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## Enhancing social studies achievement through make-a-match cooperative learning

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### Abstract

This classroom action research aimed to improve social studies learning outcomes for Grade VII students at SMPN 1 Batusangkar through the implementation of the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model. The study involved 32 students and was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. Data were collected through observation sheets and achievement tests. The findings revealed a significant improvement in both student participation and academic performance. Classical learning mastery increased from 28% in the pre-action stage to 47% in Cycle I and 84% in Cycle II. The average score also improved from 69 in Cycle I to 78 in Cycle II. The Make-a-Match model fostered active engagement, collaboration, and motivation, contributing to better conceptual understanding. These results indicate that the Make-a-Match strategy is effective in enhancing social studies achievement and classroom interaction at the junior secondary level.

### Keywords

Classroom action research; cooperative learning; learning outcomes; Make-a-Match model; social studies education.

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## Introduction

The quality of education plays a fundamental role in shaping a nation's human resources and determining its competitiveness in the global era. In the context of rapid technological development and information accessibility, education systems are required to transfer knowledge and to foster critical thinking, collaboration, and social responsibility among students. Education is widely recognized as a powerful instrument for social transformation and national development (Wiratama et al., 2023). Therefore, improving the effectiveness of classroom learning remains a central concern in efforts to enhance educational quality.

At the junior secondary level, social studies (Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial/IPS) serve as a compulsory subject designed to develop students' understanding of social life, citizenship values, and democratic participation. Social studies integrate concepts from various social science disciplines, including history, geography, economics, sociology, and political science, and adapts them pedagogically to suit students' developmental levels (Tarsini, 2022; Waluyati, 2017). Through this subject, students are expected to develop logical and critical thinking skills, social awareness, and the ability to interact constructively in a pluralistic society. Consequently, effective social studies instruction is essential for preparing students to become responsible and active members of society.

Learning, as a process, involves deliberate, systematic efforts to change students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Syukriyah (2024) defines learning as a conscious and intentional process aimed at producing meaningful behavioral change. Similarly, Warif (2019) emphasizes that learning requires deliberate efforts from educators to motivate students to engage actively in instructional activities. Learning outcomes, therefore, are not merely the result of content delivery but are shaped by the quality of interaction between teachers, students, and instructional strategies. According to Ulfah and Arifudin (2021), learning outcomes encompass cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, reflecting comprehensive student development.

Despite the subject's strategic importance, learning outcomes in social studies in Indonesia remain a concern. Reports from national assessments, including the National Examination (UN) and the Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM), indicate that students' performance in social studies-related competencies is still below expectations. In addition, survey data show that many students perceive social studies as less engaging and difficult to relate to their daily lives. Such perceptions may negatively influence students' motivation and participation, which are critical factors in achieving meaningful learning outcomes (Rahman, 2021).

Classroom observations further reveal that social studies instruction often remains teacher-centered. Teachers tend to rely heavily on lecture-based approaches, limiting opportunities for student interaction and active engagement. Syaparuddin et al. (2020) argue that teacher-dominated instruction restricts students' learning experiences and reduces their opportunity to construct knowledge independently. Similarly, Pratiwi et al. (2023) found that limited variation in teaching methods contributes significantly to low student motivation and suboptimal academic achievement. When instructional practices emphasize passive information reception, students may struggle to develop a deep understanding of concepts and fail to connect learning materials to real-life contexts.

Another contributing factor to low learning outcomes is insufficient student involvement during the teaching and learning process. [Mardani et al. \(2021\)](#) reported that limited student participation in classroom activities leads to weak conceptual understanding and lower academic performance. Active engagement is essential in social studies learning because the subject requires students to analyze social phenomena, evaluate multiple perspectives, and apply concepts to real-world situations. Without meaningful participation, learning remains superficial and fails to foster higher-order thinking skills.

The limited use of engaging instructional media also affects students' motivation and comprehension. [Mu'minin and Humaisi \(2021\)](#) demonstrated that integrating attractive learning media can significantly enhance students' motivation and understanding. However, in many classrooms, instructional media are underutilized and learning activities are confined to textbook reading and question-and-answer sessions. As a result, students may perceive social studies as monotonous and irrelevant, leading to decreased enthusiasm and academic achievement.

