



Optimizing Student Interest in Social Studies Through the Integration of Project-Based Learning and Wordwall Media in the Topic of Social Integration

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ABSTRACT

Low student interest in Social Studies (IPS) remains a common issue in the school learning process. Instruction dominated by lecture-based methods often results in students being passive and lacking interest in learning activities. This study aims to analyze the impact of implementing Project-Based Learning (PjBL) supported by Wordwall media on the learning interest of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 9 Surabaya regarding the topic of Social Integration. The study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental method with a Nonequivalent Control Group Design. The sample consisted of 35 students in the experimental class and 36 students in the control class. Data collection techniques included learning interest questionnaires, observation, and documentation. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, normality tests, homogeneity tests, and an Independent Sample t-Test. The results showed that the average learning interest in the experimental class (3.02) was higher than that in the control class (2.71). Hypothesis testing yielded a significance value of 0.037 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant effect of PjBL supported by Wordwall on student learning interest. Furthermore, students responded positively to the instruction, finding it engaging, interactive, and capable of enhancing their involvement in the learning process. Thus, integrating PjBL with Wordwall serves as an effective alternative for Social Studies instruction to boost student learning interest.

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INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation in education has shifted the learning paradigm from a conventional, one-way model to one that is dynamic and interactive. Advances in information and communication technology act as a catalyst, encouraging educators to create learning ecosystems that go beyond mere knowledge transfer; instead, they empower students to become active participants in their own educational journeys. This aligns with the demands of 21st-century education, which prioritizes the development of essential skills specifically critical thinking, creativity, communication, and

collaboration among students. In tandem with this shift, active student engagement has become a key indicator of effective learning. Integrating technology, such as interactive learning media, enables educators to present material that is contextual and relevant to the issues students encounter in their daily lives. Through a student-centered approach supported by project-based learning models, the classroom becomes a space where students can explore their potential, collaboratively solve real-world problems, and hone the social skills vital for life in society. However, Social Studies instruction often remains conventional, relying on teacher-centered lectures. This approach tends to render students passive and unenthusiastic, resulting in low learning interest. Learning interest is a crucial factor in educational success, as it encompasses a student's attention, curiosity, engagement, and enjoyment regarding the learning process. (Afifah et al., 2022).

The topic of social integration plays a crucial role in the Social Studies curriculum, serving as a foundation for students to understand the dynamics of uniting various elements within a diverse society. Given the complexity of existing social challenges, a deep understanding of this subject requires active student engagement; students must move beyond rote memorization of theories to connect sociological concepts with the real-life realities they encounter daily. Transforming this knowledge requires innovative learning models such as Project-Based Learning (PjBL) that create more meaningful and contextual learning experiences. Through this problem-solving approach, students are encouraged to critically explore social issues, collaborate with peers, and utilize supporting technologies like the Wordwall application to reinforce their understanding. Consequently, learning about social integration becomes a dynamic process, enabling students to internalize values of harmony and tolerance while honing higher-order thinking skills applicable to life in society. One particularly relevant model is Project-Based Learning (PjBL). This model places students at the center of the learning process through projects that facilitate exploration, investigation, discussion, and collaboration in solving real-world problems. PjBL encourages students to actively construct knowledge through authentic learning experiences. Beyond enhancing conceptual understanding, the model fosters critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork. (Wahyudi, 2025)

The implementation of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model becomes more dynamic and effective when supported by innovative and interactive learning media, such as the digital platform Wordwall. As a versatile tool, Wordwall offers a variety of game-based activities ranging from interactive quizzes and crossword puzzles to word-matching games that transform complex concepts into enjoyable experiences. Utilizing this platform in the classroom has proven effective in boosting motivation and fostering active student engagement, as its game-like format creates a stimulating learning atmosphere. By integrating PjBL with this interactive medium, teachers can ensure that

students do not merely passively receive information but also maintain a high level of interest while working on assessments or group projects.. (Pamungkas et al., 2023)

