



Strategies of Social Studies Teachers in Using Natural Tourist Attractions as Learning Resources for Middle School Students in Semarang Regency

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Abstract. Education generally demands that the learning process should not be directed solely toward textual understanding, but rather encourages contextual learning. In this approach, learning should utilize a variety of learning resources that keep pace with advancements in science and technology, and are also closely tied to up-to-date developments in the surrounding environment and society. By using local environmental issues as a learning resource, it is expected that students will obtain more accurate and reliable information. The aim of this research activity is to identify and explain natural tourist attractions in Semarang Regency as learning resources for social studies in junior high schools. The method used is qualitative. The data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Data collection techniques include interviews, observation, and document/archive analysis, while the validity of the data is ensured through technique triangulation.

Keywords IPS, Natural tourist attractions, Teacher strategies, Student learning resources

1. INTRODUCTION

The shift from the 2013 curriculum to the prototype curriculum has far-reaching implications for the future of education, impacting policymakers and various aspects of the educational process, such as teachers, learning resources, and facilities. This policy urges teachers, particularly in social studies, to better prepare for their material. However, social studies instruction often focuses solely on knowledge acquisition without applying it to real-life situations. Teachers typically use traditional methods that don't actively engage students, as noted by Aswita in 2017, who argued that teachers fail to explore students' potential or foster active learning (Aswita, 2017). Social studies lessons are still dominated by lectures, with minimal interaction between learners and social studies objects, which include society and its various aspects. This interaction is crucial for optimal mental and psychomotor development in students. Despite this, many teachers haven't developed effective strategies based on local potential or student characteristics, relying instead on commercially available resources that may not suit the school or student needs.

Education plays a critical role in fostering an understanding of sustainable management of natural tourism environments. It allows students to see themselves as responsible caretakers of their surroundings. The connection between natural tourist attractions and education helps convey environmental, cultural, and resource management values. Education not only transfers knowledge but also motivates and inspires individuals to appreciate and manage natural tourist spots responsibly. These efforts offer valuable educational experiences about the beauty of nature and God's creations. Teachers are required to possess competencies, defined as the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed for their professional roles. According to UU No 14 of 2005 and Government Regulation No 19 of 2005, teachers must master four core competencies: pedagogical, professional, personal, and social. However, social studies teachers in Semarang Regency face challenges in classroom management and resource utilization, particularly in leveraging the natural environment for effective learning. This leads to the key question: how can natural tourist attractions in Semarang Regency be utilized as learning resources for social studies in junior high schools?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning Strategies

Becoming a teacher is a highly esteemed profession, yet pursuing this career has become increasingly challenging for many educators due to numerous professional demands. The primary role of a teacher is to impart knowledge to students both inside and outside the classroom. However, teaching goes beyond just delivering content and assigning tasks. A dedicated teacher continually seeks effective strategies to enhance the learning process, particularly for subjects that involve extensive theoretical material, like social studies. The shift in 21st-century education from teacher-centered to student-centered learning has prompted global education experts to create new strategies, methods, and learning models to achieve educational goals (Wijayanto P. A et al., 2017).

A teaching strategy refers to a set of general guidelines that direct teacher and student activities toward achieving educational objectives (Djamarah & Zain, 2010). Teachers must carefully select appropriate strategies to engage students and accommodate their varied learning needs. Using the right strategies helps prevent student boredom, especially when teaching theory-heavy subjects, and enhances material absorption. The rapid advancement

of science and technology in education necessitates innovative solutions, such as computer-based media, to address emerging challenges (Wijayanto, P. A et al., 2018).

The researcher focuses on social studies (IPS) due to its reputation as a dull, theory-laden subject that often leads to student disengagement. This study seeks to explore how teachers identify and apply effective strategies for teaching social studies.

Natural Tourist Attractions as Learning Resources

Learning resources are systematically and purposefully designed to promote stable behavioral changes through interactions (Sitepu, 2014). These resources play a crucial role in the learning process, helping individuals gain knowledge, skills, and emotional understanding. Essentially, they are tools that facilitate learning. Learning resources come in two forms: created and utilized. Created resources are specifically designed for learning, while utilized ones serve other purposes but can be adapted for educational use. Santoso in 2019 emphasizes the need for diverse and engaging teaching methods to maintain students' interest, while Suprpto, Y., et al in 2020 highlight the importance of learning media in enhancing students' understanding.

