Picture Media Application in Social Studies Students Critical Thinking Ability

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A B S T R A C T

Education is an important for humans. Social Sciences studies (IPS) is one of the subjects taught at the Junior High School level. In social studies subjects, there are various learning media that can support the learning process in order to achieve learning objectives. For that researchers are interested in conducting research at MTs Nurani, Bogor City to see how the application of image media in social studies learning is beneficial for students' critical thinking skills. The purpose of this research is to (1). Analyzing how to use picture media in social studies learning. (2) Analyze how students' critical thinking skills in social studies learning. (3). Analyzing how the benefits of picture media in social studies learning for students' critical thinking skills. The method used in this research is descriptive method. Data collection in this study was carried out by taking closed questionnaires to class VII students of MTs Nurani Kota Bogor and face-to-face interviews with social studies teachers. The findings obtained in this study were the use of picture media in explaining the learning material was able to describe concretely and significantly related to the content of the lesson delivered by the teacher. The use of picture media in social studies learning in particular has a positive impact where students' critical thinking skills can be honed in it.

A R T I C L E   I N F O

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is closely related to a child's growth and development, as it can enhance their thinking abilities. One of the efforts to develop a child's thinking abilities is through formal and non-formal educational institutions. There are numerous aspects that need to be developed to support a child's thinking abilities. In developing social and cognitive aspects within educational institutions, one can do so through Social Science education (IPS). IPS is one of the subjects taught in primary schools (SD) and junior high schools (SMP). Soemantri (2001) stated that "the teaching of IPS in primary and secondary schools is a synthesis of several social science and humanities disciplines as well as basic human behavior that has been structured, presented scientifically, and pedagogically for educational purposes."

According to Egok (2016), learning is still predominantly teacher-centered, with the teacher being the main driver of the teaching and learning process, resulting in students receiving information solely from the instructor. The application of media in education has become an essential component in enhancing the learning process. In particular, the use of picture media in social studies has garnered attention due to its potential to improve students' critical thinking abilities. Critical thinking, as defined in educational contexts, refers to the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in a systematic way to make informed decisions or solve problems. Social studies, which encompasses subjects such as history, geography, economics, and civics, inherently requires students to engage with complex ideas, recognize patterns, and make connections between concepts and real-world events.

In recent years, educators have increasingly recognized that traditional teaching methods may not fully foster the development of critical thinking skills. Therefore, integrating media tools like pictures can offer a more interactive and visually engaging approach, allowing students to better grasp abstract concepts and stimulate deeper analysis. Picture media can provide context, evoke emotional responses, and make complex information more accessible and relatable, especially in social studies, where visual materials such as maps, historical photographs, and infographics are often used to convey important messages.

This shift in teaching methodology is driven by the growing demand for students to develop not just rote memorization skills, but also the capacity to think critically and apply knowledge in real-life scenarios. By incorporating picture media into social studies lessons, educators hope to promote active learning and enhance students' ability to assess information from multiple perspectives. Thus, the role of picture media in fostering critical thinking abilities in social studies students is a promising area of research that may offer valuable insights into how modern educational tools can be leveraged to improve cognitive development. This study aims to explore how the use of picture media can effectively support and enhance the critical thinking skills of social studies students. However, it is important to encourage all students to actively participate in the learning process to achieve the learning goals. There are several approaches that can be taken to address the issue. Researchers choose the medium to tackle the problem.

2. METHOD

The research methodology used in this study is a quantitative descriptive technique that aims to define the subject under investigation. Descriptive research, according to Ramadhan (2021), attempts to describe and explain the phenomena being studied. Meanwhile, the quantitative approach refers to research that utilizes words, images, and numerical data obtained from questionnaires, interviews, and other documentation sources. Arikunto (2006) states that descriptive research is not conducted to test specific hypotheses, but rather to describe a variable as it exists. Arikunto (2006) also highlights the statistical aspect often associated with quantitative studies, which involve data collection and presentation of findings. Thus, it can be said that the purpose of this quantitative descriptive research is to observe, review, and characterize the items under investigation in their current state and then form an assessment considering the phenomena that emerge during the study. The objective of this research is to determine the impact of visual media on students' critical thinking skills when learning Social Studies (IPS).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Social Studies

NCSS in 1993 (Sapriya, 2012) formulated Social Studies as follows. In order to promote civic coordinated, organized study, the study of social studies combines the social sciences and humanities. This can be seen in courses like anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as the appropriate material from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. Assisting the younger generation in developing the competence to make informed decisions for the general public in a democratic society built on a coordinated domain is the basic objective of social studies.

