



The Nationalism of Students During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: History education has a strategic role in strengthening national identity. Therefore, supporting historical education to enhance nationalism is also a strategic effort in achieving the target. Nowadays, there are various challenges to nationalism among the Indonesian younger generation. On the other hand, when in early 2020 the world was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, it became a challenge in internalizing nationalism in learning. This study aims to measure how high the level of student nationalism is during health crises. The research was conducted using a survey method to 932 respondents from class X of public high school in Semarang City. By using descriptive analysis of students, the result shows that nationalism among students is still relatively high. However, the social dimension of nationalism is considerably low. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen multiculturalism in history learning.

Keywords: nationalism, pandemic, history learning



Introduction

Indonesia has various ethnic groups. The BPS's (Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics) report collaborated with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in 2013 showed that there is a new classification of 633 major ethnic groups across the archipelago (Ananta et al., 2015). The diverse ethnic identities become a national wealth as well as a huge challenge in developing and realizing a collective national identity. Therefore, strengthening nationalism is a necessity for Indonesia.

Nationalism is the quality and integrity of the national consciousness of the citizens of a country (Smith, 1991). It is an understanding that creates and maintains state sovereignty by realizing a concept of shared identity to benefit a group of human beings (Kahin, 2013). Nationalism is an understanding that stands because of the existence of a nation from a specific country (Anwar, 2014). It also defines national identity with whom we want to work together to achieve the bonum publicum. In simpler terms, nationalism must be owned by every level of society, mainly the student or younger generation group.

Various strategies were carried out to strengthen Indonesian nationalism. One of them is through history education. Darmawan (2019) states that history education has a strategic meaning in forming a noble national character and civilization while forming an ideal Indonesian people who have a sense of nationality and love for the country. Here, perennial education has placed history learning as a medium of inheritance in developing an understanding of nationalism that is proud of the nation's past (Darmawan, 2019).

Enhancing nationalism in history learning experiences challenges when in 2020 the world is hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. This pandemic has had a tremendous impact on various education fields. When the situation deteriorated in the mid-2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia issued Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 on March 24, 2020, concerning the Implementation of Educational Policies in Emergency Periods the spread Covid-19. The letter explained that the learning process from home is carried out online (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI, 2020). This condition poses a challenge to the implementation of the internalization of nationalism.



So far, studies on nationalism in the context of history learning have been carried out in offline learning. Several studies explain a relationship between perceptions of learning history and attitudes of nationalism. (Amboro, 2013; Prayogo, 2017; Widiyanto, 2007). On the one hand, studies on offline history learning have emphasized the ideas, processes, and barriers to learning. Several studies on this include studies on the implementation of online learning by Ameli et al. (2020), Sadikin and Hamidah (2020), also Siahaan (2020). A survey on the idea of online learning during the covid period, for example, was carried out by Amboro (Amboro, 2020). While among others, Kurniawan conducted a study on the barriers to learning history (2020).

From the context above, it indicates that the study of nationalism in online history learning has not been given much attention and had not been carried out. This study is essential to see how high the level of student nationalism is when the learning process is conducted online.

Methods and Research Design

Methods. The research was conducted on students of class X SMA Negeri in the city of Semarang. Class X students were chosen because they have used online learning since starting school. A survey is used to analyze the level of student nationalism. Meanwhile, the researcher conducted a phenomenological study of teachers and students to deepen the study.

Respondents in this study were 932 students from class X at SMA N 1 Semarang, SMA N 2 Semarang, SMA N 3 Semarang, SMA N 4 Semarang, SMA N 7 Semarang, and SMA N 12 Semarang. This class was chosen because they have never done offline learning during the pandemic. Data collection was carried out with a survey.

Research Design. This research was conducted using a survey approach. The variable of this research is nationalism. In this study, nationalism is defined as the national consciousness of someone who sees themselves as part of a unified collective identity formed by shared history and ideals (common goals). Operationally, student nationalism is a perceptual assessment of students regarding national awareness as part of a unified identity created by a shared history and shared objectives with indicators (1) Proud to be Indonesian, (2) understanding the nation's history, (3) understanding rights and obligations as citizens, (4) respecting the struggle of heroes, (5) respecting cultural diversity;

(6) aware for the nation's sustainability. These indicators were measured by a Likert scale of 4, namely strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

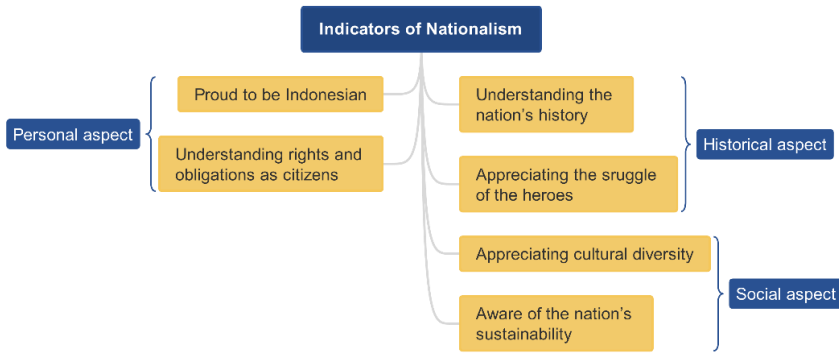


Figure 1. The Indicators of Nationalism

There is a questionnaire of 40 items used to collect data. The Spearman-Brown formula is reliable with an r_{11} value of 0.840 and is very high. However, the remaining 34 items are valid after being tested for validity. After the data was collected, the researcher used the MSI approach to convert the ordinal data into intervals. Meanwhile, the analysis was done descriptively.

