

# Implementation of Project Based Learning to Improve Understanding of the Concept of Rights and Obligations in Grade IV Students of SDN Cihajere

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model through poster-making projects in Civic Education (PPKn) and to analyze its effect on enhancing the understanding of rights and obligations among fourth-grade students at SDN Cihajere. The research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) using the Kemmis & McTaggart model, conducted in two cycles and involving 40 students. Each cycle comprised the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through concept understanding tests and observation sheets on the implementation of learning activities. The results showed a significant increase in the average test scores, from 58 (pre-cycle) to 68 (cycle I) and 82 (cycle II). The percentage of classical mastery rose from 35% to 60%, and finally to 88%. Moreover, the application of PjBL encouraged active student participation in group discussions, improved argumentative and collaborative skills, and stimulated creativity through the production of educational posters. These findings indicate that PjBL is effective in improving students' understanding of the concepts of rights and obligations. This study recommends the integration of poster-based PjBL as an innovative strategy in Civic Education to strengthen the understanding of rights and obligations at the elementary school level.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Civic Education (PPKn) in elementary schools holds a strategic role in building the foundational character and identity of young Indonesian citizens. Amidst the challenges of globalization and increasingly complex social changes, the need for a strong understanding of the concepts of rights and obligations becomes ever more urgent to be instilled from an early age (Nugraha et al., 2023; Nurhalisyah

et al., 2024). Rights and obligations are two inseparable aspects of national life and serve as the main pillars for creating a harmonious, safe, and prosperous society (Haifarashin et al., 2021). Primary education is viewed as a crucial phase in which moral, ethical, and social values begin to be internalized within students, making the reinforcement of the concepts of rights and obligations an integral part of the objectives of national education.

The urgency of understanding the concepts of rights and obligations for elementary school students is reflected in the legal framework and philosophy of the Indonesian nation. As a state governed by law, Indonesia guarantees the rights of its citizens through the 1945 Constitution and the philosophical foundation of Pancasila. Pancasila is not only the foundation of the state but also explicitly regulates the rights and obligations of all citizens in various dimensions of life, be they basic values, instrumental values, or practical values (Rofiq et al., 2024; Ruhianti et al., 2023). The cultivation of understanding of rights and obligations cannot wait until adulthood; it must begin early through education in the family, community, and especially at school. Schools become a strategic arena for introducing constitutional rights, as students interact and gain learning experiences every day. The early introduction of rights and obligations is expected to foster a spirit of nationalism, patriotism, love for the homeland, and a sense of responsible character that will persist into adulthood (Bunda et al., 2026).

In the school context, understanding rights and obligations becomes key to creating a safe, healthy, and productive learning environment. Social phenomena such as bullying in schools are among the real challenges that can be prevented through strengthening civic education based on rights and obligations (Husnunnadia & Slam, 2024). Through a deep understanding of human rights, students are expected not only to be able to protect their own rights but also to respect the rights of others and avoid discriminatory or harmful behaviors. The application of civic values, discipline, and empathy in daily school life will form a positive culture that supports students' optimal growth and development.

Nevertheless, various studies reveal that Civic Education in elementary schools often faces the challenge of low student interest, motivation, and learning outcomes, one of which is caused by the use of less innovative and overly rote-oriented teaching methods (Aisah et al., 2022; Melinda & Dwi, 2024). Conventional teaching models dominated by the teacher's role result in limited interaction, passive students, and difficulty in connecting civic material with real life. This condition leads to low mastery of the concepts of rights and obligations as well as weak critical thinking skills, collaboration, and active student participation in learning (Satriani et al., 2025).

To overcome these challenges, Project Based Learning (PjBL) emerges as an innovative solution relevant to the needs of 21st-century learning. PjBL is a learning model that places students as active subjects involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of real projects related to the learning material (Indahwati & Abdullah, 2019; Satriani et al., 2025). With this approach, students are encouraged to work collaboratively, develop creativity, communication skills, and critical thinking, as well as apply the knowledge they have learned to solve problems encountered in daily life (Suharyati & Sakura, 2023). The research by Indahwati & Abdullah (2019) shows that the application of PjBL significantly increases the activeness of teachers and students, improves Civic Education learning outcomes in various domains (cognitive, affective, psychomotor), and overcomes various classroom learning obstacles.

