

Culturally Responsive Teaching in Social Studies Education: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

This systematic literature review (SLR) synthesizes current evidence on the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in Social Studies Education, with particular attention to the integration of local wisdom. Following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines and the SPICE framework, relevant studies were identified from the Scopus database (2000–2026). After the screening process, empirical studies were analyzed using thematic synthesis to address four research questions concerning CRT implementation, local wisdom integration, pedagogical characteristics, and educational outcomes. The findings indicate that CRT is implemented through culturally inclusive curricula, dialogic pedagogy, inquiry-based learning, local history, multicultural citizenship education, and technology-supported learning. Local wisdom is integrated through cultural experiences, indigenous knowledge, community narratives, local history, and cultural values, strengthening contextual learning and cultural identity. The review also identifies contextual, dialogic, critical, inclusive, and transformative pedagogical characteristics. Consequently, this review proposes the Local Wisdom-Based Culturally Responsive Social Studies Pedagogy model as a conceptual framework for advancing culturally responsive, socially just, and contextually relevant social studies education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing cultural diversity of contemporary societies has transformed the goals of social studies education from merely transmitting civic knowledge into fostering democratic participation, intercultural competence, social justice, and respect for diversity. As migration, globalization, and digital communication intensify interactions among people from different cultural backgrounds, schools are expected to prepare learners who are capable of understanding multiple perspectives and participating responsibly in multicultural societies (Liu, 2020; Torres & Tarozzi, 2020). Consequently, culturally responsive teaching (CRT) has emerged as one of the most influential pedagogical approaches for addressing cultural diversity while promoting equitable learning opportunities.

Culturally responsive teaching emphasizes connecting curriculum, instructional strategies, classroom interaction, and assessment with students' cultural backgrounds, experiences, languages, and identities. Rather than viewing culture as an obstacle, CRT positions culture as an educational resource that enriches learning experiences and strengthens students' engagement. Previous studies have demonstrated that culturally responsive pedagogy improves students' academic participation, classroom interaction, and willingness to take intellectual risks (Mitton & Murray-Orr, 2021). Likewise, culturally responsive practices have been shown to enhance multicultural awareness and teachers' pedagogical efficacy among preservice teachers (Akcaoglu & Aرسال, 2022). These findings

indicate that culturally responsive teaching contributes not only to academic achievement but also to learners' social and cultural development.

Within social studies education, the importance of CRT becomes even more evident because the discipline explicitly aims to develop democratic citizenship, historical understanding, civic responsibility, and appreciation of cultural diversity. Research has shown that culturally responsive learning opportunities support civic development and democratic participation by encouraging inquiry, dialogue, and critical reflection (Bowyer & Kahne, 2026). Similarly, social studies teachers who adopt culturally responsive approaches are better able to facilitate inclusive classroom interactions involving culturally diverse learners, including refugee and immigrant students (Yılmaz & Gönel, 2022). Studies also suggest that integrating multicultural citizenship perspectives into civic education strengthens students' tolerance, empathy, and understanding of pluralistic societies (Nuryadi, 2020; Rachmadtullah & Syofyan, 2020).

Recent developments have expanded CRT beyond multicultural education toward culturally sustaining pedagogy, which seeks not only to acknowledge learners' cultural identities but also to preserve and sustain local cultural practices within educational contexts. Sinclair and Sener (2026) argue that culturally sustaining approaches encourage educators to maintain students' linguistic and cultural identities rather than replacing them with dominant cultural norms. Likewise, Li et al. (2025) emphasize that culturally responsive teaching requires teachers to understand learners' cultural contexts before designing meaningful instructional experiences. These perspectives indicate that effective CRT extends beyond instructional techniques toward broader commitments to cultural sustainability and educational equity.

One important dimension of culturally responsive teaching is the incorporation of local wisdom into learning. Local wisdom reflects indigenous knowledge, cultural values, traditions, historical experiences, and community practices that shape learners' identities. Integrating local wisdom into social studies education enables students to connect abstract concepts with authentic social realities while strengthening cultural identity and civic awareness. For example, Amboro and Purwanta (2026) demonstrated that local history integrated through culturally responsive teaching enhanced multicultural understanding among senior high school students. Similarly, Misco (2018) found that culturally responsive curriculum grounded in indigenous cultural contexts supported meaningful learning experiences and increased students' cultural engagement. Nakaya (2018) further reported that multicultural education rooted in local cultural contexts contributed to reducing ethnic conflict and strengthening social cohesion.

Despite these positive findings, existing studies remain fragmented across educational levels, countries, cultural settings, and instructional contexts. Some studies focus primarily on multicultural education (Yılmaz, 2022), while others examine refugee education (Karabacak et al., 2025), intercultural historical learning (Johansson, 2021), local history instruction (Amboro & Purwanta, 2026), culturally sustaining pedagogy (Son, 2024), or global citizenship education (Andrews & Aydin, 2020). These diverse perspectives demonstrate the richness of CRT implementation but also indicate the absence of a comprehensive synthesis that specifically examines how culturally responsive teaching has been implemented within social studies education while simultaneously exploring the integration of local wisdom into pedagogical practice.

