



Strengthening Historical Awareness through the Utilization of Primary Archives of the Jogja Library Center: A Transformative Approach

Pandji Saputra,^{1*} Roro Wilis,² Aman,¹ Naufal Raffi Arrazaq³

¹Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

²Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

³Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Indonesia

*pandjisaputra.2025@student.uny.ac.id

Received: 21-06-2026; Revised: 17-08-2026; Accepted: 18-08-2026; Published: 31-08-2026

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the use of primary archives from the Jogja Library Center collection, integrated with the historical inquiry model as a representation of a transformative learning approach, and its implications for students' historical awareness, particularly in the New Order to Reformation materials. The study used a mixed-method approach with an embedded design strategy, involving a history teacher and 25 12th-grade students of SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and a Likert questionnaire, which were then analyzed using descriptive-quantitative and interactive qualitative methods using the Miles and Huberman model. The results showed that using contemporary newspapers as primary sources during the historical inquiry stage encouraged students to engage in critical reflection, deconstruct single narratives, and understand the multi-perspective nature of history. Student responses to this learning program were very positive, with an average score of 4.20–4.80 and an agreement level of 72–100%. The study concluded that integrating primary archives with the historical inquiry model effectively increased students' critical-genetic historical awareness, although the degree of internalization of the transformation varied between individuals.

Keywords: historical awareness; Jogja library center; primary archives; transformative approach

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pemanfaatan arsip primer koleksi Jogja Library Center yang terintegrasi model historical inquiry sebagai representasi pendekatan pembelajaran transformatif dan implikasinya terhadap kesadaran sejarah siswa, khususnya pada materi Orde Baru hingga Reformasi. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan mixed-method dengan strategi embedded design, melibatkan seorang guru sejarah dan 25 siswa kelas XII SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta yang dipilih melalui purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi partisipatif, dan kuesioner Likert, yang kemudian dianalisis secara deskriptif-kuantitatif dan interaktif kualitatif model Miles dan Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemanfaatan surat kabar sezaman sebagai sumber primer melalui tahapan inkuiri historis mampu mendorong siswa melakukan refleksi kritis, mendekonstruksi narasi tunggal, dan memahami sifat multiperspektif sejarah. Respons siswa terhadap program pembelajaran ini sangat positif, dengan rerata skor 4,20–4,80 dan tingkat persetujuan 72–100%. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa integrasi pemanfaatan arsip primer terintegrasi model historical inquiry efektif meningkatkan kesadaran sejarah kritis-genetik siswa, meski tingkat internalisasi transformasi bervariasi antarindividu.

Kata Kunci: arsip primer, Jogja library center; kesadaran sejarah; pendekatan transformatif



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Introduction

The 21st-century educational paradigm aims to foster awareness of the interconnectedness of the past, present, and future as a foundation for critical thinking and responsible action. In this context, historical consciousness is a fundamental competency that needs to be developed through education (Grever & Adriaansen, 2019). A strong historical awareness will enable students to understand the long process of collective identity formation and foster a moral responsibility for the sustainability of values inherited from previous generations (Dessingué, 2024). Therefore, strengthening historical awareness is a strategic agenda for 21st-century education, inseparable from efforts to develop reflective, critical, and character-driven citizens.

Historical awareness is generally defined as a process that encourages individuals, as involved subjects, to understand the relationship between the past, present, and future (Clark & Peck, 2020; Karlsson, 2011; Körber, 2021; Russen, 2004; Seixas, 2017b, 2017a; Straaten et al., 2016; Zanzanian & Nordgren, 2019). However, most implementations of history learning still encounter various obstacles. The dominant history curriculum generally fails to provide students with opportunities to cultivate social awareness and critical reflection. This is because textbook narratives largely determine the historical content taught (Kumalasari et al., 2025; Wilis & Kumalasari, 2025). Meanwhile, other studies have also identified a gap between what students consider relevant in history and curricular perspectives. The complexity of problems in history learning certainly has implications for students' low historical awareness. As stated by Freire (2001), who underscored the importance of education as a means of liberation, not oppression, awareness must be fostered through meaningful dialogue and lived experiences within education.

To address these requirements, the concept of a transformative learning approach was introduced. Transformative learning theory, first introduced by Jack Mezirow, emphasizes the importance of paradigm shifts in students' thinking, as well as critical reflection on the values and beliefs that influence their frames of reference (Mezirow, 1997). Authentic learning does not focus solely on acquiring knowledge but rather involves profound transformation through critical reflection on experiences that challenge or disrupt existing assumptions, resulting in the development of new perspectives. In the context of history education, which seeks to foster connections between the past and the present, this process is particularly relevant (Calleja, 2014). Furthermore, Fleming (2022) emphasizes that education should be viewed as a political and ethical process that empowers students to understand and modify their social environment. The actualization of the idea of a transformative learning approach, in turn, closely intersects with the concept of historical consciousness, which is the ultimate goal of this critical reflection process in history learning.

