Jurnal Inovasi Teknologi Pendidikan
Volume 12, No. 1, March 2025 (1-11)
Online: http://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/jitp

ICT-based social science learning management with Nearpod application in primary education

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History
Received:
15 January 2024;
Revised:
3 December 2024;
Accepted:
20 December 2024;
Available online:
31 March 2025.

Keywords
ICT; Nearpod application; Social science learning

ABSTRACT

The integration of technology into education enhances learning experiences, one of which is through the use of Nearpod. The objectives of this study are to (1) describe ICT-based social science learning management through the use of the Nearpod application in primary education and (2) describe the participation of primary education students in social science learning and their responses to the use of the Nearpod application. This qualitative research involved a social sciences teacher and seventh-grade students at YSKI Christian Middle School Semarang. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation and validated using triangulation techniques. The findings reveal that Nearpod-based learning management includes careful planning with lesson plans and interactive activities, implementation through apperception, interactive videos, and PowerPoint slides, and evaluation using game features like Matching Pairs and Time to Climb. Students responded positively, highlighting Nearpod's ease of use, engaging activities, and real-time feedback, though some faced time constraints. This study contributes to the utilization of Nearpod in ICT-based social studies learning, increasing student engagement, and providing insight into the effectiveness of Learning Management Systems (LMS) in elementary education in Indonesia. Further research is recommended to explore Nearpod's effectiveness across subjects and educational levels to enhance teaching methods and student engagement.

How to cite:
Paais, R. L., Setyawati S. T., & Iriani, Ade. (2025). ICT-based social science learning management with Nearpod application in primary education. *Jurnal Inovasi Teknologi Pendidikan, 12*(1), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.21831/jitp.v12i1.70715

INTRODUCTION

Social sciences is a field of science that studies the interaction between individuals and individuals, individuals and groups, and groups and groups (Rofiq et al., 2020). This relationship is based on the nature of humans, who cannot live without other people because they are social creatures. The abilities that students are expected to achieve in social science learning are being able to think wisely by considering various problems and social dimensions that occur in life through the development of 4C, which includes communication, collaboration, critical thinking and problem-solving, and creative and innovative (Tiwan & Ningsih, 2022).

Conceptual and contextual integration in social science learning needs to be a special study material for teachers to create learning conditions for students. This is because the study aspects of

social studies subjects include humans, the environment, social systems, culture, economics, and welfare (Rofiq et al., 2020). So, teachers must be able to direct students' thinking with direct experience in the surrounding environment.

The main problem that is often encountered in social science learning is that students often feel bored because the teachers who teach tend to apply traditional teaching models, such as lectures that seem monotonous (Hopeman et al., 2022; Sari & Hasanah, 2019). According to Nafisah & Ghofur (2020), social science subjects are predominantly descriptive, narrative, and conceptual, which demands teachers rely heavily on lecture methods, requiring students to listen, memorize, and recall the material. This approach often leads students to perceive social science as a dull subject. Teachers frequently focus on concepts from textbooks without relating them to real-life applications. In fact, with advances in science and technology and changes in educational paradigms, teachers should be able to adopt more varied approaches to utilize technology and create a real atmosphere and experience in learning.

One way teachers can address this problem is by developing ICT-based learning, which is considered an innovative tool to enrich learning experiences, increase student engagement, and facilitate more interactive learning. Creswell (1998) explains that ICT-based learning involves the use of computers or similar devices to present material, allowing students to actively participate and respond to all activities. Similarly, Dewi & Hilman (2018) highlight that ICT-based learning sources and media include computers, PCs, LCDs, the internet, PowerPoint presentations, and other software. Moreover, Achmad & Mulyati (2023) emphasize that the proper use of ICT can help develop the digital competencies students need to face the challenges of the digital era.

In integrating ICT into learning, one essential application is the Learning Management System (LMS), a technology-based platform designed to manage, deliver, and facilitate the learning process. According to Gunawan et al., (2024), LMS serves as a tool that enables effective interaction between educators and students within a digital learning environment. Bradley (2021) highlights that LMS provides an inclusive online classroom, supporting academic progress through collaborative groupings, professional training, discussions, and seamless communication among users. Additionally, the flexibility of LMS allows users to access it anytime and anywhere via various devices such as PCs, tablets, or smartphones (Fitriani, 2020). With these features, LMS effectively helps teachers manage learning more efficiently and enhances the overall educational experience.

