

Understanding Students' Learning Styles and Its Implementation in History Learning by Teachers at Two State Madrasah Aliyah in Magelang Regency

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ABSTRACT

In learning history, students are expected to be able to understand the historical context being taught and practice students to think critically. In realizing this, teachers need to have a good understanding of students' learning styles in order to create an appropriate learning process to achieve learning objectives. This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods. The data collection techniques used in this research are in-depth interviews with history teachers, observation, and documentation studies related to the design of teaching modules. The results of this study show that teachers in understanding the learning styles of students, use a variety of different ways, one of which is by non-cognitive diagnostic assessment and observation. The results obtained will show how the characteristics of students' learning styles. Teachers' understanding of learners' learning styles is related to the design of lesson planning and implementation. By understanding the learning styles of students, teachers can create innovative teaching modules with learning methods and models that are tailored to the learning styles of students.

Keywords: Understanding, Learning Style, History Learning

INTRODUCTION

Kurikulum Merdeka is the latest curriculum set by the Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi (Kemendikbudristek) in 2022. The Kurikulum Merdeka seeks to create lessons that make students the center of the learning process, which can be referred to as learning with a new paradigm (Sufyadi et al., 2021). The Kurikulum Merdeka has diverse intracurricular learning, so that students have enough time to learn concepts and improve competencies. In the Kurikulum Merdeka, in the world of education, students' skills are the main thing. The skills referred to are critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, self-management, information communication technology and so on. In addition, in the Kurikulum Merdeka, the main focus in learning is on students by applying the term Merdeka Belajar. Merdeka Belajar means giving students the opportunity to learn freely and comfortably, using the talents they have, without forcing them to learn and also master an area of knowledge outside of their hobbies and abilities, and create a knowledge portfolio that suits their interests (Fajri et al., 2023). Especially with the issuance of the Kurikulum Merdeka, teachers must be able to adapt to all changes in education which of course always develop according to the times (Prayoga &

Purnomo, 2023). The Kurikulum Merdeka gives teachers the freedom to create interesting and educational learning. Teachers as designers and implementers of activities are one of the factors that affect the quality of education. Teachers directly see and know how the learning process occurs, which is the core of the overall educational process, with the teacher as the main role holder (Tunjung & Purnomo, 2020). In addition, in accordance with pedagogical competence, teachers must have the ability to design and implement the learning process. Teachers are given responsibility as the driving force in planning, implementation, and evaluation (Sutrisno et al., 2022). Pedagogical competence is an essential foundation for history teachers in delivering learning materials effectively. By having a good understanding of teaching methods, evaluation strategies, and individual student needs, teachers can create a learning environment that motivates and facilitates the understanding of historical concepts (Purnomo et al., 2023).

The learning process is part of the duties of a teacher who acts as a facilitator for students to gain knowledge with limits in accordance with applicable curriculum provisions. The facilitator in question is the teacher not only as a teacher, but the teacher also educates, guides, trains, directs, assesses and also evaluates students (Ulul Azmi et al., 2019). Therefore, a teacher must be able to create good and appropriate learning conditions so that students can achieve the competencies set out in the curriculum. However, in reality in the field, teachers often have various obstacles in the learning process in the classroom. Moreover, a teacher in some subjects or meetings only uses one-way learning techniques that make the teacher the center of learning and knowledge information. In determining the learning characteristics that suit the needs of students, teachers can conduct a diagnostic assessment. Assessment is an important process in education that is carried out to obtain

information to make decisions and plan effective learning (Nasution, 2022). Diagnostic assessments are conducted to determine students' strengths, weaknesses, potential and skill needs. The information obtained from the assessment is later used to create learning objectives and appropriate learning strategies. To find out and determine the learning style of students, the assessment used is a non-cognitive diagnostic assessment. Ghufroon in (Ahmad, 2020) defines that "Learning style is an approach that explains how each person learns or how they concentrate on the process and master difficult and new information through different perceptions". There are 3 kinds of learning styles for students, namely 1. Visual learning style 2. Auditorial learning style, and 3. Kinesthetic learning style. Learning styles have a major impact on education, especially on the achievement of learning materials (curriculum), teaching, and assessment.

