

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SCIENCE LEARNING THROUGH INTEGRATION OF GLOBAL GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Gender equality is a global issue that continues to face challenges in its implementation across countries. School learning plays a strategic role in instilling the values of justice and equality from an early age. One such approach is through the subject of Social Studies. This article aims to examine how strengthening Social Studies learning through the integration of a global perspective on gender equality makes learning more relevant, contextual, and better able to foster critical awareness in students. This research uses a literature review. Data were obtained from various literature sources, including national and international journal articles and books related to Social Studies learning themes, gender equality, and global perspectives. Data analysis was conducted descriptively and analytically by mapping the relationship between ten main Social Studies themes and gender equality issues in a global context. The results of the study indicate that gender equality can be integrated comprehensively into Social Studies subject themes, such as culture, history, environment, individual identity, social relations, power, economics, technology, global connections, and citizenship. The integration of a global perspective into Social Studies learning helps students understand gender equality as a cross-border, cross-cultural social issue. Thus, Social Studies learning plays a vital role in fostering inclusive, just, and responsible attitudes among global citizens.

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INTRODUCTION

Gender equality is a global issue that is still being pursued in various countries. This is due to the persistent unequal roles, access, and opportunities between men and women in various areas of life, including education, social, economic, and political spheres. As stated in the Global Gender Gap document, Index released by World Economic Forum that among the 145 countries included in the 2024 and 2025 editions, significant improvements in gender equality were seen only in some countries, namely Bangladesh (+8.6 percentage points), the United Kingdom (+4.9 percentage points), and Benin (+4.6 percentage points), while Estonia, the Dominican Republic, Mongolia, and the Republic of Moldova also narrowed their gaps by more than two percentage points over the same period. In contrast, Togo (-5.3 percentage points), Mozambique (-3.9 percentage points), and Sierra Leone (-3.1 percentage points) saw declines of more than 3 percentage points between 2024 and 2025. Kenya, Nicaragua, Peru, Portugal, North Macedonia, and Tajikistan saw declines of more than 2 percentage points in their scores.

This situation indicates that achieving gender equality at the global level remains uneven and highly dependent on each country's policies and commitments. In this context, learning in schools plays a strategic role, systematically instilling aspects of justice, equality, and respect for the roles of men and women from an early age. Learning serves not only as a means of transferring knowledge but also as a medium for social transformation, shaping students' perspectives on gender and making education a significant contributor to accelerating the realization of fairer, more sustainable gender equality.

Social Sciences is one of the subjects in schools that has the potential to support the realization of gender equality, because its learning is designed to help students understand social realities and the dynamics of community life, including various forms of gender inequality and injustice that still occur (Gunnarsson, 2021). Through the study of social structures, social roles, and intergroup relations, social studies subjects provide space for students to recognize how gender construction is formed and influences the roles of men and women in the realms of family, education, economics, culture, and politics (Z & Al, 2021).

Several previous studies related to the integration of gender equality were conducted by (Fajriyati et al., 2024) with the title "Implementation of gender equality in social studies learning process at junior high schools in Kedawang District, Cirebon Regency. The study found that implementing gender equality in Social Studies learning fosters an inclusive environment, increases student participation, improves learning outcomes, promotes gender awareness, and encourages community involvement, ultimately supporting the development of students without gender barriers in Junior High Schools. Meanwhile, research by (Utama et al., 2023) entitled "Integration of gender equality values through innovative development of interactive e-modules in social studies subject. The study found that integrating interactive e-modules that embed gender equality values into Social Studies subjects in junior high schools, validated by experts and teachers, achieved a high validity score of 94.7%, making it a recommended resource for improving gender equality in education.

In contrast to the above research, this article aims to increase social studies learning by integrating a global perspective on gender equality, viewing it not only as a value in learning practices but also as a global issue that students must critically understand. This article links gender equality with social, cultural, economic, and political dynamics at the local and global levels in social studies learning. The purpose of this article is to explain how integrating a global perspective on gender equality can strengthen social studies learning, making it more relevant, contextual, and able to foster critical awareness and inclusive attitudes in students when facing global challenges.

