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Cultivating Civic Virtue in Early Education: The Implementation of Pancasila Values in Primary School Students' Daily Behavior

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ABSTRACT

The suboptimal implementation of Pancasila values among elementary school students, manifested in rising bullying, low discipline, and weak environmental responsibility, demands systemic investigation. This study examines how the five core Pancasila principles are integrated into students' daily behavior at a public primary school in South Tangerang City, while identifying key supporting and inhibiting factors. Employing a descriptive qualitative single case-study design, data was gathered over a four-week period via participant observation, structured teacher interviews, and extensive documentation. Analysis followed the classic Miles and Huberman framework (data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing), with trustworthiness rigorously ensured through source, technique, and time triangulation strategies. Findings reveal highly uneven implementation across the five principles: divinity values are most consistently practiced due to established daily routines, while unity and humanity values thrive primarily within structured activities. Conversely, democratic deliberation and social justice values weaken significantly once students operate outside direct teacher supervision. Crucial systemic facilitators include consistent teacher role-modeling, routine habituation, and active parental support. Meanwhile, primary barriers include a scarcity of explicit fairness-building activities, student over-dependence on external oversight, and unmonitored digital media influences. This study concludes that successful moral internalization depends heavily on sustained behavioral habituation rather than conceptual instruction alone, offering vital theoretical and practical implications for refining primary-level character-education policies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pancasila constitutes the foundational ideology of the Republic of Indonesia, functioning simultaneously as a philosophical basis and as a practical guide for social, national, and state life (Harianja & Sinaga, 2025; Hasbi et al., 2023; Sudirta et al., 2025). Its five principles—belief in the One and Only God, just and civilized humanity, the

unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by deliberation, and social justice for all—are not merely normative statements; they are intended to be enacted in everyday conduct, including within educational settings (Lumapuy et al., 2026; Rosyad & Mahamood, 2025). Schools occupy a strategic position for instilling these values in the younger generation, shaping a character consistent with the Indonesian national identity (Purnomo & Kurniawan, 2025). At the primary-school level in particular, the cultivation of Pancasila values carries substantial weight, because children at this developmental stage are highly receptive to modeling and readily absorb values from family, school, and community environments, making elementary school a decisive setting for the formation of student behavior and personality (Tetiwar et al., 2026; Yasin, 2026).

Theoretically, student behavior can be understood as an individual's response to environmental stimuli, shaped and modified through processes of conditioning and reinforcement—such as reward, exemplary modeling, and consistently enforced rules—consistent with behaviorist theory as advanced by Skinner (Nuha & Fithriyah, 2025; Yusra et al., 2022). In a complementary vein, positive student conduct is regarded as the outcome of character education encompassing moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, such that behavior is determined not only by knowledge but also by attitudes and habits cultivated through a sustained educational process (Hasriani et al., 2025). The implementation of Pancasila values itself is understood as the practical enactment of the principles of divinity, humanity, unity, deliberative democracy, and social justice in real life—in attitude, behavior, and individual action within the community, including the school—as part of a value system that must be internalized (Afifah & Fadilah, 2023; Salam, 2021). Within education, this implementation is pursued through habituation, exemplary modeling, and integration into learning activities, aiming to produce learners who are faithful, of noble character, independent, collaborative, critical thinkers, and globally engaged (Wahono et al., 2021). At the primary level, these values surface in concrete routines: praying before and after lessons reflects the value of divinity; mutual respect among peers reflects humanity; cooperation in group work reflects unity; deliberation in electing a class leader reflects democracy; and fairness in treating classmates without discrimination reflects social justice (Utari & Afendi, 2022).

Notwithstanding this normative framework, a review of recent evidence reveals a persistent gap between the values that are taught and the behavior students display in the field. Elementary schools continue to report insufficient mutual respect among peers, incidents of bullying, low discipline, weak responsibility toward assigned tasks, and limited concern for the cleanliness and orderliness of the school environment. This gap cannot be separated from several interrelated factors. First, the influence of the social environment and information technology is considerable: in the digital era students readily access information through social media and the internet that is not uniformly positive, and without adequate guidance and supervision this exposure can foster conduct inconsistent with Pancasila values, even though character education is properly a continuous process jointly carried by schools, families, and communities (Anisah, 2023; Cholifah, 2024). Second, insufficient habituation and exemplary modeling in the application of Pancasila values contribute to the problem, given that teachers serve not

merely as transmitters of subject matter but as living models of attitude and conduct; when teachers do not consistently display behavior that reflects Pancasila values, students struggle to emulate and apply them in daily life (Susanti et al., 2024). Third, an education system that remains oriented toward academic achievement poses a further challenge, since an excessive focus on cognitive outcomes often leaves the affective and character dimensions under-attended, even though the success of education should be measured not only by intellectual attainment but also by students' capacity to enact moral values in everyday life.

