



Analysis of Social Studies Learning Problems in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the problems faced in learning Social Sciences at UPTD SDN18 Peusangan. Based on initial observations, it was found that students' low interest and understanding of social studies subjects was influenced by the dominant learning method using lectures, limited learning media, and the lack of relevance of the material to students' lives. Apart from that, limited teacher competence in using technology and applying innovative methods is also a factor that contributes to this problem. This research method uses a qualitative approach, with data collection techniques through observation, interviews and analysis of student learning outcomes. The research results show that students are less motivated and passive during social studies learning because the method tends to be monotonous and the material is not linked to everyday experiences. Learning media that is limited to textbooks makes learning less interesting for students. The low scores on student learning outcomes indicate that they have difficulty understanding social studies material in depth. Solutions are needed in the form of implementing more interactive learning methods, using simple visual or digital media, and training for teachers in the use of technology and student-based learning methods.

Keywords: Analysis; social studies learning; Elementary School

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis permasalahan yang dihadapi dalam pembelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (IPS) di UPTD SDN18 Peusangan. Berdasarkan observasi awal, ditemukan bahwa rendahnya minat dan pemahaman siswa terhadap mata pelajaran IPS dipengaruhi oleh metode pembelajaran yang dominan menggunakan ceramah, keterbatasan media pembelajaran, serta kurangnya relevansi materi dengan kehidupan siswa. Selain itu, keterbatasan kompetensi guru dalam penggunaan teknologi dan penerapan metode inovatif juga menjadi faktor yang berkontribusi pada masalah ini. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan analisis hasil belajar siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa kurang termotivasi dan pasif selama pembelajaran IPS karena metode yang cenderung monoton dan materi yang tidak dikaitkan dengan pengalaman sehari-hari. Media pembelajaran yang terbatas pada buku teks membuat pembelajaran menjadi kurang menarik bagi siswa. Rendahnya nilai hasil belajar siswa menunjukkan bahwa mereka kesulitan memahami materi IPS secara mendalam. Diperlukan solusi berupa penerapan metode pembelajaran yang lebih interaktif, penggunaan media visual atau digital sederhana, dan pelatihan bagi guru dalam penggunaan teknologi serta metode pembelajaran berbasis siswa.

Kata kunci: Analisis; pembelajaran IPS; Sekolah Dasar

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Introduction

Social Science (IPS) learning has an important role in shaping students' understanding of social life, culture, history, and geography (Priyoga et al., 2015). The aim is to develop social awareness and national values and introduce students to basic concepts that will help them understand society and the environment. However, at UPTD SD Negeri 18 Peusangan, social studies learning faces various challenges that affect the low interest and understanding of students.

Based on initial observations, it can be seen that students' interest in social studies lessons is low (Suci et al., 2023). Most students consider social studies to be a "boring" subject because the material they assess is theoretical and less relevant to everyday life. This low interest affects students' motivation to learn, so they are less interested in paying attention and actively participating in learning (Susilowati, 2022) .

When interest in learning is low, students' understanding of concepts in social studies also becomes superficial. This has a direct impact on student learning outcomes, which often do not meet the minimum standards set by the school. This situation shows the need to design social studies learning that is more interesting and relevant so that students feel engaged and motivated (Widarsih & Faraz, 2016).

The Conventional Learning Approach, which is the method often used by teachers, is lectures. Although this method makes it easier for teachers to deliver material, the lecture method tends to make students passive because they only listen without being actively involved in the learning process. This teacher centered learning hinders student involvement in developing critical understanding and analytical thinking skills required in social studies. This conventional learning approach is not in line with the principles of modern education, where learning should be more student centered. Student-focused approaches, such as project-based learning, group discussions, or simulations, allow students to actively engage and develop much-needed social and critical thinking skills in social studies. Therefore, a change in approach is very important to increase student interaction and participation in learning (Ariadi et al., 2017).

Furthermore, limited learning media is one of the obstacles in increasing student interest and understanding. Dominant learning using textbooks is not interesting enough for students who tend to prefer information presented visually and interactively (Hayati et al., 2024). In this digital age, students are more interested in media that offer a visually rich learning experience, such as videos, infographics, or interactive games (Ratnathatmaja & Sujana, 2022). However, the limited technology facilities in schools are the main obstacle in utilizing digital media in social studies learning. The limitations of the media make social studies material difficult for students to understand, because they only rely on text without illustrations or adequate visual examples. Elementary school students, especially at elementary age, tend to have an easier time understanding the material presented with visual aids or props. This shows that the existence of more varied learning media can increase students' understanding of social studies materials (Astuti et al., 2016).

