

The Impact of Active Learning Methods (Group Discussion) on Elementary School Students' Learning Outcomes: Systematic Literature Review 2020–2025

Nabila¹, Candra Utama¹

¹State University of Malang

²Department of Primary and Preschool Education, State University of Malang, Malang, Indonesia

*Corresponding author, email: nabila.2301516@students.um.ac.id

Keywords

Discussion group
Active participation
Student Understanding
Learning Collaboration Students

Abstract

This study uses the SLR method to analyze the 2020–2025 literature on the impact of group discussion strategies. Various literature reviews show that group discussion methods can significantly improve students' understanding of subject matter. In a group discussion atmosphere, students have the opportunity to explain concepts to each other, ask questions, and share various perspectives. This in turn deepens their understanding. Research conducted by Giemael, Rahmansyah, and Hasibuan (2022) revealed that the application of the group discussion method succeeded in changing the average score of students in science subjects from the "bad" category to "good" in grade IV of elementary school. This shows that social interaction and collaboration during group discussions play an important role in helping students build a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The results showed that group discussions can improve students' understanding, motivation, participation, and critical thinking skills. Variations in grouping help to generate new perspectives. The role of teachers as facilitators is also important to create a good learning environment. Although there are challenges such as student dominance and poor communication, appropriate strategies can overcome these obstacles. The group discussion method is in accordance with the principles of constructivism and supports the quality of education in elementary schools. Therefore, it is recommended for educators to maximize this method in their teaching and learning process.

1. Introduction

Ki Hajar Dewantara: Education is "the cultivation of the fruits of civilized human reason". He emphasized the importance of education to develop children's character, mind, and body so that they can adapt to nature and society. Education is an important thing for humans today, because in general humans measure their success in life in the world on worldly success and good character, by not violating the law and customary norms (Amaliah Kadir, 2020: 1).

According to Al Ghozali, children are very much determined by the way parents and teachers educate them, so that learning methods should be a very important thing in education, but unfortunately what happens in schools is that teachers only transfer knowledge, without considering the child's talents and interests in learning.

The learning process in elementary schools is crucial in building the foundation of students' knowledge and skills. One of the major challenges in education is ensuring that students not only understand the subject matter, but are also actively involved in the learning process. One approach that has been widely applied is the active learning method, especially through group discussions. This method encourages students to interact with each other, share ideas, and work together to solve problems, thus creating a collaborative and dynamic learning environment.

Research has indicated that the implementation of group discussion methods can have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. For example, a study showed that the average student grades increased significantly after using this method, moving from the "bad" to "good" category in Natural Science (IPA) subjects in grade IV of elementary school. In addition, group discussions were

also able to increase active student participation by almost 90%, while deepening their understanding of the subject matter through constructive social interaction. This method not only helps students understand concepts more deeply, but also helps develop their critical and analytical thinking skills (Giemael, A., Rahmansyah, H., & Hasibuan, S).

However, systematic studies on the impact of group discussion methods on elementary school learning outcomes in the last 5 years are still limited. Some of them include dominance by certain students and inadequate communication skills in some students. These challenges can be overcome through the active role of teachers in facilitating discussions and clear explanations of roles in each group. Therefore, further research on the effectiveness of group discussion methods is very important to optimize student learning outcomes in elementary schools.

This study aims to explore the impact of active learning methods applied through group discussions on student learning outcomes in elementary schools. The main focus of this study is to understand the extent to which the method can improve students' understanding, learning motivation, and social and cognitive skills. It is expected The results of this study can provide a significant contribution to the development of more effective learning strategies at the elementary education level.

