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Disparity Between Cognitive Understanding and The Implementation of Pancasila Values Among Fifth Grade Students

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A B S T R A C T

This study was conducted to gain a deeper and more realistic understanding of how fifth-grade students at SDN 066053 comprehend Pancasila learning and how far they are able to apply its values in their daily lives. In practice, learning Pancasila is often limited to memorizing concepts, even though its main purpose is to shape students' attitudes, habits, and character. Therefore, it becomes important to look not only at students' knowledge, but also at how they behave in real-life situations. This research used a descriptive quantitative approach by distributing a questionnaire to 20 students. The instrument consisted of 10 statements that were designed to explore students' understanding, attitudes, and daily behavior related to Pancasila values. The data collected were then analyzed using percentage calculations so that the results could be presented in a simple and easy-to-understand way, while still reflecting the actual condition in the classroom. The results show that most students already have a fairly good understanding of Pancasila learning. However, when it comes to applying these values in everyday situations, some students are still inconsistent. This indicates that understanding alone is not enough, and students need more guidance, examples, and practice so that these values can truly become part of their daily behavior.

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1. Introduction

Pancasila, as the philosophical foundation and ideological basis of Indonesia, plays an essential role in shaping students' character and citizenship competencies. Consequently, Pancasila education has been introduced from the elementary school level to instill national values, moral awareness, and responsible behavior among young learners. In practice, however, Pancasila learning is often associated with students' ability to memorize the five principles rather than their capacity to understand and implement these values in everyday life. While many students can recite Pancasila fluently, their actual behavior does not always reflect the values embodied in its principles.

Recent studies have highlighted concerns regarding the effectiveness of Pancasila education in promoting character development. Research by Hidayat and Nurhayati (2021) found that although elementary school students demonstrated adequate knowledge of Pancasila concepts, the application of values such as responsibility, tolerance, and cooperation was not consistently reflected in their daily behavior. Similarly, Prasetyo and Wibowo (2021) reported that Pancasila learning in primary schools

frequently emphasizes cognitive achievement, resulting in limited internalization of character values. Furthermore, Fitriani and Wahyuni (2023) revealed that students generally possess a basic understanding of Pancasila values, yet many still encounter difficulties in translating this understanding into real-life actions.

The growing emphasis on character education and the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile has further increased scholarly attention to this issue. Studies by Rusnaini et al. (2021), Juliani and Bastian (2021), and Nurasih et al. (2022) emphasized that Pancasila values should be integrated into students' daily habits and social interactions rather than being taught solely as theoretical knowledge. Likewise, Dewi et al. (2021) argued that strengthening Pancasila values is increasingly important in the era of globalization, where students face various social and cultural influences that may affect their character formation.

These previous studies indicate that research on Pancasila education has predominantly focused either on students' conceptual understanding of Pancasila values or on the implementation of character education programs in schools. However, limited studies have examined both aspects simultaneously by exploring the relationship between students' cognitive understanding and their practical implementation of Pancasila values in everyday life. This limitation constitutes the state of the art and research gap addressed by the present study.

The selection of SDN 066053 as the research site was based on preliminary observations conducted by the researcher. The observations indicated that most fifth-grade students were able to recite the principles of Pancasila correctly and answer questions related to its content. Nevertheless, variations were observed in the extent to which students practiced values such as discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and respect in their daily interactions within the school environment. This phenomenon suggests the existence of a potential gap between students' knowledge and their actual behavior, making SDN 066053 a relevant setting for investigating the effectiveness of Pancasila learning.

Considering the importance of developing students' character through meaningful Pancasila education, this study aims to analyze the level of fifth-grade students' understanding of Pancasila learning at SDN 066053 and to examine how they implement Pancasila values in their daily lives. By investigating both cognitive understanding and practical implementation, this research is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of Pancasila education at the elementary school level.

2. Research Methods

This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach with a case-study orientation. The research aimed to describe the actual condition of fifth-grade students' understanding of Pancasila learning at SDN 066053 without providing any treatment or intervention. A case-study orientation was considered appropriate because the research focused on a single class with a relatively limited number of participants, allowing a more in-depth description of the phenomenon within its real educational context.

