

Implementation of Social Sciences Education in Improving Students' Critical Thinking Abilities

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Critical Thinking, Social Studies, Qualitative Learning Methods.</p>	<p><i>Critical thinking skills are essential in educational institutions, especially social studies education. Social studies education mainly focuses on developing students' critical thinking skills. This research explores the methods used in social studies learning to support students' critical thinking abilities. The method used in this research is to use a qualitative description approach, using primary and secondary data collection techniques. The primary data collection technique involves interviewing education experts. In contrast, secondary data is obtained by exploring information through scientific works such as articles, books, and educational documents. The results of this research are that in improving students' critical thinking skills, social studies learning can combine learning methods such as discussion-based learning methods, case studies, social research projects, assessment of critical thinking skills, and the use of technology in social studies learning. The implications of this research suggest that educational institutions should prioritize the integration of these diverse learning methods to foster critical thinking skills in students, thereby enhancing their overall academic performance and preparing them for complex problem-solving in real-world scenarios.</i></p>

INTRODUCTION

For adults, critical thinking skills are critical skills in education. Critical thinking skills must be developed early so that students have high-level intellectual abilities (Zubaidah, 2010). In this era of globalization, challenges will arise every day. Therefore, social studies education needs to be a forum that can improve students' critical thinking skills and prepare them to face the realities of the world. With practical strategies in social studies learning, students must develop the ability to analyze, evaluate, and reflect.

Social studies learning with a problem concept has become a prominent approach in implementing the educational curriculum. Involving students in solving social and contextual problems will increase the experience so that students will have the motivation to think and find solutions actively. In this case, the teacher's role is the primary key to organizing learning in students' daily lives. Thus, to open up space for the development of student's critical thinking skills, students are required to identify, analyze, and formulate solutions to the problems they encounter (Nadhiroh & Anshori, 2023).

Discussion and debate are needed to improve students' critical thinking skills. By presenting contemporary social issues in the classroom, teachers can create an atmosphere that allows students to express opinions with arguments accompanied by facts. This will hone students' abilities to see problems from various perspectives.

The next step in supporting the implementation of social studies education is using multimedia resources. Videos, articles, online learning, and news will increase broader insight into social studies topics and involve students in analyzing and evaluating information from various sources to help improve student learning and build students' skills to assess the credibility and accuracy of something. News information that has been obtained.

Collaborative projects are an appropriate and effective method of improving students' critical thinking skills. By organizing projects that involve research, collecting data, and compiling reports on current social issues,

students can develop collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills together. The project will provide opportunities for practical experience while encouraging students to consider a variety of points of view and seek appropriate solutions.

Another learning instrument that can be used to improve student's critical thinking skills is presenting a case study. By formulating certain social and historical situations, students are invited to analyze the factors that can influence an event and present critical opinions. With this approach, students can learn from experience and relate it to the current context while helping them develop a broader perspective on the complexity of the latest social issues.

Open questions in learning are another instrument or approach that effectively hone students' critical thinking skills. This approach will encourage deep thinking and reflection in students to develop their critical thinking skills. By stimulating students to explore various points of view and develop strong arguments, this approach will provide opportunities for developing critical thinking skills in the classroom.

A regular formative evaluation will be important in measuring students' critical thinking abilities. The understanding provided will help students understand the strengths and weaknesses of students' thinking so that students can continuously improve their critical thinking skills through evaluation. So, this approach will give teachers an idea of the forms of learning that need to be improved in the form of teacher teaching.

Developing literacy skills is also an essential aspect of improving the implementation of social studies education. Developing literacy skills will teach students to understand a text well, write critically, and interpret data, which will help students respond wisely to the information they have obtained. By involving students and strengthening the skills of reading, writing, and interpreting complex information, social studies education will provide a strong foundation for developing students' critical thinking abilities.

