



The Use of Instructional Media in Social Studies Classes in Elementary Schools: A Literature Review

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Article history: Received: February 28, 2026 Received in revised form: April 29, 2026 Accepted: May 4, 2026 Available online: July 30, 2026 Keywords: Instructional media Social studies Elementary school Literature review Published by PT. Sahabat Cendekia Indonesia in Collaboration with the Center for Scientific Publications and Rankings Universitas Islam Negeri Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, Indonesia.	<i>Background:</i> Social studies (IPS) instruction in elementary schools is still dominated by lecture-based methods and conventional media, while the implementation of innovative learning media remains uneven because of teachers' limited understanding and inadequate technological infrastructure. <i>Aims:</i> This study analyzes the use of instructional media in IPS classes in elementary schools, focusing on the types of media used, their effectiveness in learning activities, and the advantages and challenges of their implementation. <i>Methods:</i> A qualitative approach with a literature review design was employed. Data were drawn from 20 SINTA 1–4 accredited scientific articles published within the last five years and obtained from Google Scholar. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and content analysis. <i>Results:</i> The use of learning media in IPS at the elementary school level has developed alongside technological advances, particularly technology-based media. The media used include audio-visual, interactive digital, game-based, and concrete media, which have been shown to enhance student motivation and learning outcomes. Media effectiveness is determined not only by its type but also by its ability to facilitate meaningful interaction between students and the subject matter. Implementation is still hindered by limited school facilities and teachers' digital competencies. <i>Conclusions:</i> The selection of media must be tailored to student characteristics, learning objectives, and school conditions, and supported by adequate teacher training so that IPS instruction can proceed optimally.
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1. Introduction

Social studies instruction in elementary schools remains dominated by lecture-based methods and the use of conventional media that lack variety. This situation leads students to become passive, easily bored, and unmotivated during the learning process, which ultimately results in low academic achievement (Anggraeni et al., 2023). On the other hand, although various innovative learning media have been developed, their implementation in the field

remains uneven due to teachers' limited understanding and inadequate technological infrastructure in many schools (Heryani et al., 2022).

This research is important because there is still a lack of studies that systematically summarize and analyze various types of social studies learning media and their effectiveness at the elementary school level. By reviewing existing research, this literature review is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of trends in the use of social studies learning media, while also identifying research gaps that require further investigation (Widiastuti et al., 2024). The results of this study are expected to be useful for teachers as a basis for selecting appropriate media, as well as for future researchers as a foundation for developing research that is more contextual and relevant to current social studies learning needs.

Recent research findings reveal that digital learning tools such as educational videos, animations, interactive quizzes, and app based platforms can enhance students' motivation, active participation, and conceptual understanding in social studies classes (Azizah et al., 2026). In addition, interactive tools such as PowerPoint, Wordwall, and Articulate Storyline have proven effective in creating a more engaging and enjoyable learning environment, thereby improving student learning outcomes.

In addition to digital media, other studies have also highlighted the importance of using concrete and visual media such as dioramas, maps, and digital comics in social studies instruction in elementary schools. These media have been shown to enhance student engagement, particularly in lower grades where students still require hands-on and contextual learning experiences (Irwan & Kamarudin, 2021). The use of instructional media in social studies in elementary schools today is moving toward the integration of digital technology, interactivity, and contextualization of content. Although this has a significant positive impact on student motivation and learning outcomes, its implementation still requires improvement in terms of resource readiness and teacher competence.

1.1 Instructional media in the Merdeka Curriculum era

Current developments in education indicate that the use of learning media in social studies classes in elementary schools is undergoing a significant transformation, particularly with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes contextual, flexible, and student centered learning. According to Safran (2022) there is a gap between the demands of the Merdeka Curriculum which emphasizes digital competencies and learning practices in elementary schools, which are still dominated by conventional methods. Although learning media have been positioned as a key component in concretizing abstract social studies concepts, in reality, social studies instruction often remains trapped in a static, rote-learning approach. This situation means that the potential of learning media has not been optimally utilized in developing students' critical thinking skills and social empathy. Furthermore, interactive media such as PowerPoint, Wordwall, and Articulate Storyline have proven capable of creating a more engaging and enjoyable learning environment, thereby leading to improved student learning outcomes.

