

# Navigating Character Education: The Multifaceted Role of Social Studies Teachers and Socio-Cultural Barriers in Elementary Schools

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## ABSTRACT

The role of a Social Studies (IPS) teacher extends far beyond mere knowledge transfer; it encompasses the critical responsibility of shaping students' social character and civic competence. This study aims to determine the multifaceted roles of teachers in enhancing IPS learning and to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in character formation at SDN 03 Patilanggio. Employing a qualitative descriptive method, data were systematically collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews with teachers and the school principal, and documentation study. The data were analyzed using an interactive model comprising data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The results reveal that teachers perform four primary roles: as educators planning the curriculum, as demonstrators executing active learning, as role models exhibiting positive social behavior, and as coaches instilling discipline. While these roles are supported by teachers' professional competence and clear school visions, a significant inhibiting factor was identified. Teachers frequently encounter socio-cultural barriers, specifically miscommunication and resistance from parents and school foundations regarding the firmness required in character building. In conclusion, optimizing IPS learning requires not only pedagogical mastery from the teacher but also a highly synergistic and transparent partnership between the school, parents, and the community to ensure consistent character education.

## Informasi Artikel

### Kata Kunci:

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Sekolah dasar; Ilmu pengetahuan sosial;  
Hambatan sosial-budaya; Peran guru

## ABSTRAK

Peran seorang guru Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (IPS) jauh melampaui sekadar transfer pengetahuan; peran ini mencakup tanggung jawab kritis dalam membentuk karakter sosial dan kompetensi kewarganegaraan siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan peran multifaset guru dalam meningkatkan pembelajaran IPS dan mengidentifikasi faktor pendukung serta penghambat dalam pembentukan karakter di SDN 03 Patilanggio. Menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, data dikumpulkan secara sistematis melalui observasi langsung, wawancara mendalam dengan guru dan kepala sekolah, serta studi dokumentasi. Data dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif yang terdiri dari reduksi data, penyajian, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa guru menjalankan empat peran utama: sebagai pendidik yang merencanakan kurikulum, sebagai demonstrator yang melaksanakan pembelajaran aktif, sebagai teladan yang menunjukkan perilaku sosial positif, dan sebagai pelatih yang menanamkan kedisiplinan. Meskipun peran ini didukung oleh kompetensi profesional guru dan visi sekolah yang jelas, ditemukan faktor penghambat yang signifikan. Guru sering menghadapi hambatan sosial-budaya, khususnya miskomunikasi dan resistensi dari orang tua serta yayasan sekolah terkait ketegasan yang diperlukan dalam pembentukan karakter. Kesimpulannya, optimalisasi pembelajaran IPS tidak hanya membutuhkan penguasaan pedagogis dari guru tetapi juga kemitraan yang sangat sinergis dan transparan antara sekolah, orang tua, dan masyarakat untuk memastikan pendidikan karakter yang konsisten.

## Article History

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## 1. Introduction

Education is a conscious and purposeful endeavor designed to develop human quality, highly interconnected within a continuous system that prepares individuals to face global challenges [1]. At the elementary school level, one of the most vital subjects for fostering this human quality is Social Studies (IPS). IPS is not merely a rote memorization subject involving history or geography; rather, it is a comprehensively integrated discipline aimed at developing students' civic responsibilities, social empathy, and moral character [2]. The ultimate goal of IPS is to produce individuals who are sensitive to social issues, possess a positive mental attitude to rectify inequalities, and are skilled at overcoming everyday societal problems [3], [4].

To achieve these profound pedagogical objectives, the role of the teacher is absolutely paramount. In the context of the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum, the paradigm of learning dictates that knowledge cannot simply be transferred; students are subjects who must actively construct knowledge through cognitive processes [5]. Consequently, the teacher's role has shifted from being a mere dictator of facts to becoming a multifaceted facilitator, class manager, demonstrator, and most importantly, a role model and coach for character building [6]. Previous studies have extensively documented the pedagogical competencies required by IPS teachers to stimulate active learning [7], [8].

However, there is a noticeable research gap regarding the socio-cultural challenges teachers face when executing their roles as character builders in rural or regional schools. While much literature highlights the theoretical roles of teachers [9], [10], fewer studies deeply investigate the friction that occurs when a teacher's effort to instill firm discipline and character clashes with the expectations or permissive attitudes of parents and school foundations. Preliminary observations at SDN 03 Patilanggio indicate that while teachers strive to build strong social characters, their efforts are frequently hampered by external resistance. Therefore, this research introduces a novelty by systematically mapping not only the implementation of the teacher's multifaceted roles in IPS learning but also critically analyzing the specific supporting and inhibiting socio-cultural factors that affect character education at SDN 03 Patilanggio.

## 2. Method

This research utilized a qualitative descriptive method, often referred to as naturalistic research, because the study was conducted in a natural setting without manipulating the objects of the research [11]. The primary objective of this method is to systematically, factually, and accurately describe the phenomena regarding the teacher's role and the accompanying

challenges in the field. The research was conducted at SDN 03 Patilanggio, located in Pohuwato Regency, during the even semester of the academic year.