According to Popa (2022), three assumptions support the concept of historical consciousness. First, history encompasses a body of knowledge, methods of inquiry, and forms of social memory that are preserved and given meaning over time. Second, there is a complex and integrated interaction of manifested mental processes, such as reflection, motivation, feelings, emotions, and hopes, that connect our experiences with the past. To actualize this, students are cultivated to continuously improve their competencies without any particular order, thereby transforming their perspectives on the world. In this context, increasing historical awareness is more appropriately achieved by strengthening reasoning and thinking about affection and identity, as well as participating in learning practices. This allows the learning

process to occur not only in the classroom but also outside of it, related to systems of meaning. Third, a disposition that claims history as one's own, thus enabling the creation of meaning. Based on these three prerequisites, efforts to strengthen historical awareness involve providing opportunities for students to contribute as historians.

History learning at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta is one concrete example of efforts to strengthen historical awareness through the use of newspapers from the Jogja Library Center collection as learning resources. Its integration with the inquiry-based learning model provides students with the freedom to form conclusions about the past based on source analysis sumber (Kainulainen et al., 2025; Rusvitaningrum et al., 2018; Voet & Wever, 2016). In this case, students are enabled to gain a conceptual understanding of how to know, explain and provide records about the past (Ni, 2023). It not only helps students deepen their understanding of the material's theoretical scope but also introduces diverse perspectives on historical sources, honing their analytical and reconstructive skills through independent interpretation. This model emphasizes active student involvement in asking questions, comparing historical narratives, and verifying the veracity of information through authentic data from primary sources. The initial dialogue process not only serves as a stimulus to arouse curiosity but also plays a crucial role in strengthening students' exploration and critical analysis skills, enabling them to develop evidence-based arguments.

Previous research has extensively discussed strategies for strengthening historical awareness. One such finding is that of Pratama et al. (2024), who attempted to integrate the STEM approach and critical thinking skills to enhance historical awareness. Through the STEM approach, history learning can provide a more holistic understanding of past events and their implications for present-day society (Pratama et al., 2024). Furthermore, research by Madshaven (2025) also proposed combining the benefits of artificial intelligence with digital games to develop historical awareness. Artificial intelligence can detect small changes that affect an individual's perspective, while digital games are used as media that activate students to construct understanding based on experience (Madshaven et al., 2025). Meanwhile, research by Wijayanti et al. (2025) examines the integration of local history as a learning resource to strengthen cultural identity as a form of historical awareness (Wijayanti et al., 2025). Based on the three previous findings, most still utilize only one aspect, whether models, media, or teaching materials, to strengthen historical awareness. To bridge this gap, this study aims to identify, analyze, and connect the potential of primary archives from the Jogja Library Center collection by integrating the historical inquiry model as a transformative learning representation to strengthen historical awareness, especially from the Orde Baru to the Reformation era. Thus, this study can serve as a reference for teachers to use archives as a learning resource and develop learning innovations that encourage critical historical awareness.

Research Methods

This study employed a mixed-method approach with an embedded design strategy. A qualitative approach was used to analyze the implementation of history learning through the utilization of primary archives from the Jogja Library Center collection and its implications for students' historical awareness. Meanwhile, a quantitative approach was used to strengthen and validate the findings of interviews, observations, and document analysis. Participants in this study consisted of a 12th-grade history teacher and 25 12th-grade students at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta. The research subjects were selected using purposive sampling with exclusion and inclusion criteria (Emmel, 2014). The exclusion criteria in this study were determined based on the research subjects' roles in influencing how history learning is conducted at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta, including: (1) The 12th-grade history teacher's role, particularly in designing

learning models utilizing primary archives from the Jogja Library Center collection. In addition to considering the potential of the Jogja Library Center, the history teacher must ensure the relevance of the daily newspaper collection to the learning materials and technical procedures of the activities; and (2) Representatives of 12th-grade students to provide information about their perceptions and responses during the history learning process. The inclusion criteria were set for 12th-grade students with a moderate interest in history to obtain objective information.

