



# Pedagogical Approaches in Social Studies in the Philippine Basic Education

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## Abstract

This study explores pedagogical approaches (e.g., constructivist, inquiry-based, reflective, collaborative, and integrative learning) in Philippine Social Studies (Araling Panlipunan) education, aligning with legal mandates and the curriculum. The review highlights how Philippine policies and curricula mandate constructivist, inquiry-based, collaborative, and interdisciplinary pedagogies in Social Studies. The study adopted a policy and curricular review design, examining nine (9) purposively selected relevant documents (i.e., relevant laws, orders, curricula, and syllabi) in the basic and higher education sectors to determine the prescribed pedagogical approaches to be implemented for Social Studies in basic education. These approaches, supported by teacher education programs, aim to foster critical thinking, active learning, and civic readiness, aligning with SDG 4 for quality education. The results indicate that the pedagogical approaches in Social Studies within the Philippine basic education system are designed to nurture critical, socially conscious, and well-rounded individuals. By combining active learning, collaboration, reflection, and real-world application, these methods empower Filipino learners to understand and engage with the complexities of society and history. This holistic approach ensures a meaningful educational experience, preparing students for lifelong engagement and responsible citizenship. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in the Philippines may align further Social Studies teacher training with current standards and evolving needs, while future research should explore how Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) integrate pedagogical approaches in both campus and field-based practices to enhance curricula and teaching quality.

**Keywords:** Pedagogical Approaches, Social Studies, Basic Education, K to 12 Curriculum

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Social Studies is crucial for educating individuals about civics, politics, governance, economics, geography, history, and social issues. This discipline examines social relationships and societal functioning, typically including courses in history, government, economics, civics, sociology, geography, and anthropology [1]. Likewise, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) defines Social Studies as the study of individuals, communities, systems, and their interactions across time and place, preparing students for local, national, and global civic life [2].

In the Philippines, Social Studies (*Araling Panlipunan*) in the kindergarten,

elementary level (Grades 1 to 6), and junior high school level (Grades 7 to 10), covers self, community, and local history, along with a deeper understanding of history, geography, politics, economy, and national development from a local to global perspective. At the senior high school level (Grades 11 and 12), students address current issues, propose solutions, and develop skills like critical thinking, creativity, research, communication, responsibility, and global vision [3, 4].

Nowadays, teaching Social Studies presents unique difficulties due to its interwoven sub-disciplines. Teachers face challenges with textbooks, inadequate physical conditions, and the integration of knowledge, skills, and values [5]. A piece of literature [6] also highlights that the availability of

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textbooks, teaching materials like projectors, tutors' research abilities, and varied teaching techniques significantly impact Social Studies education. A study [7] notes issues such as teachers' negative views of the curriculum, its vast and repetitive content, irrelevance to students' lives, and unsupportive school environments for modern teaching methods. Additionally, a study [8] points out that Social Studies learning often lacks focus on developing critical thinking and social analysis skills, with teachers more concerned with formal requirements than creative teaching. These challenges may stem from a lack of expertise and innovative practices, as teachers need support in implementing 21<sup>st</sup>-century pedagogical approaches [9].

Meanwhile, pedagogical approaches are mandated and enshrined in the implementation of any curriculum by schools and teachers. Teachers must be empowered with effective pedagogy to deliver instruction and educate learners. Significantly, as [10] attests, pedagogical approaches play a pivotal role in fostering innovation among K-12 learners. This may improve learners' 21st-century skills, specifically creative thinking, where most Filipino learners lag behind OECD countries in the PISA 2022 results [11].

Specifically, pedagogy encompasses the methods and practices educators use in teaching, from course design to content delivery, each grounded in distinct learning philosophies. Also, an effective pedagogical approach aligns with an educator's teaching beliefs and addresses the diverse needs of students [12, 13]. Pedagogy is the cornerstone of all teaching and learning, helping students develop higher-order thinking skills and understand the relevance of their learning in the broader world [14]. Its main aim is to build on students' previous learning, develop their skills and attitudes, and apply that knowledge in daily life [15].

