

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLACE-BASED EDUCATION MODEL IN ENHANCING THE PANCASILA STUDENT PROFILE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOLL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines changes in the Profil Pelajar Pancasila of elementary school students following the implementation of a Place-Based Education (PBE) model within the context of the Kurikulum Merdeka. A quantitative pre-experimental approach using a one-group pretest-posttest design was employed. The participants were 25 students from one elementary school class at SDN 1 Lodan Wedan, Rembang. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire (1-4) measuring four dimensions of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila: collaboration, independence, critical thinking, and creativity. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, normalized gain (N-gain), Shapiro Wilk normality testing, paired-samples t-test, and Cohen's d. The results show that the mean score increased from 2.85 in the pretest to 3.35 in the posttest, with an N-gain of 0.43 (moderate category). The paired-samples t-test indicated a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores ($t(24) = 7.14, p < .001$), with a large effect size ($d = 1.43$). Improvements were observed across all measured dimensions, particularly collaboration. These findings provide preliminary evidence that Place-Based Education has positive potential for supporting the development of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila in elementary school contexts.

Keywords: Place-Based Education, Profil Pelajar Pancasila, Elementary School, Pilot Study

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INTRODUCTION

Elementary education worldwide is currently under strong pressure to prepare young learners for the challenges of the 21st century, which are characterized by rapid technological change, knowledge-based economies, and increasingly complex social and global issues. Contemporary competency frameworks emphasize that students are not only expected to master basic literacy and numeracy skills, but also to develop critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and strong character as foundations for future life and work (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Binkley et al., 2012; OECD, 2018; Battelle for Kids, 2019). Within this context, elementary school plays a strategic role, as this stage is crucial for shaping students' cognitive patterns, social emotional development, and moral dispositions in a relatively lasting manner.

In response to these global challenges, Indonesia has introduced the Kurikulum Merdeka, which positions the Profil Pelajar Pancasila as the central goal of the national education system. Official documents issued by the Agency for Standards, Curriculum, and Educational Assessment emphasize that the Profil Pelajar Pancasila consists of six core dimensions: faith and noble character, global diversity, collaboration, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity, all of which should be developed holistically from early childhood through secondary education (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2022). Implementation guidelines further stress that the Profil Pelajar Pancasila should not remain a normative slogan, but must be translated into concrete learning objectives, instructional strategies, and classroom-based assessment practices (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2022; Pratiwi, 2024). In addition, national rubrics highlight the importance of authentic and contextual learning experiences so that Pancasila values are internalized through daily practices rather than remaining at the cognitive level alone (Kurikulum Merdeka, 2022; Rubrik Pencapaian Profil Pelajar Pancasila, 2022).

Despite the clarity of policy direction, several studies indicate that character education at the elementary school level in Indonesia still faces persistent challenges. Research on character education has pointed to a continuing moral crisis reflected in increasing deviant behaviors among adolescents, underscoring the urgency of strengthening character education from early schooling (Sari & Puspita, 2019). Other studies reveal that while elementary school teachers generally perceive character education as important, its implementation is often constrained by limited instructional time, insufficient environmental support, and inconsistent integration into daily learning activities (Hardini & Wening, 2020). Similarly, research conducted at SD Negeri Pedurangan Tengah 02 found that character education had been integrated into lesson plans and teaching methods, yet remained largely school-centered and insufficiently connected with the surrounding community (Gunawan et al., 2020). More recent analyses suggest that character education in elementary schools tends to remain normative and has not fully addressed the demands of 21st-century competencies and rapid social change (Andikaratri & Atmojo, 2024).

Within this context, Place-Based Education (PBE) has emerged as a potentially relevant pedagogical approach to bridge character development, 21st-century skills, and students' connections with their immediate environments. Sobel (2004) defines PBE as an approach that uses local communities and environments as the primary context for learning, aiming to strengthen students' attachment to place, enhance appreciation of the natural world, and encourage active community participation. Gruenewald (2003) further conceptualizes place-conscious education as an approach that integrates environmental education with critical social analysis, encouraging learners to reflect on cultural, social, and sustainability-related dimensions embedded in specific places. Smith (2002) argues that PBE enables interdisciplinary learning by connecting multiple subject areas through locally relevant themes, thereby making learning more meaningful and contextualized. Empirical work by Semken and

Freeman (2008) also demonstrates that PBE contributes to the development of students' sense of place, encompassing both cognitive and emotional attachment to their environment, which in turn supports pro-environmental attitudes and social responsibility.

