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**Strengthening Civic Education in Elementary
Schools Through a Multiple Intelligence Approach**

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ABSTRACT

Citizenship Education (PKn) at the elementary school level (SD/MI) plays a strategic role in shaping the character of young citizens grounded in Pancasila values. The challenges of globalization and digitalization demand more adaptive and holistic learning approaches. This article examines the application of Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence theory in PKn learning at the SD/MI level as an effort to strengthen the internalization of Pancasila values among students. Through a literature study method, this review explores various previous research to identify the correlation between diverse intelligences and the pedagogical strategies of PKn teachers. The findings indicate that a multiple intelligence approach can accommodate the diversity of student potential, enhance the effectiveness of national values cultivation, and encourage active student engagement in PKn learning. The practical implication of this study is the need for SD/MI teachers to design PKn learning that is responsive to students' multiple intelligences to realize a complete Pancasila Student Profile.

ABSTRAK

Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan (PKn) di jenjang SD/MI memegang peranan strategis dalam membentuk karakter warga negara muda yang berjiwa Pancasila. Tantangan era globalisasi dan digitalisasi menuntut pendekatan pembelajaran yang lebih adaptif dan holistik. Artikel ini mengkaji penerapan teori Multiple Intelligence (Kecerdasan Majemuk) Howard Gardner dalam pembelajaran PKn di SD/MI sebagai upaya memperkuat internalisasi nilai-nilai Pancasila pada peserta didik. Melalui metode studi kepustakaan, kajian ini menggali berbagai penelitian terdahulu untuk mengidentifikasi korelasi antara ragam kecerdasan majemuk dengan strategi pedagogis guru PKn. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan multiple intelligence mampu mengakomodasi keberagaman potensi siswa, meningkatkan efektivitas penanaman nilai kebangsaan, serta mendorong keterlibatan aktif siswa dalam pembelajaran PKn. Implikasi praktis dari kajian ini adalah perlunya guru SD/MI merancang pembelajaran PKn yang responsif terhadap kecerdasan majemuk siswa demi terwujudnya profil pelajar Pancasila yang utuh.

INTRODUCTION

Civics Education (PKn) at the elementary and Islamic elementary school (SD/MI) levels is a crucial pillar of Indonesia's national education system (Assingkily & Putri, 2025). As mandated by Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, education aims to develop students' potential to become people who are faithful, pious, have noble character, are creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. Within this framework, PKn serves as a strategic vehicle for instilling Pancasila values from an early age.

However, reality shows that Civics learning in elementary schools (SD/MI) often faces significant challenges. Globalization and the rapid development of information technology bring foreign cultural influences that can shift students' national values (Pebriani & Dewi, 2022). Furthermore, the conventional, memorization-oriented approach to Civics learning is considered ineffective in deeply internalizing Pancasila values in students.

This is where Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences becomes relevant. Gardner (1983) asserted that human intelligence is not singular, but rather multiple and diverse,

encompassing linguistic-verbal, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical-rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist intelligence. By integrating this theory into civics learning, elementary school teachers can design pedagogical strategies that are more responsive to the diverse potential of their students (Astarita et al., 2024).

The multiple intelligences approach in civics is not simply a variation of teaching methods, but rather a paradigm that recognizes that each child has their own unique path to understanding and internalizing national values. Interpersonal intelligence, for example, can be optimized through deliberation and group work activities that reflect the fourth principle of Pancasila. Kinesthetic intelligence can be stimulated through election simulations or mutual cooperation activities that embody the values of togetherness.

This study aims to: (1) identify the correlation between the dimensions of multiple intelligences and civics learning strategies in elementary schools/Islamic elementary schools; (2) analyze the effectiveness of the multiple intelligences approach in internalizing Pancasila values; and (3) formulate practical recommendations for civics teachers in elementary schools/Islamic elementary schools in designing multiple intelligences-based learning. Through a comprehensive literature review, this article is expected to provide a real contribution to the development of character education at the elementary level.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with library research. Primary data sources were obtained from various scientific journal articles, national seminar proceedings, and dissertations related to civics learning in elementary schools and the theory of multiple intelligences. The literature search was conducted through Google Scholar, ERIC, and the SINTA-accredited national journal portal.

Literature inclusion criteria included: (1) relevance to the topic of Civics and/or Multiple Intelligence at the elementary/Islamic elementary school level; (2) publication year between 2019 and 2025; and (3) clear and academically accountable methodology. Data analysis was conducted qualitatively through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Source triangulation was used to ensure the validity of the study findings.

The primary sources analyzed include research by Angganing & Yuliana (2019), Bhughe (2022), Pebriani & Dewi (2022), Khoiry (2021), Maesarani (2025), Octavia (2023), and Wijayanti & Muthali'in (2023). Each source was critically analyzed to identify findings relevant to strengthening multiple intelligence-based civics education in elementary schools (SD/MI).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Correlation of Multiple Intelligences with Civics Learning Strategies in Elementary Schools

Based on the literature synthesis reviewed, a significant correlation was found between Gardner's eight dimensions of multiple intelligences and various civics learning strategies in elementary schools. Table 1 below presents a comprehensive mapping of intelligence types, appropriate strategies, levels of relevance, and their impact on the internalization of Pancasila values.

