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# THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING DEEP LEARNING-BASED CURRICULUM TO FACE THE CHALLENGES OF THE DIGITAL ERA

**Rino Junianto[1a*], Jamil[2b], Tutuk Ningsih[3c], and Siswadi[4d]**

[1,2,3,4] State Islamic University (UIN) Prof. K. H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia

[a]254120300013@mhs.uinsaizu.ac.id
[b]254120300020@mhs.uinsaizu.ac.id
[c]tutuk@uinsaizu.ac.id
[d]siswadi@uinsaizu.ac.id

(*) Corresponding Author:
254120300013@mhs.uinsaizu.ac.id

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**ABSTRACT**
This study aims to analyze the strategic role of social studies teachers in developing a deep learning-based curriculum to face the challenges of the digital era at SD Negeri Karangcegak, Sumbang District, Banyumas Regency. Digital transformation requires a change in the learning approach from just knowledge transfer to learning that emphasizes conceptual understanding, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and the ability to solve social problems. This study uses a qualitative approach with interview, observation, and documentation data collection techniques. The results showed that teachers began to integrate project-based learning, local social case studies, as well as the use of simple digital media to encourage more in-depth learning. The strategic roles carried out by social studies teachers at SDN Karangcegak Sumbang District are (1) as learning designers who design contextual learning oriented to deep understanding; (2) as a facilitator who encourages cognitive engagement through discussion, scaffolding, and critical questioning; (3) as a motivator who builds a learning climate conducive to active student involvement; (4) as an innovator who develops problem-based and project-based learning methods; (5) as a curriculum designer who adapts the national curriculum to the local context; and (6) as an integrative user of contextual learning media and resources.

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology in the 21st century has brought fundamental changes in various aspects of life, including the world of education. The era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Society 5.0 demands the education system to produce students who are not only able to access information, but also able to process, analyze, and create new knowledge critically and creatively (Nurhayati, Sedubun, et al., 2024). Education in the digital era also

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requires students to have 4C skills (*Critical Thinking* (critical thinking), *Creativity* (creativity), *Communication* (communication), and *Collaboration* (collaboration) (Nurhayati, Pramono, et al., 2024). This condition puts Social Science (IPS) learning in elementary schools in a very strategic position because the competence of the social studies subject itself is to form citizens who are literate in information, think critically, and are sensitive to the social issues around them (Marhayani, 2017; Wahyu Nurlinawati, 2025). This condition puts Social Sciences (IPS) learning in elementary schools in a very strategic position because social studies not only functions as a medium of knowledge transfer, but also as a vehicle for the formation of character and competencies in the 21st century. Through social studies learning, students are directed to understand social reality contextually, develop information literacy skills, and practice critical and reflective thinking skills to various phenomena that occur in the surrounding environment. Thus, social studies plays an important role in forming citizens who not only know social facts, but are also able to analyze, evaluate, and make decisions wisely in community life.

Data from the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2023 shows that high-level thinking skills (*Higher Order Thinking Skills*/HOTS) elementary school students in Indonesia are still relatively low (Siti Rohmi Yuliati, 2018). This is exacerbated by the conventional learning model which is still dominated by memorization and one-way information transfer, which is not able to develop deep thinking skills in students. This phenomenon shows that there is a gap between the demands of a curriculum that emphasizes strengthening 21st century competencies and the practice of learning in the field (Sinaga & Firmansyah, 2024). Based on these problems, the Ministry launched a learning approach called *deep learning* or deep learning. Where the goal is to transform traditional learning into more in-depth, meaningful, and fun, in order to improve students' conceptual understanding. With a problem-solving-oriented learning design (*problem based learning*), project-based learning (*project-based learning*), as well as reflective activities, so that students are actively involved in the process of knowledge construction(Suwandi, Riska Putri, 2024).

Concept *deep learning* In education, it refers to a learning approach that encourages students to process information in depth, relate new concepts to existing knowledge, and apply that understanding in a meaningful context. *Deep learning* emphasizing six global competencies, namely character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. Unlike surface learning that only emphasizes memorization, deep learning demands higher cognitive engagement through analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and creation (Intermediate, 2025). Concept *deep learning* It becomes relevant to apply because it emphasizes learning that is not just memorizing, but understanding, processing, and developing knowledge more broadly. Thus, the application of deep learning is expected to be a solution to improve the quality of social studies learning while answering the challenge of low HOTS of students, so that it is in line with the direction of education policy through the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes meaningful learning and comprehensive competency development.

