



Strengthening Teamwork in the Pancasila Student Profile (P5) Project: A Qualitative Study of Collaborative Learning Implementation

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Abstract :

Educational reform increasingly emphasizes character development and collaborative learning as essential components of twenty-first-century education. Within this context, the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)* is a project-based learning initiative that integrates academic learning with character formation. This study aims to examine how teamwork is strengthened during the implementation of P5 and how collaborative practices contribute to the development of an effective and adaptive school environment. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, field observations, and document analysis involving school leaders, teachers, and project implementation teams. The findings reveal that teamwork functioned as a central mechanism supporting successful program implementation through coordinated stages, including collaborative planning, stakeholder socialization, project execution, and reflective evaluation. Collective professional practices encouraged a shift from individual teaching routines toward shared responsibility, enabling teachers to integrate interdisciplinary learning and facilitate meaningful student participation. The study also found that project-based activities promoted students' engagement, responsibility, creativity, and collaborative skills. However, challenges such as limited instructional time and the persistence of individual work habits remained evident. These results highlight that curriculum innovation becomes more sustainable when supported by organizational collaboration rather than relying solely on instructional change. The findings offer practical insights for strengthening collaborative school cultures to support long-term educational transformation.

INTRODUCTION

Education continues to occupy a central position in shaping social development and preparing societies to respond to rapid global transformation. In recent decades, educational systems have faced increasing pressure to cultivate not only academic competence but also character, collaboration, and adaptive skills required in complex social environments. International educational discourse has shifted toward

competency-based, student-centered learning models that emphasize collaboration and real-world problem-solving (Bliven & Jungbauer, 2021; Isayeva et al., 2025; McPherson, 2021). UNESCO has highlighted that education systems worldwide are moving beyond knowledge transmission toward learning approaches that foster cooperation, creativity, and responsible citizenship as essential competencies for the twenty-first century (Barrios, 2021; Celume & Maoulida, 2022; Sarigoz, 2021). Within this broader transformation, Indonesia introduced the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which places character formation and experiential learning at the core of educational reform (Handayani et al., 2024). One of its key initiatives, the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)*, promotes project-based learning that integrates cognitive development with social and moral values. However, the implementation of such reforms depends not solely on policy design but on how schools reorganize professional practices, particularly teamwork among educators who must collaboratively interpret and enact new curricular expectations.

Scholarly discussions on project-based learning and collaborative teaching have consistently emphasized the importance of professional cooperation in improving learning outcomes and sustaining educational innovation. Research has shown that collaborative teacher practices enhance instructional coherence and foster meaningful student engagement by allowing educators to jointly design learning experiences and reflect on pedagogical challenges (Andaya & Quinto, 2025; Darling-Hammond, 2023; Lacinia & Griffith, 2021). Similarly, studies on professional learning communities demonstrate that sustained collaboration strengthens teacher adaptability during curriculum reform and supports shared responsibility for student learning (Cheung, 2024; Ecarma, 2024; Grimm, 2024). More recent research examining character education through experiential learning also indicates that project-based approaches enable students to internalize values more effectively when learning occurs through authentic social interaction rather than isolated classroom instruction (Black & Warhurst, 2025; Kumari, 2024; Winarno et al., 2023). Despite these advances, much of the existing literature tends to focus on instructional strategies at the classroom level. Less attention has been given to how collaboration functions as an organizational process within schools, particularly in contexts where curriculum reform explicitly requires cross-disciplinary teamwork and institutional coordination.

This gap becomes especially evident in studies on the implementation of character-based curricula in developing education systems. Existing research often evaluates program outcomes or pedagogical effectiveness without closely examining how educators collectively negotiate roles, responsibilities, and working cultures during implementation. As a result, there is limited empirical understanding of how teamwork is formed, sustained, and experienced by teachers in real school environments undergoing policy change. The novelty of the present study lies in its focus on teamwork as a lived organizational practice rather than merely a supporting instructional factor. By exploring the implementation of P5 in an elementary school context, this research investigates how collaboration emerges through everyday professional interactions, how teachers collectively interpret curriculum expectations, and how teamwork influences both learning processes and institutional development. The study therefore contributes a contextual and process-oriented perspective that connects curriculum reform with organizational dynamics at the school level.

