

Unveiling Indigenous Livelihood Transformation for Contextualized Social Studies

Learning

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ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by the transformation of the livelihoods of the Talang Mamak community in Talang Sungai Ekok Village due to the expansion of oil palm plantations and forest degradation. Previous research has generally focused on adaptation strategies and policies, while the community's lived experiences and their potential as a source of contextual social studies learning have rarely been examined. This study aims to analyze changes in the livelihoods of the Talang Mamak community and to identify their potential as a source of social studies learning. The study employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. Informants consist of village leaders, traditional leaders, and community members selected through snowball sampling until data saturation is reached. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation, using interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation notes as research instruments. Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, while data validity was ensured through triangulation. The results indicate that shifts in livelihoods occur dynamically due to environmental pressures and economic needs. Oil palm cultivation enhances income stability but also leads to environmental degradation and the erosion of local knowledge. These findings have the potential to serve as a source of contextual social studies learning that strengthens students' understanding of social and environmental change.

Keywords: Talang Mamak, Livelihood Transformation, Learning, Social Studies

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh transformasi mata pencaharian masyarakat Talang Mamak di Desa Talang Sungai Ekok akibat ekspansi perkebunan kelapa sawit dan degradasi hutan. Penelitian sebelumnya umumnya berfokus pada strategi adaptasi dan kebijakan, sedangkan pengalaman hidup masyarakat dan potensinya sebagai sumber pembelajaran IPS kontekstual masih jarang dikaji. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis perubahan mata pencaharian masyarakat Talang Mamak serta mengidentifikasi pemanfaatannya sebagai sumber pembelajaran IPS. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain fenomenologi. Informan terdiri atas tokoh desa, pemimpin adat, dan anggota masyarakat yang dipilih melalui snowball sampling hingga mencapai kejenuhan data. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam semi-terstruktur, observasi lapangan, dan dokumentasi dengan pedoman wawancara, lembar observasi, dan catatan dokumentasi sebagai instrumen penelitian. Analisis data menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman, sedangkan validitas data dijaga melalui triangulasi. Hasil

penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perubahan mata pencaharian berlangsung secara dinamis akibat tekanan lingkungan dan kebutuhan ekonomi. Kelapa sawit meningkatkan stabilitas pendapatan, tetapi juga menyebabkan degradasi lingkungan dan mudurnya pengetahuan lokal. Temuan ini berpotensi menjadi sumber pembelajaran IPS kontekstual yang memperkuat pemahaman siswa terhadap perubahan sosial dan lingkungan.

Kata kunci: *Talang Mamak, Livelihood Transformation, Pembelajaran, Ilmu Sosial*

A. INTRODUCTION

Social Studies education plays a vital role in helping students understand social dynamics, social change, and human-environment relationships. It not only conveys social knowledge but also fosters social awareness, critical thinking, and an understanding of real-life social conditions (Maksum, Widiana, & Marini, 2021). These concepts become more meaningful when connected to students' immediate environments (Rahmah, Hasanah, & Mutiani, 2021). A contextual approach enables students to learn from real social experiences in their daily lives (Aydin-Ceran, 2021; Ernawati, 2021; Jasper-Abowei & Victor-Ishikaku, 2023), in line with contextual teaching and learning that emphasizes connecting academic content with real-world situations (Johnson, 2007). This approach is closely aligned with place-based education, which emphasizes the use of local community experiences and environments as primary learning resources to enhance relevance and meaning in learning (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014).

