

# Revitalizing Elementary Education: The Impact of Characteristic Learning Development and P5 Implementation on Mitigating Learning Loss

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## ABSTRACT

This study analyzes strategies to reconstruct learning experiences in elementary schools, focusing on character development and the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) to mitigate learning loss. Conducted in Bogor, Jakarta, and Banyumas, this research used a phenomenological approach to explore participants' lived experiences, aligning with the study's focus on personal insights into learning loss impacts. Purposive sampling selected participants, including teachers, principals, and two students from each of the five schools, chosen for their direct engagement in character education and P5 activities. Data were collected via interviews, observations, and documentation, with credibility validated through triangulation. Findings reveal that learning loss impacts are significant and multifaceted, including declines in motivation, increased learning disparities, dropout risks, delays in reading, and decreases in academic performance and character. Effective character development was identified as involving positive reinforcement, a character-centered school culture, teacher modeling, and habitual practices. The P5 project, implemented through a project-based learning model, effectively integrated Pancasila values, fostering essential character traits such as perseverance, hard work, and adaptability alongside academic skills. The results highlight the P5 project's role in addressing learning loss by enhancing both academic and character growth. This approach provides practical insights for schools aiming to strengthen student resilience and adaptability. The study concludes that character development and P5 implementation can effectively reconstruct learning experiences in elementary education, supporting both academic recovery and character formation. These findings offer implications for educators and policymakers seeking comprehensive strategies to address learning loss in Indonesian schools.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted the global education sector, bringing unprecedented disruptions and challenges, particularly in Southeast Asia. Among the hardest-hit areas was the learning process itself, as education systems quickly shifted from offline to online formats, leading to a decline in instructional quality and effectiveness (Ji, DuBois, & Flay, 2021). This shift significantly increased the risk of "learning loss," a phenomenon marked by the erosion of academic knowledge and skills, which has been especially pronounced among elementary students in Indonesia (Farhan & Lismandasari, 2022). The pandemic's impact on education was vast, affecting nearly 90% of the world's student population and resulting in a massive educational setback, particularly for younger learners who rely heavily on structured, in-person learning environments to build foundational skills (Buffie et al., 2023; Gore et al., 2021). Addressing the issue of learning loss and revitalizing elementary education post-pandemic has become a pressing priority, necessitating innovative strategies that go beyond traditional academic recovery and include comprehensive approaches such as character development and the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5).

In addition to academic ability, students' mental conditions and character, such as learning motivation, discipline, and self-confidence, declined during the pandemic. The results of the study showed that the psychological impact of students on online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic included: (1) students felt bored with online learning after the first two weeks of learning from home; (2) considerable anxiety in students whose parents have low incomes, because they have to buy quotas to be able to participate in online learning; and (3) emotional disorders characterized by mood swings caused by too many tasks that students consider ineffective (Buffie, E. F., Adam, C., Zanna, L. F., & Kpodar, K., 2023). The results of other studies show that online learning during the pandemic has a psychological impact, resulting in 29% of students having an above-normal level of depression, 70% of students having an above-normal level of anxiety, and 46% of students having an above-normal level of stress (Maulana, H. A., 2021). Students with low economic backgrounds experience more severe learning loss in mathematics and literacy (Kuhfield, M., & Tarasawa, B., 2020). Online learning has the potential to cause learning loss. Learning loss is the loss of knowledge and skills in academic ability caused by the disruption of the learning process. Learning loss occurs a lot in reading and writing skills, as well as arithmetic. Students' reading ability during the pandemic has decreased significantly, especially for students in grades 2 and 4 (Lerkkanen, M. K., Pakarinen, E., Salminen, J., & Torppa, M., 2023).

The decline in achievement was significantly greater for students in schools facing relatively longer closures. It was seen that low-achieving students suffered significantly greater losses (Jakubowski, M., Gajderowicz, T., & Patrinos, H. A., 2023). In addition, the implementation of learning during the pandemic has had an impact on the low motivation of students to learn. This is because, during learning, teachers, students, parents, and educational units experience various obstacles such as limited facilities and skills in using technology, difficulties for students in understanding the material, learning support facilities, as well as the implementation of learning assessments and the participation of some students in learning during the pandemic (Fikriah, D., & Prabawanto, S., 2021). Therefore, post-pandemic recovery efforts need to target not only the academic aspect but also the strengthening of the character of elementary school students. Character education is the main issue in the world of education after the COVID-19 pandemic because character education is a solid main foundation for realizing a dignified generation of the nation (Pan, D. J., Yang, X., Lui, K. F. H., Lo, J. C. M., McBride, C., & Ho, C. S. H., 2021).

