

# Mapping character and competency education in Indonesian primary schools: A bibliometric and systematic review of the Pancasila Student Profile

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**Abstract:** This study integrates bibliometric analysis and systematic review to comprehensively map research trends and pedagogical practices concerning the *Pancasila Student Profile* (P5) in Indonesian primary education. A bibliometric analysis of 40 peer-reviewed articles published between 2021 and 2025 reveals a rapid expansion of P5 research, predominantly emphasizing character and culture-based education models. However, limited attention is given to global competencies such as digital literacy, critical thinking, and citizenship. The systematic review of 15 empirical studies further indicates that most P5 implementations adopt folktale-based learning, ecoliteracy projects, and digital literacy initiatives. Despite their relevance, these interventions are generally short-term, target only partial dimensions of P5, and lack standardized assessment frameworks for affective and dispositional outcomes. Teacher professional development, longitudinal evaluation, and scalability across diverse school contexts remain underexplored. This study contributes to the theoretical and practical discourse on character and competency education by highlighting the urgent need for adaptive and holistic educational models that integrate local wisdom with global learning competencies under the *Merdeka Curriculum* framework.

**Keywords:** *Pancasila student profile*, *Merdeka curriculum*, Character education, Bibliometric analysis, Systematic review.

## Introduction

In the era of rapid technological advancement and growing global interdependence, education is increasingly expected to cultivate learners who are academically competent, socially responsible, emotionally resilient, and ethically grounded (Naidu, 2019; Yao et al., 2025). This transformation reflects a global shift from standardized performance to holistic education, aligned with the principles of transformative citizenship and competency-based learning that emphasize adaptable and value-driven individuals (Murtozaeva & Kunlin, 2025; Rachman et al., 2024). Responding to this development, Indonesia introduced the *Pancasila Student Profile* (P5) as the philosophical and pedagogical foundation of the *Merdeka Curriculum*. P5 seeks to develop students'

faith, appreciation of diversity, collaboration, critical reasoning, creativity, and environmental awareness, positioning character education as a vital component of national progress (Solehuddin et al., 2024; Zein et al., 2023). However, despite its forward-looking vision, P5 implementation in primary schools remains inconsistent due to conventional pedagogy, limited teacher preparation, and varying institutional commitment (Rachman et al., 2024).

Existing research reveals several gaps that limit P5's transformative potential. Most studies still emphasize moral and cultural values while paying little attention to competencies essential for 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning such as digital literacy, global citizenship, and critical consciousness (Prasetyarini et al., 2025). Empirical works also tend to be localized, short-term, and descriptive, offering little

insight into longitudinal impact or system-wide integration (Fauziah et al., 2023; Suwandi et al., 2025). Moreover, few studies connect P5 with broader educational frameworks like education for sustainable development and social-emotional learning (Ding et al., 2024; Rear, 2019). As a result, current literature does not yet establish a coherent understanding of how character formation, competence development, and civic values are integrated within Indonesia's primary education context.

This situation reflects what Solehuddin et al. (2024) describe as "insular scholarship," in which studies on P5 remain largely confined within national boundaries and rarely engage with international theoretical discussions. Such epistemic isolation limits innovation and prevents P5 from contributing meaningfully to global debates on character and citizenship education. Methodological inconsistencies and the lack of cumulative synthesis further hinder the development of an evidence-based framework capable of guiding educational policy and practice. A more comprehensive and integrated analysis is therefore necessary to consolidate fragmented evidence and situate P5 within the global educational landscape.

To address these challenges, this study combines bibliometric analysis and systematic review to map and synthesize research on the P5 in Indonesian primary education. The approach provides both a structural overview of research development and a detailed examination of pedagogical practices. Specifically, this study seeks to answer two questions: (RQ1) What are the emerging research trends, thematic focuses, and knowledge structures in studies on P5 within primary education? and (RQ2) What pedagogical models, instructional strategies, and learning outcomes have been reported, and what research gaps remain? By integrating macro-level mapping with micro-level synthesis, this study offers a novel contribution to the discourse on character and competency education and supports Indonesia's educational transformation toward a more holistic and globally relevant paradigm.