Findings

Based on the survey, the nationalism score of class X State Senior High School students in Semarang City as a whole is 76.43. When viewed from the distribution of respondents, there are only three categories of scores, namely very high (2.90%), high (84.98%), and medium (12.12%). This value is included in the high category.

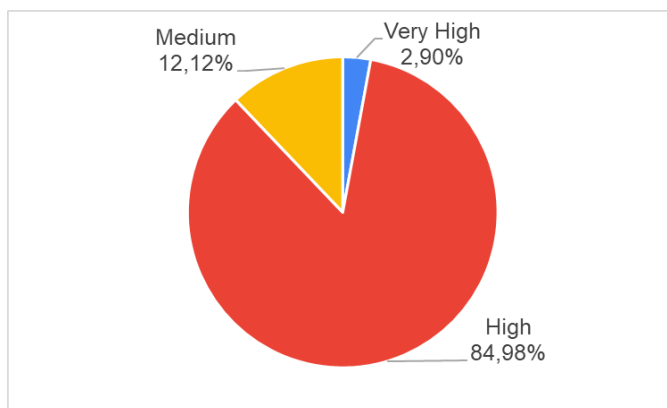


Figure 2. The Nationalism Criteria for Class X Students (N=932)



In general, students' nationalism scores are included in the high category. However, when viewed from each indicator, the distribution is not evenly distributed. Overall, the order of arrows from the highest to the lowest is (1) being proud as an Indonesian national, (2) understanding the rights and obligations as citizens, (3) appreciating the services of heroes, (4) understanding the nation's history. Meanwhile, the distribution of each indicator of nationalism is as follows.

Table 1. Values for Each Indicator of Student Nationalism

No	Indicator	Value	Criteria
1	Proud to be Indonesian	89,01	Very high
2	Understanding the nation's history	79,79	High
3	Understanding the rights and obligations as a citizen	87,87	Very high
4	Appreciating the struggle of the heroes	84,47	High
5	Appreciating cultural diversity	67,09	Medium
6	Aware of the nation's sustainability	42,67	Low

There are indicators with low scores, namely caring for the nation's sustainability. Research shows that students' awareness is constrained in learning in a pandemic situation.

From the research results above, in general, nationalism has shown a good trend. However, not all aspects of nationalism are included in the high category. The element that needs to be strengthened is how to respect cultural diversity and inclusivity as well as increase awareness of the nation's sustainability. These aspects are still not optimal. It tends to occur because historiography is still Java-centric.

One alternative to strengthen aspects of cultural pluralism and diversity and increase concern for the nation's sustainability is to integrate the issue of multiculturalism in history. Currently, historiography in Indonesia tends to be Javanese-centric, so students have not seen the full extent of the involvement of the nation's components from different regions. Therefore, multicultural education is necessary to strengthen collective national identity (Hasan, 2012; Nordgren, 2017).



Hasan (2012) explains that there are reasons why multicultural education is needed. (1) social inequality in Indonesian society, (2) community mobility and cultural encounters that are increasingly intensive, (3) increasingly open regions in Indonesia, (4) various conflicts that often occur due to cultural misunderstandings, and (5) erasing myths and interpretations that threaten national unity.

These efforts need to be strengthened immediately because various problems are currently threatening. After the reformation, Indonesia faced the problem of disintegration that undermined the nation's unity. Some areas became vulnerable to break away from the state because of various issues and the legacy of oppression during the New Order era. These areas are East Timor, Papua, and Aceh. East Timor was even separated from Indonesia through a referendum in 1999. In addition, various socio-religious conflicts occurred. One of the most significant religious conflicts occurred in Maluku. The conflict has been going on for an extended period from 1999 to 2002. Due to the mob clash, anarchy, and reprisal attack, thousands of people became victims. Meanwhile, tens of thousands more were displaced. Poso also experienced a social conflict from 1998 to 2001 and even impacted society deeply up to 2007 (Madinier, 2017; Ricklefs, 2010).

One of the efforts to strengthen multicultural education is to present diverse narratives about the participation of all parties in developing Indonesia. In simple terms, history learning needs to accommodate the diversity of roles of regions and regional figures in Indonesian history.

History learning cannot limit itself to national history. History learning must simultaneously exhibit historical events in the student's cultural environment, other cultural settings, and national dimension. The themes raised are not limited to politics but the various dimensions of human life (Hasan, 2012).

Through multicultural education, students are expected to acquire specific social skills. According to Jarolimek, these social skills are (1) Living and working together, taking turns, respecting the rights of others, being socially sensitive, (2) earning self-control and self-direction, (3) Sharing ideas and experiences with others (Kurniawati, 2010). These social skills are relevant to fostering concern for the nation's sustainability in learning amidst the highly individualistic era of the pandemic Covid-19 today.



Discussion and Recommendations

The pandemic has changed the implementation of learning. The change from face-to-face learning to online learning has become a new trend in education, including history education. From this phenomenon, researchers are interested in seeing how high the nationalism of students in class X of high school is. Overall, the student nationalism score was 76.43. This value is included in the high category. However, the rate of nationalism is not similar for each dimension or aspect. The element that needs to be strengthened again is respecting cultural diversity and increasing awareness of the nation's sustainability. One alternative to enhance cultural pluralism and diversity and increase concern for the nation's sustainability is integrating the multi-culturalism context in history learning.

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