

SEJARAH-HIDUP Learning Model and the Merdeka Curriculum Reform: A framework for contextual and reflective history learning based on local culture

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Received 23 June 2025; Received in revised form 21 August 2025; Accepted 24 August 2025

Abstrak

Pengajaran sejarah di Indonesia masih berpusat pada narasi nasional, dan sering kali terputus dari realitas budaya yang dijalani oleh para siswa. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk memperkenalkan model “SEJARAH-HIDUP” (Siswa Jelajah, Rekam, Harap - Hidupkan Identitas dan Ungkapkan Perubahan), sebuah kerangka kerja pedagogis yang dikembangkan untuk merevitalisasi pendidikan sejarah melalui pembelajaran yang kontekstual, reflektif, dan berbasis masyarakat. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif berdasarkan tinjauan literatur yang ekstensif dan analisis berdasarkan triangulasi teori dan sumber. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa model SEJARAH-HIDUP tidak hanya menjembatani kesenjangan antara desain kurikulum nasional dan konteks sosiokultural siswa, tetapi juga meningkatkan kesadaran sejarah dan kewarganegaraan yang aktif. Model ini menawarkan kemajuan teoretis dan panduan praktis untuk mengintegrasikan narasi lokal ke dalam pendidikan sejarah yang transformatif. Karya ini berkontribusi pada literatur yang terus berkembang yang mengadvokasi kurikulum yang responsif terhadap tempat yang didekolonisasi dalam sistem pendidikan pascakolonial.

Kata kunci: budaya lokal, kurikulum merdeka, model sejarah-hidup.

Abstract

The teaching of history in Indonesia remains predominantly centered on national narratives, often disconnected from the lived cultural realities of students. This article introduces the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model (Students Explore, Record, Aspire), pedagogical framework developed to revitalize history education through contextual, reflective, and community-based learning. Situated within the flexibility of the Kurikulum Merdeka, this model seeks to integrate local cultural heritage as a primary medium for historical inquiry and identity formation. This study employs a qualitative design based on an extensive literature review and triangulation of theories and sources. Findings indicate that the SEJARAH-HIDUP model not only bridges the gap between national curriculum design and students’ sociocultural contexts but also enhances historical consciousness and active citizenship. The model offers both theoretical advancement and practical guidance for integrating local narratives into transformative history education. This work contributes to the growing body of literature advocating for decolonized, place-responsive curricula in postcolonial education systems.

Keywords: kurikulum merdeka, local culture, sejarah-hidup model.

INTRODUCTION

History education in the 21st century faces significant challenges due to technological disruption, global humanitarian crises, and growing social and identity polarization. In an

increasingly pluralistic, digital, and fragmented society, history can no longer be taught as a single, linear, and nationalistic narrative. Instead, there is a strong push to develop history education that fosters historical literacy, critical

thinking, and multicultural awareness among students (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Seixas, 2013; Wineburg, 2001). This approach requires history teachers not only to convey content but also to facilitate students' understanding of the complexity of the past, verifying sources, and assessing the diversity of historical perspectives.

The paradigm shift in history education is also marked by the development of the concepts of historical thinking and place-based history education, which emphasize the importance of the connection between students' local experiences and national and global historical narratives. Such learning models have been proven to increase student engagement, foster historical agency, and strengthen the relevance of history to their lives (Levstik & Barton, 2022; Taylor & Young, 2003; Sandwell, 2012). In various countries such as Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, local and community history has been incorporated into the national curriculum as a pedagogical strategy to create learners who are contextual and reflective of their social environment.

In addition, contemporary history education needs to respond to the skills required in the 21st century, such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; OECD, 2018; UNESCO Pillars of Education, 2015). Within this

framework, history education is not merely about memorizing the past but serves as a tool for fostering global citizenship, strengthening cross-cultural empathy, and cultivating social awareness relevant to contemporary challenges such as climate change, inequality, and misinformation. Therefore, reforms in history education should focus on contextual, reflective, and grounded learning that aligns with the realities of students.

