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Differentiated Learning Via Gallery Walk: Improving Pancasila Student Profiles and Learning Outcomes in Indonesian Elementary Education

Harmah[1], Supriadi[2], Abdul Wahid[3]
[1, 2, 3] Program Studi Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar, Universitas Islam Makassar, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Accommodating learner diversity under Indonesia's Independent Curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) remains a persistent challenge, particularly in balancing cognitive competencies with the character-building dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile (Profil Pelajar Pancasila, PPP). Conventional, lecture-centered instruction frequently fails to engage diverse learning styles or foster collaborative character formation. This Classroom Action Research (CAR) study investigated how integrating differentiated instruction with the Gallery Walk model enhances instructional quality, cognitive learning outcomes, and core PPP dimensions (cooperation, critical reasoning, and creativity). Following the Kemmis and McTaggart spiral model, the study was conducted over two reflective cycles with 23 fourth-grade students at Elementary School Inpres Lantebung, Makassar, Indonesia. Data were gathered using validated observation rubrics, PPP assessment instruments, and summative tests, and then analyzed through mixed descriptive methods. The results demonstrated substantial progress: the mean class score rose from a pre-cycle baseline of 64.35 to 73.91 in Cycle I, and 85.22 in Cycle II, yielding a 32.4% total gain. Classical mastery increased sharply from 30.43% to 69.60%, reaching 100% by Cycle II. Concurrently, PPP indicators advanced from "Low" to "Developing as Expected" (*Berkembang Sesuai Harapan*), with zero student regression. Synthesizing differentiated learning with the Gallery Walk model establishes an inclusive, kinesthetically engaging, and participatory learning ecosystem. This synergy offers a scalable framework for successfully operationalizing national curriculum mandates.

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Corresponding Author:

Harmah,
Program Studi Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar, Universitas Islam Makassar, Indonesia
Email: harmaaryanti54@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The global imperative toward personalised learning has accelerated as research consistently demonstrates that homogeneous, lecture-centred instruction fails to capture the full spectrum of student potential (Whalley et al., 2021). In Indonesia, the *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Independent Curriculum) represents the national response to this imperative,

granting educators flexibility to design contextualised learning experiences that honour students' diverse readiness, interests, and learning profiles (Zainuddin et al., 2025). Despite this progressive policy shift, classroom practice in many Indonesian elementary schools—including those in urban Makassar—continues to default to one-directional pedagogies that fail to accommodate learner heterogeneity (Tomlinson, 2017). The result is a persistent gap between policy aspiration and instructional reality, manifesting in suboptimal cognitive achievement and stunted character development.

Differentiated instruction has emerged as a theoretically grounded and empirically supported response to learner diversity. Grounded in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), it posits that learning is most effective when challenges are calibrated to a student's current developmental stage while scaffolding advancement toward higher competence (Ness, 2023; Vu Huy Tran, 2022). Beyond cognitive adjustment, differentiated instruction encompasses the modification of *content* (what students learn), *process* (how they make meaning), and *product* (how they demonstrate understanding) based on individual readiness, interest, and learning profile (Gheyssens et al., 2022; Tomlinson & Jarvis, 2023). However, differentiation alone is insufficient if the learning environment does not provide physical and social structures that translate instructional flexibility into meaningful engagement.

Within the Indonesian national education framework, learning quality is no longer assessed solely by cognitive scores but equally by the internalisation of the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (PPP), a six-dimensional character framework encompassing faith and piety, global diversity, mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), independence, critical reasoning, and creativity (Hakim et al., 2024; Parwati & Suastra, 2024). Integrating these values into everyday learning without resorting to didactic moralising presents a significant pedagogical challenge, particularly at the elementary level where abstract character concepts must be anchored in concrete, experiential activity (Astawaa et al., 2024; Indriani et al., 2024).

The Gallery Walk model offers a compelling structural solution. Originating in collaborative and inquiry-based learning frameworks, the Gallery Walk invites students to display their work as exhibition artifacts, tour peers' contributions, and engage in structured written or verbal feedback (Annac et al., 2026; Che-Aron & Matcha, 2023). This process simultaneously activates physical movement, social negotiation of meaning, and critical evaluation—dimensions directly aligned with the PPP's cooperation and critical reasoning mandates (Fajriawati & Harisman, 2020; Suparno et al., 2023). Prior studies on Gallery Walk have demonstrated its capacity to enhance motivation, engagement, and collaborative competencies in various educational contexts (Insani, 2020; Ridwan, 2019; Rudianto, 2023). However, these studies have largely examined the model as a standalone instructional strategy, leaving its interaction with differentiated instruction underexplored.

