

Practice Strategies of Social Sciences Learning Assessment in the Independent Curriculum: A Mixed-Method Study in Indonesian Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT: The Independent Curriculum, which strongly emphasizes student autonomy and holistic development, marks a paradigm shift in education. The efficiency of Social Sciences Learning assessment techniques is essential in this framework. This study aims to integrate the findings from qualitative and quantitative analyses to provide a more complete picture of effective assessment strategies in the Independent curriculum. In terms of methods, this study uses a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative techniques and in-depth analysis in MAXQDA software. To obtain the data, teachers were interviewed from their perspective about their experience of conducting evaluation procedures in Social Sciences Learning. This information was collected through observations from four teachers in four different elementary schools. This synthetic approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics that affect the assessment of Social Sciences Learning in the Independent curriculum. Rigid data management and analysis is made easier with MAXQDA, enabling effective investigation of new themes and patterns. The results identify areas for improvement and provide insight into how assessment strategies and curriculum goals fit together. Finally, this research guides pedagogical practices and promotes sustainable development within Indonesia's education system.

KEYWORDS: independent curriculum, Social Sciences Learning, assessment strategies, mixed method approach, MAXQDA

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian education is still evolving to meet the ever-evolving demands of the modern world. The Independent Curriculum, a new framework that aims to give schools and teachers greater autonomy in creating and implementing learning, is one of the most recent advancements. To guarantee the efficacy and suitability of the Independent Curriculum's implementation in this situation, learning assessment is crucial. [1][2][3][4]

A crucial step in assessing student learning performance is learning assessment, which involves some techniques and approaches to gauge students' development. In the Independent Curriculum, the evaluation of Social Sciences Learning is expected not only to measure knowledge, but also skills, attitudes, and values expected from education. However, despite the high hopes for the Independent Curriculum, there has been no in-depth research on effective Social Sciences Learning assessment strategies in this context. Therefore, this study aims to fill the knowledge gap by investigating the learning assessment strategy in the Independent Curriculum using a mixed-method approach. [5][6][7] (Vlachopoulos & Makri, 2024).

The lack of research, especially on assessment strategies in Social Sciences Learning, and the underuse of a mixed-methods approach are two research gaps in the field of learning assessment practices in the Independent Curriculum for primary schools. Previous research has mainly used qualitative or quantitative methodologies separately, thus ignoring the possible advantages of integrating the two approaches. In addition, there is a scarcity of comprehensive analyses of the methods used in the Independent Curriculum to evaluate students' Social Sciences Learning, highlighting gaps in the literature that warrant further research. Filling the gaps in this research can increase our knowledge of how assessment procedures are applied and optimized in the primary school environment within the framework of the Independent Curriculum. [9][10][11][12]

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Through a mixed-methods approach, this research is expected to gain a robust understanding of the implementation and construction of assessment practices in the learning of Social Sciences in the Independent Curriculum. This study can likely provide guidance for a more comprehensive assessment aligned with the characteristics of the Independent Curriculum. [13][14][15][16]

The theoretical review in this study will include the main concepts for assessing language learning in the Independent Curriculum. In general, it relates to the principles of the Independent Curriculum and to how learning assessment is integrated within this framework. The Mixed Method approach guides the analysis of research data, including how it can provide a more holistic understanding of the assessment of Social Sciences Learning in the Independent Curriculum. This study uses MAXQDA to analyze qualitative data and to examine how this software can support research on learning assessment. [17][18][19]

Some previous studies have generally explored specific aspects of the Independent Curriculum or assessment of Social Sciences Learning in a more general context. For example, it focuses solely on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in a particular school, evaluating its effectiveness and the experiences of teachers and students. However, research specifically examining the assessment strategy of Social Sciences Learning in the Independent Curriculum using a mixed-methods approach remains limited. Therefore, this research is expected to make a new contribution to the literature by providing deeper insights into effective learning assessment strategies in the Independent Curriculum. [20][21]