## Materials and Methods

This study adopted an integrated design combining bibliometric analysis and a systematic review to provide a comprehensive understanding of the P5 research landscape in Indonesian primary education. The bibliometric component identified macro-level publication patterns, thematic developments, and collaborative structures, while the systematic review synthesized pedagogical models, instructional strategies, and learning outcomes derived from empirical studies. This dual-method approach aligns with contemporary recommendations in educational research for combining large-scale mapping with in-depth qualitative synthesis to capture both structural trends and conceptual insights (Derviş, 2020; Donthu et al., 2021). All data were sourced exclusively from the Scopus database (<http://www.scopus.com>), which was selected for its multidisciplinary coverage, consistent metadata, and robust indexing standards that ensure replicability and reliability (Baas et al., 2020). By integrating both approaches within a single analytic framework, this study provides a systematic and multidimensional portrayal of how P5 has been conceptualized and implemented in Indonesian primary education.

### Bibliometric analysis

The bibliometric analysis was designed to examine the structural and thematic evolution of P5-related research published between 2021 and 2025. The data collection process involved searching Scopus using a combination of key terms, including "Pancasila Student Profile," "P5 project," and "Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila." Filters were applied to include only peer-reviewed journal articles written in English and categorized under Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Psychology, and Multidisciplinary Education. This procedure yielded forty relevant documents that formed the dataset for quantitative analysis. The timeframe was intentionally limited to capture research outputs emerging after the official implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in 2021, ensuring that all retrieved works reflected the most current phase of Indonesia's educational reform.

All bibliometric analyses were conducted using the Bibliometrix package in RStudio through the Biblioshiny web interface (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). The analytical focus included the identification of publication dynamics, leading authors, institutional affiliations, and co-authorship networks to reveal the structure of academic collaboration in P5 scholarship. Keyword co-occurrence mapping was performed to visualize conceptual relationships and thematic concentrations, employing the association strength normalization method with a minimum occurrence threshold of five. These analyses collectively provided a transparent and replicable overview of how research on the P5 has developed in terms of scope, productivity, and thematic direction within the field of primary education.

### **Systematic review**

The systematic review complemented the bibliometric mapping by synthesizing detailed pedagogical insights and empirical findings from studies implementing the P5 framework in classroom practice. The review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines (Haddaway et al., 2022; Page et al., 2021), comprising four core stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. An additional data-extraction phase was added to enable structured coding and thematic synthesis. This component specifically addressed the second research question (RQ2), which focused on identifying pedagogical models, instructional strategies, and reported learning outcomes associated with the implementation of P5 projects in primary schools.

#### *Identification*

The identification phase began with a comprehensive literature search within Scopus using the same key terms as those applied in the bibliometric analysis. The search was refined to articles published between 2021 and 2025 in English, classified under education-related disciplines, and representing final publication stages. This process initially produced forty records, which were exported into Microsoft Excel for data organization and screening.

#### *Screening*

During the screening stage, inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to ensure methodological consistency and topical relevance. Articles were included if they explicitly discussed the P5 in the context of primary education and were empirical or conceptual works published in peer-reviewed journals. Non-English papers, conference proceedings, and duplicate records were excluded. After this process, twenty-five articles remained eligible for full-text assessment.

#### *Eligibility*

The eligibility stage involved reviewing the full texts to confirm conceptual alignment with the objectives of this study. Articles that mentioned P5 without addressing its pedagogical implementation or learner outcomes were excluded. Following this evaluation, fifteen articles met the criteria for final inclusion. The complete flow of article selection is illustrated in Figure 1, which presents the PRISMA process used to ensure transparency and replicability.