The Independent Curriculum launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022 is basically in line with the deep learning paradigm that emphasizes meaningful learning and holistic competency development (Mardiana, 2024). This is reflected in the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile which integrates character values, critical thinking skills, creativity, communication, and collaboration as the main foundation of learning. In addition, the implementation of project-based learning (*project-based learning*) in the Independent Curriculum provides space for students to actively construct knowledge, relate concepts to real-life contexts, and develop analytical and reflective skills. Thus, conceptually the Independent Curriculum has adopted the principles of deep learning as explained earlier (Mujtahid, Ali Hasan Assidiqi, 2026).

The role of teachers in curriculum development is a key element that directly determines the success of implementation *deep learning* in the field. As previously described, this approach provides a space for learning that demands active student involvement through knowledge construction, reflection, and problem-solving. In this context, teachers no longer play a sufficient role as technical implementers of the curriculum, but rather as the main actors who translate the conceptual framework of the curriculum into meaningful learning practices (Mutmainnah et al., 2025). According to Mulyasa, teachers have a strategic role as curriculum developers who are able to adapt, modify, and elaborate the curriculum according to the characteristics of students and the context of the learning environment (Mulyasa, 2003). In line with Lev Vygotsky's perspective in the framework *deep learning*, the teacher functions as a

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facilitator who creates a dialogical, collaborative, and cognitively challenging learning environment, so that students are encouraged to construct knowledge independently (Vygotsky, 1978).

Thus, optimization of implementation *deep learning* It is highly dependent on the pedagogical capacity of teachers in compiling and developing a curriculum that can create a learning experience that is not only contextual, but also able to develop students' high-level thinking skills in a sustainable manner (Alya Fitriani, 2025; June et al., 2025). In this context, the strategic role of social studies (Social Sciences) teachers as curriculum developers has become increasingly significant, considering the characteristics of social studies subjects which are inherently integrative, contextual, and close to the reality of students' social lives. Social studies teachers have a great opportunity to design learning based on actual issues, social problems, and the dynamics of people's lives, so that students not only understand concepts, but are also able to analyze, evaluate, and offer solutions to real problems.

A number of previous studies have examined relevant aspects related to this topic, including research conducted by Dena Dwitami, et al., entitled The Role of Teachers in Improving the Quality of Social Studies Learning in Elementary Schools Through Approaches *Deep Learning*. The results of the study show that teachers play a central role as designers, facilitators, and evaluators of learning that not only emphasizes mastery of the material, but also on the development of character and competencies in the 21st century. Through this approach, social studies learning in elementary school becomes more meaningful and contextual, so that students are able to relate knowledge to the social realities in their environment (Dwitami et al., 2025). Intan Rusmarhadi, with her research entitled "The Role of Teachers in Developing the Independent Curriculum" found that the role of teachers is very crucial and multifaceted in the success of the Independent Curriculum. The results of his research show that teachers need to master the use of technology, innovate in learning plans, and act as community drivers and motivators to align curriculum content with the needs and interests of students' talents (Rusmarhadi et al., 2024).

Nature Research Slamet Barkah, et al related to Curriculum-Based Development *Deep Learning* as the Foundation of Adaptive and Responsive Education. The results of this study show that this approach emphasizes high-level thinking, analysis, and problem-solving through contextual project-based learning. The success of this curriculum is highly dependent on the readiness of teachers in developing learning strategies that foster students' critical reasoning and creativity as a manifestation of the Pancasila Student Profile (Barkah et al., 2025). Research by Prova Imam Musthofa and Zaini Tamin AR related to the Strategic Role of Teachers in the Development of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics in Schools" revealed that teachers have a strategic role as planners, implementers, and evaluators in the development of the PAI curriculum. The findings of the study confirm that the active role of teachers in these three dimensions greatly determines the quality of character and moral formation of students in the modern era (Try Imam Musthofa, 2024).