This study addresses a specific and underinvestigated gap in the literature: the *integrated* implementation of product and process differentiation *within* the Gallery Walk's syntactical structure as a mechanism for simultaneously enhancing cognitive achievement and PPP dimensions in Indonesian elementary education. While Saputra et

al. (2025), Setiawan et al. (2023), and Dewi et al. (2025) have examined differentiation strategies in isolation, and Suparno et al. (2023) have linked Gallery Walk to 21st-century competencies, no study has explicitly traced how product differentiation embedded within gallery sessions affects both learning outcomes and character profile dimensions across a full Classroom Action Research (CAR) cycle in a demographically heterogeneous class.

The contextual imperative for this research was identified through pre-study observations at Elementary School Inpres Lantebung, Makassar City. The fourth-grade class exhibited a pronounced participation gap, with 18 predominantly kinesthetic male students showing high disengagement rates under conventional lecture-format instruction, contributing to a mean pre-cycle score of 64.35 with only 30.43% classical mastery. Furthermore, PPP dimensions such as cooperation and critical reasoning were minimally observable in daily learning activities. The demographic composition of the class—where kinesthetic learners form the majority—made the case for a pedagogical model that channels physical energy into structured educational activity particularly urgent.

This study therefore pursues three interrelated objectives: (1) to describe the systematic implementation of a differentiated learning approach embedded within the Gallery Walk model; (2) to measure the impact of this integration on the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile dimensions, particularly mutual cooperation, critical reasoning, and creativity; and (3) to evaluate its effect on the cognitive learning outcomes of fourth-grade students. By providing granular empirical evidence across two reflective CAR cycles, this study contributes an actionable and theoretically coherent instructional prototype for teachers navigating the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in diverse elementary classrooms.

2. METHOD

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design following the Kemmis and McTaggart spiral model, which organises cyclical inquiry through four interrelated phases: planning, action, observation, and reflection (Siregar et al., 2025). CAR was selected for its inherently participatory and reflexive character, enabling the research team to directly intervene, observe consequences in real time, and iteratively refine instructional strategies within a naturalistic classroom ecology (Abbasi et al., 2023). This design is consistent with established methodological standards for practitioner-based educational improvement research, where the goal is not generalisation but depth of contextualised understanding and actionable change.

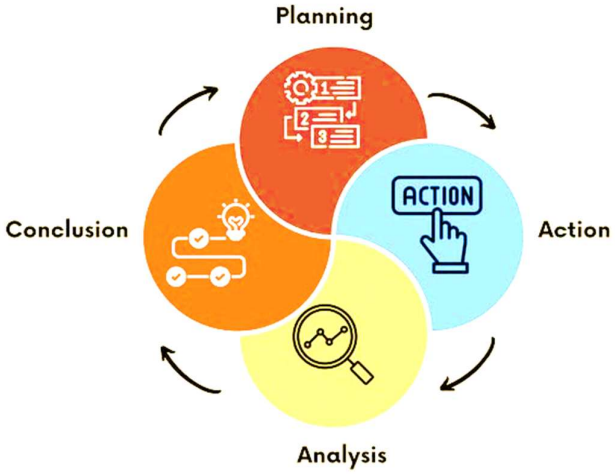

Figure 1. Classroom Action Research Design

The study was conducted in the fourth grade of Elementary School Inpres Lantebung, Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, over one academic semester. Participants comprised 23 students (18 male, 5 female) ranging in age from 9 to 10 years. The site was purposively selected due to the class's pronounced learner heterogeneity, with documented discrepancies in learning styles (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic), academic readiness levels, and prior attainment. The class also reflected a realistic Indonesian urban elementary context, making findings transferable to analogous settings under the Kurikulum Merdeka. The class teacher served as the primary action implementer, with the lead researcher and one trained collaborator functioning as observers. Participation was voluntary, and parental informed consent was obtained.