1.2 Constructivism and Cognitive Development in Social Studies

To fully comprehend the urgency of instructional media in Social Studies, it is essential to ground the discussion in constructivist learning theories, notably those pioneered by Piaget (1972) and Vygotsky (1978). Elementary school students, typically ranging from 7 to 12 years of age, fall squarely into Piaget's 'concrete operational stage' of cognitive development. During this phase, learners struggle with purely abstract reasoning and require tangible, visually stimulating, and interactive models to process complex information (Widiastuti et al., 2024). Social Studies inherently deals with abstract constructs—such as historical timelines, cultural diversity, civic responsibility, and macroeconomic principles. Without appropriate instructional media, these subjects remain disconnected from the students' lived realities. By utilizing interactive and visual media, educators effectively bridge the cognitive gap, transforming abstract social concepts into concrete, digestible phenomena that students can explore and internalize. This scaffolding process aligns with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), wherein digital and concrete media act as the 'more knowledgeable other' that guides students toward higher-order thinking (Rigopouli et al., 2025).

1.3 The Demands of 21st-Century Learning and Global Citizenship

Furthermore, the global transition towards 21st-century education demands a fundamental paradigm shift in teaching Social Studies. The contemporary educational landscape, deeply influenced by global frameworks such as UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development, requires students to develop critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (the 4Cs) (González-Salamanca et al., 2020). Within the Indonesian context, the Merdeka Curriculum explicitly demands the cultivation of these skills through 'Profil Pelajar Pancasila' (Pancasila Student Profile). Integrating technology and diverse instructional media in Social Studies is no longer merely an administrative enhancement but a pedagogical imperative. It equips students with digital literacy while fostering global citizenship. When students interact with digital maps, virtual cultural exhibitions, or socioeconomic simulations, they are not just passively receiving information; they are actively participating in simulated civic environments. This active participation builds social empathy and prepares them to navigate a rapidly globalizing world (Herrera et al., 2018).

1.4 Research objectives

It is important for educators to understand the media required in the learning process; the use of media in the learning process can assist teachers in delivering instructional content to students. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the use of media in Social Studies (IPS) classes in elementary schools through a literature review. In simpler terms, this study will examine and analyze the types of learning media used in Social Studies (IPS) lessons, the role and effectiveness of learning media in the learning process, and outline the advantages and disadvantages of using learning media in Social Studies (IPS) lessons based on previous research. Undoubtedly, the results of this study can provide information and serve as a reference for educators in selecting learning media to be used in the learning process, particularly in Social Studies (IPS) classes.

2. Methods

2.1 Research design

In this study, a qualitative approach was employed using a literature review methodology. Through this literature review, the study will examine, describe, and analyze the use of instructional media in Social Studies (IPS) lessons developed in accordance with the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2022). This is in line with what Creswell (2022) stated, namely that a literature review is a series of research activities related to library data collection methods, followed by reading, noting, and processing research materials.

2.2 Research procedures

Scientific writings such as articles, journals, books, and previous research findings on the use of instructional media in Social Studies (IPS) are the data sources used in this study. Through a literature review by searching for various sources and references from Sinta 1–4 accredited journals on Google Scholar using the keywords “Use of Instructional Media,” “Social Studies (IPS),” and “Elementary School,” and ensuring that the articles were published within the last 5 years to ensure the relevance of the topics to the research objectives, a total of 20 articles were collected between March and April (Chigbu et al., 2023).

2.3 Data collection

To facilitate the researcher in recording and grouping data from various references, the researcher used a research instrument in the form of a literature analysis and created a tabulation column for the articles.

2.4 Data analysis

In conducting research, data analysis is one of the most critical stages, as it determines how the collected data can be processed into understandable information and references. A systematic process carried out in analyzing data will help researchers identify key insights contained within the specified references and sources. Therefore, researchers must possess strong data analysis skills to ensure the interpreted data is reliable and accountable. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching for and organizing data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials into a form that is easy to understand (Hamzah, 2020).

The analysis process carried out by researchers includes the following stages: 1) Data Reduction; the first step is to reduce the data. This step is necessary to avoid disorganized data by summarizing, identifying key points, focusing on important aspects, understanding the themes, and removing unnecessary data. This process provides a clear overview and facilitates further data collection. 2) Data Presentation: The second step is to present the data. This stage makes it easier to understand the results of the research that has been conducted. 3) Content Analysis: The third step is to analyze the collected data. In conducting data analysis, the researcher analyzes the content specifically, the methods used to collect data and the analysis

of a text's content. This text can include words, meanings, images, symbols, ideas, themes, research findings, and any form of information that can be communicated.