In Indonesia, history education faces various structural and pedagogical challenges that impact the low effectiveness of learning. One of the main issues is the continued dominance of traditional approaches that focus on content mastery and chronological memorization. History is often taught as the “official story” of the state, with an emphasis on a grand national narrative constructed from a single perspective—usually that of the state or the ruling elite. This results in limited space for alternative narratives, local history, or students' critical reflection on past events (Retnawati et al., 2017; Susanto, 2019). As a result, history is perceived as a boring and irrelevant subject to students' daily lives.

In addition, the integration of local culture into history learning is still very limited. In fact, Indonesia has a wealth of cultural heritage and community history that can be used as a source of contextual

learning. Many teachers do not yet have the pedagogical competence and curriculum support to explore history from their own students' environment. A study by I. Wulandari et al. (2024) shows that teachers tend to overlook the potential of local culture due to time constraints, limited resources, and administrative burdens. This highlights a gap between the potential for locally-based history education and its actual implementation in the classroom.

Furthermore, the role of students in history learning is still passive. The lack of an approach that places students as active subjects in the search for historical meaning hinders the growth of agency and critical historical awareness. However, approaches such as project-based learning, oral history, or community-based investigation can foster student engagement in learning (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Biesta, 2015). History education should be a space where students learn not only about history but also through history, that is, through the process of reflection, social interaction, and identity formation.

With the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, there is actually an opportunity to overhaul the way history is viewed and taught. However, its implementation still faces challenges: the availability of resources, teacher training, and concrete learning models that are in line with the spirit of the curriculum.

Without serious intervention in the areas of pedagogy and curriculum design, history education in Indonesia will continue to remain stagnant disconnected from the cultural context and the needs of the times.

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology since 2022 marks a paradigm shift in the national education system. This curriculum emphasizes flexibility in learning, differentiation based on students' needs, and a focus on character development through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). In the context of history education, the Merdeka Curriculum opens up significant opportunities for teachers to incorporate local narratives, community experiences, and cultural contexts into the teaching-learning process. This is a response to criticism of the previous curriculum, which was deemed too centralized, text-based, and insensitive to local diversity (Subekti, 2022; Majid & Rochman, 2023).

Project P5, as an integral element of the Merdeka Curriculum, provides space for the exploration of local culture in the development of values such as mutual cooperation, global civility, and critical thinking. This provides an opportunity for history learning to become more reflective, contextual, and oriented towards the experiences of students.

Unfortunately, despite this normative opportunity, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum still faces significant challenges. Many teachers are not yet pedagogically and conceptually prepared to design history learning based on local culture and grounded in the context of the learners' community (Maulidina & Yamin, 2023). Additionally, there are no concrete models available that can serve as systematic references for integrating local history with the principles of P5.

Thus, the ongoing curriculum reform should not stop at changes to policy documents, but must be accompanied by pedagogical innovations that make history a tool for student empowerment. In this framework, the development of contextual and reflective history learning models such as the "SEJARAH-HIDUP" model becomes an urgent need. This model can bridge the gap between the transformative vision of the Merdeka Curriculum and the reality of its implementation in the classroom, particularly in efforts to present history that is relevant, grounded, and liberating.

Local culture is a rich historical resource, full of values, and closely connected to the life experiences of students. In the context of history education, local culture does not merely serve as a decorative addition to the curriculum but as a pedagogical foundation for fostering reflective, contextual, and critical understanding of

history itself. By exploring local cultural practices such as the Reyog tradition in Ponorogo, Meron in Pati, or the Cawisan ritual in Palembang students do not merely learn "what happened," but "why and how history lives on in the memory and social practices of its community" (Barton & Levstik, 2004; T. Taylor, 2011).

The use of local culture as a source of learning brings history closer to the social reality of students. They are not only listeners to the grand narrative of the state, but also interpreters of the collective experiences of their community. This aligns with the "history from below" approach, which emphasizes the importance of representing marginalized, local, and non-dominant groups in historical narratives (Thompson, 1966; Hall, 1997). Through this approach, history education becomes a process of democratizing knowledge, giving space to community voices, family memories, and local cultural artifacts as legitimate components of historical construction.

