

Technium.

49/2023



The 7th International Conference on Social Sciences
Organized by Faculty of Social Science
and Law Manado State University

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Social Studies In The Postmodernism Era

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ABSTRACT

Postmodernism is a new perspective on science and technology and today's social culture. The main feature of postmodernism is uncertainty. Humans today are in a condition filled with uncertainty, episodic and dynamic lifestyles. Changes in society occur very quickly, it is not uncommon for cultural shocks to occur, including in the world of education. The main goal of education is to humanize humans, so education must adapt to developments that occur locally to globally. Social studies education has a central role in dealing with the dynamics of social change. Postmodernism is one of the crucial challenges in social studies education learning. This study aims to 1) analyze the conditions and challenges of social studies education in the postmodern era and 2) analyze the fundamental skills that need to be taught in social studies education in the postmodern era. This research has a qualitative paradigm using library research. Data collection techniques for the study of related books, articles, and journals, using the hermeneutic data analysis method. Interpretive analysis shows that the emphasis on social studies learning is expected not only to focus on affective and cognitive aspects but also on life skills in the global era, which is synonymous with postmodernism. Adaptation skills, democracy, critical thinking, problem-solving, multiculturalism, socio-cultural relativism, and collaboration skills are needed to equip students to face the dynamics of postmodernism. Therefore, postmodernism in social studies education can be used as a philosophical foundation in the practice of compiling curriculum, materials, and the learning process of social studies education at every level of education.

Keywords: *Social Studies; Skills; Postmodernism Era*

1. INTRODUCTION

of the term postmodernism is Arnold Toynbee, with his famous book entitled *Study of History*. Arnold Toynbee believed that a new historical era had begun, although he himself changed his mind about its origins, either during World War I or as early as the 1870s. Although experts argue about who first used the term, there is agreement that the term appeared in the 1930s.

Postmodernism is a reaction from modernism. Although until now there has been no agreement on its definition, the term has managed to attract the attention of many people in the West. In 1960, for the first time the term was successfully exported to the European continent so that many European thinkers became interested in the idea. Basically, postmodernism wants to address the issue of cultural understanding which is often neglected by modernists. If modernists tend to push aside cultural understanding from historical aspects, ignore isolated cultures, colonized cultures, and tend to deify binary oppositions, postmodernism is not the case. Postmodernism actually wants to elevate the small world, which was "thrown away" by modernism. So

that postmodernism is more towards democratic and open [1].

Current living conditions require a new logic or a new perspective on science and technology and socio-culture. Understanding postmodernist thinking is important for understanding various developments in science and culture which are no longer sufficient to be analyzed only based on the modern scientific paradigm which emphasizes unity, homogeneity, objectivity and universality. While science in a postmodernist view emphasizes plurality, difference, heterogeneity, local/ethnic culture, and everyday life experiences. This is in line with the view of [2] that postmodernism is a change in culture, especially the lifestyle and mindset of society due to the development of science and technology. The characteristics of postmodern life are 1) many uncertainties that give rise to various possibilities, 2) global mindset but still based on local wisdom, 3) situational and diverse identities, 4) episodic lifestyles, mobile, easily bored, and work tends to be dynamic, and 5) a multicultural society, prioritizing diversity and pluralism. Postmodernism can also be defined as a view that the reality of the world is not absolute, but is

relative, subjective, and volatile [3]. Setiawan and Sudrajat [4] summarize the differences between modernism and postmodernism as in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Differences between Modernism and Postmodernism

Modernism	Postmodernism
Centralization	Decentralization
Class Battle	Ethnic Fight
Construction	Deconstruction
Culture	Sub-Culture
Hermeneutical	Nihilism
High Culture	Low Culture
Hierarchy	Anarchy
Industry	Post-Industry
Theory	Paradigm
State Power	Shared Strength
Religion	Sects
Legitimacy	Delegitimization
Consensus	Deconsensus
Traditional Culture	Liberalism
Continuity	discontinuity

Symptoms of postmodernism have infected all aspects of life. Borrowing back the ideas of Setiawan and Sudrajat [4], postmodernism has also penetrated the field of science. Knowledge is obtained one way through education. So indirectly postmodernism has also penetrated the world of education. Education is expected to create a generation that can live side by side and even face the harsh dynamics of the postmodern era. It is time for the world of education to improve in order to face the challenges of postmodernism, such as the characteristics described above. One of the fields in education that is suitable for achieving this goal is social studies education.