Another important gap concerns the educational outcomes associated with CRT. Existing empirical studies report various outcomes, including improvements in civic engagement, multicultural competence, historical thinking, intercultural understanding, student participation, empathy, cultural identity, and tolerance (Bowyer & Kahne, 2026; Barton & Ho, 2020; Chun & Eun, 2025). However, these outcomes have rarely been synthesized systematically to identify recurring pedagogical characteristics, contextual factors, and patterns of implementation across different educational systems. Without such synthesis, it remains difficult for educators and policymakers to identify evidence-based strategies for integrating culturally responsive teaching into social studies curricula.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to systematically identify, evaluate, and synthesize empirical research on the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in Social Studies Education. The SLR approach was selected because

it provides a comprehensive, transparent, and reproducible synthesis of existing evidence through a rigorous methodological process, thereby minimizing researcher bias compared with traditional narrative reviews. The review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines, which consist of four sequential stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of eligible studies. Adopting the PRISMA 2020 protocol ensured transparency throughout the article selection process and enhanced the validity and reliability of the review findings.

The research focus, search strategy, and inclusion–exclusion criteria were developed using the SPICE (Setting, Perspective, Intervention, Comparison, Evaluation) framework, which is considered more appropriate for educational research than the PICOS framework. The Setting included Social Studies Education across different educational levels, encompassing Social Studies Education, Civic Education, History Education, and Geography Education. The Perspective involved teachers, students, pre-service teachers, and researchers. The Intervention focused on the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP), and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP). The Comparison component accommodated variations in instructional approaches and implementation contexts across studies, while the Evaluation component examined pedagogical characteristics, the integration of local wisdom, educational outcomes, research gaps, and future research directions. The SPICE framework guided the review in addressing four research questions concerning CRT implementation, local wisdom integration, pedagogical characteristics, and educational outcomes in Social Studies Education.

