

Implementation of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Lessons at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember

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Abstract

This research is based on the lack of enthusiasm and understanding of students regarding social interaction material in social studies subjects. This was obtained based on the results of observations and interviews with educators. From the results of observations and interviews in the pre-research, it was seen that learning social studies subjects still often use conventional models only, while in mastering the material it is not enough to do activities by reading and memorizing only. Educators are required to be creative in selecting learning models that involve students actively in learning activities. Therefore, a Social Inquiry learning model help students to increase enthusiasm, social participation and understand the material in depth.. The focus of the research examined in this thesis is: 1. How is the Planning of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember? 2. How is the Implementation of the Social Inquiry Model in Social Studies Subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember? 3. How is the Evaluation of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember? This research method uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative research type. The research subjects were conducted in class VII A using a purposive technique. Data collection techniques used were observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis used data condensation, data display and verification. Data validity used source and technical triangulation. The results of this study are the planning of a social inquiry learning model, namely educators prepare learning tools that are appropriate to the needs of students. For the implementation of the social inquiry learning model, it begins with 3 activities, namely opening activities, core activities through 6 steps of the Social Inquiry learning model, and finally closing activities. Meanwhile, the evaluation of the social inquiry learning model is through investigations of students who are active and enthusiastic when working on group worksheets. In conclusion, the planning of the Social Inquiry learning model in the Social Studies subject at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember has been structured, in its implementation the Social Inquiry learning model also goes through 3 activities, namely opening activities, core activities by carrying out 6 steps of the social inquiry learning model, and closing activities.

Keywords: implementation, learning models, social inquiry, social studies.

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Introduction

Education is widely understood as a transformative process that develops learners' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor capacities. In the context of 21st-century education, learning is not merely the transmission of knowledge but also a process aimed at fostering critical thinking, social competence, character development, and learner autonomy (Astuti, 2020; UNESCO, 2021). Therefore, improving educational quality requires not only competent educators but also instructional practices that actively engage students and support meaningful learning experiences (Sutikno, 2019).

The quality of learning can be observed through learners' ability to think critically, solve problems, and make informed decisions. The OECD (2019) emphasizes that effective learning environments should equip students with higher-order thinking skills to respond to increasingly complex social challenges. However, in practice, classroom learning—particularly in Social Studies—often remains dominated by teacher-centered approaches, rote memorization, and limited student participation (Fitriani & Suyanto, 2020; Joyce & Weil, 2018). Such conditions restrict students' opportunities to actively construct knowledge and develop analytical and social reasoning skills.

Social Studies plays a strategic role in preparing students to become informed, responsible, and participatory citizens. Banks (2017) argues that Social Studies education contributes to the development of civic competence, including the ability to analyze social issues critically, participate in democratic processes, and respect cultural diversity. Nevertheless, various studies indicate that challenges in Social Studies instruction persist, particularly in terms of learning models that fail to actively involve students in inquiry and reflection.

One instructional approach considered relevant to addressing these challenges is the Social Inquiry learning model. This model emphasizes students' active involvement in identifying social problems, formulating questions, and constructing knowledge through systematic inquiry processes. A preliminary study conducted at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember showed that Social Studies teachers had implemented the Social Inquiry model during the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year to encourage more student-centered learning. However, this implementation has not yet been examined systematically, especially in terms of lesson planning, learning implementation, and evaluation.

Previous studies have mainly focused on measuring the effectiveness of the Social Inquiry model in improving learning outcomes or specific skills using quantitative approaches or classroom action research (Astuti, 2020; Herawati, 2021; Nabila, 2023). Research that comprehensively examines how the Social Inquiry model is planned, implemented, and evaluated in junior high school Social Studies classrooms using a qualitative descriptive approach remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to describe the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the Social Inquiry learning model in Social Studies instruction at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember.

Literature Review

Social Studies Education

Learning theories provide an important foundation for understanding effective instructional practices. Piaget's theory of cognitive development emphasizes that knowledge is actively constructed by learners through processes of assimilation and accommodation based on their experiences (Piaget, 1972). This constructivist perspective highlights the importance of students' active mental engagement in the learning process.

In addition, Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the role of social interaction and learning environments in cognitive development. According to this view, learning occurs through collaboration, guidance, and social interaction with others. These perspectives align with UNESCO's framework of 21st-century education, which emphasizes four pillars of learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together (UNESCO, 2021). Collectively, these theories view education as a holistic process that integrates cognitive, social, and affective dimensions.