According to [5] IPS education can be allocated at the school and tertiary level. Gunawan [6] philosophizes that social studies education is a philosophy of educational practice, namely the practice of social sciences education so that students are able to understand social problems and be able to overcome them and be able to make decisions about the problems they face in their lives. So, in general, social studies education is a subject that plays an important role in the formation of the character and social life of students. Apart from that, through social studies education it is hoped that students will be more sensitive to the social conditions around them, and be able to overcome the problems they will face, including postmodernism.

According to Lasmawan [7] the laboratory of social studies education is the community. The scope of social studies material includes social, economic and human cultural behavior in society. The community is the main resource in social studies education. In fact, social studies education over time still experiences relatively the same problems.

Weaknesses in social studies education related to this discussion are sourced from Susanto [8], social studies education is said to be unable to give meaning to what has been learned, so it is considered only for momentary interests without any practical benefits in everyday life in society and has not made socio-cultural values developed in the community into a source of student learning. Criticism which is also a basic problem in social studies education is homework that must be resolved immediately. One thing that can be done to overcome this problem is to create new innovations for social studies education, so that it becomes a useful field of knowledge and has an existence among the people.

The progress of the social sciences, especially social studies education, actually lies in improving the quality seen from three aspects. The three aspects are 1) what needs to be improved, 2) how to improve and 3) how to present social studies as an applied science [9], especially to deal with postmodernism. This opinion is very much in line with the idea of reforming IPS education in accordance with the demands of the postmodern era.

Alvin Tofler [6] needs social studies education that is of international quality but still based on local culture. Based on this statement social studies education in schools must be able to create a generation that thinks broadly or globally but is still guided by the values of local character and culture, or in other words the next generation must be able to sort out these global thoughts for local interests in order to create an advanced, dignified, characterized and cultured Indonesia. This concept is in line with the characteristics of postmodernism which echo ethnicity, culture and local wisdom, and other small narratives that seemed to have drowned during the era of modernism. Based on this opinion, it is necessary to renew all aspects of social studies education in order to create a society that is able to think globally but is still based on local culture. Other skills in order to coexist with postmodernism are also very necessary.

This article basically describes postmodernism in social studies education. More specifically, that is interpreting postmodernism and its correlation in social studies education, especially postmodernism which is used as a philosophical foundation in the practice of learning social studies education. Analyze the basic skills that students must have in order to live in the postmodernism era. In addition to attitudes and knowledge, skills also need to be emphasized in social studies learning.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is library research [10], with data collection techniques for studying related books, articles, and journals, or in other words, this research is compiled based on findings from existing books, articles, and journals. This research has a qualitative paradigm. Previously published sources of literature mainly regarding

postmodernism, were interpreted, analyzed, and linked to social studies education. Interpretation or hermeneutics is an analytical method used in order to review and compare postmodernism from the point of view of social studies education.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It has been explained previously that postmodernism has penetrated all aspects of people's lives, including education. Social studies education as a field of education is also affected by postmodernism. Postmodernism in social studies education, in the discussion of this article, is elaborated in several sub-topics as follows.

3.1. Postmodernism and Its Correlation in Social Studies Education.

IPS and community education is something that cannot be separated. IPS education is fundamentally expected to create a generation that can face problems in society, and make the best decisions in solving problems, while upholding the interests of the general public [11]. It has already been mentioned that the Social Sciences educational laboratory is a community. Then the question arises, what are the characteristics of society in the postmodern era? The characteristics of society in the postmodernism era are considered important to explore in order to find a relationship or correlation of postmodernism with social studies education. This can also be used as the basis for social studies education in order to achieve its goals, namely to produce citizens who are sensitive to their social environment and contemporary developments, one of which is postmodernism.