Character education in learning has a role for students grow good characters that can be realized in their social lives. This is very important so that students independently want to learn the materials and develop an attitude of responsibility towards the tasks given by the teacher during BDR (Intania, E. V., & Utama, S., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has presented great challenges to the world of education, with the most significant impact in the form of the phenomenon of learning loss or loss of learning. This phenomenon is characterized by a decrease in students' academic knowledge and skills due to disturbances in the normal learning process (Donnelly, R., & Patrinos, H. A., 2022). In addition, social restrictions and distance learning implemented during the pandemic also harmed the character

development aspect of students. In the face of this dual challenge, character learning has emerged as a promising approach, not only to overcome learning loss but also to strengthen students' character holistically.

Character learning, which integrates character development into the academic learning process, has shown significant potential in increasing student learning motivation, perseverance, and engagement (Jeynes, W. H., 2019). This approach not only aims to improve academic achievement, but also forms positive characters such as responsibility, integrity, and empathy. Furthermore, character learning also plays a role in the development of crucial social-emotional skills, such as self-management and social awareness, which are becoming increasingly important in the context of post-pandemic recovery (Mahoney, J. L., Weissberg, R. P., Greenberg, M. T., Dusenbury, L., Jagers, R. J., Niemi, K., & Yoder, N., 2021). In Indonesia, this approach is in line with the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) policy which aims to strengthen students' character through the harmonization of heart, taste, thought, and sports (Dalyono, B., & Lestariningsih, E. D., 2017).

Taking into account the complexity of post-pandemic educational challenges, character learning offers a comprehensive solution that not only addresses learning loss in academic aspects but also strengthens students' character and social-emotional skills. This is an important part of activities to reconstruct learning in primary schools post-pandemic help students recover from the impact of the pandemic, and prepare them for future challenges (Darling-Hammond, L., & Hyler, M. E., 2020).

Character education is a fundamental aspect of shaping the nation's next generation with integrity and quality. At the elementary school level, character formation is very crucial because it is the initial phase of the formation of a child's personality. In this context, the implementation of the Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) is very important. P5 aims to develop six main dimensions of student character, namely: faith, fear of God Almighty, and noble character; global diversity, cooperation, self-sufficiency; critical reasoning, and creativity (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

The implementation of P5 at the elementary level is important for several reasons. First, the elementary school age is the golden age of character formation, where the values instilled will leave an imprint and become the basis for future behavior (Ahmadi, F., Rochmad, R., Lestari, F. P., & Harjunowibowo, D., 2021). Second, through this project, elementary school students can understand and appreciate the values of Pancasila from an early age, strengthening their identity as Indonesian citizens (Azizah, F. N., 2019). Third, the dimensions in the Pancasila Student Profile are in line with the skills needed in the global era, such as critical thinking and creativity (Marsidin, S., 2022). Recent studies show that the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile in the elementary school curriculum can improve students' understanding of national values and their social skills (Aeiniq, N. D., & Alfiansyah, I., 2023).

Given the considerable impact of COVID-19 on both academic performance and student character development, this study focuses on exploring effective post-pandemic strategies to address these issues within Indonesia's elementary education system. Specifically, this research aims to investigate the role of character education, guided by the Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) or Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, in mitigating learning loss and promoting holistic student development. By integrating character values with academic learning, P5 offers a framework to foster resilience, motivation, and critical social-emotional skills, all of which are crucial for students recovering from the disruptions of the pandemic. This study will assess the effectiveness of P5's character education approach in rebuilding foundational academic skills, reinforcing positive behavioral traits, and enhancing students' social and emotional well-being. Ultimately, this research seeks to provide insights that can inform educators, policymakers, and stakeholders on best practices for supporting students in their recovery journey and preparing them to meet future challenges with a strengthened character and academic foundation.