#### *Data extraction and analysis*

Data extraction and analysis were conducted through a structured framework focusing on four analytical dimensions: instructional design and pedagogical approaches, targeted learning outcomes across cognitive, affective, and dispositional domains, classroom implementation strategies, and challenges or research gaps identified by the authors. Two independent reviewers carried out the coding process, resolving discrepancies through discussion to ensure reliability and minimize interpretive bias. Due to methodological heterogeneity among the included studies, a narrative synthesis was employed rather than a quantitative meta-analysis. The synthesis process combined descriptive coding with thematic interpretation, supported by cross-references to bibliometric trends to integrate macro and micro-level findings. This analytical convergence enabled a comprehensive understanding of how P5 has been explored across empirical, conceptual, and pedagogical dimensions in Indonesian primary education.

## Results and Discussion

### Research trends, thematic evolution, and knowledge structures of P5 studies primary education

Research on the P5 in primary education has expanded rapidly between 2021 and 2025, marking the emergence of a distinct academic focus within Indonesia’s educational reform agenda. As illustrated in Figure 1, the number of publications increased from one article in 2021 to sixteen in 2025, totaling forty studies with an estimated annual growth rate of 100 percent. This upward trajectory reflects growing scholarly attention to P5 as both a conceptual framework and an instructional model for strengthening character and citizenship education aligned with the *Merdeka Curriculum*. Authorship analysis reveals an increasingly collaborative landscape, with 164 scholars contributing to forty publications and an average of 4.1 co-authors per article, indicating expanding research networks and institutional cooperation. Despite this encouraging trend, only ten percent of the studies involved international partnerships, suggesting that while P5 scholarship is gaining momentum domestically, its global engagement remains limited. Overall, these findings demonstrate a significant acceleration of research productivity and thematic consolidation around P5, underscoring its strategic importance in shaping Indonesia’s vision of holistic and globally relevant primary education.

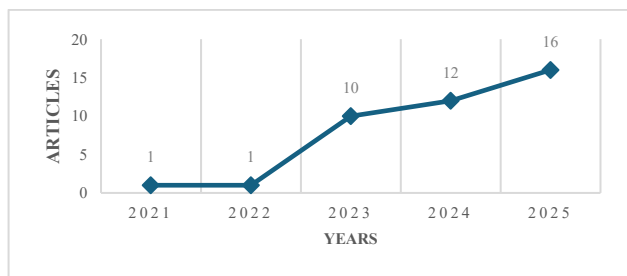


Figure 1. Annual scientific production

The thematic evolution of P5 research reflects not only the expansion of publication output but also a maturing intellectual direction within the field. As shown in Figure 2, early studies published between 2021 and 2022 predominantly addressed general educational values such as leadership, character formation, and extracurricular activities, reflecting

an initial emphasis on moral and behavioral dimensions of schooling. From 2023 onward, the discourse became increasingly diverse, incorporating culturally embedded concepts such as local wisdom, civic education, and the P5 itself, alongside policy-oriented themes including the *Merdeka Curriculum* and the Independent Curriculum. By 2025, the thematic focus had further broadened to encompass issues of 21<sup>st</sup>-century education, student well-being, social sciences, and classroom practice. This progression indicates a clear interdisciplinary convergence between character education, cultural identity, and future competencies. The steady diversification of themes suggests that P5 scholarship has evolved from a narrow character-based agenda into a more integrative research domain that connects values education with broader concerns of equity, inclusion, and global relevance.