Grounded in this perspective, the study aims to examine the processes and strategies used to strengthen teamwork during the implementation of the P5 program and to understand how collaborative practices support the development of an excellent school environment. Rather than measuring outcomes quantitatively, the research seeks to capture the meanings, experiences, and interactions that shape collaborative work among educators and stakeholders. By focusing on one school actively implementing P5, the study provides an in-depth account of how policy initiatives are translated into practical educational activities. The findings are expected to extend existing discussions on project-based learning by demonstrating how institutional collaboration contributes to character education and learning innovation. At a practical level, the study offers insights for school leaders and policymakers seeking sustainable approaches to implementing curriculum reform through collective professional engagement.

The central argument advanced in this study is that the effectiveness of P5 implementation is closely linked to the quality of teamwork established within the school organization. Collaboration is not treated as an additional requirement but as a foundational condition that enables teachers to integrate interdisciplinary learning, coordinate project activities, and support student participation. Through examining stages such as team formation, collaborative planning, project execution, and reflective evaluation, the research explores how teamwork reshapes professional roles and learning practices. A qualitative approach is therefore employed to capture the complexity of these interactions and to understand how participants construct shared meanings around collaboration and educational change. This focus provides a basis for examining curriculum implementation as a social process embedded in organizational culture, which in turn leads to the methodological approach described in the following section.

The urgency of this inquiry lies in the growing recognition that educational reform succeeds only when institutional practices evolve alongside policy innovation. Understanding how teamwork operates within everyday school contexts offers valuable insight into how collaborative cultures can sustain character-based learning initiatives beyond formal program requirements, opening pathways for further research on organizational learning and educational transformation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was conducted at SD Negeri 01 North Pontianak District, a public elementary school actively implementing the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)* as part of the *Merdeka Curriculum* reform. The selection of this setting was based on its relevance to the research problem: understanding how teamwork is strengthened in real educational practices during curriculum transformation. Schools implementing P5 provide a natural context in which collaboration among educators, school leaders, and stakeholders is essential for translating policy into practice. Therefore, examining this environment allows the researcher to capture authentic social interactions and organizational dynamics embedded in daily school activities. The study employed a qualitative field research design using a descriptive case study approach (Rattani et al., 2022; Talrich et al., 2025; Yoon, 2025). A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of meanings, experiences, and collaborative processes that cannot be adequately understood through numerical measurement. As argued in qualitative inquiry traditions, case study research is appropriate for

investigating complex social phenomena within bounded real-life contexts, allowing researchers to interpret how participants construct and negotiate shared practices related to teamwork and the implementation of project-based learning (Brown, 2024; Morrissey, 2022; Wünsch-Nagy, 2025).

Data were collected using multiple qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, field observations, and document analysis, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of teamwork practices during P5 implementation. Interviews were conducted with the school principal, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and members of the P5 implementation team who were directly involved in planning and executing project activities. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure that informants possessed relevant experience and contextual knowledge aligned with the research objectives. Interviews allowed participants to articulate perceptions, roles, and challenges related to collaborative practices, while observations enabled the researcher to capture interaction patterns and practical implementation processes within natural settings. Documentation, such as project modules, meeting records, and visual activity reports, served as supporting evidence that strengthened contextual interpretation. The integration of these methods follows the principle of methodological triangulation, which enhances credibility by allowing data to be examined from multiple perspectives (Feng et al., 2021; Kašník, 2025; Ogunkan & Akinpelu, 2025). Each method contributed distinct yet complementary insights, resulting in a richer and more reliable dataset capable of addressing the research questions comprehensively.

