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Teacher Agency and Local Wisdom in Managing The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project: a Phenomenological Study in an Indonesian Boarding School

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Abstract

This phenomenological study examines how teachers at SMA Negeri 2 Plus Sipirok organize the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) across planning, implementation, evaluation, and strategic management. Twenty-three purposively selected participants—one principal, two vice-principals, and twenty teacher-facilitators—contributed data through semi-structured interviews, two months of participant observation, and analysis of 15 institutional document types. Data were analyzed iteratively through condensation, display, and conclusion drawing/verification, with source and method triangulation, prolonged engagement, member checking, peer debriefing, and an audit trail supporting trustworthiness. Findings show that P5 planning was participatory and needs-based, using student surveys and deliberation to connect national themes with Sipirok culture. Implementation combined authentic, student-centered projects with local products, traditions, and community partnerships; 87.3% of students were actively involved and 91.2% reported a deeper understanding of Pancasila values. Character reports showed gains in creativity (22.1%), global diversity (19.8%), mutual cooperation (18.4%), independence (15.7%), critical reasoning (12.3%), and faith and noble character (9.6%). Strategic analysis identified visionary leadership and the 69.6% proportion of Guru Penggerak among facilitators as strengths, while 70% of informants displayed a collective strategic blind spot regarding external continuity risks. The study develops the PELA-KELS model, which integrates participatory leadership, teacher agency, local wisdom, authentic assessment, amanah, and muhasabah. These findings imply that sustainable P5 governance requires equitable teacher capacity-building, institutionalized community partnerships, calibrated assessment, and explicit succession and policy-risk planning.

Keywords: Authentic Assessment; Local Wisdom; Pancasila Student Profile; Phenomenology; Project Governance; Teacher Agency.

Introduction

Contemporary education systems are expected to develop disciplinary knowledge while also cultivating agency, collaboration, ethical judgment, cultural competence, and the capacity to act in uncertain social conditions. International frameworks consequently position student agency, transformative competencies, and whole-school coherence as central to education for 2030, while research on project-based, experiential, and authentic learning shows that meaningful competencies are most effectively developed through sustained inquiry connected to consequential problems and products (OECD, 2019; Guo et al., 2020; Kokotsaki et al., 2016). Character and citizenship learning are likewise strengthened when values are enacted through participation, reflection, and social interaction rather than transmitted as abstract prescriptions (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Nucci et al., 2014; Veugelers, 2021). In Indonesia, the Merdeka Curriculum responds to this agenda through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila, P5), a cross-disciplinary co-curricular program intended to develop faith and noble character, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity (Kemendikbudristek, 2022; Rachmawati et al., 2022; Rusnaini et al., 2021). P5 therefore represents more than a set of project activities: it is an institutional mechanism for translating national ideals into situated learning experiences.

Translation from policy into practice, however, is neither automatic nor uniform. Policy-enactment scholarship demonstrates that schools interpret, select, and reconstruct policy through their histories, material conditions, professional cultures, and local priorities (Ball et al., 2012; Braun et al., 2011; Spillane et al., 2002). Implementation may consequently become decoupled from substantive practice when visible compliance is rewarded more readily than pedagogical transformation (Bromley & Powell, 2012; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Westphal & Zajac, 2001). Teachers occupy a pivotal position in this process because they exercise discretion while reconciling policy expectations with student needs and organizational constraints; their agency is ecologically shaped by professional purpose, prior experience, collaborative relationships, and available resources (Biesta et al., 2015; Priestley et al., 2015; Tao & Gao, 2017). Indonesian studies have documented enthusiasm for P5 but also uneven teacher understanding, limited time, assessment difficulty, and the risk that projects become episodic events detached from curricular and community contexts (Asiati & Hasanah, 2022; Rachmawati et al., 2022; Ulandari & Dwi, 2023). These tensions make school-level organization not policy design alone a decisive object of inquiry.