## 2. METHODS

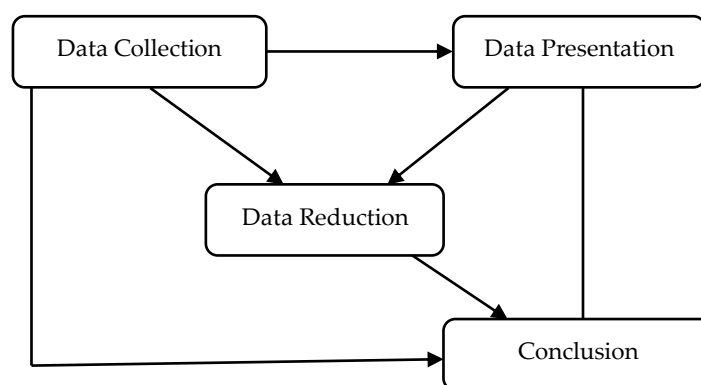
This study employs a qualitative approach using a phenomenological method, chosen for its suitability in exploring the unique and deeply personal experiences associated with character learning as a strategy to address learning loss post-COVID-19. Phenomenology is particularly appropriate because it

seeks to uncover the essence of a shared experience or phenomenon as it is consciously and personally lived by individuals (Suyanto, 2019). In this context, the implementation of character learning in the wake of the pandemic represents a complex educational experience that cannot be quantified but requires an in-depth understanding of how it impacts students, teachers, and school communities. Through phenomenology, this study aims to distill these individual experiences into a universal description of the essence of character learning as perceived by those directly involved. This approach enables a nuanced understanding of the psychological, social, and educational dimensions of character development and the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in the recovery from learning loss. Accordingly, data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations, allowing for a rich exploration of the lived realities of educators and students engaged in post-pandemic character education initiatives.

This study utilized purposive sampling to select participants strategically based on their roles and relevance to the research objectives. Participants included principals, teachers, and students from five schools each in Bogor, Jakarta, and Purwokerto. These cities were chosen to provide diverse perspectives on character education implementation, as they represent varying educational contexts within Indonesia: Jakarta, as the capital, offers insights from an urban, resource-rich environment; Bogor, a suburban area, reflects a mix of urban and rural educational challenges; and Purwokerto, a smaller city, illustrates the dynamics within more localized, rural settings.

Within each selected school, the principal, a teacher, and two students were interviewed, chosen because these individuals directly engage in the application and experience of character education programs, particularly the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). Principals provided insights into school-level implementation and policy, teachers shared firsthand experiences of classroom instruction and student engagement, and students offered perspectives on learning and character development post-pandemic.

Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of character education practices. Data validity was tested through triangulation, using several methods: (1) Method triangulation involved comparing information across different data sources; (2) Inter-researcher triangulation utilized multiple researchers in data collection and analysis to enhance reliability; (3) Data source triangulation involved cross-verifying information through interviews, observations, field notes, and photographic documentation; and (4) Theory triangulation compared findings with relevant theoretical frameworks. Data were then analyzed through interactive analysis (Miles & Huberman, 2014), facilitating an iterative process that refined insights across multiple validation stages.



**Figure 1.** Data Analysis Technique Chart

The data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation are recorded in field notes, which are divided into two parts: descriptive and reflective. Descriptive notes include objective information, i.e. about what the researcher sees, hears, and experiences directly, without involving the opinion or interpretation of the researcher regarding the observed phenomenon. Once the data is

collected, the next step is to reduce the data, select relevant and significant information, and focus on the data that can help in solving problems, finding findings, and answering research questions.

Data presentation can be in the form of writing, drawings, graphs, or tables, namely, combining information to describe the circumstances that occur. In this section, narratives, matrices, or graphs are made so that the information or data obtained is easy to master, both in whole and in certain parts of the research results. Furthermore, conclusion drawing is carried out during the research process to produce a provisional conclusion and continue with the conclusion.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews, questionnaires, and analysis of documents from three cities, namely Bogor, Jakarta, and Purwokerto, the following results were obtained.

#### 3.1. *Forms of Learning Loss Experienced*

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with several teachers and principals from three research locations, one of which was from the Principal of SDN Adipala 02, the results were obtained that there was a decrease in enthusiasm and desire to learn during teaching and learning activities carried out online.