3. Result and Discussion

In school learning activities, media serves as a tool used by teachers to deliver instructional content in a way that captures students' attention. Moreover, the use of media can create a pleasant learning environment and make the material more engaging. Extensive learning material can cause students to lose focus and become bored; therefore, a tool is needed to make the material more engaging to follow. This is because the learning process is not solely centered on the teacher's explanation but requires student involvement to make the process more active. This aligns with the statement by Arsyad (2017), who notes that instructional media serves as a tool to help teachers convey educational messages, thereby stimulating students' attention, interest, thoughts, and emotions during learning activities. Instructional media can be utilized by teachers to simplify lengthy instructional content, making it more accessible and effectively capturing students' attention throughout the learning process.

Based on the data analysis process conducted using research instruments such as literature review and tabulation of articles, it appears that the use and application of educational media by teachers in the teaching process have begun to develop. However, in reality, this implementation has not yet been fully realized. Currently, there are still teachers who continue to use and rely on traditional methods without the support of technology-based learning media; on the other hand, many teachers have already adopted and utilized technology-based learning media as tools to deliver content during the learning process. This illustrates that the Social Studies (IPS) learning process is in a transitional phase toward technology-rich learning, having previously relied solely on traditional methods and existing resources without utilizing technology that could be beneficial in the learning process.

3.1 Theoretical Reinforcement: The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning

To understand the profound impact of transitioning from traditional methods to technology-rich media, we must evaluate this shift through Richard Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. Mayer posits that the human mind processes auditory and visual information through two separate channels. Traditional Social Studies instruction, which heavily relies on textual reading and teacher lectures, frequently overloads a single cognitive channel, leading to student fatigue and poor retention. By introducing interactive PowerPoint presentations, educational videos, and digital comics, teachers distribute the cognitive load across both channels. This dual-channel processing is particularly vital in Social Studies, where visual representations of historical artifacts or geographical landscapes work synergistically with audio narrations to build comprehensive mental models. Therefore, the integration of multimedia is not merely a stylistic upgrade; it is fundamentally aligned with how the human brain optimally processes and retains complex information.

Technology-based media such as interactive PowerPoint, educational videos, Canva, Google Sites, digital comics, Android-based media, and educational games are the types of media that currently dominate Social Studies (IPS) instruction, based on data collected through research

instruments and the tabulation columns in the article. Budianti et al. (2023) explain that students are able to improve their attention and learning outcomes in Social Studies (IPS) when supported by the use of Interactive PowerPoint learning media, as the material is presented in a more engaging and easier to understand manner for students. This aligns with the findings presented by Lahamado & Lukman (2025) who state that the use of Canva-based media can facilitate teachers in designing more creative learning materials, thereby enhancing students' learning motivation and increasing their engagement in the learning process. These findings indicate that teachers are now beginning to utilize technology in instructional media, making the learning process particularly in Social Studies (IPS) more creative, interactive, and enjoyable.

The analysis results show that concrete media are now widely used in elementary schools not just digital media because they align with students' characteristics. Concrete media such as dioramas, Social Studies Monopoly (Plysoc), digital picture cards, augmented reality-based flashcards, and pop-up books are among the types of media used by teachers in the Social Studies learning process. Choirunnisa & Arini (2023) states in her research that the Monopoly game in Social Studies (IPS) lessons can increase student participation and enthusiasm in the classroom learning process. Furthermore, other media such as dioramas also offer benefits in the classroom learning process. Dioramas can help students understand Social Studies (IPS) material concretely because they are able to display real images of each topic being studied (Sapitri & Guslinda, 2021).

3.2 The Impact of Gamification and Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

The integration of games like 'Social Studies Monopoly (Plysoc)' can be theoretically supported by the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) formulated by Deci and Ryan. SDT suggests that optimal human motivation occurs when three basic psychological needs are met: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Gamified instructional media directly address these needs. When students play educational board games or digital equivalents, they experience 'autonomy' through making strategic choices within the game. They build 'competence' by answering questions correctly to advance, and they foster 'relatedness' through peer collaboration and healthy competition. Consequently, gamification shifts student motivation from extrinsic (studying merely for grades) to intrinsic (learning because the process itself is inherently rewarding and enjoyable). This shift is particularly crucial in Social Studies, a subject historically stigmatized as a dry, memorization-heavy discipline. Digital learning media are indeed quite effective for use in the learning process if they are used appropriately and not misapplied. However, in real-world conditions, the use of digital media still faces several challenges. This aligns with research conducted by Sawitri et al. (2024) which states that there are still limitations in technological resources, a lack of school facilities, and low levels of teacher proficiency in using technology. These factors remain obstacles to the use of technology-based media in school settings. Technological advancements do not automatically translate to positive effects in other areas; without adequate skills and capabilities, technological progress can actually become a hindrance. Similarly, the presence of digital media in educational settings can become a hindrance if teachers lack the necessary facilities and basic skills to use technology. Currently, many teachers are still not accustomed to using digital

media, so the learning process is still facilitated by traditional and less innovative methods (Heryani et al., 2022). This situation illustrates that while technological advancements in the field of education have progressed rapidly, their implementation in school settings still requires support through training, adequate facilities, and teacher creativity to function effectively.