The intervention integrated differentiated instruction across three dimensions, content, process, and product—within the operational syntax of the Gallery Walk model. During the planning phase, the research team administered a learning profile diagnostic assessing preferred learning modalities (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) and readiness levels, which informed the formation of five small, intentionally heterogeneous learning groups. Teaching Modules (*Modul Ajar, MA*) aligned with the Independent Curriculum were developed for each cycle, incorporating tiered content materials, differentiated task scaffolds, and product choice menus.

The Gallery Walk was operationalised as follows: (a) students collaboratively produced differentiated artifacts (posters, concept maps, oral reports, or mini wall magazines) reflecting their chosen modality; (b) groups rotated through peers' gallery stations in structured time intervals; (c) students recorded written observations and feedback using guided response frames targeting PPP dimensions (mutual cooperation, critical reasoning, creativity); and (d) a facilitated whole-class debrief synthesised gallery insights. The teacher's role throughout was as a facilitator and formative monitor, not as a didactic information transmitter. Cycle I identified time management inefficiencies and uneven product quality; these informed specific Cycle II refinements including explicit product scaffolding, reinforced group work protocols, and extended gallery rotation time.

To ensure a robust and comprehensive data collection process, this study employed three validated instruments aligned with the research objectives. The first instrument, a structured activity observation rubric, was utilized to evaluate teacher instructional fidelity to the differentiated Gallery Walk protocol while simultaneously capturing student engagement behaviors. Two trained observers independently monitored each lesson, recording data across five distinct categories: physical mobility, peer interaction, task engagement, feedback quality, and the emergence of the Pancasila Student Profile (PPP) indicators. To establish the psychometric integrity of the observational data and minimize observer bias, inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cohen's kappa. The analysis yielded a coefficient of $\check{k} = 0.82$, demonstrating strong agreement between the raters and confirming the consistency of the observational protocol.

In addition to behavioral observations, the development of students' character values was systematically monitored using the Pancasila Student Profile Assessment Instrument. This instrument featured a four-point rubric consisting of progressive developmental tiers: Undeveloped, Beginning to Develop, Developing, and Developing as Expected (Bergembang Sesuai Harapan [BSH]). The assessment targeted three core PPP dimensions observable during the gallery sessions, namely cooperation, critical reasoning, and creativity. To guarantee construct validity and alignment with national educational standards, the behavioral descriptors within the rubric were meticulously calibrated against the official PPP assessment framework formulated by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture.

Finally, cognitive achievements were measured through Summative Learning Outcome Tests administered at the conclusion of each instructional cycle. These assessments were designed to evaluate students' mastery of the thematic content covered within the respective cycles and were strictly calibrated to the Minimum Competency Criterion (KKTP]). To establish the instrument's validity, a content validity review was independently conducted by two subject-matter experts. Furthermore, the internal consistency of the tests was statistically verified using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded reliability coefficients of $\alpha = 0.79$ for Cycle I and $\alpha = 0.81$ for Cycle II. These values exceed acceptable psychometric thresholds, indicating that the cognitive tests provided highly reliable measures of student learning outcomes across the intervention period.

A descriptive-comparative approach was adopted. Quantitative data (test scores) were analysed to compute (a) pre-cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II mean class scores; (b) percentage of students meeting or exceeding the KKTP (classical mastery rate); and (c) inter-cycle gain scores. Qualitative data from observation rubrics and field notes were analysed thematically to document the developmental trajectory of PPP dimensions across cycles. Research success was determined by achievement of pre-established criteria: a classical mastery rate of ≥75% and a minimum class mean of 75, along with observable advancement in PPP dimensions to the BSH category. Data triangulation across quantitative test results, observation rubrics, and qualitative field notes ensured credibility of findings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Pre-Cycle Baseline Conditions

Prior to the intervention, the fourth grade exhibited a conventional instructional pattern dominated by teacher-led lecture delivery with minimal student interaction. Pre-study observations documented passive learner postures among most students, particularly the 18 male students with predominantly kinesthetic profiles. The diagnostic assessment revealed that the class mean score stood at 64.35, substantially below the KKTP threshold (Table 1). Only 7 students (30.43%) achieved the minimum mastery criterion, while 16 (69.57%) fell below it. PPP dimensions of cooperation and critical reasoning were minimally observable in daily classroom interactions, rated in the "Undeveloped" or "Beginning to Develop" band across the class.