*"Not a few students feel lazy and do not care about the development of their learning process. This desire to learn also affects their school achievement. The reason is that by not going to school, many students do not have a strong reason or motivation to study. When teachers usually teach, pay attention, and supervise students directly in class, the level of students' desire to learn is relatively more maintained."*

The impact of learning loss in Indonesia is both significant and multidimensional, affecting various aspects of student development. The findings highlight a substantial decline in learning motivation, as supported by research from Putra et al. (2020), which documented similar declines in student motivation during distance learning. Additionally, interviews with teachers revealed a widening of learning gaps, primarily due to discrepancies in access to learning resources and varying levels of family support. This aligns with Collier-Murayama's (2023) study, which underscores the pandemic's role in exacerbating educational inequalities in Indonesia.

Furthermore, the risk of school dropout has increased, driven by economic hardship and student disengagement from online learning. This finding emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to prevent dropouts, as noted by Suryahadi et al. (2020) in their research on the intersection of COVID-19, poverty, and education. Observations also highlighted delays in reading abilities, particularly in early-grade students, necessitating urgent, specific strategies for academic recovery, echoing Shohel et al. (2023) in their recommendations for post-pandemic learning recovery in developing nations.

Beyond academic skills, there has been a general decline in students' academic abilities, with teachers observing significant gaps between curriculum expectations and students' actual competencies. This reinforces the need for adaptive curriculum adjustments, as suggested by Suarmika et al. (2022) in their research on learning recovery strategies for Indonesia. In addition, changes in student character, including decreases in discipline and manners, along with increased dependence on gadgets, were commonly reported by participants. This reflects findings from Sari and Maningtyas (2020), which highlight the importance of collaboration between schools and parents in fostering character development during remote learning.

Overall, the study illustrates that the impact of learning loss extends beyond academic deficits to include social-emotional aspects and shifts in students' character. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic and collaborative approach among schools, families, and communities. Recovery strategies should thus encompass not only academic catch-up initiatives but also character education and

psychosocial support to support students comprehensively in the post-pandemic educational landscape.

### **3.2. Overcoming Learning Loss through the Development of Character Learning**

Based on the results of in-depth interviews and observations of schools in three regions, the school's efforts to develop character through a comprehensive approach to developing student character as part of efforts to recover learning loss. The analysis shows several key strategies applied in the development of character learning, as follows.

#### **3.2.1 Positive character development habits**

Schools that implement various habituation activities to instill character values such as discipline, religiosity, and social concern show a systematic and integrated approach to the formation of students' character. This habituation is an important strategy in character education because it allows these values to become part of students' daily routines so that they are effectively embedded in them. Discipline, as one of the main values, is taught through daily routines such as enforcing class rules, time management, and responsibility for tasks. These activities help students develop good habits that are essential for their academic success and social behavior. Religiosity is strengthened through activities that integrate spiritual aspects of school life, such as joint prayers, celebrations of religious holidays, and activities based on religious values. Social care, on the other hand, is instilled through activities such as community service, community service, and social projects that involve students in helping their communities.

This statement is in line with what was made by Atmazaki, A., Agustina, A., Indriyani, V., & Abdurahman, A. (2020), that habituation has a significant impact on the formation of the character of elementary school students. This research shows that by implementing regular activities that emphasize values such as discipline, religiosity, and social care, schools can strengthen the internalization of character values in students. Overall, habituation in school activities is an effective strategy to instill character values in students. Through this habituation, students not only learn about character values but also experience their application in their daily lives. It supports the continued development of character and creates a school environment that supports the moral and social growth of students.

#### **3.2.2 Creating a school culture with character**

One of the school cultures with character encountered in one of the schools, namely SD Negeri 4 Gunungwuled, is through the implementation of programs such as "Semangat Pagi" reflecting the school's commitment to creating an environment that supports the development of students' character. The program typically involves morning activities designed to motivate students and instill positive values from the beginning of the school day. By involving activities such as group prayers, motivational talks, or physical activity, the program aims to start the day with an atmosphere that builds spirit, discipline, and other character values.

This approach is in line with a study conducted by Dini, J. P. A. U. (2022) which emphasizes the importance of school culture in shaping student character in Indonesia. A positive and supportive school culture can play a key role in the formation of students' character. In this context, the "Morning Spirit" program serves as a tool to build a strong school culture, where values such as discipline, responsibility, and work spirit are emphasized daily. The "Morning Spirit" program integrates these elements by focusing attention on morning activities that refresh and motivate students. Activities like this not only increase students' motivation and enthusiasm but also create an atmosphere that is consistent with the values they want to develop.

