MJP Journal of Education and Teaching Learning
Vol.3, No.2 Oktober (2025):33 – 32
https://jurnalilmiah.co.id/index.php/MJPJETL

Beyond the Classroom Boundaries: Utilizing the School Environment to Enhance Student Engagement and Social Studies Learning Outcomes

[1] Fatma Asneni, [2] Melinda Maula
[1] Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Pohuwato, ftmaasneni@gmail.com

Correspondence Author: +628228031***

Article Info

Keywords:

Classroom action research; Constructivism; Learning outcomes; School environment; Social studies

ABSTRACT

Social Studies (IPS) instruction in elementary schools often suffers from theoretical monotony, leading to low student engagement and sub-standard academic outcomes. This study aims to enhance both student learning activities and academic outcomes by utilizing the school environment as a contextual learning resource for fifth-grade students at SDN 09 Marisa. Employing a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design, the study was conducted over two cycles, consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection phases. The subjects were 17 students (6 males and 11 females). Data were collected through direct observation rubrics to measure student activity and cognitive tests to evaluate learning outcomes against the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). The synthesized results demonstrated a significant improvement; initial pre-cycle data showed only a 35% classical mastery rate. Following the implementation of outdoor environmental observation in Cycle I, mastery increased to 64%, and further optimization in Cycle II resulted in an 88% mastery rate, successfully exceeding the target. Student engagement drastically shifted from passive listening to active inquiry and exploration. In conclusion, strategically utilizing the school environment as a primary learning resource effectively breaks classroom monotony, actualizes constructivist learning theories, and significantly boosts both student participation and cognitive achievement in Social Studies.

Informasi Artikel

Kata Kunci:

Penelitian tindakan kelas; Konstruktivisme; Hasil belajar; Lingkungan sekolah; Ilmu pengetahuan sosial

ABSTRAK

Pembelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (IPS) di sekolah dasar sering kali menderita akibat kebosanan teoritis, yang menyebabkan rendahnya keterlibatan siswa dan hasil akademik yang di bawah standar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan aktivitas belajar dan hasil akademik siswa dengan memanfaatkan lingkungan sekolah sebagai sumber belajar kontekstual bagi siswa kelas V di SDN 09 Marisa. Menggunakan desain Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK), penelitian ini dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus yang terdiri dari tahap perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi, dan refleksi. Subjek penelitian adalah 17 siswa (6 laki-laki dan 11 perempuan). Data dikumpulkan melalui rubrik observasi langsung untuk mengukur aktivitas siswa dan tes kognitif untuk mengevaluasi hasil belajar terhadap Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM). Hasil sintesis menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan; data pra-siklus awal hanya menunjukkan tingkat ketuntasan klasikal sebesar 35%. Setelah penerapan observasi lingkungan luar kelas pada Siklus I, ketuntasan meningkat menjadi 64%, dan optimalisasi lebih lanjut pada Siklus II menghasilkan tingkat ketuntasan 88%, yang berhasil melampaui target. Keterlibatan siswa berubah drastis dari mendengarkan secara pasif menjadi penyelidikan dan eksplorasi aktif. Kesimpulannya, pemanfaatan lingkungan sekolah secara strategis sebagai sumber belajar utama secara efektif memecah kebosanan kelas, mengaktualisasikan teori belajar konstruktivisme, dan secara signifikan meningkatkan partisipasi serta prestasi kognitif siswa dalam pelajaran IPS.

Article History

Received : 08 17, 2025
Revised : 09 10, 2025
Accepted : 09 21, 2025

✉ ***Corresponding Author:*** (1) Fatma Asneni, (2) Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, (3) Universitas Pohuato, (4) Gorontalo, 96266, Indonesian, (5) Email: ftmaasneni@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Social Studies (IPS) is a crucial subject in the Indonesian elementary education curriculum, designed to develop students' social sensitivities, democratic participation, and problem-solving skills in everyday life [1]. However, achieving these noble objectives heavily relies on the pedagogical strategies employed by educators. A recurring issue in primary education is the over-reliance on conventional teaching methods. When teachers utilize textbooks as the sole learning resource and employ monotonous lecturing methods, students become passive recipients of information. This theoretical approach strips IPS of its contextual relevance, leading to severe boredom, low intrinsic motivation, and consequently, learning outcomes that fail to meet the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM).

