtaposed with the potential for adverse effects on children's character development and learning engagement. In Indonesia, the guarantee of education for all people and quality education is already regulated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Responding to the learning crisis after COVID-19, Indonesia released a new curriculum called *Kurikulum Merdeka.* Cobbold (1999) identified the curriculum as a core component of student learning. As a set of educational contexts, curriculum guides educators to ensure that students receive a comprehensive and structured education, which plays a fundamental role in an educational system. The curriculum, as highlighted by Apsari (2018), is considered the foundational component of education. It acts as a crucial roadmap for realizing intended educational goals, thereby determining the quality and efficacy of the educational system. Utami (2022) stated that the Merdeka Curriculum was introduced to address the learning crisis and to create an adaptive generation that can face the changes of the times with independence. *Merdeka Belajar* aims to cultivate independent, courageous, polite, critical-thinking, civilized, and morally upright learners. Another goal of *Merdeka Belajar* is to develop a free spirit where learners and teachers can freely explore knowledge, attitudes, and skills from the surrounding environment. The literacy meaning of ‘Merdeka’ in English is *Independent,* and ‘Belajar’ is *Learning*. In this curriculum, the *Ministry of Education and Culture* (MoEC) integrated the *Projek Penguatan Profil Pancasila,* well known as Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), as one of the ways to influence students with the core values of Pancasila as the ideology of Republic of Indonesia.

The Project to Strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile (P5) is a distinct component of the Merdeka Curriculum structure, separate from intracurricular learning. P5 aims to develop Pancasila Students who are able to apply Pancasila values in their daily behavior. To achieve this goal, P5 adopts an experiential learning approach that is relevant to the surrounding environmental context (Anggara et al., 2024). In the guidebook of *Projek Penguatan Profil Pancasila*, the MoEC (2022) mentioned this project as a component of the Merdeka Curriculum designed to reinforce character and values rooted in Pancasila, the foundational ideology of Indonesia. It is designated to develop competent students from the Indonesian educational system. This program employs a project-based learning approach. The competencies of the Pancasila student profile are designed by considering internal factors such as national identity, ideology, and national aspirations, as well as external factors such as global conditions and contemporary challenges, particularly the 4th Industrial Revolution. Furthermore, the guidebook also explained that this project offers students a chance to "experience knowledge" firsthand, building their character while learning from their surroundings. This project allows students to explore important issues like climate change, anti-radicalism, and mental health, empowering them to take real-world actions aligned with their learning and needs. Several studies have been conducted about the implementation of P5. First, the usage of Sukuraga Puppets as a medium for character development of the Pancasila Student Profile was proven effective in improving the student's character in grade third primary school using action research at SDN Mekarjaya Sukabumi (Apriantika Ardi Sari et al., 2022). Second, Anggara et al., 2024 investigate the application of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMK Negeri 1 Karawang, specifically analyzing the "Sustainable Lifestyle" theme within the Strengthening Pancasila Student Profile Project (P5) in the 10th-grade Mechanical Engineering program which resulted in students increased awareness for the environmental aspect, better critical thinking skills and creative solution.

As an educational unit, Ariya Metta Vocational High School in Tangerang City, Banten Province, Indonesia, is also required to implement the P5 project. This private Buddhist educational institution is located in a multicultural environment, both culturally and religiously, where almost all of its students are Peranakan Chinese, also known as Cina Benteng. Cina Benteng is one of the local wisdom in the surrounding city. Local wisdom encompasses worldviews, knowledge, and strategies manifested in the activities of local communities. Daily activities carried out to fulfill individual and social needs are an integral part of community life. Despite the passage of time, local culture continues to exist among older generations. Distinctive customs, beliefs, and activities that are rich in local values can still be found (Syaharuddin et al., 2019). Suryadinata (1997) defined Peranakan Chinese as individuals of Chinese descent who have intermarried with local Indonesians and have adopted local customs and traditions. Cina Benteng is one of them. The community rooted in Tangerang is a fascinating blend of Chinese and Indonesian cultures. This unique blend, both physically and culturally, has been a distinctive feature of the community.

However, the modernization of society poses a threat to the preservation of their unique heritage as younger generations seem to be distancing themselves from their traditional customs and beliefs. This can have a negative impact if future generations do not understand the existing traditions and cultures in their society. Many values in culture actually functioned as guidelines for life. Preserving the cultural heritage is an important matter and cannot be separated from educational institutions.

Therefore, the researcher will find out the alignment of implementation and regulation of the P5 project in Ariya Metta Vocational High School in Tangerang and its impact on students to determine whether this school's P5 project is effective for developing students' character and knowledge of Pancasila values conducted in the local culture as intended by the curriculum program.

2. POLICY REVIEW

Various laws and regulations guide the development of education quality in Indonesia, such as the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia and Law No. 20/2003 about the National Education System. The Merdeka Curriculum is regulated by Regulations of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology No. 56/M/2022 and the Decree of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Republic of Indonesia No. 262/M/2022.

