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Needs Analysis of Pancasila Educational Comics as a Deep Learning Medium in Elementary Schools

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Abstract
Learning Pancasila Education in elementary schools still tends to focus on memorization and does not fully support deep learning that is meaningful for students. This study aims to analyze the need for developing Pancasila educational comics as a deep learning-based learning media in elementary schools. The research method used is descriptive with a qualitative approach through interviews, observations, and documentation involving teachers and students. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results revealed that teachers face limitations in using learning media that can present Pancasila material in a contextual, visual, and student-centered manner. In addition, students show a strong preference for story-based visual learning media that help them understand abstract Pancasila concepts more concretely. The available learning media are considered not yet optimal in supporting students' cognitive engagement and conceptual understanding in depth. Therefore, the development of Pancasila educational comics is needed as an alternative learning medium that has the potential to support deep learning and enhance students' cognitive understanding in elementary schools.
Keywords: *Pancasila Educational Comics, Deep Learning, Elementary School*

Abstrak
Pembelajaran Pendidikan Pancasila di sekolah dasar masih cenderung berfokus pada hafalan dan belum sepenuhnya mendukung pembelajaran mendalam yang bermakna bagi peserta didik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kebutuhan pengembangan komik pendidikan Pancasila sebagai media pembelajaran berbasis *deep learning* di sekolah dasar. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui wawancara, angket, observasi, dan dokumentasi terhadap guru serta siswa sekolah dasar. Data dianalisis dengan langkah reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa guru mengalami keterbatasan dalam penggunaan media pembelajaran yang mampu menyajikan materi Pancasila secara kontekstual, visual, dan berpusat pada peserta didik. Selain itu, siswa menunjukkan preferensi yang tinggi terhadap media pembelajaran visual berbasis cerita yang dapat membantu memahami konsep-konsep abstrak Pancasila secara lebih konkret. Media pembelajaran yang tersedia saat ini dinilai belum optimal dalam mendukung keterlibatan kognitif dan pemahaman konseptual siswa secara mendalam. Dengan demikian, pengembangan komik pendidikan Pancasila diperlukan sebagai alternatif media pembelajaran yang berpotensi mendukung pembelajaran mendalam dan meningkatkan kualitas pemahaman kognitif siswa di sekolah dasar.
Kata kunci: *Komik Pendidikan Pancasila, Pembelajaran Mendalam, Sekolah Dasar*

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INTRODUCTION

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Pancasila Education in elementary schools continues to face significant challenges, despite its crucial role in shaping students' character and personality from an early age. Previous studies have demonstrated that Pancasila education plays a vital role in instilling fundamental values such as humanity, unity, democracy, and social justice, as well as fostering integrity and responsibility among elementary school students (Aprilia et al., 2025). In line with this, Usma (2024) emphasizes that the implementation of Pancasila values in elementary education contributes to the development of strong character and a clear national identity.

Although Pancasila serves as the ideological foundation and way of life of the nation, which should be internalized by students, current instructional practices still tend to emphasize rote memorization without reflective and contextual meaning (Saqjuddin et al., 2025). This issue is reflected in students' limited ability to apply Pancasila values in their daily lives. Research by Ali et al. (2025) indicates that many elementary school students show low interest in Pancasila Education due to its perceived lack of contextual relevance and engaging delivery, which ultimately affects their motivation and participation. This finding is reinforced by Janah et al. (2025), who argue that conventional and non-contextual teaching approaches contribute to students' perception of the subject as uninteresting and fail to promote deep understanding.

In the context of elementary schools in Saradan District, Madiun Regency, Pancasila Education plays a critical role in shaping students' character and identity as future citizens embodying Pancasila values. Currently, 44 public elementary schools in this district have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum. However, based on observations and interviews, significant challenges remain, particularly in terms of limited learning media. Instruction still relies heavily on textbooks and student worksheets (LKS), and deep learning approaches have not been widely implemented. As a result, teaching remains teacher-centered, focusing on memorization rather than meaningful learning, and the core values of Pancasila are not optimally internalized by students.

International studies indicate that teacher-centered approaches tend to hinder the development of higher-order thinking skills, whereas student-centered learning is more effective in promoting reflection, analysis, and independent learning (Kıranlı-Gungor & Taşpınar, 2023). Similarly, Van Gelder et al. (2025) highlight that many elementary school teachers have not systematically integrated critical thinking skills into their instruction, leading to a focus on knowledge transmission rather than meaning-making and problem-solving. These findings are consistent with the conditions observed in elementary schools in Saradan, where limited interaction and reflection result in less meaningful learning experiences.