Data were collected through three main techniques: (1) semi-structured interviews with history teachers to explore the rationale, design process, and implementation of primary archive-based learning; (2) participatory observation of the implementation of learning, including the introductory stage, the collaborative inquiry phase at the Jogja Library Center, and the presentation of student findings; and (3) a questionnaire as supporting data consisting of an open-ended questionnaire and ten Likert-scale statements (1–5), which aimed to capture students' perceptions of the entire learning program. The Likert questionnaire was completed by all 25 students who were the subjects of the study, with each statement measuring a specific dimension such as learning interest, understanding of the material, critical attitude, multi-perspective awareness, and program sustainability.

Table 1. Scores and Answer Categories

Score	Categories
5	Strongly Agree (SS)
4	Agree (S)
3	Undecided (R)
2	Disagree (TS)
1	Strongly Disagree (STS)

Source: Sugiyono, 2022

Quantitative data obtained from the Likert questionnaire were analyzed descriptively by calculating the mean value for each statement and the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed (SS+S). These were then summarized in a table to facilitate interpretation of the overall trend of student perceptions. Meanwhile, qualitative data were analyzed using interactive techniques as promoted by Miles and Huberman (2014), including data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). The data condensation stage was carried out by processing and reviewing interview transcripts, observations, and documents to facilitate the identification of patterns or themes that emerged from the relevant data. The researchers then presented the coding results descriptively and drew conclusions.

Research Result

Utilizing the Jogja Library Center Primary Archives as a Transformative Learning Approach

The concept of a transformative learning approach, as proposed by Jack Mezirow, emphasizes the importance of shifting students' paradigms and critically reflecting on values and beliefs, which in turn shape their thinking frameworks. According to Arbeiter and Buèar (2021), a transformative learning approach focuses on issues of sustainability and social justice. Furthermore, Naeini and Shakouri (2016) state that this approach allows educators to adapt the curriculum to the lived experiences and specific needs of students in their local environment (Alenezi, 2023; Petousi et al., 2022). In practice, applying a transformative approach to history learning is highly relevant for examining controversial topics. As demonstrated by Hartono and Huda (2020), this method can deconstruct mainstream historical narratives and replace them

with more diverse and balanced perspectives, for example, on the G30S/PKI incident. Katyeudo and de Souza (2022) similarly stated that controversial historical issues can be used as pedagogical tools to train critical thinking skills and build students' social awareness. Similarly, Sleeter (2018) emphasized that transformative education should go beyond simply adding multicultural content to the curriculum, but rather reconstruct meaning from the perspectives of marginalized groups, while also questioning exclusive power structures.

The implementation of a transformative learning approach is demonstrated through the use of primary archival materials from the Jogja Library Center collection at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta, specifically within the Grade XII (Phase F) unit on "The Life of the Indonesian Nation from the New Order to the Reformation Era." The rationale for selecting this topic, as explained by the history teacher, is as follows:

"The period spanning the New Order to the Reformation involves numerous controversial issues that cannot be understood from a single perspective alone. It encompasses matters regarding politics, society, the economy, democracy, human rights violations, and societal changes. Therefore, students need the opportunity to examine various sources and perspectives so that they do not simply accept the narrative presented in textbooks" (Interview with GS/1A, April 24, 2026).

Interviews with the history teacher at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta revealed that the prevalence of controversial issues and political interests during the period from the New Order to the transition into the Reformation Era served as the primary factors driving the use of primary archival materials for this topic. Furthermore, a history teacher at Yogyakarta State High School 9 also considered the comprehensiveness of the daily newspaper collection at the Jogja Library Center, such as *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, *Sinar Harapan*, *Kompas*, and *Suara Merdeka*. These newspapers, published after 1945, serve as authentic primary sources for understanding Indonesia's socio-political dynamics. The strategy for utilizing historical sources significantly determines the quality of the resulting analysis. In general, Kuntowijoyo (2013) classifies historical sources based on their proximity to the events, namely primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are direct accounts of contemporary actors or witnesses to events, including archival documents, contemporary newspapers, official records, artifacts, or oral testimony. Meanwhile, secondary sources are interpretations or writings compiled after the event has occurred, such as textbooks, scientific articles, or historical narratives by historians. Within this classification, newspapers occupy a special position as primary sources published contemporaneously with the events reported. Furthermore, the information reported in newspapers can provide a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of developments in society in the past (Beach & Hanlon, 2023; Girdhar et al., 2024). On the other hand, newspaper production is not free from inherent limitations and biases. This aligns with Philip L. Graham's assertion that newspapers are rough drafts of historical narratives.