History is one of the subjects taught at the Senior High School equivalent. According to Edwin in (Rofiqoh & Atmaja, 2024), history is a subject that fosters and shapes citizens, and good nation building that will help students foster nationalism. Subagyo in (Astuti & Suryadi, 2020) says that history is a branch of science that examines systematically how the overall development of the process of changing the dynamics of life that occurred in society with all aspects of its life that occurred in the past. History learning is designed to give students the ability to observe, ask questions, gather information, draw conclusions, communicate, reflect and also collaborate (Siti Raihanah et al., 2024). History learning teaches noble values that will be used to build the foundation and cultivation of character education. History education can also increase awareness, knowledge, insight, and values about society (Satrio & Atno, 2024). Cairns and Gerrard in (Purnomo & Kurniawan, 2025) say that history lessons play an important role in shaping a better future by fostering understanding and cognitive skills through dialog. History

education integrated with character education is a solution to answer various challenges in the world of education today through the Kurikulum Merdeka in the Pancasila Student Profile (Irawati et al., 2022). Significant differences in the objectives of history learning in the Kurikulum Merdeka are the number of items taught, the level of awareness about history, individual understanding, collective understanding, and values related to the environment.

Students' interest and learning motivation are the basis that needs to be considered to form maximum learning. It is necessary to choose learning methods and strategies that are tailored to the characteristics of students. A teacher's understanding of learning styles has indirectly led or asked a teacher to understand the characteristics, interests talents and also the needs needed by students. Identification of students' learning styles is expected to provide a source of reference for teachers in determining approaches, planning, strategies, and methods that are suitable for students in the implementation of history learning.

This research was conducted in two State Madrasah Aliyah Magelang Regency which is one of the Islamic Education Institutions under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, namely State Madrasah Aliyah 1 Magelang and State Madrasah Aliyah 2 Magelang. The two religious-based schools have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka. The newness of the Kurikulum Merdeka, which has only been implemented for a few years, needs to be studied further to find out the development of the curriculum, especially for the study of planning and implementation of history learning that refers to the learning style of students in the two State Madrasah Aliyah in Magelang Regency.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Researchers use a descriptive qualitative approach, namely data collected in the form of words, images, and not in the form of numbers (Danim, 2002: 51). According to

Bogdan and Taylor, quoted by Lexy. J. Moleong (2007: 3), a qualitative approach is a research method that collects descriptive data from behavior and written or spoken words from people and observed behavior. Descriptive research is a type of research that aims to describe or describe phenomena that occur, both those from human engineering and natural (Moleong, 2007: 17). Descriptive qualitative research aims to describe, explain, explain and also answer in more detail and detail related to the problems to be studied by studying as much as possible an individual, a group or an event. This descriptive qualitative research approach and type describes how the relationship between teachers' understanding of the design and implementation of history learning that refers to the learning styles of students at two MANs in Magelang Regency. Researchers will see how activities, views, attitudes, designs, and processes take place in the implementation of learning style-based history learning.

The subjects in this research are history teachers at MAN 1 and MAN 2 in Magelang district. For this research, the determination of research subjects used purposive sampling technique, namely data source retrieval carried out by selecting subjects based on specific criteria set by the researcher (Rokhmat Subagiyo, 2017: 69). The subject criteria that must be met for the purposes of this study are history teachers at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Magelang Regency with two teachers each in each school. The class that will be taken data for the implementation of history learning that refers to the learning style of students is class XI majoring in Social Sciences with a total of 2 classes for MAN 1 Magelang and 2 classes for MAN 2 Magelang.

The data collected in this study are qualitative data related to the understanding of students' learning styles, history lesson planning, and implementation of learning. Techniques in data collection that will be carried out by researchers are observation, in-depth interviews with history teachers,

and documentation studies in the form of learning modules made by teachers. In this study, data validity techniques will use credibility testing with triangulation techniques, observation persistence, and extended observation. In this study, researchers used data analysis Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) who suggested that qualitative data analysis has three streams of activities that occur simultaneously. Activities in data analysis are: Data Condensation, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing/Verifications.

