



## APPLICATION OF A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH IN HISTORY LEARNING TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING AT SMA NEGERI 1 MEDAN

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### Abstract

History education has an important role in shaping students' understanding of the past and its relationship to the current context. However, challenges arise in teaching history in a way that encourages students to think critically and relate learning to contemporary realities. This research aims to explore the application of a contextual approach to history learning at SMA Negeri 1 Medan in an effort to strengthen students' critical thinking skills. The research method used is a case study using interviews, observation and document analysis as data collection techniques. The research results show that the application of a contextual approach to history learning has succeeded in activating students to think critically, increasing their involvement in the learning process, and strengthening the relationship between historical material and the current social, cultural and political context. The implication of these findings is the need to continue to encourage innovation in history learning approaches to produce a generation that is critical, informed, and able to relate learning to the realities they face.

**Key words:** *Contextual Approach; Historical Learning; Critical Thinking.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Training is a work to plan HR who have aptitude and abilities as per the requests of public events. The acknowledgment of a quality society is the obligation of schooling, particularly in getting ready understudies who have a harmony between perspectives, abilities and information to construct delicate abilities and hard abilities. Endeavors to work on the nature of schooling are by creating and working on the nature of instruction broadly (Sudarsana, 2015). Regulation Number 20 of 2003 (Branch of Public Training, 2003) Part I Article 1 passage (1) concerning the Public schooling system instruction is a cognizant and arranged work to make a learning climate and growing experience with the goal that understudies effectively foster their capability to have qualities strict otherworldliness, restraint, character, knowledge, respectable person, and abilities required without help from anyone else, society, country and state (Indonesia, 2006).

In the educational experience, in execution, there are as yet many learning exercises that overlook the exercises and needs of understudies. What causes this is a learning approach that puts more emphasis on dominating scholarly capacities and educator-focused realizing, where understudies are situated as objects of understanding from the instructor's information. The review materials are just hypothetical and unbending. With the goal that instructive organizations just produce graduates who are hypothetically shrewd yet poor in application (Mariyaningsih & Hidayati, 2018). As a general rule, the set of growing experiences completed in schools is as yet static and regular. Being static can really mean that there are no progressions made by history educators now and again, just utilizing traditional strategies, for example, the talk strategy, which just peruses or rehashes sentences in books and understudies just have opportunities for growth like tuning in, taking notes and remembering the material introduced. by instructors without understanding what is being considered, without understanding whether the material introduced or examined has significance and worth that is helpful for understudies' lives, leading to understudies' insights that set of experiences illustrations are exhausting, exhausting, less intriguing, and less essential to learn (Muis et al., 2023).

What is implied by relevant learning, or

what is naturally called contextual teaching and learning (CTL), is a learning idea where the educator carries this present reality into the homeroom and urges understudies to make associations between the information they have and its application in daily existence, while the members obtain restricted information, abilities and settings gradually and will develop their own as an arrangement for tackling issues in their lives as citizens later on (Hasibuan, 2014). Relevant learning is a learning approach that is based on the understanding that information is built by people. On this premise, a constructivist learning approach was created, which opens up the broadest doors for understudies to engage themselves. According to the current instructive hypothesis, the most ideal way to learn is for understudies to develop their own seeing effectively (Suriadi & Supriyatno, 2020).

A context-oriented learning approach will make a functioning homeroom airy since all understudies feel liable for their examples. Members can advance freely and transparently, as a context-oriented approach coordinates understudies as subjects and not simply protests. The relevant training model is an instructive model that underlines that understudies in the educational experience are expected to be completely involved, so they can find the material being educated and relate it to reality, which eventually urges understudies' energy to have the option to apply it in their lives (Nurdyansyah & Fahyuni, 2016). At first, relevant learning depended on the examination aftereffects of John Dewey. Constructivism is the reason for context-oriented thinking (reasoning), specifically that information is worked on by people gradually, the consequences of which are extended through a restricted setting (Afriani, 2018).