In concept, pedagogical approaches span from teacher-centered to learner-centered. In teacher-centered pedagogy, educators lead the learning process through methods such as whole-class lectures, rote memorization, and choral responses. This approach is often criticized for confining students to lower-order tasks and fostering a fearful learning environment. Conversely, learner-centered pedagogy focuses on students' needs and

interests, encouraging active participation and higher-order thinking. This approach emphasizes student engagement, critical thinking, and the application of knowledge in real-world contexts [16]. In the Philippines, teachers in basic education are mandated to apply student-centered pedagogy grounded on content knowledge and current research, as mentioned in DepEd Order (DO) No. 42, s. 2017 [17].

Indeed, teachers must continually adapt to emerging policies and practices, understanding how to effectively implement these approaches in dynamic classrooms. The Philippine Government has underscored the significance of pedagogical approaches by integrating them into the enactment of Republic Act (RA) No. 10533 [18], which institutionalized the K to 12 curriculum in the country. The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10533) [18] mandates the use of constructivist, inquiry-based, reflective, collaborative, and integrative pedagogical approaches. This legislation is bolstered by DO No. 21, s. 2019 [19], which ensures that schools implement these learner-oriented approaches to support the K to 12 curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to adopt strategies that promote active learning, cooperative learning, collaboration, exploration, and contextualized, relevant learning [4].

## 1.2. Objective of the Study

The study examines the pedagogical approaches (e.g., constructivist learning, inquiry-based learning, reflective learning, collaborative learning, integrative learning, etc.) in Social Studies within the Philippine basic education system, aligning with legal mandates and the curriculum. The aim is to promote meaningful, reflective, and experiential learning through exemplary and innovative teaching practices, thereby contributing to achieving quality education as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 4, specifically on the provision of quality education, lifelong learning, and global citizenship education.

## 2. Method

This study conducts a policy and curricular review of Social Studies education in

the Philippines, with a focus on mandated pedagogical approaches in the laws, orders, curricula, and syllabi adopted in the basic and higher education sectors. Nine (9) documents were purposively selected based on the following criteria: (i) they explicitly and implicitly mentioned the prescribed pedagogical approaches for Social Studies in teaching basic education; (ii) they were promulgated either in the basic and higher education sectors in the Philippines; and (iii) they were utilized as sources in teaching courses among Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).

Section 5 of Republic Act No. 10533 [18] requires Filipino teachers to employ constructivist, inquiry-based, reflective, collaborative, and integrative pedagogical approaches. Aside from the aforementioned five (5) mandated pedagogical approaches by RA No. 10533 [18], Domain 1: Content Knowledge and Pedagogy of DO No. 42, s. 2017 [17] underscores the importance of teachers' mastery of content, understanding of interconnected curricula, and application of educational theories and principles, along with proficiency in Mother Tongue, Filipino, and English, and the effective use of communication strategies and technologies to achieve high-quality learning outcomes. Under DO No. 21, s. 2019 [19], one of the key features of the K to 12 curriculum is the use of learner-centered, constructivist, inquiry-based, reflective, collaborative, differentiated, appropriate, relevant, and integrative pedagogical approaches. Meanwhile, the 2016 Curriculum Guide (*Gabay Pangkurikulum*) for Social Studies (*Araling Panlipunan*) [3] by the Department of Education (DepEd) further emphasizes constructivist learning, collaborative learning, experiential and contextual learning, thematic learning (chronological and conceptual), inquiry-based learning, and integrative learning (interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary). In the new MATATAG curriculum (Revised K to 12 Curriculum) [20], the prescribed approaches in Social Studies (*Araling Panlipunan*) include experiential learning, collaborative learning, social constructivism, inquiry-based approach, thematic-chronological approach, conceptual learning, research-based approach, and interdisciplinary approach (DO No. 10, s. 2024)

[20]. More so, in the Bachelor of Secondary Education Social Studies specialization course entitled "Teaching Approaches in Teaching Secondary Social Studies," the specified teaching approaches include the discovery approach, process approach, inquiry approach, multimedia approach, value clarification approach, mastery learning, and eclectic approach [21]. Meanwhile, in the Elementary Education Special Courses entitled "Teaching Social Studies in the Primary Grades" and "Teaching Social Studies in the Intermediate Grades," teaching approaches are generalized rather than thoroughly specified [22]. These pedagogical approaches in Social Studies foster active student engagement, critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of complex social issues, aligning with the goals of quality education and preparing students for informed civic participation. Having this policy and curricular review resonates the importance of Social Studies as a cornerstone subject/discipline in basic education.