Social Studies is an interdisciplinary field that integrates concepts from sociology, history, geography, economics, politics, law, and culture (Musyarofah et al., 2021). The primary objective of Social Studies education is to prepare learners to function effectively as members of society. Banks (2017) states that Social Studies plays a crucial role in developing civic competence, including critical thinking, social participation, and respect for diversity.

Wesley (as cited in Sapriya, 2009) defines Social Studies as the social sciences adapted for educational purposes in schools, emphasizing its pedagogical orientation. Similarly, Dusty (1986) views Social Studies as a learning process through which individuals acquire social understanding and learn to interact responsibly within society. These perspectives suggest that Social Studies instruction requires learning models that promote active participation and social inquiry.

Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Learning

The Social Inquiry learning model is rooted in constructivist and inquiry-based learning theories. It emphasizes students' active involvement in identifying social problems, formulating questions, developing hypotheses, collecting and analyzing data, and drawing conclusions. Inquiry-based learning is considered effective in developing critical thinking and analytical skills because it positions students as active participants in the learning process (Bell et al., 2010; Joyce & Weil, 2018).

Developed by Byron Massialas and Benjamin Cox, the Social Inquiry model aims to enhance students' social problem-solving abilities through systematic inquiry and logical reasoning (Sutikno, 2019). The model consists of six stages: orientation, problem identification, hypothesis formulation, data collection, hypothesis testing, and conclusion drawing (Rosaliana, 2017). Its implementation is characterized by the use of relevant social issues, hypothesis-driven investigation, and evidence-based reasoning (Sanjaya, 2016).

Several studies have reported positive impacts of the Social Inquiry model on students' learning outcomes and critical thinking skills. Astuti (2020) found that the implementation of the Social Inquiry model significantly improved elementary school students' critical thinking abilities. Herawati (2021) reported improvements in Social Studies learning outcomes through classroom action research, while Nabila (2023) demonstrated that the model enhanced students' civic skills through discussion and social problem-solving activities.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach. According to Hurst, A. L. (2023) qualitative research is research about the social world that does not use numbers in its analyses. The focus of qualitative research is less about explaining and predicting relationships between variables and more about understanding the social world. The type of research employed was descriptive qualitative. Therefore, the primary objective of the study was to determine how the Social Inquiry learning model was implemented in Social Studies at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember.

The determination of informants used purposive techniques. The main informants were the social studies teacher of class VII A, namely Mrs. Dyan Sartika Weni, S.Pd and class VII A students. Supporting informants were the principal and the curriculum vice principal of SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember. Data collection techniques used observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis techniques used Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) through data condensation, data presentation and conclusion drawing. Data validity techniques used were source triangulation and technical triangulation (Sugiyono, 2013).

Discussion results

Results/Findings

The results of the research were conducted using interview, observation, and documentation data collection techniques at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember. The research began with observations of the curriculum vice principal, social studies educators, and seventh-grade students during the learning process. The results obtained by the researchers presented data based on the research focus as follows:

Planning of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember for the 2024/2025 Academic Year

SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember is a school that prioritizes the learning models and methods used in the learning process. They aim to ensure a non- monotonous learning environment that encourages active student engagement. One such approach is the Social Inquiry learning model. As stated by Mr. Muslimin, the principal of SMP Plus Darus Sholah:

"Yes, at SMP Plus Darus Sholah, we prioritize engaging learning and can motivate students to learn.

One way we do this is by considering the learning model used. The social inquiry learning model has also been implemented in the classroom, and this model encourages students to be more independent in solving problems and thinking critically."

The explanation given by the principal of SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember can be understood that educators are required to be creative in implementing the learning process and must also be precise in choosing learning models.

The researcher also conducted an interview with Mrs. Pipit Ermawati as the curriculum vice principal of SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember regarding the planning of the Social Inquiry learning model that:

"Before implementing learning activities, it's crucial to align the Social Inquiry learning model plan with the material to be delivered to achieve the desired objectives. One of the tasks I assigned to educators was preparing learning materials tailored to their students' needs. Because grades VII and VIII are currently implementing the independent curriculum, educators are planning their learning by creating learning modules that are essentially based on the Social Inquiry model, in line with the curriculum. This requires students to be independent in their learning activities."