Furthermore, local culture provides space for fostering ethical awareness and historical empathy among students. Values such as mutual cooperation, spirituality, tolerance, and diversity embedded in local culture can serve as a bridge between history learning and character education. Research by Gay (2018) shows that contextual and culturally responsive learning enhances engagement, understanding, and retention of learning

outcomes. In the Indonesian context, the involvement of local culture in history learning can strengthen social integration and appreciation for diverse cultural identities (Tilaar & Hapsari, 2004; E. Wulandari & Suryadi, 2021).

In the last decade, attention to the integration of local culture in history education in Indonesia has increased. Various studies have attempted to design learning models that involve local wisdom as a source of contextual values and knowledge. For example, Umasih et al. (2019) developed an Integrative Learning Model Based on History and Local Culture for secondary schools, which places local culture as supporting material for national history. Although relevant in substance, this model remains instructional and teacher-centered, failing to provide space for active student participation as learning agents. Meanwhile, Suprijono et al. (2021) propose a more dialogic transformative history learning approach, but it does not directly utilize local cultural experiences through field exploration or community-based social action.

International research also shows a trend toward culturally and place-based pedagogical approaches. A. I. Taylor & Young (2003) in Australia emphasize the importance of place-based historical learning as a way to build students' connection to the history of their community. In Indonesia, Birsyada et al. (2024) introduced a hybrid dialogue model

in history education based on the local philosophy of "Jalma Kang Utama," but this approach focuses more on moral reflection than empirical cultural exploration. Additionally, the integration of Pancasila Student Profile values into contextual and transformative history learning models has not been systematically developed, especially those oriented toward tangible outcomes such as cultural documentation, conservation campaigns, or community history projects. Therefore, there are several significant research gaps. First, there is no comprehensive history learning model that integrates local cultural exploration, historical reflection, and transformative action as a unified learning process. Second, student involvement as young researchers of their community's history remains minimal in existing learning designs. Third, there is no pedagogical approach that explicitly connects local culture, the strengthening of Pancasila values, and critical historical literacy based on action.

In this context, this article offers a new approach in the form of the development of the "SEJARAH-HIDUP" (Student Exploration, Recording, Hope) model, which is based on three main principles: contextualization of local culture, active student participation, and transformative reflection. This model is designed as a response to the Merdeka Curriculum reform, as well as a

pedagogical innovation to make history learning a space for identity emancipation, critical awareness, and cultural action relevant to the challenges of the 21st century.

The “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model is designed not only to be symbolic, but also participatory and reflective in order to optimize the potential of local culture in history education. This model was developed in this spirit: to revive history as a contextual, collaborative learning practice rooted in living cultural heritage. With such an approach, history is no longer a frozen lesson from the past, but a space for the formation of meaning that is alive and relevant for the future.

Responding to the complexity of challenges in history education in Indonesia and the opportunities offered by the Merdeka Curriculum, this article proposes a conceptual model called “SEJARAH-HIDUP,” which stands for Siswa Jelajah, Rekam, Harap - Hidupkan Identitas dan Visi Perubahan (Students Explore, Record, Hope - Revive Identity and Vision for Change). This model is developed as a pedagogical approach that places local culture at the center of the learning process and students as active subjects in interpreting and reflecting on the meaning of history. In this approach, history is not merely a collection of past events, but a living experience that continues to shape present-day identity and social action.

This article aims to formulate a conceptual framework for a contextual, reflective, and locally-based history learning model through the development of the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model. This model is designed to address the gap between the vision of the Merdeka Curriculum and the practice of history learning in the classroom, particularly in terms of integrating local values, strengthening student identity, and fostering meaningful historical awareness. Additionally, this article seeks to demonstrate that local culture can not only serve as instructional material but also as a pedagogical tool for cultivating critical, empathetic learners with a vision for social change.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative method with a literature review research design from Zed (2008: 11-15) to formulate a conceptual framework for a contextual and reflective history learning model based on local culture. Zed (2008; 3-5) explains that a literature review is a scientific activity that utilizes library sources to obtain data. This approach was chosen because the primary objective of the research is not to test empirical hypotheses but to construct a pedagogical model that is theoretically and contextually relevant to the conditions of history education in Indonesia within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum.