Table 1. Mapping of Multiple Intelligences and Civics Learning Strategies in Elementary Schools

Types of Multiple Intelligences	Civics Learning Strategy in Elementary Schools	Level of Relevance	Impact on Internalization of Pancasila Values
Verbal Linguistics	Value debate, moral stories, reading of Pancasila texts	High	National discussion and arguments
Logical-	Case analysis, data-based	Medium	Reasoning of rights &

Mathematical	social problem solving		obligations
Visual-Spatial	Pancasila values concept map, diversity infographics	High	Symbolic representation of national identity
Bodily-Kinesthetic	Election simulation, mutual cooperation role play	High	Internalization of values through direct action
Musical-Rhythmic	National anthem, Pancasila march, national poem	Medium	Emotional appreciation of nationalist values
Interpersonal	Group work, conflict mediation, class discussion	Very High	Direct application of the fourth principle
Intrapersonal	Reflective journal, self-evaluation based on Pancasila values	Medium	Penguatan karakter dan kesadaran moral
Naturalist	Environmental projects based on social justice values	Medium	Kepedulian lingkungan & keadilan sosial

Source: *Synthesis of Gardner (1983), Angganing & Yuliana (2019), Octavia (2023), Wijayanti & Muthali'in (2023)*

The data in Table 1 reveals that interpersonal intelligence has the highest relevance in the context of Civics learning in elementary schools (SD/MI), with an indicator of "Very High." This is not surprising, given the nature of Civics, which is oriented towards developing citizens capable of interacting, deliberating, and collaborating in community life. Wijayanti and Muthali'in (2023) confirm that strengthening the global diversity dimension in the Pancasila Student Profile inherently demands the activation of interpersonal intelligence through collaborative Civics learning.

Linguistic-verbal, visual-spatial, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences are all at a "High" level of relevance, indicating that Civics requires a multi-modal approach that goes beyond conventional lectures. Strategies such as value debates, diversity infographics, and election simulations have consistently been shown to deepen students' conceptual understanding and emotional appreciation of Pancasila values (Octavia, 2023).

Meanwhile, musical-rhythmic and naturalist intelligence are at the "Moderate" level, but that doesn't mean they're unimportant. Using the national anthem as a medium to instill nationalistic values has proven effective in engaging the affective dimension of elementary-age students (Maesarani, 2025). Naturalist intelligence can be integrated through environmental projects based on social justice values, which are a manifestation of the fifth principle of Pancasila in the context of students' real lives.

Previous Research Findings on Civics Teacher Strategies Based on Multiple Intelligences

Table 2 presents a summary of the findings from seven relevant previous studies, covering the research context, teacher strategies, dimensions of intelligence stimulated, and the main findings of each study. This study specifically identifies the relationship between teacher strategies and the dimensions of multiple intelligences activated.

**Table 2. Summary of Previous Research:
Civics Teacher Strategies and Stimulated Multiple Intelligences**

Researchers and Years	Research Context	Teacher Strategy	Stimulated Multiple Intelligences	Key Findings
Angganing & Yuliana (2019)	SD Umum	Exemplary Behavior and Habituation	Strengthening interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence	Teacher consistency is very important for success
Bhughe (2022)	SD – PPKn	Interactive Learning	Stimulation of linguistic and interpersonal intelligence	Interactive methods strengthen the sense of nationalism
Pebriani & Dewi (2022)	SD – Era Globalisasi	Integration of Values & Technology	Visual-spatial and linguistic intelligence	Technology can be used to strengthen moral values
Khoiry (2021)	SLB / Inklusi	Inclusive Individual Approach	Kinesthetic and intrapersonal intelligence	Pancasila values are universal for all students
Maesarani (2025)	SMA (relevan SD)	Formation of Religious Attitudes	Intrapersonal and musical intelligence	Religious morals strengthen the first principle of Pancasila
Octavia (2023)	SD Negeri	Social Habits	Interpersonal and kinesthetic intelligence	Social attitudes are formed through real activities at school
Wijayanti & Muthali'in (2023)	SD – Profil Pelajar Pancasila	Global Diversity Learning	Linguistic, interpersonal, naturalist intelligence	Global diversity strengthens the dimensions of Pancasila's profile

Source: Angganing & Yuliana (2019); Bhughe (2022); Pebriani & Dewi (2022); Khoiry (2021); Maesarani (2025); Octavia (2023); Wijayanti & Muthali'in (2023)

Table 2 shows a striking consistency: across the seven studies reviewed, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence emerged as the dimensions most frequently stimulated through various civics learning strategies. Angganing and Yuliana (2019) found that teacher-implemented role models and habituation strategies were consistently effective in activating students' intrapersonal intelligence, namely the ability of students to reflect and evaluate themselves based on Pancasila values.