From the explanation of the curriculum deputy above, it can be concluded that SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember in planning this Social Inquiry learning model prepares learning tools that are appropriate to the needs of students and in this Social Inquiry learning model, it is in accordance with the independent curriculum, because it demands students to be independent and critical in learning.

Planning the Social Inquiry learning model in social studies involves educators preparing learning media in the form of images, videos, student worksheets (LKPD), and preparing learning tools or teaching modules. This was conveyed by Ms. Dyan Sartika Weni:

"The planning that I prepared in the learning process when applying the Social Inquiry model to the Social Interaction material was by preparing several media such as images, videos or several problems such as questions that are appropriate to the surrounding environment to provoke students to think critically in the learning carried out. There are also other media such as Social Studies student books for Grade VII, Laptops and LKPD that I have created by paying attention to the needs of students to be more enthusiastic in learning. Then I also determine the assessment to evaluate student understanding by giving students assignments and investigations during discussions."

Interview data is supported by documentation of the social studies teaching module, in the learning preparation subsection, which lists educators preparing visual and video materials on social interaction and preparing learning tools. This can be seen in the following image:

Table 1Core Competencies

B. Komponen Inti	
Tujuan Pembelajaran	Melalui studi literatur dan observasi lapangan peserta didik secara mandiri memahami dan memiliki kesadaran akan keberadaan diri serta mampu berinteraksi dengan lingkungan terdekatnya dengan baik.
Pertanyaan pemantik	Sebelum memulai kegiatan pembelajaran guru mengajak siswa untuk membersihkan kelas selama 5 menit. Kemudian guru memberikan pertanyaan kepada siswa :
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apa yang baru saja kalian lakukan bersama-sama dengan teman sekelas? 2. Pada saat kalian membersihkan kelas, apakah kalian saling berkomunikasi dengan temanmu? 3. Bagaimana respon temanmu saat kamu mengajak berkomunikasi? 4. Peserta didik diarahkan untuk mengaitkan dengan materi yang akan dipelajari.
Persiapan pembelajaran	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pendidik melakukan asesmen diagnostik dalam bentuk kuis sebelum pembelajaran mengenai materi sebelumnya. 2. Pendidik menyiapkan bahan tayang gambar dan video mengenai materi Interaksi Sosial. 3. Pendidik mempersiapkan perangkat pembelajaran.

Based on the results of the interviews and documentation that have been presented by the researcher above, it can be seen that in planning the Social Inquiry learning model at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember, educators prepare everything that is needed by preparing media in the form of images and videos regarding the Social Interaction material and preparing learning tools (teaching modules).

Implementation of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember in the 2024/2025 Academic Year

The implementation of the Social Inquiry learning model in the Social Studies subject is carried out in the element of recognizing the surrounding environment with the material of Social Interaction in society. The implementation of the Social Inquiry learning model is carried out in accordance with the teaching module that has been created by Mrs. Dyan, the Social Studies subject educator, activities in the implementation of learning include preliminary activities, core activities and closing activities. This was expressed by Mrs. Dyan Sartika Weni as the Social Studies subject educator that:

"The implementation of the Social Inquiry learning model is carried out on the Social Interaction material where in this element there is a sub-element about getting to know the surrounding environment. In the learning activities for implementing the Social Inquiry learning model that I do, there are several stages, namely preliminary activities, where the learning begins by giving greetings, taking attendance, appointing one of the students to pray together, then I just ask questions about the material to provoke students so that it can build student motivation as well. Then I convey the learning objectives."

The next core activity in implementing the Social Inquiry learning model focuses on the material to be studied. The following is an interview with Ms. Dyan Sartika Weni:

"In the core activity, I prepared 6 stages in implementing this social inquiry model in class, so I delivered a little material first then showed pictures to stimulate problem formulation, formulate hypotheses, collect data or information to be analyzed until the hypothesis was tested and found conclusions from the problems I gave."