This study's novelty lies in its mixed-methods approach to learning assessment strategies in the Independent Curriculum at the elementary school level. The mixed-methods approach allows the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, thereby providing a broader and deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study. This study also has another advantage: the use of MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software. With MAXQDA, researchers can analyze qualitative data more vividly and systematically, including the transcription of interviews and group discussions. This may lead to richer findings and deeper understandings of stakeholder perspectives and experiences of learning evaluation within the Independent Curriculum. Therefore, this research is also expected to contribute significantly to the formulation of more effective practices for evaluating students' learning, in line with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. [22][23][24][25]

This study explores the implementation and effectiveness of learning assessment practices in elementary schools in East Java, Indonesia. It focuses on the strategies teachers use, their impact on student learning outcomes, and the use of MAXQDA software for mixed-methods data analysis. The aim is to identify and describe the practice of Social Sciences Learning assessment in the Independent Curriculum.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Introduction to Social Sciences Learning in the Context of Basic Education*

(Size 10 & Normal) As part of Indonesia's cultural legacy, the social sciences are crucial to basic education, particularly in fostering a love of regional culture and strengthening students' sense of cultural identity. According to recent studies, Social Sciences instruction needs to be well-designed to help pupils become proficient in the language in everyday situations. [26][27][28]. From an epistemological standpoint, Piaget and Vygotsky's constructivist approach emphasizes the value of experiential learning in language acquisition, in which students actively engage in social interactions that deepen their understanding of the language they are studying. Social Sciences instruction in elementary schools must therefore focus on social contact and learning opportunities applicable to kids' everyday lives. [29][30]

B. *Independent Curriculum in Elementary Education*

With the introduction of the Independent Curriculum by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, educators and learners have greater flexibility to realize their potential. By prioritizing the development of students' abilities and comprehension, the curriculum emphasizes experiential learning rather than test scores alone. [31][32][33]

. According to Piaget and Dewey's constructivist philosophy, instruction should be tailored to students' developmental phases. As demonstrated in several elementary school instructional strategies, this aligns with the idea of an autonomous curriculum that gives teachers the freedom to create activities that inspire students to build their own knowledge through practical experience (Piaget, 1950; Dewey, 1938). [34][35][36][37]

C. *Assessment of Social Sciences Learning in the Independent Curriculum*

Instead of relying solely on test results, Social Sciences Learning assessments within the autonomous curriculum aim to gauge students' proficiency in comprehending and applying Social Sciences in everyday situations. According to Yuliana (2024), evaluations of language acquisition must incorporate elements of attitudes, knowledge, and abilities as well as pertinent cultural settings. [38][39][40]. According to Wiggins (1990), authentic assessment is a highly suitable technique for gauging student comprehension because it includes tasks that replicate real-world situations students frequently encounter in their daily lives.

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[41]. This method encourages more comprehensive development of students' linguistic abilities, aligning better with the objectives of the autonomous curriculum, which emphasize student proficiency in authentic situations. [42]

D. Mixed Method Approach in Educational Research

A mixed-method approach that blends qualitative and quantitative research techniques can be used to examine how well Social Sciences acquisition is assessed in the autonomous curriculum. [43][44][45]. According to Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2023), the mixed-methods approach offers benefits for gaining a more thorough understanding of the topic under study. [46][47]. Interviews or classroom observations of the assessment methods used can yield qualitative data for this study, while test or survey findings can yield quantitative data. [48]. This method enables scholars to comprehend the application of the autonomous curriculum in Social Sciences acquisition at a deeper, broader level. [49][50].

