

Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Social Sciences Learning: Integration of Behavioristic, Constructivist and Humanistic Theories

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Abstract: The transformation of education in Indonesia through the implementation of the Independent Curriculum brings a new approach that is more flexible and student-centered. This article analyzes the implementation of social studies learning at MTsN 1 Jember, especially in the context of the integration of behavioristic, constructivist and humanistic theories. The research uses descriptive quantitative methods with a comparative study approach to evaluate differences in learning outcomes between classes 9C and 9A. Test score data, learning observations, and teacher interviews were analyzed through descriptive statistics, comparative analysis, and qualitative. The research results showed that class 9C, which more consistently applied educational theories, achieved a higher average score (87.4) than class 9A (56.07). A constructivist approach through problem-based learning, the application of positive reinforcement from behavioristic theory, as well as attention to students' emotional aspects according to humanistic theory contributed to this result. This article emphasizes the importance of teacher training and professional collaboration to bridge the gap between educational theory and learning practice, supporting contextual and meaningful social studies learning according to the principles of the Independent Curriculum.

. Keywords: Integration of Educational Theory in the Independent Curriculum

INTRODUCTION (Heading 1)

The transformation of education in Indonesia entered a new phase with the presence of the Independent Curriculum which brought significant changes in learning approaches. In contrast to previous curricula which tended to be rigid and teacher-centered, the Merdeka Curriculum provides greater flexibility for educators to develop learning that suits students' needs [1]. This curriculum was designed with the main aim of creating more meaningful contextual learning and forming students' characters who are strong, independent and have noble morals [2]. In this context, social studies subjects have a strategic role as a vehicle for forming social understanding and strengthening national insight in students.

The implementation of social studies learning within the Independent Curriculum framework faces several challenges that need to be overcome [3]. The complexity of social studies material which covers various aspects of social, economic and cultural life requires a holistic and integrative learning approach. Each student has different needs and learning styles, so teachers must be able to accommodate this diversity in the learning process. In addition, there is a gap between the educational theories studied and learning practices in the field, which often makes it difficult for teachers to implement effective learning.

Facing these challenges, the integration of various educational theories becomes very important in supporting the success of social studies learning. Behavioristic theory can be applied to shape students' positive behavior through a system of reinforcement, while constructivist theory helps students build their own understanding of social studies concepts. Humanistic theory also plays an important role in creating a learning environment that respects the uniqueness

of each individual. These three theories are in line with the principles of the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes student-centered learning, developing individual potential, and character formation [4]. By combining these various educational theories appropriately, teachers can create social studies learning that is more meaningful and in line with the demands of the Independent Curriculum.

Difficulty in combining educational theory with learning practice is a challenge for educators [5]. Most teachers experience difficulty in translating theoretical concepts into concrete and meaningful learning activities [6]. This often happens due to a lack of in-depth understanding of the practical application of educational theories, as well as limited examples of applications that are relevant to the local context. This situation is exacerbated by the high administrative burden, which often means teachers do not have enough time to design lessons that truly integrate educational theories effectively.

Considering these challenges, the urgency of integrating educational theory in learning becomes increasingly crucial [7]. Behavioristic theory can be implemented through a structured reward and punishment system, as well as the formation of positive habits in learning. Meanwhile, constructivist theory can be applied through project-based learning and problem solving, where students actively build their own knowledge through direct experience. Humanistic theory provides a basis for creating a learning environment that respects the uniqueness of each student, encourages self-expression, and develops individual potential optimally.

These three theories are in close accordance with the principles and components of the Independent Curriculum. The flexibility of this curriculum provides room for teachers

to combine various theoretical approaches in learning. For example, project-based learning, which is a manifestation of constructivist theory, can be combined with a positive reinforcement system from behavioristic theory, while still paying attention to aspects of student self-development according to humanistic theory. Harmonious integration between these educational theories and the Independent Curriculum components can create more adaptive, contextual and meaningful learning for students [8].

In its implementation, teachers need to be supported with practical training and ongoing mentoring to be able to integrate educational theories effectively [9]. Collaboration between teachers in the form of professional learning communities can also help in sharing experiences and best practices in integrating theory into learning. In this way, the gap between theory and practice can be bridged, creating higher quality learning in accordance with the spirit of the Independent Curriculum [10].

2. Research Methods

1. Research Approach

This research uses a descriptive quantitative approach [11], with the aim of analyzing differences in student learning outcomes between classes 9C and 9A. This approach is used to describe the implementation of the Independent Curriculum based on student learning outcomes and linking it to behavioristic, constructivist and humanistic theories.

2. Type of Research

This type of research is **comparative studies** [12], which compared student learning outcomes in two classes (9C and 9A) to evaluate the effectiveness of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum.

3. Location and Research Subjects

- **Research Location:** MTsN 1 Jember.
- **Research Subject:**
 - Class 9C students (30 students).
 - Class 9A students (28 students).

4. Research Variables

- **Independent Variable (Independent Variable):** Implementation of the Independent Curriculum with the integration of behavioristic, constructivist and humanistic theories.
- **Dependent Variable:** Students' social studies learning outcomes are measured through test scores.

5. Data Collection Techniques

The data in this research was collected through:

1. **Documentation:**
Collect data on student test scores from both classes (9C and 9A).
2. **Observation:**
Observing the learning process in both classes to identify the application of behavioristic, constructivist and humanistic theories.