Empirical studies from various national contexts further highlight the potential of PBE in elementary education. Research in Bhutan indicates that the use of community-based learning environments can enhance student engagement and align schooling with national humanistic values (Dorji et al., 2021). Other studies report that PBE-oriented instruction in elementary English classrooms fosters meaningful learning experiences, although teachers often face constraints related to time and pedagogical competence in utilizing local resources (Kelzang et al., 2023). In Thailand, a ten-week PBE program implemented in rural elementary schools was found to strengthen students' sense of place and environmental awareness through experiential and collaborative activities (Jaikrasen & Ketsing, 2025). In Indonesia, studies on local wisdom-based learning indicate that integrating local culture into instruction can enhance learning motivation, strengthen cultural identity, and promote environmental awareness among elementary students (Nurpratiwiningsih et al., 2023).

Conceptually, the characteristics of PBE align closely with both the dimensions of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila and the 21st-century skills framework. The widely cited 4C competencies critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration are understood to develop most effectively through authentic learning experiences, real-world problem solving, and collaborative inquiry (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Binkley et al., 2012; Battelle for Kids, 2019). Recent studies emphasize that fostering these competencies requires learning environments that extend beyond the classroom and provide rich, complex contexts for exploration and action (Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023). Research in the Indonesian educational context also suggests that teachers who intentionally integrate 21st-century skills into lesson planning can promote higher levels of creativity, collaboration, and critical reasoning, despite ongoing challenges related to facilities and student motivation (Hapsari & Prasetyarini, 2025). In this regard, PBE through its emphasis on inquiry, collaboration, and engagement with local issues has the potential to support key dimensions of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila, particularly collaboration, critical reasoning, and creativity.

However, a review of existing literature indicates that empirical research on PBE in Indonesian elementary schools remains limited, particularly from a quantitative perspective. Many international studies focus on student engagement, sense of place, or alignment with national values, without explicitly examining outcomes in relation to Indonesia's Profil Pelajar Pancasila framework (Dorji et al., 2021; Jaikrasen & Ketsing, 2025). Studies conducted in Indonesian contexts tend to emphasize local wisdom-based learning rather than systematically adopting PBE as a structured instructional model (Implementation of Local Wisdom Based Learning in Realizing Pancasila Students, 2022). Even systematic reviews of 21st-century skills in Indonesian elementary education primarily map conceptual importance rather than empirically testing PBE as an integrative pedagogical strategy (Pratiwi, 2024).

Based on this gap, there is a need for empirical studies that explore the implementation of Place-Based Education in relation to the Profil Pelajar Pancasila at the elementary school level. Using a quantitative pre-experimental approach, this study seeks to examine changes in students' Profil Pelajar Pancasila before and after the implementation of PBE in a specific elementary school context. Although the research design does not allow for strong causal inference, the findings are expected to provide preliminary evidence regarding the potential of PBE as a contextually relevant learning model aligned with national character education policy and 21st-century educational demands. Practically, the study may offer insights for elementary school teachers in designing place-based, contextual learning experiences that integrate curriculum content, local resources, and the dimensions of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila in a

more systematic manner (Dorji et al., 2021; Kelzang et al., 2023; Implementation of Local Wisdom Based Learning in Realizing Pancasila Students, 2022; Pratiwi, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Pancasila Student Profile in Elementary Education

Current educational reforms emphasize the importance of integrating character education with 21st-century competencies to prepare students for complex social, cultural, and global challenges. In Indonesia, this orientation is formally articulated through the Pancasila Student Profile, which serves as the core competency framework of the Kurikulum Merdeka. The framework outlines six key dimensions: faith and moral integrity, global diversity, collaboration, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity that are expected to be developed holistically from the elementary level onward (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2022). As a national framework grounded in Pancasila values, the Pancasila Student Profile reflects Indonesia's commitment to balancing cognitive achievement with character and civic development.

Although the Pancasila Student Profile provides clear normative direction, recent empirical studies indicate that its implementation in elementary schools remains challenging. Research suggests that character-related competencies are often addressed through symbolic activities or moral messaging, rather than embedded within authentic and meaningful learning experiences (Samudra et al., 2024; Pratiwi, 2024). As a result, students have limited opportunities to practice collaboration, critical reasoning, and creativity in real-life contexts. These findings point to a gap between the intended goals of the Pancasila Student Profile and the pedagogical approaches commonly used in classroom practice.