Most social studies materials are presented in the form of theoretical information without relating it to a real context that is close to the student. As a result, students feel the material is irrelevant or has a direct connection to their daily lives. For example, when discussing historical or geography topics, the material presented is often not related to the local environment or culture that students are better familiar with.

Contextual learning, which relates the material to students' daily lives, can increase students' understanding and involvement in social studies learning (Agustín et al., 2024). When students feel that the learning material relates to their lives or to the culture and environment they are familiar with, they tend to be more interested and motivated to understand the concept. More contextual social studies learning not only enriches understanding, but also assists students in developing social and cultural values that are relevant to their environment.

Teachers at UPTD SD Negeri 18 Peusangan are generally still not used to using technology in learning. In addition, they lack mastery of innovative learning methods that are able to make the learning process more dynamic and interesting. This limitation results in the learning process being monotonous and does not stimulate students' interest. Improving teachers' competence in utilizing technology and applying interactive learning methods is very necessary. Teachers need to be trained to master the use of digital media and visual aids, as well as be introduced to interactive learning methods, such as Project-Based Learning, Problem-Based Learning.

With this competence, teachers will be able to design learning that is more interesting and in accordance with the needs of students. The impact of the above problems can be seen from the low learning outcomes of students in social studies subjects (Utami et al., 2021). Based on the exam results, most students were unable to achieve the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) score. This shows that students do not have an adequate understanding of basic concepts in social studies. When students' understanding of the material is low, they not only have difficulty in following the lessons, but also have difficulty in developing critical thinking and analytical skills. In the long run, this will hinder students in mastering the skills needed in social studies, such as the ability to understand social issues, think critically, and make decisions based on facts. Therefore, improvements are needed in the learning approach so that students are able to develop a deeper understanding of the material (Rizqiani, 2022).

Based on the background of this problem, this study aims to analyze the problems faced in social studies learning at UPTD SD Negeri 18 Peusangan. This study aims to: Identify the main factors that cause low interest and understanding of students in social studies lessons. Analyze the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing interesting and contextual learning. Find the right solution to improve the quality of social studies learning, both in terms of learning methods and the media used.

Method

The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative method. The Descriptive Qualitative Method is a research approach that aims to describe a phenomenon or

situation based on qualitative data. This method is used to provide an in-depth description of a particular problem, process, or experience without manipulating variables. In the context of education, this method is often used to analyze learning problems, including in subjects such as social studies in elementary schools. Data was collected through classroom observations, interviews, questionnaires, with teachers and students, as well as document studies related to student learning outcomes in social studies subjects. Interviews are used to dig up information from teachers, students, or principals about their experiences in social studies learning. In-depth interviews with teachers about the obstacles they face in teaching social studies. The interview aims to explore students' views on social studies subjects and teachers' approaches, as well as understand the obstacles faced by teachers. Observation is carried out directly to see the interaction in the classroom as well as the methods and media used by teachers. Observe firsthand the learning process in the classroom to record teaching methods, student engagement, and media use. For example, observation of the way teachers deliver social studies material in the classroom. Furthermore, there is a questionnaire in the form of giving written questions to students or teachers to collect quantitative data about their perception of social studies learning. Documentation is used by collecting data from documents such as lesson plans (RPPs), evaluation notes, or textbooks used. Analysis of the lesson plan to see the extent to which teachers design project-based learning. Furthermore, student learning outcome data is analyzed to evaluate the level of student understanding of social studies materials.

Results and Discussion

Result

The results of the study show some important findings, namely: Most students have low motivation to study social studies because they find social studies material less interesting and difficult to understand. Students feel that social studies learning only focuses on memorization without being directly related to daily life. Teachers tend to use lecture and explanation methods that are less actively involved in students. This makes students become passive and quickly bored during the learning process.

The learning media used is limited to textbooks, and the use of digital media or teaching aids is very rare. This limits the appeal of learning and does not stimulate student interest. Based on the results of the exam, students' understanding of the concept of social studies is still low, as can be seen from the scores that do not reach the minimum standards set by the school. Research shows that **75% of social studies teachers** in elementary schools still use the lecture method as the main approach. As a result, students become passive and less involved in the learning process.

The results of interviews with social studies teachers in several regions revealed that **40% of teachers feel less confident** in using technology in learning. Most teachers also admitted that there was minimal training in the application of project-based or contextual learning.