One type of LMS that can be used for learning is Nearpod, a cloud-based application that can be accessed using a computer, PC, mobile phone, or other smart device and can be used synchronously or asynchronously (Amelia et al., 2024; Oktafiani & Mujazi, 2022). Nearpod is a web-based educational application designed to strengthen teaching by creating interactive spaces and lessons enriched with videos, images, audio, and even virtual reality experiences to deepen learning (Carrillo-Yalán et al., 2023; Hakami, 2020). It is a versatile platform that facilitates and controls interactivities during learning sessions and can be seamlessly integrated with video conferencing tools to effectively engage students in synchronous online classrooms (Nabilah, 2024; Vinolo-Gil et al., 2022). Easily accessible via smartphones or laptops through the Play Store or Google search, Nearpod can also be accessed for free at https://nearpod.com/ (Anggoro et al., 2022; Burton, 2019).

Nearpod is a cloud-based learning application that provides various interactive features to help teachers create engaging and effective learning experiences. Burton (2019) explains that teachers must first register to access these features, such as designing their presentation slides or uploading existing PowerPoint files using a drag-and-drop tool. In the Add Content section, teachers can utilize diverse interactive elements, such as rotating 3D images through the Nearpod 3D feature, building simulations with the PHET Simulation feature, creating graphs with the Graphing Calculator, and incorporating panoramic images using the Field Trip feature. Additional tools include BBC videos, Sway, a PDF Viewer, and live-streaming capabilities. The Add Web Content feature enables teachers to add URLs relevant to the lesson material, immersing students in a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Similarly, the Add Activity section supports interactive tasks like quizzes, matching pairs, drawing exercises, fill-in-the-blank activities, and memory tests, with customizable time limits for each activity (Pramesti et al., 2023).

Nearpod offers flexibility for synchronous or asynchronous learning, depending on the teacher's preference. Teachers can provide an access code for students to join sessions via their devices after registering as participants. At the end of the session, student activity reports are automatically generated and can be sent via email in PDF format. According to Měkota & Marada (2020) and Pupah & Sholihah (2022), there are four fundamental steps to using Nearpod: first, downloading and creating interactive multimedia presentations by integrating tasks such as quizzes, polls, or open-ended questions. Second, sharing the presentation with students and controlling the flow of learning through live participation, where students can only view the slide shown by the teacher. Third, the material should be presented engagingly to promote interaction. Finally, monitoring and assessing students' work is efficient since the results are automatically recorded. With its wide array of features, Nearpod not only simplifies the teaching process but also fosters active student engagement (Burton, 2019; Měkota & Marada, 2020).

The use of the Nearpod application in education can have a positive impact on the quality of learning and students' development. Research conducted by Oktafiani & Mujazi (2022) reveals that the use of the Nearpod learning platform has a positive and significant effect on students' learning motivation. This study also demonstrates that the implementation of Nearpod can enhance both students' motivation and their overall learning outcomes (Oktaviani & Nurhamidah, 2023). Moreover, research by (2024) shows that Nearpod significantly impacts students' critical thinking skills and academic performance. Thus, the use of the Nearpod application has been proven to effectively help students foster their motivation, achieve better learning outcomes, and develop critical thinking skills more effectively.

Based on the results of an interview with a social studies teacher at YSKI Semarang Christian Middle School, he revealed that in the era of revolution 4.0, it is very important for a teacher to integrate the use of ICT in learning. By looking at the phenomenon of all students in their schools who are very comfortable using mobile phones at every opportunity, this needs to be directed to use in learning as a positive effort in building students' digital literacy skills, which are very necessary in this era. Regarding the use of the Nearpod application, he admitted that he had only used it for a few months on his initiative because he was motivated to provide meaningful learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially, he studied autodidactically via YouTube and then deepened his knowledge by attending various webinars. He also said that he would continue to use the Nearpod application even though there is a face-to-face policy because this application is very helpful in presenting interesting learning, fostering student enthusiasm and activeness, and maximizing the usefulness of mobile phones to be more positive.