METHOD

This research employs a literature review. This method was chosen because the article aims to examine, analyze, and synthesize concepts, theories, and previous research findings relevant to strengthening Social Studies learning through the integration of a global perspective on gender equality. The focus of the research is not on collecting empirical field data, but rather on deepening the meaning, interconnections, and conceptual implications of various relevant scientific sources.

The research data sources comprise reputable national and international journal articles on social science learning, gender equality, and global perspectives. To guide the analysis, the literature sources are grouped thematically by function and their contribution to the study's focus. The grouping of these literature sources is presented in **Table 1** below:

Table 1. Grouping of Literature Sources in the Study of Strengthening Social Studies Learning with a Global Perspective on Gender Equality

Literature Group	Focus of Study	Functions in Articles
Gender Equality Literature and Global Perspectives	The concept, dynamics and development of gender equality in a global and cross-cultural context	To be a theoretical basis in understanding gender equality as a global issue
Literature on Conceptual Framework and Social Studies Learning Themes	Characteristics, goals, and main themes of social studies (culture, history, environment, economics, politics, technology, and citizenship)	To be the basis for mapping the relationship between social studies themes and gender equality issues.

Based on these groupings, data were collected through a systematic literature search, selection, and analysis. The literature was selected by considering the relevance of the topic, the credibility of the sources, and the novelty of the study. Each body of literature was analyzed according to its role in supporting the discussion of integrating a global perspective on gender equality into social studies learning. Data analysis was conducted using analytical descriptive analysis and conceptual synthesis. At this stage, the author reviewed the literature to identify the relationships among the main themes of social studies, gender equality issues, and the global perspective. The analysis aims to produce a comprehensive understanding of how integrating a global perspective on gender equality can strengthen social studies learning by making it more contextual, reflective, and relevant to global challenges. To maintain data validity, this study implemented source triangulation, namely by comparing and confirming concepts and findings from various literature groups, so as to produce strong synthesis results that can be used in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

These results and discussion explain the findings of a study on strengthening Social Studies (IPS) learning through the integration of a global perspective on gender equality. The findings are derived from a review of relevant literature, both national and international, on IPS learning and gender equality. This analysis demonstrates that gender

equality is a crucial issue in IPS learning, not merely a moral value but also a social problem that occurs across countries.

The study also shows that the main themes in social studies learning are closely related to gender equality issues. Each social studies theme can be used to discuss gender equality from different perspectives, such as culture, history, environment, individual identity, social relations, power, economics, technology, and global citizenship. By integrating a global perspective, social studies learning becomes more contextual. It helps students understand that gender equality issues are part of interconnected social dynamics at the local, national, and global levels.

To facilitate understanding of the analysis results, the relationship between the social studies learning theme, gender equality issues, and global perspectives is presented concisely and systematically in a table in the following section.

Table 2. Identification Of Relationships Social Science Theme, Issue Equality Gender And Integration Perspective Global

No	Social Science Theme	Issue Equality gender	Integration Perspective global
1	Culture	The formation of gender roles in Comparison of gender equality practices across society is influenced by cultural cultures in each country. aspects, which are dynamic because (Luo & Jiang, 2023; Mielke et al., 2022; Munro et they continue to develop through al., 2021; S et al., 2021);Paulo, 2024). social interactions and cultural contexts (Zhang, 2024).	
2	Time, Continuity, and Change	Gender understanding and roles History of the global gender equality movement evolve over time, influenced by (Reynolds & Wellons, 2021; Wiesner-Hanks, social, cultural, and historical 2021) (Koppell, 2022) changes in society.	
3	People, Places, and Environments	Gender and environmental issues Implications of the relationship between relate to addressing environmental environmental context and gender equality in problems through an inclusive various countries. approach that takes women into (Caven et al., 2022; de Boer & Aiking, 2023; Leach account through integrated policies et al., 2025; Leal Filho et al., 2022). and practices.	
4	Individual Development and Identity	Gender equality is related to Global perspectives on gender identity influencingthe process of identity (Badgett et al., 2024; Speechley et al., 2024; formation, psychosocial Steiner et al., 2022) development, and individual choices and potential throughout life.	
5	Individuals, Groups, and Institutions	Gender equalitygender shapes the Comparison of gender policies in various countries Groups, and roles, interactions, and positions of ((Berga & Abdisa, 2022; Hervías Parejo & individuals and groups, as well Radulović, 2023) (Emon & Nipa, 2024)) asinfluenceinstitutional policies and practices in society.	
6	Power, Authority,	Gender equalityinfluencerepresentation, Women's political participation globally (Fellegi et al., 2023; Grasso & Smith, 2022; Liu, decision-making, and distribution of 2022);	