From the study of these previous studies, it can be concluded that there has been no research that specifically examines the strategic role of social studies teachers in developing a deep learning-based curriculum in elementary schools. The purpose of this research is to comprehensively analyze and describe the strategic role of social studies teachers in developing a deep learning-based curriculum. The contribution of this research is expected to be a reference for social studies teachers and policy makers in an effort to improve the quality of social studies learning that is relevant to the demands of educational development and the digital era.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design (Scott, 2022) which aims to gain an in-depth and contextual understanding of the strategic role of social studies teachers in developing a deep learning-based curriculum at SD Negeri Karangcegak, Sumbang District, Banyumas Regency. The research subjects consist of social studies teachers as the main actors in curriculum development and implementation, and school principals as policy makers who have a strategic role in determining the direction and policies of the curriculum in schools. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews (*in-depth interview*) to explore perspectives, experiences, and strategies used by teachers and principals, non-participatory observations of the learning process to identify real practices of applying deep learning in the classroom, as well as documentation studies of curriculum documents. Data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, presentation (*Display*) data, as well as conclusion drawing

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and verification, resulting in systematic and structured findings. To ensure the validity of the data, this study applied source triangulation techniques and triangulation techniques (Miles, Matthew B., & Huberman, 1994)

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**Research Findings**

This section presents findings obtained from qualitative descriptive analysis, findings are compiled based on research questions: The strategic role of social studies teachers in developing *a deep learning-based* curriculum in facing the digital era. Data were obtained through *in-depth interviews* to explore perspectives, experiences, and strategies used by teachers and principals, non-participatory observations of the learning process to identify real practices of applying deep learning in the classroom, and documentation studies of curriculum documents between 2024 and 2025.

**Overview of Social Studies Learning at SDN Karangcegak**

The results of the study show that social studies teachers at SDN Karangcegak, Sumbang District have begun to develop learning practices that lead to a deep learning approach, although they are not yet fully structured in the design of the formal curriculum. Social studies learning is no longer solely focused on conveying social facts, but is beginning to be directed at activities that encourage students to understand social phenomena contextually, reflectively, and analytically.

Historically, social studies learning in elementary schools at SDN Karangcegak has mostly used a transmissive or teacher-centered approach, namely teachers as the main source of knowledge and students as passive recipients of information. This pattern has proven to be ineffective in developing high-level thinking skills. However, with the existence of deep learning policies, teachers begin to apply deep learning principles gradually, which has been proven to create more meaningful learning from learning that is oriented towards memorization and completion of textbooks, to learning that is oriented towards deep understanding, problem solving, and the application of knowledge in real life.

In its implementation, teachers utilize group discussions, simple case studies about community life around Sumbang District, as well as small project assignments related to the social environment of students. This approach is in line with the view of Biggs and Tang that *deep learning* occurs when learners connect concepts with real experiences resulting in more meaningful understanding. Thus, the learning practices carried out by teachers show that there is a real effort to shift learning from memorization patterns to more reflective and contextual learning.

To obtain a more systematic and comprehensive picture of the role of teachers in the practice, this study summarizes the findings in the field as presented in the following table.

| Observation Focus | Findings | Teacher Role Indicators | Analysis |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teachers' understanding of deep learning-based social studies learning | Teachers understand the importance of relating the material to students' real lives | Teachers as learning designers | Teachers begin designing contextual learning that supports deep understanding |
| Learning strategies used | Teachers use social case examples in the environment around students | Teachers as facilitators | Teachers encourage students to think critically through real-life experiences |
| The process of interaction in the classroom | Students actively discuss and ask questions | Teachers as facilitators and motivators | Student-centered learning |
| Learning methods | Problem-based and contextual learning | Teachers as innovators | Teachers apply deep learning principles in learning practices |
| lesson plans and learning tools | There is an integration of real-life context in the material | Teachers as curriculum designers | The curriculum has been geared towards meaningful learning |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Media and learning resources | Use of simple media and the surrounding environment | Teachers as innovators | The use of contextual learning resources improves student understanding |

Based on the data in the table above, it is known that the role of teachers in deep learning-based social studies learning at SDN Karangcegak includes six dimensions that are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The six dimensions do not stand alone, but form a unified pedagogical ecosystem that together encourages the occurrence of a deep learning process in students. These findings are in line with Vygotsky's constructivist view which emphasizes that knowledge is actively constructed by students through meaningful learning experiences (Vygotsky, 1978).