The data sources in this study come from relevant secondary literature, including: (1) books on educational theory and critical pedagogy; (2) reputable scientific journals discussing history education, culture-based learning, and 21st-century curriculum; (3) national policies and official documents from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology related to the Merdeka Curriculum and the Pancasila Student Profile; and (4) previous research findings related to local culture-based learning models, both in Indonesia and internationally.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic study of these sources, emphasizing the relationship between historical learning theory, local cultural values, and curriculum implementation. The analysis procedure was carried out through thematic synthesis stages (Zed, 2008: 49-55), namely: (1) identification of key themes in related literature, such as contextual pedagogy, participatory history, and community-based learning; (2) analyzing the relationships between themes and the principles underlying the learning model; and (3) reconstructing the conceptual model of "SEJARAH-HIDUP" based on the theoretical principles verified in the literature.

The analysis was conducted using thematic synthesis and content analysis techniques by examining the relationships

between texts, theories, and practices. In this process, the researcher applied triangulation of theory and sources to enhance conceptual validity. Theoretical triangulation was conducted by comparing the perspectives of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970), place-based education (Gruenewald, 2003), and participatory historiography (Barton & Levstik, 2004) to test the coherence of the principles of the SEJARAH-HIDUP model. Meanwhile, source triangulation is conducted by combining findings from academic journals, national curriculum policies, and empirical practice documentation in the field. The results of this process are formulated into a conceptual model that is not only descriptive but also applicable for use in designing history education at the secondary education level. Thus, this literature review method enables researchers to formulate a contextually relevant learning model grounded in strong theory, which can serve as an initial reference for further implementation-based field research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History education in the context of 21st-century education is no longer understood as the transmission of a single, static, and elitist narrative of the past. Instead, history is viewed as a social construct that must be critically examined in relation to the identity, power, and cultural experiences of students. In the Indonesian

context, which boasts a rich diversity of local cultures and histories, efforts to prioritize local culture as the primary source in history education have become increasingly urgent (Tilaar & Hapsari, 2004; Hall, 1997). Unfortunately, most of the approaches used in history education in schools are still oriented toward national narratives, often ignoring the historical experiences of local communities that are actually closer and more relevant to students' lives.

This situation creates a gap between students and learning materials, resulting in weak engagement, a lack of historical empathy, and low reflective abilities regarding current social realities (Levstik & Barton, 2022; Retnawati et al., 2017). History education, if not connected to the local context and the real lives of students, tends to fail in fostering transformative historical awareness. Yet, local culture contains various historical learning resources—whether in the form of rituals, artifacts, oral narratives, or social practices—that can be developed into meaningful learning tools.

The Merdeka Curriculum Reform provides space for strengthening the local dimension in national education. The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) is one of the main instruments for integrating local cultural values into interdisciplinary learning, including history. The principles of flexibility, differentiation, and

contextualization promoted by this curriculum implicitly encourage a shift in the paradigm of history learning from a narrative-factual approach to a reflective-participatory one (Kemendikbudristek, 2022; Majid & Rochman, 2023). However, this policy space has not been optimally responded to by pedagogical innovations at the practical level. Many teachers still lack learning models that can systematically, participatively, and practically bring local culture to life in the learning process.

In this context, a local culture-based history learning model needs to be designed as a pedagogical framework that not only respects the diversity of cultural heritage but also shapes students into critical, empathetic, and empowered historical agents. Such a model can address two major issues in contemporary history education: first, the disconnect between the curriculum and the local context; and second, the alienation of students from their own history. By presenting local culture as the primary source of learning, students are encouraged to actively interpret, reconstruct, and respond to history—an approach that makes history learning not merely knowledge of the past, but also a practice of social transformation (Freire, 1970; Biesta, 2015).