Meanwhile, local wisdom is a valuable learning resource in social science education due to its close connection to the community (Widodo & Priyanto, 2022). Local knowledge is shaped through communities' long-standing interactions with their natural and social environments it serves as a guide to life that fosters a balanced relationship between humans and nature and supports environmental sustainability and social order (Permatasari, Suprpto, Setiawan, & Setyowati, 2021) these values are reflected in society's daily practices, the management of natural resources, and the patterns of social interaction that develop within a particular community. These values (in Agrariani, 2026) explain that the local knowledge of indigenous communities is the result of collective experience passed down from generation to generation and makes a significant contribution to environmental sustainability and the community's social life. Cultural identity is reflected in and depicted in all activities produced by the local community (Safitri, Widiastuti, & Pratiwi, 2025). Therefore, incorporating local wisdom into social studies education not only enriches the curriculum but also helps students better understand cultural values and environmental sustainability within a local context.

In line with the statement above, the Talang Mamak Tribe, a traditional community that still exists today and maintains its local wisdom in its daily activities. The Talang Mamak Tribe is a local entity residing in Indragiri Hulu Regency, Riau, and relies on the forest for its livelihood and livelihood. Hunting and gathering forest products and polycultural farming are common practices among the Talang Mamak community as a form of forming social

and cultural networks and as a livelihood system (Widodo, 2025). This is a symbol that shows the closeness between humans and nature in carrying out their traditional activities which are clearly passed down from generation to generation as a form of love for their environment (Akalibey et al., 2024; Asrawijaya, 2024; Sarumaha, 2024).

Significant transformations commenced with the rapid expansion of oil palm plantations in Riau Province. Data from (Codingest, 2025; Dinas Komunikasi, Informatika dan Statistik Provinsi Riau, 2025), show that plantation areas reached approximately 3.4-3.64 million hectares in 2023-2024 making Riau the largest oil palm producer in Indonesia. This expansion, primarily led by smallholders and private enterprises, makes a substantial contribution to the regional economy, while concurrently promoting land conversion (Putra & Elida, 2024). As a result, the socioeconomic conditions of local communities, especially indigenous groups, have shifted from forest-based subsistence livelihoods to plantation-based economic systems (Fauzi & Bahri, 2022). This shift, as explained in the livelihood transformation perspective, is influenced by external factors such as policies and economic pressures that shape livelihood strategies (Ding, Xin, Haiguang, Dayi, & Rui, 2022), indicates that changes in resource access and control have significantly reshaped community livelihoods.

Research on changes in individuals' livelihoods can be comprehended through the lens of livelihood transformation. This methodology underscores that livelihood strategies are the outcome of intricate interactions among both internal and external factors. These include natural conditions, policies, and community preferences and capacities (Ding et al., 2022). This change happens when people adapt their livelihood choices to improve well-being in response to evolving social and economic conditions, often selecting more profitable and flexible strategies (Higgins, Arslan, & Winters, 2021; Sunam, Barney, & McCarthy, 2021). Choices, including human, social, financial, physical, and natural capital, are strongly influenced by the possession of livelihood capital. Assess the capacity of communities to access opportunities and respond to pressures (Deng, Li, & Zhang, 2020; Manlosa, Hanspach, Schultner, Dorresteijn, & Fischer, 2019). Changes in livelihood strategies not only impact economic aspects but also modify patterns of production, consumption, and natural resource use, ultimately influencing ecological systems (Xie, Sun, & Song, 2024). This process is dynamic and nonlinear because it involves the interplay among economic needs, policy changes, and evolving environmental conditions (Sinore & Wang, 2024). Understanding the perspective of livelihood transformation is essential for analyzing how communities develop adaptation strategies while also managing the social and ecological impacts of these changes.

As reported in the past studies, Faisal & Wihardyanto (2020) demonstrate that the Talang Mamak community adapts to modernity through transformations in housing forms, spatial arrangements, and building materials while maintaining their local needs and traditions. Mayenti, Hakam, Malihah & Mupid (2024) reveal that a learning model based on Talang Mamak local wisdom significantly enhances students' moral self-efficacy and

contributes theoretically through the reinforcement of a communal-transcendental ethical dimension. Based on research by Firmanda, Nurbani, Wafi, Manik, & Supaat (2025), the existence of conflict between state conservation policies and the forest management practices of the Talang Mamak community is primarily due to weak recognition of customary land rights. Widodo (2025) revealed that forest degradation, economic pressures, and the success of oil palm plantations in the surrounding area significantly influence the livelihood dynamics of the Talang Mamak Tribe in Sungai Ekok Village. Furthermore, environmental concerns in Indonesia are frequently influenced by constrained ecological awareness and knowledge. This underscores the significance of the Talang Mamak tribe's indigenous wisdom in enhancing ecological understanding through social studies education (Rege & Lee, 2021).