Effective project governance depends on interdependent managerial and pedagogical conditions. Shared and distributed leadership can mobilize expertise across formal roles, improve collective responsibility, and support organizational learning when participation is accompanied by clarity, trust, and coordination (Harris, 2013; Leithwood et al., 2020; Mifsud, 2024). Professional collaboration further enables teachers to co-design curricula, examine evidence, and adapt practice, although its effects depend on depth, focus, and institutional support rather than the mere frequency of meetings (de Jong et al., 2022; Vangrieken et al., 2015; Voogt et al., 2016). Project-based learning similarly requires coherent goals, scaffolding, manageable workloads, and assessment aligned with intended competencies (Almulla, 2020; Chen & Yang, 2019; Kokotsaki et al., 2016). These strands suggest that P5 outcomes emerge from a system linking leadership, teacher capacity, curricular design, resource allocation, community participation, and continuous evaluation.

The cultural location of that system is equally important. Culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogies treat learners' languages, histories, identities, and community knowledge as intellectual resources, thereby strengthening relevance, belonging, and critical engagement (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris, 2012). Place-based education likewise connects curriculum to local ecological, economic, and cultural realities and can deepen both learning and civic participation when communities act as partners rather than decorative sources of content (Gruenewald, 2003; Smith, 2002; Yemini et al., 2025). For a boarding school in Sipirok, this perspective is especially salient because Batak

Angkola traditions, local foods, coffee-based livelihoods, Islamic values, and communal deliberation form the lived context in which Pancasila values are interpreted. Integrating local wisdom into P5 can thus make character education experientially meaningful, but it also raises questions about who selects cultural knowledge, how it is pedagogically transformed, and whether national and local commitments are sustained across project cycles.

Evaluation constitutes another unresolved dimension. Competency and character development cannot be validly represented by a single product score; it requires multiple observations across time, explicit criteria, learner reflection, and evidence from different assessors and contexts (Boud & Falchikov, 2006; Panadero et al., 2017; Wiliam, 2011). Self- and peer-assessment may strengthen evaluative judgment and self-regulation, but rating quality is affected by training, interpersonal dynamics, visibility, and shared understanding of standards (Double et al., 2020; Panadero et al., 2016; Yan et al., 2022). Portfolios and narrative feedback can capture developmental trajectories more fully, provided that teachers calibrate judgments and document less visible contributions (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Carless & Boud, 2018; Lam, 2018). In an Islamic educational environment, the ethical notions of amanah (trustworthy responsibility) and muhasabah (critical self-examination) may add a moral rationale for honest participation and reflection, but their role in the management and assessment of P5 has rarely been examined empirically.

Existing P5 research has mainly described implementation, student perceptions, or isolated project outputs, often in elementary or non-boarding settings (Asiati & Hasanah, 2022; Rachmawati et al., 2022; Ulandari & Dwi, 2023). It has given less attention to teachers' lived experiences across the complete organizational cycle of planning, enactment, and evaluation; to the interaction among teacher agency, school leadership, local culture, and Islamic ethical meaning; and to strategic risks that may threaten continuity beyond a successful project cycle. Addressing this gap, the present study explores how teachers at SMA Negeri 2 Plus Sipirok experience and make meaning of organizing P5, identifies the internal and external factors shaping that process through SWOT analysis, and develops an empirically grounded governance model. Specifically, it asks how P5 is planned, implemented, and evaluated; what strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats teachers perceive; and how these experiences can inform a culturally responsive and sustainable model of P5 management. By foregrounding practitioner meaning within a distinctive boarding-school ecology, the study seeks to connect curriculum enactment, educational management, authentic assessment, and locally grounded character education.

Method

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological design to describe and interpret the shared meaning of teachers' lived experiences in organizing P5 (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Plus Sipirok, South Tapanuli Regency, Indonesia, a residential Sekolah Penggerak that combines the national curriculum with an Islamic boarding-school environment. The site was selected because it had implemented complete P5 cycles and explicitly incorporated Sipirok cultural resources. Participants were recruited through criterion-based purposive sampling. Eligibility required direct responsibility as a P5 leader, coordinator, or facilitator and participation in at least one complete project cycle. The final group comprised 23 informants: the principal, two vice-principals responsible for curriculum and student affairs, and 20 facilitator teachers representing science, social sciences, religion, and languages. This role diversity was intended to capture both strategic and operational perspectives rather than to produce statistical representation.

