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Integrating Independence in Early Learning through the Making of Batik Jumputan

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Abstract

This study examines integrating the independence dimension within the Pancasila Student Profile Project through the culturally enriching activity of batik-making, specifically Jumputan Batik, in Indonesia's Merdeka *Curriculum.* While using a qualitative phenomenological approach, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation involving principals, teachers, and students in early childhood education settings. The findings reveal that children demonstrated notable growth in independence, creativity, and resilience, mainly through hands-on activities. The structured project emphasized planning, execution, and evaluation, allowing children to practice self-reliance, adapt to challenges, and collaborate with peers. This study provides actionable insights for educators and policymakers, offering strategies to address identified challenges and enhance the effectiveness of characterbuilding initiatives like the Pancasila Student Profile Project.

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INTRODUCTION

A curriculum inherently guides education as a framework for shaping students' learning experiences (Julaeha, 2019). In Indonesia, the curriculum is rooted in the philosophy of Pancasila, ensuring that educational practices align with its values. The Indonesian government introduced the Merdeka Curriculum to meet evolving educational demands, emphasizing learner-centered approaches and freedom in education. This curriculum aims to nurture independence, a critical attribute that empowers individuals to face challenges confidently, take the initiative and solve problems without excessive reliance on others (Kahfi, 2022).

Independence is a process that a person wants to achieve even though humans are social creatures who cannot be separated from other people. However, humans must be able to learn to be independent. As Bernadib said in Sari & Rasyidah, independence is having confident behavior, high initiative, and the ability to overcome problems without depending on others. (Sari & Rasyidah, 2019).

As a behavioral trait, independence is significant for children's long-term success. The research underscores the need to instill independence from an early age through structured guidance and habitual practice. By fostering independence, children develop confidence and self-reliance and enhance problem-solving abilities and adaptability—skills essential for their future (Musbikin, 2019).

Several studies have implemented a project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. Wiyani, in 2023, conducted a study with the title Implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project in the Independent Curriculum at PAUD Institutions. The results showed that there were six dimensions developed in the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students, namely: (1) dimensions of faith, piety, and noble character; (2) dimensions of diversity; (3) dimensions of cooperation; (4) dimensions of independence; (5) dimensions of critical reasoning; and (6) creative dimensions (Wiyani, 2023).

Then, Ulandari and Rapita the year with the research title Implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project as an Effort to Strengthen the Character of Students. The results of this study state that the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project can strengthen character dimensions, including faith and devotion to God Almighty and noble character, cooperation, independence, global diversity, and critical and creative reasoning (Ulandari & Rapita, 2023).

Furthermore, Rizal et al.. conducted a study titled "Nice of Early Childhood Education Teachers in Implementing the Pancasila Learner Profile in Braking Schools. The "results of this study state that early childhood education teachers in several early actions are still constrained in terms of preparing teaching modules (Rizal et al., 2022).

Existing studies have explored various dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile Project within the Merdeka Curriculum, focusing on faith, teamwork, critical thinking, and creativity. However, limited attention has been given to independence, particularly in early childhood education settings. This study addresses this gap by examining the practical application and outcomes of fostering independence among young learners, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers.

METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative research on scientific conditions that collect data through analysis, and the results must be meaningful (Sugiyono, 2022). This type of research is phenomenological research based on explanations, understanding, and individual experiences (Creswell, 2015). The data sources of this research are taken from 1) primary data sources. data sources that are directly given to the person collecting the data, namely the Head of State Kindergarten Pembina 2 Palembang, B2 Class Teacher, and 13 children who have done Pancasila learner profile activities in the previous semester (Ardial, 2014), 2) secondary data sources, namely data obtained by researchers from outside the research site such as journals and research that has been carried out (Sanusi, 2012). With data collection techniques using the method of 1) observation, where researchers go directly to the field; 2) interviews, interviews are conducted in the form of questions and answers using interview instruments that have been made; and 3) documentation, in the form of photos, field notes, and interview notes. Then, analyze the research data using the technique of 1) data reduction, withdrawing data that will become the core or focus of the research; 2) data presentation, where the data drawn will be collected and described according to what has been researched, and 3) conclusions, the final result of the data that has been collected and described (Miles et al., 2014).