The results of the previous research review that have been presented still contain research gaps that show (1) an understanding of the views of indigenous peoples in managing transformed livelihoods that have not been discussed phenomenologically; (2) previous research studies have not discussed and utilized this as contextual learning material in social science lessons; (3) previous research has not discussed the theory of livelihood transformation according to Ding et al., (2022); (4) Previous findings that studied the Talang Mamak Tribe still discussed economic-based changes and still had a structural perspective so that the discussions found have not been explained thoroughly. Based on the review of the research gaps that have been described, the novelty of this research arises, which includes (1) revealing more deeply the relationship between the role of the Talang Mamak tribe which is reviewed from the perspective of livelihood transformation Ding et al., (2022); (2) using the phenomenological method as a tool for expressing research results so that it provides more in-depth findings and can answer problems in more detail compared to previous methods; (3) this research presents novelty by integrating the findings of the research with social science learning sources.

Based on the gaps and novelties outlined above, this research is crucial in response to the shifting livelihoods of the Talang Mamak tribe due to ongoing social change. This is crucial because these changes could affect the sustainability of local cultural identity and the socio-economic resilience of indigenous communities. Meanwhile, contextual teaching materials are also needed as reference sources for use in the learning process. This research helps bridge the gap between social reality and educational practice by promoting the integration of local wisdom into Social Studies education, and encouraging more critical, reflective, and contextually appropriate learning.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The Talang Mamak community's livelihoods seem to have shifted from a forest-based polyculture system to a monoculture, driven by the expansion of oil palm plantations. This study employs a qualitative, phenomenological method to better understand the process. This method enables researchers to investigate lived experiences and the personal meanings the community attributes to these changes. (Creswell, 2019)

states that phenomenology aims to understand the essence of an individual's experience of a phenomenon; thus, this approach is considered appropriate for examining the social reality of the Talang Mamak community in Sungai Ekok Village, Indragiri Hulu Regency.

The research subjects were selected using snowball sampling to ensure that the data collected was more accurate and that more detailed information could be obtained (Campbell et al., 2020). The researcher collected data in the field until data saturation was reached. Based on the method used, the informants were identified and summarized in the following subject frame table.

Table 1. Subject Frame

No	Subject	Frame (Role in the Study)	Description
1	Village Head	Formal leader	Understands village governance, development policies, and socio-economic changes
2	Batin / Customary Leader	Cultural leader	Maintains traditional values and observes cultural impacts of livelihood transformation
3	Talang Mamak Community Members	Main actors of livelihood transformation	Directly experience the shift from forest-based subsistence to a market-oriented economy
4	Community Members (with diverse work experiences)	Adaptation agents	Represent various livelihood strategies such as oil palm cultivation, migration, and other economic activities
5	Key Informants / Community Figures	Social intermediaries	Provide broader perspectives on social dynamics and community changes

Source: Author's elaboration based on research findings (2026)

Data collection involved in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, with interviews as the main method for exploring the informants' experiences and perspectives (Creswell, 2019). Researchers conduct observations to fulfill data needs by directly observing community activities, which include: (1) livelihood patterns; (2) interactions carried out; (3) their environment. Documentation was used as supporting data, in the form of village documents and archives, to reinforce and provide material for deepening the analysis of findings and strengthening evidence of changes in livelihoods and social conditions within the community. After collecting the data, an analysis was conducted according to the Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014) model that includes data collection, data reduction, interpreting the data and drawing conclusions. To obtain qualified data quality, researchers used triangulation of sources and techniques, which were to analyze the experiences of the Talang Mamak Tribe regarding changes in livelihoods and analyze them as a source of contextual learning insights in social studies lessons.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Livelihood Transformation Experience of the Talang Mamak Community