As "rough drafts," newspapers have the potential to become strategic instruments within a transformative educational framework. As Mezirow emphasizes, the transformative learning process requires students to critically reflect on pre-established frames of reference, including assumptions and single narratives that have been taken for granted. The biases and limitations inherent in contemporary newspapers, rather than being weaknesses, can be used by teachers as teaching materials to train students to recognize that each historical source emerges from a particular perspective and set of interests. In this case, students are required to be active in analyzing the perspective and socio-political background of a story events, even skeptical of the biases and vested interests behind newspaper production (Ardiansyah et al., 2021; Fahrudin & Saefudin, 2025; Gentallan & Pandan, 2024). Ideally, history learning should be

systematically designed, emphasizing the strengthening of scientific evidence-based knowledge, testing the validity of history textbooks by exploring primary sources, and enriching secondary sources to enable the development of perspectives and the discovery of new facts (Hill, 2024; Kainulainen et al., 2025). This practice is evident from the earliest stages of learning, when teachers design introductory activities to spark students' critical awareness before moving on to the core material.

In introductory activities, teachers begin the learning activity by conducting several sub-activities, including opening the class, preparing the classroom, recording student attendance, and conducting an apperception by asking questions related to the previous lesson's material or material the students have mastered. Some contextual questions teachers ask include, "In your opinion, was the Orde Baru government dictatorial or did it contribute to national development?" and "Has the Reformation era truly revived democracy in Indonesia?" The students then answered the teacher's questions by providing several answers. Most students responded with limited knowledge. This aligns with the perspective of Rahmawati & Zidni (2019) that memorization is important in social studies learning, but only at the lowest level in the taxonomy of thinking (Bariham et al., 2022). History learning should empower students to think critically and construct knowledge into something meaningful. After students were presented with several critical questions and asked to answer them in their own language, the history teacher finally determined their level of understanding of the topic. At this stage, the teacher also presented a project assignment to analyze historical events reported in newspapers from the New Order era to the Reformation era, including the social, political, and economic dimensions of Indonesia during the Reformation era, and contextualize them with current and future life. To enrich the analysis, students were allowed to use digital information for comparison.

In the second meeting, students entered a collaborative inquiry phase that positioned them as "little historians" by giving them the freedom to interact with primary sources in the form of newspapers. Prior to the visit, the history teacher divided students into groups to analyze narratives reported in newspapers from different time periods (Lionar et al., 2024; Thoriquun et al., 2025). Based on the results of the Focus Group Discussion, the student organization functioned as an effort to foster a conducive atmosphere, thus fostering positive relationships and impressions between the students as co-learning designers, the history teacher as facilitator, and the Jogja Library Center librarian as learning partners. Compared with the findings of Fahrudin & Saepuddin (2025) and Rinder (2025), who promote an approach that integrates primary sources digitally, the historical inquiry model offered in this study offers the novelty of utilizing physical primary archives, which has the potential to instill academic ethics and prevent plagiarism.

During the collaborative inquiry phase, the history learning environment was designed by positioning primary archives, in the form of daily newspapers from the New Order era to the Reformation era, not as facts to be memorized but as something to be re-examined and interpreted for their underlying meaning. This is because the narratives constructed in newspapers always reflect the media's subjectivity, its accompanying ideology, and the power relations that shape public discourse (Fulbrook, 2016; Nelson, 2016).. In inquiry activities, students are instructed to read texts, understand the context, analyze media perspectives, and identify hidden political interests. True learning is not limited to the acquisition of knowledge; it also involves profound transformation through critical reflection on experiences that challenge or disrupt existing assumptions, resulting in the development of new perspectives. The findings of Firmansyah & Atmaja (2025) emphasize that the transformative curriculum, as

implemented in history lessons at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta, has the potential to enhance critical understanding, which then has positive implications for historical awareness.

One example of a narrative published by Kedaulatan Rakjat entitled "18 Years of Supersemar" on March 12, 1984, can be used as analytical material for students to consider whether the New Order government truly carried out its commitment to purifying Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. By analyzing the newspaper, students are expected to consider the Orde Baru government's violations through various events that occurred between 1966 and 1984. This strategy is important for building historical empathy, namely the ability to understand past experiences more humanely and without judgment (Pulatjonovich, 2024; Yulianto et al., 2024). A history teacher described the shift in students' thinking as follows:

"Initially, most students possessed only general knowledge about the New Order government, the kind found in textbooks or on the internet and their answers tended to be simplistic. I realized then that they needed guidance in using evidence and viewing issues from multiple perspectives. Following this learning project, students began to perceive the connections between political decisions, social and economic conditions, and the lives of the people. They also came to understand that contemporary life is linked to processes that unfolded in the past" (Interview with GS/2A, April 24, 2026).