Constructivist learning theory fundamentally argues that humans construct knowledge and assign meaning through concrete, real-world experiences rather than passive absorption [2], [3]. Aligning with this paradigm, modern pedagogical literature emphasizes the utilization of the surrounding environment as a dynamic instructional medium. Previous studies have demonstrated that outdoor learning and environmental integration significantly improve critical thinking and situational awareness [4], [5]. Furthermore, environmental learning bridges the gap between abstract textbook theories and tangible ecological or social realities [6].

Despite the proven benefits of environmental learning, there remains a noticeable gap in its practical application within rural or regional elementary schools, such as SDN 09 Marisa. Preliminary observations in the fifth grade of this school revealed a highly passive classroom dynamic; students rarely asked questions, frequently engaged in off-task conversations, and demonstrated a classical mastery rate well below 80%. The teacher's failure to exploit the rich, accessible school environment resulted in a stagnant learning atmosphere. Therefore, this study presents a novelty by systematically applying Classroom Action Research (CAR) to actively transition the IPS learning process from indoors to the outdoor school environment. The objective of this research is to describe and quantify the enhancement of students' learning activities and cognitive outcomes through the utilization of the school environment as a primary learning resource at SDN 09 Marisa.

2. Method

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design to systematically identify, address, and solve pedagogical problems occurring within the classroom. CAR is highly appropriate for this context as it offers practical procedures to improve teacher professionalism and instructional quality by directly observing student conditions [7]. The research was conducted in the fifth grade of SDN 09 Marisa during the 2023-2024 academic year. The subjects of the study were 17 students, comprising 6 males and 11 females.

The research utilized the Kemmis and McTaggart cyclical model, which consists of four interconnected phases per cycle: Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection [8]. In the **Planning** phase, lesson plans (RPP) were designed specifically to incorporate outdoor areas (such as the school garden and yard) as observation sites for IPS topics. The **Action** phase involved the actual execution of these lesson plans, where students were guided to conduct direct environmental inquiries. Concurrently, the **Observation** phase was carried out using standardized rubrics to measure student engagement (asking questions, collaborating, and exploring) and cognitive tests to measure academic outcomes. Finally, in the **Reflection** phase, the collected data were analyzed to determine whether the learning targets were met. The study was planned for two cycles. The criteria for success were set at a classical learning mastery of ≥ 80%, where individual students must achieve a score equal to or greater than the KKM threshold.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The initial pre-cycle observations confirmed a dismal classroom atmosphere. Students were lethargic, easily distracted, and exhibited a profound lack of interest in the IPS material delivered via the lecture method. The pre-cycle cognitive tests revealed that out of 17 students, only 6 students (35.2%) achieved the KKM, while the remaining 11 students (64.8%) failed.

To rectify this, Cycle I was implemented, shifting the learning environment to the school's outdoor spaces. Students were tasked with observing specific social and environmental interactions within the school compound. The implementation of this environmental resource immediately sparked curiosity. However, during the reflection of Cycle I, it was noted that some students struggled with the inquiry method, as they were unaccustomed to extracting academic answers from unstructured outdoor environments. As a result, the cognitive mastery in Cycle I improved to 64.7% (11 students passing), but this still fell short of the 80% classical target.

Addressing the shortcomings of Cycle I, the researcher executed Cycle II by providing clearer observation worksheets and more structured guidance during the outdoor activities. This adjustment yielded highly significant results. Student activity rubrics indicated that off-task behaviors had virtually disappeared, replaced by active questioning and collaborative exploration. The quantitative progression of the students' learning outcomes across the research phases is meticulously detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Progression of Students' IPS Learning Outcomes

Research Phase	Total Students	Passed (≥ KKM)	Failed (< KKM)	Classical Mastery (%)
Pre-Cycle	17	6	11	35.2%
Cycle I	17	11	6	64.7%
Cycle II	17	15	2	88.2%

As shown in Table 1, the utilization of the school environment under structured pedagogical guidance in Cycle II resulted in 15 students achieving the KKM, elevating the classical mastery rate to 88.2%. Because this figure exceeded the pre-determined 80% success indicator, the Classroom Action Research was deemed successful and formally concluded at Cycle II.