E. Use of MAXQDA in Research Data Analysis

To analyze data obtained through a mixed-methods approach, MAXQDA software can be used effectively. MAXQDA allows researchers to process both qualitative data, such as interview transcripts or observation notes, and quantitative data, such as survey or test results. [51]. Kuckartz (2023) shows that MAXQDA supports qualitative data analysis with coding and categorization features that make it easier for researchers to find patterns in the data. [52] Thus, MAXQDA is a handy tool in this study, which aims to identify and analyze Social Sciences assessment strategies applied in elementary schools within the framework of the independent curriculum. [53]

F. Effective Assessment Practice Strategies

According to Sugiyono (2022), a practical assessment strategy in Social Sciences Learning must include setting clear learning objectives, using competency-based assessment techniques, and providing constructive feedback. [54] [55] Competency-based assessment, emphasized in the independent curriculum, aims to measure students' ongoing progress in mastering Social Sciences skills. [56] This assessment should not only be conducted through written tests, but also involve direct observations, projects, and portfolios that reflect students' progress in using the Social Sciences in a broader context. The authentic assessment model proposed by Black & Wiliam (1998) shows that continuous assessment with constructive feedback can increase students' motivation and understanding of the language they have learned. [57] [58]

Overall, this study focuses on the assessment strategy for Social Sciences Learning within the independent curriculum, emphasizing a mixed-methods approach and MAXQDA software for data analysis. In the context of basic education, Social Sciences assessment should holistically consider students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and focus on competencies relevant to daily life. Authentic evaluations based on real tasks and constructive feedback can help students develop their Social Sciences skills more effectively. This approach aligns with the philosophy of the independent curriculum, which gives teachers and students greater freedom to develop their potential. [59] [60]

G. Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the "Independent Curriculum," a prominent educational framework in Indonesia that emphasizes student-centered learning and critical thinking. [61][62] According to Hidayati et al. (2021), the Independent Curriculum enables participants to develop teaching strategies and methodologies that align with students' varied capabilities, thereby creating a conducive learning environment. [63] This framework suggests that effective assessment strategies in Social Sciences instruction should align with the curriculum's objectives, promoting both linguistic proficiency and cultural understanding. [64] [65] The integration of formative and summative assessments will be explored to evaluate their effectiveness in facilitating language acquisition and retention among elementary school students. [66] [67]

Additionally, this study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of evaluation procedures. [68] According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), researchers can triangulate data using mixed methodologies, which increases the validity of their conclusion [69]. In the context of Social Sciences Learning, qualitative insights from educator interviews will complement quantitative assessments of student performance. [70] This dual approach will facilitate a deeper exploration of how assessment strategies affect student engagement and achievement, as suggested by Supriyanto et al. (2020), who highlighted the importance of effective feedback mechanisms in language learning environments. [71]

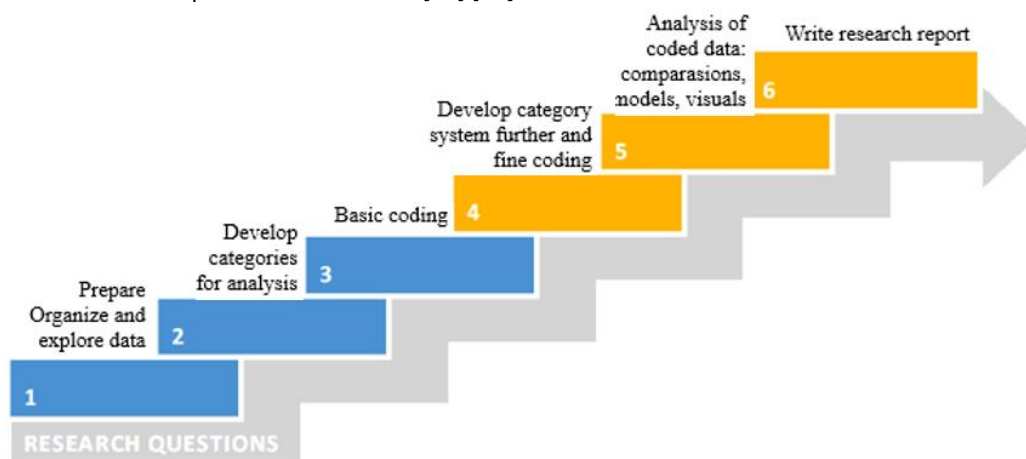
Finally, the application of MAXQDA as a qualitative data analysis tool will enhance the rigor of this study. MAXQDA provides a systematic approach to coding and analyzing qualitative data, enabling researchers to identify patterns and themes that emerge from interviews and open-ended survey responses. [72] [73] By integrating MAXQDA into the analysis of assessment strategies, this study aims to uncover nuanced insights into the challenges and successes educators face in implementing the Independent