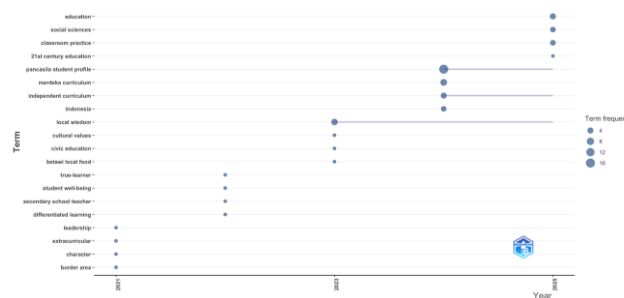
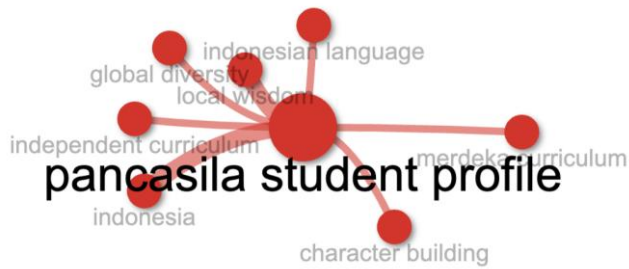


Figure 2. Trend topic

The co-occurrence network analysis (Figure 3) further reinforces the evolving intellectual architecture of P5 scholarship by visualizing its conceptual interconnections. The P5 emerges as the central node within the network, directly linked to dominant clusters such as *Merdeka Curriculum*, character building, and local wisdom. This configuration underscores P5’s pivotal role as an integrating framework that bridges educational policy, cultural heritage, and values-based pedagogy within Indonesia’s broader transformation agenda. The surrounding nodes, which include global diversity, Indonesian language, independent curriculum, and civic education, illustrate an expanding academic orientation that blends national identity with global educational discourse. This relational pattern highlights P5’s intellectual trajectory from a culturally grounded initiative toward a multidimensional paradigm that integrates cultural

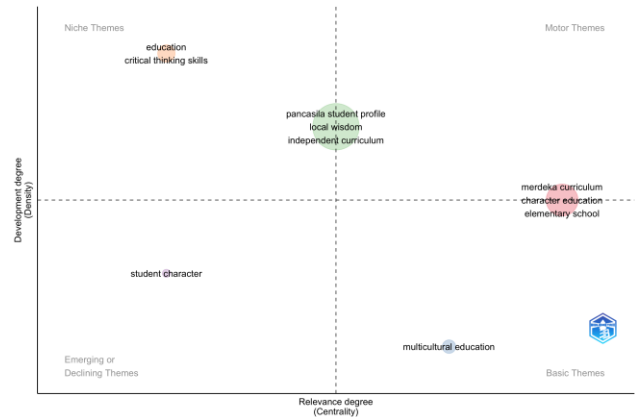
identity, multilingual competence, and adaptive learning policies within primary education. Collectively, these connections signify a more cohesive and globally resonant research ecosystem, positioning P5 not merely as a curriculum component but as a unifying construct in Indonesia’s pursuit of holistic and future-ready education.



**Figure 3.** Co-occurrence network

The thematic map analysis (Figure 4) extends the conceptual visualization by categorizing research clusters according to their centrality and density, revealing the structural composition of established and emerging themes within P5 scholarship. The analysis identifies *Pancasila Student Profile*, local wisdom, and independent curriculum as core or “motor” themes that are both highly developed and central to the ongoing research discourse. These clusters represent the intellectual backbone of current studies, reflecting strong alignment between Indonesia’s educational policies and culturally grounded pedagogical innovation. In proximity, character education, *Merdeka Curriculum*, and elementary school appear within the same quadrant, underscoring their strategic relevance to curriculum reform and holistic learning design. In contrast, critical thinking skills and education are positioned as niche themes, indicating specialized discussions that, while methodologically robust, remain peripheral to the dominant research stream and thus require further integration into broader educational frameworks. Meanwhile, student character appears as an emerging or possibly declining theme, suggesting that earlier emphases on moral development are being reframed within newer pedagogical paradigms centered on competence, adaptability, and 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills. Collectively, this thematic configuration illustrates the intellectual diversification of P5 research, marking a transition from value-centered inquiry

toward a more integrative and future-oriented discourse that bridges policy, culture, and pedagogy.