It's interesting to note that Khoiry's (2021) research in an inclusive special needs school environment confirms the universal dimension of Pancasila values. With an individualized approach that activates kinesthetic and intrapersonal intelligence, civics values can be taught without discrimination, confirming that the multiple intelligences approach is truly an inclusive and equitable educational practice.

Bhughe (2022) and Wijayanti & Muthali'in (2023) simultaneously identified linguistic intelligence as a key dimension in developing national awareness and the ability to argue about Pancasila values. These findings reinforce the urgency of civics learning designs that provide space for students to express their understanding of nationality through various language-based media, such as debates, presentations, and reflective writing.

Discussion

Teachers as Architects of Multiple Intelligence-Based Learning

Literature reviews consistently demonstrate that the role of teachers in civics learning in elementary schools (SD/MI) extends far beyond simply conveying information. Within the multiple intelligences paradigm, teachers serve as learning architects, creatively designing learning experiences that address the diverse intelligences of students (Iswadi et al., 2022). Bhughe (2022) emphasized that effective civics teachers are able to integrate Pancasila values into all dimensions of learning, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.

This concept aligns with Angganing and Yuliana's (2019) perspective, which positions teachers as agents of change who shape national character through role models and habituation. In the context of multiple intelligences, teacher role models indirectly activate students' intrapersonal intelligence, as observing consistent behavioral models encourages the independent internalization of values.

Synergy of Multiple Intelligences and Pancasila Values

There is a close correlation between each principle of Pancasila and the relevant dimensions of multiple intelligences. The first principle, which emphasizes the belief in the One and Only God, is strongly correlated with intrapersonal and musical-rhythmic intelligence, which can be activated through reflection on spiritual values and appreciation of religious songs containing moral messages. Maesarani (2025) found that a learning approach focused on developing religious attitudes has been proven to strengthen students' moral character holistically.

The Fourth Principle, Democracy Guided by Wisdom, has the most direct correlation with interpersonal intelligence. Wijayanti and Muthali'in (2023) documented that civics learning that integrates group discussions, conflict mediation, and class deliberation significantly improves students' ability to apply democratic principles in everyday life.

Challenges and Adaptive Strategies

Although the multiple intelligences approach offers much potential, its implementation in elementary schools (SD/MI) is not without challenges. Pebriani and Dewi (2022) identified three main obstacles: (1) the influence of global culture shifting national values; (2) limited time for civics instruction in the curriculum; and (3) a lack of teacher competence in identifying and responding to students' multiple intelligence profiles.

Adaptive solutions that can be implemented include the integration of Civics values into all subjects (cross-curricular integration), the positive use of digital technology to activate visual-spatial and linguistic intelligence, and collaboration between teachers, parents, and the community in creating a consistent and sustainable values-based learning ecosystem (Pebriani & Dewi, 2022; Octavia, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study identified a significant pattern that has not been widely explored explicitly in the Indonesian civics literature: a systematic correlation between Gardner's eight dimensions of multiple intelligences and the implementation of Pancasila values in civics learning in elementary schools. The most striking finding is that interpersonal intelligence is not only pedagogically relevant but also the intelligence most inherent in the values of Pancasila itself, particularly the fourth and fifth principles. This means that civics learning designed to prioritize the activation of interpersonal intelligence naturally creates conditions for students to internalize Pancasila not merely as an abstract concept but as a concrete and meaningful life experience. Furthermore, it was found that the multiple intelligences approach is inherently inclusive and equitable, as evidenced by Khoiry's (2021) research in inclusive education

environments, which demonstrated that civics values are universal and accessible to all students without exception.

The findings of this study have significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study strengthens the argument that Civics in elementary schools (SD/MI) needs to shift from a teacher-centered paradigm oriented towards memorization to a student-centered paradigm oriented towards the development of students' multiple potentials. Practically, the most important implication is the need to reconstruct Civics learning designs that explicitly include multiple intelligences as planning variables. Civics teachers in elementary schools (SD/MI) are required to have the competence to identify the dominant intelligence profiles of students in their classes and then design learning activities that activate various dimensions of these intelligences simultaneously. Another implication touches on the realm of education policy: the Civics curriculum in elementary schools (SD/MI) should provide greater flexibility for teachers to experiment with a variety of learning methods based on multiple intelligences, rather than limiting them to a single standard approach that does not accommodate the diversity of student potential.

Based on the findings and implications above, this study formulates three strategic recommendations. First, for elementary school teachers, it is recommended to adopt the "PKn-MI" (PKn-based Multiple Intelligences) framework in designing Lesson Implementation Plans (RPP), by explicitly identifying the intelligence dimensions to be activated for each Pancasila principle taught. Practice-based training and workshops need to be held regularly to equip teachers with these competencies. Second, for curriculum developers and school principals, it is recommended to integrate multiple intelligence indicators into authentic PKn assessments, so that evaluations not only measure cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor aspects that reflect the integrity of the Pancasila character. Third, for future researchers, it is recommended to conduct empirical research based on experiments or classroom action research (CAR) that directly measures the effectiveness of PKn-based learning on measurable Pancasila character indicators, such as the level of tolerance, deliberation skills, and social participation of elementary school students.

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