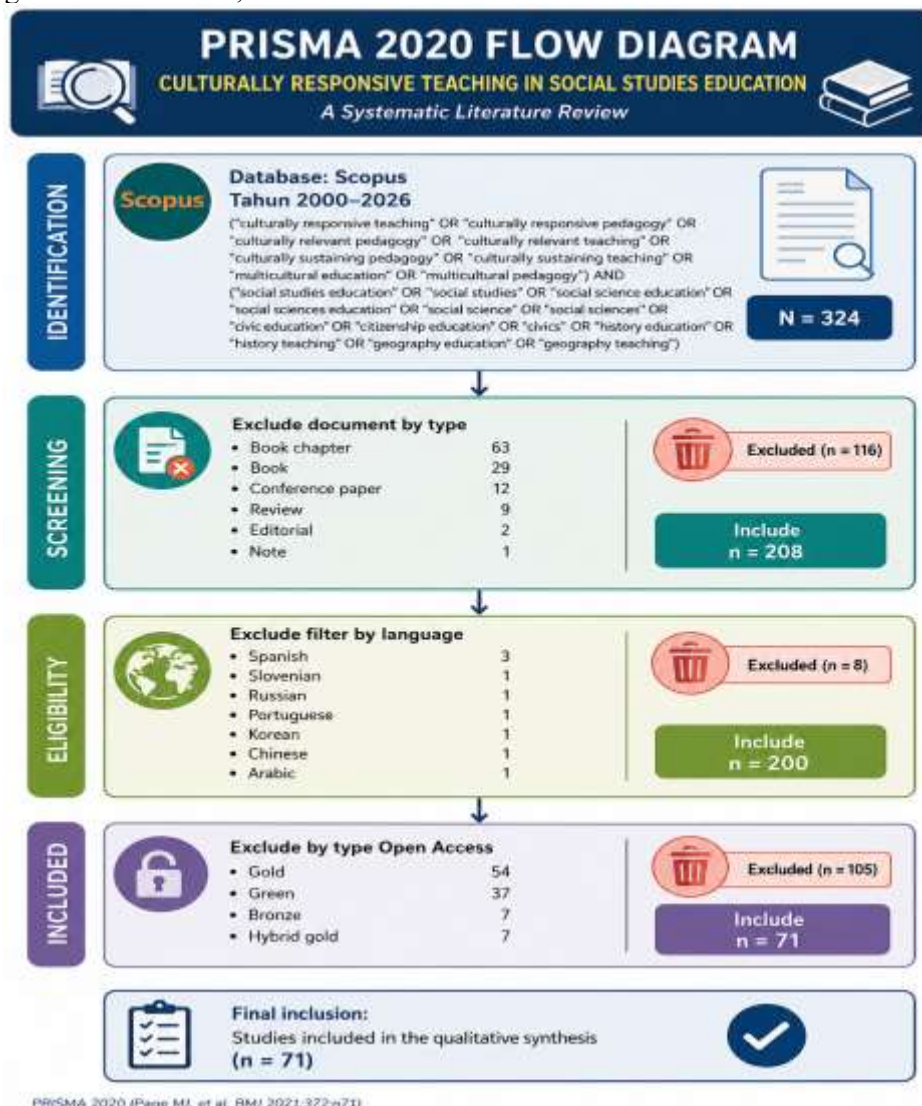


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram

The data were retrieved exclusively from the Scopus database because it indexes high-quality international peer-reviewed journals and provides broad disciplinary coverage. The literature search covered publications from 2000 to 2026 using a combination of keywords derived from the SPICE framework and connected through the Boolean operators AND and OR. The initial search identified 324 articles. After excluding non-eligible document types, 208 articles remained. A subsequent language screening retained only 200 English-language articles for further review. The remaining studies then underwent title, abstract, and full-text screening to ensure their relevance to the research objectives. Articles were included if they explicitly investigated the implementation of CRT or related culturally responsive pedagogical approaches within the context of Social Studies Education and reported empirical findings relevant to the research questions. The entire selection procedure was documented using the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram.

Data from the included studies were extracted using a structured data extraction form containing information on publication characteristics, research design, participants, forms of CRT implementation, local wisdom integration, instructional strategies, educational outcomes, and recommendations for future research. Data analysis was conducted through thematic synthesis, beginning with a descriptive analysis of publication trends, countries of origin, educational levels, and research methodologies. Subsequently, open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were performed to identify, categorize, and synthesize the major themes emerging from the literature according to the four research questions. This analytical process enabled the identification of recurring patterns regarding the implementation of CRT, pedagogical characteristics, integration of local wisdom, educational outcomes, and research gaps, ultimately forming the basis for the proposed conceptual framework of Local Wisdom-Based Culturally Responsive Social Studies Pedagogy.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Publication Characteristics

Based on a search of the Scopus database covering the period 2000–2026, a total of 71 final articles were selected and analyzed in this review. The annual publication trend indicates that research on Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), multicultural education, and Social Studies Education has not developed linearly but has experienced a substantial increase over the last five years. During the initial period (2009–2019), the number of publications remained relatively low, ranging from zero to three articles per year. This pattern suggests that, in its early stage, CRT within Social Studies Education was primarily conceptual and had not yet become a major focus of international educational research.

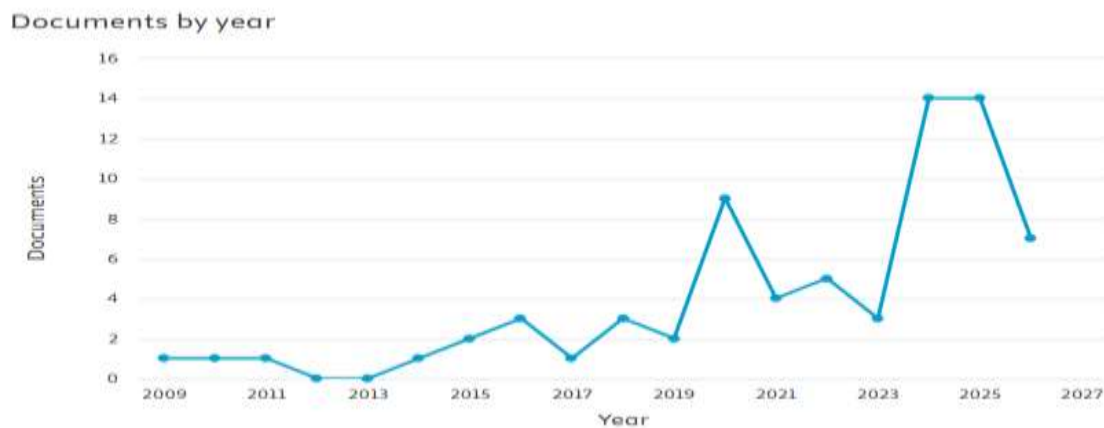


Figure 2. Documents by Year

Publication growth became more apparent in 2020, with nine articles, followed by moderate fluctuations between 2021 and 2023. The most significant increase occurred in 2024 and 2025, each recording 14 publications. Although 2026 had not yet completed its publication cycle, it had already produced seven articles, indicating sustained research interest. This trend demonstrates that CRT has become increasingly relevant in response to growing global concerns regarding cultural

diversity, migration, refugee education, racial discrimination, global citizenship education, and the demand for more inclusive curricula. Consequently, CRT has evolved beyond a pedagogical approach into a broader global educational agenda associated with social justice, cultural identity, and democratic education.