**Teacher as *a Learning Designer* (Contextual Learning Designer)**

The first and most basic dimension of the strategic role of social studies teachers at SDN Karangcegak is their role as a learning designer or learning experience designer. The results of in-depth interviews show that teachers have understood the importance of relating social studies material to students' real lives. This understanding is not just theoretical knowledge, but has been embodied in concrete and measurable learning planning practices.

In designing lessons, teachers consciously choose social studies topics that are relevant to the local context of Sumbang District, such as changes in agricultural land use to residential areas, dynamics of traditional market activities and modern markets, and social environmental issues around students. The selection of topics that are close to students' daily experiences is not a coincidence, but is part of a pedagogical strategy that teachers are aware of to create meaningful learning. According to the theory *Contextual Teaching and Learning* (CTL) presented by Johnson, learning will be more meaningful if students are able to connect the material with their daily life experiences (Ester et al., 2023). In this context, teachers not only compile the order of the material, but design life-relevant learning experiences.

The lesson plan documents and teaching modules that are developed by social studies teachers show that teachers are beginning to integrate learning objectives that are oriented towards long-term understanding, not just material achievement in a short time. This reflects the principle *of Understanding by Design* (UbD) where effective learning planning must start from the desired end result, namely in-depth understanding and then design activities and assessments that support the achievement of this understanding. This shift in curriculum design orientation from "what is taught" to "what is understood" is a crucial step in the transformation towards a deep learning-based curriculum.

Teachers also design multi-source learning, which is no longer relying on textbooks as the only reference. Teachers develop learning scenarios that allow students to explore a variety of sources of information, including digital sources, the environment, and local speakers. This multi-resource approach is in keeping with the hallmarks of deep learning which emphasizes that the process of deep learning requires a wealth of stimuli and diverse perspectives (Raup et al., 2022). Multi-submerged learning is also an important part of contextual learning, where in social studies materials the use of a contextual approach has been proven to improve their understanding of social studies materials and build their social skills (Lilis Widuri, 2025). Thus, teachers at SDN Karangcegak have begun to lead to the practice of deep learning with a contextual approach because they focus not only on knowledge transfer, but also on deep understanding (*meaningful understanding*).

This was emphasized by the statement of the fourth grade teacher in an in-depth interview session: "I always try to relate social studies material to real events that are around students. For example, when discussing economic activities, I invite students to observe activities in stalls near schools, not just reading from textbooks. That way, they don't just memorize, but really understand." This statement shows the strong pedagogical awareness of teachers in designing meaningful learning. Concretely, the teacher once designed a learning unit with the theme "Changes in the Social Environment Around Us" which raised the issue of the conversion of agricultural land in the Sumbang District area into housing. Students are asked to gather information from family members or local residents about the change, then discuss it in class and present their findings in the form of a simple report. This activity not only trains social analysis skills, but also builds students' sensitivity to local environmental issues relevant to their lives.

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**Teachers as Inquiry-Based Learning Facilitators**

The second dimension is the role of the teacher as a facilitator who actively encourages students' cognitive involvement in the learning process. From the results of interviews and observations, it is clear that teachers consistently use social case examples from the students' neighborhoods as a starting point for class discussions, encourage students to ask questions, and create space for productive intellectual dialogue. In the context of Vygotsky's theory, the role of the teacher as a facilitator is very important in helping students go beyond the Proximal Development Zone (ZPD), which is the distance between what students can do independently and what can be achieved with guidance. Through scaffolding techniques in the form of triggering questions, gradual hinting, and constructive feedback, teachers help students rise to a higher level of understanding (E. Rahma & Eka, 2024). Observations in the classroom show that teachers skillfully use tiered questions from factual, then analytical, to evaluative questions to lead students to deeper understanding.

Indicators of the success of the facilitator's role can be seen from three aspects documented in the observations: (1) teachers consistently provide a structured group discussion space, where each student has the opportunity to express their opinions; (2) the teacher triggers critical questions that cannot be answered by memorization alone, but require analysis and reasoning; and (3) students are actively involved in the learning process, not just listening to the teacher's lectures. This condition shows that learning has shifted from *a teacher-centered* model to *student-centered learning*, which is a key feature of *deep learning*.