This teacher's statement aligns with Axel Honneth's concept of social recognition, which emphasizes the psychosocial aspects of transformative learning, specifically, the social and emotional acknowledgment of students' experiences as part of their personal transformation. Previously, students had viewed the New Order government in binary terms: either as a dictatorship or as a regime that drove development. Furthermore, through the process of analyzing newspaper content, students were encouraged to grasp historical complexity not as a linear progression, but as an interconnected web of cause-and-effect relationships involving mutually influencing social, cultural, economic, and political factors. Thus, this educational model has the potential to train students to understand that history is never neutral and that, consequently, the veracity of dominant narratives can be challenged.

History learning activities at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta also introduce students to how historians work by using the stages of historical research methods, from topic determination, data collection (heuristics), source criticism, interpretation, and the preparation of historical reports (historiography). Given that methodological aspects are rarely taught explicitly in learning activities, this achievement is quite significant for secondary education. This is because students are not merely "consumers of history" but also understand how history is produced, using specific scientific stages. Simply put, students are guided to trace "how" an event occurred and can be accounted for based on newspaper reports, rather than simply knowing "what" happened through procedural storytelling and memorization (Mahardika et al., 2021). One example of a news item used for study from the Jogja Library Center collection is a Suara Merdeka article titled "Sumpit Factory Employees Demand a Wage Increase," published on June 1, 1999. Through analysis of this news item, students were able to understand that articles reported during the transitional years of the Reformation demonstrated the public's freedom to express their aspirations more democratically.

Furthermore, the presentation phase of the inquiry results served as the primary assessment indicator. The criteria for success were based not only on the systematic presentation of the visit report but also on the students' clear and argumentative presentation of their findings. During the discussion, the teacher was responsible for monitoring the students' analytical skills, contextualizing the discourse reported in the newspaper, and facilitating the discussion democratically. At the end of the lesson, the teacher provided an opportunity for

students to ask questions and share their impressions of the learning process. Thus, history teachers gained a comprehensive picture of the strengthening of students' historical awareness.

Student Perceptions of the History Learning Process

Student perceptions of the overall program were gathered through an open-ended questionnaire and ten Likert-scale statements completed by 25 12th-grade students from seven study groups. This questionnaire served as supporting data to corroborate the interview and observation results. A summary of the Likert-scale responses is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' Perceptions of Primary Archive-Based Learning (N = 25)

No	Statement	Average	SS+S (%)
1	Learning using primary archives made me more interested in learning history.	4,52	92
2	I understood the material more easily after seeing the original archives.	4,20	72
3	I was encouraged to seek historical information from various sources.	4,36	88
4	I became more critical of historical information.	4,56	92
5	I understand that history can have various perspectives.	4,68	92
6	This learning made me actively participate in discussions.	4,44	92
7	I better understand the relationship between the past and the present.	4,48	88
8	Activities at the Jogja Library Center were more interesting than classroom learning.	4,76	100
9	I gained a greater appreciation for historical evidence.	4,64	100
10	I hope this type of learning can be repeated.	4,80	100

Source: Research Data, 2026

The processed data from a questionnaire survey of student responses to primary archive-based history learning at the Jogja Library Center indicates a very positive level of acceptance, with average scores ranging from 4.20 to 4.80 on a maximum scale of 5. The percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed (SS+S) ranged from 72% to 100%. These findings indicate that primary source-based learning was not only enthusiastically received but also had a substantive impact on changing students' perspectives on learning history.

When examined through Mezirow's transformative education framework, student response patterns strongly indicate a process of critical reflection and a shift in frames of reference. The 92% agreement score for statement number 5, "I understand that history can have multiple perspectives," indicates that students are beginning to recognize the multiperspective nature of history as a core indicator of perspective transformation. As reinforced in point 4, regarding students' critical attitudes toward historical information, the average score was 4.56, reflecting the development of critical reflection skills as a primary prerequisite for transformative learning. In this regard, history teachers' efforts to provide classroom facilities that prioritize student engagement and dialogue are crucial determinants of success. This aligns with Hoggan & Kloubert's (2020) statement, which suggests that transformative learning not only transforms the instructor's professional identity but also the students'.

Furthermore, students' active engagement in exploring information from various sources achieved an average score of 4.36. In contrast, discussions achieved an average score of 4.44, indicating that students are beginning to play a role as active agents in constructing their own understanding. Meanwhile, students' responses to the sustainability of this learning model achieved an average score of 4.80, reinforced by their interest in learning activities at 4.76, confirming that primary archive-based learning in authentic spaces can create a more meaningful and in-depth learning experience than classroom lectures. Overall, the use of primary archives in history instruction at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta not only represents a transformative learning approach but also increases students' historical interest and awareness, fostering their understanding of diverse perspectives and their ability to evaluate evidence independently.

