

The Basic Concepts of Social Sciences in Higher Education: Perspectives on Communication and Public Administration

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ABSTRACT

Social Science Education (IPS) is an integrated field that combines many social science and humanities disciplines, such as geography, history, economics, and sociology, and has been adapted to meet pedagogical goals. The basic concepts of social studies are very important to understand because they provide students with the foundation they need to understand the diversity of life in society. This article aims to outline the basic elements and structure of social studies, as well as the underlying philosophical, psychological, and sociological foundations. This article focuses on the relationship between people, places, and the environment, as well as the aspects of time and change that are central to social research. The literature study approach reveals that mastery of basic social studies concepts is very important to foster critical thinking, social skills, and internalization of humanistic values. In short, a thorough understanding of the fundamental ideas of the social sciences is not only a mastery of theory, but also an essential tool for cultivating good citizenship, which includes social awareness, tolerance, and accountability in national and state life.

Keywords: Basic Social Studies Concept, Social Science Integration, Curriculum, Good Citizens.

INTRODUCTION

Humans are social creatures that interact with the surrounding environment and each other throughout their lives. To understand these complex interaction dynamics, an educational framework is needed that

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can integrate diverse social phenomena into a comprehensive understanding. In this situation, Social Sciences (IPS) plays an important role in the education system. In line with the perspective of Somantri (2001), social studies at the school level is not just a raw transfer of social science disciplines, but rather the result of simplification, adaptation, and modification that is adapted to the psychological development of students.

Social science education is very important in cultivating citizen skills. According to NCSS (1994), social studies is structured as an integrated subject to foster attitudes, values, and abilities necessary for social interaction in society. However, when the material is seen only as a collection of historical facts or economic concepts that are theoretical in nature. In reality, social studies is based on human values and the foundation of pragmatic and sociological philosophy, which strongly emphasizes real-world experience and human dignity. The purpose of social studies serves as a tool to convey the values and culture of the community so that the young generation can live peacefully in diversity.

Social studies is characterized by the integration of several academic disciplines, including history, geography, economics, and sociology, which allows students to approach a subject from a variety of perspectives. Students must have strong foundational knowledge, critical thinking, inquiry skills, and the ability to solve social problems in addition to their cognitive intelligence. Its main goal is to produce good citizens, who are dedicated to democratic values and actively involved in their communities.

However, in its implementation, social studies learning in schools is still often oriented towards memorizing material and minimally developing students' critical thinking skills. Learning that is too theoretical causes students to consider social studies as a subject that is less relevant and boring with daily life. This condition shows the importance of a deeper understanding of the basic concepts of social studies so that the learning process can take place in a more contextual and meaningful way.

Based on this urgency, it prompted the creation of this article, which aims to thoroughly examine the basic principles of social studies. The theoretical foundations (philosophical, psychological, and sociological), scope, and various learning theory approaches that can be used in social studies will be analyzed in this study using the literature study method. This article aims to thoroughly examine the basic principles of Social Sciences (IPS).

THEORETICAL STUDIES

2.1 Essence and Definition of Social Studies Education

Social Sciences (IPS) in schools are basically not a collection of social sciences that are presented as they are in universities, but have gone through an adjustment process to make it easier for students to understand. According to Somantri (2001), social studies is an achievement of simplification, adjustment, screening, and change of various branches of social science. This means that materials derived from sciences such as history, geography, economics, and sociology are not taught raw, but are selected and rearranged to suit students' thinking abilities and developmental stages. In other words, social studies is designed not only based on scientific principles, but also considers the educational and psychological aspects of students, so that learning becomes more effective and meaningful.

Furthermore, the concept of social studies is also explained by the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS, 1994), which states that social studies education is an integrated study of several social sciences and humanities that aims to shape the ability of citizens. That is, social studies not only teaches knowledge, but also forms attitudes, values, and skills needed in social life. In practice in schools, social studies covers various fields of science such as archaeology, anthropology, geography, economics, history, philosophy, law, political science, religion, psychology, and

sociology. In addition, social studies also utilizes elements from other fields such as humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences if relevant. All of these areas are organized in a coordinated and systematic manner so that students can understand social life as a whole, not separately.