Data collection extended over two months and combined semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews explored planning and role allocation, theme selection, professional learning, facilitation, student participation, assessment, local-cultural integration,

perceived outcomes, constraints, and continuity risks. With permission, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim; field notes documented contextual and nonverbal information. Observations followed P5 activities from coordination and preparation through implementation, reflection, and reporting. Documentary evidence covered 15 institutional document types, including appointment decrees, curriculum plans, project modules, schedules, meeting records, assessment rubrics, portfolios, photographs, follow-up plans, and digital P5 character reports. Numerical percentages reported in the findings were treated as descriptive supporting evidence derived from the school's survey and administrative records, including responses from 312 students; they were not subjected to inferential testing and were triangulated with interview and observation evidence.

Analysis proceeded concurrently with data collection using the interactive processes of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2014). After repeated reading, meaning units were coded inductively and deductively against the research questions. Codes were compared within and across participant roles, grouped into categories, and developed into themes concerning participatory planning, local-wisdom integration, authentic enactment, facilitative teacher agency, developmental assessment, and strategic conditions. Textural descriptions of what participants experienced were integrated with structural descriptions of how organizational and cultural conditions shaped those experiences. A SWOT matrix was then constructed from convergent evidence, distinguishing internal strengths and weaknesses from external opportunities and threats. Negative and divergent cases such as unequal training access, uneven student contribution, assessment subjectivity, and limited recognition of continuity risks—were retained rather than absorbed into majority accounts. The final thematic structure informed the PELA-KELS model.

Trustworthiness was supported through triangulation across participant groups, methods, and documents; prolonged engagement at the site; member checking of interpretive summaries; peer debriefing; reflexive field notes; and an audit trail linking raw evidence, codes, categories, and claims (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Nowell et al., 2017). Participant identifiers were anonymized as KS (principal), WKS (vice-principal), and GR1–GR20 (teachers), and quotations were translated into English with attention to semantic equivalence. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and participants could withdraw without penalty. Organizational permission was secured before data collection, and digital records were stored securely with access limited to the research team. The analysis deliberately separates participants' perceptions from causal claims: reported student gains and percentages describe the case and support qualitative interpretation but do not establish population-level effects.

Results

Participatory and Locally Grounded Planning

Planning was experienced as a participatory process organized through meetings, deliberation, and formal role allocation. Across the 23 informants, strategic decisions including team formation, task distribution, theme selection, module development, scheduling, and evaluation planning were described as collective rather than solely managerial. The principal summarized the sequence as forming the team, analyzing school conditions and student needs, identifying themes, formulating objectives and P5 dimensions, and then conducting evaluation and dissemination. The vice-principals confirmed that school leaders and teachers jointly assigned responsibilities, while GR1 reported direct involvement in determining the team, responsibilities, themes, and project topics. Formal appointment decrees strengthened accountability, although the practical distribution of expertise remained dependent on experienced facilitators.

Theme selection combined student voice with contextual analysis. A survey of 312 students, followed by deliberation, yielded entrepreneurship based on local products (38.7%), sustainable

lifestyles (31.2%), and South Tapanuli local wisdom (30.1%) as the three priority themes. Participants linked these choices to Batak Angkola culture, Sipirok coffee, local foods, the school's mission, and students' interests. Cross-subject collaboration enabled different disciplinary contributions to the project modules, but access to preparation was uneven: some teachers had received intensive Sekolah Penggerak training, whereas others relied on internal in-house training and mentoring by Guru Penggerak. Planning therefore combined strong collective commitment with a continuing need to equalize facilitation and assessment competence.

Authentic Implementation and Student Participation

Implementation proceeded through preparation, contextual exploration, group work, product development, presentation, reflection, and reporting. Students participated in selecting activities, forming groups, allocating roles, making decisions, and presenting outcomes. Projects included learning Mangkobar wedding deliberation, producing sasagun, itak pohul-pohul, lampet, panggelong, chili crackers, and recycled-fabric or eco-brick products, developing Sipirok coffee entrepreneurship, simulating democratic processes, and presenting Batak Angkola arts. Teachers described their role as facilitating inquiry, asking probing questions, providing scaffolding, monitoring collaboration, and connecting students with customary leaders, cultural offices, local health services, and micro-enterprises rather than delivering content as the sole authority.