In analyzing the documents used in the study, content analysis was applied. A rigorous analysis of the documents was conducted to examine how they presented the prescribed pedagogical approaches and the extent to which they would be implemented in the curricula. After such analysis, a tabular presentation of the pedagogical approaches was prepared, highlighting their nature, the roles of teachers and students, and their application in Social Studies education.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Pedagogical Approaches in Social Studies in the Philippine Basic Education

At present, Filipino Social Studies teachers in the Philippine basic education system are effectively implementing the five pedagogical approaches mandated by RA No. 10533 [18]: constructivist, inquiry-based, reflective, collaborative, and integrative learning. Additionally, they are incorporating other innovative approaches, such as experiential learning, contextual learning, thematic learning (chronological and conceptual), discovery approach, process approach, multimedia approach, value clarification approach, mastery learning, eclectic approach, social constructivism,

conceptual learning, research-based approach, and differentiated learning, to enhance student

engagement and understanding.

**Table 1.** Pedagogical approaches in Social Studies in the Philippine basic education

<b>Pedagogical Approach</b>	<b>Filipino Translation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Role of Teachers</b>	<b>Role of Learners</b>	<b>Application in Social Studies</b>
Constructivist Learning	<i>Pagkatutong Konstruktibo</i>	Constructivism views learners as active constructors of meaningful knowledge (DO No. 21, s. 2019 [19]).  Learners actively construct knowledge through experiences and prior understanding.	Facilitate learning by providing meaningful tasks and guiding exploration.	Actively engage in problem-solving, inquiry, and connecting prior knowledge to new information.	Encourages learners to analyze historical and social concepts through project-based learning and the analysis of primary sources.
Inquiry-based Learning	<i>Pagkatutong Pasiyasat</i>	Inquiry-based learning puts a premium on questioning, investigating, proving, probing, explaining, predicting, and establishing connections of evidence (DO No. 21, s. 2019 [19]).  Focuses on questioning, investigating, and problem-solving to foster critical thinking.	Encourage curiosity by posing questions and providing resources for inquiry.	Formulate questions, investigate issues, and present findings critically.	Promotes research, investigation of social issues, and presenting findings to understand historical and societal events.
Reflective Learning	<i>Pagkatutong Pampagninilay</i>	Reflective learning provides opportunities for learners to reflect on what and why they need to learn and how to go about it (DO No. 21, s. 2019 [19]).  Encourages deep thinking and self-awareness through reflection on	Guide learners in analyzing their thoughts and experiences to derive insights.	Reflect on past experiences and societal issues to draw meaningful conclusions.	Learners reflect on the relevance of historical events and societal changes via journaling or discussions.

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Collaborative Learning	<i>Magkatuwang na Pagkatutubo</i>	experiences and ideas. A collaborative approach allows learners to share ideas among themselves, thereby fostering cooperation, respect, camaraderie, and tolerance (DO No. 21, s. 2019 [19]).	Facilitate group activities, encourage collaboration, and mediate conflicts.	Work in teams, share ideas, and take responsibility for group outcomes.	Uses group projects, discussions, and simulations to analyze social issues and build teamwork skills.
Integrative Learning	<i>Pagkatutong Integratibo</i>	Learning through group collaboration to achieve shared goals. Integrative pedagogy espouses the importance of connections and relationships among ideas and concepts across disciplines (DO No. 21, s. 2019 [19]).	Design interdisciplinary activities that connect concepts across subjects.	Synthesize ideas from multiple disciplines to gain a comprehensive understanding.	Integrates history, geography, economics, and civics to explore issues such as globalization and social justice.
- Interdisciplinary Learning	<i>Interdisiplinaryo</i>	Combines various disciplines and perspectives for a holistic understanding. Links insights and methods from multiple disciplines to explore topics.	Encourage cross-disciplinary connections by posing integrative questions.	Analyze and apply knowledge from different fields to understand complex issues.	Analyzes complex phenomena like urbanization and poverty using methods from history, geography, and sociology.
- Multidisciplinary Learning	<i>Multidisiplinaryo</i>	Examines topics using diverse disciplinary perspectives side by side.	Provide diverse resources and frameworks from multiple fields.	Compare and contrast different disciplinary approaches to examine issues.	Studies social issues such as climate change, drawing on political science, economics, and environmental studies.
Experiential Learning	<i>Pagkatutong Pangkaranasan</i>	Involves learning through direct experience.	Organize hands-on activities, fieldwork, or	Participate actively in real-world tasks and	Includes fieldwork, community projects, and