In line with that, Sapriya (2009) emphasized that social studies at the school level is a subject that studies social life by integrating various social science and humanities disciplines. This integration is carried out by combining related themes, so that learning becomes more complete. For example, when discussing a historical event, students not only study the chronology of the event, but also understand the geographical conditions, economic aspects, and social impact of the event. With this approach, students can see a problem from various perspectives, so their understanding becomes more deep.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations of Social Studies Education

2.2.1 Philosophical foundations

The philosophical foundation of social studies education is based on two main streams, namely humanism and pragmatism. Humanism emphasizes that every human being has values and dignity, so that students are seen as whole individuals, not just recipients of information. Therefore, social studies learning not only aims to increase insight, but also to form attitudes, values, and personalities so that students become wise human beings and care for others.

Meanwhile, the pragmatism pioneered by John Dewey emphasized that education should be concerned with real experience. Social studies learning should be associated with daily life so that it is more meaningful and easy for students to understand.

These two streams complement each other in social studies education. Humanism focuses on character building, while pragmatism ensures learning remains relevant and contextual. Thus, social studies helps students understand and explain various social phenomena logically and apply them in real life.

In the context of modern education, the application of humanism and pragmatism approaches still faces challenges, especially because the learning process in schools is often still teacher-centered. As a result, students have not fully gained an active and reflective learning experience as expected in social studies education.

2.2.2 Psychological foundation

The psychological foundation of social studies education is related to the way students think, learn, and understand their social environment. The two main figures who became references were Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. According to Piaget, learning is an active process in which a student develops his or her knowledge based on experience. Each child has a different stage of cognitive development, so social studies learning needs to be adjusted to their level of thinking. For example, elementary school students find it easier to understand social concepts through concrete examples in everyday life than abstract concepts. Meanwhile, Vygotsky emphasized the importance of social involvement in learning. He introduced the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is an ability that students can acquire with the support of others, such as teachers or friends. In social studies, this can be applied through discussions and group work so that students' understanding becomes wider.

Although Piaget emphasized individual development, while Vygotsky emphasized social interaction, both theories placed learners as active subjects in the learning process. By combining these two theories, social studies learning should be active, constructive, and collaborative. This means that students do not only memorize, but play a direct role, develop their own insights, and learn through social interaction. This approach helps students understand social life in real life while also developing critical thinking and cooperative skills.

2.2.3 Sociological Basis

The sociological foundation of social studies education departs from the understanding that education is not just about imparting knowledge, but also about passing on culture and social values to the next generation. This view is in line with the thought of Émile Durkheim (1956) who stated

that education is a process of cultural transmission, namely the inheritance of values, norms, and habits from the older generation to the younger generation.

In social studies education, this foundation is very important because social studies studies human social life. Social studies not only presents social facts, but also creates the character and behavior of students through the socialization process. Through this learning, students learn to understand norms, values, and rules in society, such as tolerance, justice, and responsibility. In addition, social studies plays a role in preparing students to be able to actively participate in social life. Students not only know the rules, but are also able to apply them, such as respecting differences, cooperating, and understanding the rights and obligations of being citizens. Thus, social studies helps to form individuals who have knowledge as well as social awareness to live harmoniously in society.

2.3 Purpose of Social Studies Education

The main goal of social studies education is to form students to become good citizens, namely citizens who not only obey the rules, but also have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to live responsibly in society. Therefore, social studies is not only based on cognitive aspects, but also on building character and social skills. In detail, social studies aims to develop an understanding of basic concepts of social sciences, such as social interactions, economic activities, cultural change, and government systems. This understanding helps students explain various phenomena in daily life more logically.

In addition, social studies also develops critical thinking, inquiry, and problem-solving skills. Students are trained to analyze information, find solutions, and make appropriate decisions in dealing with various social problems. Social skills such as communicating, cooperating, and respecting the opinions of others are also an important part. Social Studies also aims to foster a commitment to human values, democracy, and human rights, so that students are able to appreciate differences and uphold justice. Understanding of cultural diversity, both local and global, is also developed so that students have an attitude of tolerance and are able to live in harmony

in a pluralistic society. Furthermore, social studies encourages students to play an active role in social life, both in the community and as citizens. Finally, social studies equips students with information and technology literacy skills to be able to filter and utilize information wisely in the digital era.

For example, by studying social studies students can be trained to understand social issues such as poverty, intolerance, environmental damage, and the spread of false information in digital media. Thus, social studies also functions as a means of building students' social awareness of real problems in society, not only as a theoretical subject.

