

## The Nature of Social Studies Learning for Elementary School Students

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### Abstract

*In essence, social studies learning is very important to be taught to students since they are in elementary school. The aim of social studies learning is to develop the potential of students to be sensitive to social problems that occur in society, to have a positive mental attitude towards correcting all inequality that occurs and to be skilled in dealing with every problem that occurs every day, whether it befalls them or others. This research uses the library research method. This research attempts to collect sources related to learning models that can be applied in the social studies learning process in elementary schools. The method used is the literature review method, which is a method that focuses on collecting literature related to the problem topic. After collecting literature related to the research focus, what the researcher does is select journals that can really be used, and group them according to the order of need, then analyze these sources and draw conclusions. Based on the results of studies that have been carried out, it can be seen that the essence of social science is a scientific discipline that studies humans, society and social interactions, which explains various phenomena or events in the social environment that have interactions within them. So that social science will integrate all scientific disciplines related to social science. Therefore, teachers need to develop teaching materials, so as to encourage students to learn actively.*

**Keywords:** *Essence Social Studies Learning Elementary School*

### INTRODUCTION

The education sector is one of the problems faced by a country, as is the case with Indonesia, especially the issue of educational output which is endlessly discussed by educational experts, experts and practitioners themselves. Education is one solution and is a pillar for turning a country into a country that is able to maintain its identity on the international stage. Education can also be the reason why a country is strong because its human resources are able to process its own natural resources.

Education must also be able to become a spearhead in overcoming various problems in order to create a peaceful and safe atmosphere in the country. In accordance with Plato's expression in Ancient Greece, "to create a safe and peaceful Athens State, every citizen of Athens must be given education or be educated in order to become a good citizen. Plato's thinking reminds us of the aim of social studies education, namely how to make good citizens in the sense of obeying the law, knowing and understanding the rules. Apart from that, good citizens are able to understand differences in ethnicity, ethnicity, religion, and so on. This is very important because it looks at the diverse

conditions of Indonesia, which is symbolized by the words *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

One of the fields of education related to making good citizens is social studies education. Social studies education is one solution to strengthen a country by providing citizens with an understanding of the various differences that must be maintained. This supports making a country able to compete with other countries in the world. So, by looking at this situation, social studies education is one answer to this problem. But unfortunately, social studies education, which should be the hope of being able to unite differences as the strength of a nation and be able to make good citizens, is faced with various obstacles that must be faced and overcome. Starting from skills and academic barriers, educational facilities, quality of educational books and administrative and management barriers. It is hoped that this problem can be resolved in order to create a generation of people who are moral and socially minded.

Interdisciplinary education programs at the school level are one approach that is considered more effective in shaping students' social behavior in the expected direction. In fact, this educational program, apart from being a form of

internalization and transformation of knowledge, can also be used as an effort to prepare human resources who are ready to face various increasingly complex challenges and problems in the future [1]. Therefore, it is necessary to include social studies in the school curriculum in Indonesia.

Social studies learning which is the implementation of social studies education in schools must be carried out to achieve the goals of social studies education itself. The aim of social studies learning is to develop the potential of students to be sensitive to social problems that occur in society, to have a positive mental attitude towards correcting all inequality that occurs and to be skilled in dealing with every problem that occurs every day, whether it befalls them or others. Therefore, social studies learning must be taught by teachers who are qualified in the field of social studies, namely those with a social studies educational background, the level of maturity, maturity, level of competence and experience of the teacher must be taken into account so that what is taught is more appropriate and can achieve the objectives of the learning concept. This is as explained by Suyono and Harianto (2013: 2) that the level of maturity, competence and experience of teachers is still needed in situations that place greater emphasis on the application of learning concepts.

The concept of social studies first entered the world of schooling in Indonesia in 1972-1973, which was tested in the Ikip Bandung School Development Pioneer Project (PSSP) curriculum. Then officially in the 1975 curriculum the educational program on social issues was deemed not sufficient to teach only through history and geography lessons, so subjects were reduced at the elementary-high school level to several allied social science subjects combined with social studies subjects [1].

Social studies learning is one of the materials taught to students from both elementary and high school, because at this age level character building is easy to do, good and positive values can be applied appropriately. Elementary school students who are quick to respond, respond and memorize are one aspect that makes it easier to teach social values and other positive things.

Character formation from an early age is very important for future matters, therefore it is very important that the nature of social studies learning is in supporting the continuity of the teaching and learning process for teachers and students in order to make social studies learning more effective for elementary school students so that it is easier for them to understand well and correctly so that can achieve the concept of learning objectives itself. Looking at the various problems above and the importance of social studies learning for elementary school students, the author will examine "The Nature of Social Studies Learning for Elementary School Students" in achieving learning goals at the elementary school level.