The school's supporting records indicated that 87.3% of students were actively involved and 91.2% reported a deeper understanding of Pancasila values. These descriptive figures converged with observation of high participation and with teacher accounts of increased confidence, creativity, cooperation, independence, and cultural pride. Nevertheless, implementation was constrained by limited time (45.2%), variation in student motivation (31.7%), limited facilities and materials (13.0%), and difficulty assessing noncognitive outcomes (10.1%). Participants also observed unequal contributions within groups. Teachers responded through adaptive scheduling, intensive communication, use of local materials, peer mentoring, and partnerships with local actors. The evidence thus depicts authentic enactment without implying an absence of operational friction.

Developmental and Authentic Evaluation

Evaluation shifted from conventional numerical scoring toward developmental descriptions of character. Teachers combined qualitative rubrics "Mulai Berkembang", "Berkembang Sesuai Harapan", and "Berkembang Sangat Baik" with process observation, portfolios, reflection journals, self-assessment, peer assessment, behavioral documentation, and narrative reports. Evidence was discussed through collegial calibration before being entered into the digital character report. This multi-source approach allowed teachers to consider process, contribution, reflection, and product quality, while follow-up plans included additional time, simplified rubrics, and further assessment training.

School reports for the first semester of 2024/2025 recorded improvement across all six dimensions: creativity increased by 22.1%, global diversity by 19.8%, mutual cooperation by 18.4%, independence by 15.7%, critical reasoning by 12.3%, and faith, devotion to God, and noble character by 9.6%. The pattern suggests that visible, collaborative, and productive dispositions were documented more readily than internal cognitive-reflective and spiritual dispositions. Informants acknowledged subjectivity, inconsistent interpretation of rubrics, weak documentation of nonverbal contributions, and visibility bias favoring outspoken students. Dual observation, multiple evidence sources, and collegial moderation were used to reduce these problems, although they did not eliminate the need for stronger assessor literacy and longitudinal evidence.

Strategic Conditions and the PELA-KELS Model

The SWOT analysis positioned the school in a strength–opportunity orientation. Internal strengths comprised visionary leadership, Sekolah Penggerak status, collaborative culture, enthusiastic students, formal role structures, and a facilitator cohort in which 69.6% were Guru Penggerak. Internal

weaknesses included unequal facilitation and assessment competence, limited time and budget, administrative workload, inconsistent coordination, and uneven student independence. External opportunities included national policy support, partnerships with government agencies, local enterprises, customary leaders and cultural communities, and digital documentation. Threats included policy discontinuity, leadership succession, economic constraints, declining student motivation, cultural commodification, and the possibility that P5 would revert to ceremonial compliance.

A notable finding was that approximately 70% of informants readily identified operational problems but did not spontaneously recognize external continuity risks. This collective strategic blind spot coexisted with optimism generated by strong current leadership and Sekolah Penggerak support. Synthesizing the themes, the study proposes PELA-KELS (P5 Organization Based on Sipirok Local Wisdom) as a case-grounded model linking participatory leadership, ecological teacher agency, local-cultural integration, networked community learning, developmental character evaluation, and sustainability planning. Amanah provides an ethical orientation for responsibility, while muhasabah frames self- and peer-assessment as disciplined reflection. The model is an analytical proposition derived from this case and requires testing in other institutional and cultural settings.