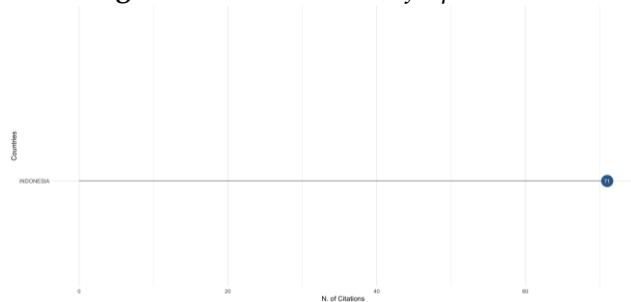


**Figure 4.** Thematic map

Geographically, P5 research remains highly concentrated within Southeast Asia, as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6. Indonesia dominates the field with 157 publications and 71 citations, positioning itself as the primary hub of P5 scholarship and policy-driven educational research. Malaysia follows distantly with four publications, while the United States contributes only a single study, indicating minimal global engagement beyond the regional context. This geographical pattern underscores the epistemic insularity of P5 research, in which both scientific production and citation activities predominantly occur within national boundaries. Such localization reflects the policy-specific and culturally embedded nature of P5 as an Indonesian innovation. However, it also highlights the limited diffusion of its conceptual framework into the wider global education discourse. The concentration of scholarship within Southeast Asia suggests that, while P5 has achieved substantial domestic recognition, its international visibility remains nascent. These findings emphasize the need to strengthen transnational academic collaboration, diversify authorship networks, and promote cross-contextual studies to elevate P5 from a nationally embedded curriculum reform into a globally acknowledged model of values-based and competency-driven education.



**Figure 5.** Countries' scientific production



**Figure 6.** Most cited countries

Overall, this bibliometric mapping provides a comprehensive overview of the structural, conceptual, and thematic development of P5 scholarship while simultaneously revealing persistent gaps in global visibility, interdisciplinary collaboration, and policy translation. These findings underscore both the growing maturity and the remaining fragmentation of the field, thereby establishing a critical foundation for the subsequent systematic synthesis that examines pedagogical models, instructional strategies, and learning outcomes in greater depth.

#### ***Pedagogical models, instructional strategies, and learning outcomes in P5 research***

This systematic review synthesized 15 primary studies on the implementation of the P5 in Indonesian primary education, revealing diverse yet predominantly culture-based pedagogical innovations conceptualized in an integrated framework (Figure 7). Most studies employed qualitative and mixed-method designs, focusing on localized instructional models aligned with P5's six dimensions. Suwandi et al. (2025) used folktale-based learning to cultivate faith, cooperation, and creativity, while Rochmiyati et al. (2024) implemented genre-based digital reading to promote literacy and moral education through digital storytelling. Siswanto et al. (2025) introduced the Transformative Reflexive Empowering Character Building (TREC) model, achieving a 0.75

N-Gain score in reflective character learning, and Hidayah et al. (2024) embedded numeracy-integrated P5 strategies in mathematics instruction, enhancing engagement and numeracy competence. Project-based and ecoliteracy-focused approaches also emerged, such as Vioreza et al. (2023) with local food projects to promote environmental awareness, and Muhardis (2023) using Minangkabau narratives to teach independence and cultural identity. Taneo and Madu (2023) integrated traditional house learning to foster social cooperation, integrity, and religious moderation, while Fauziah et al. (2023) extended P5 practices to vocational contexts, emphasizing local wisdom integration across educational levels. The reported learning outcomes span cognitive, affective, and social domains, including critical thinking, literacy, and numeracy (Hidayah et al., 2024; Rochmiyati et al., 2024), tolerance, religious moderation, and ecological awareness (Rifki et al., 2024; Vioreza et al., 2023; Zakso et al., 2021), as well as teamwork and leadership skills (Siswanto et al., 2025; Taneo & Madu, 2023). A large-scale study by Solehuddin et al. (2024), involving 2,755 students across 17 provinces, reported significant improvements in hope, optimism, and social welfare, illustrating P5's broader psychosocial impact.