Table 1. Pre-Cycle Baseline Conditions in the Fourth-Grade Classroom

Observation Indicator	Pre-Cycle Condition
Instructional Model	Conventional; teacher-led lecture with minimal student interaction
Student Engagement	Low; especially among 18 kinesthetic male students who remained passive without physical activity
Class Mean Score	64.35 (below competency threshold)
Students ≥ KKTP (Mastery)	7 students (30.43%)
Students < KKTP (Non-mastery)	16 students (69.57%)
Pancasila Student Profile (PPP)	Cooperation and critical reasoning dimensions minimally observable; rated "Undeveloped"

Cycle I Outcomes

Cycle I introduced the differentiated Gallery Walk intervention with content and process differentiation as primary foci. Students were grouped heterogeneously and assigned tiered tasks calibrated to their readiness profiles, culminating in a gallery exhibition of their collaborative products. End-of-cycle evaluation results (Table 2) indicated measurable improvement from baseline, though a substantial proportion of students had not yet reached optimal mastery. The class mean score rose to 73.91 (a gain of 9.56 points from baseline), and the classical mastery rate advanced to 69.60%.

Table 2. Distribution of Learning Outcome Scores — Cycle I

Score Range (%)	Category	n (Students)	Percentage (%)
81–100	Very Good	4	17.40
61– 80	Good	16	69.60
41–60	Satisfactory	3	13.00
Total		**23**	**100.00**

Cycle I observations documented the emergence of collaborative behaviour and increased physical engagement during gallery rotations. PPP indicators transitioned from "Undeveloped" to "Beginning to Develop," with cooperation and peer feedback behaviours becoming more consistent. Cycle I reflection identified three primary improvement areas: (a) insufficient time allocation for gallery rotations; (b) unclear

product differentiation scaffolding leading to uniform artifact types; and (c) uneven peer feedback depth. These issues informed targeted Cycle II refinements.

Cycle II Outcomes

Cycle II incorporated refined product differentiation (students explicitly offered a choice menu of posters, oral reports, concept maps, or mini wall magazines), reinforced group collaboration protocols, and extended gallery rotation intervals. These adjustments yielded substantial and statistically meaningful gains in all outcome dimensions (Table 3).

Table 3. Learning Outcome Change Distribution — Cycle II

Change Category	n (Students)	Percentage (%)
Improved	22	95.65
Stable	1	4.35
Declined	0	0.00
Total	**23**	**100.00**

The class score reached 85.22 in Cycle II, an inter-cycle gain of 11.31 points from Cycle I and a cumulative gain of 20.87 points (+32.4%) from baseline. Critically, all 23 students (100%) achieved the KKTP, representing a 69.57-percentage-point increase in classical mastery from baseline. The lowest individual score increased from 60 (pre-cycle) to 75 (Cycle II), confirming that differentiated scaffolding provided protective learning benefits for previously underperforming students. The highest individual score also increased from 85 to 95, suggesting that the model did not limit high achievers.

Cross-Cycle Comparison and PPP Development

Table 4 presents a comprehensive cross-cycle comparison of all primary outcome indicators, providing a panoramic view of the intervention's cumulative effects.

Table 4. Cross-Cycle Comparison of Learning Outcomes and Pancasila Student Profile Development

Indicator	Pre-Cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
Class Mean Score	64.35	73.91	85.22
Classical Mastery Rate (%)	30.43%	69.60%	100%
Student Activity Level	Passive	Moderately Active	Highly Active
Pancasila Student Profile (PPP)	Undeveloped	Beginning to Develop	Development as Expected (BSH)
Score Gain (from previous)	—	+9.56 pts	+11.31 pts

The data confirms a consistent and accelerating upward trajectory across all four indicators. Qualitative observation data further revealed that the frequency and depth of cooperation behaviours (e.g., shared task negotiation, peer encouragement, inclusive problem-solving) and critical reasoning behaviours (e.g., analytical feedback, inter-group questioning, evidence-based argumentation) increased substantively from Cycle I to Cycle II. Disruptive classroom behaviour, previously common among kinesthetic male students, declined dramatically as physical energy was redirected into structured

gallery mobility. These patterns collectively demonstrate that the intervention achieved its success criteria across both quantitative and qualitative dimensions.