Tourist attractions are also considered valuable learning resources, though many students and teachers overlook their educational potential, often viewing them merely as recreational sites. However, these locations offer opportunities for contextual learning, as noted by Pradipta, A. R., & Santoso, A. B. in 2017, driven by various motivations, such as curiosity, economic and social interests, or the desire to learn.

Semarang Regency is designated as an ecotourism area due to its unique geography, including mountainous terrain and valuable environmental resources like water, biodiversity, and natural tourism spots. Mulianingsih, F. in 2017 points out that Social Science (IPS) integrates various disciplines such as History, Geography, and Economics, making Semarang Regency an ideal learning resource for this subject. The region's natural and social interactions provide rich material for Social Science education. Lastly, Wijayanto, P. A., et al in 2020 underline the importance of evaluation in learning, which, when combined with the use of tourist sites as educational tools, can assess cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

3. METHODS

This research employs a qualitative method with a case approach to understand how teachers utilize learning resources. Moleong in 2018 defines qualitative methodology as research that produces descriptive data from individuals and observable behaviors. Sugiyono in 2020 describes qualitative methods as naturalistic, reflecting real-world events. The researcher acts as the primary instrument, exploring subjects and objects in depth. The investigation aims to clarify research stages, present field data, and identify factors influencing the strategies and learning resources used by social studies teachers in junior high schools in Semarang Regency.

1. Research Focus

This research provides a comprehensive and thorough analysis, gathering data and facts from the field regarding strategies for utilizing natural tourist attractions as a learning resource for Social Studies teachers in Semarang Regency.

2. Data Sources

This research utilized both primary and secondary data. The primary data includes information regarding the learning conditions of Social Studies (IPS) in junior high schools, as well as details about teachers, students, and learning activities. Secondary data comprises photographs that capture images of the research locations, observation activities, and interviews conducted at junior high schools in Semarang Regency.

3. Data Collection Tools and Techniques

In this research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument, conducting in-depth observations and interviews to gather data. The study uses additional tools such as audio and video recording devices to capture key moments during the observations and interviews, ensuring that the research is well-documented. Field notes are used to summarize observations, particularly data obtained through qualitative methods. An interview guide, consisting of pre-prepared questions, helps structure interviews with relevant informants, with writing tools to record responses. According to Sugiyono in 2020, data collection involves observations, interviews, documentation, and triangulation. In this research, the researcher employs observation, interviews, and documentation for data collection.

4. Data Validity Test

Several techniques can be used to verify data validity, including data triangulation, where external sources are used to check or compare the research data (Moleong, 2018). In this study, data validity was tested through two methods: data source triangulation and method triangulation.

5. Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data, both primary and secondary, are analyzed using a descriptive qualitative method. The data analysis process involves: 1) data reduction, which includes categorizing, refining, eliminating irrelevant information, and organizing the data; 2) data display, aimed at identifying significant patterns and relationships to facilitate conclusion drawing; and 3) conclusion drawing and verification (Huberman, 2005).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The 21st-century education paradigm requires teachers to be more intensively involved in the learning process. Therefore, in planning, teachers must direct learning so that students can master the necessary competencies. The shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning has driven the emergence of various strategies, methods, and learning models (Wijayanto, P. A., et al, 2017). Social Sciences, as an integrated and interdisciplinary subject, covers geography, history, economics, and sociology, in line with Mulianingsih's opinion in 2017.

Social Sciences teachers need to focus on four dimensions of learning knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, and actions to achieve learning objectives (Widiastuti, 2017). The data collection process in this research was conducted in three stages: preparation, development and implementation, and evaluation, as explained by Jailani in 2017 and by Depdikbud in 1983. These three stages were used as indicators in field data collection through interview methods, as shown below:

Table 1. Research Stages and Indicators

No	Stages	Indicator
1.	Initial Preparation Stage : 1. Analyzing the Learning Needs and Characteristics of Students 2. Formulating Learning Objectives	1. Finding materials from various sources independently. 2. Planning activities for the effective use of learning resources to achieve learning objectives.
2.	Development and Implementation Stage : 1. Development of Learning Materials 2. Selection of Learning Resource Types	1. Using learning resources in daily learning activities. 2. Introducing and presenting learning resources. 3. Explaining the role of various learning resources in education. 4. Selecting materials in accordance with principles and learning theories
3.	Evaluation Stage : 1. Developing measurement tools for success 2. Collecting data on the effectiveness and efficiency of instructional materials, including learning resources	1. Organizing tasks for the use of learning resources in the form of behaviors. 2. Assessing the effectiveness of the use of learning resources as part of the learning materials.

