

Integration of Environmental Education Through Ecopedagogical Approach to Social Studies

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Abstract. This research was conducted based on the importance of environmental education in learning Social Sciences in junior high schools, especially in developing students' knowledge through the learning process. This research focuses on observing the implementation of environmental education for junior high school students in learning Social Sciences using an ecopedagogy approach. The purpose of this study is to determine the development of the implementation of environmental education in learning Social Sciences with an ecopedagogy approach. The research was conducted in junior high schools throughout Sukoharjo Regency, which have the predicate of public schools or non-aghiwiyata and adhiwiyata schools. This study used a descriptive qualitative method with the research subjects being all social studies teachers and vice principals of the curriculum division. The results showed that through the process of conducting interviews with related parties, it was shown that the implementation at junior high schools in Sukoharjo district varied quite well, with quite good results in the implementation of environmental education and some that produced quite low results in the implementation of environmental education in learning social sciences.

Keywords: ecopedagogy, environmental education, junior high schools

INTRODUCTION

Education has a fundamental role in developing the character of students so that they always have sensitivity and concern for the surrounding natural environment. This is in line with the opinion of Sapriya (2011) who states that students need to be prepared to be able to respond to various ecological crises by forming attitudes and care as a form of human responsibility for a shared future and sustainable life. In fact, fostering an attitude of caring for the environment has not yet been fully realized to its full potential. Students do not yet have an attitude of caring about the environment as expected. Muhaimin (2015) indicates that in several cases there are still many dirty school environments, student participation in environmental activities is still low, there is no student awareness in forming environmental behavior, wasteful behavior in the use of natural resources, apathy towards preserving the environment around students, etc. The ecopedagogical approach can be applied effectively in an educational context, with a focus on integrating sustainability values, understanding ecosystems, and concrete actions in everyday life. Through this approach, it is hoped that students will not only gain theoretical knowledge but also practical skills to act as agents of change who care about the environment. Ecopedagogy not only teaches theory, but also encourages the development of sustainable skills such as problem solving, critical analysis, and active involvement

in environmental public policy. This helps students to become agents of change who contribute positively to maintaining environmental sustainability. This approach emphasizes systemic thinking, where students are taught to see the complex relationships between social, economic, political, and environmental factors in understanding global issues such as climate change, energy sustainability, or natural resource conflicts.

The integration of environmental education through an ecopedagogical approach can make a significant contribution in developing educational practices that are responsive to current and future global environmental challenges. Eryaman, et al (2017) stated that the ecological crisis is a vital problem faced by all humans. Therefore, education is essential for the development of environmental awareness and for strengthening the ability of individuals and communities to resist actions that could lead to environmental crises. Ecopedagogy can be interpreted as an academic movement to awaken students to become individuals who have understanding, awareness and life skills in harmony with the interests of nature conservation (Kahn, 2010). Ecopedagogy is not a teaching method. As Dhea Adela (2020) argues, ecopedagogy-based learning is oriented towards achieving a complete understanding of the nature of humans and nature which have an essential relationship, so this has implications for

the growth of critical awareness and the formation of students' attitudes. On the contrary, the ecopedagogical movement opposes environmental education practices that emphasize momentary interests, separate humans from their environment, are not oriented towards the future, and do not support the concept of sustainability (Supriatna, 2016: 45). Ecopedagogical experts criticize environmental education practices that accommodate the interests of the modern world and the ideologies of capitalism, imperialism and neoliberalism which have a negative impact on the planet Earth where all living creatures live. Gyallay in (Muhaimin, 2015), stated that the goals of ecopedagogy include, 1) to help explain issues of concern and attention regarding the interdependence between economic, social, political and ecological aspects in cities and in rural areas, 2) to provide opportunities to everyone in developing the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment and abilities needed to protect and improve the environment, 3) to create new patterns of behavior for individuals, groups and society as a whole towards the environment. The integration of environmental education through an ecopedagogical approach is very important to understand in the context of modern education which is increasingly facing global environmental challenges. The importance of ecopedagogy can be seen from the case discussed by Siti Tartila (2022) who said that students did not care about the cleanliness and beauty of the school environment and students did not maintain physical and spiritual health.