Through contextual learning, it is a strategy that can be used to increase the effectiveness of social studies education. Connecting social studies learning material with students' social lives will help students see the relevance and practical application of the concepts they have learned. Through contextual learning materials, students will be actively involved in the learning process, and the connection between theory and reality will be strengthened.

The involvement of parents and the community also has a vital role in positively impacting students' critical thinking skills. Involving parents in the social studies learning process will provide a more detailed understanding of the social issues studied. Students can discuss their views with parents and the community and open up space for a more profound exchange of ideas and arguments.

Improving students' critical thinking skills is not the ultimate goal of social studies education. However, it is integral to students' preparation to face globalization's continuous and complex flow. Implementing these strategies will form a strong pillar for developing student's critical thinking skills, helping students become individuals who can assess, respond, and participate actively in the social dynamics of a global society.

Based on the above background, this research aims to explore the methods used in social studies learning to support students' critical thinking skills. The objectives of this research are to identify effective methods to enhance critical thinking skills in social studies education and to evaluate the impact of these methods on students' intellectual development. The benefits expected from this research include providing educators with practical strategies to implement in their teaching practices, thereby improving the quality of education and preparing students to meet the challenges of a globalized world. Additionally, this research aims to contribute to the academic discourse on critical thinking by offering insights and recommendations that can be adopted in various educational settings.

METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative description. This research will describe the problems and case studies studied. To explore information in this research, a qualitative approach will use two data sources, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. The primary data source in this research is interviews conducted with educational consultants such as teachers and other academics. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are obtained from scientific works such as journal articles, academic books, and other research articles.

As an accountability for the data obtained, this research applies a standard level to see the validity and success of researching case studies. The aim of enforcing a standard level of research is to ensure the validity of the data that has been obtained so that there is a balance between the data that has been obtained and the object

that has been studied. Regulation of the data obtained is needed to strengthen this standard level by verifying the data sources studied (Sutriani, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Discussion-Based Learning Method

The discussion-based learning method is a practical approach to increase student involvement and build a more profound understanding. The Discussion Method allows students to exchange ideas and views and creates a collaborative learning environment. In this case, every student can contribute, promote, and actively participate in the learning process.

Apart from that, this method can also improve students' critical thinking skills. Through discussion, students are asked to construct arguments, develop reasons, and evaluate classmates' ideas. This process helps them develop analytical and evaluation skills for real-life problems.

Discussion-based learning methods also create memorable learning experiences for students. Students usually respond quickly and understand the main issues or content of explanations related to learning, where the material is related to personal experiences and classmates' points of view. In this method, students remember the knowledge or information they understand more easily in discussion-based learning activities.

Not only that, but this method also supports the development of students' social skills. Through interaction in discussions, students learn to work together, listen well, and respect other people's opinions. These skills are helpful not only in an academic setting but also in everyday life.

Finally, discussion-based learning methods allow students to explore new ideas and solve problems together. This method helps students develop innovative thinking that adds value to the world of modern education by encouraging them to think creatively and develop collaborative solutions.

Social Studies Learning Case Study

Through social studies learning case studies, insight into challenges and potential will increase students' knowledge. There need to be more supporting resources, such as a shortage of books, a lagging curriculum, and limited teacher training (Almarisi, 2023). These are factors that can hinder social studies learning. Therefore, solutions to overcome factors that hinder learning must consider the best and most sustainable solutions, such as funding allocation, continuous teacher training, and technology integration in education.

The social studies education case study will explore the impact of social and political changes on education (Suryana, 2020). Changes in regulations and structural policies of a country's government will have a structural impact on the educational curriculum, especially social studies education. For this reason, innovation and educational curriculum adjustments are necessary as materials relevant to current developments (Bentri, 2007).

The inclusiveness aspect is an important focus point in social studies education. A study will highlight social studies education, such as the role of media social studies education in promoting cultural understanding, overcoming gender inequality, and ensuring that all levels of society, including minority community groups, can benefit from and access social studies education.