## METHOD

This research uses the library research method. This research attempts to collect sources related to learning models that can be applied in the social studies learning process in elementary schools. The method used is the literature review method, literature review is a method that focuses on collecting literature related to the problem topic. Library research includes general processes such as systematic identification of theories, literature exploration, and analysis of documents that contain information related to the research topic. After collecting literature related to the research focus, what the researcher did was select journals that could really be used, and grouped them based on the order of need. After that, the researcher analyzed these sources and wrote them into new writing, then drew conclusions from the sources that had been analyzed. Apart from that, researchers used an analysis model of previous findings called meta-analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Social Science Learning in Elementary Schools

In general, learning is an effort to learn and understand something with certain strategies, methods or approaches to achieve previously planned lesson objectives. Learning is a reciprocal communication process between a person or group, in this case both between students and teachers and between students and

other students. In learning efforts there are a series of activities that need to be carried out such as selecting, determining, developing methods/tools to obtain the desired results. Humans as social creatures always live side by side with each other and will need each other. This is in accordance with previous research, in Social Sciences lessons which are subjects from various aspects such as society, humans, the environment, and the interactions between them. Social studies lessons cover several fields of study such as history, geography and economics [2]. Learning at the elementary school level, students can already learn the basics related to this field of study. Students will understand how humans interact with the surrounding environment, how society is formed, as well as economic and social dynamics in a country or region.

The definition of IPS always refers to studies related to attention to human life activities. Among the results of research conducted by previous researchers, social studies is character education with a contextual approach to the learning process, one of which is related to Indonesian natural skills material [3]. This theme is directly related to the surrounding environment which will make students more flexible and motivated by the social studies learning process. In this material, students' character can be developed through group discussion activities.

Apart from that, this social studies subject involves understanding historical changes, physical and human geography, economic structure, and the role of government in managing society. This lesson is important because it helps students to understand the conditions around them better, building awareness of social, political and economic issues that affect everyday life (Yusnaldi, et al., 2023). It also helps develop analytical skills, problem solving, and a deep understanding of different historical and cultural contexts. By learning social studies from an early age, it is hoped that it will be able to shape students' attitudes to be more active, have good social characteristics, respect each other, and become good citizens in social life. The most important thing is that students can understand that humans

need each other, respect each other, and have a sense of responsibility for obligations, so that a harmonious social life can be created even amidst differences.

Learning social studies education in Indonesia cannot be separated from the 1975 curriculum which places social studies as a subject at the elementary and middle school education levels. The development of Social Education Science ideas in Indonesia has adapted quite a lot from various social education ideas (Social Studies) that developed abroad, especially in professional organizations which have quite a big influence on school curriculum policies. Social Sciences at the school level has a different meaning between Social Sciences in Elementary Schools and Social Sciences for Middle or High Schools. Social studies education at the school level is a simplified discipline of social sciences, state ideology and religion which is presented in a structured and scientific manner in order to achieve educational goals. This is in accordance with the understanding in research conducted, that social studies education at the school education level is a simplification or adaptation of the disciplines of social sciences and humanities, and is related to basic human activities that are organized and presented scientifically [4].

Based on the perspective on Social Sciences education above, it can be concluded that Social Sciences is an integrated study of social sciences that is simplified for education in schools and aims to enable students to acquire good values as provisions for life in society. Human activities related to their interaction with geographical aspects. Human activities in fulfilling all their life needs in the dimensions of production, distribution and consumption flows. Apart from that, it is also studied how humans form a set of social rules in maintaining patterns of social interaction between humans and how humans gain and maintain power. In essence, the focus of social studies is various human activities in various dimensions of social life in accordance with the characteristics of humans as social creatures.

## **The Nature of Social Science Learning in Elementary Schools**

Learning Social Sciences is very important learning for children from the time they start elementary school, because human life in society cannot be separated from their relationships with each other. The essence of Social Science is the study of humans and their world. The main aim of IPS is to understand and explain social phenomena in society and their impact on individuals and groups. Apart from that, it helps humans understand how people interact with their physical, social and cultural environments [2]. In accordance with this explanation, with the help of social science, students can understand the history of development, migration patterns, social changes, economic systems, political structures and dynamics of social groups. It then helps to understand the individual's role in society, including values, norms, and social behavior.

In practice, social studies subjects become a unified whole that is taught to students, even though in its classification there are many scientific disciplines included in it. Social studies taught in Indonesia itself is packaged in the form of integrated social studies for elementary school level which studies various disciplines that are integrated with each other.

### **1. Social Studies Learning Objectives**

Social studies education aims to educate and provide basic skills so that you can develop yourself according to your talents, interests, abilities and environment as well as various provisions for continuing your education to a higher level. Social Sciences is one of the subjects given at the basic education level which has been integrated from history, geography and economics subjects as well as other social science subjects. Social Sciences are formulated on the basis of reality and social phenomena.