Basic Principles of the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” Model

The “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model is an acronym for Siswa Jelajah, Rekam, Harap—a pedagogical approach designed to revive history as a contextual, reflective, and participatory practice. This model does not merely present local culture as an object of knowledge but positions students as active participants who explore their community's history, document its meanings, and formulate hopes and concrete actions in response to those historical experiences. This approach emphasizes that history is not merely “what happened” but also “how we socially and ethically interpret it” (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Seixas, 2013).

The development of the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model is based on the integration of cross-theories in history education and critical pedagogy. In general, the theoretical framework used covers three main dimensions. First, Critical Pedagogy theory (Freire, 1970). This model adopts the spirit of liberating education, in which learners are positioned not as passive objects but as active subjects who interpret their social reality. History learning, in this context, becomes a dialectical space for exploring critical consciousness (conscientization) of cultural heritage and representational inequalities in historical narratives.

Second, the theory of Place-Based Education (Gruenewald, 2003). The

“SEJARAH-HIDUP” model places students' living spaces at the center of the learning process. This theory emphasizes the importance of the connection between students, their place of residence, local culture, and learning experiences. In the context of history, this means exploring local narratives and linking them to national and global historical dynamics.

Third, the theory of Participatory Historiography (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Barton and Levstik emphasize that history is not only told by the victors, but needs to be reconstructed through the lens of communities, ordinary citizens, and students as historical actors. Through this approach, students learn to become cultural researchers and writers of their community's history. These three theories contribute to the philosophical and methodological structure of the model.

The SEJARAH-HIDUP model attempts to synergize these three approaches into a learning structure that has dimensions of exploration (exploration), reflection and articulation (recording), and social transformation (hope). These three stages not only reflect the learning process, but also represent the three main pillars of 21st century education: learning to know, learning to do, and learning to be (Delors, 1998).

The “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model is explicitly designed to integrate three domains of learning outcomes: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. This design

reflects a holistic approach to history learning, which is not only oriented toward knowledge transfer, but also toward strengthening values and concrete actions.

Cognitive - Historical and Critical Thinking: This model facilitates the development of higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis through student engagement in the exploration of local culture and interpretation of historical sources. Activities such as analysis of local narratives, study of artifacts, and comparison of sources encourage students to think historically, understand context, and construct evidence-based arguments (Wineburg, 2001).

Affective - Historical Empathy and Cultural Values: Learning based on local cultural experiences allows students to directly experience values such as mutual cooperation, spirituality, and community identity. Through interaction with cultural practitioners and deep reflection, students develop historical empathy and social awareness of the dynamics of marginalized cultures in the dominant narrative. This aligns with character education and the affective dimension in the Pancasila Student Profile (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Psychomotor - Action and Social Collaboration: The final stage of this model encourages students to transform their learning outcomes into concrete

actions. Learning products such as digital documentation, cultural exhibitions, conservation campaigns, and community projects provide opportunities for the development of 21st-century skills, including collaboration, creativity, public communication, and leadership. These activities integrate knowledge and values into real-world actions, making history learning a transformative experience focused on social change (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

With this integrative principle, the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model provides a holistic and contextual learning approach that can be adapted to local cultural wisdom in various regions. This model addresses the needs of 21st-century education to produce students who are not only cognitively intelligent but also have strong character and are able to actively contribute to their communities.

The distinctive features of the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model are reflective, participatory, and transformative. Reflective means encouraging students to interpret the meaning of history through local experiences and values. Participatory implies student involvement in the process of exploring, documenting, and reconstructing the history of their community. Transformative indicates that this learning does not stop at knowledge but continues into social action, such as cultural preservation, public awareness campaigns, or innovations based on local

heritage. This model inherently supports the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, such as critical thinking, global diversity, and cooperation (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Compared to previous models of history education based on local culture, such as the integrative model (Umasih et al., 2019) or transformative learning (Suprijono et al., 2021), SEJARAH-HIDUP places greater emphasis on concrete actions and the historical connection between students and their communities. It does not merely treat local culture as supplementary material but as the core of learning that drives narrative, emotion, and responsibility. As a result, this model has the potential to transform history education from a rote-learning environment into a space for personal, cultural, and social engagement.