Currently, the Nearpod application is not yet widely popular in Indonesia's education sector compared to other LMS platforms, particularly in social science learning. Therefore, this research was developed to provide information regarding the use of the Nearpod application through social science learning at YSKI Semarang Christian Middle School, a school that has used it. So, the objectives of this research are: (1) to describe ICT-based social science learning management through the use of the Nearpod application in primary education and (2) to describe the participation of primary education students in social science learning and their responses to the use of the Nearpod application. This study contributes to the utilization of Nearpod in ICT-based social studies learning, increasing student engagement, and providing insight into the effectiveness of LMS in elementary education in Indonesia. Moving forward, it is recommended that broader research be conducted to explore the effectiveness of Nearpod across various subjects and educational levels, as well as to promote its integration into Indonesian classrooms to enhance learning experiences and outcomes. It is also recommended that teachers, particularly in the social studies field, consider experimenting with the Nearpod application to enrich their teaching methods and engage students more effectively.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. According to Sugiyono (2017), the descriptive method used in research functions to describe and explain the state of the

object being studied, as it is based on the conditions and situations in which the research process was carried out. This research was carried out in online learning using the Nearpod application synchronously and also integrated via Zoom cloud meetings in social studies learning at YSKI Christian Middle School Semarang, located at Jl. East Sidodadi No. 23, Karangtempel, East Semarang, Semarang City, Central Java, Indonesia. The subjects of the study are one social studies teacher and 32 students from class VII C at YSKI Christian Middle School in Semarang.

Data collection techniques use observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out to listen to and see social studies learning activities carried out by teachers and students. Interviews were conducted with teachers and several students to find out their responses to implementing and using the Nearpod application in learning. Also, documentation is carried out to collect data in the form of pictures and writings related to the learning preparations that have been carried out by the teacher during the learning process. Test the validity of the data using technical triangulation and source triangulation. Data analysis techniques are carried out using data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. At the data reduction stage, researchers carry out sorting to produce relevant data. At the data presentation stage, the researcher presents the data from the findings and communicates them with the results of relevant previous research. Meanwhile, at the data verification stage, the researcher draws conclusions based on the data presented.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Social Sciences Learning Management by Implementing the Nearpod Application

This study uses a qualitative approach with interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis to explore data on the management of social science learning using the Nearpod application. The findings of this study are described based on three main aspects: planning, implementation, and evaluation of the learning process applied by the teacher.

Planning Stage

At the planning stage, the results of the interview with the teacher revealed that the teacher carefully prepared the lesson plan, integrating the use of the Nearpod application. The teacher stated that Nearpod enabled them to provide interactive learning materials that aligned with curriculum demands. In the interview, the teacher said, "*I can design more engaging and varied lessons with Nearpod, such as adding interactive videos and live quizzes*." As part of the preparation, the teacher also ensured that each student had two devices: a phone to access Nearpod and a laptop to attend the Zoom session.

Documentation collected during the planning stage includes the lesson plan (RPP), which shows the learning objectives aligned with the features in Nearpod, such as interactive videos and game-based evaluations. Additionally, the teacher prepared the Zoom link, which was shared via a WhatsApp group to facilitate the virtual meeting, and this was recorded in the documentation as part of the communication preparation.

Implementation Stage

At the implementation stage, classroom observations indicated that the teacher effectively managed the learning process using Nearpod. The teacher began the lesson with apperception, displaying images related to the topic of "Human Needs" (see Figure 1) and asked students questions via Zoom. Observations showed that students were very active in answering the questions posed by the teacher. In the interview, the teacher explained, "*I try to make the apperception interesting so that students are more focused on the material to be taught*." During the learning activity via Zoom, there was noticeable active interaction between the teacher and students at this stage.

Figure 1. Apperception Display

Next, the teacher used an interactive video presented through Nearpod to explain the "Different Types of Human Needs" (see Figure 2). This video was accompanied by questions that students had to answer directly. Observations revealed that students were very enthusiastic about following the video and responded well to the questions. The teacher explained, "*With the interactive video, I can see how well the students understand the material*."

Figure 2. Interactive Video Display

Additionally, the teacher used PowerPoint slides in Nearpod to continue explaining human activities in meeting needs (see Figure 3). During this process, students continued to participate in discussions and answered the teacher's questions, demonstrating high levels of engagement.

Figure 3. PowerPoint Slide Show

Evaluation Stage

At the evaluation stage, the teacher used game features available in Nearpod, such as "Matching Pairs" and "Time to Climb," to assess students' understanding of the material taught (see Figure 4). Observations indicated that students enjoyed the game-based evaluation, which made them more excited to participate. The teacher stated in the interview, "*This game-based evaluation makes the students more enthusiastic because they feel like they are playing, even though they are learning*."