Given these challenges, innovative and student-centered learning models are urgently needed to improve social studies learning outcomes. Cooperative learning approaches have been widely recognized as effective strategies for promoting active participation, collaboration, and deeper understanding. The Make-a-Match model is one cooperative learning model that has shown good results. Developed as a game-based cooperative strategy, Make-a-Match requires students to find matching pairs of question-and-answer cards within a specified time limit, encouraging active involvement and peer interaction ([Ralahalu, 2016](#)).

The Make-a-Match model emphasizes collaborative learning in small, heterogeneous groups. According to [Sari et al. \(2020\)](#), this model fosters cooperation, communication, and shared responsibility among students. Through interactive matching activities, students review concepts, clarify misunderstandings, and reinforce their knowledge in an enjoyable atmosphere. [Rahmayanti and Koeswanti \(2017\)](#) further explain that Make-a-Match facilitates active, creative, and meaningful learning experiences that strengthen students' cognitive structures and long-term retention.

In addition to enhancing conceptual understanding, the Make-a-Match model increases learning motivation. [Palalas \(2021\)](#) found that this cooperative strategy encourages students to review and evaluate learning materials in an interactive and engaging manner. By integrating elements of play and competition, the model reduces classroom anxiety and stimulates students' enthusiasm. Moreover, cooperative learning environments have been shown to improve social skills, mutual respect, and positive interdependence ([Fauhah & Rosy, 2020](#)).

Theoretically, the Make-a-Match model aligns with constructivist learning principles, which emphasize active knowledge construction through social interaction. When students are required to match questions and answers collaboratively, they are not merely memorizing information but actively processing and negotiating meaning. This process supports the development of higher-order thinking skills and strengthens both cognitive and affective learning outcomes.

Among grade VII students at SMPN 1 Batusangkar, preliminary observations indicated low student participation, limited interaction, and unsatisfactory academic performance in social studies. Many students appeared passive during lessons, and only a small proportion achieved the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). These conditions indicate that there must be instructional improvement to enhance both student engagement and academic achievement.

Based on the theoretical foundations and empirical evidence discussed above, implementing the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model represents a strategic effort to enhance social studies achievement. By creating an interactive, collaborative, and enjoyable learning environment, this model is expected to increase student participation, strengthen conceptual understanding, and improve overall learning outcomes. Therefore, this study aims to enhance social studies achievement through the implementation of the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model among Grade VII students at SMPN 1 Batusangkar. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of effective instructional practices in social studies education and provide practical recommendations for teachers seeking to improve classroom interaction and academic performance.

## Literature Review

### *Learning outcomes*

Learning outcomes refer to measurable changes in students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that result from participation in instructional activities. These changes reflect the extent to which educational objectives have been achieved. Aditya (2016) defines learning outcomes as students' abilities obtained after receiving learning experiences. Similarly, Sulastri et al. (2015) describe learning outcomes as behavioral changes resulting from the learning process, including shifts from not knowing to knowing and from not understanding to understanding.

Learning outcomes are closely associated with instructional goals. Rahman (2021) emphasizes that learning is a deliberate effort to produce relatively permanent changes in behavior through structured educational activities. Therefore, successful learning outcomes indicate that students have achieved the intended instructional objectives. In classroom practice, learning outcomes are commonly assessed through various forms of evaluation, including written tests, performance tasks, and observation of attitudes and skills.

Contemporary educational frameworks categorize learning outcomes into three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Ulfah and Arifudin (2021) state that effective assessment must encompass these domains to ensure holistic student development. The cognitive domain concerns knowledge acquisition and intellectual skills; the affective domain concerns attitudes, values, and motivation; and the psychomotor domain concerns practical and physical skills. Ningsih et al. (2024) further argue that learning outcomes must align with curriculum standards and institutional competency targets to ensure educational relevance and quality.

Several factors influence learning outcomes. Syafi'i et al. (2018) classify these factors into internal and external categories. Internal factors include physical condition, intelligence, attention, interest, motivation, readiness, and psychological maturity. External factors involve family background, parental support, socioeconomic conditions, cultural environment, and instructional quality. In addition, classroom management and teacher competence significantly affect student achievement (Hidayat et al., 2020). Effective teachers create supportive learning environments, use appropriate instructional strategies, and encourage active participation, all of which contribute positively to learning outcomes.