Environmental education is no longer just an additional topic in the curriculum, but has become essential in forming a generation that cares about the environment and is able to take sustainable action. The ecopedagogical approach offers a model that fits this approach, by emphasizing the integration of knowledge, skills, attitudes and sustainability values. Sustainability in Education: Effective environmental education focuses not only on teaching theory, but also on direct experience and concrete actions to improve the surrounding environment. An ecopedagogical approach offers a foundation for creating impactful and sustainable learning experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of junior high school social studies learning in Sukoharjo Regency related to environmental education implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka can mainly be seen from

the standard processes prepared and carried out by teachers and schools. The same as the opinion expressed by Rifki Afandi (2013) that Environmental education can be integrated into learning social studies by reviewing social studies content standards in elementary schools bring out the National Education Standards Agency, with environmental education life is expected to create green schools. This study was carried out in Sukoharjo Regency with the research subjects being all junior high school teachers in Sukoharjo Regency. For the purposes of this research, the data focuses on the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in Sukoharjo Regency Middle Schools, the experience of social studies teachers in Sukoharjo Regency, and the social studies learning process by teachers in the classroom with the integration of environmental education based on eco-pedagogy (Ferani Mulianingsih, 2024; Pranichayudha Rohsulina, 2024). This research focuses on schools that have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka. The Sukoharjo Regency Education Office has determined that in the new school year 2022/2023, it will begin implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka, and in the new school year 2023/2024 it is hoped that all junior high schools will be required to have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka. However, not all junior high schools in Sukoharjo Regency have implemented Kurikulum Merdeka.

The number of public and private middle schools in Sukoharjo Regency is 76 middle schools, including 41 public middle schools and 35 private middle schools. There are 64 schools that have IKM, both from the state and private sector, and there are still 12 schools that do not have IKM. Implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in schools can be seen through classroom learning planning. The Kurikulum Merdeka Learning Planning is a process of designing and preparing learning strategies and materials that are in accordance with the principles of the Kurikulum Merdeka. The Kurikulum Merdeka is known as a new approach to education in Indonesia that provides schools with more flexibility in designing a curriculum that suits local needs, student potential and current developments. Some of the characteristics of the Kurikulum Merdeka Learning Plan include Competency-based learning which focuses on developing competencies or skills that are relevant to real life and the needs of the world of work, Project-based learning which uses an integrated project or assignment approach that allows students to learn

actively, collaboratively and involved. directly in the learning process, Use of technology: Encouraging the use of information and communication technology in learning to support a more effective and efficient teaching and learning process, Formative Assessment which prioritizes continuous and formative assessment to continuously monitor student learning progress, School independence which provides freedom for schools to adapt the curriculum according to student characteristics, local potential and regional needs, inclusiveness which ensures that education is accessible to all students regardless of their background or conditions. The Kurikulum Merdeka Learning Planning aims to increase the relevance of education to the needs of society and prepare students to have the skills needed to face future challenges. Kurikulum Merdeka Learning Planning is the development of learning in the form of an integrated system consisting of several elements that interact with each other. Planning for the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in all public and private junior high schools in Sukoharjo district begins with the management of the school principal in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka. The following are the results of an interview with Mr Hartoyo as the principal of Muhammadiyah Grogol Middle School, Weru District on Jl Watukelir - Cawas, Mlaran Grogol Weru Sukoharjo. "Even though the pandemic hindered it, the entire school community worked together and shared tasks according to their respective roles as part of the sekolah penggerak to implement the Merdeka curriculum which has now been formalized as an Kurikulum Merdeka. In Sekolah Penggerak, training/workshops are given at the beginning. "After being selected to become a sekolah penggerak, there is training/IHT. After becoming a sekolah penggerak, the curriculum is called the school operational curriculum (formerly the learning unit level curriculum)." Based on the results of an interview with the principal of Muhammadiyah Grogol Middle School, Weru District on Jl Watukelir - Cawas, Mlaran Grogol Weru Sukoharjo. He revealed that in learning planning there are differences between the Merdeka curriculum and the previous curriculum, namely K13, in part as follows: "There is a change in the name or term from Syllabus to ATP; RPP becomes a Teaching Module; "And also the advantage of students in this kurikulum merdeka is that they really like it because it applies direct practice and all subjects are involved in practice." The obstacles faced by schools in implementing the

kurikulum merdeka from both state and private schools are:

- 1) There is still a need to adapt to the existence of an Kurikulum Merdeka for both teachers and students
 - 2) Many teachers have not attended training so there are still many teachers who do not understand IKM
 - 3) Teachers have difficulty compiling teaching modules
 - 4) There are still some teachers who do not master the use of information technology media and gadget equipment
 - 5) Differences in students' levels of understanding in receiving learning
 - 6) Lack of cooperation and support from parents when implementing P5 which requires money
- From the results of interviews with social studies teachers, several advantages of IKM compared to the previous curriculum were also found, namely:
- 1) The Kurikulum Merdeka is more flexible and free, more adaptable to students' abilities, and develops students' competencies and skills
 - 2) The Kurikulum Merdeka is more structured and systematic
 - 3) The Kurikulum Merdeka provides more experiences for students through project learning and going directly into the field
 - 4) From an assessment perspective, it is simpler
 - 5) For more interesting activities for students
 - 6) Learning is more fun, deeper, more meaningful, and less rushed
 - 7) Students can be more creative and innovative
 - 8) Teachers are given freedom in posting projects