The participants consisted of 20 fifth-grade students enrolled at SDN 066053. All students in the class were involved as research respondents. Data were collected using a questionnaire consisting of 10 statement items designed to measure students' understanding and application of Pancasila values in daily life. The instrument was developed based on key dimensions of Pancasila learning, including knowledge of Pancasila principles, understanding of their meanings, and the implementation of Pancasila values in students' behaviors and interactions.

Before data collection, the questionnaire underwent an expert judgment process conducted by elementary education lecturers and teachers experienced in Pancasila education to ensure content

validity and clarity of the items. Suggestions from the validators were used to revise and refine the instrument before administration. Because the study was conducted on a limited scale within a single class, the instrument was primarily intended to provide descriptive information rather than to establish broad generalizations.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, particularly percentage calculations. The percentage results were then interpreted to provide a clear overview of students' levels of understanding and their application of Pancasila values in everyday situations.

2.1. Research Subjects

The subjects of this research were 20 fifth-grade students at SDN 066053. The choice of fifth-grade students was purposeful: at this stage, students are already able to understand questions well and provide answers based on their own experiences.

Furthermore, students at this level have begun to demonstrate clearer attitudes and behaviors in daily life. This allows the researcher to assess not only their knowledge mastery but also their behavioral performance. With a sample size of 20 students, the collected data was deemed sufficient to present a general picture of the situation within the class.

2.2. Instrument and Data Collection

The research instrument used in this study was a questionnaire consisting of 10 simple statements. These statements were formulated in easy-to-understand language to ensure students would not feel confused when responding. The content covered students' understanding of Pancasila, their attitudes toward peers, and their daily habits related to Pancasila values.

Each statement had three response options: "Yes", "Sometimes", and "No". These simple options were designed to encourage students to answer honestly based on their real experiences, without facing unnecessary difficulties.

The data collection process was carried out directly in the classroom. The researcher distributed the questionnaires and provided brief instructions on how to complete them to avoid errors. After all students finished responding, the questionnaires were collected for analysis. This method ensured that the obtained data was authentic and truly reflected the students' actual conditions.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using percentage analysis techniques. This method was chosen for its simplicity and its ability to present a clear overall picture of students' responses. Through percentage calculation, the researcher could determine the proportion of students who chose "Yes", "Sometimes", and "No" respectively.

The formula used is as follows: Data were analyzed descriptively through percentage techniques with the formula:

$$\text{Percentage} = \left(\frac{\text{Number of responses per kategori}}{\text{Total number of responses}} \right) \times 100\%$$

The results were interpreted to draw conclusions about the overall level of understanding, using the following categories: "Good" (>70%), "Fair" (50%-70%), and "Poor" (<50%).

After calculation, the results were not only presented in numerical form but also explained descriptively. The aim was to ensure that readers could not only view the figures but also understand their meaning in the context of students' daily lives.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on questionnaire data collected from 20 fifth-grade students at SDN 066053, a total of 200 responses were obtained from 10 statement items. Overall, 153 responses (76.5%) were categorized as “Yes,” 38 responses (19%) as “Sometimes,” and 9 responses (4.5%) as “No.” These findings indicate that most students possess a positive understanding of Pancasila values and generally demonstrate behaviors that reflect these principles in their daily school activities.

To provide a more detailed picture, the responses were analyzed according to the indicators represented by each Pancasila principle.

Table 1. Indicator Analysis

Pancasila Indicator	Yes (%)	Sometimes (%)	No (%)
Belief in God (1st Principle)	90	10	0
Humanity (2nd Principle)	85	15	0
Unity (3rd Principle)	70	25	5
Democracy (4th Principle)	75	20	5
Social Justice (5th Principle)	62.5	30	7.5

The results show that the highest level of understanding and application was found in the first principle, Belief in God, with 90% of students responding positively. Students generally reported praying before learning activities, respecting religious differences, and following school rules related to religious practices.