Source: 2022 Research Findings

The interview instrument was designed to collect data from six junior high schools: three public (SMPN 1 Ngablak, SMPN 1 Sumowono, SMPN 2 Banyubiru) and three private (MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan, MTS Raudhotul Furqon, MTS Sudirman). This data will help compare the implementation of social studies teachers' strategies using natural tourist sites as learning resources. The first interview with Ms. Putri Ayu, a seventh-grade social studies teacher at MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan, took place on August 20, 2022. The interview results are as follows:

1. MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan Kabupaten Semarang

The strategy for utilizing natural tourism learning resources at MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan includes several key points. Teachers select attractions like Gedong Songo Temple based on student needs and competencies, conducting a needs analysis before lesson planning. They consider the benefits and distance of the locations, although implementation has not been optimal. Learning resources are aligned with basic competencies and supplemented with observation tools for outdoor study, focusing on 21st-century skills such as character, critical thinking, and collaboration. Teachers facilitate learning, assign projects, and use PowerPoint, evaluating effectiveness through student observations during questioning.



Picture 1. Interview Documentation at MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan

Source: Research Results 2022

2. SMPN 2 Banyubiru Kabupaten Semarang

The interview with Mrs. Yuli, a seventh-grade social studies teacher at SMPN 2 Banyubiru on August 20, 2022, highlighted her strategies for using natural tourism resources in education. She chose locations like Candi Gedongsongo and Bukit Cinta based on student needs and developed a lesson plan with clear objectives. Mrs. Yuli incorporated outdoor study and relevant videos to boost environmental awareness, using PowerPoint presentations to showcase local attractions. Her selection of materials aligned with the curriculum and 21st-century competencies. As a facilitator, she guided student exploration and assigned conservation tasks. However, details on evaluation methods were lacking, and further clarification is needed to enhance the quality of the learning process at the school.



Picture 2. Documentation of the learning process at SMPN 2 Banyubiru

Source: Research Results 2022

3. SMPN 1 Sumowono Kabupaten Semarang

Based on an interview with Mr. Brapastyo, a social studies teacher at SMPN 1 Sumowono on August 20, 2022, the strategy for using natural tourism as a learning resource involves several key steps. First, the teacher selects nearby locations like Gedung Songo Temple after consulting with the school administration. Second, a needs analysis and lesson plan are prepared to enhance student knowledge. Third, natural tourism is presented in oral

and video formats. Fourth, resources align with the curriculum and incorporate 21st-century competencies and the 6Cs (character, citizenship, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication). The teacher also employs ice-breaking activities for engagement, assigns research-related tasks, and evaluates learning through tests and projects.



Picture 3. Interview Documentation at SMPN 1 Sumowono

Source: Research Results 2022

4. MTS Sudirman Kabupaten Semarang

The fourth interview, conducted on August 29, 2022, featured Mr. Rosidin, a seventh-grade social studies teacher at MTS Sudirman in Semarang Regency. The interview focused on utilizing natural tourism as a learning resource. Mr. Rosidin noted that teachers collaborate to select sites like Koppeng, Umbul Songo, and Kalipancur, conducting a needs analysis to ensure alignment with student competencies before designing lesson plans. These resources integrate the curriculum with 21st-century competencies, including character education and critical thinking. The teacher facilitates connections between tourism knowledge, moral education, and local wisdom. Students visit sites monthly, and the teacher employs images and observation tasks to track progress, reflecting a commitment to enhancing educational quality at MTS Sudirman.



Picture 4. Documentation of the learning process at MTS Sudirman

Source: Research Results 2022

5. MTS Raudhotul Furqon Kabupaten Semarang

The interview with Mr. Abdurahman, a seventh-grade Social Studies teacher at MTS Raudhotul Furqon in Semarang Regency on August 29, 2022, highlighted strategies for using natural tourism resources in education. He selects locations like Rawa Pening and Banyubiru after conducting a needs analysis to align with student competencies. Mr. Abdurahman develops lesson plans with clear objectives and integrates resources from books and local community discussions. He emphasizes connecting these sites to student interests, aligns with the curriculum and 21st-century skills, and acts as a facilitator in using social media for learning. He monitors student progress through assignments like storytelling and interviews to create meaningful educational experiences.