As made sense of by (Darma & Joebagio, 2018), history learning assumes a part in framing the public person for a more youthful age through proper training, as would be considered normal to shape verifiable mindfulness that can ethically encourage understudies' patriotism. As a subject that can possibly shape a public person, history learning shouldn't just focus on parts of information or scholarly insight; it ought to likewise incorporate parts of mindset or the capacity to understand individuals on a profound level. It is important for endeavors to shape the country's personality later on.

Contextual learning (contextual teaching learning) will be a discovery that

assists educators with connecting the material instructed with understudies' genuine circumstances and urges understudies to make associations between the information they have and its application to their regular routines. This includes seven principal parts of powerful learning, in particular: constructivism, addressing, making requests, learning commonality, displaying, reflection and genuine appraisal (Hidayat, 2012). One more point of contextual learning is to furnish understudies with more sensible information and capacities, on the grounds that the substance of this learning is to carry hypothetical things closer to reasonable ones. So that in carrying out realizing, this technique endeavors to have the option to assimilate illustrations that are applied in genuine circumstances (Sihombing, 2017).

Learning will be more significant if kids 'experience' what they are realizing, not simply 'know' it. Discovering that it is situated towards the objective of dominating material has for sure been demonstrated to help youngsters 'recollect', but just in a brief timeframe and can't prepare kids to tackle issues, all things considered. Urge understudies to apply their insight to family, school, local area and resident life, fully intent on tracking down the importance of the material for their lives (Hanik, 2015).

SMA Negeri 1 Medan as one of the proper training organizations keeps on making many updates to track down learning models that suit the necessities and times that understudies live in. To accomplish these learning targets, development and imagination endeavors are required from history educators, one of which is by utilizing a logical learning approach in introducing verifiable material so the exhausting history learning worldview can be supplanted with significant history learning. While history learning is felt to have importance for the people who concentrate on it, then that is the point at which the most common way of assimilating person values will flourish in understudies and the objectives of history learning can be accomplished.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This kind of exploration is elucidating contextual investigation research utilizing a subjective examination approach (Sugiyono, 2017). Subjective exploration was picked to get a more point-by-point, level headed and top-to-

bottom picture with respect to the execution of context-oriented approaches and their viability in learning history training. The information examination method utilized in this exploration was done intuitively and proceeded persistently until finishing, so the information was immersed. Beginning with information assortment, information show, information buildup and making inferences (Miles & Huberman, 1992).

First of all, the researcher observed the history learning process, which had implemented a contextual approach in randomly selected classes. Observations were carried out to understand how teachers integrate social, cultural and political contexts into history learning and how students participate in and react to this approach. Next, researchers conducted interviews with history teachers who were involved in implementing the contextual approach. Interviews were conducted to gain deeper insight into the learning strategies used, the challenges faced, and their perceptions of the effectiveness of this approach in improving students' critical thinking. Apart from that, researchers also collected related documents, such as lesson plans, learning materials, and student evaluation results, to complete an understanding of the application of a contextual approach in history learning. Data from observations, interviews and document analysis were then analyzed in depth to identify relevant patterns, themes and findings related to the application of a contextual approach in encouraging students' critical thinking at SMA Negeri 1 Medan. The combination of various data collection techniques allows researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the application of the contextual approach to history learning in high school and its impact on students' critical thinking.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

History learning plays a basic part in this association with the reason or motivation behind concentrating on history. History learning It is trusted that it can encourage understudies' knowledge into learning and monitoring the advantages of history for their day-to-day routines as people and as a country. As history learning alludes to the motivation behind learning history, it is important to foster different ways to deal with history learning. To gain history according to the viewpoint of

history learning goals in regards to mental, emotional and psychomotor perspectives, which are bound together, the result of history learning is understudies who have information, appreciation and conduct as per verifiable qualities considered (Asmara, 2019).