The effectiveness of PjBL in enhancing student interest, engagement, and learning outcomes is also quantitatively evidenced by experimental studies reporting significant increases in interest and learning outcomes after the implementation of PjBL compared to conventional methods (Irfana et al., 2022; Satriani et al., 2025). PjBL has also been proven to improve students' skills, attitudes, knowledge, and self-confidence, making them more responsible and actively involved in the learning process (Satriani et al., 2025).

One highly relevant innovation for contextualizing PjBL in the learning of rights and obligations is the integration of educational poster projects. Educational posters have proven to be effective visual media for instilling values of nationality, character, as well as understanding rights and obligations in elementary school students (Fadilah et al., 2025; Nabila et al., 2025). Posters combine visual strengths—color, images, and concise text—so that key messages can be easily absorbed and retained in students'

memory. The use of posters as PjBL project products not only provides concrete and creative learning experiences but also enables students to express their understanding of the concepts of rights and obligations in a personal and meaningful way.

Based on the above explanation, it can be emphasized that the implementation of Project Based Learning integrated with educational poster projects in Civic Education is an innovative and effective solution for improving students' understanding of the concepts of rights and obligations in elementary schools. By positioning students as active participants who collaborate and reflect on their learning experiences through visual works, poster-based PjBL provides meaningful, contextual, and sustainable learning experiences.

## 2. METHODS

This study employs a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach using the Kemmis & McTaggart model, which consists of two cycles aimed at describing the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) through poster-making projects in civics education (PPKn) and analyzing its effect on improving the understanding of rights and obligations concepts among fourth-grade students at SDN Cihajere. Each cycle comprises four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, conducted in a spiral and continuous manner to ensure ongoing improvement of teaching practices (Kemmis et al., 2014). The research subjects are all 40 fourth-grade students at SDN Cihajere, with a peer teacher involved as an observer of the learning implementation.

The research instruments consist of two main types, namely test instruments and classroom observation sheets. The test instrument is used to measure students' conceptual understanding in each cycle, with 5 multiple-choice items per cycle. The indicators for the test in Cycle I are: (1) students understand rights and obligations at school, and (2) understand how to balance those rights and obligations. The indicators for the Cycle II test are: (1) students understand the meaning of the motto *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*, (2) understand how to respect differences, and (3) understand tolerance and cooperation. All test items have been validated by civics education experts to ensure their relevance and appropriate level of difficulty. The observation sheet is used by the peer teacher to assess the implementation of PjBL strategies by the teacher.

The research procedure is carried out systematically in each cycle. In the planning stage, the researcher prepares learning tools, project scenarios, test instruments, and observation sheets. The acting stage involves implementing PjBL through group-based poster projects according to the theme of each cycle, accompanied by direct observation from the peer teacher. During the observation stage, the researcher and peer teacher record the learning process and outcomes, including collecting test results and documenting poster projects. In the reflection stage, all data are analyzed to identify successes, obstacles, and to formulate improvement plans for the next cycle. The test results are analyzed quantitatively by calculating the average scores and the percentage of students meeting the class mastery criteria. The indicator of successful action is set if more than 75% of students reach the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) based on the test results in each cycle.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### FINDING

#### 1. General Overview of Informants and Research Location

This classroom action research was conducted at SDN Cihajere, Garut Regency, West Java Province, during the even semester of the 2023/2024 academic year. The research subjects were all fourth-grade students, totaling 40 individuals (19 boys and 21 girls), aged between 9 and 10 years. The research was carried out in two cycles, each consisting of the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The entire research sequence focused on the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model in Civic Education (PPKN), specifically on the topic of rights and obligations. The school environment supported the implementation of group projects, with adequately equipped

classrooms and the active involvement of teachers and observers in each stage of the research. All learning activities were conducted in accordance with research ethics principles, maintaining the confidentiality of student identities, and obtaining official consent from the school authorities.