RESULT

Based on the research conducted, results show that the implementation of the Pancasila student profile strengthening project in the dimension of independence, one of which is through batik activities. The implementation includes three stages as follows:

1) Project Planning

a) Form a team of facilitators

The first step is the formation of a team of facilitators. The head of the kindergarten formed the project facilitator team. The head of the kindergarten created a community called "Komunitas Belajar Sekolah Bangkit Towards Change for the Better," which consisted of teachers from the State Kindergarten of Pembina 2 Palembang. This facilitator team involved all 12 teachers. The task is to coordinate with each other, develop an activity plan tailored to the dimensions of the Pancasila learner profile, and implement it. This community is also a forum for teachers to discuss the project of strengthening the Pancasila learner profile, especially the value of independence.

b) Identifying the readiness level of education units

The facilitator team that had been formed earlier held regular meetings and discussed what should be prepared to implement the project. The team also explores the concept of project-based learning to be implemented and prepares the tools and materials to be used. Thus, the preparation for implementing the project will be maximized.

c) Determine the dimensions, theme, and time allocation of the activity project

The team will determine the theme after identifying the preparations for implementing the project. Activity themes that can be used include I love the earth, I love Indonesia, my imagination and creativity, and playing and working together (we are all brothers and sisters). The theme was adjusted to the things around the school that could support learning. After that, the team considers the value dimensions suitable for the theme that has been determined and how long the time allocation is in doing the project.

d) Develop a project module

In developing the module, the facilitator team considered and adjusted the stages and abilities of the children. The module contains project objectives, topics, flow, time, learning strategies, and materials. Thus, accuracy is needed to achieve learning objectives when making teaching modules.

e) Design a strategy for reporting project results

On the last day of the project week, a special time is set aside to report learners' work. On this day, there is an activity called "Harvesting the Work." This activity is a way of reporting the results of all students' work. The method used in this activity is to display all the children's work in the school's front yard. Reporting the results of this project is also done by listing the types and forms of children's work in the report card book at the end of the semester. The principal then submits the report to the supervisor and the education office.

2) Project Implementation

The next stage is the implementation of project activities in order to strengthen the values of independence. At this stage, children are invited to participate in various activities that provide opportunities to apply the values of independence through honing their batik-making skills.



Figure 3.1. The teacher demonstrates how to make jumputan batik

Project implementation lasts one week or can be adjusted to the time it takes to complete an activity with a predetermined theme. Before the implementation begins, children are first introduced to the theme and the type of activity that will be given. The theme determined during this research was "I Love Indonesia." Under this theme, the activity chosen was making jumputan batik.

Batik Jumputan is a traditional Indonesian tie-dye textile with vibrant patterns and intricate craftsmanship. Unlike conventional batik, which uses wax-resist dyeing, Batik Jumputan employs a tying and dyeing technique where fabric is tightly bound in specific areas with threads or small objects before being immersed in dye. This process creates unique, repetitive patterns such as dots, circles, or abstract motifs, often symbolizing cultural meanings.

According to the teacher, the purpose of choosing this activity is so that children can recognize the concept of jumputan as one of the techniques for making batik. In addition, this activity is also expected to stimulate children to recognize the types of colors, learn how to decorate fabrics, and foster a sense of responsibility in children to complete the assigned tasks correctly. The following is the sequence of steps for the implementation of the jumputan batik project by teachers and learners:

Table 1. Schedule for the implementation of the jumputan batik-making project

Day 1	• The teacher prepares various pictures and videos of making
	jumputan batik on cloth as brainstorming material with the
	children.
	• Watch the video together:
	<u>https://youtu.be/_pcNe1Ra0u4?si=0QC5Cu985iwnBs5v</u>
	 Introducing the children to various jumputan motifs
	• The teacher and children prepare a place to make jumputan batik cloth
	• Teachers and children can agree on the activities to be carried out
Day 2	• The teacher guides the children in collecting the tools and materials needed for batik making, including white cloth, textile dye, rubber, marbles, raffia, scissors, a bowl, and a spoon.
	• Prepare and organize the tools and materials to make jumputan batik at the practice site.
Day 3	 The teacher explains and models how to tie the white cloth The teacher teaches how to make a shape/design motif by tying marbles, coins, or stones to some parts of the cloth using rubber or rope in a tight and varied manner.
	Children observe and follow the teacher's explanation
Day 4	Children practice making jumputan batik from cloth and dyes
Day 5	 Children observe the results of jumputan batik cloth
	• Teacher gives feedback
	• Children listen to the teacher's instructions on how to use jumputan cloth

The children enthusiastically participated in the Jumputan batikmaking activity. Each child looked diligent and busy completing the motif they wanted to make themselves. On the fourth day, the children were allowed to be creative in making their patterns and motifs and completed their work well. The teacher let the children complete their work and only occasionally gave feedback.