Case studies of social studies education need to respond to global challenges such as conflict, climate change, and migration (Tilaar, 2004). A case study can highlight how social studies education can integrate current global issues into the education curriculum and the role of teachers in guiding students to develop a critical understanding of the social impact of these global challenges.

Students can analyze specific challenges by planning a social studies education case study and finding appropriate solutions. Collaboration between government and educational institutions is needed to achieve positive changes in the social studies education curriculum (Idris et al., 2021). Therefore, by planning a social studies education case study, students can provide valuable insight and make a real contribution to improving the quality of social studies education in a region and educational institution.

Social Research Project

Research or "research" comes from the word "research," which means to reveal. (Sial & Budyatna, 2006) A social research project is a systematic effort to study, analyze, and understand various aspects of society. The first important step is to determine the research topic. The choice of topic must be related to social issues that are important and interesting to researchers. A good research project should make a positive contribution to the understanding of a particular social phenomenon.

Research methods are an essential part of any social research project. Appropriate research methods help collect accurate and relevant data. Qualitative and quantitative methods are often used in social research. The

choice of method must be consistent with the research questions and objectives. Depending on the research focus, these methods may include interviews, surveys, observations, and statistical data analysis. Through social science research, it produces a lot of information and understanding of developing social phenomena (Silalahi & Atif Falah, 2015)

The design comprises shapes, designs, and motifs (patterns) (Herdayati & Syahrial, 2019). Research design is an essential step in determining the structure and process of a social research project. The research design must follow a clear logic and methodology appropriate to the objectives. For example, experimental research designs can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of social interventions. In contrast, correlational research designs help determine the relationship between two or more variables.

Data analysis is an essential stage in a social research project. The collected data is carefully analyzed to obtain valid and reliable results. Valid means the accuracy of the measurement, the accuracy between the data that occurs on the object and the data that can be collected by the researcher (Hastono Priyo, 2001). They use statistical tools or qualitative analysis techniques to help researchers get more information from their data. Data analysis helps researchers identify patterns, trends, or relationships that may occur in the social context under study.

Research results are made systematically and rationally (Strauss et al., 2003). A successful social research project must produce findings that can contribute to developing knowledge in the social field. Publication of research results, whether in scientific papers, presentations, or reports, is essential in sharing knowledge and influencing societal policy and practice.

Media and Information Analysis

According to Ali (2010: 89), learning media means anything that can convey messages and arouse students' thoughts, feelings, attention, and willingness to motivate teaching and learning. Mass media is a technique used to improve communication between educators and students in a school's education and learning process (Musfiqon, 2012). The learning environment can be interpreted as a message; the components of the communication process are the source, channel, and recipient of the message. The message to be conveyed is the teaching or education contained in the curriculum. Sources of messages can be educators, students, books, and mass media. The channel/media used is educational media (Ni'matul Rohmah, 2020).

The benefits of learning media are that it can make messages clearer and less wordy, overcome limitations of space, time, energy, and sensory power, create enthusiasm for learning, and provide excitement and a similar experience. Difficulties that create a shared understanding. Meanwhile, the educational media aims to improve education quality through indicators so that all material is conveyed to the end and students understand it more easily (Ni'matul Rohmah, 2020).

One of the technological advances that can be utilized is the web. The web is a source of data and information that everyone can access. By using browser software, users can explore all the information and news in the world. E-learning is a new technology that can create changes in the learning process. Using e-learning, students can gain helpful knowledge of technology in order to achieve educational goals (Aurora & Effendi, 2019).

Presentations using e-learning can be more interactive and engaging, and course information can be gathered quickly, as can communication, which, although not possible in the classroom, can be done online. This online learning system, without access restrictions, allows lectures to be held without time limits; students can access this system at any time, send SMS, and conduct lectures. Discussion boards and instructors can also provide students with notes, assignments, and announcements (Aurora & Effendi, 2019).