2.4 Scope of Social Studies Education

The scope of Social Sciences (IPS) education basically covers all aspects of human life in society, both from the dimensions of space and time. That is, social studies not only studies "what happens" in social life, but also "where" and "when" those events occur, as well as how they relate to human life at large. Therefore, social studies has a very wide scope because it seeks to understand human life in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

According to James A. Banks (1990), the scope of social studies education can be understood through four main interrelated dimensions. The first dimension is the knowledge dimension, which includes facts, concepts, generalizations, and theories. In social studies learning, students are asked to understand the concept and relationship between events, not just memorize facts. For example, when studying historical events, students not only know when they occurred, but also understand their causes and effects and their relationship to social conditions at that time.

The second dimension is the skills dimension, which includes thinking, research, social participation, and communication skills. Thinking skills include the ability to analyze, compare, and draw conclusions. Research skills are related to the ability to search and process information systematically. Meanwhile, social participation and communication skills help students to interact with others, express opinions, and cooperate in

community life. This dimension shows that social studies does not only focus on knowledge, but also on practical skills that can be used in real life.

The third dimension is the values and attitudes dimension, which contains the values of democracy, justice, and respect for diversity. Through social studies, students are taught to have an attitude that respects differences, upholds justice, and behaves in accordance with the norms that apply in society. These values and attitudes are very important because they are the basis for forming an individual's character as a good member of society.

The fourth dimension is the dimension of social action, which is the ability to be actively involved in people's lives. In this case, learners not only understand social problems, but are also encouraged to take concrete actions, such as participating in social activities, taking care of the environment, or contributing to solving problems around them. This dimension suggests that the ultimate goal of social studies is to encourage real engagement in social life, not just theoretical understanding.

In line with that, in the context of education in Indonesia, especially based on the 2013 Curriculum that has been perfected, the scope of social studies includes several main aspects. First, people, places, and the environment, which discusses the relationship between humans and their geographical environment. Second, time, sustainability, and change, which are related to historical events and the dynamics of life from time to time. Third, social and cultural systems, which discuss patterns of social interaction, cultural values, and people's lives. Fourth, economic behavior and welfare, which are related to economic activities and human efforts to meet their living needs.

2.5 Social Studies Learning Theory Approach

Social Science (IPS) learning is not carried out carelessly, but is based on various learning theories that have been developed by experts. These theories are the foundation for the learning process to be not only effective, but also in accordance with the way students think and learn. Some of the most influential theoretical approaches in social studies learning include

constructivism, meaningful learning, problem-based learning, and cooperative learning.

The first approach was the theory of constructivism pioneered by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. This theory emphasizes that knowledge cannot simply be "transferred" from teacher to student, but must be built by students themselves through experience and interaction. In social studies learning, this means that students need to be actively involved, for example through discussions, environmental observations, or case studies. In this way, students not only know the information, but really understand its meaning because they can be directly involved in the learning process.

The second approach is the theory of meaningful learning put forward by David Ausubel. According to this theory, learning will be more effective if the new material is connected to the knowledge already possessed by the students. This means that teachers need to know in advance what students have understood, then relate it to the material to be taught. In social studies, for example, before discussing more complex economic concepts, teachers can relate it to students' daily experiences, such as buying and selling activities in the market. Thus, learning becomes easier to understand and does not feel foreign to students.

The third approach is problem-based learning. This approach helps to enhance learners to learn through real-life or authentic problem-solving. In social studies, students can be given social problems that actually occur in society, such as poverty, environmental pollution, or social conflicts. Through the process of finding solutions, students will learn to think critically, analyze situations, and make decisions. Learning becomes more engaging because students feel that what they learn has a direct connection to real life.

The fourth approach is the cooperative learning theory developed by Robert E. Slavin. This theory emphasizes the importance of cooperation between students in small groups. In social studies learning, students can collaborate to carry out assignments, discuss, or solve problems together. Through group work, students not only learn the subject matter, but also learn to communicate, respect the opinions of others, and take

responsibility for shared tasks. This is very important because social studies is closely related to social life that requires the ability to work together.

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Types and Research Approaches

This study applies the library research method through a descriptive qualitative approach. Literature research is a method that is carried out by collecting data and information from various literature sources, such as books, scientific journals, and digital sources relevant to the topic of study. According to Mestika Zed (2004), this method is not carried out through field research, but through a review of various written sources related to the problem being researched. This method was chosen because it is suitable for studying theoretical concepts that have been developed by experts.