Borrowing Jameson's idea in Setiawan and Sudrajat [4], society in the postmodern era consists of four elements. First, postmodernism society is characterized by shallowness and lack of depth. This means that postmodernist society has limitations in certain respects, so that it often results in people seeking fast and efficient solutions in order to solve problems. Second, society postmodern is characterized by affectation or emotional sluggishness. Many contemporary people who are often met and seen are often pretending, for example pretending to be happy, pretending to be rich, and so on. As mentioned by Atmadja [12] that society in the postmodern era adheres to a pseudo-culture. This means that what is seen outside is not necessarily like the reality. Third, Postmodern society is characterized by a loss of history. Postmodernism society prioritizes life in the present and in the future. History is considered only as the past. Fourth, postmodern society is marked by a kind of new technology that closely related to postmodern society itself. For example, technology such as television or electronic technology. Atmadja and Ariyani [13] write down the idea that modern electronic media is a popular culture of postmodern society. Media is a channel for watching and displaying certain things. Postmodernism society is indeed synonymous with spectacle culture. Whatever

people do in the postmodern era can be watched and exhibited, if a culture is followed by many people, that culture is called popular culture. Popular culture often raises a race on postmodern society to show its existence on the world stage. Those who don't follow popular culture will be referred to as outdated people.

Postmodernism society can also be traced and described based on the theory of extreme postmodernism. Fundamentally, this theory defines the collapse of modernism and its replacement by postmodernism. Postmodernism society is synonymous with consumption society [13]. According to Baudrillard, describing a postmodernist society characterized by simulation, it is difficult to distinguish the real from the pseudo [14]. In short, postmodernist society depends on the media because the media can very easily turn reality into hyperreality. So it is unavoidable, most people will consume and prioritize media compared to the real reality. Because through the media, everyone can change their reality instantly. Everything that is published through the media is identical with a sign or symbolic value.

The reality of society in the postmodernism era is fundamentally a contemporary phenomenon which has become a social studies educational laboratory. Students are part of society. It can also be said as a new society that needs to learn a lot about the realities, problems, and solutions to social problems that will be faced when they become a whole society. Social studies education, which is taught at the elementary to secondary education level, has a lot of expectations from all elements of society. His biggest hope is a human being who has human character. In addition, Rozi [15] put forward the idea that social studies education which teaches critical thinking in accordance with critical social theory has the potential to create active agents in the development of the social world and contemporary and future life.

The relationship between social studies education and society, especially the postmodern society, is not only limited to that. Based on previous theoretical studies, the characteristics of postmodern life [2][16] are (1) a lot of uncertainty that raises various possibilities, (2) a global mindset but still based on local wisdom, (3) identity is situational and diverse, (4) an episodic lifestyle, sedentary, easily bored, and work tends to be dynamic, and (5) a multicultural society, prioritizing diversity and pluralism. If lived, felt, and adapted to today's life, most of the characteristics of the postmodern era have mostly or even all of them already happened or started to happen. Social studies education with its role as an educational agent for the generation of postmodernism era, really needs a very in-depth analysis, to condition social studies education to suit today's demands.

Various kinds of possibilities can occur in the current era, and are full of uncertainties. All caused by the development of science and technology which began to undermine the boundaries of space and time. For example, who would have thought that social

media could provide a very decent livelihood for some people. The choice of jobs today is very complex, in fact many new types of jobs have emerged such as *YouTubers*, *influencers*, *online motorcycle taxi drivers*, *travelers*, *online shops*, *gamers*, *freelancers*, and so on, which at first it was thought that it was impossible to make money, especially in the eyes of generations X and Y. The boundaries of cultural identity, religion, ethnicity and race have started to fade because all have become one unit under the banner of global diversity and pluralism, this is evident from the proliferation of global villages such as Ubud, Kuta, Labuan Bajo and other global villages. around the world.

This situation requires everyone to be prepared and move quickly to face all forms of changes in contemporary (postmodern) life. If you are not fast and adaptive, you must be prepared to be left behind. The dynamics of postmodern socio-cultural life, which is briefly written down, has dismantled the educational foundations of the old concept and reconstructed it with a new concept that is expected to be more flexible and follow science and technology, social and cultural developments. Social studies education is expected to be able to prepare Indonesia's golden generation to be part of world competition which is increasingly fluctuating and dynamic. The world, especially Indonesia, still needs many generations of smart, innovative, tough, and of course honest people to be able to create more *unicorns* in the class of *traveloka*, *gojek*, *Bukalapak*, and *Tokopedia*. In the end, the correlation of social studies education with contemporary social realities, especially postmodernism, becomes inseparable. Social Studies education is demanded to be dynamic like the socio-cultural changes that occur, including postmodernism.