The transformation of the Talang Mamak community's livelihoods, as demonstrated in the research, is a process that occurs and is influenced by environmental pressures, the community's economic needs and changes in access to surrounding resources. This is reflected in the shift in community practices moving from traditional forest utilisation to market-oriented strategies. This change has had social, cultural and environmental impacts shifting the community's approach from traditional practices to an economy-oriented one. For further explanation, the stages of livelihood transformation related to field findings are described in the following table.

Table 2. Livelihood Transformation Process of the Talang Mamak Community

Stage	Process Description	Key Aspects
1	Traditional Livelihood System	Forest-based subsistence (rubber tapping, rattan harvesting), dependence on natural capital
2	Environmental Pressure	Forest degradation, reduced access to natural resources
3	Livelihood Transformation	Shift to oil palm cultivation as an adaptive strategy
4	Economic Change & Capital Shift	More stable income, increased role of financial and physical capital
5	Socio-Cultural & Ecological Impact	Loss of local knowledge, cultural change, environmental degradation
6	Adaptation Outcome	Improved well-being alongside sustainability and cultural challenges

Source: Author's elaboration based on research findings (2026)

As Informant MJ noted, rubber tapping takes hours and requires consistent effort, while Informant SI stated that rattan harvesting is a risky and labor-intensive activity. These activities clearly demonstrate that long-standing economic activities rely on forests as the primary source of livelihood capital, thus creating a strong dependence on natural resources. Environmental pressures, such as declining resource quality and difficult access for indigenous communities, also contribute to the weakening of traditional income sources. When examined from a livelihood transformation perspective, this issue demonstrates the interconnectedness of external factors such as environmental change and policy developments, which have significantly impacted livelihood strategies (Ding et al., 2022).

The shift from traditional livelihoods to oil palm, as explained by informants MJ and Ma, is a condition of local community adaptation to the changes that have occurred, so that it is considered a way to survive and gain long-term benefits and, according to the community, provides high flexibility to meet their living needs. As stated by Higgins et al., dan Sunam et al., (2021), who describe socio-economic responses that create future opportunities and are practical and durable. With this livelihood transformation, the

decline in natural capital such as forests is lost due to the fulfillment of financial capital through oil palm cultivation to meet the very large market (Deng et al., 2020; Manlosa et al., 2019).

Informant SA stated that the changes that have occurred arise from the social, cultural, and emotional impacts that have occurred. The loss of forests is not only a symbol of real change, but also the loss of local knowledge previously held by the community and the erosion of traditions and spiritual ties between local communities and nature that have been preserved previously. Based on this statement, natural resources and traditional human interactions with nature have been sacrificed due to the transformation of livelihoods and economic fulfillment of the community (Xie et al., 2024). This process occurs gradually, as stated by Sinore & Wang (2024), which gradually adapts to local conditions.

The Meaning of Change in Community Life: An Examination of the Talang Mamak Community in Talang Sungai Ekok Village.

The results of direct interviews with informant RA indicate that an increase in income has been achieved through oil palm cultivation as a means of survival. This became the informant's choice due to the limited availability of forest resources, which were insufficient to meet basic living needs; consequently, this led to a shift in livelihoods perceived as better able to meet the community's essential needs. This change in livelihood represents an adaptive response to evolving environmental conditions and economic demands, which remain primary necessities (Higgins et al., 2021; Sunam et al., 2021). As noted by Ding et al., (2022), meeting needs evolves alongside shifting economic demands and environmental conditions. Transitioning to the oil palm sector can transform economic conditions rather than continuing to rely on natural resources as before (Deng et al., 2020; Manlosa et al., 2019).