Furthermore, the current condition reflects limited effectiveness in facilitating meaningful learning and value internalization. Many schools still adopt traditional approaches centered on rote learning, making it difficult for students to apply Pancasila values in real-life contexts. This aligns with Henson et al. (2020), who found that traditional teaching methods in elementary education do not sufficiently promote active engagement or critical thinking. In addition, Karadag et al. (2021) emphasize that the lack of innovative and contextual learning media poses a significant barrier to reflective and applicable learning, making it harder for students to connect values with their lived experiences.

Modern pedagogical approaches such as deep learning offer a promising alternative by linking conceptual knowledge with real-life experiences through reflection, collaboration, and application (Peya Nia Do et al., 2025). Saqjuddin et al. (2025) further argue that the dominance of traditional teaching methods that are not

responsive to 21st-century learning needs is a major factor contributing to the low quality of Pancasila education. The absence of engaging, relevant, and contextual learning media further limits meaningful learning opportunities.

Advancements in educational technology suggest that innovative learning media such as digital comics, augmented reality, and interactive platforms can significantly enhance student engagement and understanding. For example, digital storytelling comics based on deep learning approaches have been shown to increase students' emotional and reflective engagement in environmental education (Tjakrawerdaja et al., 2025). However, limited teacher competence in implementing deep learning strategies remains another critical challenge, as teachers often lack the skills and resources needed to design meaningful and engaging learning experiences (Supriyanto & Fitriyana, 2025).

Given these challenges, the urgency of this study is evident, particularly considering the importance of Pancasila Education in early character formation. Effective learning must create meaningful, reflective, and deep learning experiences to achieve character education goals. In this regard, deep learning has been proposed as a new direction in Indonesian education, emphasizing not only cognitive achievement but also value internalization, critical thinking, and contextual problem-solving (Saqjuddin et al., 2025). Nurlailah and Julkifli (2024) also found that deep learning strategies can foster critical reasoning aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile. This aligns with national policy, as outlined in the Regulation of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education of the Republic of Indonesia No. 13 of 2025, which promotes integrative, mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning.

From a theoretical perspective, constructivist learning theory posits that knowledge is actively constructed by learners through meaningful experiences rather than passively received (Piaget, 1972). Deep learning represents an extension of this theory, integrating cognitive, affective, and metacognitive dimensions of learning (Saqjuddin et al., 2025). It requires active, collaborative, reflective, and applicative engagement, enabling students not only to "know" but also to "understand" and "apply" knowledge.

In terms of learning media, educational comics represent a visual-narrative tool capable of simplifying complex concepts through engaging stories and illustrations (Puspitasari & Rodiyana, 2022). Previous studies have shown that digital comics can enhance emotional engagement and conceptual understanding (Tjakrawerdaja et al., 2025), as well as improve literacy, motivation, and critical thinking skills (Putri & Sukasih, 2025). As defined by Scott McCloud (2002), comics are "juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence intended to convey information and/or produce an aesthetic response." Indira (2011) further highlights their effectiveness in facilitating rapid comprehension of educational content.

Additionally, research has demonstrated the effectiveness of comics in character education. Browning and Purnell (2021) found that integrating graphic novels and comics enhances students' affective engagement and interpretative skills, while Rosli and Mahmud (2023) reported significant improvements in reflection and empathy through interactive comic-based learning. These findings support the potential of comics as an effective medium for meaningful Pancasila education.

Thus, the conceptual framework of this study establishes a relationship between the development of deep learning-based Pancasila educational comics and the improvement of learning quality and value internalization among elementary school students. This study offers a novel contribution by integrating deep learning pedagogy with comic-based instructional media—an area that remains underexplored in elementary education research. While previous studies have examined these aspects separately, this study combines them systematically to address the need for more reflective, contextual, and meaningful Pancasila learning.

Based on the identified problems, theoretical foundations, and previous research, this study aims to analyze the need for developing deep learning-based Pancasila educational comics as an instructional medium in elementary schools. It is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of innovative, contextual, and responsive learning media for character education in the modern era..