Discussion

. Saya mempertahankan struktur argumentasi dan mayoritas sitasi lama karena secara konseptual masih kuat. Saya menambahkan literatur **2020–2026**, termasuk artikel yang dapat diverifikasi dari profil Muhammad Sufian, DiSoLife, GILS, JPI, serta jurnal internasional bereputasi/Scopus. Profil Google Scholar enexRJ8AAAAJ sendiri memblokir akses langsung, sehingga artikel yang berkaitan dengan profil tersebut saya verifikasi melalui laman penerbit dan database lain; misalnya Koderi, Sufian, dan Erlina (2023) serta Rokhman et al. (2024). IJTET

Revised Discussion

The participatory planning identified in this study reinforces evidence that shared leadership and professional collaboration enhance schools' capacity to translate curriculum reform into workable organizational routines. Distributed leadership becomes productive when expertise, responsibility, and influence circulate across formal and informal roles rather than remaining concentrated in the principalship (Harris, 2013; Mifsud, 2024). More recent evidence strengthens this interpretation. De Jong et al. (2023) found that distributed leadership in collaborative teacher teams was associated with accessible collegial advice and teachers' willingness to work beyond individual classroom boundaries, while Özdemir et al. (2023) demonstrated that distributed leadership can shape instructional practice partly through professional collaboration. Similarly, Shal et al. (2024) show that collaborative communities can provide spaces in which teachers exercise agency, experiment with practice, and assume leadership responsibilities. DOI The Sipirok case extends this international evidence by showing how deliberation, student surveys, and collective planning mediated between national P5 expectations and a specific cultural ecology. At the same time, uneven access to Sekolah Penggerak training confirms that collaboration does not automatically equalize professional expertise. Indonesian evidence similarly indicates that structured supervision and professional support remain necessary for strengthening educators' capacity to enact innovation (Rokhman et al., 2024). Al-Ishlah Thus, team formation was necessary but insufficient: teacher agency became consequential when organizational structures supplied time, collegial support, professional learning, and permission to adapt policy to local circumstances.

The integration of Mangkobar, Sipirok coffee, traditional foods, local arts, and environmental practices is consistent with culturally responsive, culturally sustaining, and place-based education. Such perspectives position community knowledge as a generative curricular resource rather than as folkloric decoration (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Paris, 2012; Yemini et al., 2025). A contemporary systematic review conceptualizes place-based education as experiential and community-oriented

learning that connects curriculum to local cultural and ecological contexts, lending further support to the approach observed in Sipirok (Yemini et al., 2025). DOI Indonesian evidence is particularly consistent with this finding. Koderi et al. (2023) demonstrated that integrating Lampung local wisdom into instructional media could make learning culturally meaningful and educationally effective, whereas Asmayawati et al. (2024) found that local-wisdom integration can mediate the effects of pedagogical innovation and curricular adaptation. IJTET Putra and Muthalib (2026) likewise found that local wisdom under Merdeka Belajar is negotiated through interactions among teachers, learners, community actors, curriculum rules, and institutional arrangements rather than merely inserted into instructional content. Siducat The present finding that students developed greater cultural pride alongside deeper understanding of Pancasila therefore suggests that local identity and national citizenship need not function as competing orientations. Nevertheless, authentic cultural integration requires critical contextualization, community participation, and attention to whose cultural knowledge is selected and represented so that heritage is not reduced to a ceremonial or commodified curriculum artifact.

The reported student participation rate of 87.3% and deeper understanding of Pancasila values of 91.2% are broadly consistent with empirical synthesis showing that project-based learning can strengthen academic performance, affective engagement, problem solving, and higher-order thinking when students work on meaningful tasks with sustained inquiry and appropriate scaffolding (Chen & Yang, 2019; Guo et al., 2020; Kokotsaki et al., 2016). More recent meta-analytic evidence reinforces this conclusion. Zhang and Ma (2023), synthesizing 66 experimental and quasi-experimental studies, found a significant positive overall effect of project-based learning on academic achievement, thinking skills, and affective attitudes, although effects varied according to instructional context and implementation characteristics. DOI A 2026 umbrella review similarly concluded that PjBL effects are generally positive across academic achievement and higher-order skills, while warning that effect magnitude varies and that the methodological quality of existing meta-analyses is uneven (Farshad & Fortin, 2026). ScienceDirect The projects in Sipirok were particularly authentic because students connected cultural production, entrepreneurship, environmental practice, democratic participation, and public presentation. Local evidence supports this mechanism: Asnani et al. (2026) reported substantial gains in creative thinking when local wisdom was embedded within contextual PjBL, while Sidik et al. (2025) identified creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking as recurrent outcomes across PBL/PjBL studies. Siducat However, the comparatively smaller gains in critical reasoning and faith and noble character indicate that participation alone is insufficient for uniform development across P5 dimensions. These domains may require explicit reasoning prompts, ethical deliberation, evidence-based argumentation, reflective dialogue, and repeated learning cycles. The descriptive percentages should therefore inform improvement rather than be interpreted as causal estimates of P5 effectiveness.