As a school subject, history is the most established subject compared with other sociology disciplines; as a matter of fact, history training has been shown in schools since the pilgrimage period, after freedom, as of not long ago (Darma & Joebagio, 2018). The job of history training as the principal starting point for social examination schooling is to incorporate values, for example, the presentation of self-character, compassion, resilience and encouraging a feeling of having a place and a feeling of fortitude as a work to shape public personality. Aside from that, concentrating on history has objectives and advantages, for example, acquiring significant experience from occasions previously, so you can gain from these missteps so they don't reoccur, and you can act all the more shrewdly and admirably, particularly in navigation. In this manner, it is fitting for the more youthful age to appreciate concentrating on history, on the grounds that, as per Cleaf (Sayono, 2015), "History ought to assist youngsters with fostering a comprehension and enthusiasm for their legacy and custom. Kids ought to then have the option to contrast the advancement of their country with that of different countries." Learning history and understanding history will actually assist youngsters with fostering a comprehension and enthusiasm for their legacy and customs. Kids can then contrast the advancement of their nation with that of different nations.

In English, logical comes from "setting, which can be perceived as a component of a depiction or sentence that supports or adds clarity to the significance or circumstances that are connected with an occasion. It tends to be deciphered as relevant as something connected with the setting. The logical learning approach, otherwise called contextual teaching and learning (CTL), is an idea that assists educators with connecting the material they educate with certifiable circumstances and urges understudies to make associations between the information they have and its application in their lives as family and local area individuals. The context-oriented learning approach is an instructive methodology that aims to assist

understudies with understanding the importance of the example material they are examining by associating it with the setting of their own lives in the social and social climate of society. In this way, the growing experience not only impacts the learning results, which are the learning goals, but also gives significant information and experience that is helpful in the reality setting of understudies. Uncovered that relevant learning is an alternate instructive methodology, accomplishing more than directing understudies in consolidating scholarly subjects with the setting in their own conditions. Logical learning will be discovering that can offer help and reinforce students' comprehension. Understudies might interpret ideas by retaining various gaining materials, acquire importance from what they realize, and relate it to genuine, regular daily existence. At the end of the day, logical learning expects to assist understudies with getting a handle on the material being concentrated by connecting it to the setting of their regular routines, including individual, social and environmental conditions. This implies that logical learning permits understudies to associate the substance of the material with the setting of their regular daily existence and view it as important. The relevant learning approach is a learning approach that underlines the course of full understudy inclusion, to comprehend the material examined and relate it to genuine circumstances, accordingly reassuring understudies to be able to apply it to their lives. The need to apply a logical learning approach by educators in introducing material is on the grounds that: 1. The growing experience in schools overall is still educator-focused in conveying material by the instructor, and understudies are "expected" to tune in, focus and acknowledge it, with the goal that the growing experience is less agreeable and engaging for understudies. 2. As a rule, learning material is unique, hypothetical, scholarly, and doesn't address the issues understudies face in their regular daily existence in the family, local area, common habitat or universe of work. 3. Evaluation is just done with tests that accentuate information and doesn't survey understudies' valid learning characteristics and capacities in genuine circumstances. 4. Learning assets are as yet centered around instructors and books. The general climate has not been used ideally. Learning is said to utilize a context-oriented approach on the off chance that the

learning material isn't just text-based yet is connected to its application in understudies' day-to-day routines in the family, local area, regular habitat and universe of work, including the seven fundamental parts, so that learning becomes significant for understudies.

### **1. Application Of A Contextual Approach In History Learning To Encourage Students' Critical Thinking**

The application of a contextual approach to history learning at SMA Negeri 1 Medan has become the main focus of this research. Through various research methods, we managed to dig up a deep understanding of how this approach is implemented and its impact on students' critical thinking. The case study carried out involved observations of the history learning process, which utilized a contextual approach. These observations provide a direct picture of interactions between teachers and students in learning contexts that are relevant to social, cultural and political realities. In our observations, we see history teachers carefully integrating these contexts into their teaching, enriching learning materials and stimulating student interest.

Interviews with history teachers are an important source of information for understanding the strategies and approaches used in teaching history. These teachers enthusiastically shared their experiences in implementing a contextual approach and revealed the challenges and successes they faced. They highlight how important it is to make history relevant to students' everyday lives to increase their engagement and understanding. Document analysis also makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the application of contextual approaches to history teaching. These documents include lesson plans, learning materials, and student evaluation results. We found that lesson plans were carefully designed to take relevant contexts into account, while learning materials were designed to stimulate students' critical reflection.