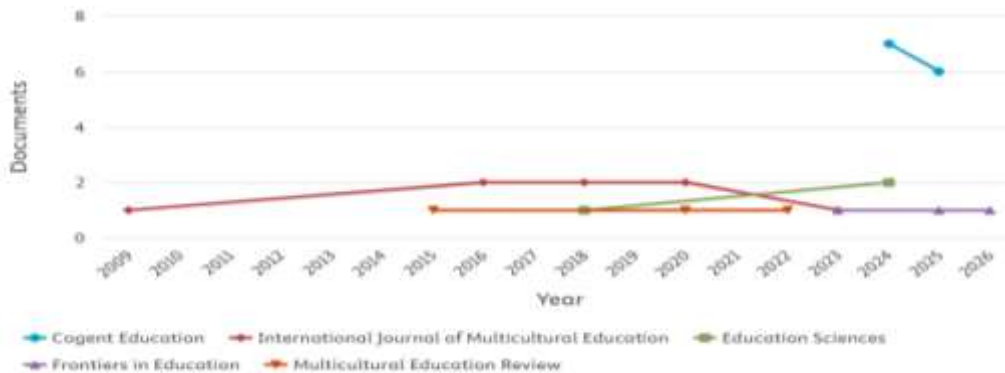


Figure 3. Article Publications

Regarding publication sources, the largest number of articles was published in *Cogent Education* (13 articles), followed by the *International Journal of Multicultural Education* (8 articles). Other prominent journals included *Education Sciences*, *Frontiers in Education*, and *Multicultural Education Review*. These findings indicate that CRT research lies at the intersection of multicultural education, citizenship education, curriculum studies, and social studies education. The dominance of *Cogent Education* reflects the interdisciplinary nature of CRT within general educational research, while the strong representation of the *International Journal of Multicultural Education* confirms the theoretical roots of CRT within the tradition of multicultural education.

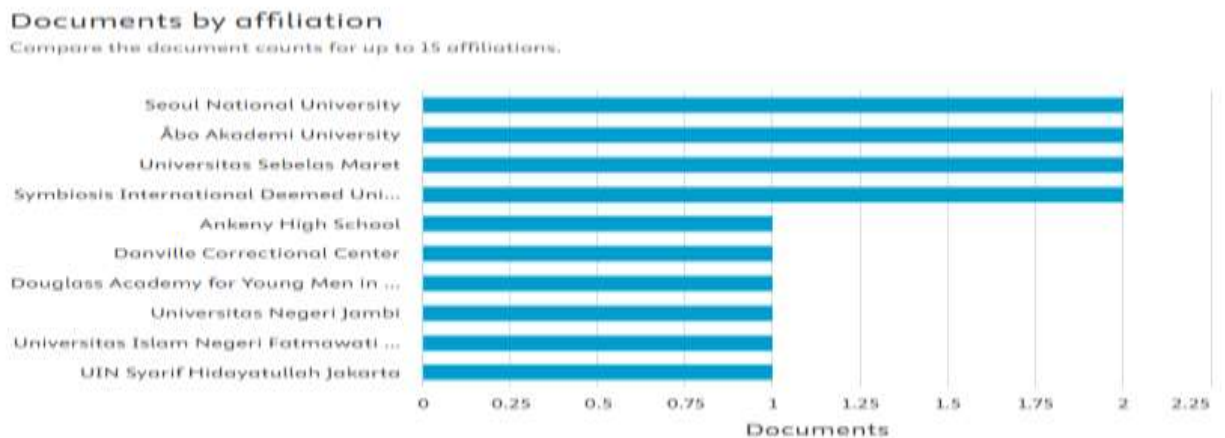


Figure 4. Publications by Affiliation

In terms of institutional affiliation, scholarly contributions were distributed across a wide range of universities, with no single institution dominating the field. Several institutions contributed two publications each, including Seoul National University, Åbo Akademi University, Universitas Sebelas Maret, and Symbiosis International Deemed University. This distribution suggests that CRT research has developed through collaborations across multiple countries and institutions rather than being concentrated within a single academic center.

From the perspective of country contributions, the United States emerged as the leading contributor with 25 publications. This finding is unsurprising because CRT, multicultural education, and culturally relevant pedagogy originated largely within the U.S. educational context as responses to racial inequality, minority education, immigration, and social injustice. Indonesia ranked second with 11 publications, followed by Turkey, Canada, China, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Finland, India, and Israel. Indonesia's strong representation is particularly noteworthy, as it reflects the growing international recognition of research concerning local wisdom, multiculturalism, Pancasila values, tolerance, and community-based education.