Advances in technology, the industrial revolution, and changes in society also indicate that education, especially social studies education, is not only carried out in schools. Social studies education learning can be implemented anywhere. Especially can be implemented in the community environment. [17] explains that contemporary education is not only carried out in schools, but can be implemented anywhere. In addition, the role of the teacher must also change and focus more on growing noble character. This is because the current source of learning is not only from teachers. Borrowing the ideas of Atmadja [13] classifies that in the contemporary era there are five teachers, namely parents, teachers at school, the government, God Almighty through religious education, and the media. The media is the fifth teacher as well as being the teacher who is considered the most able to provide a lot of information to students, even more than the information they get from the other four teachers. It's just that the media cannot be a teacher who can teach noble character and complete compassion. So to cover these deficiencies, other teachers, especially social studies teachers, have a very important role in

explaining and providing more specific understanding to students to be wise in using and consuming information from the media.

Social studies education has its own foundation as a scientific discipline education. The foundation includes philosophical, ideological, sociological, anthropological, humanitarian, political, psychological, and religious [18]. The foundation is used as a basis of reference for developments in social studies education. The concept of postmodernism in understanding today's social studies issues is simply and briefly very relevant. Basically the concept of postmodernism is an elaboration of modern beliefs, as an attempt to break with modern traditions by bringing up completely new ways of life and thinking. Judging from the sources of material in social studies, social studies material can be sourced from the environment, society, past life, and the most commonly referred to as social sciences. However, it can be said that this is commonplace, so that lately many have raised a certain reality to be used as a source of material in Social Sciences. One example is the offer of innovation to develop social studies material specifically for *net generation* or what is often called generation Z. Generation Z is a designation for those born from 1997 to 12 AD [19], this generation has known modern technology since birth. One of the different materials developed in relation to *net generation* is material on ethics for using technology and social media. This example actually leads to postmodernity, besides that the concept of postmodernism is considered relevant for understanding social studies. Efforts to achieve the desired goals, perhaps new thoughts that refer to postmodern concepts are needed, so that postmodern thinking is considered very relevant to answer all these problems.

The social studies dimension case that can be dissected from one of the postmodern theories is regarding the social studies case as a second grade subject. Until now natural sciences and mathematics are still the main sciences and the prima donna of all circles. If viewed from the postmodern theory of Jean F. Lyotard, natural science becomes a first-class science and prima donna is a grand narrative that is adapted to society. Natural science as a grand narrative is considered to have a higher scientific level than other sciences, including social studies as a social sciences discipline. Lyotard argues that knowledge is not metaphysical, universal, or transcendental (essentialist), but specific, related to space-time (historical) [20]. Based on these assumptions, basically Lyotard's ideas lead to equality of knowledge or viewing science without discrimination. This view is important in the case of social studies as a second-class science, because Lyotard's postmodern view is expected to open people's minds about the reality of science. As we all know, especially in Indonesia (most of them) who are interested in natural sciences and mathematics are selected from the test results of

students who have an above average level of intelligence, and the rest are accommodated in specializations in social sciences. If it is explored again from the point of view of the field of science, in fact the study of social sciences is a study that is just as difficult as the natural sciences and mathematics, it could even be more difficult, because social sciences studies reality which has high and complex dynamics . The social sciences also need intelligent people above average to advance the social sciences themselves, so that discrimination between fields of knowledge needs to be realigned. The biggest hope of social studies education in the postmodernism era is social studies education that is flexible, emphasizes skills aspects, has value in preparing students to face socio-cultural changes and other dynamics of life.

3.2. Fundamental Skills That Must Be Learned in Social Studies Education Learning in the Framework of Life in the Postmodernism Era.