3) Project Evaluation

Project evaluation is done after the activity has been completed. At this time, we will discuss whether each child faced obstacles and how they felt after completing the task. The teacher also provides feedback and reinforcement to motivate the children to dare to try themselves. The results of this evaluation are used as one of the materials for reporting on children's development, which will be helpful for parents.



Figure 3.2. The teacher conducts a joint reflection after the project is carried out The following description of the children's attitude toward independence was obtained based on the evaluation.

1) Children can complete tasks by themselves without help.

When doing the activity, the teacher only modeled the correct way to pour, and then the children were asked to demonstrate themselves. Thus, they could imitate the activity with the help of their creative ideas. That is when they learned to exercise their creativity according to the style and way they wanted. Not helping the children complete the task taught them to be more independent and disciplined and made them more confident. 2) Not giving up on a challenge.

When the challenge of making their own Jumputan batik was given, the children showed mixed responses. Some immediately started working, but some did not know what to do. However, with the teacher's assistance, they were trained to be willing to face challenges and solve them on their own. Creative ideas emerged as their hands began to work.

Sometimes, some ask how to complete the task, but the teachers want to see the extent of the children's ability to overcome obstacles. Teachers also let the children solve problems in their way, such as how to keep paint from spilling over. They learn to solve problems and not give up easily despite obstacles.

3) Children dare to try new things and are willing to adapt

This activity is done in groups to help children adapt and socialize with their peers. Based on the observation results, they occasionally chatted with their friends. In addition, they occasionally express themselves if they need help. They also learn to help each other.

Based on the evaluation of this project, it was found that the implementation of instilling the value of independence through the project of making Jumputan batik went as expected by the teacher. The children were able to complete the challenge with different adaptations. Some completed the task quickly, and some were slower. However, the willingness to try to solve their challenges was under the target expected by the teacher, namely the creation of an attitude of independence in children.

Some of the problems that become challenges include the lack of complete facilities at school, so teachers and children need to find simple tools and materials that can be found around the house. In addition, the lack of parental support for developing the spirit of independence in children causes some students who still do not have the initiative to start new things they do not understand. It can be seen from the different student responses during project activities.

DISCUSSION

Fostering Independence in Young Children

The implementation of the project activity is designed to strengthen children's values of independence by creating Jumputan batik, a traditional Indonesian tie-dye textile. The schedule emphasizes scaffolding: the teacher models techniques introduces tools and provides guidance while gradually shifting responsibility to the children. Children independently create motifs by the fourth day, demonstrating creativity and accountability. This approach teaches practical skills like fabric decoration and color recognition and nurtures self-reliance as children take ownership of their work, culminating in feedback and reflection. The enthusiastic participation and completion of individual patterns highlight the project's effectiveness in fostering independence and creativity in a culturally meaningful context.

The character of children's independence has been seen when they complete tasks without the help of others. It is in line with the opinion of Yuni Retnowati, who explains that independence is a behavior whose activities are focused on oneself and that one does not expect help from others (Retnowati, 2021). In line with the findings, a study suggested that teachers identify children's independence by observing their ability to be left by parents, complete tasks independently, and carry out daily habits independently (Fadlillah et al., 2020).

Batik training provides essential skills, enabling students to participate in society and become independent individuals. The study underscores the importance of life-skills training, including batik creation, in fostering student autonomy (Atika et al., 2019). It is closely related to efforts to build independence in children.

Besides that, art practice, explicitly making jumputan batik, can improve creativity among elementary school students. This batik model was selected based on its efficiency and ease of use in the learning process, making it suitable for fostering creativity in young learners (Wulida & Sapriya, 2024).

Supporting children's creativity at an early age is important in building their independence. In line with this, a study found a positive correlation between early childhood creativity and independence (Munastiwi, 2023).

Several researches highlight how arts and crafts activities can help children develop problem-solving abilities and independence (Atamanchuk et al., 2020). A study published in the *Education 3-13* journal emphasizes that promoting independence helps children develop trust in themselves, enabling them to maximize learning opportunities (Cerino, 2023). Moreover, research discusses how physical activity can improve concentration, reduce anxiety, and enhance motor skills in young children, contributing to their overall independence. As a result, physical education positively affects preschoolers' emotional and social behavior. The results of the post-test showed that children became more independent and responsible (Changwei Wang, 2022). **Building Resilience**

The evaluation of the jumputan batik project revealed two key outcomes: First, children demonstrated the ability to complete tasks independently, utilizing creativity and learning discipline and confidence by attempting tasks without direct help. Second, they exhibited resilience when faced with challenges, learning to problem-solve and persevere even when initial difficulties arose. Finally, children showed adaptability and social growth by working collaboratively in groups, communicating, and helping peers. The project effectively met its goal of nurturing independence, with children adapting at their own pace and showcasing a willingness to take on and overcome new challenges. This success reflects growth in independence and lays a foundation for creativity, resilience, and teamwork.