Overall, the implementation of programs such as "Semangat Pagi" is a strategic step in creating a school environment that supports character development. It demonstrates an understanding of the importance of a supportive and character-building school culture. The program not only motivates

students but also integrates positive values into their daily routines, reinforcing the formation of the desired character.

The results of interviews and observations at SD Negeri 2 Wlahar showed that character development is carried out through the application of character according to the profile of Pancasila students. Steps to overcome *learning loss* in character education: (1) creating a school culture with character by emphasizing discipline and conducting habituation programs at school on a routine basis; (2) implementing learning with character following the current curriculum; (3) activate the Tri Education Center in our school environment. Activating parent class associations and holding parenting programs for student guardians. Collaborate with community leaders to jointly support education in the school environment, and (4) establish good relationships with all stakeholders so that educational goals in our schools can be well achieved.

The findings from SD Negeri 2 Wlahar show a holistic approach to developing student character that is in line with the Pancasila student profile. The Morning Spirit Program with its various components reflects comprehensive efforts in overcoming character learning loss. This approach is in line with the research of Saidek, A. R., & Islami, R. (2016), which emphasizes the importance of integrating character values in school routines to form a positive school culture. The involvement of parents and the community in the Tri-Center Pendidikan reflects the concept of an educational ecosystem that emphasizes the importance of collaboration between schools, families, and communities in character education (Wuryandani, W., Maftuh, B., & Budimansyah, D., (2014).

### 3.2.3 Teacher example

The findings from interviews with teachers in Bogor Regency reveal a clear awareness of their role in mitigating character-based learning loss experienced during the pandemic. One teacher emphasized:

*“As a teacher, it is our duty to pay attention to the character of children. We must instill good character in students. The learning loss in character education during the pandemic is a challenge, but we can address it by setting good examples in speech and behavior, correcting students who use inappropriate language, and modeling respectful communication and behavior.”*

This insight underscores teachers' awareness of their impact on student character formation and their commitment to reinforcing character education through direct modeling.

This emphasis on teacher modeling aligns with findings in the literature, which highlight the role of teachers as key influences in shaping student character. According to Hawa (2020), teachers serve as powerful role models, impacting not only students' intellectual growth but also their moral and ethical development. In line with Steinmann, Klug, and Maier (2018), the data from this study demonstrate that the teacher's example is crucial to fostering moral motivation and ethical behavior in students. Observations in classrooms further support this, with teachers regularly reinforcing respectful language and positive behavior through daily interactions, underscoring their dual role as educators and ethical guides.

This approach highlights the necessity of a holistic educational strategy, where cognitive development is integrated with character education. Teachers are viewed not only as facilitators of knowledge but as role models whose behavior and interactions provide students with frameworks for positive social behavior and ethical conduct. The findings affirm that character education, when actively embodied by educators, is instrumental in addressing learning loss, fostering resilience, and promoting well-rounded development in students. This holistic approach aligns with current educational theory, which advocates for character development as an integral component of a comprehensive education.

### 3.2.4 Getting used to it

The results of interviews and observations at SD Negeri 1 Gebangsari concluded that the school's efforts to restore students' character include habituation in intra, ko, and extracurricular activities. Character development through habituation by: 1) leaving early to enter school early. All students are

lined up in the yard doing morning apples. Every Monday carries out a flag ceremony, in rotation according to the picket schedule, the teacher leads the morning apple. Singing the national anthem of Indonesia Raya, followed by chants and applause to add to the enthusiasm. The morning apple ended by praying together for useful knowledge and understanding as a form of religious character; 2) After the morning apple, the children read Asmaul Husna and short letters. Then, sing the national anthem of the country then participate in learning; 3) when the children relax so that their minds are refreshed, continue the dhuha prayer in turns between classes; 4) every Friday students do infak to practice generosity and social care; 5) Every time students come and go, they are required to picket clean the classroom in groups and take turns according to the schedule. The principle applied is "come clean, go home clean" to train togetherness, cohesiveness, and care for the environment; 6) the nature of honesty and independence is fostered; and 7) other characters are restored through scout extracurricular education, reciting activities during the day with one class.