Despite these promising innovations, several critical gaps persist. Most studies are short-term pilots, lacking longitudinal data to capture P5's sustained impact over time (e.g., Siswanto et al., 2025; Zakso et al., 2021). Many focus on isolated competencies without integrating the full six-dimension framework (e.g., Muhardis, 2023; Suwandi et al., 2025), and the assessment of affective and dispositional outcomes remains limited, relying primarily on qualitative reflections or simple pre-post tests (e.g., Hasanah et al., 2022; Hidayah et al., 2024). Additionally, few studies address teacher professional development (Fauziah et al., 2023; Taneo & Madu, 2023), leaving gaps in educator readiness for daily P5 integration. There is also minimal attention to scalability and policy-level monitoring, which are crucial for sustaining P5 initiatives beyond localized contexts. Collectively, these findings suggest that while P5 implementation fosters culturally grounded pedagogical innovation, future research must prioritize systemic integration, comprehensive assessment models, teacher capacity

building, and sustainable frameworks to ensure the P5 becomes a transformative force in Indonesian education.

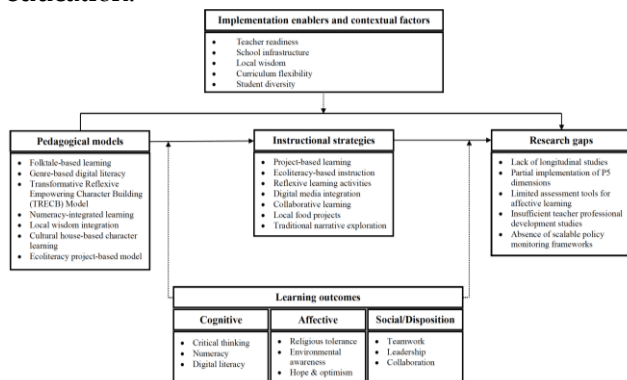


Figure 7. Integration of the P5 implementation model

**Discussion**

The rapid growth of P5 research between 2021 and 2025 reflects a pivotal shift in Indonesia’s primary education landscape, positioning holistic student development as a national priority. However, despite this surge, the current body of research reveals a tension between P5’s transformative aspirations and its conservative implementation. The dominance of cultural and moral education themes such as local wisdom, character building, and independent curriculum underscores an epistemic trajectory rooted in local identity reinforcement, potentially limiting P5’s integration into broader global discourses on sustainability, digital literacy, and civic engagement. Although concepts like 21<sup>st</sup>-century education and student well-being have started to emerge, they remain peripheral, mirroring what Santosa et al. (2025) describe as "epistemic insularity." Geographically, P5 studies are overwhelmingly localized, with 157 out of 162 publications produced by Indonesian scholars and minimal cross-border collaboration. Unlike frameworks such as Social Emotional Learning (SEL) or UNESCO’s Global Citizenship Education, P5 has yet to participate in international educational dialogues. The critical question, therefore, is whether P5 will remain a locally bounded model or evolve into a global pedagogical contribution that harmonizes cultural specificity with universal competencies.

At the methodological level, the current research corpus is heavily dominated by short-term, qualitative interventions and pilot studies, with