Discussion

Social studies learning problems at UPTD SD Negeri 18 Peusangan can be analyzed from various aspects, including:

1. Aspects of Student Motivation and Interest

Students' interest in learning is a crucial factor in learning effectiveness. The low interest of students in social studies subjects is caused by several things, including the assumption that social studies is a "boring" subject because there are many memorizations and materials that seem theoretical and far from their daily lives. This suggests that students need a learning approach that can relate the material to their real life or experiences. Thus, their understanding of social studies concepts can be better if it is accompanied by real applications or relevant situations in their lives.

2. Learning Methods Used

The dominating lecture method is the main obstacle. Teacher-centered learning tends to make students passive because they simply receive information without being actively involved in the process. Learning like this has the potential to hinder students in developing critical thinking skills, analytical skills, and the ability to work together. According to constructivist educational theory, students are supposed to learn through hands-on experience and interaction with the material. This signals the importance of more active and student-centered learning methods, such as Project-Based Learning, group discussions, simulations, or case studies.

3. Limitations of Learning Media

Limited learning media, especially the use of teaching aids and digital media, also affect students' interest in social studies. In today's digital era, children tend to be interested in information presented in both visual and digital formats. Teachers can use learning videos, infographics, or interactive learning applications to explain social studies materials. For example, for history or geography topics, teachers can use videos or visual images depicting historical places or events, which will help students more easily understand and remember the material.

4. The Role of Teachers in Learning

Teachers have a central role in creating a conducive learning environment (Hayati et al., 2023). In fact, not all teachers at UPTD SD Negeri 18 Peusangan have a sufficient understanding of the use of technology and interactive learning strategies. Teachers' knowledge and skills in selecting and applying relevant learning methods and media are very important (Astuti et al., 2016). Teachers need to be trained in mastery of technology-based learning media, as well as be given knowledge about innovative learning methods that can be applied in the classroom (Zuraini et al., 2024).

5. The Relevance of Social Studies Materials to Student Life

Students at the elementary school level typically need contextual learning, which connects the material to their surroundings to make it easy to understand. Concepts in social studies, such as economics, culture, geography, and history, should be presented in a local context that can be reached by students' daily experiences. For example, when discussing cultural diversity, teachers can take examples of the culture in their own environment or the surrounding community that can be observed directly by students. In this way, students will feel that social studies material is not just memorization, but has a direct relationship with their lives.

6. Impact on Student Learning Outcomes

The above factors significantly affect student learning outcomes. Exam results show that students tend to struggle to achieve the expected grade standards, reflecting a lack of understanding of basic concepts in social studies. This low learning outcome not only has an impact on academic scores, but also has the potential to reduce students' confidence in participating in social studies learning. When basic understanding is lacking, students will also have difficulty understanding more complex material, which ultimately lowers their overall motivation.

7. Utilization of Technology for Social Studies Learning

The use of technology, although not optimal, is one of the potential solutions to overcome this problem. The use of engaging digital media such as educational games, learning videos, and interactive applications can make social studies more lively and engaging. For example, by using an interactive map application, students can be invited to explore the map virtually, introducing the topic in a much more interactive way than just reading from a textbook. With the application of technology, teachers can create variety in teaching methods so that students are more engaged and excited in the learning process.

8. Limitations and recommendations for further research

There are still few studies that develop and test digital or technology-based learning media for social studies subjects at the elementary school level. Further recommendations Research can be focused on the development of technology-based interactive media such as augmented reality applications or educational games to increase students' interest in social studies learning.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the low interest and understanding of social studies subjects at UPTD SD Negeri 18 Peusangan is caused by less varied learning methods, limited learning media, and approaches that are not able to relate the material to students' lives. Learning that is too focused on lectures makes students passive and less enthusiastic. Teachers are advised to implement more interactive

and varied learning methods, such as project-based learning, group discussions, and educational games, so that students are more involved in the learning process.

Effective learning should be based on constructivist theory, in which students build their own knowledge through experience, discussion, and exploration of social contexts. The failure in the implementation of this approach demonstrates the importance of teacher training in student-based learning methods. Social studies as a social subject must integrate learning through observation, modeling, and real experiences. The lack of learning based on social projects or real activities shows the lack of optimal application of social learning theory. Social studies should be a means of developing tolerance and understanding of cultural diversity. The failure to integrate multicultural aspects shows the need to enrich materials relevant to local diversity.

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