



Strengthening social intelligence in social studies learning in Semarang Middle Schools

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Abstract

The lack of social intelligence in students is something that needs attention. Many factors cause the lack of social intelligence, including the learning process that does not channel the formation of social intelligence in students. Through the independent curriculum, the government seeks to foster students' social intelligence. The research objective examines students' perceptions of the independent curriculum and strengthening social intelligence through social studies learning through the implementation of the independent curriculum at SMPN 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia. Researchers applied descriptive qualitative methods with research locations at SMPN 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang. The results showed that male and female seventh-grade students at SMPN 22 Semarang perceived that the independent curriculum in learning tended to be monotonous, causing laziness to be active during learning. VII grade students at MTs Arrois Cendekia perceive the independent curriculum in the learning process to be active, innovative, and creative so that it creates a sense of wanting to communicate and socialize among friends when learning takes place. The conclusion of the study shows that the school context and the learning approach used can influence students' perceptions regarding the implementation of an independent curriculum and the form of strengthening social intelligence can be encouraged through the applied learning approach.

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INTRODUCTION

Guiding the younger generation to be smart and behave well is the basic goal of education. Education is not just about making intelligent people, but character building is also needed in the development of learning implementation in the classroom. Smart Indonesian humans are produced by quality education (Nurparida & Srirahayu, 2021). Quality education is education that meets the national standards of education, namely content standards, process standards, graduate competencies, education personnel, facilities and infrastructure, management, financing, and educational assessment which are improved in a planned and periodic manner (Undang-Undang RI No.20 Tahun 2003).

In the national standards of education, it is clearly stated that there must be an educational assessment that must be organized by every educational institution, in this case, the school. Education is the main pillar for the progress of a nation. Education is a basic element in improving human resources (Melindawati et al., 2022). Human resources grow and develop by the ability to reason and individual thinking patterns from their own experiences (Indraswati et al., 2020).

Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning where content will be optimized so that learners have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies (Nurwiati, 2022). The project is not directed to achieve specific learning outcome targets, so it is not tied to subject content (Darlis et al., 2022). Education aims to increase the potential of learners humanely to make each person superior and able to compete in the national and international realms, similar to the objectives of national education (Pasal 3 Undang-undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003) concerning the National Education System, namely the development of the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative independent and become democratic and responsible citizens (Darlis et al., 2022)

The independent curriculum suffers from a long-standing learning crisis. The study showed that

many Indonesian children were unable to comprehend simple reading or apply basic math concepts (Marisa, 2021). The findings also showed steep educational disparities across regions and social groups in Indonesia (Habibah & Nurhidin, 2023). To overcome the crisis and these challenges, we need systemic changes, one of which is through the curriculum. The curriculum determines the material taught in the classroom. It also influences the pace and teaching methods that teachers use to meet the needs of learners. For this reason, the Ministry of Education and Culture and Research developed the Merdeka Curriculum as an important part of efforts to recover learning from the crisis we have experienced for a long time (Kemdikbud, 2022).

Social studies is a form of subject in which several branches of social science become one unit, namely integrated social knowledge. Social studies subjects include several social sciences, namely history, economics, sociology, politics, and geography (Suryaningsih & Salam, 2020). Social Studies learning should aim to develop students' social intelligence to understand human values, tolerance, cooperation, and justice which are the basis for a harmonious social life (Diah Ayu Wijayanti et al., 2023). Through interactive social studies learning integrated with real life, students can learn to empathize, communicate effectively, and understand differences and conflicts in society wisely (Melindawati et al., 2022).

Research conducted by (Ashton et al., 2018) about the relationship between social intelligence and the ability to cooperate with study groups of Elementary Teacher Education (PGSD) students in semester 1 of Palangkaraya University shows that the higher the social intelligence of students, the easier it will be to work together with the study group. Meanwhile, research conducted about the relationship between social intelligence and adolescent loneliness shows that the higher the social intelligence of adolescents, the lower the level of loneliness in adolescents, on the contrary, if the lower the level of adolescent social intelligence, the higher the loneliness in adolescents (Salam, 2019). Some studies investigate social intelligence, but there is still a lack of research that specifically examines the Implementation of the Merdeka

Curriculum in improving students' social intelligence, especially in junior high school education. (Malik et al., 2018).

Junior High School (SMPN) 22 Semarang and Islamic Middle School (MTs) Arrois Cendekia Semarang were chosen as research locations because both schools have quite representative social diversity from various backgrounds and social conditions. In addition, both schools have adopted an independent curriculum that emphasizes a more contextual approach and is relevant to the needs of students in the current era. (Permana & Sujana, 2021). Both schools are under different auspices. This can be the basis for school selection because the learning process certainly follows how the independent curriculum is implemented by each school. Grade VII was chosen because, at this level, students have entered early adolescence which is an important period in the development of social intelligence. (Malik et al., 2018).