Based on research findings shows a shift in community orientation from fulfilling subsistence needs to efforts to obtain a more stable income. These changes are primarily caused by ongoing deforestation, economic pressures, and the expansion of oil palm plantations (Widodo, 2025). Researchers also found that the impact is felt not only in economic terms but also in cultural and ecological dimensions, which significantly affect the erosion of local knowledge as forest plants used for traditional medicine become increasingly scarce, while river quality is also beginning to decline due to environmentally unsustainable fishing practices. Therefore, the transformation of livelihoods clearly reflects changes in subsistence strategies, local knowledge, and the relationship between communities and the environment (Firmanda et al., 2025; Rege & Lee, 2021; Xie et al., 2024).

Researchers also found that shifts in livelihoods within indigenous communities are gradual processes that allow them to adapt to the community's needs in meeting their economic requirements, by leveraging their knowledge of cultural values and the increasingly changing environmental conditions (Sinore & Wang, 2024). This is seen as an

opportunity to improve the economic well-being of local communities; however, indigenous communities also recognize that the loss of their customary forests constitutes a destruction of their traditions and their connection to nature. These findings underscore those deliberate efforts to transform livelihoods not only open up new economic opportunities but also trigger cultural shifts and the loss of environmental sustainability.

Discussion

Adaptation Strategies in the Perspective of Sustainable Livelihood About the Talang Mamak Community in Talang Sungai Ekok Village

The Talang Mamak community has been very adaptive to changes in livelihood in Sungai Ekok village. It is not merely a reactive capability but an active survival tactic that exploits the available resources. The sustainable livelihoods approach suggests that the capacity of a community to sustain its livelihood depends essentially on how it manages the different types of capital, e.g. human, natural, financial, physical and social capital (Chambers, 2022). The Talang Mamak community has not only shifted the types of work they do but has also redefined their sources of livelihood in response to ongoing environmental changes. This is evident in the human capital of this community, manifested in their ability to master new skills, as exemplified by their activities in managing oil palm plantations. Their experience working far from home has allowed them to acquire knowledge and work skills that they apply in their daily lives, as noted by informant LA. Based on data gathered from real-world field experiences regarding the distinctive characteristics of a community with limited access to formal education and limited capacity to understand its own environmental context, it turns out that this community is not passive but actively develops its capabilities to cope with change (Ellis, 2024).

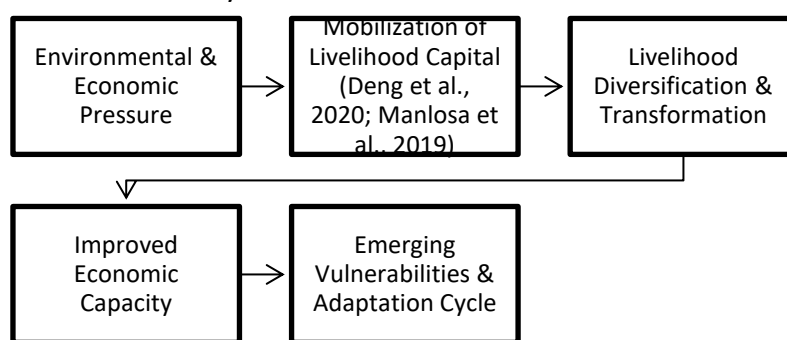
The decrease in forest areas has caused a significant change in the use of natural resources. Land that was previously part of the forest ecosystem is now converted into oil palm plantations, which is the main source of livelihood for local communities. MJ and RA informants said forest products used to be plentiful but are now increasingly scarce, making it difficult for communities to rely on them. Such a situation is a transition from a diverse ecosystem to a monoculture in the use of natural resources driven by economic reasons (Dwiartama, Akbar, Ariefiansyah, Maury, & Ramadhan, 2024). This alteration consequently leads to a decline in biodiversity and a diminishment of the forest's ecological functions that sustain these communities (Ding et al., 2022).