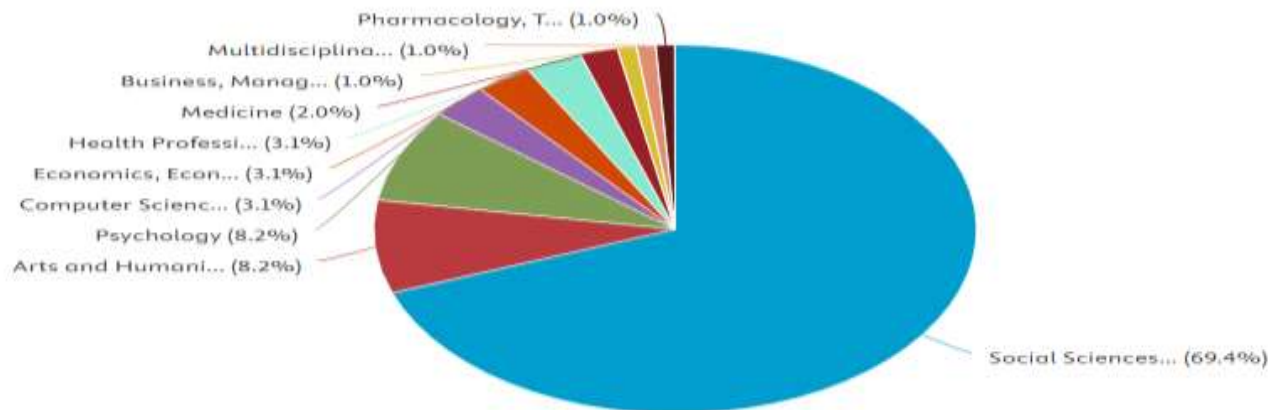


Figure 5. Publications by Subject Area

Based on subject classification, the majority of publications (69.4%) belonged to the field of Social Sciences. Smaller proportions were classified under Arts and Humanities, Psychology, Computer Science, Economics, Health Professions, and Business and Management. The predominance of Social Sciences indicates that CRT within Social Studies Education is primarily investigated as a social, cultural, civic, and curricular issue rather than merely as an instructional technique. This finding aligns with the interdisciplinary nature of Social Studies, which integrates history, geography, sociology, economics, politics, culture, and citizenship education into a unified educational framework.

3.2 RQ1: Implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching in Social Studies Education

RQ1 examines how Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) has been implemented across diverse social studies education contexts. The synthesis reveals five dominant implementation patterns: cultural integration into the curriculum, dialogic and critical pedagogy, multicultural citizenship education, inquiry-based learning, and the strengthening of cultural identity through history and contemporary social issues.

The first implementation pattern is the integration of culture into the curriculum. Rather than functioning as supplementary content, culture serves as a foundation for understanding social phenomena. Akcaoglu and Arsal (2022) demonstrated that culturally integrated content positively influences pre-service teachers' multicultural attitudes and teaching efficacy. These findings suggest that successful CRT depends on teachers' ability to connect social studies content with students' cultural backgrounds, thereby creating more meaningful and contextualized learning experiences. The second pattern involves dialogic pedagogy and critical reflection. Abd Elkader (2016) emphasized that dialogic pedagogy develops critical multicultural awareness by engaging learners in discussions on identity, inequality, conflict, and diversity. Within social studies education, dialogue extends beyond exchanging opinions to encouraging students to critically examine their own social positions and the power structures shaping society. Chun and Eun (2025) further demonstrated that dialogic approaches effectively reduce ethnic prejudice while promoting appreciation for multiple social identities.

The third implementation pattern concerns multicultural citizenship education. Barton and Ho (2020) argued that citizenship education should cultivate compassion, civic responsibility, and

respect for diversity. Similarly, Nuryadi (2020) and Rachmadtullah and Syofyan (2020) found that multicultural citizenship education promotes tolerance and appreciation of differences. In this context, CRT bridges citizenship concepts with students' lived experiences within culturally diverse societies.

The fourth pattern is inquiry-based learning centered on authentic social issues. Bowyer and Kahne (2026) reported that culturally responsive inquiry opportunities are positively associated with students' civic development. Rather than emphasizing memorization, inquiry-based CRT encourages learners to investigate social problems, evaluate multiple perspectives, and make informed civic decisions through critical reflection.

The fifth pattern focuses on strengthening cultural identity and representing marginalized communities. Johansson (2021) found that intercultural history education enhances students' understanding of identity and multiple cultural perspectives. Likewise, Kohvakka (2022, 2025) and Lee and Eun (2024) highlighted the importance of representing minority groups within history curricula to avoid reproducing dominant historical narratives. Furthermore, studies by Yilmaz and Gönel (2022), Karabacak et al. (2025), and Kumi-Yeboah and Smith (2016) demonstrated that CRT effectively supports refugee, immigrant, and minority students by recognizing their identities, experiences, and cultural knowledge as legitimate components of classroom learning.

Recent studies also indicate an emerging integration of digital technologies into culturally responsive pedagogy. Tanszil et al. (2026) employed culturally responsive digital storytelling to strengthen university students' resilience against radicalism, whereas Nadjamuddin et al. (2026) utilized AI-supported historical simulations to promote historical thinking and empathy. These findings indicate that CRT is evolving toward digitally mediated pedagogy while maintaining strong connections to local cultural contexts. Overall, the findings indicate that CRT in social studies education is implemented through inclusive curricula, dialogic pedagogy, inquiry-based learning, multicultural citizenship education, critical history instruction, and culturally contextualized technology integration. Nevertheless, most existing studies continue to conceptualize CRT primarily as an instructional strategy rather than as a comprehensive curriculum transformation capable of challenging dominant power relations, knowledge representation, and assessment practices.