One concrete example of the role of facilitators was recorded in class V observation when discussing the theme "Social and Cultural Diversity in Indonesia." Instead of explaining directly, the teacher opened the session with a lighter-burning question: "Why do you think the people in our village have different traditions from the people in Purwokerto, even though the distance is not too far?" This question sparked a lively class discussion for nearly 20 minutes, where students shared experiences with each other and built arguments based on their initial knowledge. The teacher then gradually directs the discussion towards relevant social studies concepts through structured scaffolding techniques. In an interview, the teacher in question stated: "I prefer to fish first with questions that make them curious. If they are curious, they will want to find out. My task then is only to direct their understanding to deepen and not deviate." This approach reflects the principles of scaffold-based inquiry that characterize effective *deep learning* facilitation .

**Teachers as Motivators and Builders of Student Engagement**

The third dimension that is no less important is the role of teachers as motivators who are able to create a learning climate that is conducive to *deep learning*. The observation findings showed that the level of student activity was quite high in the discussion and question and answer process in the classroom. Students do not hesitate to ask questions, share opinions, and even debate constructively about the social issues discussed. This condition indicates the existence of intrinsic learning motivation that teachers have successfully built.

According to the theory of learning motivation put forward by Uno, intrinsic motivation is the motivation to learn that comes from within students because they feel that the material is relevant and interesting is much more effective in encouraging deep learning engagement than extrinsic motivation that depends on rewards and punishments (Uno, 2015). Teachers at SDN Karangcegak have succeeded in building students' intrinsic motivation by associating social studies topics with issues that are close and relevant to their daily lives, so that students feel that learning social studies is a real need, not just an academic obligation.

In the context of deep learning, the active involvement of students (*student engagement*) is an absolute prerequisite for the occurrence of in-depth information processing. Research by Novy Trisanani et al. confirms that optimizing the role of teachers in implementing deep learning strategies significantly stimulates the critical thinking skills of elementary school students (Trisanani et al., 2025). The findings at SDN Karangcegak support the results of the study: when teachers succeed in motivating and actively involving students, the critical thinking process that is the core of deep learning becomes easier to develop.

Teachers also act as motivators in the affective dimension of learning, which is to help students build confidence, curiosity, and a positive attitude towards social studies learning. Through appreciation for every student's contribution, no matter how small, and the creation of a psychologically safe classroom atmosphere for opinions,

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teachers succeed in removing the affective barriers that are often barriers to authentic learning engagement. This safe psychological condition is essential for the development of critical and creative thinking that is the foundation *of deep learning*.

The role of this motivator is reflected in the testimony of the principal of SDN Karangcegak when interviewed: "Our classroom teachers have started to change the way they teach. In the past, students tended to be passive and afraid of making mistakes. Now, since teachers have changed their approach to more open spaces for students to speak and express their opinions, the classroom atmosphere is much more lively. Children are no longer afraid to ask questions." This is also confirmed by observations made by researchers, where it was recorded that in one social studies learning session in grade VI, there was a spontaneous question-and-answer interaction between students and teachers, as well as a small group discussion session that was active. Teachers consistently respond positively to every question or comment a student makes, even to inappropriate answers, with phrases such as "Interesting idea, let's explore it further together." This kind of affirmative approach has proven effective in building students' courage and enthusiasm for learning which is a prerequisite for deep cognitive engagement.

**Teachers as Learning Method Innovators**

The fourth dimension is the role of teachers as innovators who creatively develop learning methods that are in accordance with deep learning principles, even in limited resources. Observation data and document analysis show that teachers at SDN Karangcegak have implemented at least three significant methodological innovations: *Problem-Based Learning*, *Project-Based Learning*, and the use of the surrounding environment as an authentic learning resource.

Application *Problem-Based Learning* (PBL) in the social studies class of SDN Karangcegak can be seen in a learning scenario where students are faced with real social problems in their community, for example, why many residents of Sumbang District still have difficulty accessing clean water, or how technological changes affect the work patterns of local farmers. According to Badriyah, based on the results of his research, PBL is effective in developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills because students are stimulated to analyze the root of the problem, find relevant information, and formulate logical and contextual solutions (Badriyah et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, the *Project-Based Learning* (PjBL) element was found in several social studies learning units, where students were asked to work on mini-projects that produced real products such as making social maps of the environment around the school, compiling mini-reports on residents' economic activities, or designing social campaign posters on environmental issues in Sumbang District. These products not only serve as evidence of conceptual understanding, but also train 21st-century competencies such as collaboration, communication, and creativity that are part of the six key competencies of *deep learning*.