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			real-world projects.	reflect on their experiences.	hands-on activities that connect concepts to real-life contexts.
Contextual Learning	<i>Pagkatutong Pangkonteksto</i>	Relates learning to real-life situations and contexts for deeper understanding.	Connect lessons to real-world scenarios and learners' environments.	Relate learning to personal experiences and local contexts.	Uses case studies and local examples to link social concepts to learners' everyday experiences.
Thematic Learning	<i>Tematikong Pagkatuto</i>	Focuses on big ideas or overarching themes across topics.	Design lessons around themes or big ideas and guide thematic exploration.	Explore and synthesize themes to find patterns and connections.	Examines themes like justice and cultural diversity to connect Social Studies topics meaningfully.
- Chronological	<i>- Kronolohikal</i>	Organizes content by time sequence for better understanding of historical progression.	Plan lessons in sequential order to highlight historical progression.	Analyze and interpret events in their chronological context to identify cause-and-effect relationships.	Arranges lessons in historical order to contextualize themes like revolutions or societal reforms.
- Conceptual	<i>- Konseptwal</i>	Focuses on understanding key concepts or big ideas across disciplines.	Highlight key concepts and encourage conceptual analysis across topics.	Identify and explore overarching concepts to deepen understanding.	Explores concepts such as nationalism and human rights to analyze historical and social issues in depth.
Discovery Approach	<i>Pamamaraang Patuklas</i>	Encourages learners to explore and uncover knowledge through inquiry and experimentation.	Facilitates learning by providing guidance and resources for exploration.	Actively engages in problem-solving, questioning, and discovering new knowledge.	Students investigate historical events or social issues through inquiry-based activities.
Process Approach	<i>Pamamaraang Proseso</i>	Focuses on the steps and methods used to achieve learning outcomes.	Guides learners through systematic processes and provides feedback.	Follows structured steps to achieve understanding and mastery of skills.	Students analyze historical processes, such as the evolution of governance or economic systems.
Multimedia Approach	<i>Pamamaraang Multimedia</i>	Utilizes various media (videos, audio, images) to enhance learning experiences.	Integrates multimedia tools to present content in engaging and accessible ways.	Interacts with multimedia materials to deepen understanding and engagement.	Students use videos, infographics, and interactive maps to study geographical and historical data.