**2.1 The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia**

*“To educate the life of the people and to participate toward the establishment of a world order based on freedom”* **—Preamble, Paragraph IV**

*“(1) Every citizen has the right to receive education. (2) Every citizen has the obligation to undertake basic education, and the government has the obligation to fund this. (3) The government shall manage and organise one system of national education, which shall increase the level of spiritual belief, devoutness and moral character in the context of developing the life of the nation and shall be regulated by law. (4) The state shall prioritise the budget for education to a minimum of 20% of the State Budget and of the Regional Budgets to fulfil the needs of implementation of national education. (5) The government shall advance science and technology with the highest respect for religious values and national unity for the advancement of civilisation and prosperity of humankind.”* **—Chapter XIII, Article 31**

Indonesia has a strong fundamental law about Education, which is clearly stated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, both in the Preamble and Article 31. This means the state of the Republic of Indonesia strongly supports educational matters in order to develop a better quality of education for a better future. This constitution becomes the basis of all regulations regarding education; all the policies and regulations must be aligned with the objectives described in the country's constitution.

**2.2 Act of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20/2003**

The law of Republic Indonesia No.20/2003 on the Act on National Education System explained that the standard of the Indonesian Education System must be based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, rooted in the religious values and national cultures of Indonesia, and responsive to the needs of the ever-changing era (Article 1, General Provisions).

**2.3 Regulations of Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology No. 56/M/2022**

In the Book Guide*: Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila stated that the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project is based on the Regulations of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology No.56/M/2022 which emphasizes* the importance of learning by experience. Encouraging students to be actively involved in their learning, especially in several subject themes like social issues, culture, mental health, entrepreneurship, and many more, is expected to be applicable to solving real-world challenges.

According to this regulation, the Pancasila Student Profile Project is a project-based co-curricular activity designed to strengthen the achievement of competencies and character in accordance with the Pancasila Student Profile, which is developed based on the Graduate Competency Standards. The implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Project is carried out flexibly in terms of content, activities, and duration. The Pancasila Student Profile Project is designed separately from the intra-curricular activities. The objectives, content, and learning activities of the project do not have to be linked to the objectives and material of the intra-curricular subjects. Educational institutions can involve the community and/or the world of work in designing and implementing the Pancasila Student Profile Project.

In its implementation, this project involves many actors, starting from the principal, teachers, students, and parents, so that the objectives and values conveyed to the students can be understood well. Some of the principles of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project include:

1. Holistic: Students can understand something comprehensively, seeing the deep connections between one thing and another and connecting it to real-world experiences.
2. Contextual: The project is based on real experiences so that students can learn from everyday life.
3. Student-centered: Students are actively engaged in learning and educator roles as facilitators so that it can foster student initiatives.
4. Exploration: Encouraging the student to be brave to explore their environment using the knowledge from intra-curricular learning.

**2.4 Decree of The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Republic of Indonesia No. 262/M/2022**

This decree is a supplementary regulation due to the amendments of regulations of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation Number 56 of 2022: Guidelines for Curriculum Implementation in the Context of Learning Recovery. This decree explained the structure of the Merdeka Curriculum from stage A to F, which means from Kindergarten to High School (Vocational or Regular High School). The curriculum structure for vocational high schools, specifically for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, is 30% of the total learning time (JP) for one year.

The implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project is conducted flexibly, both in terms of content and time. In terms of content, the profile project must refer to the achievement of the Pancasila Student Profile according to the student's phase and does not have to be linked with the intra-curricular subject. In terms of time management, the project can be carried out by summing up the allocation of project learning hours from all subjects, and the total duration of each project does not have to be the same. The Indonesian government has outlined specific themes for student projects that aim to develop the qualities described in the Pancasila Student Profile. These themes cover a wide range of topics, from environmental sustainability to entrepreneurship, including:

1. Sustainable Lifestyle (*Gaya Hidup Berkelanjutan*)
2. Local Wisdom. (*Kearifan Lokal*)
3. Unity in Diversity. *(Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*)
4. Building Mind and Body. (*Bangunlah Jiwa dan Raganya*)
5. Voice of Democracy. (*Suara Demokrasi*)
6. Engineering and Technology. *(Rekayasa dan Teknologi*)
7. Entrepreneurship. (*Kewirausahaan*)
8. Employment. (*Kebekerjaan*)

There are specific requirements for the number of projects and themes:

1. Grade 10: 3 projects, including 2 chosen themes and 1 theme on Employment.
2. Grade 11: 2 projects, including 1 chosen theme and 1 theme on Employment.
3. Grade 12: 1 project with the theme of Employment. For vocational high schools (SMK), the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project can be implemented in an integrated manner, collaborating with industry partners, communities, organizations, and the public.