Place-Based Education as a Contextual Learning Approach

To address the gap between character education goals and classroom implementation, scholars have increasingly emphasized the role of contextual and experiential learning approaches. One approach that has gained prominence in recent literature is Place-Based Education (PBE). PBE is defined as a pedagogical approach that situates learning within local environments and communities, using students' immediate surroundings as meaningful contexts for inquiry and problem solving (Smith & Sobel, 2021; Semken et al., 2022). By grounding learning in real places, PBE seeks to enhance relevance, engagement, and students' sense of connection to their social and environmental contexts.

Recent empirical studies demonstrate that Place-Based Education supports active learning processes by encouraging students to explore local issues, collaborate with peers, and engage in hands-on experiences. Research conducted in elementary school settings shows that PBE can foster student engagement, social interaction, and responsibility toward local communities (Dorji et al., 2021; Kelzang et al., 2023). Furthermore, studies in Southeast Asian contexts indicate that PBE-oriented learning activities strengthen students' sense of place and environmental awareness through experiential and collaborative practices (Jaikrasen & Ketsing, 2025). These findings suggest that PBE offers pedagogical characteristics that are compatible with the developmental needs of elementary school students.

Place-Based Education and 21st-Century Competencies

The relevance of Place-Based Education becomes more evident when examined in relation to widely recognized 21st-century skills frameworks. Contemporary educational literature consistently emphasizes that competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication are best developed through authentic learning environments that involve inquiry, problem solving, and social interaction (OECD, 2021; Battelle for Kids, 2022). Experiential learning models, including PBE, provide students with opportunities to apply knowledge in complex, real-world situations, thereby supporting deeper cognitive and social learning processes (Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023).

In this regard, the principles of Place-Based Education align closely with several dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, particularly collaboration, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity. By engaging students in locally relevant projects and collaborative inquiry, PBE allows learners to practice these competencies in meaningful contexts rather than through abstract instruction. Studies in the Indonesian context also indicate that contextual and local-environment-based learning approaches can enhance student motivation and character development, although such studies often do not explicitly frame their interventions as Place-Based Education (Nurpratiwiningsih et al., 2023). This suggests a conceptual convergence between PBE, 21st-century competencies, and the goals of the Pancasila Student Profile.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on the reviewed literature, this study adopts a conceptual framework that positions Place-Based Education as a contextual learning approach that may support the development of the Pancasila Student Profile among elementary school students. In this framework, Place-Based Education functions as the instructional intervention, characterized by experiential learning activities, local environmental exploration, collaborative tasks, and inquiry-based learning. These pedagogical features are expected to create learning conditions that facilitate the development of key competencies aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile, including collaboration, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity.

The framework assumes that students' engagement in place-based learning activities can lead to observable changes in their Pancasila-based competencies, as measured through pretest and posttest assessments. Although the framework does not imply strong causal relationships due to the pre-experimental research design, it provides a theoretical basis for examining potential changes in students' competencies following the implementation of Place-Based Education. A visual representation of this conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1, illustrating the relationship between Place-Based Education, learning processes, and the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile.

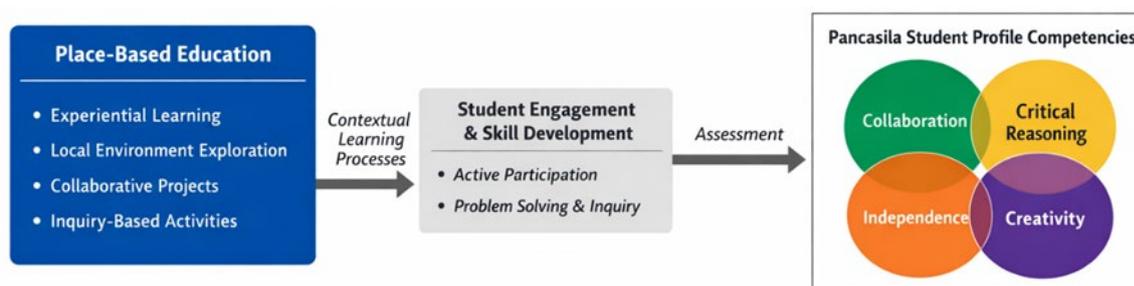


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative pre-experimental research design using a one-group pretest-posttest approach. This design was selected to examine changes in students' competencies before and after the implementation of Place-Based Education (PBE) in a natural classroom setting. Although the absence of a control group limits causal inference, the design is appropriate for exploratory and preliminary investigations aimed at identifying potential effects of instructional interventions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Accordingly, the findings of this study are interpreted as indicative rather than confirmatory.

The participants of the study were 25 elementary school students from one class at SDN 1 Lodan Wedan, Rembang, Indonesia. The participants were selected using a total sampling technique, as the study involved all students in the class where the intervention was implemented. This school was chosen due to its proximity to local environmental and

community resources, which supported the implementation of Place-Based Education activities. All participants took part in both the pretest and posttest phases of the study.