No	Social Science Theme	Issue Equality gender	Integration Perspective global
	and Governance	power between men and women in the government system.	
7	Production, Distribution, and Consumption	Gender equality determines the access, roles and opportunities for women and men in working, doing business and contributing to activities.economy.	gender economic gap (Gelardi & Gozzi, 2021; Haq et al., 2025; Pawluczuk et al., 2021; Podolchak et al., 2023; S et al., 2021; Singh & Singhal, 2025)
8	Science, Technology, and Society	Gender-based economic and wage inequality	Digital gender divide at the global level (Acilar & Sæbø, 2021; Pawluczuk et al., 2021; Wang & Lin, 2024)
9	Global Connections	Gender access to technology and science	Gender issues across countries and cultures (Hsu et al., 2021; Mazzuca et al., 2024; Zimmer et al., 2022)
10	Civic Ideals and Practices	The impact of globalization on gender roles	Gender equality as a human rights principle (Jongen & Scholte, 2022; Leal Filho et al., 2022; Mashtalir et al., 2022)

Based on the table, the information obtained indicates a relationship among the main themes of Social Studies subjects, gender equality issues, and the integration of global perspectives. This shows that gender equality can be analyzed from various dimensions of social life. Each theme in social studies learning offers a different perspective on the context of gender equality, ranging from culture, history, and the environment to power, economics, and global citizenship (Leal Filho et al., 2022; Ortega-Sánchez et al., 2022). Therefore, it can be said that the issue of gender equality does not stand alone but is interconnected with and integrated into various social contexts and global developments, which will be discussed in depth in the following analysis.

Social studies learning is designed to help students understand social reality holistically, critically, and contextually. Social studies not only presents social facts but also develops awareness of values, attitudes, and reflective thinking skills regarding societal dynamics. In the current global context, an issue that demands attention in social studies learning is gender equality (E. Wayne Ross, 2024; Gunnarsson, 2021; Ross, 2024), Lay, 2021. This issue is cross-dimensional, namely culture, history, economics, politics, technology, and citizenship so that demands an integrated and holistic learning approach (Munro et al., 2021; Paolo, 2024)

Gender equality cannot be understood separately from the cultural and historical constructions of society. In various social contexts, gender roles are formed through long cultural processes and are passed down across generations (Luo & Jiang, 2023; Mielke et al., 2022). Culture shapes perceptions of what is considered appropriate for men and women, while history records how gender contexts change over time (Reynolds & Wellons, 2021; Wiesner-Hanks, 2021). Therefore, Social Studies learning needs to integrate cultural and historical analysis to show that gender inequality is not a natural condition but rather a social construct that can change. A global perspective expands this understanding by showing that changes in gender relations occur differently across societies, influenced by each nation's cultural values, political systems, and historical experiences (Koppell, 2022; Zhang, 2024).

Within the framework of Social Sciences learning, analysis of people, places, and the environment increasingly emphasizes that gender equality is closely related to living space and geographic conditions. Gender context can determine access to natural resources, the division of labor, and vulnerability to environmental crises (Caven et al., 2022; de Boer & Aiking, 2023; Leach et al., 2025). In many parts of the world, women are in a more vulnerable

position to the impacts of climate change, natural disasters, and environmental degradation, due to limited access to education, technology, and decision-making (Leal Filho et al., 2022). Integrating gender issues into environmental studies in social studies learning helps students understand that environmental issues are not only ecological but also social and gender-justice issues on a global scale.