3.2 Discussion

The empirical findings of this study robustly confirm that transitioning the learning process from a confined classroom to the open school environment effectively breaks the cycle of student boredom and passivity. The dramatic increase in classical mastery—from a mere 35.2% in the pre-cycle to 88.2% in Cycle II—highlights the profound impact of experiential learning. According to constructivist principles, when students are provided the opportunity to actively extract information from their surroundings, the learning process shifts from rote memorization to meaningful internalization [2], [9].

The initial difficulties observed in Cycle I, where students struggled to find precise answers in an open environment, reflect a common transitional hurdle in inquiry-based learning. Students accustomed to being "spoon-fed" information by the teacher require cognitive scaffolding when first exposed to independent environmental observation [10]. Once this scaffolding was provided in Cycle II via structured worksheets, students easily connected the IPS material with tangible objects and social phenomena present in the school yard.

This success corroborates the assertions made by Sudjana (2010), who posited that environmental learning resources offer immense benefits: they make learning highly attractive, present factual and accurate materials, and foster a deep appreciation for the students' immediate surroundings [11]. Furthermore, by analyzing real-world contexts, students actively engage the higher-order thinking skills required in the cognitive domain, advancing beyond mere knowledge recall to application and analysis [12], [13]. Ultimately, utilizing the school environment transforms IPS from an abstract, textbook-bound subject into an interactive skill-building endeavor, perfectly aligning with the curriculum's goal of producing socially aware and capable citizens [14], [15].

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the Classroom Action Research, it can be definitively concluded that utilizing the school environment as a primary learning resource significantly enhances both student activity and academic outcomes in Social Studies (IPS) for the fifth-grade students of SDN 09 Marisa. The integration of outdoor observation shifted the classroom dynamic from passive boredom to active, joyful inquiry. Quantitatively, this pedagogical intervention raised the students' classical learning mastery from a pre-cycle baseline of 35.2% to a highly successful 88.2% by the end of Cycle II. Despite initial challenges in adapting to outdoor inquiry methods, structured guidance allowed students to deeply comprehend the material through real-world contextualization. It is highly recommended that educators continuously explore and integrate their immediate school environments to foster dynamic, constructivist learning experiences tailored to the specific materials being taught.

References

[1] S. Sapriya, *Pendidikan IPS: Konsep dan Pembelajaran*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2009.
[2] A. Suparno, *Membangun Kompetensi Belajar*. Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, 2001.
[3] N. Sudjana, *Dasar-Dasar Proses Belajar Mengajar*. Bandung: Sinar Baru Algensindo, 1989.
[4] S. A. Wibowo and S. R. Ningsih, "Pemanfaatan Lingkungan Sekitar Sebagai Sumber Belajar IPS," *Satyawidya*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 45-56, 2016.
[5] P. R. Yulianto, "Lingkungan Sekolah sebagai Laboratorium Sosial dalam Pembelajaran Sosiologi dan IPS," *Sosiolium: Jurnal Pembelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 112-120, 2018.
[6] M. F. Amin, "Efektivitas Outdoor Learning Terhadap Hasil Belajar Kognitif Siswa," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Unnes*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2019.
[7] Supardi, *Penelitian Tindakan Kelas*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2006.
[8] S. Kemmis, C. McTaggart, and R. Nixon, *The Action Research Planner: Doing Critical Participatory Action Research*. Singapore: Springer, 2014.
[9] O. Hamalik, *Proses Belajar Mengajar*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2011.
[10] S. Djamarah, *Psikologi Belajar*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2011.
[11] N. Sudjana, *Penilaian Hasil Proses Belajar Mengajar*.

Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2010.
[12] A. A. Wahab, *Metode dan Model-Model Mengajar Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (IPS)*. Bandung: Alfabeta, 2007.
[13] M. Huda, *Model-Model Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2013.
[14] I. W. Susila, "Pemanfaatan Lingkungan Alam Sebagai Sumber Belajar Untuk Meningkatkan Aktivitas Belajar Siswa," *Jurnal Ilmiah Sekolah Dasar*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 315-322, 2020.
[15] Hasbullah, *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Pendidikan*. Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2005.