The instructional intervention consisted of the implementation of Place-Based Education (PBE) integrated into regular classroom learning. The intervention was conducted over several instructional sessions during the academic term. Learning activities were designed to engage students with their local environment and community, emphasizing experiential learning, collaborative projects, inquiry-based activities, and contextual problem solving. Students participated in group discussions, environmental observations, and reflective learning tasks related to local issues. These activities were intended to provide meaningful contexts for practicing collaboration, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity, which are key dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile.

Data were collected using a questionnaire measuring the Pancasila Student Profile competencies, developed based on official indicators issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. The instrument focused on four dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile: collaboration, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity. Each item was rated using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The same instrument was administered as a pretest prior to the intervention and as a posttest following the completion of the Place-Based Education activities.

Content validity of the instrument was ensured through alignment with the official indicators of the Pancasila Student Profile and consultation with educational experts. To assess internal consistency, the reliability of the questionnaire was analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.8X$, indicating good reliability and suggesting that the instrument was suitable for measuring students' competencies consistently (Taber, 2018).

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate mean scores for the pretest and posttest. To examine the magnitude of change, normalized gain (N-gain) analysis was applied. Prior to hypothesis testing, data normality was assessed using the Shapiro Wilk test. Since the data were normally distributed, a paired-samples t-test was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest scores. In addition, Cohen's d was calculated to estimate the effect size of the intervention. All statistical analyses were performed at a significance level of $\alpha = .05$.

Ethical considerations were addressed by obtaining permission from the school and informing participants about the purpose of the study. Student participation was voluntary, and data were collected anonymously to ensure confidentiality.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest Scores

This study examined changes in students' Pancasila Student Profile before and after the implementation of Place-Based Education (PBE). Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to provide an overview of students' competency levels at both measurement points. Table 1 presents the mean scores of the pretest and posttest for the overall Pancasila Student Profile.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest Scores

Test	N	Mean	Category
Pretest	25	2.85	Moderate
Posttest	25	3.35	High

As shown in Table 1, the mean score increased from 2.85 in the pretest to 3.35 in the posttest. This increase indicates an overall improvement in students' competencies after participating in Place-Based Education activities. The shift in category from moderate to high suggests that the learning intervention was associated with positive changes in students' competency levels. To provide a more detailed picture, descriptive statistics were also analyzed for each dimension of the Pancasila Student Profile, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Mean Scores by Dimension of the Pancasila Student Profile

Dimension	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Category (Posttest)
Collaboration	2.80	3.45	High
Independence	2.90	3.30	High
Critical Reasoning	2.75	3.25	High
Creativity	2.95	3.40	High

The results indicate improvements across all four dimensions. Collaboration showed the highest increase, suggesting that PBE activities such as group exploration and collaborative tasks provided students with more opportunities to interact, communicate, and work together in meaningful contexts.

Normalized Gain (N-gain) Analysis

To examine the extent of improvement relative to students' initial competency levels, a normalized gain (N-gain) analysis was conducted. The N-gain value was calculated based on the difference between pretest and posttest scores.

Table 3 N-gain Analysis Results

Mean Pretest	Mean Posttest	N-gain	Category
2.85	3.35	0.43	Moderate

As shown in Table 3, the N-gain value of 0.43 falls within the moderate category, indicating a moderate level of improvement in students' Pancasila Student Profile competencies following the PBE intervention. This result suggests that while the improvement was not maximal, it was meaningful and observable within the limited duration of the intervention.

Normality Test Results

Before conducting inferential statistical analysis, a normality test was performed to determine whether the data met the assumptions for parametric testing. The Shapiro-Wilk test was applied to both pretest and posttest scores.

Table 4 Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test Results

Test	Statistic	Sig. (p)	Interpretation
Pretest	0.96	0.21	Normally distributed
Posttest	0.97	0.34	Normally distributed

The results indicate that the significance values for both the pretest and posttest scores were greater than .05, suggesting that the data were normally distributed. Based on these results, parametric statistical analysis using a paired-samples t-test was considered appropriate.

Paired-Samples t-Test Results

To determine whether the observed difference between pretest and posttest scores was statistically significant, a paired-samples t-test was conducted. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Paired-Samples t-Test Results

N	Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (p)
25	0.50	7.14	24	< .001

The results show a statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest scores ($t(24) = 7.14, p < .001$). This finding indicates that students' Pancasila Student Profile scores after the implementation of Place-Based Education were significantly higher than before the intervention.