The findings from SD Negeri 1 Gebangsari show a comprehensive approach to restoring students' character through habituation in various aspects of school life. This approach is in line with the research of Eko, H. P. (2022), which emphasizes the importance of integrating character education in the curriculum and daily practice, which is reflected in school programs such as morning apples, asmaul husna reading, and extracurricular activities. Tanti, T., Darmaji, D., Astalini, A., Kurniawan, D. A., & Iqbal, M. (2021) emphasized that the effectiveness of character education depends on the consistency of the application of values, as shown through the habituation of discipline, honesty, and environmental concern in these schools.

### ***3.3. Character Development of Elementary School Students in Overcoming Learning Loss through P5***

Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation from three respondent regions, it was concluded that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum through the Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila was very significant in overcoming learning loss. The Independent Curriculum in Indonesia opens up significant opportunities for student character development by prioritizing student-centered learning. This approach encourages students to optimize their potential through collaboration, critical thinking, and the development of a sense of responsibility and confidence. Thus, this curriculum not only focuses on the academic aspect but also forms a strong character in students (Rantauwati, H. S., (2014).

Activities carried out in several schools related to P5 are the application of the Project-based learning (PjBL) model. The project-based learning model has been proven to be effective in developing students' character. Through the implementation of the project, students not only improve their academic skills, but also develop important characteristics such as hard work, perseverance, and adaptability. The process of cooperation, problem-solving, and taking initiative in these projects contributes to the formation of a holistic character. Role-playing activities and group activities offer valuable opportunities for students to develop empathy, tolerance, and communication skills. Through real-life situation simulations, students learn to understand other people's perspectives and work together in teams. These activities also encourage students to think critically and act with integrity, thus helping to form a strong and ethical character (Mahalia, M., Sutrisno, S., & Rofi'ah, F. Z. (2023). The integration of Pancasila values in daily learning is an important aspect of the development of student character in Indonesia. Values such as cooperation, social justice, and a just and civilized humanity can be implemented through concrete examples and direct practice. This approach helps students internalize these values and apply them in their daily lives, thus forming a strong character and integrity.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, the implementation of PjBL in the context of (P5) is carried out through several stages as follows.

### 3.3.1 Integrated Project Design

Teachers design projects that integrate Pancasila values with learning materials. For example, the "Environmental Heroes" project combines science learning about ecosystems with the values of cooperation and concern for the environment. Research by Suttriso, S., & Rofi'ah, F. Z. (2023), shows that the integration of character values in thematic learning can increase the understanding and internalization of values in elementary school students. Designing an Integrated Project in the context of Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile is a strategic step to overcome the learning loss of elementary school students' character after the pandemic.

The design of an integrated project that combines Pancasila values with learning materials offers a holistic approach to education that is both in-depth and contextual. In the context of Indonesia, where national identity and Pancasila values are very important, this approach not only enriches students' academic understanding but also shapes character according to local culture. The implementation of the "Environmental Heroes" project effectively illustrates this integration by combining learning about ecosystems with the values of cooperation and concern for the environment. Through activities such as studying local ecosystems, identifying environmental problems, designing solutions, and carrying out concrete actions, students not only deepen their scientific understanding but also learn to apply Pancasila values in practical contexts.

The project explicitly integrates Pancasila values such as divinity, humanity, unity, populism, and social justice in every stage of the activity, providing a strong context for character learning. Thus, this project can contribute to overcoming possible character learning loss, as proposed by (Suttriso, S., & Rofi'ah, F. Z., 2023). Through relevant and meaningful projects, students' motivation to learn increases, values are better understood and internalized, and students' social skills develop through group work. The teaching methods used, including group discussions, field observations, structured reflections, and presentation of results, are designed to maximize the impact of learning and student engagement.

The assessments in this project include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor assessments to provide a comprehensive picture of the student's achievements. These assessments include knowledge tests, behavioral observations during group work, evaluation of the final product, and student self-reflection. The role of teachers as facilitators is very important in designing projects, facilitating discussions about Pancasila values, providing support when facing difficulties, and being an example of expected behavior. Parent and community involvement also amplifies the project's impact, with parents supporting tasks at home and the community providing information and partners in environmental action (Winarti, N., Maula, L. H., Amalia, A. R., & Pratiwi, N. L. A., 2022).