In contrast, the lowest scores were found in the fifth principle, Social Justice, where only 62.5% of responses were categorized as “Yes,” while 30% were “Sometimes.” This suggests that students understand the concept of fairness but do not consistently apply it in everyday situations. Several students admitted that they occasionally prioritized close friends, were reluctant to share responsibilities equally, or felt disappointed when group tasks were divided fairly among all members.

A similar pattern appeared in the third principle, Unity of Indonesia. Although most students agreed that cooperation and friendship are important, 25% selected “Sometimes.” Classroom observations and questionnaire responses indicate that students occasionally preferred working with familiar peers and were less willing to interact with classmates outside their friendship groups. This finding suggests that the value of unity has not yet been fully internalized into habitual behavior.

The relatively high percentage of “Sometimes” responses reveals a gap between students’ cognitive understanding and behavioral consistency. Students generally know which actions reflect Pancasila values, yet they do not always practice them consistently. For example, some students recognized that mocking classmates is inappropriate, but they admitted doing so in joking situations or under peer influence. Likewise, students understood the importance of cooperation but occasionally chose to work independently rather than contribute actively to group activities.

This finding supports Lickona’s (1991) theory of character education, which argues that moral development involves three interconnected dimensions: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Possessing knowledge of values alone is insufficient; students require repeated practice and reinforcement before values become stable habits.

Several factors may explain this inconsistency. First, Pancasila learning is still often delivered through conventional teaching methods that emphasize memorization rather than real-life application. Second, students’ social environments, including peer groups, may not consistently reinforce positive behaviors. Third, opportunities for experiential learning remain limited, reducing students’ chances to practice Pancasila values in authentic situations. As a result, students may understand the values conceptually but struggle to apply them consistently in everyday interactions.

These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that students frequently demonstrate adequate cognitive understanding of Pancasila while experiencing difficulties in translating that understanding into daily behavior. Research on character education has also found that active learning approaches, such as Project-Based Learning (PjBL), collaborative activities, and role-play simulations, are more effective in strengthening value internalization than lecture-based instruction. Such approaches provide students with direct experiences that encourage reflection, cooperation, responsibility, and empathy.

Overall, the findings indicate that Pancasila learning among fifth-grade students at SDN 066053 has successfully developed basic conceptual understanding. However, challenges remain in transforming this understanding into consistent behavioral practices, particularly in the areas of unity and social justice. Therefore, teachers should incorporate more interactive and experience-based learning strategies to strengthen the habituation of Pancasila values in students' daily lives.

Teachers serve as primary facilitators and role models, integrating Pancasila values through exemplary attitudes, rather than only delivering subject content. Effective strategies include continuous teacher training and collaboration among schools, families, and communities to build an environment that supports excellent character development. Implementation of these measures can accelerate the transition from cognitive understanding to consistent behavior.

4. Conclusion

This study found that fifth-grade students at SDN 066053 generally possess a satisfactory understanding of Pancasila values and are able to identify attitudes and behaviors that reflect these principles. The findings indicate that Pancasila learning has successfully developed students' cognitive awareness of moral and civic values. However, understanding these values does not automatically lead to consistent implementation in daily life. Some students still experience difficulties in translating their knowledge into habitual actions, particularly in situations involving cooperation, fairness, and social interaction. These findings suggest that effective Pancasila education should go beyond the transmission of knowledge and place greater emphasis on value internalization through continuous practice, real-life experiences, and character-building activities. The development of students' character requires a sustained process of habituation in which positive values are repeatedly reinforced both inside and outside the classroom. This study is limited by its focus on a single class in one elementary school and the relatively small number of participants, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the research relied primarily on questionnaire data, which may not fully capture students' actual behavior. Future studies are therefore encouraged to involve larger and more diverse samples, employ multiple data collection methods such as observations and interviews, and examine the effectiveness of innovative learning approaches, including Project-Based Learning, role-playing activities, and other experiential learning models, in strengthening the implementation of Pancasila values among elementary school students.

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