## 2. Initial Condition (Pre-Cycle)

In the pre-cycle stage, Civic Education learning still utilized conventional methods, such as lectures and Q&A sessions. Observations indicated that students tended to be passive, participated less actively, and were not yet accustomed to working collaboratively or completing project-based tasks. Based on the results of the conceptual understanding test on rights and obligations, consisting of five multiple-choice questions, the data obtained were as follows: (1) the average test score was 58 (categorized as low); (2) the number of students achieving the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) was 14 (35%); and (3) the number of students not achieving mastery was 26 (65%).

## 3. Results of Cycle I

In Cycle I, the Project Based Learning model began to be implemented through a poster-making project themed on rights and obligations in the school environment. Students were divided into groups and encouraged to collaborate in determining the theme, dividing tasks, and expressing ideas in the form of posters. The main findings in Cycle I included increased student participation in group discussions, although most students still experienced confusion in task division. The observer noted the need for additional guidance in time management and task assignment. The observer also found that students needed more probing questions to enhance their analytical skills. The following is a visual documentation of the implementation observation process by a peer observer (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Observation of Learning Implementation by Observer

The development of learning outcomes regarding the understanding of rights and obligations concepts in Cycle I is presented in Table 1.

**Tabel 1.** Learning Outcomes Development in Cycle I

Indicator	Cycle I
Average Test Score	68
Percentage of Classical Mastery (%)	60
Number of Students Achieving Mastery ( $\geq$ KKM)	24
Number of Students Not Achieving Mastery ( $<$ KKM)	16

Table 1 shows an improvement in student learning outcomes after the implementation of Project Based Learning in Cycle I. The average test score for conceptual understanding of rights and obligations increased to 68, compared to the pre-cycle average. The percentage of classical mastery also rose to 60%, with 24 students successfully reaching the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). Meanwhile, the number of students not achieving mastery decreased to 16. These data indicate a positive response to the applied learning model, although there are still students who need further guidance to achieve learning mastery.

#### 4. Results of Cycle II

Reflection on the results of Cycle I was used as the basis for improvements in Cycle II. In this cycle, the teacher enhanced scaffolding (gradual guidance) and provided concrete media, namely a project for making models of Indonesia's cultural diversity. Students again worked in groups but were given more structured guidance regarding task division and group work schedules.

The main findings in Cycle II were that students showed increased independence, were able to divide tasks fairly, and were more skilled in arguing and responding to the opinions of other groups. All groups were able to present their project results, respond to questions from peers, and provide logical arguments. The observer noted an increase in active participation and the quality of inter-group discussions.



**Figure 2.** Student Activities in Poster-Making

The development of learning outcomes in Cycle II can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Learning Outcomes Development in Cycle II

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Cycle II</i>
Average Test Score	82
Percentage of Classical Mastery (%)	88
Number of Students Achieving Mastery ( $\geq$ KKM)	35
Number of Students Not Achieving Mastery ( $<$ KKM)	5

Table 2 reflects the learning outcomes in Cycle II after implementing improved strategies through enhanced scaffolding and the use of concrete media. The average student test score increased significantly to 82, while the percentage of classical mastery surged to 88%. A total of 35 students had achieved the KKM, with only 5 students not yet achieving mastery. This improvement indicates the effectiveness of the learning improvements in Cycle II and the growing number of students who understood the concepts of rights and obligations as intended in the learning objectives.

#### 5. Recapitulation of the Development of Understanding Rights and Obligations Concepts

Table 3 summarizes the development of students' understanding of rights and obligations concepts at each stage of the research:

**Table 3.** Development of Understanding Rights and Obligations Concepts

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Pre-Cycle</b>	<b>Cycle I</b>	<b>Cycle II</b>
Average Test Score	58	68	82
Percentage of Classical Mastery (%)	35	60	88

Table 3 presents data on the development of the average test scores for understanding the concepts of rights and obligations and the percentage of classical mastery at each stage of the research, from pre-cycle, Cycle I, to Cycle II. At the pre-cycle stage, the average student test score was 58, with a

classical mastery of 35%. This shows that most students had not yet reached the expected minimum standard of understanding.