A learning model serves as a form of pedagogical design that enables students to navigate the teaching-learning process effectively, avoiding an environment where they are merely compelled to follow teacher-imposed interventions. It is crucial to develop learning models that align instructional activities with students' specific abilities and characteristics. Consequently, the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model is grounded in constructivism. Under this learning theory, educators do not simply transmit knowledge to students; rather, individuals must actively construct their own knowledge within their minds. Education provides the freedom for students to generate and implement their own ideas, with the educator acting as a bridge guiding the individual toward understanding. Within the PjBL framework, students are encouraged to actively construct knowledge through hands-on experience in solving contextual problems such as analyzing cases of social integration in their local communities. This process of building understanding is further reinforced by Wordwall, which serves as an interactive learning environment for testing and consolidating key concepts discovered during the project. Through social interaction in group work and the use of engaging digital media, students can connect academic theory with social reality, making the learning process more meaningful and profound while aligning with constructivist principles that emphasize active learner engagement. (Rusandi et al., 2024)

Research by Zahrani (2024) also found that the combination of PjBL and Wordwall significantly enhanced student engagement and participation. However, literature specifically examining the impact of integrating the PjBL model and Wordwall media on students' learning interest particularly regarding the topic of Social Integration at SMP Negeri 9 Surabaya remains limited. This research gap underscores the urgency of conducting a more in-depth study to address the existing empirical void. Therefore, this study aims to answer the primary research question: whether the integration of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model and Wordwall media has a significant influence on students' learning interest regarding the topic of Social Integration in Grade VIII at SMP Negeri 9 Surabaya.

RESEARCH METHODE

This study employs a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental method. The research design utilized is the Nonequivalent Control Group Design. The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 9 Surabaya during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The study population consisted of all eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 9 Surabaya. The research sample comprised two classes: Class VIII-H (35 students) as the experimental group and Class VIII-I (36 students) as the control group.

The experimental class received instruction using the Project-Based Learning model supported by Wordwall media, whereas the control class underwent conventional instruction. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Prerequisite tests conducted included normality and homogeneity tests. Subsequently, hypothesis testing was performed using the Independent Sample t-Test to determine the effect of implementing Wordwall-assisted PjBL on students' learning interest.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistical analysis shows that the average student learning interest in the experimental class was 3.02, whereas the average in the control class was 2.71. These results indicate that the learning interest of students taught using Wordwall-assisted PjBL was higher than that of students receiving conventional instruction.

Table 1.

Descriptive Analysis

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max.
Kelas VIII H	35	3.02	0.68	1.6	4
Kelas VIII I	36	2.71	0.57	1.4	3.8

The normality test results indicate that the data for both the experimental and control classes are normally distributed, as their respective significance values are greater than 0.05. Furthermore, the homogeneity test results show a significance value of 0.095 (> 0.05), indicating that the data possess homogeneous variances.

Table 2.

Normality Test Results

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Skor	2.870	1	69	0.095

Table 3.

Homogeneity Test Results

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Skor	2.870	1	69	0.095

Hypothesis testing using the Independent Sample t-Test yielded a significance value of 0.037. Since the significance value is less than 0.05, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that the implementation of Wordwall-assisted Project-Based Learning has a significant effect on students' learning interest regarding the topic of Social Integration.

Table 4.
Independent Sample t-Test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	sig.
Kelas VIII H	35	3.02	0.68	2.131	69	0.037
Kelas VIII I	36	2.71	0.57	-	-	-

The research results indicate that the implementation of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model supported by Wordwall media positively influenced students' learning interest regarding the topic of Social Integration. This finding is supported by hypothesis testing results showing a significance value of 0.037 (<0.05), leading to the conclusion that there is a significant difference in learning interest between the experimental and control classes. The average learning interest of students in the experimental class was also higher than that of the control class. These results suggest that integrating the project-based learning model with interactive digital media creates a more engaging and meaningful learning atmosphere for students. Instruction that allows students to be actively involved has been shown to enhance their attention, curiosity, and interest in the subject matter.

The increase in students' interest in learning is closely linked to the characteristics of Project-Based Learning, which places students at the center of the learning process. Throughout the process, students are given the opportunity to select project themes, design work plans, gather information, engage in group discussions, and present their completed projects. These activities encourage students to take greater responsibility for their own learning. Students act not merely as passive recipients of information but also as active seekers, processors, and presenters of information. This approach fosters more meaningful learning, as students gain firsthand experience in understanding the concept of Social Integration (Jusita, 2019).