Social Sciences subjects use geography as a basis (platform) for learning studies by considering all places, objects, resources and events tied to location (Mulianingsih et al., 2022; Purnani & Mulianingsih, 2020). The aim is to emphasize the importance of space as a place of life and resource for humans, recognizing the potential and limitations of space, which is why spaces are always interconnected (connectivity between spaces) to complement each other as a result of interactions between nature and humans, and spatial conditions (Kintoko & Mulianingsih, 2022; Mulianingsih et al., 2022; Mulianingsih, Kintoko, et al., 2023; Mulianingsih, Suharini, et al., 2023). If we look at the teachers' teaching experience, most of the teachers have more than 10 years of experience. Judging from the level of education, 100% have a Bachelor's degree from various social studies groups (Geography,

History, Economics, Sociology education) and some even have a Master's degree. All teachers have received independent learning training and curriculum. Based on these conditions, it can be said that junior high school social studies teachers in Sukoharjo Regency are of good quality. Based on the results of participatory observation, in-depth interviews and documentation, it shows that the integration of environmental education with the Ecopedagogical approach to social studies learning consists of planning, implementation and assessment. The planning carried out by social studies teachers is already in the realm of environmental education, especially for teachers in schools that have implemented an independent curriculum in their learning. However, teachers still encounter obstacles in developing learning tools that integrate environmental education with an eco-pedagogical approach, especially whether there is material outside the environment or not. In the assessment, the teacher has carried out the entire series of learning implementations in accordance with educational process standards which include preliminary, core and closing activities.

The preliminary activities carried out by the teacher through the teaching module are good, but the teacher in the teaching module scenario at the beginning of the lesson does not put enough emphasis on learning objectives that lead to environmental education and the eco-pedagogical approach has not been properly introduced to students so that there is no clear focus at the beginning of the lesson. Same as the opinion of Anjalianti Eka Pitriyanti Hurni Adela (2024) The aim of the local content ecopedagogical curriculum for Environmental Education at SDN Kutaraharja I is to implement a school with a culture of caring for the environment with the form of school residents who are responsible for protecting, preserving and preventing damage to the environment and resources. natural resources through good school governance to support sustainable development, as well as equip students with activities to protect, preserve and prevent damage to the environment and natural resources, as well as preserving environmental functions in schools. The core learning activities carried out by the teacher are also good. The teacher's role is to be a facilitator and reinforcer in learning so that students have many roles in learning activities. The use of learning media is very good, especially when it is connected to environmental education and can be seen using an eco- pedagogical approach. The closing activities carried out by the

teacher were also good. However, the teacher and students had not yet carried out a reflection on learning that was focused on environmental education with an eco-pedagogical approach, so that at the end of each lesson the role of eco-pedagogy had not emerged with certainty. The social studies subject is one of the compulsory subjects in SMP/MTs which is integrated and is composed of the essential concepts of geography, sociology, economics and history. The learning assessment that has been made by the teacher in the teacher's learning tool document is quite good. The teacher has made an assessment covering three assessment domains, namely attitudes, knowledge and skills. The knowledge assessment made by the teacher is good, because the teacher uses test instruments that are adapted to environmental education with an ecopedagogical approach. For skills assessment, the teacher has made a fairly good skills assessment because the skills assessment carried out is clear, in accordance with the KD skills that must be taught, especially in material related to the environment. However, what the teacher has not done regarding this skills assessment is preparing a special format for skills assessment to support the assessor from a specific environmental perspective (Hamzah et al., 2022; Lasmawan, 2019; Lestari & Mulianingsih, 2020; Supadmini et al., 2020). Supporting factors in the integration of environmental education using an ecopedagogical approach in junior high school social studies learning are the teacher's understanding, ability and creativity in developing learning indicators when preparing integrated lesson plans for environmental education with an ecopedagogical approach in social studies learning. The inhibiting factor found was the difficulty of teachers in developing integrated learning indicators for environmental education using an eco-pedagogical approach to material and practical activities in class, so that teachers' planning regarding time management needed to be more detailed and detailed.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been carried out, the integration of environmental education with the Ecopedagogical approach in social studies learning consists of planning, implementation and assessment. The planning carried out by social studies teachers is already in the realm of environmental education, especially for teachers in schools that have implemented an

independent curriculum in their learning. In implementation, the teacher has made the entire series of learning implementations in accordance with educational process standards. However, teachers in the teaching module scenario at the beginning of learning do not put enough emphasis on learning objectives that lead to environmental education and the eco-pedagogical approach is not enough. The closing activities carried out by the teacher were also good. However, teachers have not carried out learning reflections that focus on environmental education with an eco-pedagogical approach. However, the supporting factors for integrating environmental education with an ecopedagogical approach in junior high school social studies learning are the teacher's understanding, ability and creativity in developing learning indicators when preparing integrated lesson plans for environmental education with an ecopedagogical approach in social studies learning.

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