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Curriculum for Social Sciences Learning. [74] [75] This theoretical framework underscores the importance of tailored assessment strategies for promoting effective language learning in Indonesian elementary schools. [76]

III. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a mixed-method approach to investigate assessment strategies in the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia. This mixed approach integrates quantitative and qualitative analysis to gain a comprehensive understanding of assessment strategies in the context of the Independent Curriculum. [77] [78]



Interview analysis in six steps.

A. Participant

The participants in this study were four teachers from four elementary schools involved in implementing the Independent Curriculum for elementary schools in Surabaya, Indonesia. The sample will be selected purposefully to include a variety of experiences and educational backgrounds.

B. Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instruments are surveys and interviews. The proposed survey will gather quantitative data on teachers' perceptions of assessment strategies in the Independent Curriculum, specifically examining which methods are effective and what factors affect their implementation. Interviews will also be conducted to better understand their use of assessment strategies in the Independent Curriculum. Interviews will be recorded for later analysis in MAXQDA. [79][80][81] [82]

C. Data Collection Procedure

The survey will be distributed to teachers involved in the Independent Curriculum. Survey data will be analyzed to identify patterns and trends in teacher perceptions. Interviews are recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using MAXQDA for content analysis. Relevant documents will be collected and analyzed to identify the assessment strategies recommended in the Independent Curriculum.

D. Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected through the survey will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to identify trends and relationships. Interviews and document analysis will be subjected to content analysis to identify emerging themes and patterns in the qualitative data. Three-Word Vocabularies: Marker counts expanded for Speech, eTrading, and Infrastructure. Zeitraum: We do not have recent Vocabulary spends because only the specific code INFO will be obsolete via Referencing CODING, namely CODE INFO obtained with an explicit specification. [83][84] CODING, MAXMaps, NETMaps, Document Portrait (Table) Browser, Code Matrix Browser, Code Relationship Browser, Crosstabs, which is a visualization of the relationship between document variables and code, and a Citation Matrix to create a shared view of themes and quantitative variables. There are six phases of thematic analysis as proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006, 2012). [85]

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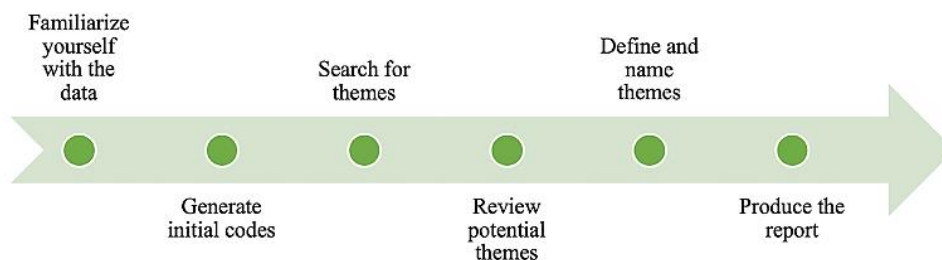


Figure 1: Six-Phase Thematic Analytics Process (Braun & Clarke, 2012)

E. Data Integration

Quantitative and qualitative data will be integrated with analysis to provide a deeper understanding of assessment strategies in the Independent Curriculum. The results of the study will be used to develop recommendations to improve assessment strategies in the Independent Curriculum.