Based on the educator's statement above, there are six core stages in implementing the Social Inquiry learning model. The educator guides students in observing images to identify the problem to be studied. Students are then divided into groups and given problems to discuss and solve. This is supported by the observation and documentation data obtained below:



Figure 1 Implementation of Social Studies Learning in Class VII A

Then, the teacher formed students into 4-5 groups and gave them a worksheet containing the problems that would be the topic for discussion. The teacher also allowed them to ask questions if anyone did not understand the material given during the group discussion. Then, Mrs. Dyan explained to the students about the group assignment, which was to identify images related to the material on social interaction in society. After that, the teacher directed the students to discuss in order to get a temporary assumption, then the students sought or collected information from various sources to test the hypothesis that had been collected from the image analysis. After all the observation and information gathering processes. Next, namely concluding the results of the discussion, students were asked to present the results of the group discussion in front of the class and submit the results of their discussions to the teacher. In presenting the results, there was a suggestion session for corrections from each group. If there were misunderstandings or inconsistencies in the results of the answers, the teacher would correct them and provide reinforcement in accordance with the material given.

After completing the core activities of implementing the social inquiry learning model, the closing phase, or final activity, begins. In this phase, the teacher reviews the lesson, provides opportunities for questions if anyone doesn't understand, and provides a summary by highlighting key points from the material covered. Ms. Dyan also reflects on the lesson with the students and concludes with a prayer and greeting.

Learning evaluation is a crucial part of the learning process for educators, as it allows them to assess the progress of the learning process. Learning activities inevitably have shortcomings, and evaluation can minimize these shortcomings and ensure the activities are carried out effectively. Evaluation of the Social Inquiry learning model in Social Studies was conducted through student inquiry into the worksheets provided and homework assignments to test their knowledge of the material taught. As exemplified by the interview conducted by the researcher with Ms. Dyan, a Social Studies teacher, stated:

"To evaluate the implementation of the Social Inquiry model, I conduct investigations while students are actively working on worksheets in groups. At the end of the lesson, I assign homework to determine whether the students truly understand what they have learned. I then reinforce the material with real-life contexts so they can become more aware of their social environment."

Based on the research results from interviews, observations and documentation conducted, it can be concluded that the evaluation of the Social Inquiry learning model is by conducting investigations into students who are enthusiastic or active when working on the group worksheets given and given homework with the aim of making students to what extent they have mastered or understood the material through the Social Inquiry learning model in the Social Studies subject at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember.

Discussion

Planning of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember

Based on the findings in the field, it is known that the planning of the Social Inquiry learning model in the Social Studies subject at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember was carried out with the intention of preparing the learning formulation that will be carried out in the next meeting by educators and students. One of them is by preparing everything that students need in learning activities that apply the Social Inquiry learning model, namely by preparing media in the form of images or videos regarding the Social Interaction material, student worksheets, information materials from the Social Studies Student Book, 2021, Jakarta. Center for Curriculum and Books - Research and Development and Books Agency - Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology as well as laptops

and other media according to the needs of students in using media that makes students more enthusiastic and not feel bored.

Learning planning is a preparation for implementing learning activities by applying learning principles and steps in order to achieve the specified learning objectives. Therefore, learning planning is made to facilitate the achievement of learning objectives more effectively. From Briggs' theory quoted by Farida Jaya above, it can be seen that the findings that researchers found related to Briggs' theory say that learning planning is the entire process of analyzing learning needs and objectives and developing a delivery system to meet those needs and achieve those objectives, including the development of learning packages and teaching and learning activities, trials and revisions of learning packages and finally evaluating programs and learning outcomes (Jaya, 2019).

In this case, the planning stage of the Social Inquiry learning model in the Social Studies subject at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember has been structured or all the learning tools needed during the Social Studies learning activities have been prepared so that they can be in accordance with the teaching modules created and the learning implementation process can be well conditioned. The Social Inquiry model is essential in Social Studies instruction because it systematically develops students' thinking skills and enables them to reflect on social realities while effectively addressing social problems (Purwana, A. E., et al., 2009). The application of this model supports the achievement of Social Studies objectives as articulated by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), particularly in promoting civic competence among learners (Singer, 2009).

Implementation of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember

The implementation of the Social Inquiry learning model, the educator acts as a facilitator during learning activities in the classroom, in the implementation of the Social Inquiry learning model in the Social Studies subject carried out in the element of knowing the surrounding environment with the material of Social Interaction in society through 3 stages, namely preliminary activities containing the educator greeting, preparing equipment, praying, student attendance, apperception, motivation and linking the material to the learning that will be studied. Core Activities contain 6 steps in accordance with the Social Inquiry learning model, namely conveying the topic or material, conveying related assessment techniques, showing images or videos related to the Social Interaction material for students to observe, guiding students to form 4-5 groups, explaining procedures or instructions in the worksheet, given the opportunity to identify problems in the worksheet by discussing with their respective groups and seeking information from various relevant sources such as videos that have been shown or student books. Each group presents the results of their discussions and other groups are given the opportunity to provide suggestions. Closing activities, the educator reviews the material and provides important points of conclusion obtained from the learning that has been carried out, reflections, assignments and closes the learning with a joint prayer and greetings.