Teachers' movement from direct instruction toward facilitation further aligns with learner-centered project pedagogy and the ecological conception of teacher agency. Agency is not simply an individual disposition; it emerges through interactions between teachers' professional histories, available resources, institutional conditions, collaborative relationships, and future-oriented professional judgment (Biesta et al., 2015; Priestley et al., 2015; Tao & Gao, 2017). Recent international studies provide stronger empirical support for this interpretation. Polatcan (2024) found that teacher agency played an important mediating role between distributed leadership and professional learning, while Hilal et al. (2024) demonstrated that teacher reflection partly mediated the relationship between distributed leadership and agency. Taylor & Francis Online Liu et al. (2022) further showed that professional learning communities promoted teacher innovation partly through creative self-efficacy and supportive innovation climates. The Chinese University of Hong Kong These findings help explain

why differences in facilitator preparation in Sipirok mattered despite the existence of a formal project team. The time pressures, uneven group contributions, and motivational differences observed in the study also deserve attention. Indonesian evidence from Putri et al. (2025) indicates that learner motivation can condition the effectiveness of cooperative instructional strategies, suggesting that collaborative designs should not assume uniform student readiness or engagement. WISE Pendidikan Indonesia Schools should consequently protect common planning time, pair more- and less-experienced facilitators, explicitly teach group roles, monitor individual contribution, and build reflection into project schedules.

The multi-component evaluation system—rubrics, portfolios, observation, self-assessment, peer assessment, and narrative feedback—is also consistent with contemporary formative and authentic assessment scholarship. Assessment becomes educationally productive when criteria are intelligible, evidence is generated from multiple sources, and feedback informs subsequent action rather than merely categorizing students (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Carless & Boud, 2018). Double et al. (2020) showed through meta-analysis that peer assessment can enhance achievement, while Li et al. (2020), synthesizing 58 studies and 134 effect sizes, found that its effectiveness is especially sensitive to conditions such as rater training. Springer Authentic assessment research likewise suggests that performance-rich assessment can strengthen engagement and meaningful application of learning, although implementation quality remains decisive (Sokhanvar et al., 2021). DOI The Sipirok findings contribute a significant caution to this literature: visibility bias may privilege verbally active students or conspicuous products, while quieter contributions, internalized ethical learning, and less observable dimensions of character remain under-documented. Collegial calibration and multiple evidence sources are therefore appropriate safeguards but should be strengthened through annotated exemplars, assessor training, longitudinal evidence, individual contribution records, and explicit assessment-literacy development. Framing self-evaluation as *muhasabah* and professional responsibility as *amanah* offers a culturally and religiously resonant assessment vocabulary, although future research should empirically examine whether these frames actually improve honesty, reflective depth, or evaluative judgment.

Strategically, the interaction among visionary leadership, the relatively high proportion of Guru Penggerak, and external partnerships is compatible with international evidence linking effective leadership with collective capacity, collaboration, organizational learning, and innovation (Hallinger, 2018; Leithwood et al., 2020; Mifsud, 2024). Contemporary studies further show that distributed leadership is associated with teacher collaboration, innovative instructional profiles, and collective innovativeness rather than operating simply through formal delegation (Özdemir et al., 2023; Erdoğan et al., 2024). Sage Journals Erdoğan et al. (2024), notably, found that supportive school culture mediated the relationship between distributed leadership and collective teacher innovativeness and that cultural context conditioned this mechanism. This is especially pertinent to Sipirok, where local norms, institutional relationships, and cultural authority shaped how P5 was interpreted. Yet the case reveals an important paradox: strong current performance can conceal future vulnerability. The collective strategic blind spot identified among approximately 70% of informants suggests that operational competence did not consistently extend to scenario planning for policy change, leadership succession, personnel mobility, or partnership loss. This constitutes the central conceptual contribution of PELAKS: culturally grounded project implementation becomes institutionally sustainable only when collaborative enactment is accompanied by institutional memory, documented routines, diversified partnerships, succession planning, and recurrent strategic-risk review.