Based on the explanation above, with current technological developments, providing IT-based learning materials can be a learning support tool to support learning activities so that children remain focused and do not get bored while studying. Children can participate in the learning process. These computer-based learning aids can be visual, audio, and audio-visual. Moreover, currently, technology is being used very well so that learning materials can be created in various creative and innovative forms (Handayani et al., 2022).

Critical Thinking Skills Assessment

Critical thinking skills are essential for evaluating an individual's ability to analyze information, build arguments, and make rational decisions. First, this assessment requires the ability to identify and categorize relevant information. Reviewers must recognize the relationship between various elements, understand the context, and assess the application of information to a particular situation or issue (Dewi & Jatiningsih, 2015).

Furthermore, critical thinking skills assessment also includes evaluating an argument's strengths and weaknesses. The evaluator must be able to identify the premises, conclusions, and assumptions underlying the

arguments presented. They need to see whether the argument is supported by solid evidence, whether the logic used is consistent, and whether some biases or assumptions affect the validity of the conclusions (Cahyani et al., 2021).

It is also essential to assess critical thinking skills using open-ended questions. These questions require students to answer in detail and in-depth, consider multiple perspectives, and use analytical skills. This detailed and thorough evaluation allows the assessor to understand the issue's complexity. It ensures that a person can present an informed and open perspective (Ii & Theory, 2017).

Synthesis of information from multiple sources is also essential when assessing critical thinking skills. This includes combining disparate ideas, recognizing general patterns and trends, and formulating coherent and insightful views. This assessment may include assignments involving the preparation of essays, research projects, or presentations that require integrating information from various sources (Anwar, 2013).

Lastly, the individual's ability to develop solutions and recommendations to complex problems should also be considered when assessing critical thinking skills. They must apply knowledge and critical thinking skills to solve real-world situations and find effective solutions. This includes thinking creatively and innovatively and taking action based on mature judgment and critical thinking (GTK, 2019).

Use of Technology in Social Studies Learning

The use of technology in social studies learning has a significant positive impact on students' learning experiences. First, technology allows easy access to information sources. Students access online databases, educational websites, and other digital resources to obtain information that supports social studies learning and expands their knowledge beyond the boundaries of traditional textbooks (Arriani et al., 2020).

In addition, technology allows the application of interactive learning methods in social studies. With the help of interactive educational applications and software, students can learn about geography, history, and economics through realistic simulations, educational games, or engaging online learning platforms. This makes the learning process more enjoyable and increases the level of student participation (Arifah et al. Arief Yanto Rukmana Destri Wahyuningsih Muh Rijalul Akbar Listiyani Siti Romlah Nyoman Alit Arsana Rendy Yudha Pratama Aidil Adhani Ayyesha Dara Fayola, n.d.).

The use of technology also supports distance learning. Especially during times of emergency or pandemic, using e-learning platforms allows students to stay connected to learning material without being physically in the classroom. This allows students and teachers to remain involved in the learning process despite being in different locations (Basar, 2021).

In addition, technology can increase student participation in social studies subjects through multimedia. Videos, images, and animations can help students better understand complex concepts. Visual media can also help create a deeper understanding of culture, geography, and history and enrich social studies learning with visual and experiential aspects (Japan, 2019).

Finally, technology opens up opportunities for global social science collaboration. Online collaborative projects allow students to interact with their peers worldwide and broaden their perspectives on different societies and cultures. This enriches learning and teaches students to appreciate diversity and understand the global impact of social studies topics (Zufar At Thariq & Anggraini, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion in this research is that to improve students' critical thinking skills, social studies learning can combine various approaches that support the development of critical thinking skills. These approaches include discussion-based learning, case studies, social research projects, assessment of critical thinking skills, and the use of technology in social studies learning. These approaches not only enhance deep understanding, student engagement, and analytical skills but also create a more collaborative learning atmosphere that encourages students' active participation and their critical thinking skills. By actively developing students' critical thinking skills, students will gain insight into ongoing challenges and solutions in learning, thus broadening their understanding of social issues. Therefore, these approaches can be an important evaluation tool in social studies education.

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