SEJARAH-HIDUP Model Design

The “SEJARAH HIDUP” learning model consists of three main stages: Exploration, Recording, and Hope. Each stage is designed to create a contextual, dialogical, and emancipatory learning experience. The structure of this model is not merely a technical sequence, but a pedagogical approach that positions learners as active subjects in constructing historical meaning based on interactions with communities, cultural environments, and living local narratives (Freire, 1970; Biesta, 2015).



Figure 1. Stages of the ‘SEJARAH HIDUP’ Model

The first stage, Exploration, is a phase of exploring local culture through direct observation, interviews with traditional leaders or cultural practitioners, and observation of social practices within the community. At this stage, students are invited to leave the classroom to immerse themselves in concrete experiences that are alive in their environment. This approach is in line with the principle of place-based learning, which emphasizes the connection between place, identity, and education (Gruenewald, 2003).

This exploration not only builds personal connections between students and their culture, but also serves as a starting point for developing curiosity, historical empathy, and basic ethnographic skills. Research by (Barton & Levstik, 2004) shows that student involvement in community-based historical investigations enhances understanding of diverse narratives and strengthens democratic historical awareness.

The second stage, Record, emphasizes the process of documenting and interpreting the findings collected by

students during their exploration. Students compile a local history portfolio in the form of narrative texts, reflective essays, documentary videos, cultural maps, or other visual forms. This process allows students to develop historical and digital literacy skills at the same time (Wineburg, 2001).

This activity encourages students to analyze meaning, select sources, and construct narratives about their community's history. In this process, history learning shifts from memorization to reconstruction—from consumption of knowledge to production of knowledge. This is a concrete form of reflective education that empowers students (Biesta, 2015).

The final stage, Hope, is a reflective and transformative phase. Students are encouraged to reflect on the values they have discovered, relate them to contemporary issues, and develop social action projects such as cultural preservation campaigns, thematic exhibitions, traditional performances, or online publications about their local history.

This phase aims to foster student agency in preserving and developing local culture, as well as using history as a means for social change. The principles of learning to do and learning to live together from UNESCO Pillars of Education (2015) find their concrete expression in this phase, where students not only learn

about the past, but also take action for the future.

With this three-stage design, the SEJARAH-HIDUP model integrates cognitive (historical analysis), affective (appreciation of cultural values), and psychomotor (community action) elements into a single, comprehensive pedagogical framework. This model can be adapted for various educational levels and cultural backgrounds, and serves as a bridge between the Merdeka Curriculum policy and transformative local history-based learning practices.

Integration of the “SEJARAH HIDUP” Model with the Merdeka Curriculum and Pancasila Student Profile

The “SEJARAH-HIDUP” learning model is designed not only as a response to pedagogical challenges in history learning, but also as a concrete effort to actualize the vision of the Merdeka Curriculum and realize the Pancasila Student Profile. The Merdeka Curriculum provides educational units with the freedom to develop learning materials and strategies in accordance with the context and characteristics of their students. On the other hand, the Pancasila Student Profile emphasizes six key dimensions of character and competencies that must be developed, namely: (1) faith and piety, (2) global diversity, (3) cooperation, (4) independence, (5) critical thinking, and (6) creativity (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

The “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model is directly aligned with the five main dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. Through the Exploration phase, students are trained to appreciate cultural diversity and explore the meaning of local traditions, which contributes to the dimensions of global diversity and faith, piety, and noble character in a cultural context. The Record phase encourages students to think critically in selecting information, constructing historical narratives, and communicating them creatively through various media. This is a form of actualization of the critical and creative thinking dimension.

Meanwhile, the Hope phase allows students to engage in value- and community-based social actions, whether through digital campaigns, cultural performances, or conservation projects. These activities strengthen their cooperative skills while encouraging their independence in taking on roles as agents of change. Thus, this model grounds the values of the Pancasila Student Profile in an applicable and meaningful way in the context of history learning.