2. Method

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method with article searches on Google Scholar and ResearchGate in the 2020–2025 period. The keywords used include "group discussion", "learning outcomes", and "elementary school". Inclusion criteria include: topic relevance, elementary school level, and experimental or qualitative research methods. Of the 20 articles identified initially, 12 articles passed the final selection.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Group Discussion: Improving Students' Understanding, Motivation, Participation, and Critical Thinking Skills

This finding is in line with an international study (Valanides, 2014) which shows the importance of collaboration for conceptual understanding in problem-based learning. Various literature studies show that group discussion methods can significantly improve students' understanding of the subject matter. In a group discussion atmosphere, students have the opportunity to explain concepts to each other, ask questions, and share various perspectives. This in turn deepens their understanding. Research conducted by Giemael, Rahmansyah, and Hasibuan (2022) revealed that the application of the group discussion method succeeded in changing the average score of students in science subjects from the "bad" category to "good" in grade IV of elementary school. This shows that social interaction and collaboration during group discussions play an important role in helping students build a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

In addition, this group discussion method has also been proven to increase students' learning motivation. When students feel part of a group and are given the opportunity to contribute, they tend to be more motivated to learn and actively participate in the learning process. A study by Asriati (2021) found that students involved in group discussions showed higher levels of motivation compared to those who learned through traditional methods. This may be due to the sense of ownership and responsibility that arises from the learning process in groups.

Active student participation also increases with group discussions. In a structured discussion environment, students feel more comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions, so the level of participation is higher compared to conventional learning methods. Giemael, Rahmansyah, and Hasibuan (2022) noted that active student participation increased by almost 90% after implementing the group discussion method.

3.2. Heterogeneous Grouping Encourages Diversity of Perspectives and Collaboration

Diverse student groups consisting of individuals with different backgrounds, abilities, and interests are known to provide significant benefits in group discussions. This diversity encourages students to consider different points of view and appreciate differences of opinion. Valanides (2014) emphasized that diversity in groups is essential to promoting critical thinking and creative solutions to problems.

It also helps students develop essential social and emotional skills, such as empathy, tolerance, and the ability to collaborate with others. In addition, heterogeneous student grouping can facilitate more effective collaboration. Students with different abilities can help and learn from each other, creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Latif (2018) found that these diverse groupings increase collaboration and positive interactions among students

This shows that group discussions create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment for students. Furthermore, group discussions stimulate the development of students' critical thinking skills. Through interactions with peers, students learn to analyze information, evaluate arguments, and formulate solutions to complex problems. Research conducted by Damayanti and Nurgiyantoro (2019) shows that group discussions contribute to the development of their critical and analytical thinking skills through constructive social interactions.

3.3. The Role of the Teacher as a Facilitator is Very Important for the Success of Group Discussions

The role of the teacher as a facilitator is very important in ensuring the success of group discussions. Teachers are responsible for creating a safe and supportive learning environment, where students feel comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions. As a facilitator, teachers also help students to stay focused on the discussion topic, manage conflicts that may arise, and ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate. Rahmayani, Siswanto, & Budiman (2019) highlight the importance of the teacher's role in facilitating discussions and providing guidance to students. In addition, teachers can also provide constructive feedback to students, helping them to improve their critical thinking and communication skills. Sari & Prasetyo (2020) found that constructive teacher feedback improved the quality of group discussions and student understanding.

3.4. Challenges and Solutions in Implementing Group Discussion Methods

Although the group discussion method offers many benefits, its implementation can also face some challenges. One of the main challenges is the dominance of certain students in the discussion. To overcome this, teachers can use techniques such as giving each student a turn to speak or using structured discussion methods such as think-pair-share. Another challenge is the lack of communication skills in some students. Teachers can help students develop their communication skills through regular practice and feedback. In addition, it is important for teachers to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment, where all students feel valued and respected.

3.5. Synthesis of Findings with Previous Theory and Research

These findings are in line with constructivism theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process. This theory states that students construct their own knowledge through interactions with their environment and peers. Previous research has also shown that group discussion methods can improve student learning outcomes, motivation, participation, and critical thinking skills.

3.6. Challenges and Solutions in Implementing Group Discussion Methods

Overall, the literature analysis shows that the group discussion method has a significant positive impact on student learning outcomes. Group discussions improve students' understanding, motivation, participation, and critical thinking skills.

In addition, group discussions also help students develop important social and emotional skills, such as empathy, tolerance, and the ability to work with others.