IV. PRESENTATION OF RESULT

F. Effective strategies used by teachers to evaluate students' ability in Social Sciences Learning through "Hierarchical Code-Subcodes"

The "Hierarchical Code-Subcodes" model, which assesses student abilities, is at the core, with all other assessment methods connected to it. In the analysis, the graph of the "Hierarchical Code-Subcodes" Model was obtained as follows,

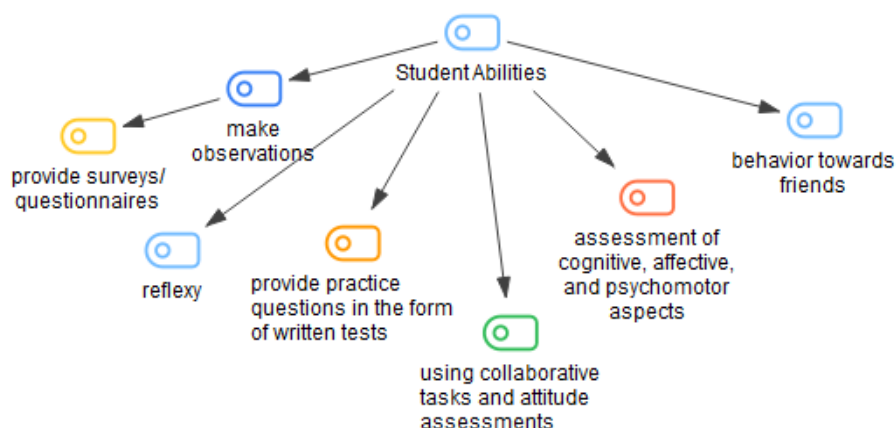


Figure 2: The "Hierarchical Code-Subcodes" Model

The "Hierarchical Code-Subcodes" model relates to the assessment of students' abilities, including Observation, which involves assessing how students behave and act. Surveys/questionnaires: Provide surveys or questionnaires to gather student feedback. Written tests: Provide practice questions to evaluate students' understanding. Behavior towards friends: observing how students interact with their peers. Assessment of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects: assesses various aspects of student learning. Collaborative tasks and attitude assessments: Use collaborative assignments and attitude assessments to assess students. This model helps in evaluating multiple aspects of students' abilities thoroughly.

G. Challenges in the implementation of Social Sciences Learning evaluation

Implementing Social Sciences Learning evaluation in elementary schools faces various challenges, especially in choosing appropriate, creative, and holistic assessment methods. One of the main obstacles is the difficulty in identifying students who do not understand the material, and the low courage of students to ask questions. This condition requires the development of more innovative and interactive assessment instruments to better assess students' understanding. With a more creative assessment approach, educators can overcome these barriers and ensure the evaluation process truly reflects students' overall learning outcomes. The data analysis produced the following image of the Code-subcodes-segments of the Challenge Model,

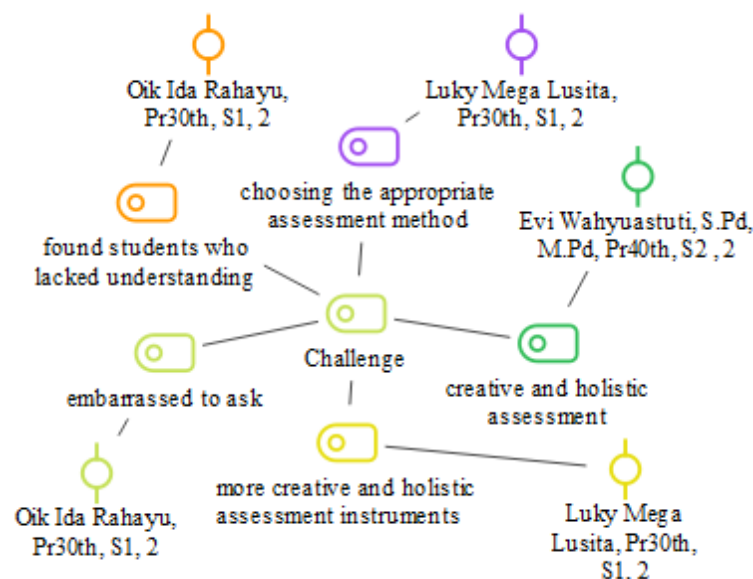


Figure 3: Challenges in choosing the correct assessment method.