This social inquiry learning model requires students to learn actively and independently. Educators also involve students' experiences in their surrounding environment. As according to Massials and Cox, this social inquiry is a learning model that can be used for social science education aimed at improving society by providing solutions to solve social problems. Nanda (2025) asserts that the implementation of the Social Inquiry learning model enhances students' social skills in addressing social problems. This finding is reinforced by Heriani (2025), who reports that the Social Inquiry learning model has a positive and significant effect on improving students' social literacy. Accordingly, the Social Inquiry learning model can be positioned as an innovative instructional alternative for strengthening students' critical thinking skills and promoting active social participation. The social inquiry learning model can be seen as a learning model oriented towards student experience. The steps or stages used in implementing the Social Inquiry model in the Social Science subject at SMP Plus Darus Sholah are in accordance with the steps according to Sanjaya, namely:

1. Orientation Stage, which includes educators carrying out teaching and learning activities by explaining the topics, objectives and learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve.
2. In the problem formulation stage, students are given a problem, such as a picture or a worksheet. This encourages them to find the right answer.
3. At the stage of formulating a hypothesis, educators can ask various questions that can encourage students to formulate temporary answers.
4. In the data collection stage, students hold discussions to collect information or solutions to the problem.
5. In the hypothesis testing stage, students look for their level of confidence in the answers given.
6. In the conclusion formulation stage, students describe the findings obtained based on the results of hypothesis testing by formulating conclusions.
7. Then the educator strengthens the conclusions obtained with relevant data (Sanjaya, 2016).

Evaluation of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember

Learning evaluation is a very important part for educators in the learning process, because it can see how far this learning has progressed. Learning activities certainly have shortcomings, so with this evaluation can minimize these shortcomings and ensure the activities are carried out well. In this evaluation of the Social Inquiry learning model, what is done is an investigation of students who are enthusiastic or active when working on the group worksheets provided and given homework with the aim of making students to what extent they have mastered or understood the material through the Social Inquiry learning model in the Social Studies subject at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember.

Evaluation of the Social Inquiry learning model can be done by observing the improvement in conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and creativity of students. This is related to the learning evaluation theory in the book written by Arief Aulia Rahman and Cut Eva Nasryrah, evaluation is defined as "*The process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives.*" This means it is the process of describing, obtaining, and presenting useful information to formulate an alternative decision. Evaluation is an assessment of data collected through assessment activities. Meanwhile, evaluation is a decision about value based on measurement results. With this understanding, it states that evaluation can be stated as a decision-making process using information obtained through measuring learning outcomes, both using test and non-test instruments (Rahman, A. A., & Nasryah, C. E., 2019). In the independent curriculum, there are two assessments used, namely formative and summative assessments. Judging from this theory, the evaluation applied at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember in implementing the Social Inquiry learning model is carried out through formative assessment evaluation, where this assessment is to determine the activeness, responsiveness, and understanding of the material of students in learning activities. With this, educators can determine whether students are active and successful in implementing the Social Inquiry learning model .

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study entitled Application of the Social Inquiry Learning Model in Social Studies subjects at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember, the following conclusions were obtained: 1) Planning the Social Inquiry learning model for the Social Studies subject at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember, namely educators prepare media such as pictures, videos, student reading books, student worksheets, laptops and learning devices in the form of teaching modules. 2) The implementation of the Social Inquiry learning model in Social Studies at SMP Plus Darus Sholah through 6 stages: orientation, problem formulation, hypothesis formulation, data collection, hypothesis testing, and conclusion formulation. Students actively and enthusiastically participated in learning activities due to their curiosity about social life in their surroundings. 3) Evaluation of the Social Inquiry learning model in the Social Studies subject at SMP Plus Darus Sholah Jember by conducting investigations with students during the learning process and giving assignments to be done at home at the end of the learning with the aim of finding out students' understanding of the material that has been covered.

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