As economic needs of the community have increased, both financial and physical capital have increased. The steps taken to source other forms of income such as moving to a new place or finding work in other industries, are evidence that economic diversification strategies are being used to reduce dependence on one form of income. This stage, as explained in the sustainable livelihoods framework where financial and physical capital influences access to economic opportunities (Deng et al., 2020; Manlosa et al., 2019), means that the community is actively re-arranging its livelihood strategies to enhance resilience. The use of basic technologies such as motorised carts (obrok) for the delivery of

palm oil products is an indication of the capacity to adapt to technological changes that improve job efficiency and promote livelihood sustainability.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher observed that the economic strategies adopted by the Talang Mamak community align with the social values and traditions that continue to be upheld, making them an integral part of their daily lives. For instance, the value of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) remains preserved to this day, despite adaptations to changing conditions and circumstances, and the continued role of the traditional leader (*Patih*) as a symbol and a figure playing a crucial role in social control within the indigenous community. Strong social bonds and networks enable the community to better navigate various economic and social challenges (Deng et al., 2020; Manlosa et al., 2019). While oil palm cultivation does offer opportunities to improve the well-being of local communities, challenges have emerged along the way such as price volatility and ongoing environmental degradation demonstrating that the people of Talang Mamak are striving to balance economic needs with efforts to preserve natural resources.

The analysis above represents the process of adaptation that occurred within Talang Mamak community in one abstraction flow line as follows:



Source: Author's elaboration based on research findings (2026)

Figure 1. Adaptation Process of the Talang Mamak Community

Livelihood Transformation as a Source of Social Studies Learning During Talang Mamak Community in Talang Sungai Ekok Village

Deforestation and environmental degradation, economic hardship and shifts in livelihood patterns within communities offer valuable insights into broader social and environmental changes, demonstrating how local realities can serve as a foundation for meaningful learning in the social sciences. Changes in the livelihoods of the Talang Mamak community in Sungai Ekok Village demonstrate the importance of linking educational content to real-world applications, and this also illustrates the complex relationship between humans, the environment, and social systems (Johnson, 2007). The phenomena in Sungai Ekok Village serve as an example of abstract social concepts manifested in concrete form.

An understanding of the social changes that have taken place, as part of the study of the social sciences, can be accurately conveyed through phenomenological methods, which can be explained in detail based directly on the community's experiences.

can explore the relationship between environmental changes, government policies, and the economy, thereby making complex concepts easier to understand and relate to everyday life (Micallef & Newton, 2022). The shift from a traditional forest-based subsistence system to a modern oil palm plantation economy can serve as a real-world example of social transformation within a community. Real social transformation is evident in the Talang Mamak Tribe, which, in fact, does not occur sequentially; changes are influenced by pressure within the community, such as the ongoing expansion of oil palm plantations and economic policies that compel society to change. Deng et al., (2020) and Ding et al., (2022) found that interactions among environmental conditions, access to capital, and community adaptability shape livelihood strategies. This interaction prompts local communities to develop new responses regarding their ownership of natural, social, and financial capital. These responses must be quickly adapted to changing conditions (Carmen et al., 2022; Shah et al., 2023). The changing relationship of the Talang Mamak community with the forest and its declining natural resources exemplifies the idea of human interaction with the environment. The resulting transformation has had dual consequences increased oil palm cultivation, coupled with environmental damage and a decline in the preservation of local traditions. These changes clearly illustrate the trade-off between community economic gain and socio-ecological sustainability. This, in turn, makes livelihood strategies a significant influence on community production and resource-use patterns. This reinforces their value as contextual learning resources, as real-life social phenomena enable students to more effectively understand complex social dynamics (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014; Johnson, 2007). Maksum et al., (2021) states that social studies education aims to help students critically understand social realities through the analysis of phenomena occurring in society.