At this time, they begin to be more sensitive to the social dynamics around them, so learning social interaction material can have a significant impact on the formation of social intelligence. Class VII is also the second level of independent curriculum implementation at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang. Facing this situation makes it interesting for researchers to research Strengthening social intelligence through the implementation of social studies learning material on social interaction in the independent curriculum of SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang.

Based on the explanation of the background of the problem, the research aims to analyze students' perceptions of the independent curriculum and examine the form of strengthening social intelligence through social studies learning through the implementation of the independent curriculum at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia. To analyze these problems, the behavioristic theory was developed by John B. Watson (1878-1958) (Anam S & Dwiyoogo, 2019). The theory is used as an analysis knife to reveal the role of the environment in shaping individuals in accordance with the focus of the research study, namely examining students' perceptions of the independent curriculum and examining the form of strengthening

social intelligence through social studies learning through the implementation of the independent curriculum at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia. The reason researchers use this theory as an analytical knife is that it is expected not only to get an empirical study but also to test a theory.

METHOD

The author's approach uses qualitative methods. This method uses descriptive sentences and language, in a certain natural context, using various natural methods (Gaol et al., 2023).

Interviews with social studies teachers of SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang, seventh-grade students, and school principals. Informants totaled 22 consisting of 2 social studies teachers SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia, 1 social studies principal SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia, 14 seventh-grade students SMP N 22 Semarang and 14 students MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang. Documentation that became supporting data of the study in the form of school profiles, vision and mission of the school, interview instruments, teacher handbooks, documentation of data acquisition activities in the form of interviews, the learning process that takes place in class, facilities and infrastructure used by schools in each class.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Learners' perceptions of the independent curriculum

SMP N 22 Semarang is located at Jalan Raya Gunungpati, Nongkosawit Semarang City, this school is under the auspices of the Semarang City Education Office and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang is located at Jalan Anyer Duwet Wates Semarang City under the auspices of the Semarang City Ministry of Religion. SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia were chosen as research locations because both schools have a fairly representative social diversity from various backgrounds and social conditions. In addition, both schools have adopted an independent curriculum that emphasizes a more contextual approach and is relevant to the needs of students in the current era (Permana & Sujana, 2021). The two schools are two schools under different auspices. The two different shelters can make a research setting that becomes a

data analysis knife to answer the formulation of the documentation problem (Eketu & Ogbu Edeh, 2019).

The following are the results of research conducted by researchers using observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The following are the results obtained from the study:

Leaners perception

Perception is a stimulus that is sensed by the individual, organized, and then interpreted so that the individual realizes and understands what is sensed. (Rafiek et al., 2022). In the field, the research study obtained the fact that the use of an independent curriculum at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia has a different application. SMP N 22 Semarang gives educators flexibility in the learning process that takes place so that students are able to follow the flow of the material presented by using the discussion model. The use of the discussion model in class VII is a way of implementing an independent curriculum. The perceptions of male VIIth grade students revealed that the learning process became the data obtained by researchers to find out the implementation of the independent curriculum, saying that the independent curriculum implemented at SMP N 22 Semarang tends to be monotonous in the learning process, this is because the learning process is too much writing. In contrast to the perceptions conveyed by male and female students of class VII MTs Arrois Cendekia, both of whom conveyed that the learning process was fun and could build communication between classmates.

Strengthening social intelligence at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang

The learning process of social studies subjects grade VII SMP N 22 Semarang is implemented through several stages, namely the first stage is the planning stage, the second stage is the implementation stage and the third stage is the evaluation stage. he stages of the learning process of social studies class VII at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang may have similarities in the essence of social studies learning but also have differences in the approach and methods used. The planning stage becomes the first

stage before the implementation of learning takes place. Social Studies (IPS) lessons have a plan that must be designed with several things related to learning objectives. Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers on March 18, 2024, Mr. Zabidi as a teacher of class VII social studies subjects SMP N 22 Semarang explained that planning is the main aspect before the implementation of social studies learning.

“For the overall learning tools, there are three learning tools. The three tools include the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP), Learning Objectives (TP), and Teaching Modules (MA) However, children, the focus in the lesson planning used is to make differentiated learning. Differentiated learning shares the abilities of children in the classroom when learning takes place. There are children who have audio, visual, and audio-visual learning types. In addition, we also have to make assessments starting from learning assessments and minimum competency assessments. We also design teaching modules, teaching materials, and project modules.”(interview, March 18, 2024).