The P5 guidebook (MoEC, 2022) suggested that vocational high schools, in particular, are encouraged to partner with businesses, communities, and organizations to make their projects more relevant to the real world. Due to its flexibility, the school has the autonomy to create a fun and meaningful project for the students, which can be adjusted to emphasize the value that school management wants to emphasize to the students.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is analyzed using the conceptual framework below. The laws and regulations enacted in Indonesia have become the foundation of the Pancasila Student Profile. The implementation for every school can be customized with the value and wisdom that school management wants to emphasize. Thus, we can see the output from the project. Qualitative research, as described by Creswell (2018), is a flexible approach used to understand social or human issues within groups or individuals, allowing for evolving questions and procedures adaptable to the participants' context. Therefore, this research was conducted using a qualitative method to describe the result of the investigation.



**Table 1 Conceptual Framework**

**4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In line with the curriculum update and the school's obligation to facilitate the deepening of Pancasila values among students as outlined in the regulations, Ariya Metta Vocational High School has chosen to implement the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project with the theme of 'Local Wisdom’. Islami (2019) defined local wisdom as knowledge and a way of life that is manifested in the routine activities carried out by the local community as a response to various problems in fulfilling their living needs. Accordingly, local wisdom influences a nation's character (Fajarini, 2014). Local wisdom is a characteristic of people with a noble culture. Local wisdom is defined as the wisdom or noble values contained in the cultural wealth of the local area in the form of traditions and life guidelines (Suarningsih, 2019).

The local wisdom chosen by Ariya Metta Vocational High School is the local wisdom that has developed and thrives in the location where this school is situated, which is the Cina Benteng culture. As mentioned in the Journal (Laurenza, Kumala. 2022), Cina Benteng is also known as Tionghoa Tangerang or more commonly called Cina Benteng. It is a native Peranakan community in Tangerang, Banten. The first arrival of their ancestors dates back to 1407 when Admiral Chen Ci Lung came. They originated from Fujian or southern China (Hokkien), which is documented in the book Babad Tina Layang Parahyang (as related by Achonk Lim, a cultural expert of the Cina Benteng). He and his crew, who were part of Admiral Zheng He's expedition, ended up being stranded in Pangkalan village in Banten (*Teluk Naga*). Subsequently, all the crew members stayed there, made a life for themselves, and married local indigenous women. The cultural traditions of the Cina Benteng bear a close acculturation of the Betawi and Sundanese. This resemblance can be observed in aspects like marriage traditions, culinary traditions, and numerous others because it stems from the assimilation of the original culture of the Totok people (who were Chinese immigrants) into the culture of their Indigenous spouses.

The information was obtained through online interviews with 2 teachers at Ariya Metta Vocational High School and 34 students at the school. Given the rich history and cultural heritage of the Cina Benteng community, Ariya Metta Vocational High School focused on preserving these traditions through its 2024 P5 project. A three-day event was organized involving students, teachers, and community members. Activities included seminars on Cina Benteng traditions, hands-on workshops like making traditional food, and cultural performances. The goal is to disseminate a deeper appreciation for the local heritage among the younger generation. The event was held from December 11-13, 2024, with a total of approximately 240 students as both participants and organizers. The school fully supported the event; all people in the school were involved in this event. Here is a summary of the activities carried out:

1. A seminar on the traditions and culture of the Cina Benteng by a cultural practitioner Mr Achonk Lim, who explained the history and meaning of each existing tradition, such as Cina Benteng-style weddings, food, and others.
2. Students were also invited to experience the process of making *Bakcang* （粽子）and *Onde* (汤圆).
3. Students also participated in demonstrations of Cina Benteng weddings, known as 'Cio Tao' and the 'Sangjit'.
4. A performance of traditional Cina Benteng music known as 'Gambang Kromong' was also invited.

As a result, it can be concluded that the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) carried out by Ariya Metta Vocational High School, with the theme of local wisdom – Cina Benteng, was effective. All student responses indicated that they were able to understand and learn more about the traditions and culture that developed in their place. Moreover, the students are also willing to preserve all the traditions because they understand the value and idea of the culture as part of their identity, which carries the Pancasila values such as the almighty of God, tolerance, and togetherness.

5. Conclusion

After analyzing the data obtained through interviews and studying a few policies related to the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in Ariya Metta Vocational High School, it can be concluded that Ariya Metta Vocational High School has already implemented the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) accordingly with the regulations of Merdeka Curriculum. The project implementation itself was done properly and received satisfying learning outcomes because the students admitted their better understanding of Cina Benteng culture and the Pancasila values inside it.

Giving the school authority to choose the theme encourages the school management to do their best in order to achieve the target in the curriculum objectives. Also, the spirit of practical implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which is about critical thinking and character development in accordance with the 21st-century era, is maintained here. By having this P5 project, the penetration of Pancasila value is easier because students combine their previous knowledge with the experience given. Besides, the principles of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), which are Holistic, Contextual, Student-centered, and Exploration, are fully implemented through the project of local wisdom Cina Benteng at Ariya Metta Vocational School.

DEFINITIONS, ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS

P5: Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila

Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)

Option 2:

Author(s) hereby declare that generative AI technologies, such as Large Language Models, etc., have been used during the writing or editing of manuscripts. This explanation will include the name, version, model, and source of the generative AI technology as well as all input prompts provided to the generative AI technology

Details of the AI usage are given below:

1. Gemini 2.0 Flash

2.

3.

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