3.3 Addressing Teacher Competency through the TPACK Framework

The challenges highlighted by Sawitri et al. point directly to the necessity of evaluating teacher readiness through the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework. Effective integration of media in Social Studies requires more than just knowing how to operate a device (Technological Knowledge). Teachers must seamlessly blend technology with their pedagogical strategies (Pedagogical Knowledge) and their deep understanding of the Social Studies curriculum (Content Knowledge). When teachers lack TPACK proficiency, digital tools are often used superficially—for instance, using an interactive whiteboard simply as a traditional chalkboard. Comprehensive professional development is required to move educators from mere consumers of technology to designers of tech-enhanced, student-centered learning experiences.

3.4 The Socio-Economic Implications: Bridging the Digital Divide

Furthermore, the infrastructure limitations reveal an underlying socio-economic challenge known as the 'digital divide.' In many regions, particularly in rural or underfunded districts, schools lack basic necessities such as stable internet connectivity, updated hardware, and licensed software. This divide poses a significant threat to educational equity, as students in well-resourced schools gain advanced 21st-century skills, while those in marginalized areas are left behind. Addressing this gap requires systemic intervention, including equitable government funding, public-private partnerships, and the development of offline digital media (such as downloadable interactive modules or hybrid learning tools) that do not rely heavily on continuous internet access. Recognizing and mitigating this digital divide is essential to ensure that the pedagogical benefits of modern instructional media are accessible to all students universally.

Teaching materials for Social Studies have evolved alongside technological advancements and the demands of 21st century learning. Various types of media have been developed and implemented to improve the quality of IPS learning, particularly at the elementary school level. In general, IPS learning media can be classified into four main categories: audio visual media, interactive digital media, digital game based media, and hypermedia based media or e-modules.

1). Audio-visual media combines two elements simultaneously (audio and visual), making the presentation of material more comprehensive and effective compared to media that relies on only one element. Nurluthfiana et al. (2023) state that audio-visual media, such as animated videos, has been proven to increase students' interest in social studies, particularly in presenting environmental education material in lower grades in a tangible and easily understandable manner. 2). Interactive digital media: Ulfa & El-Yunusi (2025) identified various forms of interactive digital media implemented in elementary schools, ranging from educational videos, interactive modules, online quizzes, and interactive presentations. These media have been shown to improve accessibility, flexibility, and student engagement in learning. In line with

this, Daryanes et al. (2023) developed Articulate Storyline-based media combined with the case study method to train problem-solving skills, and obtained validation results from experts. 3). Digital game-based media: Anggraeni et al. (2023) developed a digital snakes and ladders game using the Genially platform on the topic of Indonesian Cultural Diversity for fourth-grade elementary school students. This media received a “highly suitable” rating from content experts (82.14%), media experts (83.82%), and language experts (85%), with positive responses from students at 87.41% and teachers at 91.66%. 4). Hypermedia and differentiated e-modules. Haryanti et al. (2026) developed EduHYPER-IPS, an e-module that adaptively integrates text, images, audio, video, and animation according to students’ learning characteristics. This medium achieved a practicality validity of 92.45% based on responses from teachers (92.9) and students (95.9%), and improved creative thinking skills with an N-Gain of 51.81% in the experimental class.