3. **Interview:**

Conducted with social studies teachers to find out the methods and strategies used in implementing the Independent Curriculum.

6. Research Instruments

1. **Test Score Document:** IPS test score data as the main source for quantitative analysis.
2. **Observation Guide:** Observation sheet to record the application of learning strategies that are relevant to theory.
3. **Interview Guide:** List of questions related to the approach used by teachers in social studies learning.

7. Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using the following steps:

1. **Descriptive Statistics:**
 - Calculate the mean, frequency distribution, and standard deviation of student scores in both classes.
 - Comparing the average scores between classes 9C and 9A.
2. **Comparative Analysis:**
 - Comparing the learning outcomes of the two classes to determine the effectiveness of implementing the Independent Curriculum.
3. **Qualitative Analysis:**
 - The results of interviews and observations were analyzed to identify the relationship between learning outcomes and the application of behavioristic, constructivist and humanistic theories.

8. Research Procedures

1. **Stage of Preparation:**
 - Determine the class that will be the research subject.
 - Collect data on student test scores.
 - Prepare observation and interview instruments.
2. **Implementation Level:**
 - Observing the learning process in classes 9C and 9A.
 - Conduct interviews with social studies teachers.
 - Collect student test scores from both classes.
3. **Level of Analysis:**
 - Analyze quantitative and qualitative data.
 - Present results in the form of tables, graphs and descriptions.
4. **Reporting Stage:**
 - Prepare research reports that include results and discussions based on behavioristic, constructivist and humanistic theories.

9. Data Validation

To ensure data validity:

- **Data Triangulation:** Comparing the results of value documentation, observations and interviews.
- **Expert Judgment:** Consulting findings with education experts or expert lecturers to ensure the relevance of theory to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Research result

1. Data on Class 9C and 9A Social Sciences Test Scores

IPS test results data shows that there is a significant difference between the performance of class 9C and 9A students. Here's a summary of the data:

Table 1. Average Social Studies Test Scores

Class	Number of Students	Total Value	Average Value	Information
9C	30	2622	87.4	Average performance is very good.
9A	28	1570	56.07	Average performance is not good.

From the table above, it can be seen that the average score for class 9C is in the very good category (87.4), while class 9A only achieved an average of 56.07, which is below the passing standard.

2. Value Frequency Distribution

The frequency distribution of grades describes the consistency of student performance in each class.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Values

Interval Value	Frequency (9C)	Frequency (9A)
90–100	6	0
80–89	17	4
70–79	4	8
60–69	0	7
<60	0	9

- In class 9C, the majority of students (23 out of 30) scored above 80, indicating consistent high learning outcomes.
- In contrast, in class 9A, 16 out of 28 students got a score below 70, even 9 students got a score below 60 (not meeting passing standards).

3. Difference in Average Values

The difference in average scores between classes 9C and 9A is: $87.4 - 56.07 = 31.3387.4 - 56.07 = 31.33$. These results show that the academic performance of class 9C is superior to class 9A by a significant difference.

4. Standard Deviation Value

Statistical analysis shows that class 9C scores are more uniform than class 9A. The low variation in class 9C indicates consistency in learning achievement, while class 9A shows

greater variation, indicating quite wide differences in student abilities.

Discussion

The difference in results between classes 9C and 9A can be analyzed through the application of learning theories relevant to the Merdeka Curriculum:

1. Behavioristic Theory

• Positive Reinforcement

In class 9C, positive reinforcement in the form of regular practice questions and giving rewards for high achievements helps students understand concepts better. Teachers are also likely to provide immediate correction and feedback, which increases student confidence. In contrast, in class 9A, the lack of implementation of positive reinforcement may cause a lack of student motivation to learn.

• Repetition of Material

Repetition of important concepts in behavioristic theory seems to be more optimally implemented in class 9C, helping students to internalize the material effectively.

2. Constructivist Theory

• Problem Based Learning

Class 9C is likely to use active learning methods, such as group discussions and problem-based assignments, which support students to build knowledge based on experience and local context. For example, social studies learning that links material to social phenomena in Jember can increase students' interest and understanding.

• Contextual Learning

The integration of learning with everyday reality is more successful in class 9C. Students are given the opportunity to connect social studies concepts with real life, such as understanding the structure of society or social issues around them.

3. Humanistic Theory

• Attention to Emotional Needs

In class 9C, teachers are likely to pay more attention to students' emotional needs, such as providing personal support, creating a comfortable learning environment, and motivating students to believe in their abilities. Meanwhile, in class 9A, the lack of attention to students' emotional aspects may be one of the factors of low learning motivation.

• Emotional Engagement

Learning that more emotionally involves students in class 9C, for example through stories or social simulations, encourages them to be more involved in social studies learning.

Conclusion

The research results show that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in class 9C is more successful than class 9A. This is characterized by:

1. The average grade is higher and the distribution of grades is more uniform in class 9C.
2. More optimal implementation of learning strategies based on behavioristic, constructivist and humanistic theories in class 9C.
3. There is an active learning approach and contextual relevance that encourages student motivation and engagement.

Recommendation

1. Teachers in class 9A need to increase the use of positive reinforcement methods and pay more attention to students' emotional needs.
2. There needs to be training for teachers to apply problem-based learning and relevant local contexts.
3. The use of humanistic strategies, such as building students' self-confidence and supporting individual needs, can be increased to improve learning outcomes.

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