The subject matter of social integration is closely linked to students' daily lives. Instruction utilizing Project-Based Learning (PjBL) enables students to connect the concepts they study with social phenomena in their immediate environment. Through their projects, students can identify various forms of social integration, the factors driving it, and the importance of cooperation within the community. Linking the curriculum content to social reality makes it easier for students to grasp the concepts and enhances the learning's relevance. When students perceive the material as having practical value in real life, their interest in the learning process increases (Indriyani, 2020).

Increased student interest in learning is also influenced by the use of Wordwall as a tool to support instruction. Wordwall offers various educational game features that create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. Interactive quizzes, matching games,

spinning wheels, and other digital activities foster greater student enthusiasm during lessons. This tool helps alleviate the boredom often associated with conventional teaching methods; students do not merely listen to teacher explanations but actively participate in challenging and engaging learning activities. This dynamic provides a unique learning experience, thereby enhancing students' attention and focus on the material being studied (Sulfi, 2020).

Another advantage of using Wordwall is the provision of immediate feedback after students complete learning activities. This feedback helps students gauge their level of understanding regarding the material. Errors can be corrected promptly, making the learning process more effective. The inclusion of scores and rankings also fosters healthy competition among students, motivating them to strive for the best results without compromising the essence of the learning experience. This demonstrates that students' affective and emotional aspects play a role in boosting their interest in learning during the lesson (Sulfi, 2020).

The findings of this study can be explained through constructivist theory, which serves as the primary foundation for the Project-Based Learning model. Constructivist theory posits that knowledge cannot be directly transferred from teacher to student; rather, it is actively constructed by students themselves through experiences and interactions with their environment. In this study, students developed an understanding of social integration through processes involving inquiry, group discussion, information gathering, and project completion. These learning experiences enabled students to construct knowledge independently, thereby making the learning process more meaningful. The more actively students engage in the learning process, the greater the likelihood of fostering a strong interest in learning (Rusandi et al., 2024).

The research findings also align with the social constructivist perspective proposed by Vygotsky. According to Vygotsky, learning occurs optimally through social interaction and collaboration with others. During the project, students worked in groups to complete the assigned tasks. They engaged in discussions, exchanged ideas, divided tasks, and collaboratively sought solutions to the problems that arose. Such social interaction provided students with opportunities to assist one another in understanding the material. This collaborative process not only enhanced conceptual understanding but also fostered communication skills, teamwork, and a sense of responsibility all of which are essential components of 21st-century competencies (Mones et al., 2023).

The results of this study reinforce findings from previous research indicating that Project-Based Learning enhances student motivation and engagement in the learning process. Project-based learning offers students greater scope to develop their creativity and critical thinking skills. Previous studies have also demonstrated that the use of Wordwall boosts learning motivation and student participation through interactive

learning activities. Integrating these two components creates a more comprehensive learning experience by combining project activities which require cognitive engagement with digital media that foster emotional engagement among students (Yusnaldi et al., 2025).

Based on the research findings and theoretical analysis presented, it is evident that increasing students' learning interest is influenced not only by the learning model or the media used in isolation but also by the synergy between the two. Project-Based Learning provides a contextual and meaningful learning experience, while Wordwall creates an interactive and enjoyable learning atmosphere. The combination of these strategies meets students' learning needs in the digital era while supporting the development of 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. Therefore, integrating Project-Based Learning with Wordwall media is recommended as an effective alternative approach for Social Studies instruction to enhance students' interest in the topic of Social Integration (Afifah et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that:

- a. The implementation of Project-Based Learning supported by Wordwall media has a significant influence on students' learning interest regarding the topic of Social Integration in Grade VIII at SMP Negeri 9 Surabaya.
- b. The implementation of Project-Based Learning supported by Wordwall proved effective in increasing students' learning interest. This is evidenced by the higher average learning interest in the experimental class compared to the control class.
- c. Students responded positively to the implementation of Project-Based Learning supported by Wordwall because the learning process became more engaging, interactive, and enjoyable.

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