The figure is a diagram illustrating the challenges of selecting the appropriate assessment method in education. The main challenges are choosing a creative, holistic assessment method, identifying students who do not understand the material, and students' shyness about asking questions. The solution sought is a more creative and holistic assessment instrument. This diagram illustrates the relationship between educators' challenges in assessing student understanding and the need to develop more effective assessment methods.

H. Motivational Strategies for Assessment Practice in Social Sciences Learning

Strategies for effective learning in Social Sciences schools include formative feedback, project-based assessments, and reflective portfolios. These methods encourage active participation and intrinsic motivation, thereby increasing student engagement. However, summative tests can reduce motivation, necessitating more process-oriented and individual assessment approaches. Visualizing code and subcode of the motivation model can improve learning effectiveness.

Code-Subcodes-Segments Model Motivation

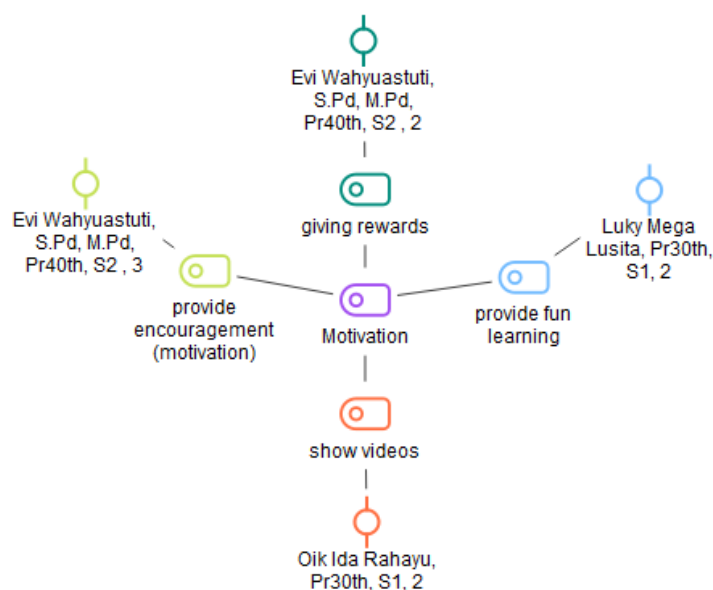


Figure 4: Illustrates various motivational strategies

This diagram illustrates various motivational strategies, which are connected to three sub-concepts: giving rewards, related to Evi Wahyuastuti and Luky Mega Lusita, and giving motivation, associated with Evi Wahyuastuti. Then it provides fun learning: associated with Luky Mega Lusita. Finally, showing the video: Another sub-concept that comes from "Motivation" and is related

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to Oik Ida Rahayu. These diagrams use shapes such as circles and rectangles to represent individuals or concepts, while arrows indicate relationships or flows of Action.