In addition, this model is also in line with the project-based approach in the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). In the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model, students not only develop projects based on historical content, but also integrate reflections on cultural values, social criticism, and

creative solutions to challenges in their communities. This is in line with the spirit of inquiry learning and project-based learning, which are the pillars of transformative learning in the Merdeka Curriculum (Majid & Rochman, 2023).

Furthermore, this model also provides space for holistic evaluation through authentic assessment. For example, students are assessed not only in terms of cognitive aspects (written historical narratives), but also in terms of affective aspects (internalized values) and psychomotor aspects (real actions or social contributions). Thus, this model simultaneously addresses the need for contextual history learning, as well as the curriculum's need to develop students' character in terms of knowledge, attitude, and action.

International Comparison and Theoretical Validation

The “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model was not developed in a vacuum, but is part of a global discourse on the transformation of history learning that is locally relevant and socially responsive. In various countries, a variety of similar approaches have emerged in spirit—namely, centering learning on the community context, developing student participation, and encouraging meaningful historical reflection. However, each approach has its own unique cultural, political, and pedagogical context.

In Australia, for example, a place-based approach to history education has been integrated into the national history curriculum since the early 2000s. This model encourages students to research the history of their communities through local primary sources, visit historical sites, and produce alternative historical narratives that often intersect with issues of Aboriginal identity and migrati (A. I. Taylor & Young, 2003). This approach is similar to the Explore and Record stages in the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model, but it has not been explicitly integrated with the dimensions of social action or value reflection as in the Hope stage.

In Canada, historical thinking concepts developed by (Seixas, 2013) emphasize historical thinking competencies through source analysis, continuity and change, and historical significance. Although conceptually very strong, this approach is still lacking in terms of local culture and community action. Similarly, in Japan, the *chiiki gakushū* (region-based learning) model is used to connect students with the history and geography of their region, but it tends to be directed toward fostering loyalty to the state and does not always encourage critical thinking or social change (Cave, 2007).

The “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model offers an original contribution in terms of integrating local history exploration, alternative narrative production, and

value-based transformative action. Within this framework, students are not only encouraged to learn about the past, but also to interpret its meaning and take action for the future of their community. The theoretical validation of this model is strengthened by the synthesis of three major approaches: critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970), place-based learning (Gruenewald, 2003), and participatory historiography (Barton & Levstik, 2004). This theoretical triangulation ensures that the SEJARAH-HIDUP model is grounded in a strong scientific foundation and can be developed in various educational contexts.

In terms of implementation, this model is highly flexible and can be adapted to multicultural and postcolonial societies such as Indonesia. As a country with thousands of local cultures that have the potential to be sources of historical learning, Indonesia needs a model that not only values diversity but also encourages young people to become active preservers of local values. In this regard, SEJARAH-HIDUP surpasses many international models by emphasizing concrete social action, student emotional engagement, and the integration of the values of the Pancasila Student Profile.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The development of the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model has significant implications for both the theory of history education and teaching practices in schools. From a

theoretical perspective, this model offers an alternative approach to history education, which has traditionally been dominated by national narratives and the transmission of facts. By integrating three core principles—contextual exploration (Explore), narrative reconstruction (Record), and social action reflection (Hope)—this model enriches the discourse on historical pedagogy with an approach that is participatory, reflective, and transformative (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Biesta, 2015).

This model also expands the horizons of historical education theory by combining the principles of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970), place-based learning (Gruenewald, 2003) and historical thinking (Seixas, 2013). In the Indonesian context—which faces challenges of curriculum decolonization, cultural identity crisis, and marginalization of local history—this model can serve as a conceptual foundation for developing historical education practices that are not only informative but also empowering. Thus, the SEJARAH-HIDUP model is not merely a learning strategy but also a counter-narrative to hegemonic approaches in educational historiography.