3.3 RQ2: Integration of Local Wisdom into Culturally Responsive Teaching

RQ2 investigates how local wisdom has been integrated into CRT within social studies education. The synthesis indicates that the term *local wisdom* is rarely used explicitly in international literature. Instead, related concepts appear under terms such as *local history*, *indigenous knowledge*, *cultural heritage*, *community culture*, *traditional values*, *ethnic identity*, and *culturally sustaining pedagogy*. Consequently, local wisdom can be broadly understood as the knowledge, values, histories, and cultural practices of local communities that function as authentic learning resources.

The first form of integration is the incorporation of local history. Amboro and Purwanta (2026) demonstrated that CRT-based local history instruction enhances students' multicultural understanding. Local history enables learners to develop a stronger sense of community identity while critically examining social change and historical narratives, thereby extending beyond commemorative approaches toward critical historical inquiry. The second form involves the inclusion of indigenous and community cultures. Misco (2018) argued that culturally responsive curricula should be grounded in local community cultures, while Peters et al. (2024) found that Dakota cultural interventions significantly strengthened Native students' sense of belonging. These findings suggest that local wisdom functions not merely as instructional content but also as a source of cultural identity, emotional engagement, and meaningful learning experiences.

The third form concerns the integration of cultural values, traditions, and arts. Asrori et al. (2025) demonstrated that Indonesian puppet theatre embodies Islamic and cultural values that support character education. Similarly, Mujahid and Mukminin (2025) emphasized the importance of cultural literacy in strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile. Within social studies education, values such as mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), tolerance, deliberation, and social responsibility provide culturally relevant foundations for citizenship education. The fourth form emphasizes students' cultural experiences as learning resources. Son (2024) showed that culturally

sustaining social studies instruction can be developed through students' languages, family histories, migration experiences, and cultural identities. Thus, students become active contributors of cultural knowledge rather than passive recipients of information.

The fifth form highlights local wisdom as a means of fostering tolerance and social cohesion. Nakaya (2018) demonstrated that multicultural education contributes to resolving ethnic conflicts, while Hasnawia et al. (2025) reported that multicultural civic education promotes tolerance among elementary school students. Nevertheless, local wisdom should be integrated critically, as certain traditional values may reinforce gender inequality or social exclusion rather than inclusivity.

The sixth form relates to globally oriented citizenship grounded in local identity. Andrews and Aydin (2020) and Abdul Hameed (2026) argued that global citizenship education becomes more meaningful when rooted in local cultural identities. Such an approach enables students to engage with global issues while maintaining strong connections to their own cultural heritage and community values.

Overall, the findings reveal that the integration of local wisdom into CRT remains fragmented. Although many studies discuss local history, culture, identity, and community values, relatively few explicitly explain how these cultural elements are systematically translated into instructional design, pedagogical strategies, assessment, and educational outcomes. Based on this synthesis, local wisdom integration can be conceptualized at three interconnected levels: the content level, where local history, traditions, and cultural values are incorporated into social studies content; the pedagogical level, where culturally responsive instructional approaches are developed through dialogue, community inquiry, storytelling, and experiential learning; and the transformational level, where local wisdom becomes a catalyst for fostering critical consciousness, social justice, and civic responsibility. This three-level framework represents the primary conceptual contribution of this review and provides a foundation for advancing CRT in social studies education, particularly within Global South contexts such as Indonesia.

3.4 RQ3: Pedagogical Characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching in Social Studies Education

The synthesis of the selected Scopus-indexed studies indicates that the pedagogical characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in social studies education have evolved beyond simply incorporating cultural elements into instructional content. Instead, CRT functions as a comprehensive pedagogical framework that connects students' cultural identities, lived experiences, critical dialogue, and civic development.

Table 1. Mapping of Local Wisdom Integration in Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) for Social Studies Education

No.	Form of Local Wisdom Integration	Implementation in CRT for Social Studies Education	Examples of Cultural Resources	Pedagogical Function	References
1	Students' Cultural Experiences	Teachers connect social studies concepts with students' backgrounds, identities, and lived social experiences.	Family traditions, migration experiences, ethnic identity, community culture	Creates more contextualized and meaningful learning experiences	Yilmaz & Gönel (2022); Misco (2018)
2	Local History	Historical content is linked to local events, heritage sites, and collective memory.	Regional history, cultural sites, local heroes, community struggles	Strengthens cultural identity and historical consciousness	Amboro & Purwanta (2026); Johansson (2021)