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a needs analysis design aimed at obtaining an in-depth understanding of the current condition of Pancasila Education learning and the need for developing comic-based educational media grounded in deep learning at the elementary school level. The study was conducted in three elementary schools located in Saradan District, Madiun Regency, all of which have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum.

The research subjects were selected using a purposive sampling technique, involving six elementary school teachers who teach Pancasila Education and upper-grade students (Grades IV–VI). Teachers were chosen based on their teaching experience and involvement in implementing Pancasila Education, while upper-grade students were selected because they possess more developed cognitive and reflective abilities, enabling them to articulate their learning experiences and needs more clearly.

The teacher participants consisted of four females and two males, aged between 30 and 50 years. Meanwhile, the student participants totaled 30 students (e.g., 16 males and 14 females) aged between 9 and 12 years, representing the typical characteristics of upper-grade elementary school students. This composition was expected to provide a representative overview of learning conditions and media needs in elementary schools.

The data in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from teachers and students through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations. Interviews were conducted to explore information regarding teaching practices, challenges faced by teachers, and the need for learning media that support a deep learning approach.

Questionnaires were administered to students to identify their level of learning engagement, interest in Pancasila Education, and preferences regarding the use of comics as learning media. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, and (4) strongly agree. The use of a four-point scale was intended to avoid neutral responses and encourage respondents to provide more definitive answers.

Classroom observations were conducted non-participatively to examine the learning process, patterns of teacher-student interaction, and the use of instructional media. In addition, secondary data were obtained through document analysis, including curriculum documents, teaching modules, lesson plans, and educational policies relevant to deep learning and Pancasila Education.

The research instruments were developed based on a synthesis of constructivist learning theory, the concept of deep learning (integrative, mindful, meaningful, and enjoyable), and studies on educational comic media. The instrument indicators were formulated by referring to the needs of Pancasila Education learning in elementary schools and relevant previous studies. The instrument blueprint is presented as follows:

Table 1. Instrument Blueprint

Aspect	Main Indicators
Pancasila Education Learning	Instructional methods and media used
Learning Challenges	Difficulties in understanding and internalizing values
Students' Learning Interest	Students' enthusiasm and engagement
Learning Media	Availability and need for visual media
Educational Comics	Needs and interest in comic-based media
Deep Learning	Value reflection and real-life contextualization

The questionnaire instrument used is as follows:

Table 2. Student Questionnaire Items

No	Indicator	Statement
1	Student enthusiasm	I enjoy learning using pictures
2	Learning methods	I understand lessons more easily through stories
3	Visual media	Pictures help me understand Pancasila values
4	Learning difficulties	I often find it difficult to understand the meaning of Pancasila values
5	Real-life context	I enjoy lessons that are related to daily life
6	Interest in comics	I am interested in learning Pancasila Education using comics
7	Value reflection	I like having questions that make me think after reading a story
8	Need for visual media	Visual media make me more motivated to learn

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The collected data were selected and classified to focus on information relevant to the development needs of deep learning-based educational comics. The data were then presented in the form of narrative descriptions and thematic matrices to facilitate interpretation and pattern identification. Conclusions were drawn by linking findings from various data sources, while verification was carried out through source and technique triangulation to enhance the validity of the research findings.

The validity of the data was ensured through data triangulation, member checking by confirming interview results with respondents, and peer debriefing to minimize researcher bias. All research procedures were conducted in accordance with ethical principles, where respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was obtained prior to data collection. The confidentiality of respondents' identities was maintained, and the data obtained were used solely for academic purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings obtained through questionnaires, interviews, and observations indicate that the teaching of Pancasila Education in elementary schools in Saradan District, Madiun Regency is still predominantly dominated by lecture-based methods and the use of textbooks as the primary learning resource. Questionnaire data from teachers show that approximately 83.3% of teachers still rely on lectures and question-and-answer methods, while 100% use textbooks as the main instructional media. This condition has an impact on the low level of student engagement in the learning process.

This is further supported by student questionnaire results, which reveal that 86% of students prefer learning using visual media and 82% find it easier to understand material through stories. However, as many as 68% of students still

experience difficulties in deeply understanding the meaning of Pancasila values. Observation results also indicate that the learning process tends to be teacher-centered and one-directional, resulting in underdeveloped reflective and contextual learning activities.