Values learned from communal experiences are very crucial for social studies education. The way that communities adapt to change reveals their ability to endure in unpredictable circumstances. One might see social resilience in attempts to sustain mutual cooperation and cultural norms even during economic upheaval. Modernisation and cultural preservation interact and form a value conflict, which pushes pupils to think critically. The contextual method assists students to understand concepts better and build empathy and social awareness by connecting their learning to real-world contexts (Hidayana & Lianingsih, 2025; Johnson, 2007).

The case of Sungai Ekok Village demonstrates that changes in community livelihoods can be a beneficial educational resource in social studies if there is a presentation to link the phenomenon with subjects and activities in social studies. The chart below shows the potential of these livelihood changes to be used as a learning instrument in social studies teaching.

Table 3. Utilizing Livelihood Transformation as a Source of Social Studies Learning

No	A Real Phenomenon on the Sungai Ekok	Social Studies Curriculum Materials	Learning Objectives
1	The transition from hunting and gathering to oil palm cultivation	Social change	Understanding the Process of Social Change
2	Deforestation and drying up of rivers	Human-Environment Interaction	Explaining the impact of human activities on the environment
3	The transition from a subsistence economy to a market economy	Economic activities	Identifying changes in the economic system
4	The disappearance of traditional medicine	Cultural changes	Recognizing the importance of cultural preservation
5	Community adaptation (migration, oil palm cultivation, etc.)	Adaptation strategy	Analyzing survival strategies
6	Community cooperation and the role of traditional customs	Social structure	Understanding the functions of social institutions
7	The palm oil dilemma and forests	Social conflict	Developing critical thinking skills

Source: Author's elaboration based on research findings (2026)

The phenomena of livelihood change of the Talang Mamak community can be immediately integrated into social studies teaching through a variety of contextual, real-world, experience-based activities. This way, students are not only able to understand the subject conceptually but also able to apply it to the social reality that occurs in their society (Widiastuti, Rosardi, Dhewantoro, & Anam, 2026). All the phenomena in Sungai Ekok Village can be related to the theme of social studies and developed into interesting learning activities. As a result, social studies education has become more meaningful, more engaging, and more useful in everyday life.

Researchers observed that changes in the livelihoods of the Talang Mamak community are not merely a social phenomenon; they also provide educational insights that can serve as a resource for learning social sciences based on local expertise. Integrating local phenomena into the educational process can help students understand that the social sciences are closely related to daily life and influenced by real-world events that students face (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014). This approach can also foster critical thinking in students, helping them not only recognize the changes taking place but also encouraging them to evaluate and seek solutions to the challenges they will face in the future. Students can enhance their ability to analyze and evaluate events determining whether they present pros and cons regarding the phenomena described in the research findings including understanding their impact on environmental justice and the sustainability of the customs and local culture of the Talang Mamak community. The learning experience equips students with practical tools for thoughtful decision-making (Arvai, Campbell, Baird, &

Rivers, 2004). This approach promotes critical thinking, social awareness, and decision-making skills in community life, aligning with the goals of social studies education to build knowledge (Phinla, 2024).

These findings suggest that using local phenomena as a basis for social studies education can effectively connect theory and practice (Allen, Kavanagh, & Ni Cassaithe, 2024). The overall transformation of the Talang Mamak community's livelihoods demonstrates that interactions stemming from both external and internal pressures give rise to social change within the community. The livelihood transformation perspective offers a systematic way to understand the process of social change in the Talang Mamak community. Meanwhile, through a location-based, context-based learning approach and local wisdom, the local community can strengthen the connection between learning materials and phenomena in society. The full integration of these two approaches can support conceptual understanding, reinforce learning materials, and enhance students' analytical skills as they examine the social realities directly within the local community. Lessons become more meaningful when students connect what they are learning to real life situations in their neighbourhood. Through exploring the changes in the means of living of the Talang Mamak people, students can investigate the complex nature of social change, including economic, cultural and environmental issues. This strategy (1) increases students' conceptual comprehension, (2) encourages critical and reflective thinking and (3) increases their ability to analyse local social concerns. Thus, social studies that incorporate local wisdom offer unique cognitive and analytical advantages.