According to Susanto (2014), "the purpose of social education is based on the premise that social education is a discipline," the goals of social studies education as a subject taught from Elementary School (SD) to High School (SMA) have purposes. As a result, the goals of national education should be mentioned in social studies instruction. Developing students' capacity to become worthy citizens (good citizenship) is the primary goal of social studies education. In addition to the general goals, Social Studies education also has specific goals as stated by Miftahudin (2016) who mentions, "The purpose of Social Studies education is specifically to prepare students to become good citizens, to develop their capacity for critical thinking and research skills as well as attitude values, to foster tolerance, to support children's ability to express serious ideas both orally and in writing, to help students understand the realities of life and become aware of their rights and responsibilities."

3.2 Learning Media

According to Nizwardi (2016), "Media pembelajaran" is any software or hardware component that can be used to deliver lesson materials to students—individually or in groups—from instructional sources and can engage their interest in learning in ways

that enhance learning both inside and outside the classroom. Meanwhile, according to Talizaro (2018), "Media pembelajaran" is an instrument used in the teaching and learning process to stimulate curiosity, focus emotions, and talents or learning abilities to promote learning. Based on both ideas, it can be said that media functions as a channel for messages or information that needs to be delivered during the learning process. The use of media in learning can certainly help achieve learning goals. Through media, learning materials can be effectively delivered to students.

3.3 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a directed and systematic process aimed at analyzing, drawing conclusions, and solving problems. According to Fisher (2008), "Clarity, relevance, sufficiency, and coherence are just a few intellectual qualities that will be achieved by very good critical thinking. Critical thinking is a skill that can be performed better or worse. When stimulated, the human brain responds by engaging in critical thinking."

Everyone should be capable of critical thinking, both in the workplace and in everyday life. One should be able to overcome difficulties by being able to think critically. Interpretation and evaluation of observations, communication, and other forms of knowledge are undoubtedly necessary for critical thinking. Critical thinking requires the capacity to challenge assumptions and formulate related questions.

Mulyani (2017) states, "The ability of students to think critically is needed so that they are responsive to issues or problems that occur in their environment. In social studies education, every student is expected to be able to express their thoughts. Additionally, students are trained to think more broadly by providing comments, suggestions, and responses related to the information they acquire. Understanding, critical thinking, and knowing how to approach learning—not avoiding it—should be the main focus of social studies education. Learning in the classroom is one way to develop critical thinking skills. From a different perspective, critical thinking is a logical process of considering something and then learning as much as you can about it before making a choice or taking action (Oktaviani, 2014)."

In this study, there is a percentage of 55% who agree and believe that learning using visual media can easily help in understanding the content conveyed by the teacher. Since learning is aided by the sense of sight, visual media is used to present educational content in a more easily understandable and digestible manner. Additionally, learning using visual media can increase the attractiveness to students. As shown in this study, 50% strongly agree and the remaining 50% agree that learning using visual media makes students more interested.

Furthermore, learning through visual media can enhance students' cognitive abilities, encourage them to pay more attention to what they learn, and help them become more proficient in making connections between various ideas and visual evidence they see. A total of 55% of students stated that they strongly agree that they can easily predict phenomena and events that appear in learning materials using visual media. The critical thinking skills of students can be nurtured and enhanced by using other direct learning tools that present knowledge or events from everyday life and have potential difficulties that students can investigate. Through teaching and learning activities in school, students' critical thinking abilities can be developed. Learning media is one of the many

additional elements of education. One resource commonly used to support educational goals is learning media.

4. CONCLUSION

Building on the objective of the Social Studies subject to develop students into good citizens, the achievement of this can be realized by facilitating every supporting component of teaching and learning activities, one of which is learning media. Visual media in Social Studies serves as a conveyer of messages, delivering content from the teacher to the students. The utilization of visual media can function as a series of simulations for Social Studies learning. One of the learning media options is visual media. In Social Studies education, students are provided with practical information. Therefore, it is important to teach students how to think critically.

The goal of critical thinking in Social Studies education is to enable students to question assumptions that are made. The critical thinking skills of students can be developed and enhanced by using visual learning media that encompass knowledge and phenomena from everyday life, as well as potential problems that can be investigated and addressed by the students. Visual media becomes a readily available, easily accessible, and usable learning tool. Based on several existing learning media, research results show that the use of visual media in explaining learning materials is capable of providing concrete and tangible descriptions related to the content delivered by the teacher. The use of visual media in Social Studies learning, specifically, has a positive impact, as it sharpens the critical thinking abilities of students.

5. REFERENCES

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