In summary, learning outcomes represent comprehensive behavioral changes that occur after structured instructional processes. They reflect not only mastery of knowledge but also

the development of attitudes and skills aligned with curriculum objectives. Therefore, improving learning outcomes requires strategic instructional design and student-centered learning approaches.

### *Social studies learning*

Social studies (Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial/IPS) is a compulsory subject at primary and secondary education levels in Indonesia. It integrates concepts from various social science disciplines, including history, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology, and political science. According to Waluyati (2017), the National Council for the social studies (NCSS) defines social studies as an integrated study of social sciences and humanities designed to promote civic competence. This integration aims to prepare students to become informed and responsible citizens.

Tarsini (2022) explains that social studies in schools involve simplifying, adapting, and pedagogically modifying social science concepts to match students' developmental stages. The subject emphasizes human interaction within social and environmental contexts, encouraging students to understand social realities and respond constructively to societal challenges. Therefore, social studies learning is not limited to memorizing facts but involves critical thinking, problem-solving, and value formation.

The objectives of social studies education include developing students' understanding of social concepts, fostering logical and critical thinking skills, nurturing social awareness, and strengthening communication and collaboration abilities. In addition, social studies promote democratic values and prepares students to participate effectively at local, national, and global levels (Tarsini, 2022; Waluyati, 2017).

However, previous studies indicate that social studies instruction often remains teacher-centered, limiting opportunities for student engagement. Pratiwi et al. (2023) found that monotonous teaching methods reduce student motivation and hinder academic achievement. Similarly, Mardani et al. (2021) reported that limited student participation negatively affects conceptual understanding. These findings suggest the need for interactive and cooperative learning strategies to enhance social studies learning outcomes. Thus, effective social studies instruction requires innovative approaches that actively involve students in constructing knowledge, discussing social issues, and applying concepts to real-life contexts.

### *Make-a-match learning model*

The Make-a-Match learning model is a cooperative learning strategy designed to promote active engagement and collaboration among students. This model, developed by Lorna Curran, involves matching question and answer cards within a specified time limit. Sari et al. (2020) describe Make-a-Match as a variation of cooperative learning in which students work in small, heterogeneous groups to find matching concept pairs.

Fauhah and Rosy (2020) explain that the Make-a-Match model encourages students to search for corresponding answers or related concepts through an interactive card game. This approach integrates elements of play (edutainment) into the learning process, making classroom activities more engaging and motivating. Rahmayanti and Koeswanti (2017) add that the model facilitates active, creative, and meaningful learning, enabling students to retain concepts more effectively in their cognitive structures.

The primary objectives of the Make-a-Match model include deepening students' understanding of learning materials, encouraging exploration of concepts, promoting active participation, and creating enjoyable learning experiences. Through collaborative matching activities, students are required to think quickly, analyze relationships between concepts, and communicate effectively with peers. This process enhances cognitive development and strengthens social skills such as cooperation, negotiation, and responsibility.

Research indicates that cooperative learning strategies, including Make-a-Match, positively influence student motivation and academic performance. Palalas (2021) found that this model improves learning outcomes by increasing student engagement and participation. Moreover, the interactive nature of Make-a-Match supports constructivist learning principles, in which knowledge is actively constructed through social interaction and problem-solving.

The implementation steps of the Make-a-Match model generally include: (1) preparing question and answer cards; (2) organizing students into groups; (3) distributing cards; (4) setting a time limit for matching pairs; (5) evaluating correct matches; and (6) providing feedback and reinforcement. These structured steps ensure that learning objectives remain aligned with classroom activities.

The advantages of the Make-a-Match model include increased student enthusiasm, dynamic peer collaboration, equitable participation, and improved conceptual understanding. However, successful implementation requires careful planning, clear instructions, and effective classroom management to ensure that all students are actively involved. Teachers must monitor the process to maintain focus on learning objectives rather than on the game element alone. In conclusion, the Make-a-Match learning model is an effective cooperative strategy that integrates cognitive engagement, social interaction, and motivational elements. By fostering active participation and collaborative problem-solving, this model has strong potential to enhance social studies learning outcomes at the junior secondary level.