The qualitative approach is used because this research aims to explore and interpret social events more deeply. In this study, the phenomenon studied is the concept of Social Science (IPS) education, both in terms of its foundation, objectives, and scope. With this approach, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding by studying, comparing, and synthesizing various theories and relevant research results.

3.2 Data Sources and Data Collection Techniques

The data sources used in this study consist of primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources include textbooks on social studies education, scientific journals, and official curriculum documents published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Secondary sources include scientific articles, theses, dissertations, and various other publications related to the study of social studies education.

Data collection is carried out through the documentation method, namely by collecting, reading, reviewing, and recording various references related to the research topic. Literature collection is carried out through various digital sources such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Academia.edu, JSTOR, and university repositories. The criteria for selecting literature sources are based on relevance to the research topic, the novelty

of the source, and the credibility of the author and publisher. Thus, the sources used are still considered for quality even though they come from a variety of different academic platforms.

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques

In data analysis, this study uses content analysis and critical analysis techniques. Content analysis is carried out to identify, classify, and interpret various important information contained in reference sources. Through this technique, researchers can find the main patterns, themes, and concepts related to social studies education. Meanwhile, descriptive-critical analysis is used to understand and compare various views of experts related to social studies education. The data analysis procedure is carried out through several stages. First, data reduction, which is the process of sorting and centralizing data on information that is in accordance with the research objectives. Second, the presentation of data, namely organizing information in the form of narrative descriptions so that it is easy to understand. Third, source triangulation, which is comparing various data sources to ensure the validity and consistency of information. Finally, drawing conclusions, which is formulating the results of the analysis based on the patterns and relationships found in the data.

3.4 Learning Methods Studied

Some of the social studies learning methods identified and studied in this study include:

3.4.1 Social Inquiry Method

The social inquiry method is a learning approach that places students as active researchers in studying social problems. The learning process is carried out through several stages, namely problem orientation, hypothesis preparation, information collection, hypothesis testing, and conclusion making. According to Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil in 2011, this method helps improve students' critical thinking abilities and scientific skills.

3.4.2 Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Method

Problem-based learning is a way of teaching that starts the learning process by facing real problems. Learners work in small groups to identify,

analyze, and figure out how to solve real social problems. According to Howard S. Barrows and Robyn M. Tamblyn (1980), this method is effective in developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork.

3.4.3 Cooperative Learning Methods

Cooperative learning is a method that focuses on working together in small groups of different types of students. Some of the methods that are often applied include Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD), Jigsaw, Group Investigation, and Think-Pair-Share. According to Robert E. Slavin (1995), this method has proven to be effective in improving students' academic achievement as well as social skills.

3.4.4 Simulation Methods and Role Playing

The simulation and role playing method provides opportunities for students to experience firsthand social situations in a safe and controlled environment. Through this method, students can understand various roles in society, develop empathy, and practice decision-making skills. This approach is very relevant in social studies learning because it helps students understand social dynamics in a more concrete way.

3.4.5 Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning is a method that involves learners in working on complex and meaningful tasks or projects within a certain period of time. In the context of social studies, projects can be in the form of field research on social issues, the creation of local historical documentation, or the design of social activities in the community. This method allows students to integrate various 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and information literacy, with social studies learning materials.

3.5 Data Validity

To ensure that the data in this study is correct and trustworthy, source triangulation and theory triangulation techniques are used. Source triangulation is done by comparing information from various sources, such as books, journals, and official documents. In this way, the data obtained

does not depend only on one source, so the results become more complete and convincing.

In addition, theoretical triangulation is also used, which is by looking at a problem from several different theoretical perspectives. By using various theories, researchers can understand the topic being studied in more depth and not just stick to one point of view.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

1. Based on the results of the literature review that has been conducted, it is understood that Social Sciences (IPS) education is a subject that combines various fields of social sciences and humanities, so as to help students become good and responsible citizens. Social studies not only teaches knowledge, but also shapes attitudes, values, skills in interacting with others, and the ability to think logically in living life together in society. This is in accordance with Somantri's opinion which states that social studies is the result of simplification and adjustment of various social disciplines to suit the educational needs and development of students.
2. The results of the study show that social studies education has a strong theoretical foundation, namely philosophical, psychological, and sociological foundations. Philosophically, social studies is based on humanism and pragmatism. Humanism places learners as individuals who have value and dignity, while pragmatism emphasizes the importance of real experience in the learning process. Thus, social studies learning is not only aimed at providing knowledge, but also shaping the character and ability of students to face social life in real life.
3. The results of the study also show that the main purpose of social studies education is to form good and responsible citizens. To achieve that goal, social studies not only focuses on cognitive aspects, but also improves social skills, critical thinking skills, and literacy. information, and problem-solving skills. In the context of modern education, social studies

is an important means to prepare students to face social changes and the challenges of globalization.