Discussion

Cognitive Gains and the Efficacy of Differentiated Instruction

The progressive and uninterrupted improvement in mean class scores across three measurement points—from 64.35 to 73.91 to 85.22—provides robust empirical evidence that embedding differentiated instruction within the Gallery Walk framework meaningfully enhances cognitive learning outcomes in Indonesian elementary students. This trajectory corroborates the foundational theoretical work of Tomlinson and Jarvis (2023), who argue that responsive instruction aligned to students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles systematically mitigates performance disparities. The achievement of 100% classical mastery in Cycle II is particularly significant: it indicates not merely marginal improvement but a structural shift in classroom learning equity.

The increase in the lowest individual score from 60 to 75 warrants specific theoretical attention. This protective effect for lower-performing students is directly interpretable through Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (Lambright, 2024; Ness, 2023): tiered scaffolding in the content and process dimensions positioned the instructional challenge within each student's developmental reach, enabling advancement that homogeneous instruction had previously foreclosed. Simultaneously, the increase in the highest score from 85 to 95 confirms that differentiation did not impose a ceiling on higher-achieving students—a common concern in mixed-ability classroom contexts. These findings align with Vu Huy Tran's (2022) construct of the "zone of proximal privilege," suggesting that product choice autonomy also reduces the social and psychological barriers to authentic academic engagement for students at all performance levels.

Physical Engagement and the Gallery Walk as Active Learning Architecture

The transformation of student activity from "passive" in the pre-cycle to "highly active" in Cycle II reflects the Gallery Walk model's capacity to serve as a physical architecture for active learning—not merely a presentational strategy. This is particularly consequential for a class where 18 of 23 students exhibit kinesthetic learning preferences, as documented in the diagnostic phase. The structured mobility of gallery rotations provided these students with a legitimate, educationally channelled outlet for their kinesthetic orientation, eliminating the non-academic behavioural displacement that had previously disrupted classroom conduciveness under conventional instruction.

Active Learning theory posits that concurrent physical and cognitive engagement strengthens information retention and intrinsic motivation (Martinez & Gomez, 2025; Rodriguez et al., 2018). The present data support this claim in a culturally specific Indonesian elementary context. The freedom to choose presentation media product differentiation mechanism—created a psychological sense of ownership over learning artifacts that further deepened engagement (Ariana et al., 2026; Dewi et al., 2025).

Critically, this study extends these theoretical propositions by demonstrating that the active engagement benefits of Gallery Walk are not merely additive to differentiation but are synergistically amplified when the two are structurally integrated: differentiation determines the variety and appropriateness of artifacts, while the Gallery Walk creates the social stage upon which that variety becomes pedagogically generative.

Compared to Suparno et al. (2023), who linked Gallery Walk to 21st-century competencies in a secondary context, the present study provides more granular evidence of the model's effectiveness at the primary level—specifically in a classroom where demographic characteristics (predominantly kinesthetic, male-majority) create instructional demands. The dramatic reduction in disruptive behaviour observed across cycles suggests that the intervention addressed not only academic but also classroom management dimensions of instructional quality, consistent with Saputra et al.'s (2025) finding that adaptive learning environments reduce maladaptive behaviour in students who feel mismatched with prevailing instructional modalities.

Character Formation and the Pancasila Student Profile

The advancement of PPP dimensions from "Undeveloped" at baseline to "Developing as Expected (BSH)" at the conclusion of Cycle II represents perhaps the most theoretically significant finding of this study, as it demonstrates that structured social-interactive learning environments can naturalistically cultivate national character values without explicit moralising instruction—a persistent pedagogical dilemma in Indonesian character education (Astawaa et al., 2024; Indriani et al., 2024; Zainuddin et al., 2025).

The development of the mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) dimension is explicable through social constructivist theory: students who engaged in collaborative artifact production and structured peer feedback were not simply practising social skills in the abstract but were constructing meaning through interdependence, a process Chuang (2021) identifies as the most potent driver of adult and youth character learning alike. The critical reasoning dimension was similarly cultivated through the Gallery Walk's inherent requirement for students to evaluate, compare, and articulate judgements about peers' work—a process that operationalises higher-order thinking skills (Bloom's evaluation and synthesis) within a socially meaningful context. The creativity dimension benefited directly from product differentiation: by granting students agency over their chosen medium, the intervention removed the cognitive and affective constraints associated with rigid, single-format assessment, creating the conditions under which original expression could emerge organically (Huang & Lajoie, 2023; Le et al., 2018).