little attention to scalability or longitudinal impact. Most of the 15 studies synthesized focus on fragmented dimensions of P5, emphasizing discrete competencies like tolerance, ecoliteracy, or creativity without fostering integrative models. For instance, Suwandi et al. (2025) promoted cooperation and creativity through folktale-based learning, while Vioeza et al. (2023) used local food projects to develop ecoliteracy. These approaches, while innovative, often reinforce isolated applications rather than systemic pedagogical change. The TREC model by Siswanto et al. (2025), which reported a 0.75 N-Gain in reflective character learning, remains confined to controlled settings without pathways for national scaling. Moreover, affective and dispositional assessments are limited, with most studies relying on pre-post tests or qualitative reflections (Rochmiyati et al., 2024; Solehuddin et al., 2024), a pattern that risks methodological stagnation similar to leadership studies' overreliance on cross-sectional designs (Rusilowati et al., 2024). Additionally, teacher professional development is largely neglected; few studies investigate how educators are prepared to operationalize P5 in daily instruction (Fauziah et al., 2023; Taneo & Madu, 2023). This reflects a broader issue in educational reform, where curricular innovation often outpaces pedagogical readiness, leading to surface-level adoption rather than transformative practice.

Beyond pedagogical and methodological limitations, deeper philosophical and ethical questions remain underexplored. Education should not be reduced to functional outcomes or managerial efficiency (Giménez et al., 2007); rather, it must cultivate moral agency, critical consciousness, and social responsibility from early schooling (Heberle et al., 2020). Few P5 studies have examined how students learn to question injustice, address inequality, or engage in civic activism (e.g., Rifki et al., 2024; Widana et al., 2023; Zakso et al., 2021). Without this dimension, P5 risks becoming a normative compliance tool rather than a catalyst for educational transformation. Indonesia’s diverse educational contexts further complicate this picture, as strategies successful in urban, resource-rich schools may not translate to marginalized or rural settings. The emphasis on local wisdom, while

valuable, must be carefully negotiated to avoid parochialism at the expense of global engagement. Advancing P5 scholarship requires theoretical expansion, methodological pluralism, and sensitivity to both cultural rootedness and global citizenship. Only by bridging the gap between local relevance and international discourse can P5 evolve into a robust framework for shaping 21<sup>st</sup>-century learners who are both nationally grounded and globally competent.

### Conclusions

This study affirms the central role of the P5 as a transformative agenda in Indonesia's primary education reform while critically exposing conceptual and methodological gaps that limit its broader impact. By integrating bibliometric analysis and systematic review, the findings reveal that current research disproportionately focuses on character- and culture-based pedagogical models, often neglecting interdisciplinary frameworks that connect local wisdom with global competencies. The majority of interventions emphasize isolated competencies such as tolerance, ecoliteracy, or cooperation, without advancing integrative approaches that link P5 to 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills. Methodologically, the field remains constrained by short-term, small-scale studies with minimal longitudinal tracking and limited tools for assessing affective and dispositional outcomes. Moreover, the research is largely confined to the Indonesian context, restricting opportunities for cross-cultural comparison and global knowledge exchange.

The bibliometric mapping identifies a rapid growth in P5-related scholarship between 2021 and 2025, yet highlights thematic imbalances and geographic concentration. The systematic review of 15 primary studies uncovers dominant instructional strategies including folktale-based learning, ecoliteracy projects, and digital storytelling models, all of which reflect innovative yet fragmented applications of the P5 framework. Critical gaps persist in teacher professional development, institutional readiness, and the creation of standardized, scalable assessment tools. These limitations underscore the risk of P5 becoming a normative compliance tool rather than a platform

for cultivating ethical agency, critical consciousness, and global citizenship. Without systemic integration and comprehensive pedagogical models, P5 risks reinforcing existing educational routines instead of inspiring meaningful transformation in primary education.

Moving forward, P5 research and practice must shift from prescriptive, one-size-fits-all strategies toward adaptive, context-sensitive models that respect Indonesia's cultural diversity while aligning with global educational challenges. This requires expanding theoretical frameworks, embracing methodological pluralism, and promoting sustained professional development for teachers. Policymakers, educators, and researchers must collaborate to create holistic, dynamic learning environments that foster both national identity and international competence. By combining macro-level trend mapping with micro-level pedagogical synthesis, this study contributes a novel perspective to the field of primary education and provides actionable insights for advancing character and citizenship education in contemporary schooling.

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