### 3.3.2 Presentations and Feedback

Based on the findings, the application of PjBL can overcome learning loss through learning that activates students, namely with student activities to present the results of their projects and receive feedback from teachers and peers. This helps overcome learning loss in terms of confidence and communication skills. Fauzi, I., & Arisetyawan, A. (2020), found that regular presentation practice can improve the confidence and speaking skills of elementary school students. Effective communication skills are essential skills that are required in various aspects of life. The presentation of the project results provides a platform for students to hone these communication skills. The presentation of the results of P5 can improve student communication, especially in terms of (1) Development of Verbal Skills: When presenting a project, students learn to compose and convey messages clearly and effectively. This includes organizing their ideas, using appropriate language, and conveying the message in a way that is easy for the audience to understand; (2) Listening and Responding Skills: Presentations also involve interaction with the audience, which teaches students to listen to feedback and respond well to questions. This ability is essential in effective communication and helps students to be good listeners and answer appropriately; and (3) Non-Verbal Skills: During presentations, students also practice non-verbal skills such as eye contact, facial expressions, and body language. These skills play an important role in conveying messages and building relationships with audiences.

The development of communication skills through project presentations is an important aspect of modern education, encompassing three main components: verbal skills, listening and responding skills, and non-verbal skills. Verbal skills developed through the preparation and delivery of messages clearly and effectively are in line with the findings of Cho, G., Hwang, H., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2020), which shows that presentation exercises improve students' ability to organize and convey ideas in a structured manner. Meanwhile, the listening and responding aspects honed during the presentation question and answer session emphasized the importance of two-way interaction in developing communication skills comprehensively (Iryanto, N. D., 2021). Meanwhile, Riswandi, D. (2018) highlighted the importance of constructive feedback in the presentation process to improve students' confidence and communication quality. This holistic approach to the development of communication skills through project presentations reflects the need for comprehensive communication competencies in the modern era.

While this study provides valuable insights, there were notable challenges. Variability in the implementation of character education and P5 across different schools affected consistency in results, as each institution had unique approaches based on its resources and local context. Additionally, the data collection methods, primarily relying on interviews and observations, may have introduced subjective biases due to the interpretative nature of phenomenological analysis. Future studies could benefit from more standardized metrics or longitudinal assessments to quantify changes in student behavior and performance over time.

Overall, the study finds that addressing learning loss requires a balanced, holistic approach that integrates both academic recovery and character education. Schools that actively cultivate a character-focused environment through consistent routines, teacher modeling, and values-based projects see improvements not only in students' academic engagement but also in social skills and personal resilience. This study emphasizes that character education is not only essential for addressing pandemic-induced learning loss but is also integral to forming well-rounded, socially responsible individuals.

The findings of this study underline the need for education policy in Indonesia to prioritize character education as a core component of the post-pandemic recovery framework. Policymakers, educators, and school administrators should focus on developing collaborative programs that strengthen connections between families, schools, and communities to support character education. Visual aids, such as summary tables and conceptual models, could further help educators understand and implement the recommended strategies, particularly in diverse educational settings across Indonesia.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research aimed to examine the impact of learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic on elementary students in Indonesia and to evaluate strategies for recovery through character education, particularly the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). The findings reveal that learning loss has had a substantial and multi-dimensional impact, resulting in decreased motivation, widened learning gaps, higher dropout risks, delayed literacy skills, overall academic decline, and shifts in student character. To address these issues, schools adopted a comprehensive character education approach that includes positive character habituation, cultivating a school culture with strong values, teacher modeling, and consistent routines. These strategies align with the goals of P5, which uses project-based learning to integrate Pancasila values, helping students develop critical skills such as perseverance, adaptability, and teamwork. The implementation of P5 was found effective in enhancing learning motivation, social skills, and communication through structured projects and presentations. Practically, this study suggests that schools, policymakers, and educators emphasize collaboration among schools, families, and communities to create a supportive ecosystem for character building and recovery. Moving forward, these findings highlight the need for consistent,

values-based programs, comprehensive assessments, and the active involvement of teachers and parents. Further research could explore the long-term effects of P5 on academic outcomes and assess its adaptability across diverse educational contexts in Indonesia.

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