The third innovation that is no less interesting is the use of the surrounding environment as an authentic learning resource. Teachers creatively invite students to make direct observations of social phenomena around the school, such as observing interactions in traditional stalls or markets as a real illustration of the concept of economic activities, or visiting rice fields around the village to understand the relationship between humans and the natural environment. According to Edgar Dale's theory in *Cone of Experience*, first-hand experience (*direct purposeful experience*) is at the top of the hierarchy of learning effectiveness because it engages all the senses and creates the most powerful and lasting understanding. By utilizing the surrounding environment as a learning space, teachers not only save costs, but also create authentic learning that is the main characteristic *deep learning* (Hariyanto, 2015).

This overall methodological innovation shows that teachers' pedagogical creativity, not technological luxury, is the main determining factor in implementing *deep learning* in schools with limited resources. This finding is in line with the results of Ira Fatmawati's research which emphasizes that an effective curriculum model does not depend solely on advanced technology, but on the pedagogical intelligence of teachers in designing meaningful learning experiences (Fatmawati, 2021). In addition, in the research of Rodiyatun and Tutuk Ningsih, it was also explained that teachers as innovators must be able to utilize local potential, present real learning experiences, and arouse student motivation even with limited facilities (Rhodiyatun, 2025).

One of the most memorable methodological innovations in observation was the "School Environment Social Map" project designed by grade VI teachers. In this project, students were divided into small groups and asked to map

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the economic, social, and cultural activities that existed around the school within a radius of one kilometer. Each group visited a specific location of stalls, fields, places of worship, or patrol posts to conduct brief interviews with residents. The results were then presented in the form of a large poster in front of the class. The teacher who designed this activity explained in an interview: "I want children to learn social studies not just from books. They have to go out, see directly, ask directly to the community. That way, the knowledge they get is attached, not just memorized and forgotten after the exam." In addition to the social map project, teachers also apply *the Problem-Based Learning* scenario by proposing a real dilemma: "If you were the village chief, what would you do to address the garbage in the river near this school?" Problem-based questions like these encourage students to think analytically, creatively, and responsibly about the core competencies they want to develop through *deep learning* approaches.

**Teachers as Competency-Based Curriculum Designers**

The fifth dimension shows that social studies teachers at SDN Karangcegak not only implement the curriculum that has been set nationally, but also actively play a role as agents of curriculum development at the grade level. From the analysis of the lesson plan documents and teaching modules developed by teachers, there is concrete evidence that teachers have integrated real-life contexts into the framework of the formal curriculum, so that the curriculum becomes more lively, relevant, and meaningful for students.

Analysis of the RPP document shows several characteristics that reflect the orientation of deep learning: (1) the learning objectives are not only oriented to factual knowledge, but include analytical and applicative skills; (2) core learning activities are designed in stages from exploration, elaboration, to confirmation activities that are in line with the principles of inquiry-based learning; (3) Assessment not only uses written tests, but also includes process, performance, and product assessments that measure in-depth understanding.

This reflects the implementation of the concept *Understanding by Design* (UbD) which emphasizes that effective curriculum planning must be oriented towards long-term understanding through three stages, namely identifying desired outcomes (*desired results*), determine the evidence of acceptable assessment (*acceptable evidence*), and designing learning experiences and instruction (*learning experiences and instruction*) (Supardan, 2015). The curriculum designed by teachers at SDN Karangcegak shows meaningful learning objectives, integration of real-life contexts, and a focus on understanding, not just material completion.

Furthermore, the role of teachers as curriculum designers also includes the ability to adapt the national curriculum in accordance with local wisdom and regional potential of Sumbang District. Teachers do not hesitate to modify case examples in textbooks with urban nuances with local examples that are closer to students' lives. This contextual curriculum adaptability is a tangible manifestation of what curriculum experts call teachers as curriculum agents, teachers are not just implementers, but interpreters and curriculum developers (Mulyasa, 2003). These findings confirm that despite being in semi-urban primary schools with limited resources, teachers at SDN Karangcegak have the capacity and initiative to develop a curriculum that is responsive to local needs and global demands at the same time.