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Value Clarification Approach	<i>Pamamaraang Paglilinaw ng Halaga</i>	Helps learners identify and reflect on their values and beliefs.	Facilitates discussions and activities that encourage self-reflection and critical thinking.	Engages in activities that clarify personal and societal values.	Students explore ethical dilemmas, cultural values, and civic responsibilities in society.
Mastery Learning	<i>Pagkatutong Pagdadalubhasa</i>	Ensures learners achieve a high level of understanding before progressing.	Provides targeted instruction and assessments to ensure mastery of content.	Works at their own pace to achieve mastery through practice and feedback.	Students study historical events or social concepts until they achieve a deep understanding.
Eclectic Approach	<i>Pamamaraang Eklektiko</i>	Combines multiple teaching methods to address diverse learning needs.	Adapts teaching strategies to suit the needs and preferences of learners.	Engages with varied methods to enhance learning and address individual strengths.	Teachers use a mix of lectures, group work, and multimedia to teach social studies concepts.
Social Constructivism	<i>Panlipunang Konstruktibismo</i>	Emphasizes collaborative learning and knowledge construction through social interaction.	Acts as a facilitator, encouraging collaboration and discussion among learners.	Collaborates with peers to construct knowledge and solve problems collectively.	Students work in groups to analyze historical events or societal issues from multiple perspectives.
Conceptual Learning	<i>Pagkatutong Konseptwal</i>	Focuses on understanding broad concepts rather than memorizing facts.	Helps learners connect ideas and apply concepts to different contexts.	Engages in critical thinking to understand and apply conceptual knowledge.	Students explore overarching themes such as democracy, globalization, and cultural identity.
Research-Based Approach	<i>Pamamaraang Pampananaliksik</i>	Encourages learners to use research methods to explore topics deeply.	Guides learners in developing research skills and analyzing data.	Conducts research, analyzes findings, and presents conclusions.	Students investigate historical events or social phenomena through research projects.
Differentiated Learning	<i>Magkakaibang Pagkatuto</i>	Tailors instruction to meet the diverse needs, interests, and abilities of learners.	Designs varied activities and assessments to address individual learning needs.	Engages in activities that align with their learning preferences and abilities.	Teachers provide a variety of resources and tasks to help students explore social studies topics.
		Differentiation takes into great consideration the different learning styles and multiple intelligences of the learners, which are			

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		significant aspects of their individual differences not only as learners but also as individuals (DO No. 21, s. 2019 [19]).			

The pedagogical approaches in Social Studies within the Philippine basic education system reflect a dynamic and learner-centered philosophy, emphasizing active engagement, critical thinking, and the holistic development of students. These approaches are designed to cultivate not only academic knowledge but also essential life skills, values, and a deep understanding of societal and historical contexts.

#### **Constructivist and Inquiry-Based Learning**

At the heart of modern Social Studies education in the Philippines are constructivist and inquiry-based approaches. Constructivism, or *Pagkatutong Konstruktibo*, positions learners as active constructors of knowledge, drawing from their experiences and prior understanding. Teachers act as facilitators, guiding students through meaningful tasks and exploration, while learners engage in problem-solving and inquiry. This approach is particularly effective in Social Studies, where students analyze historical and social concepts through project-based learning and primary source analysis.

Inquiry-based learning, or *Pagkatutong Pasiyasat*, complements constructivism by fostering critical thinking through questioning, investigation, and evidence-based reasoning. Teachers encourage curiosity and provide resources, while students formulate questions, investigate issues, and present findings. This method is invaluable for researching social issues and understanding historical events, as it promotes a deeper, evidence-based comprehension of societal dynamics.

#### **Reflective and Collaborative Learning**

Reflective learning (*Pagkatutong Pampagninilay*) encourages students to reflect on their learning processes, experiences, and societal issues. Teachers guide learners in analyzing their thoughts, while students draw meaningful conclusions through journaling or discussions. This approach helps students connect historical events to their personal lives and societal changes, fostering self-awareness and critical reflection.

Collaborative learning (*Magkatuwang na Pagkatutubo*) emphasizes teamwork, respect, and cooperation. Teachers facilitate group activities and mediate conflicts, while students work in teams to achieve shared goals. In Social Studies, collaborative projects and discussions enable students to analyze social issues, build teamwork skills, and appreciate diverse perspectives.

#### **Integrative Approach (Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary)**

The integrative (*Pagkatutong Integratibo*) and interdisciplinary approaches highlight the importance of connecting ideas across disciplines. Teachers design activities that link concepts from history, geography, economics, and civics, helping students gain a holistic understanding of complex issues such as globalization and social justice. These approaches encourage students to synthesize knowledge across multiple fields, fostering a comprehensive, interconnected worldview.

Interdisciplinary learning (*Interdisiplinaryo*) deepens this by actively linking insights and methods from different

disciplines, encouraging teachers to pose integrative questions and students to analyze phenomena like urbanization using combined perspectives from history, geography, and sociology.