The process of creating batik involves challenges that require problemsolving and perseverance. Children learn to overcome obstacles, such as mastering dyeing techniques, which builds resilience. This experiential learning approach enables them to develop critical thinking skills and adaptability (Wulida & Sapriya, 2024). Conversely, a study showed that learning to create Batik Jumputan positively impacted students' fine motor skills, resulting in notable enhancements (Izzah & Pamungkas, 2024).

Encouraging children's resilience from a young age plays a vital role in fostering their independence. Promoting resilience involves creating supportive environments that address psychological, social, and physical factors. A socioecological perspective positions child resilience within four important levels: individual, relationships, community, and society. Interventions at these levels can enhance a child's capacity to adapt and thrive independently (Pillay, 2023). Aligned with it, a critical analysis of national and international policy documents highlights the need for early educational frameworks that support resilience-building, thereby promoting children's independence and adaptability (Furu et al., 2023).

Overcoming Challenges

While the project successfully instilled independence, challenges such as limited resources and insufficient parental support were noted, affecting some children's ability to initiate tasks. In addition, children who have difficulty focusing are also obstacles to the learning process in the classroom.

Overall, the activity achieved the intended outcomes. However, some challenges remain in developing creative activities for early childhood, especially training in the spirit of independence. Addressing these challenges could further enhance children's independence.

While the project demonstrated results that align with expectations in fostering independence among children, challenges such as limited resources (e.g., lack of educational tools) and insufficient parental support were notable, impeding some children's ability to initiate tasks effectively. Additionally, attention difficulties among certain children posed obstacles to classroom learning.

These challenges reflect early childhood education literature findings, emphasizing the critical role of resources and parental engagement <u>(Cerino, 2023; Reynolds et al., 2022)</u>. Despite these hurdles, the activity met its intended outcomes, significantly improving children's independence.

One of the challenges is the lack of adequate support facilities, so teachers and students can only collect makeshift tools and materials that can be found around the house and school. It is in line with what Rahayu et al. found: one of the inhibiting factors in the implementation of activities to make Jumputan batik in early childhood education institutions is inadequate facilities and infrastructure (Rahayu et al., 2024).

Facilities and infrastructure can also affect the learning process. For instance, maker spaces are needed in kindergartens to enhance children's maker literacy and problem-solving skills <u>(Xiang et al., 2023)</u>. Makerspaces in

early childhood education institutions can provide young children with opportunities for tinkering, making, and hacking using various tools (<u>Marsh</u>, <u>2019</u>).

Makerspaces, collaborative environments where individuals engage in hands-on learning and creation, have been increasingly integrated into educational settings worldwide. In Indonesia, the concept has yet to be widely adopted in kindergartens. Makerspaces allow children to have 'maker agency' as they explore personal interests, acting independently and with volition (Marsh et al., 2019).

The child's condition and willingness to learn are the other factors that can affect the child's learning process (Mustaqim & Wahib, 2003). Even successful independence training requires consistent support from educators and parents, emphasizing the importance of a collaborative approach in early childhood development (Rozi et al., 2022).

Future initiatives should incorporate targeted solutions such as parent workshops to enhance engagement, resource-sharing strategies, and attention-training activities tailored to individual needs. Such measures could further optimize creative activities for early childhood education, fostering independence and contributing to a holistic learning environment.

These insights have important implications for educational policy and curriculum design, particularly in integrating community support and resource accessibility in early childhood programs.

CONCLUSION

Implementing the independence dimension within the Pancasila Student Profile Project has been effectively carried out, showcasing meticulous planning and execution by educators. Through integrating well-prepared modules and engaging activities, such as the batik-making project, children demonstrated significant growth in independence, creativity, and resilience. These results underscore the importance of embedding practical, culturally meaningful projects into early childhood education to instill essential life skills.

This study offers fresh insights into fostering independence in young learners and identifies critical factors influencing its development. The findings provide a practical framework for educators and lay the groundwork for future research to explore the long-term effects of such initiatives. Addressing challenges, such as limited resources and varying levels of parental support, will further optimize these programs, enabling broader scalability and impact across diverse educational settings.

This research contributes to understanding character development in early education, supporting the continued refinement and implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Project and ensuring its potential to cultivate independent, resilient, and creative future generations.

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