Data analysis was conducted through an iterative qualitative process involving data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and triangulation to ensure analytical rigor (Bingham, 2023; GRODAL et al., 2021; Monaro et al., 2022). Following the analytical framework proposed by Miles and Huberman, the researcher first organized the raw data through systematic reduction, selecting relevant information on teamwork practices and P5 implementation stages. The data were then coded and categorized into thematic patterns representing forms of collaboration, organizational roles, and learning processes. Through abstraction and constant comparison, emerging themes were refined to identify relationships between collaborative structures and educational outcomes. Interpretation was carried out reflexively by connecting empirical findings with conceptual understandings of teamwork and collaborative learning. Triangulation across interview data, observational notes, and documentation was applied to confirm consistency and minimize researcher bias. This iterative analytical process allowed findings to emerge inductively while maintaining coherence with the study's theoretical framework. The use of thematic analysis strengthened validity by ensuring that interpretations were grounded in participants' experiences and supported by multiple sources of evidence, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness and credibility of the research conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The implementation of the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)* at the school level is supported through the *Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM)*, which assists educators in developing independent learning practices and instructional materials. Within this framework, educational institutions are required to implement the P5 project as one of the flagship programs of the *Merdeka Curriculum*, aimed at

strengthening student character in alignment with the values of the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila*.

The findings show that the implementation of the P5 project at SD Negeri 01 North Pontianak District was conducted through several structured stages, including: (1) the formation of the P5 project implementation team, (2) the collaborative design of the P5 project module, (3) the socialization of P5 project activities, (4) the implementation of project-based learning activities, and (5) the presentation of student work through a project exhibition known as *Gelar Karya*. These stages reflect a systematic process that emphasizes collaboration among teachers and school stakeholders in carrying out the program. The initial stage of teamwork formation conducted through a coordination meeting among educators and school leaders is presented in

Figure 1.



Figure 1. P5 Team Formation Meeting

(Source: P5 Team of SD Negeri 01, Pontianak Utara District)

The initial stage of forming the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)* implementation team began with a coordination meeting led directly by the school principal as the head of the educational institution. This meeting aimed to ensure direct supervision and coordination of all project activities carried out within the school. During this process, discussions were conducted to identify current issues affecting the school environment, which were later used as the basis for determining the main theme of the P5 project implementation. The establishment of the P5 project team was intended to ensure that all stages of the project were implemented collaboratively through teamwork

among educators rather than being assigned to a single teacher.

The implementation of the P5 project was positioned as a collective school initiative involving all teachers rather than solely the responsibility of homeroom teachers. As a result, each teacher held equal roles and responsibilities in supporting project activities. During the team formation meeting, a coordinator and facilitators were jointly appointed by the principal, teachers, and the school committee. The coordinator was responsible for organizing and collaboratively planning project activities, while facilitators acted as the main drivers of implementation by guiding and assisting students throughout the learning process.



Figure 2. P5 Module Design Activity

Determining school readiness for the implementation of the P5 project was conducted to assess institutional preparedness in carrying out project-based learning activities. Interview findings with members of the P5 implementation team indicated that students were already in a developmental stage of collaborative learning, as they had become accustomed to participating in project-based activities guided by teachers working collectively. This condition reflects the active involvement of educators in supporting the implementation process and strengthening teamwork practices within the school environment. The collaborative activities during the preparation and implementation stages of the P5 project are presented in

Figure 2.

The selection of themes for the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)* was carried out collaboratively by a team led by a project coordinator, who functioned as a liaison in strengthening students' character development. At the elementary school level, several themes were considered, including Sustainable Lifestyle, Unity in Diversity (*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*), Local Wisdom, Development of Body and Mind, Engineering and Technology, and Entrepreneurship. Through collective discussion, SD Negeri 01 North Pontianak District selected the Sustainable Lifestyle theme with the topic *School Herbal Garden* for the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

The selection of this theme aimed to encourage students to utilize plants available in their surroundings as an alternative means of establishing a living pharmacy (*apotek hidup*) both at school and within the community. The cultivation of traditional medicinal plants on limited land became one of the school's flagship initiatives in supporting its efforts to achieve *Adiwiyata* status as an environmentally friendly school. This project emerged in response to the underutilization of vacant land within the school environment and was designed to create a greener and more comfortable learning atmosphere while fostering students' environmental awareness and responsibility toward nature. The availability of fertile soil, a supportive climate, adequate water resources, and access to a nearby organic plant cultivation center further supported the successful implementation of this activity.