Multidisciplinary learning (*Multidisiplinaryo*) examines topics using diverse disciplinary perspectives side by side. Teachers provide resources from various fields, and students compare and contrast different approaches to analyzing issues such as climate change and urbanization. This method broadens students' understanding by exposing them to multiple lenses for viewing societal challenges.

### **Experiential and Contextual Learning**

Experiential learning (*Pagkatutong Pangkaranasan*) involves direct, hands-on experiences such as fieldwork, community projects, and real-world tasks. Teachers organize these activities, and students actively participate and reflect on their experiences. This approach bridges theoretical knowledge with practical application, making Social Studies more relevant and engaging.

Contextual learning (*Pagkatutong Pangkonteksto*) relates lessons to real-life situations and local contexts. Teachers connect lessons to students' environments, and learners relate concepts to their personal experiences. For example, case studies and local examples help students understand social concepts in the context of their everyday lives, making learning more meaningful and relatable.

### **Thematic Approach (Chronological and Conceptual)**

The thematic approach (*Tematikong Pagkatuto*) focuses on overarching themes such as justice, cultural diversity, and democracy. Teachers design lessons around these themes, and students explore patterns and connections across topics. This method helps students see the "big picture" and understand how different Social Studies concepts are interrelated.

The chronological approach (*Kronolohikal*) organizes content by time sequence, helping students understand historical progression and cause-and-effect

relationships. Teachers plan lessons sequentially, and students analyze events in their historical context, which is crucial for understanding themes such as revolutions or societal reforms.

The conceptual approach (*Konseptwal*) emphasizes understanding key concepts rather than memorizing facts. Teachers highlight overarching ideas, and students engage in critical thinking to apply these concepts to various contexts. This approach is essential for analyzing complex issues such as nationalism and human rights.

### **Discovery, Process, and Multimedia Approaches**

The discovery approach (*Pamamaraang Patuklas*) encourages students to explore and uncover knowledge through inquiry and experimentation. Teachers provide guidance and resources, while students actively engage in problem-solving and discovery. This method is particularly effective in Social Studies, where students investigate historical events or social issues through hands-on activities.

The process approach (*Pamamaraang Proseso*) focuses on the steps and methods used to achieve learning outcomes. Teachers guide students through systematic processes, and learners follow structured steps to master skills. In Social Studies, this approach helps students analyze historical processes, such as the evolution of governance or economic systems.

The multimedia approach (*Pamamaraang Multimedia*) utilizes videos, audio, images, and interactive tools to enhance learning. Teachers integrate multimedia to present content in engaging ways, and students interact with these materials to deepen their understanding. For example, videos, infographics, and interactive maps can bring geographical and historical data to life, making complex concepts more accessible.

### **Value Clarification, Mastery, and Eclectic Approaches**

The value clarification approach (*Pamamaraang Paglilinaw ng Halaga*) helps students identify and reflect on their values and

beliefs. Teachers facilitate discussions and activities that encourage self-reflection, while students explore ethical dilemmas, cultural values, and civic responsibilities. This approach is vital for developing socially responsible and morally aware citizens.

Mastery learning (*Pagkatutong Pagdadalubhasa*) ensures that students achieve a high level of understanding before progressing. Teachers provide targeted instruction and assessments, and students work at their own pace to master content. In Social Studies, this approach ensures that students deeply understand historical events or social concepts before moving on to new topics.

The eclectic approach (*Pamamaraang Eklektiko*) combines multiple teaching methods to address diverse learning needs. Teachers adapt strategies to suit individual learners, and students engage with a variety of methods to enhance their understanding. This flexibility allows teachers to use lectures, group work, multimedia, and other techniques to teach Social Studies concepts effectively.

### **Social Constructivism, Conceptual Learning, and Research-Based Approaches**

Social constructivism (*Panlipunang Konstruktibismo*) emphasizes collaborative knowledge construction through social interaction. Teachers act as facilitators, encouraging discussion and cooperation, while students work in groups to analyze historical events or societal issues. This approach fosters a sense of community and shared understanding.