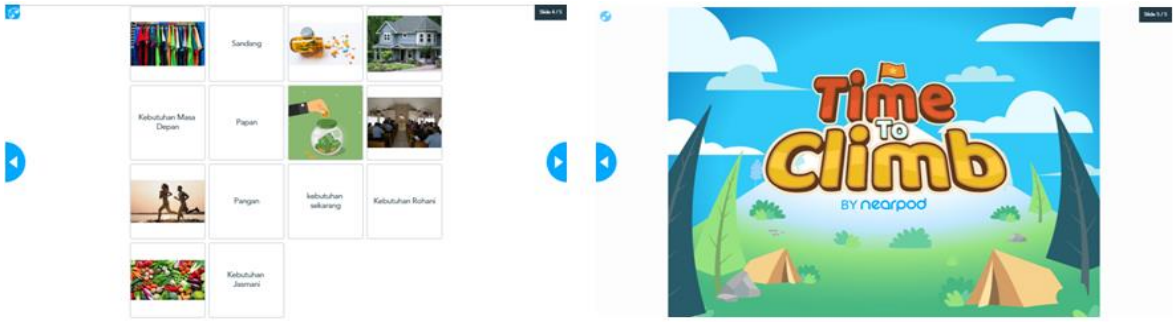

Figure 4. Game Matching Pairs and Time to Climb Display

Documentation of the evaluation results, taken directly from Nearpod report features, showed that the teacher could easily view students' work in a clear and structured format. These reports made it easier for the teacher to assess students' understanding immediately after each evaluation activity, allowing the teacher to follow up promptly if needed. The display of evaluation results through matching pairs and time-to-climb game activities is presented in Figure 5.

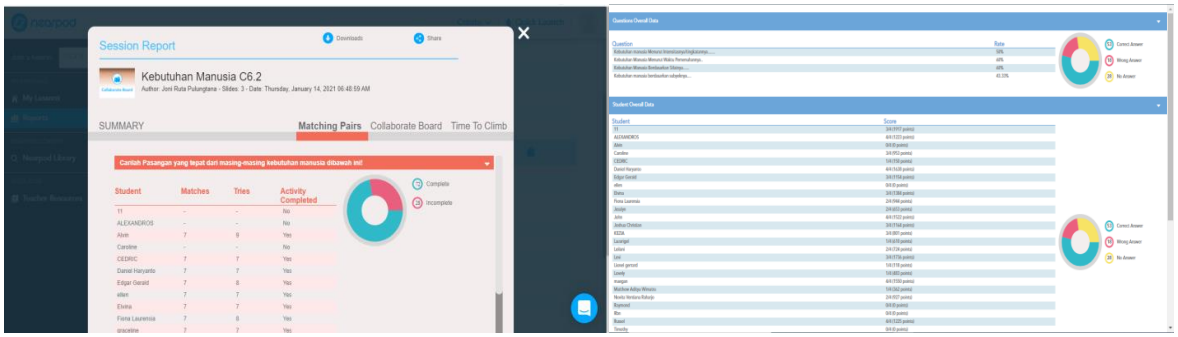

Figure 5. The Results of Matching Pairs and Time to Climb Game Display

Student Participation and Response to Social Science Learning using the Nearpod Application

The classroom observation results show that the student participation rate in each activity is 78% for those who answered and 22% for those who skipped (see Figure 6). The 22% who skipped the activity did not mean they were not involved; most likely, they ran out of time to complete the tasks. Since activities in Nearpod are time-limited, students need to manage their time well to avoid missing tasks. The reports generated by the Nearpod application provide detailed data on student participation, offering insights into both individual and collective engagement in the learning process.

Figure 6. Student Participation Display

The results of interviews with seventh-grade students from YSKI Christian Middle School Semarang revealed a positive response to the use of Nearpod. The students felt happy and motivated because the application is easy to use and presents fun, interactive activities. "*Learning*

with Nearpod is more interesting and helps me understand the material better," said one student. The students also felt more engaged because they could interact directly with the questions and videos provided.