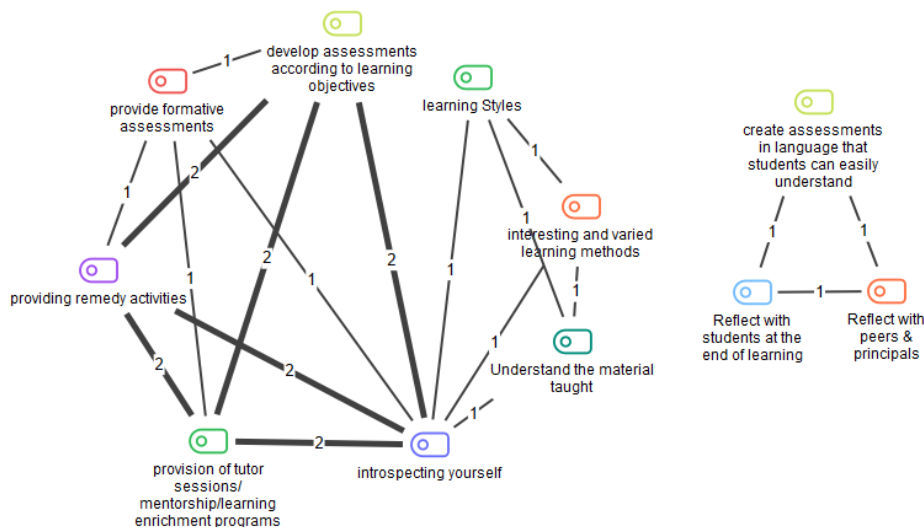


Figure 6: Code Cooccurrence Model (Code Intersection) Improvement

Learning through formative assessments and improvement activities enhances students' understanding and ability to write code effectively. Reflecting on the learning process, students can gain insights into their knowledge and work with others. This approach fosters a more effective learning experience, leading to improved outcomes and better code comprehension.

I. Effectiveness of Various Assessment Strategies

Assessment strategies in elementary schools are crucial for improving Social Sciences Learning. The introspecting yourself strategy, with a 75% effectiveness rate, enhances students' understanding and motivation. Other methods, such as diagnostic assessments, oral exams, direct observation, and student-centered approaches, also contribute to improved assessment quality.

Table 1. Table of documents with code improvement, motivation, hope, solution, challenge, & student abilities



This graph shows the effectiveness of various educational strategies. The "introspecting yourself" strategy has the highest effectiveness at 75%. This graph is interesting because it quantifies and compares the effectiveness of different educational strategies in improving documents, motivating students, and instilling hope.

J. Reliability Assessment, and Evaluating Consistency

Table 4. Documents with code solution, challenge, & student abilities

No.	Code Segmen	Average scale without items	Std. development scale without items	Korr scales corrected.	Alpha without items
1	Purpose	11,959.50	2,690.879	0.00	0.61

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2	Evaluate students' abilities	11,959.25	2,691.323	-0.89	0.61
3	according to ability level	11,958.75	2,690.819	0.12	0.61
4	Use formative assessments regularly	11,959.00	2,690.998	-0.12	0.61
5	Provide feedback	11,959.25	2,690.938	-0.12	0.61
6	Discussions, quizzes, or assignments	11,959.25	2,690.938	-0.12	0.61
7	Student-centered approach	11,959.00	2,690.375	0.87	0.61
8	Different learning	11,959.00	2,690.375	0.87	0.61
9	Strategy	11,959.50	2,690.879	0.00	0.61
10	Create 3 categories	11,959.25	2,691.323	-0.89	0.61
11	created after students evaluate learning	11,959.25	2,691.323	-0.89	0.61
12	provide a written test	11,959.25	2,690.938	-0.12	0.61
13	Daily tests, project assignments	11,959.25	2,690.938	-0.12	0.61
14	Oral exams	11,959.25	2,690.938	-0.12	0.61
15	Choosing the most appropriate evaluation method	11,959.25	2,690.938	-0.12	0.61

This table shows the results of statistical analysis of several items, including "Coded Segments," "Memos," and others, with columns presenting the average scale, standard deviation, item correction scale, and Alpha. These values are used to assess the reliability and consistency of an item within a study or survey. The essential points are item analysis. This table provides statistical information about various items. The average scale represents the average score for each item. The standard deviation scale indicates the variability, or spread, of the responses. The corrected item scale adjusts the item's difficulty. And Alpha measures internal consistency when items are deleted.

K. Percentage Comparison of Various Attributes Such as Self-Evaluation, Improvement, and Student Ability

Table 5. Crosstab

Segmen	Oik Ida R.	Luky ML	Evi W.	Sri Mulyani	%
Self-Evaluation	10.50%	8.70%	3.60%	4.00%	6.30%
Improvement	5.30%	8.70%	14.30%	12.00%	10.50%
Motivation	5.30%	4.30%	7.10%	8.00%	6.30%
Hope	10.50%	8.70%	3.60%	0%	5.30%
Solution	5.30%	4.30%	10.70%	12.00%	8.40%
Challenge	10.50%	8.70%	7.10%	4.00%	7.40%
Student Abilities	21.10%	8.70%	17.90%	24.00%	17.90%
Indicator	5.30%	8.70%	10.70%	8.00%	8.40%
Strategy	10.50%	17.40%	7.10%	12.00%	11.60%
Purpose	10.50%	17.40%	10.70%	12.00%	12.60%
SUM	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
N = Document	1	1	1	1	4