## **Methodology**

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design to enhance social studies learning outcomes through the implementation of the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model in Grade VII at SMPN 1 Batusangkar. Classroom Action Research was selected because it allows teachers to systematically identify instructional problems, apply targeted interventions, and evaluate their effectiveness within authentic classroom settings. CAR emphasizes reflective cycles aimed at improving instructional practices and student achievement (Nurgiansah, 2021). It is particularly appropriate for addressing practical classroom challenges and fostering continuous improvement (Nurgiansah et al., 2021). The participants consisted of 32 Grade VII students (10 male and 22 female) enrolled in the 2023/2024 academic year. The research was conducted during social studies lessons focused on Socialization in Society.

The study was carried out in two cycles. Each cycle included four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. During the planning stage, the researcher prepared lesson plans integrating the Make-a-Match model, designed instructional materials, developed question-and-answer cards, and constructed observation sheets and achievement tests. In the action stage, the Make-a-Match strategy was implemented by engaging students in cooperative matching activities within a structured time limit. Students worked collaboratively to identify correct concept pairs, promoting active participation and peer interaction.

In the observation stage, student engagement and classroom dynamics were systematically recorded using structured observation sheets. The reflection stage involved analyzing results from each cycle to identify improvements in student activity and academic performance, and to identify necessary adjustments for the subsequent cycle. Data were collected through observation and written achievement tests administered at the end of each cycle. Observation data measured students' active participation, collaboration, and responsiveness during the learning process. Test results were used to evaluate cognitive learning outcomes. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including comparison of mean scores and the percentage of classical mastery across the pre-action stage, Cycle I, and Cycle II.

The criteria for research success were defined as follows: (1) at least 80% of students demonstrated active participation during classroom activities, and (2) at least 80% of students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) score of 68. The intervention was considered effective if both indicators were achieved by the end of Cycle II. Through this structured CAR design, the study systematically evaluated the effectiveness of the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model in improving student engagement and social studies achievement.

## **Findings**

This section presents the findings of the classroom action research conducted to enhance social studies achievement through the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model in Grade VII at SMPN 1 Batusangkar. The findings are organized into three stages: pre-action, Cycle I, and Cycle II. The analysis focuses on student learning outcomes, classical mastery, and classroom engagement.

### ***Pre-action***

The pre-action stage was conducted to identify initial classroom conditions before implementing the Make-a-Match model. Observation results revealed that the learning process was predominantly teacher-centered. Instruction was delivered in a one-way format, with limited interaction between the teacher and students. Students tended to listen passively, and only a small number actively responded to questions or participated in discussions.

Out of the 32 students, only approximately 6 (around 20%) demonstrated active participation during the lesson. Most students appeared disengaged, frequently talking among themselves or showing limited attention to the instructional process. The learning atmosphere was less conducive to meaningful interaction and collaborative learning.

In terms of academic performance, only nine students (28%) achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) score of 68, while 23 students (72%) scored below the required

standard. The classical mastery percentage at this stage was therefore 28%, indicating that most students had not yet achieved satisfactory learning outcomes.

These findings confirmed the need for instructional improvement. The low participation rate and limited academic achievement suggested that conventional teaching methods were insufficient to promote active engagement and conceptual understanding. Therefore, the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model was introduced as an intervention to address these challenges.

### *Cycle I*

Cycle I was implemented in two meetings, each lasting  $3 \times 35$  minutes. The Make-a-Match learning model was applied by organizing students into cooperative groups and having them engage in question-and-answer card-matching activities within a predetermined time limit. The researcher acted as the classroom teacher, while the subject teacher served as an observer. During Cycle I, improvements were observed in both classroom dynamics and student achievement. Students began to show greater enthusiasm during the matching activities. Although some students remained hesitant and required guidance, the model's interactive nature encouraged greater participation than in the pre-action stage.

The average score in Cycle I increased to 69. At the end of the cycle, 15 out of 32 students achieved scores equal to or above the KKM, resulting in a classical mastery percentage of 47%. This represented a substantial improvement from the pre-action stage (28% to 47%). However, the mastery level had not yet reached the predetermined success indicator of 80%.

Despite the improvement, several challenges remained. Some students were still adjusting to cooperative learning procedures, and time management during the matching activities needed refinement. Reflection at the end of Cycle I led to adjustments in instructional guidance, clearer task instructions, and improved classroom organization for Cycle II.