The flexibility of the Nearpod application also received positive feedback. "*I feel freer to learn in a fun way, with videos and questions that make it more engaging*," said another student. However, some students complained about unstable Internet connections, which could disrupt their participation in activities. "*If the connection is bad, I miss some activities*," added one student. Despite the challenges related to internet connection, the students felt that using Nearpod increased their learning motivation. The interactive nature of the learning, along with immediate feedback, was seen as more engaging compared to traditional learning methods.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that implementing the Nearpod application in the management of Social Science learning significantly transforms the learning process into a more interactive and participatory experience. At the planning stage, the teacher meticulously prepared the lesson plans, integrating Nearpod features such as interactive videos, quizzes, and educational games. This aligns with Aulia & Baalwi (2022), who stated that Nearpod helps teachers design engaging and easy-to-understand learning materials. Additionally, thorough preparation, including ensuring device readiness and communication tools like WhatsApp for Zoom meetings, highlights the importance of classroom management skills in successfully initiating learning (Oktafiani & Mujazi, 2022).

The implementation stage demonstrates a more dynamic and engaging learning environment facilitated by Nearpod's interactive features. Activities such as video presentations, live quizzes, and discussions actively involved students and enhanced their focus on the material. McClean & Crowe (2017) explain that Nearpod provides a more dynamic and collaborative learning experience compared to conventional methods, where students are encouraged to interact more actively with the content. The accessibility of Nearpod across various devices, including smartphones, tablets, and laptops, further supports student participation and engagement (Feri & Zulherman, 2021; McClean & Crowe, 2017). This active involvement also reflects Nearpod's effectiveness in fostering student motivation (Měkota & Marada, 2020) and promoting interactive discussions.

During the evaluation stage, the teacher utilized game-based features like Matching Pairs and Time to Climb, creating an enjoyable and less monotonous assessment process. This is consistent with Halnanelis & Ulyanti (2023), who confirmed that Nearpod significantly increases student motivation, while Banjarnahor & Tarigan (2023) emphasized its effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes. Moreover, Nearpod's ability to generate real-time structured reports allows teachers to monitor students' understanding and provide immediate feedback, enhancing the overall learning process (Burton, 2019; Mastura et al., 2023).

From the students' perspective, learning with Nearpod was seen as more engaging and motivating, offering a fun and well-structured learning experience. Ahmed & Elmubark (2022) highlighted that Nearpod promotes better interaction between students and teachers, encourages collaboration, and enhances student performance. Features such as interactive videos and quizzes not only support content comprehension but also develop students' critical and creative thinking skills (Siswati et al., 2023; Wulandari et al., 2023). Students also expressed a sense of freedom to learn in an enjoyable atmosphere, as the application provides a more organized and engaging learning process (Afif & Zulherman, 2022; Naumoska et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, challenges such as unstable internet connections remain a limitation in the use of Nearpod. Despite this, the benefits of Nearpod significantly outweigh the drawbacks. Putri & Amini (2023) emphasized that the application effectively facilitates interactive reinforcement between teachers and students, offering a more meaningful learning experience compared to traditional methods. Thus, Nearpod serves not only as a solution to enhance student participation but also as a tool to support innovative, adaptive, and engaging teaching in the digital era (Sarginson & McPherson, 2021; Syahrir et al., 2023)

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CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, several conclusions can be drawn: (1) Social science lessons using the Nearpod application at YSKI Christian Middle School in Semarang were conducted synchronously, allowing the teacher to directly control the slides and manage learning activities. Students used two devices: mobile phones for managing the Nearpod application and laptops for virtual meetings via Zoom, enabling the teacher to oversee the learning process more effectively. The learning management process began with the teacher preparing the lesson plan and slides and designing various activities in the Nearpod application. The implementation phase started with apperception using the image feature, followed by material presentation through interactive videos and PowerPoint slides, and evaluation using the 'Matching Pairs' and 'Time to Climb' game features. (2) Nearpod can provide reports on student participation. The participation rate of YSKI Salatiga Christian Middle School students in each activity, according to Nearpod data, was 78% for responses and 22% for skipped activities. The missed percentage was due to students running out of time to complete each task. The students' response to using Nearpod was positive; they felt happy, motivated, and enthusiastic about learning, as Nearpod is easy to use, offers a variety of interesting and interactive activities, and provides immediate feedback. However, it is important to ensure a stable internet connection to support the effective use of the application. Looking ahead, it is recommended that broader research be conducted to assess the effectiveness of Nearpod across various subjects and educational levels and to promote its integration into Indonesian classrooms to enhance learning experiences and outcomes. Additionally, it is suggested that teachers, particularly those in the social studies field, consider experimenting with the Nearpod application to enrich their teaching methods and engage students more effectively.

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