Contemporary life with the existence of postmodernism era requires that all components of society and their lives coexist with the reality of postmodernism. The world of education through IPS education in particular, must also improve and adapt, in order to carry out the task of creating citizens who are sensitive to changes and developments in science and technology and socio-culture. Based on the characteristics of postmodernism, and elements of postmodernism society, there are several life skills that must be equipped and mastered by students before starting real life in a local to global community environment.

(1) Adapting Skills

Adaptation skill is a competence to adjust to the physical or socio-cultural situation of the living environment within the shortest possible time, with the aim of harmony or harmony either with oneself or with the surrounding environment [21]. The era of postmodernism requires everyone to be able to adapt quickly, bearing in mind that the physical and social dynamics in life are very fast. For example the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused all people in the world to adapt quickly to circumstances. These skills can be taught to students according to their level of education and take advantage of the physical and social environment at the local, national and even global levels.

(2) Democracy Skills

The concept of democracy according to Indonesian dictionary (KBBI) is an idea or outlook on life that prioritizes equal rights and obligations and equal treatment for all citizens . Democratic skills are needed in the postmodernism era, given the existence of decentralization and shared power [4] in real practice. Decentralization and shared power are synonymous with democratic practices. The more common concept states that democracy is not limited to the political system or the formal rules contained in the constitution. But it also concerns local values that

are applied in social life, such as respect for others, tolerance, respect for the opinions of others and similarities as citizens and rejecting discrimination [22]. This is very suitable to be taught through social studies education learning in schools.

(3) Critical Thinking Skills

The characteristics of postmodernist thought are deconstructive. Deconstructive means an attempt to re-question modern theories that have been recognized and established, in order to then look for and develop a more appropriate theory in understanding the reality of today's society, including diversity, as well as natural reality [23]. The period of postmodernism according to Rahman [24] is characterized by deconstructionism, namely questioning, dismantling established adages, standards built by modernism's mindset, to then look for and develop more appropriate theories to understand social reality, religion and the developing world today far from the time when these standard theories were built.

Both of these views interpret that the era of postmodernism requires every member of society to be able to think critically about a reality. A reality is complex and multiperspective in the view of postmodernism. Such as the discussion in the book by Atmadja [25] regarding the *offerings industry* in Bali in terms of the critical theory of postmodernism.

Students through social studies education are taught to always think critically about a reality. There are many socio-cultural and other realities in the student's environment that can be criticized. Such as daily habits, cultural objects, even to community traditions. Therefore, honing critical thinking skills in social studies education is required to face the challenges of the postmodern era.

(4) Problem Solving Skills

Life is not without problems. Problems and solutions must always coexist. There are many choices of solutions to a problem [26]. Based on this quote, it can be interpreted that every human being must have skills or skills in order to overcome problems in life. Social studies education is a subject that theoretically has a problem-solving model in the learning context [7]. Social studies education must be able to realize this model, considering that social studies education is a subject that is expected to be able to provide problem-solving skills, especially social problems that students will face in the future [27], especially in the postmodern era. Postmodernism with several of its characteristics, namely rapid change, episodic lifestyle, and work tends to be dynamic, requiring everyone to have strategic skills in order to overcome problems in their life. For example, the creation of industrial *unicorns* such as Go-jek, Traveloka, Tokopedia, and so on, is a practical solution for postmodern society. The brilliant ideas of the company's founders are highly exemplary by many people in order to provide solutions to such complex problems.

(5) Life Skills in Diversity (Multiculturalism)

Multiculturalism in the era of postmodernism is something that cannot be denied. Pluralism is a feature of postmodernism [23]. There is diversity in culture, religion, economy, social, family, law, education, science, technology, and so on; all of them are postmodernist pluralistic performances. In fact, the era of plurality has existed and developed since ancient times until today. However, human appreciation, awareness and vision are now much more advanced and developed. One of the determining factors for this very advanced development is due to progress in the field of science and technology, especially in the field of communication and information technology [24].

Postmodernism wants to realize that reality is complex. Postmodern education departs from the paradigm that reality is built on complex realities, so that multicultural education is more relevant to this postmodern paradigm. Diversity (pluralist-multicultural) is an element that needs to be considered in the implementation of education today, so that education is in accordance with the underlying cultural background [28].