No.	Form of Local Wisdom Integration	Implementation CRT for Social Studies Education	in Examples Cultural Resources	of Pedagogical Function	References
3	Community Narratives and Stories	Learning incorporates folktales, experiences, and narratives from marginalized communities.	Folklore, family history, memories, community narratives	oral Promotes family empathy, dialogue, intercultural understanding	Osler (2015); Gibbs (2020)
4	Arts and Cultural Artifacts	Teachers use traditional arts, cultural symbols, artifacts, and materials as learning resources in social studies.	Public art, local artifacts, traditional clothing, cultural symbols	Connects social concepts with authentic cultural realities	Taylor & Iroha (2015); Misco (2018)
5	Local Cultural Values	Cultural values are used as the foundation for discussions on citizenship, tolerance, social justice, and peaceful coexistence.	Mutual cooperation (<i>gotong royong</i>), tolerance, deliberation, solidarity, empathy	Develops social character and civic competence	Barton & Ho (2020); Torres & Tarozzi (2020)
6	Representation of Marginalized Groups	Curriculum and instructional materials are critically revised to include the voices of minorities, refugees, Indigenous peoples, and marginalized communities.	Minority identities, refugee experiences, Indigenous cultures	Promotes inclusive equitable learning	Kohvakka and (2022, 2025); Lee & Eun (2024)
7	Community-Based Social Issues	Students investigate authentic social issues within their local communities.	Social conflict, discrimination, migration, poverty, intolerance	Develops critical thinking and civic participation	Bowyer & Kahne (2026); Chun & Eun (2025)
8	Cultural Dialogue and Critical Reflection	Teachers facilitate discussions on cultural diversity, relations, racism, and social injustice.	Experiences of discrimination, identity conflicts, majority–minority relations	Fosters critical consciousness and social justice awareness	Abd Elkader (2016); Bassey (2010)
9	Culturally Responsive Digital Storytelling	Students use digital media to present local identities, histories, and cultural values.	Cultural storytelling videos, digital narratives, community documentation	Integrates digital literacy with cultural identity	Tanszil et al. (2026)
10	Technology-Supported Historical Simulation	Technology is employed to reconstruct historical events and sociocultural experiences.	Local historical simulations, Artificial Intelligence (AI), augmented	Enhances historical thinking and empathy	Nadjamuddin and et al. (2026)

Form of Local Wisdom Integration	Implementation CRT for Social Studies Education	in Examples Cultural Resources	of Pedagogical Function	References
		historical simulation		

As summarized in Table 1, local wisdom is integrated through students' cultural experiences, local history, community narratives, cultural values, indigenous knowledge, arts, community issues, digital storytelling, and technology-supported historical simulations.

Another defining characteristic is its orientation toward social justice and democratic citizenship. Bassey (2010), Barton and Ho (2020), and Torres and Tarozzi (2020) argued that multicultural education should extend beyond celebrating cultural diversity toward addressing structural inequality and promoting civic responsibility. Therefore, CRT encourages learners to critically examine injustice and actively participate in democratic social transformation.

Recent studies also reveal a growing integration of digital technology into culturally responsive pedagogy. Nadjamuddin et al. (2026) developed AI-supported historical simulations to foster historical thinking and empathy, while Tanszil et al. (2026) employed culturally responsive digital storytelling to strengthen students' resilience against radicalism. These innovations demonstrate that CRT is expanding toward digitally mediated pedagogy while maintaining strong connections to local cultural values.

3.5 RQ4: Educational Outcomes, Research Gaps, and Future Directions

The synthesis demonstrates that CRT generates multidimensional educational outcomes across cognitive, affective, social, and civic domains. First, CRT consistently enhances multicultural competence and tolerance. Akcaoglu and Aarsal (2022) found that multicultural education improves pre-service teachers' attitudes and instructional efficacy, while Rachmadtullah and Syofyan (2020) and Hasnawia et al. (2025) reported increased tolerance through multicultural civic education. These findings confirm that CRT supports the fundamental mission of social studies education in preparing citizens for culturally diverse societies.

Second, CRT strengthens cultural identity and students' sense of belonging. Peters et al. (2024) demonstrated that Dakota cultural interventions enhanced Native students' belonging, whereas Misco (2018) showed that culturally grounded curricula increased cultural engagement. These findings suggest that acknowledging students' cultural identities creates more inclusive learning environments and counters the dominance of majority cultures.

Third, CRT promotes empathy, intercultural understanding, and social awareness. Shapira et al. (2020) reported that media-based multicultural learning fostered intergroup empathy, while Johansson (2021) and Gan et al. (2025) highlighted the role of intercultural learning in strengthening cultural identity and citizenship. Consequently, CRT contributes not only to academic achievement but also to students' affective and social development.

Fourth, CRT enhances civic competence and global citizenship. Andrews and Aydin (2020), Abdul Hameed (2026), and Bowyer and Kahne (2026) argued that culturally responsive learning supports civic participation by connecting local cultural identities with global citizenship perspectives. Fifth, CRT encourages critical thinking and academic agency. Mitton and Murray-Orr (2021) found increased academic risk-taking, while Gibbs (2020) emphasized critical pedagogy as a means of empowering learners to interpret complex social realities.