For the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, the school selected the Entrepreneurship theme with the topic *School Mini Business (UMS)*. This theme was intended to promote character development and behavioral change by introducing students to basic entrepreneurial concepts and practices. Students were guided to develop essential skills such as managerial abilities, goal-setting and planning, communication and collaboration skills, decision-making, problem analysis, and effective time management. Teachers explained that introducing entrepreneurship at an early age

helped students build confidence, independence, and resilience, particularly in response to challenges experienced during the pandemic period.



Figure 3. P5 Project Socialization

(Source: P5 Team of SD Negeri 01, Pontianak Utara District)

Overall, the selection of project themes was adjusted to the targeted character dimensions and contextual issues within the school environment while accommodating students' needs and learning programs. The Sustainable Lifestyle theme emphasized the development of environmentally responsible habits integrated into daily school activities, whereas the Entrepreneurship theme encouraged the development of an entrepreneurial mindset from an early age. The collaborative process of determining project themes and preparing subsequent socialization activities is presented in

Figure 3.

The socialization of the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)* served as an initial stage aimed at introducing the concept and implementation mechanisms of the program to all school stakeholders, particularly teachers, students, and parents. The primary objective of this activity was to build a shared understanding of the importance of integrating the values of the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* into daily practices and learning activities. The socialization process was conducted through various approaches, including presentations by the implementation team, educational video screenings, interactive discussions, and the distribution of P5 implementation guide modules. Teachers received guidance on project planning, character development, and process-based assessment methods, while students were introduced to the themes they would explore, such as Sustainable Lifestyle and Entrepreneurship. Parents were also involved through school committee meetings to strengthen their role in supporting P5 activities at home.

Interview findings indicated positive responses from stakeholders toward the implementation of the P5 program as an integral component of the *Merdeka Curriculum*. School leaders, teachers, and student representatives reported that socialization

activities were carried out through teacher coordination meetings, internal training sessions, and character-building activities integrated into thematic learning. Teachers viewed P5 as an effective platform for fostering character values such as collaboration, independence, and creativity. However, several challenges were identified, particularly limited time allocation for integrating P5 into existing learning schedules and the need for further assistance in developing project modules.



Figure 4. Implementation of P5

(Source: P5 Team of SD Negeri 01, Pontianak Utara District)

Students also expressed enthusiasm for the program, noting that project activities allowed them to participate in more contextual and active learning experiences. Collaborative tasks, including environmental projects and cross-class cooperation, were perceived as enjoyable and meaningful learning opportunities. Overall, the findings indicate that although the implementation of P5 socialization still faced several constraints, the school demonstrated a strong commitment to continuously improving its implementation practices in alignment with the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum. The implementation of collaborative learning activities following the socialization stage is presented in Figure 4.

The implementation of the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)* was carried out according to a schedule collaboratively designed by the implementation team and approved by the school principal. Through this program, students were given opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in meaningful, context-rich situations, enabling learning through direct, hands-on experiences. Interview findings with teachers involved in the program indicated that the P5 project had become an essential component of implementing the *Merdeka Curriculum* at SD Negeri 01, North Pontianak District. The program also served as one of the school's flagship initiatives in support of its efforts to achieve *Adiwiyata* status as an environmentally oriented school. In practice, the school integrated environmental awareness into learning activities, school management, and community participation, demonstrating that character education was implemented alongside academic development.

The P5 project was implemented using a project-based learning approach designed to strengthen *Pancasila* values and develop students' character, including collaboration, independence, creativity, and critical thinking skills. The activities followed themes developed in the P5 module: Sustainable Lifestyle, with the subtopic *School Herbal Garden*, and Entrepreneurship, with the topic *School Mini Business (UMS)*. These were selected based on contextual issues within the school environment and students' learning needs. The implementation process began with theme introduction, group formation, student project planning, activity execution, and concluded with presentations and reflective discussions. Teachers acted as facilitators who guided and

supported students while maintaining students as active subjects of learning. Teachers reported that the main challenges during implementation included time management and encouraging equal participation among all students. Despite these challenges, students responded positively, showing increased motivation, enthusiasm for collaborative work, and greater appreciation for contextual learning experiences. These findings indicate that the P5 project contributed significantly to students' character development and engagement in learning activities.