In an interview, the grade V teacher revealed the process of adapting the curriculum that he carried out independently: "Many of the textbooks we use take examples from big cities such as Jakarta or Surabaya. I feel like it's too far removed from the children's experience here. So I always replace it with an example from Sumbang or Banyumas District. For example, when discussing the types of work, I use the example of farmers in the rice fields next to the school, traders in the Sumbang market, and bamboo weaving craftsmen in neighboring villages." A concrete example of this adaptation is evident in the lesson plan document analyzed: in the Basic Competency on "Economic Activities and Their Relationship to Various Fields of Work," the teacher adds an assessment rubric that asks students to identify at least three types of work that exist in their own living environment, rather than simply memorizing a list of jobs from a book. Curriculum design rooted in a local context like this is a tangible manifestation of the teacher's ability as an adaptive and responsive curriculum agent to the needs of students.

**Utilization of Digital Media and Contextual Learning Resources**

The sixth dimension reveals that social studies teachers at SDN Karangcegak are starting to use digital technology integratively in learning, although on a limited scale and intensity. This study found that the use of digital media such as learning videos, web-based digital maps, and online information resources is used as a means to enrich

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social studies learning materials, present more actual social phenomena, and help students understand the relationship between the concepts learned and the reality of people's lives more broadly.

These findings are in line with the TPACK framework put forward by Rahmatiah, which emphasizes that the effectiveness of technology integration in learning depends on the ability of teachers to harmoniously integrate three types of knowledge: content knowledge (*content knowledge*), pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge (*technological knowledge*) (Rahmatiah et al., 2022). In addition, the results of research by Auwla Rahma and Tutuk Ningsih also show that the use of technology in social studies learning can encourage students to be active in the learning process (A. A. Rahma & Ningsih, 2025). Teachers at SDN Karangcegak, although not yet fully mastering TPACK comprehensively, have shown promising initial steps in integrating these three types of knowledge functionally. In addition, the use of technology in social studies learning at SDN Karangcegak also makes students more enthusiastic in participating in learning.

Based on the results of observations, it was found that not all teachers can make maximum use of technology, this finding provides an important context for the situation at SDN Karangcegak, the limitations of digital literacy for some teachers are a real obstacle in optimizing the use of technology to support deep learning. However, teachers who already have adequate digital literacy manage to create a richer and more interactive learning experience through the use of digital resources. Teachers also creatively combine digital media with contextual learning resources based on the surrounding environment. The combination of documentary video shows on national social issues with direct observation of local social phenomena in Sumbang District creates a learning experience rich in dimensions: students can see the larger context (national/global) while relating it to concrete experiences in their immediate environment. This hybrid approach is particularly relevant to the principles of deep learning which emphasizes the importance of the interconnectedness between knowledge, experience, and reflection in the learning process.

Concretely, the use of digital media at SDN Karangcegak can be seen in the practice of grade IV teachers who use short videos from YouTube about the lives of tribes on various Indonesian islands to open the topic of cultural diversity. After watching the videos together through the school projector, students were asked to compare what they saw with the traditions and customs that existed in their own hometowns. Guru explained in an interview: "We don't have many digital devices yet. There is only one projector and school laptop, but we make the most of it. If I can't use video, I use images from the internet that I print, or directly invite students out of class to observe the surroundings. The important thing is that students can see and feel directly, not just imagine." This statement reflects the creativity and flexibility of teachers in overcoming the limitations of technological facilities, while showing that the spirit of contextual learning is not hindered by the lack of digital infrastructure. Limitations actually encourage teachers to be more innovative in utilizing learning resources available in the surrounding environment as authentic and meaningful learning media.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research that has been conducted, it is known that the implementation of a deep learning-based curriculum in social studies learning at SD Negeri Karangcegak, Sumbang District is greatly influenced by the pedagogical capacity and creativity of teachers in designing meaningful learning experiences. Learning practices that lead to deep learning have begun to develop in the classroom through teachers' initiatives. The strategic role of social studies teachers at SDN Karangcegak is manifested in six interrelated dimensions: (1) as a learning designer who designs contextual learning oriented to deep understanding; (2) as a facilitator who encourages cognitive engagement through discussion, scaffolding, and critical questioning; (3) as a motivator who builds a learning climate conducive to active student involvement; (4) as an innovator who develops problem-based and project-based learning methods; (5) as a curriculum designer who adapts the national curriculum to the local context; and (6) as an integrative user of contextual learning media and resources.

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