The practical and policy implications therefore extend beyond improving individual P5 activities. Principals should institutionalize recurring co-design, reflection, and assessment-calibration forums; pair experienced and novice facilitators; preserve protected project time; document local knowledge

sources; and formalize partnerships so that collaboration does not depend exclusively on particular personalities. Policymakers, meanwhile, should maintain sufficient national coherence in P5 guidance while safeguarding contextual adaptation and avoiding accountability systems that privilege visible ceremonial products over learning processes. Recent Indonesian work supports such contextual flexibility. Febriani et al. (2026) found that Indonesia's sustainability-education approach is strongly associated with character education, local wisdom, community participation, and environmentally oriented school programs, suggesting that locally rooted P5 practices can also contribute to broader sustainability agendas. WISE Pendidikan Indonesia Likewise, the growing literature on digital and project-based learning emphasizes that innovations become meaningful when they are pedagogically integrated rather than treated as stand-alone instruments (Sidik et al., 2025). WISE Pendidikan Indonesia Theoretically, the present study connects policy enactment, ecological teacher agency, culturally sustaining/place-based pedagogy, distributed leadership, PjBL, and authentic assessment within one organizational cycle. Methodologically, its combination of phenomenological accounts, observation, documentary evidence, student-survey information, and institutional data offers an analytically useful way to examine complex reform implementation while maintaining a distinction between participants' interpretations, descriptive institutional evidence, and causal claims.

Several limitations delimit these conclusions. The investigation concerns one high-performing residential Sekolah Penggerak, so PELA-KELS should be regarded as an analytically transferable framework rather than a universally validated model. Schools with different resource levels, leadership histories, community structures, religious compositions, and cultural settings may generate substantially different implementation dynamics. Data also primarily represent adult perspectives; student and community voices were mediated partly through institutional records and teachers rather than through an equivalent phenomenological sample. The reported percentages were drawn from school surveys and administrative documentation whose instruments and baselines were not independently validated for causal inference. Researcher participation may have influenced observed behavior despite reflexivity and triangulation, while the two-month field period captured only one implementation window and could not test organizational sustainability, partnership durability, or leadership succession. Future studies should therefore use multisite and longitudinal designs; directly include students, parents, customary leaders, and local economic actors; validate P5 measurement instruments; compare residential and non-residential schools; and test whether the distinctive components of PELA-KELS remain functional when principals, facilitators, policy requirements, or community partnerships change.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that P5 at SMA Negeri 2 Plus Sipirok was organized as a participatory, culturally situated, and reflective process rather than merely an administrative requirement. Teachers collectively planned projects from student needs and Sipirok resources, facilitated authentic activities with community partners, and evaluated character development through rubrics, observation, portfolios, self- and peer-assessment, and narrative reporting. Institutional records showed active student participation (87.3%), deeper perceived understanding of Pancasila values (91.2%), and gains across all six profile dimensions, led by creativity (22.1%), global diversity (19.8%), and mutual cooperation (18.4%). Visionary leadership, Sekolah Penggerak status, and the 69.6% proportion of Guru Penggerak supported implementation, whereas unequal teacher capacity, time and resource constraints, assessment subjectivity, and a collective strategic blind spot regarding continuity risks remained consequential. The resulting PELA-KELS model contributes an integrated account of participatory leadership, ecological teacher agency, local wisdom, networked community learning, developmental assessment, amanah, muhasabah, and sustainability planning. Its immediate

implication is that schools should institutionalize mentoring, assessment calibration, community agreements, documentation, and succession-risk review. Because the evidence comes from a single case and school-generated descriptive measures, the model should be analytically generalized and tested through multi-site, longitudinal research rather than treated as a universally validated causal framework.

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