From a practical standpoint, this model provides concrete guidance for teachers in designing history lessons that connect with students' life experiences and the cultural context of their communities. For example, teachers can

design learning projects that involve students in researching local culture, documenting local traditions, or organizing community history exhibitions. These activities not only foster academic skills, but also enhance students' empathy, social awareness, and agency in their communities (Gay, 2018 ; E. Wulandari & Suryadi, 2021).

In addition, this model supports the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) with a holistic and action-based approach. Assessment in this model can be conducted through authentic assessments such as portfolios, reflective journals, project presentations, and social impact evaluations. Thus, learning evaluation is not limited to cognitive achievements but also encompasses the affective and psychomotor domains, which have been marginalized in conventional history education.

Another implication is the need to strengthen teachers' capacity in terms of local cultural literacy, participatory methodologies, and project-based learning design. Teacher training and professional development programs need to be geared toward equipping them with skills and perspectives that are in line with the principles of the SEJARAH-HIDUP model. This requires synergy between educational institutions, local governments, and cultural communities in supporting

grounded and empowering history learning.

Overall, the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model opens up space for a more democratic, relevant, and humanistic renewal of history education in Indonesia. It returns history to its rightful owners—the community and students—and makes it a way to understand the past, interpret the present, and shape the future together.

CONCLUSION

This study develops a local culture-based history learning model with a contextual, reflective, and transformative approach through the concept of “SEJARAH-HIDUP” (Siswa Jelajah, Rekam, Harap or Students Explore, Record, Hope). This model is designed in response to the need for pedagogical innovation in Indonesian history education, which has tended to focus on the grand national narrative and has not provided enough space for the historical experiences of local communities of students. Within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, which allows for curriculum development tailored to regional contexts and student characteristics, the SEJARAH-HIDUP model provides a framework that bridges national vision with local realities.

This model is built on the theoretical foundations of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970), place-based learning (Gruenewald, 2003), and participatory historiography (Barton &

Levstik, 2004). The Exploration stage guides students to explore local culture through observation, interviews, and field studies. The Recording stage emphasizes the creative process of documentation and interpretation through local historical products, such as documentary videos, narrative maps, or digital narratives. The Action stage encourages students to design social actions based on historical and cultural values, such as conservation campaigns or community projects. These three stages simultaneously develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies while fostering identity awareness, historical empathy, and social responsibility.

In practical terms, this model makes a concrete contribution to the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), particularly in the dimensions of critical thinking, creativity, global diversity, and mutual cooperation. Assessment in this model is conducted through authentic portfolio-based assessments, participatory observations, and community action presentations, which are able to capture the learning process in its entirety and in a humanistic manner. Additionally, this model aligns with the spirit of project-based learning (PJBL), which is currently a cornerstone of the Merdeka Curriculum approach.

From a theoretical perspective, the “SEJARAH-HIDUP” model provides an

alternative to traditional approaches to history, which tend to be monological and factual, by introducing reflective, participatory, and dialogical dimensions to history learning. It contributes to the expansion of the conceptual framework of community-based history education and can serve as inspiration for the development of contextual curricula in other countries with diverse cultural characteristics.

Based on these findings, the author offers several recommendations. First, history teachers should be trained in community-based contextual learning design and given the space to innovate micro-curricula. Second, local governments and educational institutions should provide support in the form of cultural resources, local documentation, and cross-sector collaboration to support the integration of local culture into history learning. Third, further research should be conducted in the form of implementation studies of the SEJARAH-HIDUP model in various regions with different cultural contexts to test the effectiveness, flexibility, and scalability of this model in broader history education practices.

Academically, the main contribution of this article is to offer an interdisciplinary approach that combines critical pedagogy theory, local history, and place-based learning in the development of history curricula in Indonesia. This model is

expected to enrich the discourse on history education by emphasizing the importance of cultural context and active student engagement. Furthermore, this article also provides practical contributions for teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers in implementing history education that is not only informative but also transformative and empowering, in line with the spirit of the Pancasila Student Profile and the principles of humanistic education. The SEJARAH-HIDUP model is expected to be an important contribution in shaping Indonesian history education that is more contextual, democratic, and rooted in living and meaningful local values.

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