RESULT

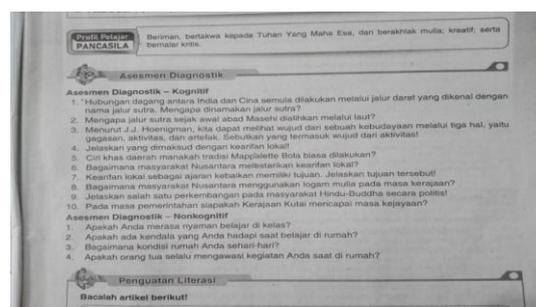
Data from the results of the study were obtained through in-depth interviews conducted by researchers, observations in the field regarding the implementation of learning in a period of one month and documentation of teaching modules. The researcher used documentation study as a supporting method to complement the data that the researcher did not get through observation and interviews. This research is a descriptive qualitative research resulting from field observations, in-depth interviews with informants, and document analysis that researchers have conducted.

Teachers' Understanding of Students' Learning Styles

Based on interviews with 4 history teacher informants; to understand students' learning styles, teachers need a fairly long time to understand the characteristics of each individual student. The methods or instruments used by teachers to understand students' learning styles also vary. One way to be able to know and understand students' learning styles is to carry out non-cognitive diagnostic assessments. The questions asked in the non-cognitive diagnostic assessment are in the form of questions about students' activities while learning at home, family conditions, psychological and socio-emotional conditions of students, students' relationships, and various other things. Based on the two schools that became the research subjects, there are differences in

how teachers understand students' learning styles. At MAN 1 Magelang, teachers in understanding students' learning styles use instruments in the form of students' biodata and confide in sessions. While at MAN 2 Magelang, the instrument used is in the form of a pre-test.

At MAN 1 Magelang, the biodata instrument is used to find out how the characteristics and background of students. In implementing the instrument, the teacher at the beginning of the meeting will ask students to fill in their biodata and then students will be asked to come forward one by one so that the teacher can better understand the characteristics of students. At MAN 2 Magelang, in seeing and understanding the learning style of students, they use an instrument in the form of a pretest. The pretest is carried out before entering the lesson. The pretest used to see students' learning styles is a non-standardized pretest. In addition to using tests and biodata, both schools also make observations in seeing students' learning styles. In daily learning activities, teachers pay attention to how students receive material, process material and do assignments.



Picture 1. Question Non-cognitive Diagnostic Assessment

After the teacher implements the instrument to find out the results of students' learning styles, the teacher will evaluate the results. The results obtained will certainly show the dominant learning style in students, strengths and weaknesses in each learning style of students. If the results or data obtained do not show how the learning styles of students, follow-up efforts need to

be made by the teacher to be able to identify the learning styles of students. The follow-up effort made by teachers in these two madrasahs is to conduct enrichment. Enrichment is done by providing YouTube literacy links for students to watch, after which they will be given both oral and written assignments with digital or non-digital media. The following is an example of enrichment that teachers do as a follow-up effort in identifying students' learning styles.



Picture 2. Follow-up Enrichment of Students

Based on the results of the interviews that have been conducted, the four informants said that the learning style of students affects the learning process in the classroom such as in the speed at which students receive learning material, whether or not it is difficult to achieve learning objectives. In dealing with the different learning styles of students in each class. The four informants chose to use a learning model based on the dominant learning style of students in each class taught in the delivery of material. However, in the assignments, teachers choose assignments that can cover a variety of learning styles. The assignments are individual assignments or group assignments.

History Learning Plans Developed With Reference To Students' Learning Styles

Interviews with informants related to learning planning began with how students'

learning styles affect teachers in planning learning. By knowing the learning styles of students, teachers can develop lesson plans using varied learning methods that suit the needs of students and also provide a comfortable learning environment for students. By understanding the learning patterns of students, the teaching module that is made becomes developed. In preparing teaching modules, the steps taken are to recognize and observe students to find out how their needs and learning patterns, see the results of student evaluations in the previous year to see deficiencies in lesson planning, see the latest cases of the learning process of students so that they can provide the latest innovations in learning.