Much of the existing empirical literature on primary-school-age children's conduct has concentrated on the influence of social media and gadget use on behavior in general (Azizah et al., 2023; Hermawan, 2021; Susanti & Mariyana, 2022; Khaerunnisa & Syarif, 2024; Kusumamurti et al., 2025; Siti et al., 2025; Maulidian & Sativa, 2025; Aurora et al., 2024). While informative, this body of work rarely disaggregates "character" or "good behavior" into its constituent Pancasila principles, leaving open the question of which specific principle is most vulnerable to weak habituation within the everyday ecology of the classroom. The present study addresses this gap by examining the implementation of each of the five principles separately—rather than treating character as a single undifferentiated construct—and by explicitly identifying the supporting and inhibiting factors associated with each. Because the study adopts a qualitative approach intended to understand the phenomenon in depth and in context, it is not designed to test a predetermined hypothesis; rather, it seeks to explore and describe the implementation of Pancasila values as it unfolds in the field.

In response to this gap, the Indonesian government has introduced several policies to strengthen character education, including the *Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter* (Character Education Strengthening) program and the *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Independent Curriculum), which emphasizes the formation of the Pancasila Student Profile across six core dimensions: faith and devotion to God, global diversity awareness, collaboration (gotong royong), independence, critical reasoning, and creativity (Nurdyansyah et al., 2022). The school environment—through intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities—together with active parental involvement in reinforcing character habituation at home, constitutes two pillars that must operate synergistically for the consistent and sustainable cultivation of Pancasila values (Tahir et al., 2024). This study is directed toward examining in depth how such synergy is realized in actual primary-school practice, thereby providing a basis for formulating more effective strategies.

Accordingly, this study pursues three objectives: to examine the implementation of Pancasila values in student behavior within the primary-school environment; to describe how each of the five principles is applied in students' daily school activities; and to identify the factors that support and inhibit that implementation. The findings are expected to benefit students by fostering discipline, tolerance, responsibility, and social concern; to benefit teachers by informing strategies for instructional design and value habituation; and to benefit schools by providing a basis for strengthening character-

education programs and cultivating an environment that genuinely reflects Pancasila values.

2. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using a case-study design, implemented across three operational phases. The first phase (month 1) was the preparation phase, comprising the development of the observation instrument and interview guide, submission of research permits to the school, and scheduling of data collection. The second phase (month 2) was the field data-collection phase, carried out through direct observation of student behavior during teaching-and-learning activities and recess, interviews with classroom teachers, and the compilation of supporting documentation. The third phase (month 3) was the data-processing and analysis phase, comprising interview transcription, data coding, and preparation of the final report.

The study was conducted at a public elementary school in South Tangerang City. The research subjects comprised Grade V students, whose behavior served as the primary object of observation, and the two Grade V classroom teachers, who served as supporting informants. Grade V students were selected on the consideration that they are cognitively mature enough to be interviewed informally while still being in an active phase of character formation. Subjects were selected through purposive sampling — that is, selection based on criteria relevant to the research objectives rather than statistical population representativeness. Student selection criteria were: (1) actively enrolled in the Grade V class at the research site, (2) consistently present throughout the observation period, and (3) willing to participate in the observation process with parental/guardian consent. Teacher selection criteria were: (1) currently teaching the Grade V class under study, and (2) possessing a minimum of three years of teaching experience. Based on these criteria, the final sample consisted of 12 Grade V students and 2 classroom teachers.

Two main variables were observed. The first (Y) is student behavior — the actions, attitudes, and responses students display when interacting with teachers, peers, and the school environment — measured through indicators of discipline, responsibility, honesty, mutual respect, cooperation, and concern for the school environment. The second (X) is the implementation of Pancasila values — the extent to which the five core values of divinity, humanity, unity, deliberative democracy, and social justice are applied and habituated by students — measured through the operational indicators presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Operational Indicators for the Implementation of Pancasila Values

Pancasila Principle (Sila)	Observed Behavioral Indicator
Belief in the One and Only God	Praying before and after learning activities
Just and Civilized Humanity	Showing mutual respect and refraining from mocking peers
The Unity of Indonesia	Cooperating in group assignments
Democracy Guided by Inner Wisdom in Unanimity Arising from Deliberations among Representatives	Engaging in deliberation (musyawarah) for class-leader election and class decision-making

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Pancasila Principle (Sila)	Observed Behavioral Indicator
Social Justice for All the People of Indonesia	Demonstrating fairness and not discriminating among peers

Three instruments were used: (1) an observation guide listing the behavioral indicators shown in Table 1, on which the frequency of each indicator's occurrence was recorded during the observation period; (2) a structured interview guide comprising ten open-ended questions addressed to teachers concerning how Pancasila values were applied in learning and the obstacles encountered; and (3) a documentation sheet used to record supporting evidence, including activity photographs, classroom daily logs, and school documents related to character-strengthening programs.