The results of this data collection were then analyzed thoroughly to identify key findings. We found that the application of a contextual approach to history learning at SMA Negeri 1 Medan has succeeded in increasing students' critical thinking. The integration of social, cultural and political contexts in history learning has succeeded in making learning

material more relevant and challenging for students. The contextual approach has also been proven to stimulate students' active participation in the learning process. They engage in discussions that consider multiple points of view, challenging and enriching their understanding of history. This is reflected in student evaluation results, which show an increase in their ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate historical information.

The challenges faced in implementing a contextual approach are also revealed in this research. History teachers face obstacles in finding adequate sources and materials relevant to local and global contexts for learning. However, they demonstrate a strong desire to continue developing and refining their approach. The successful implementation of a contextual approach to history learning at SMA Negeri 1 Medan has significant implications for educational practice. This shows the importance of considering social, cultural, and political contexts in designing meaningful learning experiences for students. In addition, this research also highlights the need for adequate support and resources for history teachers to implement this approach effectively. Thus, this research provides an important contribution to the understanding of how a contextual approach can be applied in history learning to encourage students' critical thinking. These findings can be the basis for further development in context-oriented and critical thinking history learning practices in high schools and other educational institutions. Our findings also highlight the importance of contextual approaches in stimulating students' learning interest and motivation. By relating historical material to the reality they experience, students become more involved in learning and more enthusiastic about exploring further. This is reflected in the active interaction between teachers and students, as well as in the quality of discussions and questions asked by students during learning. In addition, applying a contextual approach also helps students develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between the past, present and future. They learn to see history as an integral part of an ongoing process that shapes the identity and direction of society's development. Thus, this approach not only strengthens students' understanding of history but also helps them develop more complex critical thinking about the world around them. This

research also shows that a contextual approach can be an effective means of promoting inclusion in history learning. By taking into account various social, cultural, and political contexts, this approach allows students from different backgrounds to feel recognized and valued in the learning experience. This creates an inclusive and supportive environment for all students to learn and develop. However, it needs to be acknowledged that implementing a contextual approach also raises several challenges. One of them is ensuring that learning materials remain relevant and up-to-date with current world developments. This requires history teachers to continue to follow the latest developments in the field of history and update their learning approaches regularly.

Apart from that, strong support is also needed from all related parties, including schools, teaching staff and administration, to facilitate the effective implementation of the contextual approach. This includes providing adequate resources, training for teachers, and support in designing relevant and innovative curricula. In facing these challenges, it is important to continue to encourage collaboration and the exchange of experiences between educational practitioners. Through this collaboration, history teachers can support and learn from each other in implementing an effective contextual approach. This will strengthen history teaching practices in various schools and help create a more dynamic and results-oriented learning environment. Overall, this research shows that the application of a contextual approach to history learning at SMA Negeri 1 Medan has made a significant contribution to strengthening students' critical thinking. These findings provide a strong basis for further development in history learning practices that are context-oriented, inclusive, and encourage critical thinking across educational institutions.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research confirms that the application of a contextual approach to history learning at SMA Negeri 1 Medan has succeeded in making a significant contribution to strengthening students' critical thinking. Through observations, interviews, and document analysis, we found that this approach has stimulated students' active

participation, increased their interest and motivation to learn, and helped them develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between the past, present, and future. In the context of history learning, the contextual approach proves itself to be an effective tool for making learning material more relevant and challenging for students. The integration of social, cultural, and political contexts not only enriches students' learning experiences but also helps them develop more complex critical thinking about the world around them. However, challenges still exist in implementing this contextual approach. Strong support is needed from all relevant parties, including schools, teaching staff and administration, to ensure its success. Providing adequate resources, training for teachers, and collaboration between educational practitioners are the keys to strengthening history learning practices that are context-oriented and critical in all educational institutions. Thus, the main conclusion from this research is that the contextual approach has great potential to enrich students' learning experiences in history. Next steps include continuing to encourage innovation in history teaching practices, strengthening collaboration between educational practitioners, and ensuring that all students can benefit from learning approaches that are relevant, inclusive, and encourage critical thinking.

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