These results show that employing local occurrences in social science teaching is a good way to connect (Allen et al., 2024). The complete transformation of the livelihoods of the Talang Mamak village indicates that the combination of the external and internal factors triggers social change in the community. The perspective of livelihood transformation is a systematic technique to understand the process of social change for the Talang Mamak community. The combination of the location-based and context-based learning strategy and the local wisdom from the community can increase the relationship between learning materials and phenomena in the community.(Aydin-Ceran, 2021; Ernawati, 2021; Jasper-Abowei & Victor-Ishikaku, 2023). The full integration of these two approaches may help to improve the conceptual comprehension, reinforce the learning material and develop the analytical abilities of the students through direct investigation of social realities in the local community. When students relate their learning to real-life situations in their communities, teachings become more relevant (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014). (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014). The analysis of changes in the life of the Talang Mamak community enables students to grasp the multifaceted dimensions of social development, including economic, cultural and environmental issues. The following conclusions can be derived; (1) it enhances students' knowledge of topics; (2) it promotes critical and reflective thinking; and (3) it strengthens their capacity to analyse local social concerns. Thus social studies teachings based on local wisdom provide particular cognitive and analytical advantages.

Implications for the Development of Social Studies Education

The research findings indicate that the experiences of the Talang Mamak indigenous community hold great potential for use as a source of contextual learning in Social Studies (IPS) classes. The transformation of livelihoods in Sungai Ekok Village illustrates tangible social changes that are directly related to Social Studies content, such as social change, human interaction with the environment, and community economic activities. When local phenomena are used as learning resources, students can understand the material more easily because it relates to the lives they are familiar with in their daily routines (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014; Johnson, 2007). Through case studies and project-based learning, students are encouraged to observe, analyze, and reflect on social issues in their environment (Khalil, 2025; Maksum et al., 2021). Additionally, local values such as mutual cooperation, adaptability, and concern for the balance between humans and nature can serve as tools for character development and strengthening students' social identity. Integrating local wisdom into social studies learning not only enriches knowledge but also fosters awareness of the importance of sustainably preserving culture and the environment (Silvano et al., 2023).

These findings suggest that social studies education should be more contextual and social in its approach through the inclusion of local occurrences in learning (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014). This approach moves the emphasis in learning away from simple memorisation towards a more meaningful knowledge, analysis and reflection on real social issues, therefore making education more meaningful and relevant. Hence, the reliance on local potential as a main learning resource is vital in bridging theory and practice, in developing students' critical consciousness and adaptive ability to respond to complicated social realities.

D. CONCLUSION

Researchers observed that changes in the livelihoods of the Talang Mamak community are not merely a social phenomenon; they also provide educational insights that can serve as a resource for learning social sciences based on local expertise. Integrating local phenomena into the educational process can help students understand that the social sciences are closely related to daily life and influenced by real-world events that students face (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014). This approach can also foster critical thinking in students, helping them not only recognize the changes taking place but also encouraging them to evaluate and seek solutions to the challenges they will face in the future. Students can enhance their ability to analyze and evaluate events determining whether they present pros and cons regarding the phenomena described in the research findings including understanding their impact on environmental justice and the sustainability of the customs and local culture of the Talang Mamak community.

The discussion also recommended that social science education should incorporate local examples through the use of case-based teaching materials, storytelling, and active learning approaches. Teachers should enrich the learning process with real-life examples

from their immediate surroundings, and curriculum designers should integrate local knowledge and customs into learning materials. Policymakers can assist by providing training, resources, and policies that promote contextual learning and sustainable education. Stakeholders and indigenous communities at the local level need to balance economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. Further research is needed to expand the application of these methods to other communities and to assess the long-term benefits of this education.

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