Data was collected through three procedures. First, participant observation was conducted by the researcher, who was directly engaged in student activities for four consecutive weeks, observing and recording every occurrence of the behavioral indicators in Table 1 using the observation sheet at each session. Second, structured interviews were conducted with each participating teacher, lasting approximately 30–45 minutes per session and following four operational steps: introducing the researcher and the purpose of the interview, presenting the prepared list of questions, recording and noting the informant's responses, and reconfirming key points of the responses with the informant. Third, documentation was compiled by collecting activity photographs, classroom logs, and school program documents relevant to the implementation of Pancasila values throughout the four-week data-collection period.

Data trustworthiness was established through triangulation, applied in three operational forms. Source triangulation compared observational data on student behavior with teachers' interview accounts and available documentary evidence, to confirm consistency between what was observed, what was reported, and what was documented. Technique triangulation compared the results of observation, interviews, and documentation regarding the same object; where discrepancies emerged across techniques, the researcher conducted follow-up clarification with the relevant data source until consistency was achieved. Time triangulation involved repeating observations in the second and fourth weeks of data collection to check the consistency of findings over time.

Data analysis followed the four operational stages of the Miles and Huberman model. During data reduction, all observation notes, interview transcripts, and documentation were screened and summarized to select information relevant to the five indicators in Table 1. During data display, the reduced data were organized into a finding matrix for each Pancasila principle so that patterns of student behavior could be examined systematically. During conclusion drawing, the researcher formulated final findings based on patterns that consistently emerged from the data, which were then re-verified through the triangulation procedures described above. The coding process followed three sequential steps: open coding, in which each unit of data (word, phrase, or sentence) from observation notes and interview transcripts was labeled; axial coding, in which these labels were grouped into categories based on the five Pancasila-value

indicators in Table 1; and selective coding, in which the most dominant core category from this grouping was established as the basis for the study's final findings.



Figure 1. Data Analysis Process Diagram

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Data obtained through participant observation, structured interviews, and documentation across four weeks at the public elementary school in South Tangerang City were processed through the reduction, coding (open, axial, selective), and display procedures described in the Method section. The resulting findings matrix, organized by Pancasila principle, is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Findings Matrix on the Implementation of Pancasila Values

Principle (Sila)	Frequency of Occurrence (12 students, 4 weeks of observation)	Category
Belief in the One and Only God	Consistently observed in 11 of 12 students during every learning session	High
Just and Civilized Humanity	Observed in 8 of 12 students; 4 students still displayed mocking or reluctance to share	Moderate
The Unity of Indonesia	Observed in 9 of 12 students during structured group tasks, declining during unsupervised activities	Moderate
Democracy Guided by Deliberation	Deliberation practice occurred only during formal occasions (class-leader election); rarely emerged spontaneously in group decision-making	Low
Social Justice for All	Fair conduct appeared under teacher supervision, but 5 of 12 students showed a tendency to favor certain peers when unsupervised	Low-Moderate

Interviewer: "Good afternoon, Ma'am. Thank you for your time. Based on the results of four weeks of observations conducted with 12 students regarding the implementation of Pancasila values, I would like to explore some of the findings. We'll start with