Implications for Historical Awareness

This study seeks to determine the extent to which a transformative learning approach, using primary archives from the Jogja Library Center collection, can influence students' historical awareness. In this context, this approach encourages a shift in our perception of history, not merely as information to be acquired but also as a tool to influence students' social awareness and identity (Geletu, 2026). Students develop a deeper sense of social responsibility because history is linked to ethics and identity. Historical awareness has the potential to facilitate citizen empowerment and reconciliation in postcolonial societies like Indonesia. Based on the theoretical framework promoted by Rüsen (2004), historical awareness can be understood through four progressive stages: the traditional stage, which relies on the continuity of tradition; the exemplary stage, which utilizes the past as a lesson for the present; the critical stage, which deconstructs a single narrative; and the genetic stage, which recognizes change as a dynamic process. The findings of this study indicate that the use of primary archives in history learning can stimulate students to move beyond the traditional and exemplary stages to a critical-genetic awareness, as reflected in the high scores of students in understanding the multi-perspective nature of history and their ability to relate past events to the present context.

Direct student engagement with primary sources can foster a more authentic historical literacy than learning that relies solely on textbooks. Consistent with the findings of Widiadi et al. (2022), who emphasized that limited access to primary sources has been a major obstacle for history teachers in Indonesia in developing students' historical thinking skills, utilizing the contemporary newspaper collection at the Jogja Library Center can be seen as a concrete solution to this problem. By coming into direct contact with authentic documents, students not only absorb factual information but also learn to interpret the socio-political context behind the publication of these sources. This shift is inseparable from the inquiry process they undergo. The stages of heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography introduce students to the workings of historians, so that historical research methods are no longer unfamiliar to them. As Sinaga (2023) notes, the opportunity to independently reconstruct history provides students with opportunities to engage in critical discourse as a crucial component in fostering a deeper understanding of their social obligations. However, this work also critically acknowledges that not all students experience profound and sustained transformation. In many cases, the impact is gradual; students develop a greater propensity to engage in conversation, become more emotionally engaged, and develop a greater interest in history, but they have not yet internalized fundamentally new perspectives.

The strengthening of students' historical awareness is also demonstrated by their understanding of the diversity of historical perspectives, which forms an important foundation for developing a tolerant and critical attitude toward single narratives, including official

narratives regarding controversial events in Indonesian history. As students become accustomed to comparing reports from various contemporary media outlets, they gradually develop sensitivity to the biases, interests, and perspectives inherent in each historical source. This capability aligns with findings that integrating digital and print primary sources can strengthen students' contextual understanding of historical events while fostering national sentiment based on critical awareness (Brink et al., 2025; Duffy et al., 2020; Howson & Kingsbury, 2023). Based on the indicators that have been met, the use of primary archives in history learning at SMA Negeri 9 Yogyakarta offers substantial positive implications for students' historical awareness. It has the potential to be developed into a relevant history learning framework in the future.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, the findings of this study are based on two points regarding the use of primary archives in history learning as a transformative approach and its implications for historical awareness. Through collaborative inquiry stages that prioritize the active involvement of students as "little historians," critical thinking skills, awareness of multiple historical perspectives, and historical empathy are fostered. Questionnaire results regarding student perceptions and responses were very positive (average 4.20–4.80), with strong indications of critical reflection and a shift in perspective transformation, as conceptualized by Mezirow. Furthermore, these findings also indicate that students are beginning to move beyond the traditional and exemplary stages of historical awareness toward the critical-genetic stage. This study is limited by the sample size of a single school with a limited number of students, which cannot represent its effectiveness in strengthening historical awareness broadly. Furthermore, future research is expected to design a longitudinal study to measure the sustainability of historical awareness and develop a more comprehensive instrument.