The informants in this study were carefully selected using a purposive sampling technique, which included the school principal, IPS classroom teachers, and several students to provide a holistic perspective. Data were collected through three primary techniques: (1) direct non-participant observation of the IPS teaching and learning process to monitor the teacher's pedagogical and managerial roles; (2) in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the teachers and the principal to explore the invisible barriers in character building; and (3) documentation study involving lesson plans (RPP) and student evaluation records.

The validity of the data was ensured through source triangulation, comparing the observational notes with the interview transcripts [12]. The gathered data were then analyzed using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman, encompassing data reduction (filtering essential information regarding teacher roles and barriers), data display (organizing the findings into narrative and tabular formats), and conclusion drawing (synthesizing the core issues affecting IPS learning).

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Results

Based on the observations and interviews conducted at SDN 03 Patilanggio, the implementation of the teacher's role in IPS learning is highly dynamic. The findings reveal that the teachers do not merely teach cognitive materials but actively engage in shaping the students' overall personas. The specific roles performed by the teachers, along with their practical manifestations in the classroom, are categorized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** The Multifaceted Roles of IPS Teachers at SDN 03 Patilanggio

Teacher's Role	Practical Manifestation in IPS Learning
<b>Educator / Planner</b>	Preparing comprehensive lesson plans, aligning materials with the school's vision, and directing students' innate talents.
<b>Demonstrator / Teacher</b>	Delivering abstract social concepts through concrete examples, facilitating group discussions, and assisting students who experience learning difficulties.
<b>Class Manager</b>	Creating a conducive, warm, and safe learning environment. Actively managing disruptive behavior to maintain focus on the lesson.

<b>Role Model (Teladan)</b>	Exhibiting exemplary behavior in daily appearance, polite speech, social interactions, and environmental care.
<b>Coach (Pelatih)</b>	Instilling firm discipline, building moral awareness, and practicing the taught social character values together with the students.

While the implementation of these roles appears structurally sound, the interview data uncovered significant underlying dynamics regarding the success of character education. The research identified distinct supporting and inhibiting factors that directly impact the teacher's efficacy, as detailed in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in IPS Character Building

Category	Identified Factors in the Field
<b>Supporting Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers possess a deep understanding of their duties, basic competencies, and the school's vision.</li> <li>- High dedication and earnestness in executing the teaching profession.</li> <li>- Strong internal cooperation among the school principal, staff, and teachers.</li> </ul>
<b>Inhibiting Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Socio-Cultural Resistance:</b> Parents do not fully support (100%) the good intentions of the school. Parents often object to the firm disciplinary actions taken by teachers.</li> <li>- <b>Institutional Miscommunication:</b> Occasional miscommunication with the school foundation regarding the boundaries of strict character enforcement, leading to teacher hesitancy.</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Discussion

The empirical findings clearly indicate that the role of an IPS teacher at SDN 03 Patilanggio perfectly aligns with constructivist learning theories, which position the teacher as a multifaceted facilitator [13]. As a demonstrator and class manager, the teacher successfully creates an interactive environment where students are encouraged to actively construct their own understanding of social phenomena, rather than being passive listeners [14]. The teacher's effort to act as a role model is particularly crucial in IPS; as Mulyasa (2013) asserts, character education is caught, not just taught. A teacher's daily demeanor provides the most potent social script for elementary students to follow [6].

However, the most critical finding of this study lies in the inhibiting factors. While the teachers are internally competent and supported by the school's vision, their role as "Coaches" for character building is severely hampered by external socio-cultural resistance. The miscommunication and lack of support from parents regarding disciplinary firmness highlight a

growing crisis in modern education. When teachers attempt to enforce rules or build resilience, parents frequently misinterpret these actions as overly harsh, leading to complaints to the school foundation.

This finding corroborates the research by Wuriyanto (2020) and Setiawan (2021), which emphasized that character education cannot be the sole responsibility of the school [10], [15]. When there is a disparity between the values taught at school and the permissive parenting styles at home, students experience cognitive and moral dissonance. The teacher's authority is consequently undermined. Therefore, to optimize the IPS learning process and true character formation, schools must aggressively establish transparent communication channels with parents. Regular parent-teacher association (PTA) meetings must be utilized not just to report grades, but to align perceptions regarding the disciplinary methods and character goals required to mold resilient, socially responsible citizens.

### 4. Conclusion

Based on the research conducted at SDN 03 Patilanggio, it can be concluded that the IPS teachers actively execute a multifaceted role essential for holistic student development. These roles include acting as educators who plan lessons, demonstrators who facilitate active learning, role models who exemplify positive social behavior, and coaches who strive to instill firm discipline. The successful implementation of these roles is highly supported by the teachers' professional competence and strong internal school cooperation. However, a major inhibiting factor significantly disrupts the character-building process: socio-cultural resistance and miscommunication from parents and school foundations who do not fully support the teachers' firmness in enforcing discipline. To overcome this, it is imperative for the school to foster a highly synergistic, transparent, and aligned partnership with parents and the community to ensure that character education is consistent both inside and outside the classroom.

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