At the individual level, social studies learning plays a vital role in shaping students' understanding of self-development and identity. Gender identity is shaped through socialization influenced by family, school, media, and society (Speechley et al., 2024; Steiner et al., 2022). When integrating a global perspective, social studies learning can help students understand that individual identity is dynamic and influenced by the broader social context (Badgett et al., 2024). This encourages students to value diverse identities and reject gender-based discrimination.

The relationship between individuals, groups, and institutions is another important dimension in the analysis of gender equality. Social institutions such as families, schools, and the state play a strategic role in reducing gender inequality. School learning practices can reinforce gender bias (Gelardi & Gozzi, 2021; Haq et al., 2025). Therefore, Social Science learning needs to integrate critical analysis of the role of institutions in shaping gender equality (Podolchak et al., 2023; S et al., 2021; Singh & Singhal, 2025). The global perspective provides examples of how various countries have developed affirmative policies, educational reforms, and inclusive approaches to promote gender equality, which can be used as material for reflection in the context of Social Sciences education in Indonesia.

The dimensions of power, authority, and governance cannot be separated from discussions of gender equality. Gender inequality is often reflected in power structures and political representation (Fellegi et al., 2023; Grasso & Smith, 2022; Liu, 2022). Women still face structural barriers to equal participation in political and government decision-making. Integrated social studies learning with a global perspective enables students to analyze how political systems, public policies, and patriarchal culture influence the gender-based distribution of power (Berga & Abdisa, 2022; Emon & Nipa, 2024; Hervías Parejo & Radulović, 2023). Through this approach, students can understand that gender equality is an essential prerequisite for an inclusive and just democracy.

Gender equality also relates to systems of production, distribution, and consumption. Wage inequality, limited access to decent work, and unrecognized workloads are global issues still faced by women. Social studies learning needs to integrate gender economic analysis to help students understand that economic systems are not gender-neutral. A global perspective shows that gender-based economic inequality is a shared challenge that impacts sustainable development (Goetz, 2022; (Alejo & Hermosa, 2025; Koppell, 2022; Wani et al., 2019). Thus, students can develop critical awareness about the importance of economic justice in a global context.

Advances in science and technology also have significant implications for gender equality. On the one hand, technology opens up new opportunities for empowerment. Meanwhile, the gap in access to technology continues to widen gender inequality. The digital gender divide phenomenon shows that women in many countries have more limited access to digital technology and science education (Acilar & Sæbø, 2021; Pawluczuk et al., 2021; Wang & Lin, 2024). Integrated social studies learning with science and technology issues can help students understand the social impact of technology on gender equality. A global perspective demonstrates that equal access to technology is key to full participation in modern society.

Globalization strengthens interconnectedness among nations and accelerates the exchange of values, information, and social practices, including those related to gender equality. Gender issues are no longer local but have become a global agenda discussed in various international forums (Hsu et al., 2021; Mazzuca et al., 2024; Zimmer et al., 2022). Social studies learning that integrates global connections enables students to understand how gender challenges in a country are linked to broader global dynamics. With this approach, students can develop an awareness of global citizenship with a responsibility to address global humanitarian issues.

In the context of citizenship, gender equality is an integral part of the values of democracy, human rights, and citizen participation. Social studies learning plays a strategic role in instilling inclusive and gender-equitable

citizenship values. Students are not only encouraged to understand the rights and obligations of citizens normatively, but also to analyze the practice of citizenship in a social reality that is still rife with inequality (Jongen & Scholte, 2022; Leal Filho et al., 2022; Mashtalir et al., 2022). The global perspective affirms that gender equality is recognized as a universal principle that underpins the formation of a democratic society.

The direct integration of all these dimensions demonstrates that gender equality cannot be taught as a separate topic in Social Studies learning. Instead, this issue must be thoroughly integrated into all learning themes and contexts. An integrated approach enables students to see how culture, history, environment, economics, politics, technology, and citizenship interconnect to shape gender relations. Thus, Social Studies learning not only enriches students' knowledge but also builds critical awareness, social empathy, and a commitment to gender justice from a global perspective. Social Studies serves as a vehicle for developing global citizens who can understand the complexity of social issues and contribute to creating an inclusive and just society. This approach also strengthens Social Studies' position as a relevant, reflective, and transformative subject in addressing global dynamics.