Based on these four categories, it is evident that the development of social studies learning media has evolved from a one-way approach to interactive, student centered media, with the selection of media types needing to be tailored to learning objectives and student characteristics. Various studies also demonstrate that the use of such media has a tangible impact on improving student learning outcomes and motivation. Suryanita & Kusmariyatni (2021) noted an increase in the average social studies learning outcome from 80.77 to 86.37 through a combination of the Jigsaw model with video media, with the gain score rising from the low to the moderate category (0.46). Aribiwo & Sukarjo (2022) reported similar results with Adobe Flash interactive multimedia, where the average student score rose from 52.78 to 86.67 with an N-Gain of 0.72, categorized as high. Regarding motivation Ali et al. (2025) serta Isa & Rustini (2023) emphasize that interactive media encourages active student engagement because it provides an enjoyable learning experience, offers immediate feedback, and aligns with students’ diverse learning styles. Thus, the effectiveness of social studies learning media lies not only in the diversity of the media itself but also in its ability to facilitate meaningful interaction between students and the material, thereby having a positive impact on both the cognitive and affective dimensions of students. The use of instructional media in social studies classes in elementary schools offers many benefits in terms of boosting student motivation, conceptual understanding, and engagement in the learning process. However, various studies indicate that the implementation of instructional media in social studies still faces a number of obstacles and challenges, including issues related to facilities and infrastructure, teacher competence, and the school environment. Menurut Isa & Rustini (2023) The success of using concrete and digital media is greatly influenced by teachers’ pedagogical skills in managing the learning process and facilitating students’ interaction with the media used.

In addition, a major obstacle lies in the limited learning facilities and infrastructure; not all elementary schools have access to supporting equipment such as computers, projectors, internet connections, or interactive digital media. Social studies material at the elementary school level tends to be abstract and requires concrete and visual aids to make it easier for students to understand. Menurut Irwan & Kamarudin (2021) The success of using concrete and digital media is greatly influenced by teachers’ pedagogical skills in managing the learning process and facilitating students’ interaction with the media used.

The use of instructional media in social studies classes in elementary school should be tailored to students' developmental characteristics, school conditions, and the learning objectives to be achieved. The most recommended media for teaching social studies in elementary school are concrete materials, visual aids, and interactive digital media, as they help students understand abstract social studies concepts by making them more tangible, contextual, and easy to grasp (Irwan & Kamarudin, 2021). In addition, the development of educational video media has been shown to meet feasibility criteria and to be effective in improving student learning outcomes. The use of video media in the learning process also creates a more engaging and interactive learning environment, fosters students' interest in learning, encourages their active participation, and facilitates the achievement of learning objectives. These factors ultimately have a positive impact on improving student learning outcomes.

Based on the data analysis process conducted using research instruments such as literature review and tabulation of articles, the use of educational media by teachers in the teaching process has begun to develop, but it has not yet been fully realized. Some teachers still rely on traditional methods without the support of technology-based learning media, while many others have adopted technology-based media to deliver content. This illustrates that Social Studies (IPS) learning is in a transitional phase toward technology-rich learning, having previously relied solely on traditional methods and existing resources.

In school learning activities, media serves as a tool used by teachers to deliver instructional content in a way that captures students' attention. Media also creates a pleasant learning environment and makes the material more engaging. Extensive material can cause students to lose focus and become bored, so a tool is needed to make it more engaging to follow. Learning is not solely centered on the teacher's explanation but requires student involvement to be more active. This aligns with Arsyad (2017), who notes that instructional media helps teachers convey educational messages, thereby stimulating students' attention, interest, thoughts, and emotions during learning activities.

Technology-based media such as interactive PowerPoint, educational videos, Canva, Google Sites, digital comics, Android-based media, and educational games currently dominate Social Studies instruction. Budianti et al. (2023) explain that students improve their attention and learning outcomes when supported by interactive PowerPoint, as the material is presented in a more engaging and easier-to-understand manner. This aligns with Lahamado & Lukman (2025), who state that Canva-based media helps teachers design more creative learning materials, thereby enhancing students' motivation and engagement. These findings indicate that teachers are beginning to use technology in instructional media, making Social Studies learning more creative, interactive, and enjoyable.

The analysis also shows that concrete media are still widely used in elementary schools, not just digital media, because they align with students' characteristics. Examples include dioramas, Social Studies Monopoly (Plysoc), digital picture cards, augmented reality-based flashcards, and pop-up books. Choirunnisa & Arini (2023) states that the Monopoly game in Social Studies lessons can increase student participation and enthusiasm. Dioramas help students understand

the material concretely because they display real images of each topic being studied (Sapitri & Guslinda, 2021).