The learning methods that teachers choose in learning certainly adjust to the material. Teachers in learning history choose differentiated learning methods and problem based learning methods. The problem based learning method is chosen to train students to explore curiosity which will show how the learning style of students, while the differentiated learning method is chosen in order to accommodate the various learning styles of students. Learning methods that are easy and suitable for students' learning styles will support students in adjusting the teaching methods chosen by the teacher. Evaluation of the success of the learning plan that refers to students' learning styles is done by looking at the results of learners' assessments, both in written tests such as formative and summative tests. Pretests are always used to identify students' learning styles, while post tests are used to test the material.

Curriculum demands are a reference in lesson planning in order to achieve the expected learning objectives. To harmonize curriculum demands with the needs of students' learning styles, teachers will adjust to the subject matter, infrastructure, abilities, characters, and needs of students. However, in this case, teachers have difficulty in adjusting the needs or abilities of students with curriculum demands

because curriculum demands are not practitioners and do not go to the field.

Implementation of History Learning by Referring to Students' Learning Styles

In the process of learning history in the classroom, to involve students' activeness, teachers choose to conduct discussions in class, ask questions, and form groups by ensuring a controlling system or responsible person in each group to ensure that there are no passive students. Technology and learning aids that are used to support the history learning process in the classroom in the form of the internet, smart tv, cellphones, laptops, projectors, master books, maps, and so on. However, there are limitations in technology and learning aids, where the infrastructure is not evenly distributed in each class. In addition, in the history learning process, teachers also use learning media in the form of concept maps, infographics, posters, learning videos, and so on.

Students' interest in history subjects will help and facilitate students in understanding the historical context being taught. In the results of interviews that have been conducted, teachers in both madrasahs to ensure that history learning can be interesting for all learning styles, teachers in the learning process will provide contextual learning, namely learning that relates to the current environment or the surrounding environment. To ensure that each learner with different learning styles can understand the historical context in the topic taught by the teacher is by assignment on each learning objective, structured tasks, question and answer discussions and summarizing the learning. The test or evaluation design chosen to cover the various learning styles of learners in history learning is of course adjusted to the provisions by the Education Office, the background, abilities and needs of learners. Therefore, the test or evaluation design chosen by teachers in learning history is complex multiple choice, presentation, crossword puzzle and article analysis.

DISCUSSION

In this sub-discussion, researchers will discuss research data obtained through observations, interviews and documentation studies that have been carried out related to understanding the learning styles of students, lesson planning, and implementation of history learning by teachers at the State Aliyah Madrasah. In the sub-chapter of research results, it shows that teachers have different strategies and ways of understanding the learning styles of students, teachers make varied plans by adjusting the characteristics of learning styles, and the implementation of learning is also different. The results of the research, based on the results of in-depth interviews, explain that teachers understand students' learning styles and understanding learning styles by students can affect the learning process in the classroom, learning achievement, and students' academic results. Learning style is a factor that exists within each learner, so it has an important relationship in the learning process and academic results. By understanding students' learning styles, teachers can adjust the learning approach, as well as find and overcome difficulties and obstacles in the learning process. Students should also be able to know and understand the type of learning style. The introduction of learning styles will later help to provide appropriate services to what and how learning can take place optimally.

The statement in the results of this study is supported by research conducted by Restu Yanuar Ula in 2021 with the title "Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Value Clarification Technique (VCT) dan Gaya Belajar Terhadap Hasil Belajar Afektif Peserta Didik dalam Pembelajaran Sejarah di SMA Negeri 1 Rancabungur, Kabupaten Bogor". In the results of his research, he also found that the VCT learning model and learning style had an effect on the affective learning outcomes of students. The same research results were also found in research conducted by Mega Dwi Susanti in 2020 with the title "Pengaruh Gaya Belajar

Terhadap Prestasi Belajar Peserta Didik pada Mata Pelajaran Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam". The research he has done produces a conclusion that learning styles have a relationship and have a significant effect on learning achievement. In the school he studied, learning styles had a contribution or influence of 52% on student achievement. Both studies support the results in this study with a statement that says that understanding students' learning styles will affect the learning process in the classroom, learning achievement, and students' academic results. This is also in accordance with what was said by (Telaumbanua et al., 2022) that learning styles will affect the success rate of students in learning.