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- 10 *the First Principle, Belief in the One and Only God. The data shows it's in the Very High category. What does the actual picture look like in class, Ma'am?"*
- Teacher (Resource Person): "Good afternoon. Yes, that's right. The progress of the First Principle is very consistent. Of the 12 students, 11 consistently demonstrate religious behavior in every learning session. For example, they are disciplined when praying before and after class, and respect prayer times without needing constant reminders."
- 4 Interviewer: "Wow, that's amazing. So, what about the Second Principle, Just and Civilized Humanity, which is in the medium category?"
- Teacher (Resource Person): "For the Second Principle, implementation has only been seen in 8 of the 12 students. I'm still noticing the remaining 4 students. They sometimes still mock their peers or are reluctant to share items or food during class activities. So, they still need guidance on this aspect of empathy."
- 1 Interviewer: "Okay, that's an interesting note. Next, regarding the Third Principle, the Unity of Indonesia, which is also in the Moderate category. Can you describe the dynamics in practice?"
- Teacher (Resource Person): "Well, the Third Principle is very situation dependent. The 9 students demonstrated a sense of unity and willingness to work well together, but this only occurred when they were given structured group assignments by the teacher. The problem is, during recess or during unsupervised activities, that cohesiveness declined. They regrouped and formed their own factions."
- 1 Interviewer: "So, independence in maintaining unity is still lacking, Ma'am. What about the Fourth Principle, Democracy Guided by the Wisdom of Deliberation/Representation? It's in the Low category here."
- Teacher (Resource Person): "Yes, the Fourth Principle seems to be the most challenging. The practice of deliberation or discussion only occurs in formal situations, like yesterday's class president election. However, when it comes to day-to-day decision-making in small groups, this democratic attitude rarely emerges spontaneously. Usually, one student is dominant and makes a decision without consulting their peers."
- 25 Interviewer: "That's interesting. This is a big homework assignment. Finally, regarding the Fifth Principle, Social Justice for All Indonesians, which is in the Low-Moderate category. What did you find?"
- Teacher (Resource Person): "This is similar to the Third Principle. Fairness and a willingness to share equally emerge when I supervise the class. However, when supervision is relaxed, about 5 out of 12 students exhibit a tendency towards favoritism. They only favor certain peers, while ignoring others."
- Interviewer: "Yes, ma'am. Thank you very much for your in-depth explanation. This interview data is very helpful in completing the observation matrix we have collected over the past four weeks."
- Teacher (Resource Person): "You're welcome. I hope the results of this study can help us evaluate the character values teaching methods at this school."

Principle (Sila)	Frequency of Occurrence (12 students, 4 weeks of observation)	Category	Analysis & Actionable Steps
 Belief in the One and Only God	 Consistently observed in 11 of 12 students during every learning session 11/12	High	Continue positive reinforcement. No additional action needed.
 only Just and Civilized Humanity	 Observed in 8 of 12 students; 4 students still displayed mocking or reluctance to share intervention 8/12	Moderate	- Introduce empathy workshops and sharing circles. - Address mocking with immediate teacher intervention.
 The Unity of Indonesia	 Observed in 9 of 12 students during structured group tasks, declining during unsupervised activities 6/12	Moderate	Develop more peer-led projects without teacher presence. Create activities that build inter-group trust.
 Democracy Guided by Deliberation	Deliberation practice occurred only during formal occasions (class-leader election); rarely emerged spontaneously in group decision-making	Low-Moderate	Incorporate daily class-decision votes. Model non-adversarial decision making.
 Social Justice for All	Fair conduct appeared under teacher supervision, but 5 of 12 students showed a tendency to favor certain peers when unsupervised	Low	Implement anonymous peer-feedback system. Clearly define fair behavior metrics.

Figure 2. Matrix on the Implementation of Pancasila Values

Interviews with the two classroom teachers indicated that the internalization of the value of divinity was the most consistently applied, because it has become an established daily routine (morning prayer and closing prayer at the end of lessons), whereas the values of deliberative democracy and social justice were regarded by teachers as the most difficult to habituate, owing to the scarcity of classroom activities that explicitly train deliberation and the fair distribution of roles among students. Documentation in the form of group-activity photographs and classroom daily logs corroborated this pattern: the documentation showed active involvement of most students in structured collaborative activities such as classroom duty rosters but yielded minimal documentary evidence of informal deliberation practices beyond the formal class-leader election.

Source and technique triangulation showed consistency between observational results, teachers' accounts, and documentation for the first four principles. For the principle of deliberative democracy, however, a slight discrepancy in perception emerged: teachers assessed students as “reasonably accustomed to deliberation,” whereas direct observation indicated a low frequency of informal deliberation practice. This discrepancy was clarified through follow-up interviews, in which teachers acknowledged that deliberation was more often facilitated directly by the teacher than initiated by students themselves.

Overall, the data-processing results indicate that the implementation of Pancasila values among Grade V students is proceeding well for the value of divinity, reasonably well for the values of unity and humanity, but remains weak for the values of deliberative democracy and social justice — particularly in situations without direct teacher supervision.