Implications: Integrating a Global Perspective on Gender Equality in Social Studies Learning

The integration of a global perspective on gender equality into social studies learning has significant implications for how teachers design and implement learning. Social studies learning no longer focuses solely on delivering material but also shapes students' perspectives on social justice, particularly gender justice, in local and global contexts (Fajriyati et al., 2024). In this context, Social Sciences teachers play a strategic role as facilitators, helping students understand social reality critically and reflectively.

From a learning planning perspective, integrating gender equality encourages Social Studies teachers to formulate learning objectives that emphasize not only conceptual mastery but also the development of attitudes and values. Social Studies learning objectives should be designed to help students understand that gender inequality is a social issue shaped by culture, history, economic systems, and power structures. Thus, Social Studies learning becomes more meaningful because students not only learn facts but also understand the meaning behind social events.

Further implications are evident in the development of Social Studies learning materials. Teachers need to be more critical in selecting and compiling materials to avoid gender bias. Social Studies materials should equally represent the roles and contributions of women and men across various areas of life, including education, economics, politics, and culture. Presenting materials that demonstrate gender equality helps students understand that every individual has the same potential to contribute to society, regardless of gender (Lay et al., 2021).

In learning practice, integrating a global perspective on gender equality requires active, participatory learning approaches and models. Social studies teachers can use discussions, case studies, and problem-based learning to engage students in analyzing gender issues at both the local and global levels. Through this approach, students learn to express their opinions, respect differing perspectives, and develop critical thinking skills regarding social issues.

Another pedagogical implication relates to creating an inclusive and gender-equitable classroom climate. Social studies teachers need to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate in learning. Teachers' attitudes toward using language, assigning assignments, and assessing learning outcomes should reflect values of equality and fairness (Gunnarsson, 2021).

Social studies learning assessments also need to be aligned to integrate gender equality. Assessments should not only measure students' ability to memorize concepts, but also their ability to analyze social issues and to demonstrate attitudes that reflect gender equity. Social studies teachers can use task-based assessments, such as essays, projects, and written reflections, to gauge how well students understand and internalize the values they are learning. (Tripathi, S. 2022).

Learning Social Studies from a gender equality perspective helps students understand that gender issues are problems that occur across countries with diverse characteristics. Students can compare the state of gender equality in

Indonesia with that of other countries, thereby developing a global perspective and an open attitude towards diversity. This understanding is essential for developing awareness as global citizens with social responsibilities. The integration of a global perspective on gender equality also strengthens the role of Social Studies in citizenship education. Through learning Social Studies, students can understand that gender equality is part of human rights and democratic values. Students are encouraged to respect the rights and obligations of every citizen, without gender discrimination, and to understand the importance of active participation in social and political life. Therefore, Social Studies teachers need to continuously improve their understanding of gender issues and a global perspective (Main, 2023). This knowledge is crucial for teachers to connect social studies material to evolving social realities. Strengthening teachers' competencies in gender and global literacy will help them design relevant, context-specific social studies lessons. This aligns with the goal of social studies as a subject that not only teaches social knowledge but also fosters responsible and just citizens.

CONCLUSION

Strengthening Social Studies learning by integrating a global perspective on gender equality is an essential and relevant approach to addressing global social dynamics. Gender equality can be integrated comprehensively into the main themes of Social Studies, ranging from culture, history, environment, individual identity, social relations, power, economics, technology, to citizenship, so that Social Studies learning becomes more contextual, critical, and meaningful for students. The integration of a global perspective helps students understand that gender equality issues do not occur only at the local level but also span countries and cultures. Therefore, it is recommended that Social Studies teachers and curriculum developers systematically integrate a global perspective on gender equality into the planning, implementation, and assessment of learning, and encourage further research that empirically examines the implementation of this approach across various levels of education.

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