These findings are reinforced by interview results with teachers, who stated that the limited availability of learning media is a major obstacle in creating meaningful learning experiences. One teacher stated, “So far, we still rely heavily on textbooks. Students sometimes get bored quickly, especially when the material is only read and explained.” Another teacher added that “students are more interested when there are images or stories, but there is still a lack of media that can help them understand Pancasila values in everyday life.” This condition indicates a gap between students’ learning needs and the current teaching practices. Therefore, there is a need for instructional media that is not only informative but also capable of facilitating value reflection, active engagement, and connections to real-life contexts.

In this context, the development of deep learning-based Pancasila Education comics emerges as a relevant solution. Comic media, with its visually engaging characteristics, contextual storytelling, and reflective questions, is considered capable of supporting integrative, meaningful, and enjoyable learning. These findings are consistent with constructivist theory, which emphasizes that learning becomes more effective when students are actively involved in constructing their understanding through meaningful experiences. Therefore, the integration of deep learning-based comic media has the potential to enhance conceptual understanding, student engagement, and the internalization of Pancasila values among elementary school students. The findings regarding teachers’ and students’ needs for Pancasila Education comic media are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Results of Learning Media Needs Analysis

Aspect	Main Findings
Instructional Methods	Dominated by lectures and question–answer activities
Learning Media	Textbooks used as the primary medium
Learning Challenges	Students have difficulty understanding the meaning of Pancasila values
Students’ Learning Interest	High when using illustrated and story-based media
Media Needs	Contextual and engaging visual learning media
Educational Comics	Required as an alternative instructional medium

Furthermore, interview data with teachers reveal that existing instructional media do not yet fully support the implementation of deep learning. Teachers emphasized the need for media that not only convey information but also facilitate value reflection, discussion, and the application of Pancasila concepts within students’ real-life contexts. The required characteristics of Pancasila educational comics that support deep learning are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Required Characteristics of Pancasila Educational Comics

Deep Learning Aspect	Expected Needs
Conceptual Understanding	Storylines aligned with learning content and students’ developmental stages
Contextualization	Examples drawn from students’ everyday life experiences
Value Reflection	Guiding questions and moral messages
Visualization	Attractive and easily comprehensible illustrations
Language	Simple and communicative language

The research findings indicate that the practice of teaching Pancasila Education in elementary schools still tends to be oriented toward verbal instruction and the use of textbooks as the primary source of learning. This condition suggests that the learning process has not fully led to meaningful and reflective learning. From a constructivist perspective, learning should provide opportunities for students to construct their own understanding through active and contextual experiences, rather than merely receiving information passively. Therefore, the dominance of lecture-based methods identified in this study has the potential to hinder the process of value internalization, as students are not deeply engaged in the learning process.

Furthermore, the high level of student interest in visual media and storytelling indicates a need for learning approaches that align with the cognitive development characteristics of elementary school students. These findings are consistent with the view that visual-narrative media such as comics can enhance emotional engagement and conceptual understanding by presenting information in a concrete and contextual manner. Thus, students' low understanding of Pancasila values is not solely caused by the complexity of the material, but also by the lack of media capable of bridging abstract concepts into more comprehensible forms.

In addition, the need for learning that connects material to everyday life and encourages reflection indicates that current instructional practices have not fully accommodated the principles of deep learning. Deep learning emphasizes active engagement, reflection, and the ability to connect knowledge with real-life contexts. When these aspects are not facilitated, learning tends to remain at the level of memorization (surface learning) and does not reach comprehensive conceptual understanding.

The findings also show that Pancasila Education learning in elementary schools in Saradan District is still dominated by lecture methods and textbook use, resulting in low student engagement and suboptimal understanding of values. This condition indicates that learning remains at the surface learning stage, focusing on memorization without deep meaning-making.

Theoretically, this condition is not aligned with the principles of constructivist learning proposed by Jean Piaget, who emphasized that knowledge is actively constructed through meaningful learning experiences. In this context, the dominance of lecture methods positions students merely as passive recipients of information, thereby hindering the optimal construction of knowledge. This also reinforces the findings of Lev Vygotsky, who highlighted the importance of social interaction and contextual experiences in developing deeper understanding.

Moreover, the results of this study indicate that students actually need more engaging and contextual learning, as reflected in their strong preference for visual and story-based media. However, current instructional practices have not adequately accommodated these needs. This finding is consistent with studies by Ali et al. (2025) and Janah et al. (2025), which suggest that non-contextual Pancasila Education tends to reduce student interest and engagement.