References

- Alenezi, M. (2023). Digital Learning and Digital Institution in Higher Education. *Education Scienceducation Sciences*, 13(88), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13010088>.
- Ardiansyah, A., Syukur, A., & Kurniawati. (2021). The Use of Historical Sources in History Learning. In *ICHELSS: International Conference on Humanities, Education, Law, and Social Sciences* (Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 31-36).
- Bariham, I., Yirbekyaa, E. K., & Bordoh, A. (2022). Teachers Perspective on Redesigning Social Studies Curriculum for Student-Centered and Constructivist Learning: Empirical Study of Secondary Schools , Northern Region. *Social Education Research*, 3(2), 307–321. <https://doi.org/10.37256/ser.322022167>.
- Beach, B., & Hanlon, W. (2023). Historical Newspaper Data: A Researcher's Guide. *Explorations in Economic History*, 90, 101541. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eeh.2023.101541>.
- Brink, S. C., Hei, M. De, Sjoer, E., Carlsson, C. J., Georgsson, F., Keller, E., McCartan, C., Enelund, M., Lyng, R., Admiraal, W., Cecilia, S., Hei, M. De, Sjoer, E., Carlsson, C. J., Georgsson, F., Keller, E., McCartan, C., Enelund, M., & Lyng, R. (2025). Curriculum Agility Principles for Transformative Innovation in Engineering Education. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 50(3), 455–471. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2024.2398165>.
- Calleja, C. (2014). Jack Mezirow's Conceptualisation of Adult Transformative Learning: A

- Review. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 20(1), 117–136. <https://doi.org/10.7227/JACE.20.1.8>.
- Clark, A., & Peck, C. L. (2020). *Contemplating Historical Consciousness: Notes from the Field*. Berghahn Books.
- Dessingué, A. (2024). Rethinking Historical Relevance in the 21st Century : An Exploration of Historical Consciousness Among High School Students in Norway. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science Education*, 14(3), 48–75. <https://doi.org/10.62902/nordidactica.v14i2024:3.26118>.
- Duffy, L. N., Stone, G. A., Townsend, J., & Cathey, J. (2020). Rethinking Curriculum Internationalization: Virtual Exchange as a Means to Attaining Global Competencies, Developing Critical Thinking and Experiencing Transformative Learning. *SCHOLE: A Journal of Leisure Studies and Recreation Education*, 37(1-2), 11–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1937156X.2020.1760749>.
- Emmel, N. (2014). *Research Methods Sampling and Choosing Cases in Qualitative Research: A Realist Approach*. SAGE Publication Ltd.
- Fahrudin, F., & Saefudin, A. (2025). Primary Sources in Online History Learning: Enhancing Engagement and Retention. *Cogent Education*, 12(1), 2452087. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2452087>.
- Fulbrook, M. (2016). *Subjectivity and History Approaches to Twentieth-Century German Society*. The German Historical Institute London.
- Geletu, G. M. (2026). Practice of Transformative Pedagogy and Personality of Teaching Theories and Models in the Teaching and Learning Science. *Discover Education*, 5(1), 452. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-026-01624-5>.
- Gentallan, J. N., & Pandan, M. S. (2024). Historical Thinking Skills of Education Students Across Specializations. *Pysch Educ*, 22(2), 198–205. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12748987>.
- Girdhar, N., Sharma, D., Coustaty, M., & Doucet, A. (2024). Leveraging Transfer Learning for Article Segmentation in Historical Newspapers. In *The 28th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Digital Libraries*, (pp. 222-238). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Grever, M., & Adriaansen, R. (2019). Historical consciousness : the enigma of different paradigms. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 51(6), 814–830. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2019.1652937>.
- Hill, R. (2024). Enquiry-Based Teaching of History with Young Children: Mediating Immersion, Resources and Perspective. *TEAN Journal*, 15(1), 149–161. <https://ojs.cumbria.ac.uk/index.php/TEAN/article/view/727>.
- Howson, C. K., & Kingsbury, M. (2023). Curriculum change as transformational learning. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 28(8), 1847–1866. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1940923>.
- Kainulainen, M., Puurtinen, M., & Chinn, C. A. (2025). Regrounding Inquiry-Based Learning in History: A Study of Historians' Epistemic Processes. *Cognition and Instruction*, 43(4), 291–315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07370008.2025.2503193>.