### *Cycle II*

Cycle II was also conducted in two meetings using the same Make-a-Match strategy, with improvements based on reflections from Cycle I. The teacher provided clearer instructions, more structured group coordination, and additional motivation to ensure equal participation among students. The impact of these refinements was evident. Students demonstrated significantly higher levels of engagement and collaboration. They were more confident in identifying matching pairs and actively discussed concepts with their peers. Classroom interaction became more dynamic, and the overall learning atmosphere was more enthusiastic and focused.

The average student score increased further in Cycle II. The class average reached 78, showing a notable improvement from Cycle I (69). Twenty-six out of thirty-two students scored at or above the KKM in terms of mastery. This resulted in a classical mastery percentage of 84%, exceeding both the Cycle I result (47%) and the predefined success criterion of 80%. The improvement from Cycle I to Cycle II indicates that consistent implementation of the Make-a-Match model, combined with reflective adjustments, effectively enhanced students' cognitive achievement and active participation.

### *Comparative analysis of learning outcomes*

The overall comparison of results across stages is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Comparison of learning outcomes across research stages*

Criteria	Pre-Action	Cycle I	Cycle II
Average Score	—	69	78
Students Achieving KKM	9	15	26
Classical Mastery Percentage	28%	47%	84%
Student Activity Level	Low	Moderate	High
Student Learning Interest	Low	Improving	High

The data show a continuous upward trend in both academic achievement and classroom engagement. The most significant improvement occurred between Cycle I and Cycle II, where classical mastery increased by 37 percentage points (from 47% to 84%).

### **Discussion**

#### *The implementation of the make-a-match model in enhancing classroom interaction*

This study aimed to enhance social studies achievement by implementing the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model among Grade VII students at SMPN 1 Batusangkar. The findings demonstrate that the intervention significantly improved both instructional practices and student engagement across two action cycles. These improvements align with classroom action research principles, which emphasize reflective cycles to address instructional problems and improve learning quality (Nurgiansah, 2021; Nurgiansah et al., 2021).

At the pre-action stage, instruction was predominantly teacher-centered, characterized by textbook-based explanations and individual assignments. Such conventional practices are often associated with low student engagement and limited conceptual understanding (Pratiwi et al., 2023). Teacher-dominated instruction limits students' opportunities to construct knowledge collaboratively, which may lead to passive learning (Mardani et al., 2021). This condition was evident in the low participation rate and minimal peer interaction observed before the intervention.

The implementation of the Make-a-Match model in Cycle I introduced structured cooperative learning activities. The teacher shifted from a knowledge transmitter to a learning facilitator, guiding students through interactive card-matching tasks. Cooperative learning models are widely recognized for promoting active engagement, positive interdependence, and collaborative problem-solving (Johnson & Johnson, 2019; Slavin, 2020). In this study, teacher performance improved from 70% in Cycle I to 80% in Cycle II, reflecting better classroom organization and instructional clarity.

The transformation in teacher roles supports the view that effective instruction requires facilitation rather than mere content delivery (Hattie, 2020). When teachers create structured interactive environments, students are more likely to engage meaningfully in learning. The Make-a-Match model provided such an environment by combining structured tasks with elements of play and competition.

### *Enhancement of student learning activities*

One of the most significant findings of this study was the increase in student learning activity. The Make-a-Match model required students to demonstrate activeness, courage, cooperation, speed, accuracy, and communication skills. Student activity increased from 47% in Cycle I to 84% in Cycle II, indicating a substantial improvement in classroom engagement.

These findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that cooperative learning strategies enhance student participation and motivation (Fauhah & Rosy, 2020; Sari et al., 2020). The interactive nature of Make-a-Match encourages students to negotiate meaning, clarify misunderstandings, and reinforce conceptual knowledge through peer discussion (Rahmayanti & Koeswanti, 2017). Such collaborative engagement aligns with social constructivist theory, which emphasizes learning as a socially mediated process (Vygotsky, 1978).

Recent studies further support the role of cooperative learning in increasing student motivation and engagement. Gillies (2020) notes that structured cooperative tasks improve academic interaction and accountability among learners. Similarly, Kyndt et al. (2019) found that cooperative learning positively influences student achievement and social skills development. The findings of this study confirm these theoretical and empirical insights within the context of social studies education.

