

Analysis of Factors Influencing Learning Difficulties in History in Grade X Students at Nurul Amaliyah Private Senior High School Tanjung Morawa

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi faktor penyebab kesulitan belajar sejarah siswa kelas X di SMA Swasta Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa, yang dilatarbelakangi oleh rendahnya minat serta capaian belajar siswa, ditambah dengan anggapan siswa bahwa sejarah merupakan mata pelajaran yang membosankan. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa hambatan dalam belajar sejarah terdiri dari faktor internal dan eksternal. Faktor internal mencakup kurangnya motivasi belajar, pandangan negatif terhadap mata pelajaran sejarah, rendahnya prestasi akademik, kurang percaya diri, serta pola belajar yang tidak konsisten. Sementara itu, faktor eksternal meliputi pengaruh dari lingkungan keluarga dan teman sebaya, keterbatasan kemampuan guru dalam mengelola pembelajaran, metode mengajar yang kurang variatif, keterbatasan media pembelajaran, serta kurangnya sumber belajar yang tersedia. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut, diperlukan inovasi dalam proses pembelajaran sejarah, seperti pemanfaatan media pembelajaran interaktif, pendekatan kontekstual, dan peningkatan partisipasi aktif siswa untuk menciptakan pembelajaran yang lebih menarik dan efektif.

Kata kunci: kesulitan belajar, sejarah, faktor internal, faktor eksternal.

Abstract

This study aims to identify the factors that cause the learning difficulties of history class X students at SMA Swasta Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa, which is motivated by the low interest and achievement of student learning, coupled with the students' assumption that history is a boring subject. The method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. The results revealed that the obstacles in learning history consist of internal and external factors. Internal factors include lack of motivation to learn, negative views of history subjects, low academic achievement, lack of confidence, and inconsistent learning patterns. Meanwhile, external factors include influences from the family and peer environment, the limited ability of teachers to manage learning, teaching methods that are less varied, limited learning media, and lack of available learning resources. Based on these findings, innovations are needed in the history learning process, such as the utilization of interactive learning media, contextual approaches, and increased active student participation to create more interesting and effective learning.

Keywords: learning difficulties, history, internal factors, external factors.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a shared responsibility, especially for teachers and parents. Education itself is a process influenced by the surrounding environment, which aims to form permanent changes in habits, ways of thinking, attitudes, and

individual behavior (Aryana, 2020).

The functions and objectives of national education that have been designed by the government are stated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia, based on Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003

concerning the National Education System, Chapter I Article 1, ducation is defined as an effort made consciously and planned to create a learning atmosphere and learning process, so that students can actively develop their potential for the advancement of individuals, society, nation, and state (Sara Indah Elisabet et al., 2020). This is in line with Freire's (2005) opinion in (Norvaizi et al., 2025), which emphasizes that education is a dialogical process that liberates and empowers individuals, where students are encouraged to understand their social reality and be able to change it.

Learning activities do not always run smoothly as expected by teachers, but sometimes faced with lessons that are too difficult to understand, or in terms of enthusiasm for learning sometimes have high enthusiasm, but have difficulty concentrating. The situation where students cannot learn as they should is said to be learning difficulties (Rusmianis et al., 2023).

According to (Hamalik, 2009), learning difficulties are a condition in which students experience obstacles in understanding the subject matter, either due to internal factors such as motivation, interest, and cognitive abilities, or external factors such as teaching methods, learning environments, and the availability of learning media. In the context of history learning, these difficulties are often

exacerbated by the way the material is delivered which is narrative, memorization, and does not involve students actively in the learning process.

According to Slameto in (Leni & Sholehun, 2021), there are two types of factors that influence the student learning process, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are aspects that come from within the individual and play a role in achieving learning goals. This factor includes the physical and psychological conditions of students. Some components in internal factors are Talent-which refers to the natural abilities that a person has since birth, which still need to be honed or developed through practice, Interest-Slameto stated that interest in learning is an interest or tendency to like an activity without coercion from other parties, and Motivation-which is defined as a series of efforts to create conditions that encourage someone to want and be enthusiastic about doing something.

Motivation is very important for every student to have so that they are encouraged to learn. Meanwhile, external factors are influences that come from outside the individual student. These factors include: a) School environment-Including teacher teaching methods, educational facilities and infrastructure, and

general conditions of the school environment that can affect students' learning atmosphere, b) Family environment-Related to parenting patterns, family economic conditions, and emotional support given to children in learning activities, c) Community environment-Is the social condition around the student's residence. A conducive environment can have a positive influence on learning outcomes, while a less good environment can have a negative impact.

Research conducted by (Simanjuntak et al., 2020) shows that students tend to have difficulty learning history because of the large amount of material that must be memorized and the lack of connection between the subject matter and everyday life. In addition, many history teachers still use conventional lecture methods that do not involve students' creativity to the maximum.