- Karlsson, K. G. (2011). Processing Time: On the Manifestations and Activations of Historical Consciousness. In *Historicizing the Uses of the Past* (pp. 129–144).
- Körber, A. (2021). Historical Consciousness, Knowledge, and Competencies of Historical Thinking: An Integrated Model of Historical Thinking and Curricular Implications. *Historical Encounters*, 8(1), 97–119. <https://doi.org/10.52289/hej8.107>.
- Kumalasari, D., Gunartati, Wilis, R., Dewi, I. M., Prayoga, S. Y., & Abdullah, R. (2025). Enhancing Historical Literacy and Critical Thinking through Primary Source-Based Inquiry: Evidence from the Jogja Library Center Tour. *Jurnal Pendidikan Progresif*, 15(3), 2028–2048. <https://doi.org/10.23960/jpp.v15i3.pp20>.
- Lionar, U., Mulyana, A., Winarti, M., Sapriya, S., Afriani, R., & Yefterson, R. B. (2024). Implementasi Model Pembelajaran Literasi Sejarah Berbasis Discovery Learning. *Fajar Historia: Jurnal Ilmu Sejarah Dan Pendidikan*, 8(2), 178–194. <https://doi.org/10.29408/fhs.v8i2.23728>.
- Madshaven, J. M., Walter, C., & Omlin, P. (2025). Making Historical Consciousness Come Alive : Abstract Concepts, Artificial Intelligence, and Implicit Game-Based Learning. *Education Sciences*, 15(9), 1128. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15091128>.
- Mahardika, M. D. G., Tricahyono, D., Pratiwi, E. P., & Ramadhan, F. N. (2021). Historiografi Indonesiasentris: problematika dan tantangan. *Historiography*, 1(4), 459. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um081v1i42021p459-469>.
- Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 74, 5–12. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.7401>.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Nelson, K. (2016). Primary Sources & Historical Understanding in High School American. In *Education Master Paper*, 1–34. <https://openriver.winona.edu/educationmasterspapers/12>.
- Ni, L. B. (2023). Adapting History Education for the 21st Century: Integrating Technology and Critical Thinking Skills. *SPEKTA: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 4(2), 216–224. <https://doi.org/10.12928/spekta.v4i2.8572>.
- Petousi, D., Katifori, A., & Servi, K. (2022). History Education Done Different: A Collaborative Interactive Digital Storytelling Approach for Remote Learners. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 942834. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.942834>.
- Pratama, R. A., Saputra, M. A., & Hikmawaty, L. (2024). Enhancing Historical Conciousness in History Education through Integrating STEM Approach and Historical Thinking Skill. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 18(1), 236–243. <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v18i1.20890>.
- Pulatjonovich, A. A. (2024). Historical Consciousness in Forming Historical Memory. *Jurnal ISO: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik Dan Humaniora*, 4(2), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.53697/iso.v4i2.1978>.
- Russen, J. (2004). *Historical Consciousness: Narrative Structure, Moral Function and Ontogenetic Development* (P. Seixas (ed.)). University of Toronto Press.
- Rusvitaningrum, Y., S, L. A., & Sudiyanto, S. (2018). Strengthening Students ' Historical

- Awareness in History Learning in High School Through Inquiry Method. *Internatinal Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 5(5), 249–254. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v5i5.446>.
- Seixas, P. (2017a). A Model of Historical Thinking. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 49(6), 593–605. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2015.1101363>.
- Seixas, P. (2017b). *Historical Consciousness and Historical Thinking*. In Carretero, M., Berger, S., & Grever, M. (Eds.), *Palgrave Handbook of Research in Historical Culture and Education* (pp. 59–72). Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-52908-4>.
- Straaten, D., Wilschut, A., & Oostdam, R. (2016). Making history relevant to students by connecting past, present and future: a framework for research. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 48(4), 479–502. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2015.1089938>.
- Thoriqun, M., Zain, N., & Widiadi, A. N. (2025). Strategi Group Investigation untuk Pembelajaran Sejarah di Era Society 5.0: Tantangan dan Solusi. *Fajar Historia: Jurnal Ilmu Sejarah Dan Pendidikan*, 9(2), 133–147. <https://doi.org/10.29408/fhs.v9i2.28752>.
- Voet, M., & Wever, B. De. (2016). History Teachers' Conceptions of Inquiry-Based Learning, Beliefs About the Nature of History and Their Relation to the Classroom Context. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 55, 57–67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.12.008>.
- Wijayanti, Y., Warto, & Djono. (2025). Enhancing Students' Cultural Identity Through History Education Based on Local Wisdom of Kagaluhan Values. *Educational Process*, 14, e2025075. <https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.14.75>.
- Wilis, R., & Kumalasari, D. (2025). Jogja Library Center Tour : Literacy-Based Inquiry Model to Improve Historical Thinking Skill. *Jurnal Pedagogi dan Pembelajaran*, 8(3), 594–604. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jp2.v8i3.100800>.
- Yulianto, N., Sutimin, L. A., & Brar, B. S. (2024). The Impact of Historical Consciousness and Literacy on Heritage Conservation: A Quantitative Study of High School Students in Ambarawa, Indonesia. *Paramita: Historical Studies Journal*, 34(1), 139–146. <https://doi.org/10.15294/paramita.v34i1.47820>.
- Zanazanian, P., & Nordgren, K. (2019). Revisiting Historical Consciousness as a Construct and Exploring its Broads Understanding for Contemporary Education and Educational Research. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 5(6), 771–868. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2019.1652940>.