These ideas are fundamentally very relevant to social studies education learning, one of the foundations of which is multiculturalism [7]. The basic things that need attention and improvement in social studies learning, especially for practitioners, are (1) the need for broader insights about multiculturalism, especially in Indonesia. (2) Social studies education practitioners must have a social spirit and multiculturalism, and (3) it is strictly prohibited to discriminate especially with regard to ethnic, religion, and race in both formal, informal and non-formal communication. Moving on from these competencies, social studies education is expected to create students who are able to live in harmony side by side with mutual respect in a pluralistic society.

(6) Skills in Dealing with Socio-Cultural Relativism

The socio-cultural reality of the people of the postmodernism era cannot be separated from relativity or dynamics. Social and cultural emerge from human interaction with other human beings. Humans are thinking creatures and human minds tend to change quickly, which also affects socio-cultural changes [12]. The development of postmodernism also causes the world to become increasingly uncertain or relative and changes occur very quickly. Rahman [24] states that postmodernism appears to state that nothing is constant and stable, because stability means static and stagnant.

The progress of science and technology and the open attitude of society is one of the indicators of fast socio-cultural change. The era of postmodernism represents aspects of social culture that are increasingly massive or relatively fast changing. Of course, this does not only have a positive impact. The negative impact of rapid socio-cultural change really needs to be prevented and its prevention must be learned as early as possible. Life skills or skills to face the challenges of westernization, demoralization, and

globalization are mandatory. As previously explained, social studies education has a central role in this regard.

(7) Collaboration Skills

According to Sugiharto [28] the tendency of postmodernism is that reality can be captured and managed in many ways, as well as with many systems. The notion of "system" itself with its autonomous and closed connotations tends to be considered less relevant, replaced by "networks", "relationalities" or "processes" which are always criss-crossing and moving dynamically. This statement interprets that the era of postmodernism is very synonymous with cooperation or collaboration from a multidimensional perspective. Currently the ability to collaborate is indeed becoming a major topic in the world of education, including through Social Studies education learning. Collaboration and building as many relationships as possible with various parties can improve the quality of life. The main goal of the collaboration is easy access in carrying out aspects of life. So that through education it is hoped that it can teach students to collaborate in creating new things and solving life's problems quickly and precisely.

Philosophically and theoretically social studies education can indeed be said to be good, and has been planned to be able to form life skills as described above. However, referring to the opinion of Al Muchtar [29]; Lasmawan [7]; Solihatin [30]; Susanto [8] that there are still many weaknesses in criticisms and problems in social studies education in Indonesia. There are still many things that need to be addressed in social studies education, especially in Indonesia in a multidimensional way. Life skills in the postmodernism era need to be emphasized in the social studies education learning process in order to deal with the reality of postmodernism itself. Until finally social studies education is expected to be a subject that is of value and useful for the future of students.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Society in the postmodern era has inviting socio-cultural characteristics that are full of uncertainties which give rise to various possibilities, based on local wisdom, identity is situational and diverse, lifestyle is episodic, mobile, easily bored, and work tends to be dynamic, as well as a multicultural society, promoting diversity, multiculturalism, and pluralism etc. These characteristics are reflected in almost every socio-cultural phenomenon, and become a challenge of life today. Social studies education has an important role in teaching students to be able to face the challenges of postmodern life. So that it is necessary to develop social studies education that is suitable for educating and training students' life skills in the current era. Crucial life skills to be learned in order to face the challenges of postmodernism are adaptive skills, democracy, critical thinking, problem

solving, multiculturalism, socio-cultural relativism, and collaboration skills.

Research and development in social studies learning so that it can adapt to the development of the current situation is of course very necessary. Social studies education learning practices in schools and tertiary institutions by education practitioners still need to be improved, considering there are still many weaknesses in learning social studies education. As social studies education practitioners, it is hoped that they will always learn and be able to always improve their competencies and social studies learning practices in accordance with the challenges of the Postmodernism era. Attitudes that show the good side of postmodernism such as local wisdom, pluralism, and flexibility of change must always be upheld, for the advancement of education and human resources in Indonesia.

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