After the implementation of the Project Based Learning model in Cycle I, the average test score increased to 68. The percentage of classical mastery also rose to 60%, indicating that more than half of the students had met the minimum mastery criteria. This improvement suggests a positive impact from the application of PjBL on the understanding of the concepts taught.

Improvements in learning strategies in Cycle II, such as enhanced scaffolding and the use of concrete media, contributed to a more significant increase in results. In Cycle II, the average test score rose to 82, while the percentage of classical mastery reached 88%. These data indicate that nearly all students had mastered the concepts of rights and obligations as targeted in the learning objectives.

Overall, Table 3 illustrates a consistent upward trend in both the average test scores and the percentage of classical mastery at each stage of the research. These data confirm the effectiveness of implementing Project Based Learning in improving the understanding of rights and obligations concepts among fourth-grade students at SDN Cihajere.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of Project Based Learning (PjBL) through poster-making projects in the teaching of Civic Education (PPKn) for fourth grade students at SDN Cihajere has had a positive impact on improving students' understanding of the concepts of rights and obligations. Quantitatively, there was an increase in the average test scores from 58 in the pre-cycle, to 68 in the first cycle, and a significant rise to 82 in the second cycle. The percentage of classical mastery also showed a positive trend, rising from 35% in the pre-cycle to 60% in the first cycle, and ultimately reaching 88% in the second cycle. This improvement demonstrates that PjBL is effective in fostering conceptual understanding as well as active participation among students, which aligns with the findings of Indahwati & Abdullah (2019), Satriani et al. (2025), and Irfana et al. (2022), who assert that PjBL can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes, particularly in Civic Education.

Beyond learning achievement, observational and interview data revealed changes in students' learning behaviors. Students became more actively involved in discussions, were able to argue their points, and showed improved skills in group collaboration. This finding is consistent with Suharyati & Arga (2023), who stated that PjBL can improve students' critical thinking and collaboration skills. The use of posters as project products also proved effective in helping students grasp the concepts of rights and obligations in a concrete and contextual manner. This supports the findings of Fadilah et al. (2025) and Nabila et al. (2025), who highlighted the role of educational visual media such as posters in instilling national values and character in elementary students.

Practically, this study implies that Civic Education teachers can utilize PjBL based on poster projects as a primary instructional strategy to enhance conceptual understanding while simultaneously developing students' social skills, argumentation, and character. Teachers are also encouraged to act as active facilitators, providing guidance in group work processes, and optimizing reflection sessions to foster democratic values and a sense of responsibility among students. The development of educational visual media such as posters can also be routinely integrated into learning to add variety and increase students' learning motivation. However, this study has several limitations. The scope of the study was limited to a single class at one school, so the results may not be generalizable to other schools or contexts. In addition, the type of project implemented was limited to posters, so the effectiveness of other forms of projects has yet to be tested.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PjBL) model through poster-making projects in Civic Education (PPKn) has been proven to significantly improve the understanding of the concepts of rights and obligations among fourth-grade students at SDN Cihajere, as evidenced by the increase in average test scores from 58 (pre-cycle) to 68 (cycle I) and 82 (cycle II), as well as the rise in classical completeness percentage from 35% to 60% and 88%. PjBL is not only effective in developing cognitive aspects, but also contributes to the enhancement of students' critical thinking, collaboration, and argumentation skills through concrete and contextual learning experiences. These results emphasize the importance of innovative project-based learning methods and the use of visual media in Civic Education to instill values of democracy, responsibility, and social awareness from an early age. For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope of schools and types of projects, to develop quantitative assessment instruments for affective and psychomotor aspects, and to conduct longitudinal studies to explore the long-term impact of PjBL implementation on the character development of students.

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