Table 1. Table Title

| Aspect | Findings | References |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the Material | Improvement of grades from "bad" to "good" in science subjects | Giemael, Rahmansyah, & Hasibuan (2022) |
| Motivation to learn | | Asriati (2021) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Participation | Higher level of motivation compared to traditional methods | Giemael, Rahmansyah, & Hasibuan (2022) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical Thinking Skills | Increased student participation by 90% | The Last Supper (2019) |
| Collaboration | Development of analytical and evaluation skills Increasing positive interactions between students | Latif (2018) |

3.7. Conclusion

Based on a systematic analysis of various literatures, it can be concluded that the group discussion method has a significant positive impact on various aspects of student learning at the elementary school level. This method has proven effective in improving understanding of subject matter, learning motivation, active participation, and the development of students' critical and analytical thinking skills.

Through group discussions, students get the opportunity to interact with each other, share ideas, and clarify their understanding. Social interaction and collaboration within a group not only strengthens a more comprehensive understanding, but also provides depth to the subject matter. In addition, students tend to be more motivated to learn when they are part of a group and have the opportunity to contribute. Heterogeneous grouping, involving students with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and interests, encourages different perspectives and collaboration. This situation greatly helps students develop important social and emotional skills, such as empathy, tolerance, and the ability to collaborate with others.

The role of the teacher as a facilitator is also crucial in ensuring the success of group discussions. The teacher's responsibilities include creating a safe and supportive learning environment, facilitating productive discussions, and providing constructive feedback to students.

Although the group discussion method offers various benefits, its implementation is not without challenges, such as the dominance of conversation by certain students and the lack of communication skills among some students. However, these challenges can be overcome with the right strategies, such as arranging turns for each student to speak and providing communication skills training. These findings are in line with constructivism theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process. Group discussions provide opportunities for students to construct their own knowledge through interactions with peers and teachers.

Overall, the literature analysis shows that the group discussion method can be an effective learning strategy to improve the quality of education at the elementary school level. With proper implementation, this method can help students achieve better learning outcomes, develop important social and emotional skills, and prepare them for future success.

Therefore, teachers and education practitioners are highly recommended to adopt and optimize the use of the group discussion method in the learning process in elementary schools. This study is limited to literature analysis and has not included direct field testing. Further experimental research is recommended to test the effectiveness of group discussions in real learning contexts in elementary schools.

Author Contributions

Nabila : Select a data source, Article selection, Data extraction. The author has read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

No funding support was received.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Declarations of interest: none.

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgement (Optional)

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to the course lecturer for the course lecturer for the valuable guidance throughout the research process. Appreciation is also extended to the head of the school, the teachers, and the students who participated in this study for their cooperation, time, and openness, which made the data collection possible.