Teaching materials for Social Studies have evolved alongside technological advancements and the demands of 21st-century learning. In general, IPS learning media can be classified into four main categories:

1. Audio-visual media. This combines audio and visual elements simultaneously, making the presentation of material more comprehensive and effective than media relying on only one element. Nurluthfiana et al. (2023) state that audio-visual media such as animated videos has been proven to increase students' interest in social studies, particularly in presenting environmental education material in lower grades in a tangible and easily understandable manner.
2. Interactive digital media. Ulfa & El-Yunusi (2025) identified various forms implemented in elementary schools, ranging from educational videos, interactive modules, and online quizzes to interactive presentations. These media have been shown to improve accessibility, flexibility, and student engagement. In line with this, Daryanes et al. (2023) developed Articulate Storyline-based media combined with the case study method to train problem-solving skills, and obtained validation from experts.
3. Digital game-based media. Anggraeni et al. (2023) developed a digital snakes and ladders game using the Genially platform on the topic of Indonesian Cultural Diversity for fourth-grade students. It received a "highly suitable" rating from content experts (82.14%), media experts (83.82%), and language experts (85%), with positive responses from students (87.41%) and teachers (91.66%).
4. Hypermedia and differentiated e-modules. Haryanti et al. (2026) developed EduHYPE-IPS, an e-module that adaptively integrates text, images, audio, video, and animation according to students' learning characteristics. It achieved a practicality validity of 92.45% based on responses from teachers (92.9%) and students (95.9%), and improved creative thinking skills with an N-Gain of 51.81% in the experimental class.

The selection of media should be tailored to students' developmental characteristics, school conditions, and learning objectives. The most recommended media for elementary social studies are concrete materials, visual aids, and interactive digital media, because they make abstract social studies concepts more tangible, contextual, and easy to grasp (Irwan & Kamarudin, 2021).

3.2 Effectiveness of instructional media

Based on these four categories, the development of social studies learning media has evolved from a one-way approach to interactive, student-centered media. Various studies show that such media has a tangible impact on student learning outcomes and motivation. Suryanita & Kusmariyatni (2021) noted an increase in the average learning outcome from 80.77 to 86.37 through a combination of the Jigsaw model with video media, with the gain score rising from the low to the moderate category (0.46). Aribiwo & Sukarjo (2022) reported similar results with

Adobe Flash interactive multimedia, where the average score rose from 52.78 to 86.67 with an N-Gain of 0.72, categorized as high.

Regarding motivation, Ali et al. (2025) and Isa & Rustini (2023) emphasize that interactive media encourages active student engagement because it provides an enjoyable learning experience, offers immediate feedback, and aligns with students' diverse learning styles. Educational video media in particular has been shown to meet feasibility criteria and to be effective in improving learning outcomes. It creates a more engaging and interactive environment, fosters interest, encourages active participation, and facilitates the achievement of learning objectives, all of which ultimately improve learning outcomes.

Thus, the effectiveness of social studies learning media lies not only in the diversity of the media itself but also in its ability to facilitate meaningful interaction between students and the material, with a positive impact on both the cognitive and affective dimensions of students.

3.3 Advantages and challenges of implementation

The use of instructional media in elementary social studies offers many benefits in terms of student motivation, conceptual understanding, and engagement. Digital learning media are effective if used appropriately and not misapplied. However, in real-world conditions, implementation still faces several challenges. Sawitri et al. (2024) state that there are still limitations in technological resources, a lack of school facilities, and low levels of teacher proficiency in using technology. Technological advancement does not automatically produce positive effects; without adequate skills, it can become a hindrance. Many teachers are still not accustomed to using digital media, so learning is still facilitated by traditional and less innovative methods (Heryani et al., 2022; Rozak et al., 2025).

According to Isa & Rustini (2023), the success of using concrete and digital media is greatly influenced by teachers' pedagogical skills in managing the learning process and facilitating students' interaction with the media. Another major obstacle is limited facilities and infrastructure: not all elementary schools have access to computers, projectors, internet connections, or interactive digital media. This is problematic because social studies material at the elementary level tends to be abstract and requires concrete and visual aids to be understood (Irwan & Kamarudin, 2021). In conclusion, although technological advancements in education have progressed rapidly, their implementation in schools still requires support through training, adequate facilities, and teacher creativity in order to function effectively.

4. Conclusion

The use of instructional media in Social Studies (IPS) classes in elementary schools has evolved alongside technological advancements. The media used include audiovisual, interactive digital, game-based, and concrete media, all of which have been proven to enhance student motivation and learning outcomes. The effectiveness of media is determined not only by its type but also by its ability to facilitate meaningful interaction between students and the subject matter. Despite this, implementation is still hindered by limited school facilities and teachers' digital competencies. Therefore, the selection of media must be tailored to student characteristics, learning objectives, and school conditions, and supported by adequate teacher training so that Social Studies instruction can proceed optimally.

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