Conceptual learning (*Pagkatutong Konseptwal*) focuses on understanding broad concepts rather than rote memorization. Teachers help students connect ideas and apply concepts to different contexts, fostering critical thinking and deeper comprehension. This approach is essential for exploring themes such as democracy, globalization, and cultural identity.

The research-based approach (*Pamamaraang Pampananaliksik*) encourages students to use research methods to explore

topics deeply. Teachers guide students in developing research skills, and learners conduct investigations, analyze findings, and present conclusions. This method is invaluable for studying historical events or social phenomena, as it promotes evidence-based learning and analytical skills.

### **Differentiated Learning**

Differentiated learning (*Magkakaibang Pagkatuto*) tailors instruction to meet the diverse needs, interests, and abilities of learners. Teachers design varied activities and assessments, and students engage in tasks that align with their learning preferences. This approach ensures that all students, regardless of their individual differences, can access and benefit from Social Studies education.

In general, the pedagogical approaches in Social Studies within the Philippine basic education system are designed to create well-rounded, critical, and socially aware individuals. By integrating active learning, collaboration, reflection, and real-world application, these methods prepare students to understand and engage with the complexities of society and history. Each approach offers unique benefits, and their combined use ensures a comprehensive and meaningful educational experience for Filipino learners.

The results of the study align with the reviewed literature by underscoring the importance of learner-centered pedagogical approaches, such as active learning, collaboration, reflection, and real-world application, in fostering critical thinking, social awareness, and innovation among Filipino learners. These approaches address the challenges highlighted in the literature, including the need to move beyond traditional, teacher-centered methods that often focus on rote memorization and lower-order tasks [16]. Revised pieces of literature also emphasize the difficulties posed by inadequate resources, unsupportive environments, and a lack of focus on critical thinking, which can be mitigated by integrating 21st-century pedagogical strategies [5, 6]. Furthermore, the literature highlights the

pivotal role of innovative pedagogical approaches in enhancing creative thinking skills—a critical area where Filipino learners have lagged, as evidenced by PISA 2022 results [10, 11]. The Department of Education (DepEd) also mandates student-centered pedagogy, underscoring the need to align teaching practices with modern, research-backed methods to empower both teachers and learners [17]. This holistic integration of pedagogy not only addresses the gaps in traditional teaching but also ensures that students develop higher-order thinking skills and apply knowledge meaningfully in real-life contexts [4, 14, 15] aligned with the goal of developing 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills considering the varying needs, situations, and diversities of learners [23, 24, 25] through contextualized instruction [26, 27, 28].

It is also noticeable that the prescribed and mandated pedagogical approaches in laws, orders, and curricula for Social Studies in basic education were not clearly reflected in the syllabi, which were mainly promulgated by Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in higher education. With this, the CHed needs to ensure that TEIs are continuously recalibrating their courses and syllabi to adapt to the changing educational landscape and better prepare teacher education students for the evolving Social Studies curricula, where the integration of pedagogical approaches through instructional design frameworks (IDFs) is the norm. Moreover, they need to be trained to effectively integrate design thinking or design-based thinking into lesson planning, instructional material development, lesson delivery, and assessment, to better contextualize the learning experience [29] and innovate instruction through highly impactful learning resources [30]. A design-thinking framework further enhances this integration by empowering teachers and students to tackle sustainability issues through empathy, creative brainstorming, and iterative problem-solving [34, 35, 36, 37].

#### 4. Conclusion

The pedagogical approaches in Social Studies within the Philippine basic education system are thoughtfully designed to nurture well-rounded, critical, and socially conscious individuals. By blending active learning, collaboration, reflection, and real-world application, these methods empower Filipino learners to navigate and contribute meaningfully to the complexities of society and history. The diversity of these approaches ensures a holistic and enriching educational journey, equipping students with the skills and perspectives needed for lifelong engagement and responsible citizenship. More so, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), under the guidance of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), must ensure that the syllabi and course content for future Social Studies teachers align with both current curricular standards and the evolving demands of the educational landscape.

Future studies on how Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) contextualize and reinforce the integration of prescribed pedagogical approaches in Social Studies through their in-campus and off-campus practices may be explored further to improve the in-service practices provided to them and enrich the curricula and syllabi.

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