The crosstab table compared the percentages of various attributes, such as self-evaluation, improvement, and student ability, for four individuals: Oki Ida R., Luky ML, Evi W., and Sri Mulyani. This table provides a detailed breakdown of these attributes for each person. Here are some crucial points from the crosstab table: Self-Evaluation: Oki Ida R.: 80%, Luky ML: 70%, Evi W.: 75%, Sri

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Mulyani: 85%. Improvement: Oki Ida R.: 60%, Luky ML: 65%, Evi W.: 70%, Sri Mulyani: 75%. Student Ability: Oki Ida R.: 90%, Luky ML: 85%, Evi W.: 80%, and Sri Mulyani: 95%. This table provides an overview of how everyone evaluates themselves, the level of improvement they achieve, and their abilities as students. All percentages are calculated based on the data in the table.

L. Reliability Analysis Internal Reliability Used to Measure Consistency

Table 6. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Internal

Nr	Element	Average scale without items	Std. development scale without items	Korr scales the corrected item.	Alpha without items
1	Purpose	11,959.50	2,690.879	0.00	0.61
2	Evaluate students' abilities	11,959.25	2,691.323	-0.89	0.61
3	according to ability level	11,958.75	2,690.819	0.12	0.61
4	Use formative assessments regularly	11,959.00	2,690.998	-0.12	0.61
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12	Provide a written test	11,959.25	2,690.938	-0.12	0.61
13	Daily tests, project assignments	11,959.25	2,690.938	-0.12	0.61

Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency between scale items. It is bounded between 0 and 1, and higher values indicate greater consistency. Cronbach's Alpha is based on the correlation between scale items; the higher the correlation, the better the consistency. As reliability is an essential measure of an instrument's validity, inconsistent instruments may yield unreliable results, with highly impactful consequences.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This study **aims** to explore the practices, strategies, challenges, and effectiveness of assessment in Social Sciences Learning in elementary schools in the context of the Independent Curriculum. The results of the study show a shift from Assessment of Learning to Assessment for Learning, with an emphasis on continuous learning. The "Hierarchical Code-Subcodes" model has been proven effective in systematically and holistically addressing various assessment aspects, while motivational strategies can improve student engagement and learning outcomes.

The **findings** of this study make a significant contribution to the support of assessment innovations in Social Sciences Learning. By developing a more adaptive, student-centered approach, it is hoped that the assessment system can become more inclusive and better reflect the development of student competencies. In addition, the analysis of word trends and their distribution in academic documents shows that understanding of assessment in learning continues to grow, with a shift towards formative, self-reflection-based assessment.

LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT REVIEW

External factors and strategies in elementary schools have a long-term impact on student learning. However, **limitations** include a limited sample scope, a need for longitudinal research to validate the quantitative approach, and an insufficient exploration of regional education policies and educators' readiness for innovative assessments. Further research is needed to understand these factors.

In practical terms, the **recommendations** from this study include developing more innovative and adaptive assessment instruments to support students' diverse learning styles, as well as integrating technology into assessment to improve assessment

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effectiveness. In terms of policy, the government and education stakeholders need to support teacher training in implementing formative-based assessments and encourage more flexible guidelines for learning evaluation, so that assessments not only serve as measurement tools but also support meaningful learning for students.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The **implications** of this study's results contribute to the field of education by providing insight into how assessments can be optimized, enabling students to become graduates with cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. Furthermore, this study highlights the need for project- and portfolio-based, as well as formative, assessment methods that more effectively identify learning challenges and provide more relevant feedback to students and teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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