Effect Size Analysis

In addition to statistical significance, an effect size analysis was conducted to examine the practical significance of the observed improvement. Cohen's d was calculated using the mean difference and pooled standard deviation.

Table 6 Effect Size (Cohen's d)

Mean Difference	Cohen's d	Effect Size Category
0.50	1.43	Large

The effect size value of 1.43 indicates a large effect, suggesting that the improvement in students' competencies was substantial in practical terms. However, considering the pre-experimental research design, this effect size should be interpreted cautiously and viewed as an indication of potential impact rather than definitive causal evidence.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine changes in elementary school students' Pancasila Student Profile following the implementation of Place-Based Education (PBE). The findings indicate an overall improvement in students' competencies, as reflected in the increase in mean scores from the pretest to the posttest, a moderate N-gain value, and a statistically significant paired-samples t-test result. These findings suggest that the implementation of Place-Based Education was associated with positive changes in students' competencies, although the results should be interpreted cautiously due to the pre-experimental research design.

The descriptive results show that improvements occurred across all four measured dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, namely collaboration, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity. Among these dimensions, collaboration demonstrated the highest increase. This finding can be explained by the nature of Place-Based Education, which emphasizes group-based inquiry, shared problem solving, and collective engagement with local environments. Learning activities that require students to work together in authentic contexts provide natural opportunities for communication, negotiation, and mutual support, which are central elements of collaborative competence (Smith & Sobel, 2021; Kelzang et al., 2023). Similar findings have been reported in previous studies indicating that community- and place-oriented learning environments tend to strengthen students' social interaction and teamwork skills (Dorji et al., 2021; Jaikrasen & Ketsing, 2025).

The moderate N-gain value obtained in this study suggests that the improvement in students' competencies, while meaningful, was not maximal. This result may be influenced by several factors, including the relatively short duration of the intervention and students' initial competency levels. Prior research emphasizes that character and competency development, particularly at the elementary level, requires sustained and repeated exposure to authentic learning experiences over time (OECD, 2021; Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023). Therefore, the moderate gain observed in this study is consistent with findings from earlier research that positions Place-Based Education as a gradual developmental process rather than a rapid instructional fix.

The statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest scores further supports the potential relevance of Place-Based Education in fostering competencies aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile. The large effect size observed indicates that the magnitude of change was substantial in practical terms. However, as noted in the methodology, the absence of a control group limits the extent to which causal conclusions can be drawn. Consistent with recommendations in educational research methodology, results from pre-experimental studies should be interpreted as preliminary evidence that can inform further investigation rather than as definitive proof of effectiveness (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Taber, 2018).

When viewed in relation to existing literature, the findings of this study reinforce previous arguments that contextual and experiential learning approaches are well suited to supporting character education frameworks. Research in the Indonesian context has highlighted that the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile often remains normative and insufficiently connected to students' lived experiences (Samudra et al., 2024; Andikaratri & Atmojo, 2024). The present findings suggest that Place-Based Education may help address this gap by embedding character and competency development within real-world learning activities. In this sense, the study contributes to the growing body of literature that calls for pedagogical models capable of translating national curriculum goals into meaningful classroom practices (Pratiwi, 2024; Hapsari & Prasetyarini, 2025)

This study examined changes in elementary school students' Pancasila Student Profile following the implementation of Place-Based Education using a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design. The results indicate an increase in overall competency scores, a moderate level of improvement as measured by N-gain, and a statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest scores. Improvements were observed across all measured dimensions, with collaboration showing the highest increase.

These findings provide preliminary evidence that Place-Based Education has positive potential to support the development of competencies aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile in elementary school contexts. By situating learning within local environments and encouraging experiential and collaborative activities, PBE offers a contextual learning approach that aligns with the goals of character education and 21st-century competency development emphasized in the Kurikulum Merdeka.

Nevertheless, several limitations should be acknowledged. The use of a pre-experimental design without a control group limits causal interpretation, and the relatively small sample size restricts the generalizability of the findings. Future research is therefore recommended to employ quasi-experimental or experimental designs with larger and more diverse samples, as well as longer intervention periods, to further examine the effectiveness and sustainability of Place-Based Education in supporting the Pancasila Student Profile.

Despite these limitations, the study offers practical implications for elementary school teachers and curriculum developers. The findings suggest that integrating Place-Based Education into classroom practice may help move the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile beyond normative instruction toward more meaningful, contextual, and student-centered learning experiences. As such, this study contributes to ongoing efforts to align national character education goals with pedagogical practices that are responsive to students' real-life contexts and contemporary educational demands.

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