A learning process will be able to take place effectively or not determined by how high or how far the teacher's understanding of the characteristics of learning styles possessed by students. In this study, to understand students' learning styles, teachers have their own instruments or methods. The way that teachers do is by carrying out non-cognitive diagnostic assessments. Borghans in (Huda & Nurhuda, 2023) said that non-cognitive diagnostics is the identification of mindsets, personality attitudes, social skills, intuition, and also behavior that affects a person's social communication. As such, diagnosis is essentially decision-making for individuals or groups of learners to achieve learning goals. Diagnosis should also be thorough and balanced by considering factors that hinder learners in learning. Diagnosis and guidance efforts should work together to help students understand what they are learning (Ardiansyah et al., 2023).

Learning planning is a guideline or instruction for teachers, as well as directing and guiding the activities of teachers and students in the learning process (Kurniawan, 2019). Based on the research results, the four informants said that in planning learning that refers to and accommodates students' learning styles, teachers really need to understand well the learning styles of students first. Teachers who have a good understanding of students' learning styles

will be able to identify students' learning needs. Identification of learning needs is a systematic and accurate step in recognizing the learning needs of students, which is the basis for developing learning programs. Teachers in accommodating various learning styles in each class choose to use varied learning methods, one of which is PBL (Problem Based Learning). The learning method was chosen to train students to find out which will be able to foster students' curiosity about a problem or learning material. This is in accordance with the statement according to Chen Xie in (Simanjuntak et al., 2025) that in the implementation of PBL, the role of the teacher shifts from being just a contributor of information to a learning facilitator. Teachers help students to access, analyze, and apply the information obtained to solve problems, create an atmosphere or learning environment that is more dynamic, interactive, and centered on the needs of students. This is also in accordance with Suyadi's statement (2015: 122), that the Problem Based Learning model is able to increase students' curiosity through finding answers to questions or problems.

In learning history, to be able to achieve the objectives of learning, teachers must be able to provide interesting learning for students. Learning that is interesting for students will help students understand the historical context being taught. By understanding well the context in the historical material taught, students will be able to take the values that exist, have a sense of nationalism and love for the country. This is in accordance with Kochhar's (2008) statement in Learning History, that Indonesian history subjects have strategic benefits in shaping the character and civilization of a dignified nation and Indonesian individuals who have a sense of patriotism and nationalism. Therefore, the purpose of learning history is to give learners the ability to take values from past events to apply in their current lives. Another statement that supports this is the statement of Nikmah and Atmaja (2023) that history learning can be said to be a

process of teaching and learning activities that aim to instill knowledge and values related to a process of change in a person's behavior both in Indonesia and in the world. Based on the research findings related to teachers' understanding of students' learning styles, learning planning that refers to students' learning styles, and on the implementation of learning, many results were found that were supported by previous studies that had been conducted related to students' learning styles. It can be seen that teachers' understanding of the needs of students' learning styles is related to how the learning planning process and the implementation of learning carried out by teachers, one of which is in the selection of learning models and methods. The higher the teacher's understanding of the student's learning style, it will make it easier for students to achieve their potential. It also makes it easier for teachers to achieve learning objective.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of descriptive qualitative research with interview techniques, observation, and documentation studies, several conclusions can be drawn. The conclusion is that in understanding learning needs such as students' learning styles, teachers can do various ways, one of which is by conducting non-cognitive diagnostic assessments or other instruments. By conducting these assessments, teachers can find out the characteristics and background of students, and can understand how students' learning styles. Teachers' understanding of students' learning styles is related to how teachers plan learning. By knowing the learning needs of students, teachers can plan varied and innovative learning with learning models and methods that are in accordance with the learning needs of students in order to achieve the expected learning potential. In planning and implementing learning that accommodates learners' various learning styles, teachers in both schools that became research subjects chose differentiated learning methods as

well as PBL (Problem Based Learning) and contextual learning models in learning history. The learning model was also chosen to integrate critical thinking skills and to facilitate learners in understanding the historical context taught.

Declaration by Authors

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