Discussion

The finding that the value of divinity emerged most consistently is congruent with the concept of moral action in Lickona's framework, which holds that moral behavior already embedded as a routine habit—such as daily prayer—is internalized more readily than a value that remains at the level of moral knowing without adequate habituation

(Adnan et al., 2026). This pattern is also consistent with behaviorist theory, according to which behavior reinforced repeatedly through routine reinforcement (in this case, daily ritual and teacher supervision) tends to be more stable than behavior that seldom receives explicit reinforcement, such as informal deliberation practice (Bahri et al., 2025).

The comparatively weak implementation of the values of deliberative democracy and social justice once students are unsupervised suggests that the internalization of these two principles remains at the stage of external compliance rather than having advanced to the moral feeling and moral action stages that Lickona identifies as markers of an independently embedded habit (Maarif et al., 2024). This finding reinforces the concern raised in the introduction that insufficient habituation and teacher exemplification contribute to the suboptimal implementation of Pancasila values, since teachers tend to act as the sole facilitator of deliberation rather than cultivating independent initiative (Pusparini et al., 2025).

Compared with prior studies that have predominantly examined the influence of social media and gadget use on the behavior of primary-school-age children (Azizah et al., 2023; Hermawan, 2021; Susanti & Mariyana, 2022), the present findings point in a broadly consistent direction: student behavior appears to be shaped more strongly by external stimuli and supervision — whether from teachers at school or parental control over gadget use at home — than by independently internalized values. The present study, however, extends this literature in a specific way. Whereas earlier work has largely documented the general negative effects of digital media exposure on children's conduct, this study identifies precisely which Pancasila principle is most susceptible to weak habituation within the school setting — namely, deliberative democracy and social justice — an area that has received comparatively little explicit attention in the literature reviewed here.

Theoretically, these results reinforce the view advanced by Zaki and Fanani (2025) that Pancasila, as a value system, requires a consistent process of internalization rather than mere conceptual introduction. Without explicit habituation targeting the values of deliberation and social justice, dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile such as collaboration and critical reasoning risk developing unevenly relative to the faith dimension, which already benefits from a strong daily routine. The findings also lend empirical support to the integration of behaviorist and character-education perspectives: routine reinforcement appears necessary, but not sufficient on its own, for values to progress from compliance to autonomously enacted moral habits (Pangestu & Sumadi, 2024; Susanti et al., 2023).

For classroom practice, these findings imply that teachers need to design activities that explicitly and routinely train deliberation and the fair distribution of roles, rather than confining such practice to formal occasions like class-leader elections — for instance, through rotating roles in group work and habituating classroom discussion for simple collective decisions. For school-level policy, the findings imply a need for character-strengthening programs that specifically target the values of deliberation and social justice, given that these two values have proven more dependent on external

supervision than the value of divinity, which is already internalized through a strong daily routine. Family-school synergy also warrants attention, since teacher role-modeling and habituation at school are most effective when reinforced by consistent parental support at home.

This study is subject to several limitations that should temper the generalizability of its findings. First, the research was conducted at a single public elementary school with a purposively selected sample of 12 students and 2 teachers, which constrains transferability to other school types, socioeconomic contexts, or grade levels. Second, the four-week observation window, while sufficient to capture routine behavioral patterns, may not fully reflect longer-term developmental trajectories in value internalization. Third, as with qualitative case-study designs generally, the coding process involves an element of researcher interpretation; this risk was mitigated, though not eliminated, through source, technique, and time triangulation. Future research would benefit from multi-site comparative designs spanning several schools and grade levels, the incorporation of complementary quantitative behavioral scales to permit cross-context comparison, and longitudinal designs capable of tracking whether deliberation- and fairness-focused interventions shift students' internalization of these values from compliance toward autonomous moral action.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of Pancasila values in primary-school students' behavior proceeds unevenly across principles: the value of divinity is the most consistently internalized because it has become a daily routine; the values of unity and humanity are already reasonably well applied, particularly during structured activities; while the values of deliberative democracy and social justice remain weak once students are outside direct teacher supervision. The principal supporting factors identified are teacher exemplification and supervision, routine school-based habituation, and family support, whereas the most prominent inhibiting factors are the scarcity of activities that explicitly train deliberation and fairness, students' dependence on external supervision, and inadequately monitored digital environment influence. These results indicate that the successful internalization of Pancasila values among primary-school students depends more on consistent habituation and role-modeling sustained over time than on conceptual introduction alone.

Going forward, schools and teachers need to habituate deliberation and fair role distribution more routinely and strengthen collaboration with parents, and future research should extend this inquiry across multiple schools and grade levels—ideally combined with quantitative or longitudinal measures—to yield a more comprehensive and generalizable picture of Pancasila value implementation in Indonesian primary education.

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