Discussion

1. From the psychological side, social studies learning is influenced by Piaget's theory of cognitive development and Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism. The results of the study show that social studies learning will be more effective if students are actively involved in the learning process through discussions, group work, observation, and social problem solving. This approach allows students to build knowledge independently through social experiences and interactions so that learning becomes more meaningful. Meanwhile, sociologically, social studies has a function as a means of inheriting societal values, norms, and culture to the younger generation. Social studies education helps students understand the importance of tolerance, responsibility, justice, and democratic attitudes in social life. Thus, social studies plays an important role in shaping the social awareness of students so that they are able to live harmoniously in the midst of a pluralistic society.
2. In addition, the scope of social studies is very broad because it covers various aspects of human life in society. Studies show that social studies discusses human relationships with the environment, social and historical changes, cultural systems, and economic behavior. The scope shows that social studies does not only focus on memorizing facts, but also on understanding the relationship between social phenomena as a whole. This integrated approach helps students understand social life from various perspectives in more depth. In the learning aspect, the results of the study found that constructivism, problem-based learning, cooperative learning, social inquiry, simulation, and project-based learning are relevant methods to be applied in social studies learning. These methods are able to increase students' active participation, critical thinking skills, creativity, communication, and cooperation. Social studies learning becomes more contextual because students are directly exposed to real social problems in the surrounding environment.

3. Although various active learning approaches have been developed, the implementation of social studies learning in schools still faces various obstacles. Many teachers still use lecture and memorization methods due to limited time, facilities, and the demands of completing curriculum materials. As a result, social studies learning is often not able to develop students' critical thinking skills and social participation optimally. In addition, the development of digital technology also brings new challenges in social studies education. Students in the digital era are faced with a very fast flow of information, including the spread of hoaxes, intolerance, and social conflicts on social media. Therefore, social studies learning needs to be directed to strengthen digital literacy, critical thinking skills, and social awareness so that students are able to filter information wisely.

However, the results of the study also show that there are challenges in the implementation of social studies education. One of the problems that often arises is that social studies subject learning is still more about memorizing material and not enough to provide a more active learning experience and in accordance with the context. As a result, students often perceive social studies subjects as subjects that contain theory and are less related to daily life. Therefore, innovative ways of learning are needed so that social studies materials can be connected to daily social life, so that learning becomes more meaningful and interesting for students. This analysis shows that the success of social studies learning subjects is highly dependent on the ability of teachers to choose learning strategies and methods that are suitable for the characteristics of students and current developments.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion that has been explained, it can be concluded that Social Sciences (IPS) is an integrated field of education, which combines various branches of social sciences and humanities including history, geography, economics, sociology, and others that have been simplified and adjusted to the stages of psychological

development of students. Social studies is not just a transfer of knowledge, but a process of character formation and comprehensive social competence.

The theoretical foundation of social studies which includes the philosophical (humanism and pragmatism), psychological (Piaget and Vygotsky), and sociological (Durkheim) dimensions emphasizes that social studies learning must be active, contextual, collaborative, and value-oriented. These three foundations support each other to ensure that social studies is scientifically relevant and meaningful for students' lives. The main goal of social studies education is to form good citizens who are not only cognitively intelligent, but also have social sensitivity, critical thinking skills, collaborative skills, and commitment to the values of democracy, tolerance, and justice. This goal is reflected in the four dimensions of the scope of social studies according to Banks (1990), namely knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, and social actions.

The effectiveness of social studies learning is highly dependent on the selection of the right approach and method. Methods such as social inquiry, Problem-Based Learning, Cooperative Learning, simulation, role playing, and Project-Based Learning have been proven to be able to optimize the potential of students as a whole, both in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. In the end, a deep understanding of the basic concept of social studies is not only a matter of mastering academic theory, but is an important foundation for the formation of a generation that is socially aware, tolerant, and responsible in the life of the nation and state. Thus, the strengthening of social studies education needs to be carried out continuously as part of efforts to build a superior and cultured national character.

Therefore, social studies learning innovations that are more contextual, participatory, and based on real social problems are needed so that the goal of social studies education in forming critical and responsible citizens can be optimally achieved.

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