Based on the results of interviews obtained from Mr. Zabidi, researchers adjust to the documentation obtained there are 2 learning tools used in supporting the learning process of Social Studies (IPS), namely the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP) and Teaching Modules (MA) to be evidence that in the design of the learning plan has a very important function before the teaching and learning process takes place in the classroom.

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Based on the results of interviews obtained with Mr. Zabidi, researchers adjusted the documentation obtained. The results of the documentation conducted by researchers are based on the implementation of learning in the appendix in accordance with what has been submitted by Mr. Zabidi a social studies teacher in grade VII at SMP N 22 Semarang. Based on the results of the documentation in the appendix conducted by researchers, there are 2 learning tools used in supporting the learning process of Social Studies (IPS), namely the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP) and Teaching Modules (MA) to be evidence that in the design of the lesson plan has a very important function before the ongoing process of learning and teaching in the classroom.

The stages in this process become 3 stages. These stages are the preliminary process, the implementation of learning, and the evaluation stage. The data obtained in the field consists of the preliminary stage consisting of administration in the form of TP, ATP, and MA. Preliminary data is used to prepare the learning process that supports the learning process. The data obtained in the field in the preliminary stage includes administration consisting of three main elements, namely TP (Level of Acceptance), ATP (Analysis of Preparation), and MA (Analysis Matrix) (Alawi et al., 2022).

These three aspects form an important foundation in preparing for an optimal learning process. TP describes the level of acceptance of the material or method to be taught, while ATP provides an in-depth analysis of learner readiness, both in terms of knowledge and skills required. Meanwhile, MA is used to formulate an analysis matrix that maps the learning needs well (Marsela Yulianti et al., 2022).

This preliminary data provides a strong basis for preparing an effective learning process that

supports optimal learner development. The learning process at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang displays striking differences, especially in terms of learning facilities and infrastructure. SMP N 22 Semarang may have more limited facilities, perhaps limited classrooms or learning equipment. SMP N 22 Semarang may have more limited facilities, perhaps limited classrooms or learning equipment. On the other hand, MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang may be equipped with modern and complete facilities, such as an adequate computer laboratory, a library rich in reading materials, as well as classrooms equipped with the latest technology. These differences can have a significant impact on students' learning experience in both schools.

At SMP N 22 Semarang, the use of a fan, projector, and one resource book is standard in supporting teaching and learning activities. Although simple, the use of a projector helps to visualize the material more clearly, while the fan keeps students comfortable in the room. At MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang, learning facilities and infrastructure have been enhanced with the use of modern technology. Smart TV, laptops, and mobile devices such as cell phones have become an integral part of the learning process. Smart TV allows the use of more interactive multimedia, and laptops and cell phones become digital learning resources. The differences in learning facilities and infrastructure between SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang also reflect the different approaches to integrating technology in the learning process.

While SMP N 22 Semarang relies more on traditional methods with limited technological support, MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang has strengthened its learning approach by utilizing the latest technology. The use of smart TVs, laptops, and mobile phones not only facilitates more dynamic and interactive learning but also opens up access to wider learning resources through the Internet. While SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang are different in this regard, both institutions share a commitment to providing quality education to students. Other factors such as the quality of the teaching staff, relevant curriculum, and conducive learning

environment also play an important role in shaping meaningful learning experiences for students in both schools.

The role of schools as educational institutions that facilitate learning is also very important. Schools need to create policies and atmospheres that support the learning process of social interaction materials (Nurwiatin, 2022). These efforts become school policies that encourage collaboration between students, social skills development programs, and rewards for active student participation in social activities at school (Mahasiswa et al., 2023). The role of the school in SMP N 22 Semarang is to fulfill the facilities and infrastructure in accordance with the conditions of the school and help support through cooperation with teachers involved during the learning process that takes place as a form of strengthening social intelligence.

At MTs Arrois Cendekia fulfillment of facilities and infrastructure through the sophistication of technology and cooperation with counseling guidance and child psychology MOU into efforts to strengthen social intelligence. Continuous evaluation and monitoring are also an important factor in ensuring the successful implementation of social studies learning at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang. Through systematic evaluation, SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang can identify weaknesses and potential improvements in the implementation of social interaction learning. Continuous monitoring also allows SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia to take appropriate corrective measures to improve the overall effectiveness of social studies learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of descriptive qualitative research with observation, interview, and documentation techniques at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia on Strengthening social intelligence through the implementation of social studies learning material on the social interaction of the independent curriculum at SMP N 22 Semarang and MTs Arrois Cendekia Semarang, it can be concluded that the research shows that the school context and the learning approach used can

influence students' perceptions regarding the application of the independent curriculum and the form of strengthening social intelligence can be encouraged through the applied learning approach.

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