Interview data further revealed that the project was conducted over six sessions within one semester. The stages included introducing project goals, learning about medicinal plants used in the school herbal garden, identifying planting locations and materials, conducting planting activities, maintaining plants through regular monitoring, and evaluating student learning outcomes. Students cultivated various medicinal plants, including lemongrass, aromatic ginger, turmeric, butterfly pea flowers, basil leaves, shallots, and garlic, which were later used as cooking ingredients and simple herbal remedies. Assessment within the P5 project was conducted through formative and summative evaluations. Formative assessment was implemented continuously throughout the activity process, while summative assessment was conducted at the end of the project to evaluate overall student development. The assessment focused on monitoring character growth according to targeted dimensions using predetermined indicators, categorized into four levels: not yet developed, beginning to develop, developing as expected, and highly developed. The overall implementation process and student participation in project activities are presented in Figure 5.

The P5 Showcase (*Gelar Karya P5*) marked the final stage of the implementation of the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)*. It served as a key component of the *Merdeka Curriculum*. Students organized this event as a presentation of projects developed throughout the project-based learning process. During the showcase, students displayed products created under two main themes: Sustainable Lifestyle, with the topic *Healthy Herbal Garden*, and Entrepreneurship, with the topic *Mini School Business*. The activity was conducted as a market day, during which project outcomes were managed and presented as products exhibited at the P5 showcase.



Figure 5. Showcase of the P5 Project

(Source: P5 Team of SD Negeri 01, Pontianak Utara District)

Students presented a variety of creative outputs, including documentary videos, processed products derived from harvested plants, and artistic performances. These works reflected the core values of the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila*, including faith and

devotion to God Almighty, global diversity, teamwork, independence, critical thinking, and creativity. The event involved the entire school community, parents, and local community partners. Beyond showcasing student achievements, the activity served as a collaborative learning space that fostered creativity, teamwork, and social awareness. Interview findings with the P5 project coordinator indicated that the showcase played an important role in strengthening students' understanding of environmental responsibility and entrepreneurial skills. The implementation of themes such as Sustainable Lifestyle and Entrepreneurship encouraged students to use limited land for a living pharmacy (*apotek hidup*), to develop environmentally friendly products, and to engage in simple entrepreneurial practices. Students were guided to process harvested plants into food or beverage products while learning about responsibility, cooperation, and problem-solving within real-life contexts.

Discussion

This study examined how teamwork was strengthened through the implementation of the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)* and how collaborative practices supported the development of an excellent school environment. The findings indicate that the effectiveness of P5 implementation depended largely on structured collaboration among school leaders, teachers, students, and parents rather than on curriculum design alone. Teamwork developed progressively through several interconnected stages, beginning with the formation of an implementation team, followed by collaborative module planning, stakeholder socialization, project execution, and concluding with the student showcase (*Gelar Karya*). These stages encouraged a transition from individually oriented teaching practices toward shared professional responsibility. Teachers worked collectively in planning and facilitating learning activities, which strengthened coordination and reduced fragmented instructional practices. Students demonstrated increased engagement during project activities and showed improvement in responsibility, cooperation, creativity, and problem-solving skills. At the same time, several constraints emerged, particularly limited instructional time and the persistence of individual work habits among some educators. These findings suggest that curriculum reform becomes meaningful when supported by collaborative organizational practices that enable teachers to translate policy expectations into concrete classroom experiences.