Learning Social Sciences aims to be able to provide understanding of a number of concepts and develop a broader understanding, and the most important thing is to train attitudes, values, morals and skills based on the concepts they already have. This is in accordance with previous research

conducted by Trianto (2012), related to the social studies concept which includes: interaction, interdependence, continuity and change, diversity or differences, conflict, values of trust, justice or equality, culture and nationalism towards students [5]. With social studies learning in elementary schools, it is hoped that students will be able to understand what is happening in their environment. Therefore, social studies education needs to refer to the goals of national education, namely developing students' abilities in mastering social science disciplines so as to achieve higher educational goals.

There are three aspects that are the objectives of learning social studies education, namely intellectual aspects, social life and individual life. This goal is in accordance with what was explained developing students' intellectual abilities is developing the ability to think about social sciences and societal problems. Meanwhile, social life values relate to actions oriented towards social responsibility and participation. According to Sumatmadja (2006), the aim of individual life is to develop students into good citizens, having knowledge, skills and social concern for society and the state [4].

### **2. Foundations of Social Studies Learning**

Learning Social Sciences as a scientific discipline certainly has a foundation, which can become fundamental ideas for developing the structure, methodology and use of social studies education as a scientific discipline. According to Sapriya (2009) in research conducted by (Yusnaldi, et al., 2023), the foundation of the Social Sciences discipline consists of: (a) the philosophical basis of the ideas used to determine the object of study or main study, (b) the foundation ideological as giving considerations and answering the relationship between theory and practical ethics, morals and norms, (c) sociological basis as ideas for determining ideals, needs, interests, patterns of life in social interactions, (d) anthropological basis as basic ideas in determining appropriate



educational patterns, systems and structures, (e) humanitarian foundations as the basis for determining ideal human characteristics as targets of the educational process (f) political foundations for determining the direction and line of political policy in social studies education, (g) psychological foundations for determining ways Social studies education builds a disciplinary structure of knowledge, both in personal and other settings.

### 3. Characteristics of Social Studies Learning

There are several characteristics for Social Sciences subjects according to Soemantri (2001) in research conducted by (Yusnaldi, et al., 2023), as follows: (a) Social Sciences is a scientific discipline that originates from a combination of geographical, historical, and social elements. economics, law and politics, citizenship, sociology, religion, to the field of humanities, (b) the basic competence of social studies comes from the scientific structure of geography, history, economics and sociology which is arranged in such a way that it becomes lesson material or topic, (c) apart from that Basic competence also concerns various social problems which are formulated using an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach, (d) basic competence can concern events and changes in people's lives with the principles of cause and effect, adaptation and management of the environment, structure, social problems and efforts to fight for life.

### 4. Scope of IPS

Based on the 2006 Minister of National Education Regulation on Content Standards, it explains that the scope of social studies subjects includes: (1) people, places and the environment, (2) time, continuity and change, (3) social and cultural systems, (4) economic behavior and well-being. Basically, social studies learning is related to human life which involves all of their behavior and needs. The discipline of Social Education is concerned with the way humans' study, examine and examine

human life systems in their social context or humans themselves as members of society. Taking into account that humans are in such a broad social context, social studies teaching at the educational level needs to be limited to the abilities of students at each level. At the basic education level, the scope of social studies teaching is limited to social phenomena and problems that can be reached in geography and history. In this case, it is mainly related to the symptoms and social problems of daily life that exist in the environment around elementary school students.

As explained above, social studies learning is related to humans as members of society in their social life. So the scope of social studies learning includes: (a) the substance of social science material which is in direct contact with society, (b) symptoms, problems and social events regarding social life.

### 5. Social Sciences Learning Function

The function of social studies learning at the elementary school level is to develop values, attitudes and social skills in students' citizenship so that they can be reflected in social life. In connection with this function in research conducted by Jarolimek, the main mission of social studies education is to help students learn about the world society in which they live and find their way, to learn to accept social reality, and to develop knowledge, attitudes and skills to help hone human enlightenment [6] .

### 6. Social Sciences Learning Principles

The principles of learning Social Sciences are lessons about social sciences and humanities within the scope of society, where science includes various social activities from economics, history, law, anthropology, psychology, geography, sociology and political science. Meanwhile, humanities is a science that studies the habits or culture of a society [7] . So, to achieve success in social studies learning, learning principles that focus on the environment as a

place where people interact need to be given more attention. According to previous research, it is explained that educators need to use local wisdom values to enrich material sources that are appropriate to the topic or theme that students will study [8]. In connection with this, another explanation also states that the principles of social studies learning must have, namely: (a) integration, (b) interaction, (c) continuity and [9].

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of studies that have been carried out, it can be seen that the essence of social science is a scientific discipline that studies humans, society and social interactions, which explains various phenomena or events in the social environment that have interactions within them. So that social science will integrate all scientific disciplines related to social science.

## SUGGESTION

Apart from that, there are many ways that can be done to make the learning process of social studies material fun and meaningful. Therefore, teachers are expected to be more creative in developing teaching materials, so that they can encourage students to learn actively and generate constructive thinking patterns. Therefore, teachers are expected to be more creative in developing teaching materials, so that they can encourage students to learn actively. and generate constructive thinking patterns.

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