These findings extend the character education literature (Maxwell, 2016; Sanger, 2020; Zajda, 2021) by establishing that PPP dimensions are not merely outcomes of explicit character instruction but are by-products of well-designed, student-centred instructional environments. This has significant implications for the *Kurikulum Merdeka*'s implementation guidelines, which advocate for the integration of PPP values into subject learning rather than their segregation into discrete character classes. The

present study provides a replicable operational model for achieving precisely this integration through the Gallery Walk differentiation protocol.

Implications for Practice and Policy

For classroom practitioners, this study offers three operationally concrete recommendations. First, student learning profile diagnostics should precede any differentiation effort; the mapping of kinesthetic, visual, and auditory preferences in this study directly shaped group composition and artifact choice menus, making differentiation responsive rather than formulaic. Second, product differentiation should be structured through explicit choice menus with accompanying quality rubrics, not left to open-ended student initiative, as unguided product choice in Cycle I produced inconsistent artifact quality. Third, Gallery Walk rotations require deliberate time engineering: under-allocation of rotation time, identified in Cycle I, compressed the feedback depth that drives PPP development.

At the policy level, these findings support the *Kurikulum Merdeka*'s emphasis on teacher pedagogical autonomy and authentic assessment by demonstrating that when teachers are empowered to adapt content, process, and product, both academic outcomes and national character dimensions advance in tandem. School leadership plays a critical enabling role in providing the diverse resource base (poster materials, oral recording devices, bulletin board space) that makes product differentiation materially possible. Regional education offices and teacher training programmes should consider embedding the Gallery Walk differentiation protocol within pre-service and in-service professional development frameworks, particularly for schools with high kinesthetic learner populations.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Several limitations temper the generalisability of these findings. First, the single-site, single-class design limits external validity; replication across multiple schools, regions, and grade levels is necessary to establish the model's robustness. Second, the short intervention duration (two cycles within one semester) precludes conclusions about the longitudinal stability of both cognitive gains and PPP development. Third, while inter-rater reliability for observation data was strong ($\kappa = .82$), the CAR framework's inherent subjectivity in qualitative data interpretation warrants triangulation with student self-report instruments in future studies. Fourth, the absence of a control group limits causal inference; quasi-experimental or randomized control designs in future research would strengthen the evidence base.

Future research should explore: (a) the application of this integrated model across different thematic content areas and subject disciplines; (b) its effectiveness with classes exhibiting different gender and learning-profile distributions; (c) longitudinal tracking of PPP dimension stability beyond the intervention period; (d) the integration of digital Gallery Walk platforms to extend the model to hybrid and remote learning contexts; and (e) the role of teacher self-efficacy and professional development depth as moderating variables in differentiation implementation quality.

4. CONCLUSION

This study provides systematic empirical evidence that integrating differentiated instruction with the Gallery Walk model creates a powerful and inclusive learning ecosystem in Indonesian elementary education. Across two reflective CAR cycles, the intervention produced a cumulative mean score gain of 20.87 points (+32.4%), elevated classical mastery from 30.43% to 100%, and advanced all three target Pancasila Student Profile dimensions from "Undeveloped" to "Developing as Expected (BSH)." These outcomes were achieved without leaving any individual student behind, confirming the model's equity-preserving character.

The study's central theoretical contribution is the demonstration that the synergy between product differentiation and Gallery Walk mobility is qualitatively different from—and more generative than—either strategy implemented in isolation. Differentiation provides the instructional substrate of individualised challenge; Gallery Walk provides the social-physical architecture through which that challenge becomes collaborative, kinesthetically engaging, and character-forming. Together, they convert diverse learner energy into productive academic and civic learning, operationalising the Kurikulum Merdeka's vision of education that is simultaneously academically rigorous and characterologically formative.

Practitioners are encouraged to adopt this model as an adaptive primary strategy for transforming classroom dynamics in mixed-ability elementary settings. Researchers are urged to extend this evidence base through multi-site, longitudinal, and quasi-experimental designs. Policy stakeholders should embed the Gallery Walk differentiation protocol within *Kurikulum Merdeka* implementation support structures to ensure that the aspiration of inclusive, student-centred, character-rich education is realised in daily classroom practice across Indonesia.

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