The results resonate with earlier studies emphasizing the role of professional collaboration in improving instructional quality and student engagement (Holzberger & Schiepe-Tiska, 2021; Huang et al., 2024; Konstantinidou & Kyriakides, 2022). Research on professional learning communities has shown that sustained collaboration allows teachers to interpret educational reforms collectively and adapt instructional strategies more effectively (Al-Sarraf & yousef, 2025; Esmat Abdou Solaiman Awad et al., 2024; Liu, 2025). The present study supports this perspective by demonstrating that shared planning and joint facilitation enhanced consistency in project-based learning practices. In addition, the findings align with social constructivist views of learning, particularly Vygotsky's argument that knowledge develops through interaction and participation in meaningful activities (Farstad & Aarsand, 2021; Fragkiadaki et al., 2021; Kellogg, 2021). Students in this study learned through authentic tasks connected to environmental and entrepreneurial contexts, which strengthened both cognitive and character development. However, this study also extends previous research by highlighting the

organizational dimension of project-based learning (Pak et al., 2025). While many studies focus primarily on classroom pedagogy, the findings here indicate that leadership coordination and institutional collaboration significantly influence implementation outcomes. In this sense, teamwork functioned not only as a teaching strategy but also as an organizational response to curriculum change, addressing a gap in literature that often separates instructional innovation from school management processes.

This study contributes to educational management scholarship by demonstrating how collaborative work structures support the operationalization of character-based curricula within school organizations. The study shows that teamwork can serve as a managerial mechanism that connects leadership practices, teacher collaboration, and student learning outcomes. From a theoretical standpoint, the findings provide empirical support for a sensemaking perspective, illustrating how educators interpret curriculum reform through daily collaborative practices rather than through policy directives alone. Teachers collectively negotiated meanings, responsibilities, and instructional approaches, which allowed curriculum change to become workable within local conditions. Practically, the study offers evidence that schools seeking to strengthen character education should invest in collaborative planning systems rather than relying solely on individual teacher competence. By documenting how teamwork shaped both instructional practices and school culture, this research adds a contextual understanding of how organizational collaboration contributes to sustainable educational improvement. Taken together, the findings underline the importance of teamwork as a foundation for effective curriculum implementation and school transformation. Collaboration enabled educators to integrate character education with experiential learning while maintaining alignment with institutional goals. The study shows that meaningful educational change occurs when collaborative culture supports both pedagogical innovation and organizational coordination. Improvements observed in student participation and character development suggest that project-based learning becomes more impactful when supported by shared professional practices. Although the study was conducted within a single school setting, the patterns identified offer insight into how collaboration can strengthen institutional adaptability during periods of educational reform. Future research may expand this work by comparing multiple schools or examining how collaborative leadership influences long-term student outcomes. Quantitative approaches could also complement qualitative findings by measuring the relationship between teamwork practices and learning achievement. Overall, the study highlights that curriculum innovation is most sustainable when schools cultivate cooperation as an organizational norm rather than treating collaboration as an additional instructional requirement.

CONCLUSION

The study set out to understand how the strengthening of teamwork supports the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) and contributes to the development of an excellent school environment. The findings demonstrate that the success of P5 implementation was closely connected to collaborative practices established among school leaders, teachers, students, and parents. Through coordinated stages that included team formation, joint module design, program socialization, project-based learning activities, and the final showcase, the school gradually shifted from individual working patterns toward shared professional

responsibility. This collaborative approach enabled teachers to translate curriculum objectives into contextual learning experiences while encouraging active student participation. As a result, students showed greater engagement and demonstrated growth in responsibility, cooperation, creativity, and critical thinking, indicating that character development became more meaningful when supported by structured teamwork.

The broader significance of these findings lies in the recognition that educational reform cannot rely solely on curriculum policy but requires organizational cultures that sustain collaboration. Strengthening teamwork offers a practical pathway for schools seeking to integrate character education with experiential learning while maintaining institutional adaptability. In practice, collaborative planning and shared facilitation can help schools respond more effectively to changing educational demands and promote learning environments that connect academic development with social values. Future studies may explore similar implementation models across diverse school contexts or examine long-term impacts on student outcomes and school performance. By highlighting collaboration as an organizational foundation rather than an additional instructional strategy, this study points toward the importance of cultivating collective professional practices as part of sustainable educational improvement.

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