References

- Ahmar, D.S., Magfirah, M., Poba, D., & Azzajjad, M.F. (2023). Pembelajaran Gamifikasi Terintegrasi Kearifan Lokal Berbasis Pendidikan Karakter, Adakah Pengaruhnya Terhadap Kemampuan Pemecahan Masalah? *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, 9(9), 7614-7620. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jppipa.v9i9.4968>
- Al Haq, M., Sukari, & Sulistyowati. (2023). Penggunaan Metode Diskusi dan Minat Belajar Siswa Terhadap Hasil Belajar Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di SMP Muhammadiyah 5 Surakarta Tahun Pelajaran 2022/2023. *Rayah Al-Islam*, 7(3), 1149-1154. <https://doi.org/10.37274/rais.v7i3.806>
- Asriati. (2018). Pengaruh Pembelajaran Diskusi Kelompok Terhadap Hasil Belajar Siswa. *Suara Guru: Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial, Sains, Dan Humaniora*, 4(2), 287-292. <https://ejournal.uin-suska.ac.id/index.php/suaraguru/article/download/10141/5172>
- Cahyono, W., Bambang, A., & Utomo, B. (2019). Pengaruh metode diskusi kelompok terhadap hasil belajar siswa pada mata pelajaran IPS Terpadu. 8(1), 1-10.
- Chassignol, M., Khoroshavin, A., Klimova, A., & Bilyatdinova, A. (2018). Tren Kecerdasan Buatan dalam pendidikan: Sebuah tinjauan naratif. *Procedia Computer Science*, 136, 16-24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2018.08.233>
- Chen, L., Chen, P., & Lin, Z. (2020). Kecerdasan Buatan dalam Pendidikan: Sebuah Tinjauan. *IEEE Access*, 8, 75264-75278. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2020.2988510>
- da Silva Bueno, RW, Niess, ML, Engin, RA, Ballejo, CC, & Lieban, D. (2023). Pengetahuan konten pedagogis teknologi: Menjelajahi perspektif baru. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 39(1), 88-105. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.7970>
- Damayanti, D., & Nurgiyantoro, B. (2019). Carpon: Kearifan Lokal Terintegrasi dengan Pendidikan Karakter untuk Siswa Sekolah Dasar. 330(Iceri 2018), 398-404. <https://doi.org/10.2991/iceri-18.2.019.84>
- Giemael, A., Rahmansyah, H., & Hasibuan, S. (2022). Pengaruh Metode Pembelajaran Diskusi Kelompok Terhadap Hasil Belajar IPA Siswa Kelas IV Sd Negeri 100950 Tolong. *Jurnal JIPDAS (Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar)*, 2(3), 117-122. <https://doi.org/10.37081/jipdas.v2i3.161>
- IGA Pidrawan, IW Rasna, & IB Putrayasa. (2022). Analisis Strategi, Aktivitas, dan Hasil Belajar Siswa dalam Pembelajaran Menulis yang Diajarkan Guru Bahasa Indonesia di Kota Denpasar. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia*, 11(1), 75-86. https://doi.org/10.23887/jurnal_bahasa.v11i1.973
- Krstić, L., Aleksić, V., & Krstić, M. (2022). Kecerdasan Buatan dalam Pendidikan: Sebuah Tinjauan. September, 223-228. <https://doi.org/10.46793/tie22.223k>
- Permana, KBA, Renda, NT, & Margunayasa, IG (2020). Model Pembelajaran Kolaboratif Meningkatkan Hasil Belajar Matematika Siswa. *Jurnal Pedagogi dan Pembelajaran*, 3(2), 223. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jp2.v3i2.26552>
- Puspitasari, Y., & Nurhayati, S. (2019). Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Discovery Learning Terhadap Hasil Belajar Siswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kewirausahaan*, 7(1), 93-108. <https://doi.org/10.47668/pkwu.v7i1.20>
- Ristantita, M., Sari, AY, Azahra, NA, Winarsih, IO, Alkhoiri, MF, Mubarak, MF, & Mayarni, M. (2024). Analisis Strategi dan Metode Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia dengan Hasil Belajar Siswa di Kelas 5 Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*, 1(3), 11. <https://doi.org/10.47134/pgsd.v1i3.290>
- Rossi, M. De, & Trevisan, O. (2018). Pengetahuan Konten Pedagogis Teknologi dalam Literatur: Bagaimana TPCK Didefinisikan dan Diimplementasikan dalam Pendidikan Guru Awal. *Italian Journal of Educational Technology*, 26(1), 7-23. <https://doi.org/10.17471/2499-4324/988>

Sabanil, S., Sarifah, I., & Imaningtyas, I. (2022). Peran Guru dalam Implementasi Hidden Curriculum untuk Mengembangkan Karakter Keberagaman Global Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(4), 6567-6579.

<https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i4.3306>

Saputra, A.A. (2017). Analisis Tingkat Literasi Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi Guru Sekolah Dasar di Kabupaten Cirebon. <http://repository.upi.edu/id/eprint/32132>

Shabrina, N.A., & Sanusi, J. (2022). Pengaruh Metode Example Non Example terhadap Keterampilan Menulis Pantun Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Elementar: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar*, 2(1), 114-118. <https://doi.org/10.15408/elementar.v2i1.25493>

Subkhi Mahmasani. (2020). Lihat metadata, kutipan, dan makalah serupa di core.ac.uk. 274-282.

Tantangan dan Inovasi Pendidikan Karakter di Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19 di Kota Bandar Lampung Ruswanto Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung Sunarto Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung Umi Kalsum Universitas Isl. 5(2), 493-512.