Picture 5. Documentation of the learning process at MTS Raudhotul Furqon

Source: Research Results 2022

6. SMPN 1 Ngablak Kabupaten Semarang

The interview with Mrs. Dita, a seventh-grade social studies teacher at SMPN 1 Ngablak, showcased her strategies for utilizing natural tourism as a learning resource. She independently selects Mount Andong and Curug Songo, conducting a needs analysis based on her students' competencies. Mrs. Dita prepares lesson plans with general objectives and considers location benefits to ensure effective participation in conservation efforts. She employs verbal explanations, field trips, and multimedia presentations, aligning her methods with the current curriculum and emphasizing 21st-century skills like critical thinking and collaboration. As a facilitator, she assigns projects to enhance critical thinking and monitors student progress through papers and clippings. However, her evaluation methods were not fully explained. Overall, the interview illustrates Mrs. Dita's effective approach to enhancing classroom learning through natural tourism.



Picture 6. Documentation of the learning process at SMPN 1 Ngablak

Source: Research Results 2022

This research, based on interviews in six schools, highlights both similarities and differences in the use of nature tourism as a learning resource for Social Science education. While all schools utilized nearby tourist attractions, the methods for selecting these locations differed. Teachers at MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan, SMPN 2 Banyubiru, SMPN 1 Sumowono, and MTS Raudhotul Furqon independently chose the locations, whereas SMPN 1 Sumowono required approval from school authorities. MTS Sudirman, however, collaborated among Social Science teachers for selection, recommending a collaborative approach for more effective outdoor learning implementation. As Macbeath & Mortimore cited in Abdullah in

2012 note, the selection of learning resources should be based on relevance, cost-effectiveness, practicality, and accessibility.

The analysis of learning needs and the design process aligns with Heinich's in 1996 model, emphasizing the importance of analyzing student characteristics and defining learning objectives. Santoso in 2019 highlights the necessity of varied approaches to prevent student boredom. MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan and SMPN 1 Ngablak set broad learning objectives, with MTS Al Bidayah adding quizzes and Q&A sessions. While SMPN 2 Banyubiru occasionally integrates outdoor activities, SMPN 1 Sumowono focuses on material delivery, and MTS Sudirman and MTS Raudhotul Furqon incorporate community engagement. According to Abdullah in 2012, internal and external factors like motivation and resource quality influence teachers' decisions in using nature tourism as a learning resource.

Despite the schools shared goal of maximizing location benefits, the implementation varies: MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan still needs to conduct activities, SMPN 2 Banyubiru involves students in conservation projects, and SMPN 1 Ngablak encourages active student participation. All six schools effectively utilized learning media to boost student engagement, as supported by learning theories from Arsyad in 2015. Each school successfully integrates educational theory, enhancing learning experiences with media use. Teachers emphasize the relevance of these learning resources to both the curriculum and 21st-century skills, including communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity. The findings reveal that MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan and SMPN 2 Banyubiru particularly excel in aligning objectives, materials, and assessments through well-organized task assignments.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that there are both similarities and differences in the implementation of social studies teachers' strategies in utilizing natural tourist attractions as learning resources for students in junior high schools in Semarang Regency. The similarities lie in the use of natural tourist attractions as a creative and relevant medium for learning materials. However, each school also exhibits distinctive characteristics in how social studies teachers apply these strategies, depending on the local conditions and potentials unique to each institution. The recommendations that can be provided are that teachers should adopt and further develop strategies to optimally utilize natural tourist attractions as learning resources. This can enhance the effectiveness of learning and make it

more engaging and interactive. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to use natural tourist attractions more frequently in the learning process, allowing students to learn in a more enjoyable and active manner.

LIMITATION

This research identifies similarities and differences in utilizing nature tourism as a learning resource in Social Studies (IPS) education across six schools. Each school employs distinct approaches for location selection and implementation strategies. For example, MTS Sudirman involves all Social Studies teachers in selecting the location, while SMPN 1 Sumowono requires consultation with the school administration. Variations in outdoor learning methods and media usage were noted, such as SMPN 1 Ngablak's use of video and PowerPoint media compared to MTS Al Bidayah Bandungan, which incorporates quizzes. Limitations arise from differing implementation strategies, affecting the generalizability of conclusions. Not all schools fully optimize relevant media, resulting in varied effectiveness in utilizing nature tourism. The researchers suggest a more optimal combination of strategies to enhance nature tourism as a learning resource.

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