Despite these positive outcomes, several research gaps remain. Existing studies are highly contextual and rarely provide an integrative conceptual model applicable across educational settings. Furthermore, local wisdom is generally discussed through concepts such as *local history*, *indigenous knowledge*, or *community culture* rather than being systematically conceptualized within CRT. Outcome measures also vary considerably, making cross-study comparisons difficult. In addition, digital CRT remains an emerging field, with only a limited number of studies exploring AI, digital storytelling, and technology-enhanced culturally responsive pedagogy (Nadjamuddin et al., 2026; Tanszil et al., 2026).

3.6 Conceptual Model Derived from the Synthesis

Based on the synthesis of the reviewed studies, this article proposes a conceptual model entitled Local Wisdom-Based Culturally Responsive Social Studies Pedagogy. The model is developed from the interaction of four interrelated components: local wisdom as the contextual foundation, Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) as the pedagogical approach, social studies instructional strategies as the learning process, and educational outcomes as the intended results



Figure 6. Conceptual Model Derived from the Synthesis

The first component is local wisdom, which serves as the contextual foundation of the model. Local wisdom encompasses local history, cultural values, traditions, language, arts, community identity, lived social experiences, and indigenous knowledge. These cultural resources function as authentic learning sources that connect social studies concepts with students' everyday realities. This finding is consistent with Misco (2018), Peters et al. (2024), and Amboro and Purwanta (2026), who demonstrated that embedding learning within local cultural contexts enhances students' engagement, cultural identity, and meaningful learning experiences.

The second component is Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), which functions as the pedagogical bridge transforming local wisdom into inclusive, critical, and transformative learning experiences. Within this framework, teachers do not merely incorporate cultural content into instructional materials; rather, they establish meaningful relationships with learners, ensure equitable cultural representation, facilitate critical dialogue, and connect students' lived experiences with broader social, historical, and civic issues. Consequently, CRT positions culture

as both a pedagogical resource and a lens through which social realities are interpreted and critically examined.

The third component consists of social studies instructional strategies, representing the instructional process through which culturally responsive pedagogy is enacted. These strategies include reflective dialogue, social inquiry, local history instruction, controversial issues discussion, culturally responsive digital storytelling, historical simulation, community-based learning, and civic engagement projects. Such approaches enable students to construct social understanding through authentic experiences closely related to their cultural backgrounds and community contexts. Rather than emphasizing content transmission, these strategies promote critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and active civic participation.

The fourth component comprises educational outcomes, which are categorized into four interconnected domains: cognitive, affective, social, and civic outcomes. Cognitive outcomes include deeper understanding of history, geography, society, politics, and social issues. Affective outcomes involve the development of empathy, cultural identity, self-belonging, and appreciation of cultural diversity. Social outcomes encompass intercultural communication, tolerance, collaboration, and respect for diversity. Civic outcomes include civic competence, civic engagement, democratic participation, and social justice awareness. Together, these outcomes reflect the multidimensional goals of culturally responsive social studies education.

The novelty of this conceptual model lies in its reconceptualization of CRT not merely as an instructional method but as a transformative framework for social studies education. Unlike previous studies that primarily discuss CRT as a classroom strategy, this model positions local wisdom as the epistemological foundation of culturally responsive pedagogy. It demonstrates that local wisdom should not be treated as supplementary cultural content but as a central knowledge base that informs curriculum design, pedagogical practices, instructional strategies, and educational outcomes. By integrating local wisdom with CRT, the proposed model provides a comprehensive framework for developing social studies education that is contextual, culturally inclusive, critically oriented, socially transformative, and relevant to students' lived experiences. Consequently, this model offers a theoretical contribution to the CRT literature while providing practical guidance for curriculum developers, teacher educators, policymakers, and classroom practitioners seeking to strengthen culturally responsive social studies education in multicultural societies, particularly within the Global South.

4. CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review provides a comprehensive synthesis of the current state of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in Social Studies Education and highlights the growing importance of integrating local wisdom into culturally responsive pedagogical practices. The findings demonstrate that CRT extends beyond incorporating cultural content into lessons by fostering inclusive, dialogic, inquiry-oriented, and socially transformative learning environments. Across diverse educational contexts, CRT promotes meaningful connections between students' cultural identities, community experiences, and social studies concepts while strengthening multicultural understanding, empathy, critical thinking, civic competence, and democratic participation.

The review further reveals that local wisdom is increasingly embedded through local history, indigenous knowledge, community narratives, cultural values, arts, and lived experiences. However, existing studies remain fragmented across cultural contexts and rarely provide a comprehensive pedagogical framework linking local wisdom, CRT, instructional strategies, and educational outcomes. In addition, inconsistencies in outcome measures and the limited integration of digital technologies indicate important areas for future investigation. As its primary contribution, this review proposes the Local Wisdom-Based Culturally Responsive Social Studies Pedagogy model, positioning local wisdom as the epistemological foundation of culturally responsive social studies education. The proposed model offers both theoretical and practical implications for curriculum development, teacher education, and culturally responsive instructional practices. Future research should validate this conceptual framework across different educational contexts through comparative, longitudinal, and technology-enhanced empirical studies.

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