From a modern learning perspective, this condition reflects the suboptimal implementation of deep learning. The deep learning approach emphasizes active engagement, reflection, and the ability to connect knowledge with real-life situations. This aligns with John Biggs' distinction between surface learning and deep learning, where learning that focuses solely on memorization fails to produce comprehensive conceptual understanding. The findings of this study show that learning remains at the surface level, causing students difficulty in relating Pancasila values to their daily lives.

In addition, the dominance of teacher-centered approaches has been shown to hinder the development of students' critical thinking skills. This is consistent with studies by Kıranlı-Gungor and Taşpınar (2023) and Van Gelder et al. (2025), which indicate that teacher-centered learning limits opportunities for student exploration,

reflection, and analysis. Consequently, current instructional practices have not yet met the demands of 21st-century education, which emphasize critical, collaborative, and reflective thinking skills.

In terms of instructional media, the findings also reveal that the limited use of innovative media is one of the main factors contributing to the low quality of learning. This is in line with the findings of Karadag et al. (2021), which suggest that the lack of contextual and interactive learning media can hinder the internalization of values among students. Similarly, Henson (2020) emphasizes that traditional learning approaches are less effective in promoting active student engagement, resulting in low conceptual understanding.

Based on these findings, the development of deep learning-based Pancasila Education comic media emerges as a relevant solution. As a visual-narrative medium, comics have advantages in presenting material in an engaging, contextual, and easily understandable way. According to Scott McCloud, comics are capable of conveying complex messages through a meaningful combination of images and text, making it easier for readers to understand information. This is supported by Indira (2011), who states that comics can facilitate rapid understanding of educational material.

The use of comics in learning is also supported by various previous studies. Putri and Sukasih (2025) found that comic media can improve student motivation, literacy, and understanding. Additionally, Browning and Purnell (2021) and Rosli and Mahmud (2023) reported that comics can enhance affective engagement, reflective ability, and empathy, which are essential aspects of value and character education.

Furthermore, integrating comics with a deep learning approach enables the creation of learning experiences that are not only engaging but also meaningful. Comics can be designed to incorporate contextual stories, visual illustrations, and reflective questions that encourage students to think critically and connect Pancasila values with their real-life experiences. This is consistent with the findings of Tjakrawerdaja et al. (2025), which show that the use of deep learning-based digital storytelling comics can enhance students' emotional and reflective engagement.

In conclusion, this discussion emphasizes that the main issue in Pancasila Education learning lies not only in the content but also in the instructional approaches and media used. Learning that remains focused on memorization and lacks innovative media results in low student engagement and understanding. Therefore, the development of deep learning-based Pancasila Education comic media has strong potential to bridge the gap between students' learning needs and existing instructional practices. This innovation is expected to create more meaningful and contextual learning experiences and to support the effective internalization of Pancasila values.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that Pancasila Education learning in elementary schools in Saradan District remains largely oriented toward textual content delivery and has not yet fully embraced a deep learning approach. This condition has contributed to students' limited ability to interpret Pancasila values in a contextual and reflective manner. Such findings are consistent with the characteristics of surface learning, in which students tend to memorize concepts rather than deeply understand and apply them in their daily lives.

The need for the development of Pancasila educational comics incorporating deep learning principles emerges as a response to the limitations of existing instructional media. Comics offer distinctive advantages in presenting learning content through narrative structures and visual representations that resonate with children's lived experiences, thereby holding the potential to enhance student engagement and conceptual understanding. Through contextualized storytelling, Pancasila values can

be embedded in real-life situations familiar to students, such as school life, family interactions, and community environments.

Deep learning requires learning activities that encourage reflection and the meaningful connection of concepts with authentic experiences. Based on the research findings, teachers require instructional media that can effectively facilitate these processes. Well-designed Pancasila educational comics can serve as a medium to promote critical thinking, value reflection, and the meaningful internalization of Pancasila principles. In this regard, educational comics function not merely as visual aids but as pedagogical tools that support the implementation of deep learning in elementary education.

Overall, the results of this needs analysis underscore the urgency of developing deep learning–based Pancasila educational comics that align with the characteristics of elementary school students in Saradan District, Madiun Regency. These findings provide an essential foundation for the subsequent stages of instructional media design and development in future research.

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