The time-bound matching activity stimulated quick thinking and analytical skills. Students were required not only to identify correct answers but also to justify their choices. This process activated higher-order cognitive skills, including analysis and evaluation, which are essential in social studies learning (Brookhart, 2019). Furthermore, incorporating game elements reduced classroom anxiety and enhanced positive emotional engagement, both of which are factors known to influence academic success (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

### *Improvement of social studies learning outcomes*

Beyond increased engagement, the implementation of the Make-a-Match model significantly improved academic performance. The average student score increased from the pre-action stage to 69 in Cycle I and 78 in Cycle II. Classical mastery rose from 28% to 47% and ultimately reached 84% in Cycle II, exceeding the predetermined success criterion.

These findings support the argument that active and cooperative instructional models enhance conceptual understanding and retention (Slavin, 2020). When students actively process information and interact with peers, they develop deeper cognitive connections than when they passively listen (Hattie, 2020). The card-matching process required students to analyze relationships between concepts, reinforcing meaningful learning rather than rote memorization.

The improvement in mastery learning also reflects increased intrinsic motivation. According to Self-Determination Theory, learning environments that foster autonomy, competence, and relatedness enhance student motivation and performance (Ryan & Deci, 2020). The Make-a-Match model created opportunities for collaboration (relatedness), task accomplishment (competence), and active decision-making (autonomy), thereby strengthening motivation.

In addition to cognitive gains, affective outcomes improved. Students demonstrated greater confidence, enthusiasm, and responsibility during classroom activities. This aligns with Gillies' (2020) findings, which reported that cooperative learning enhances social responsibility and interpersonal skills. The positive classroom climate observed in Cycle II contributed to sustained engagement and improved achievement.

### *Theoretical and practical implications*

The findings reinforce constructivist learning principles, which emphasize active knowledge construction through interaction and reflection (Vygotsky, 1978). The Make-a-Match model operationalizes these principles by requiring students to collaborate, communicate, and problem-solve. The structured yet playful format bridges cognitive rigor with motivational engagement.

From a practical perspective, the results suggest that social studies teachers should integrate cooperative and game-based learning strategies to enhance classroom interaction and achievement. Traditional lecture methods may be insufficient to foster meaningful learning in contemporary classrooms (Pratiwi et al., 2023). Instead, structured cooperative approaches like Make-a-Match provide an effective alternative.

The cyclical reflection process inherent in classroom action research also contributed to instructional refinement. Adjustments made after Cycle I improved implementation quality in Cycle II, demonstrating the importance of reflective practice in professional teaching development (Nurgiansah, 2021).

Overall, the implementation of the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model effectively enhanced social studies achievement and student engagement among Grade VII students at SMPN 1 Batusangkar. The model increased classroom activity from moderate to high levels and improved classical mastery from 28% to 84%. These findings are consistent with contemporary research highlighting the effectiveness of cooperative learning in promoting cognitive and affective development (Gillies, 2020; Hattie, 2020; Slavin, 2020).

### **Conclusion**

This study concludes that implementing the Make-a-Match cooperative learning model effectively enhances social studies achievement among Grade VII students at SMPN 1 Batusangkar. The findings demonstrate significant improvement in both student engagement and academic performance across two action cycles. Student activity increased substantially, as reflected in more active participation, improved collaboration, and greater confidence in classroom discussions.

Academic achievement also showed consistent improvement. The average student score increased from Cycle I to Cycle II, while classical mastery improved from 28% in the pre-action stage to 84% in Cycle II, exceeding the predetermined success criteria. These results

indicate that the Make-a-Match model not only strengthens conceptual understanding but also fosters positive learning motivation and classroom interaction.

By integrating cooperative learning and game-based elements, the Make-a-Match strategy creates an engaging and student-centered learning environment that supports both cognitive and affective development. Therefore, this model can be recommended as an effective instructional strategy for improving social studies learning outcomes at the junior secondary level. Future research is recommended to examine the application of the Make-a-Match model across different subjects and educational contexts, as well as its effectiveness among students with varying academic abilities.

### **Disclosure Statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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