SMA Swasta Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa as one of the secondary education institutions also faces similar challenges. Based on the results of initial observations, it is known that grade X students show low interest in history lessons, marked by lack of participation in learning activities, daily test scores below average, and complaints from students regarding difficulties in understanding the

material. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further analysis of the factors that influence the difficulty of learning history in this school.

Several previous relevant studies have highlighted similar findings. Research by (Rusmianis et al., 2023) shows that difficulties in learning history are caused by low motivation to learn and uninteresting teaching methods. An international study by (Gültekin & Berk, 2011) states that students struggle to understand complex historical topics if they are not supported by visual media or contextual learning approaches. Additionally, a study by (Kuran et al., 2018) shows that difficulties in learning history can also be reduced through the use of innovative learning media, such as history-based educational games.

Unlike previous studies that generally focus on only one aspect, such as teaching methods or student motivation, this study presents a more comprehensive and contextual approach by examining the difficulties of learning history holistically in private schools in the local area. Additionally, the selection of the research location at SMA Swasta Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa—which has not been extensively studied before—contributes uniquely to mapping educational issues in history at the secondary school level. It is hoped that the results of this study will not only explain the factors hindering the history

learning process but also provide practical insights for teachers and schools in creating more effective, enjoyable, and meaningful history education.

By analyzing these factors, it is hoped that the right solution can be found to increase the effectiveness of history learning, both in terms of teaching approaches, media use, and student motivation strategies. Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct a study entitled "Analysis of Factors Influencing Difficulties in Learning History in Grade X Students of SMA Swasta Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa".

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach, which is a research method that aims to describe various phenomena, both those that occur naturally and those produced by humans. In general, qualitative descriptive research focuses on efforts to explain and interpret a condition or situation, including the relationship between variables, developing views, and the impacts or consequences that arise (Sujarweni, 2023). This research was conducted at SMA Swasta Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa which is located at Jl. Sei Merah, Dagang Kerawang Village, Tanjung Morawa, Tj. Morawa District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra. Participants in this

study were selected purposively, consisting of history teachers and students who are directly involved in the learning process at the school (Palinkas et al., 2015). Data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document analysis to obtain comprehensive and contextual information related to the research objectives (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

The research instruments consisted of interview guides, observation checklists, and document review sheets, designed to align with the study's focus (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Data analysis followed the interactive model introduced by Miles and Huberman, involving three main stages: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). During data condensation, the researcher filtered and organized raw data from interviews, observations, and documents to focus on relevant information (Moleong, 2019).

The condensed data was then presented through descriptive narratives, tables, or charts to identify patterns and relationships (Sugiyono, 2017). Finally, conclusions were drawn and continuously verified to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Difficulty Learning History

Learning difficulties are conditions in which students experience obstacles in the teaching and learning process, so that the results achieved do not match their abilities or potential, even though they have been given adequate learning opportunities and facilities. Learning difficulties are something experienced by some students in schools at higher levels of education. Operationally, learning difficulties can be seen from the fact that there are students who are left behind in following learning, or students who get poor grades in several subjects they are taking (Rusmianis et al., 2023)

According to Reid in (Saidillah, 2018), students who can be said to have learning difficulties have the following characteristics: a) Having a normal IQ, above normal, or slightly below normal based on an IQ test. However, students with an IQ score slightly below normal are not because they actually have a low IQ, but because the learning difficulties they experience make it difficult for them to take an IQ test, so their scores are low, b) Having difficulty in some subjects, but showing good grades in other subjects, c) Learning difficulties experienced by students affect their learning success, so they are classified as low-achieving students (students whose

learning outcomes are lower than their potential).

One of the subjects that students often find difficult to learn is History. History is often seen as a subject that only requires memorization and tends to be boring. According to research conducted at Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa Private High School, many students consider learning history to be nothing more than memorizing a series of year numbers and a series of events that must be repeated when facing exams. The process of learning history often feels rigid and less interesting for students. In fact, history education has a very important role in shaping the nation's identity, as well as improving the quality of individuals and Indonesian society as a whole.

Factors Influencing Difficulties in Learning History

Difficulty in learning history means a condition where students experience obstacles in the process of learning history. At SMA Swap Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa, students said that History is a very boring lesson, this is seen by researchers as one of the obstacles to the learning process which is included in the students' lack of enthusiasm for learning history. The low interest in learning history of students is one example of a factor that influences the difficulty in learning history of class X students of SMA Swap Nurul

Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa. Other factors that influence the difficulty in learning history of class X students of SMAS Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa can be classified into 2 factors, namely internal factors and external factors as follows:

1. Internal Factors

a. Lack of student interest in participating in history learning

Interest in learning is an important aspect that determines students' success in receiving and understanding the subject matter (Afzal et al., 2010). However, in reality, many students show a passive attitude during history lessons. They appear unenthusiastic, lack focus, and are reluctant to be actively involved during the learning process. This condition is exacerbated if history is taught in the last lesson or after sports, where students appear tired, sleepy, and not physically or mentally ready to follow the lesson optimally

b. Students' Perceptions of History Learning Materials

Many students believe that history is a boring subject and only memorizes the names of figures, dates, and places of events. Based on the results of the interview, students considered the most difficult part of the history material to be the colonial period, prehistoric times, and the Old Order. Meanwhile, teachers also admitted that students had difficulty

remembering dates and places of historical events. This negative view shows that the approach to learning history needs to be developed to be more interesting and contextual.

c. Low Learning Outcomes in History Subjects

Most students get a history subject score below the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM), which is 75. The average class score does not reach the completion standard, and many students have to take remedial activities. What is concerning is that some students do not seem to mind the low scores and consider remediation as a common thing. This attitude shows a lack of responsibility and motivation in achieving optimal learning outcomes.

d. Student Self-Confidence

Some students show a lack of self-confidence when asked to answer questions or express opinions in history discussions. They tend to follow their friends' answers or just keep quiet, because they feel that history is a difficult subject. This lack of self-confidence is related to the lack of success felt by students during history lessons, so they do not have positive experiences that can motivate themselves.

e. Study Habits

The irregular study habits of grade X students of SMA Swasta Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa, such as only studying when there is an exam, not making a study schedule, and rarely reading textbooks outside of the assigned tasks, also affect the low mastery of history material. Lack of discipline and study time management causes students to be unaccustomed to thinking critically and understanding the historical context in depth.

2. External Factors

External factors are factors that come from outside the students themselves that can influence learning history. The external factors are as follows:

a. Family and Student Social Factors

The Family is the first educational environment and the first preschool for children. In addition to being a place for early socialization before entering formal education, the family has an important role in laying the foundations for the formation of a child's character and personality. It is in the family environment that the instillation of religious values, morals, and basic principles of social interaction begins to be introduced. Therefore, the family is the main place in the formation of students' personalities. Most of the children's learning time takes place at

home, so the condition of the family's residence also has a major influence on the success of the child's learning (Gunawan et al., 2015). Lack of supervision from parents can result in increased peer influence in the social life of students. This peer group has a significant influence, which can be divided into three types, namely support groups that provide positive motivation in learning, neutral groups that do not provide a significant influence, and inhibiting groups that tend to transmit negative behavior and encourage deviant actions.

b. Lack of Teacher Potential in the History Learning Process

Classroom management is a process carried out by teachers through a certain approach to create a comfortable and conducive learning atmosphere for students so that they can participate in learning optimally (Rahmania, 2022). The purpose of this classroom management is to encourage optimal student development, both in individual and group contexts. This includes efforts to overcome various learning barriers, adjust the approach to the emotional and intellectual conditions of students, and create an environment that supports the growth and development of attitudes, discipline, and thinking skills. However, the practice of learning

evaluation carried out by teachers is sometimes not fully effective. This can be seen from the assessment that only focuses on the final results without paying attention to the process or difficulties experienced by students during learning. As a result, teachers are less aware of whether there has been a change in behavior or understanding in students as a result of the learning that has taken place.

c. Lack of Teacher Creativity in Applying History Learning Methods

History learning methods tend to be monotonous and less interactive. Many teachers still rely on lectures and assignments without actively involving students. This makes learning boring and does not provide space for students to develop creativity or critical thinking. The use of innovative methods such as educational games or history-based projects is necessary to increase student engagement.

d. Lack of Media in History Learning

The use of learning media plays a significant contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process which ultimately has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. Learning media not only functions as an aid, but can also arouse students' interest, motivation, and desire to be actively involved in

the learning process. In schools, the use of learning media has been attempted optimally by maximizing the available facilities and infrastructure. However, its effectiveness still faces a number of obstacles. One of the obstacles that often arises in history learning is damage to the LCD device which causes the delivery of material to not run optimally.

e. Lack of Learning Resources

The limited learning resources in history subjects make reading history books a burden for some students. Based on statements from several students, they rarely read history books because the material presented is considered monotonous and uninteresting. Most students never even open a history book because they consider the learning content boring. Generally, they only read history textbooks if instructed by the teacher or assigned directly. This condition reflects the low interest of students in studying history subjects, as well as showing their lack of interest in reading reading sources related to historical material.

CONCLUSION

Difficulties in learning history experienced by grade X students of SMA Swasta Nurul Amaliyah Tanjung Morawa are influenced by internal and external factors. Internal

factors include low interest, negative perceptions of the material, low learning outcomes, lack of self-confidence, and irregular learning habits. While external factors include lack of family support, peer influence, limited creativity and teacher evaluation, lack of learning media, and minimal sources of learning history. Therefore, joint efforts are needed from teachers, schools, and families to create more interesting, interactive, and meaningful history learning. Learning difficulties are a long-standing issue in the world of education because this disorder is difficult to overcome, but with the right support and intervention, individuals with learning difficulties can carry out their

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