



Affective Domain Implementation in History Education: A Critical Examination of Pedagogical Practice in Post-Colonial Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examines affective domain implementation in Indonesian secondary history education, interrogating persistent disjunctures between policy aspirations and classroom practice. Drawing on qualitative case study research at SMA Negeri 01 Mayong, the investigation reveals that affective learning remains pedagogically peripheral, treated as incidental supplement to cognitive instruction rather than integrated dimension of historical understanding. Teachers conceptualise affective outcomes predominantly through nationalist and behavioural frameworks, overlooking the complex cognitive-affective interplay essential for historical consciousness development. The findings demonstrate that meaningful affective implementation requires reconceptualising history education's purpose in post-colonial societies, moving beyond value inculcation toward cultivating critical historical consciousness that embraces ethical complexity, perspective-taking, and cognitive-affective integration necessary for democratic citizenship.

KEYWORDS

Affective Domain;
History Education;
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ABSTRAK

Studi ini secara kritis mengkaji implementasi ranah afektif dalam pendidikan sejarah jenjang menengah di Indonesia, dengan menginterogasi diskursus yang persisten antara aspirasi kebijakan dan praktik kelas. Berdasarkan penelitian studi kasus kualitatif di SMA Negeri 01 Mayong, investigasi mengungkapkan bahwa pembelajaran afektif tetap berada pada posisi perifer secara pedagogis, diperlakukan sebagai suplemen insidental bagi pengajaran kognitif, alih-alih sebagai dimensi terintegrasi dari pemahaman sejarah. Para guru mengkonseptualisasikan capaian afektif utamanya melalui kerangka nasionalistik dan perilaku, mengabaikan interaksi kompleks antara aspek kognitif dan afektif yang esensial bagi pengembangan kesadaran sejarah. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa implementasi afektif yang bermakna menuntut reconseptualisasi tujuan pendidikan sejarah di masyarakat pascakolonial, melampaui penanaman nilai menuju pembudayaan kesadaran historis kritis yang merangkul kompleksitas etis, pengambilan perspektif, dan integrasi kognitif-afektif yang diperlukan bagi kewarganegaraan demokratis.

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Introduction

The implementation of affective domain learning constitutes one of the most persistent challenges in contemporary history education. Since Bloom's foundational taxonomy positioned the affective domain alongside cognitive and psychomotor dimensions, educational systems worldwide have grappled with cultivating and assessing attitudes, values, and emotional engagement in classrooms. Despite decades of policy rhetoric emphasising holistic education, the affective domain remains systematically marginalised in practice (Bartelds et al., 2020; Bloom et al., 1964b; Sheppard, 2023).

This marginalisation is particularly acute in history education, where the affective dimension occupies a paradoxical position. History is frequently invoked as a vehicle for moral education, national identity formation, and civic values cultivation, yet classroom practice continues to privilege cognitive outcomes: factual recall, chronological sequencing, and causal analysis (Ammert et al., 2022; JASKULOWSKI, 2023). Affective learning remains at best an incidental byproduct rather than deliberate pedagogical focus. This disjuncture reflects the persistence of examination-oriented pedagogies that prioritise measurable cognitive outputs over the more elusive but vital work of shaping students' ethical orientations and historical consciousness (Ammert et al., 2022).

The Indonesian context presents an illuminating case for examining these tensions. As a post-colonial nation with complex history of authoritarian rule, democratic transition, and ongoing debates about historical memory, Indonesia's history education system has been repeatedly reshaped to serve shifting political agendas (Kusno, 2025). The New Order regime (1968-1998) instrumentalised history for legitimising state power through centralised curriculum. The post-1998 reform era brought aspirations toward critical and pluralistic historical education, yet legacies of this instrumental approach persist. Contemporary curriculum reforms, including Merdeka Belajar, have sought greater pedagogical flexibility and critical thinking emphasis, but implementation remains uneven (Rohmah et al., 2024).

Within this complex landscape, the affective domain presents particular challenges. The 2013 Curriculum and subsequent Merdeka Curriculum mandate attention to affective outcomes, yet teachers consistently report difficulties in operationalising affective learning (Bartelds et al., 2020; Karn, 2025; Rohmah et al., 2024). These difficulties stem from multiple sources: absence of clear assessment frameworks, dominance of cognitive outcome measures in high-stakes examinations, limited professional development, and conceptual confusion about what affective learning in history education entails (Bartelds et al., 2020; Godsell et al., 2024; Karn, 2025).

The significance of this inquiry extends beyond the Indonesian context. As history educators worldwide confront the challenge of preparing students for democratic citizenship in increasingly pluralistic societies, integrating cognitive historical thinking with affective engagement has become urgent (Endacott et al., 2023; Karn, 2025; Wilke et al., 2022). By examining specific challenges and possibilities of affective implementation in a post-colonial setting, this study contributes to broader international conversations about history education purposes and practices in diverse, democratising societies.

Research Questions

1. How do Indonesian secondary history teachers conceptualize the relationship between cognitive historical thinking and affective learning outcomes in their classroom practice?
2. What systemic and pedagogical obstacles impede the systematic implementation and assessment of affective domain learning in post-colonial Indonesian history education?
3. How do students perceive and experience the affective dimensions of history instruction, and how does this shape their historical consciousness and civic identity?

Literature Review

Historical Consciousness and the Cognitive-Affective Nexus

Understanding affective domain implementation in history education requires engagement with theoretical literature on historical consciousness and historical thinking. Rüsen's foundational work on historical consciousness provides an essential starting point. (Edling et al., 2022; Popa, 2023) conceptualise historical consciousness as a coherent set of mental operations defining historical thinking's peculiarity and its role in human culture. Critically, Rüsen emphasises that historical consciousness involves not merely cognitive operations but also moral and affective dimensions, connecting interpreting the past, understanding the present, and envisioning the future. This temporal orientation fundamentally constitutes meaning-making enterprise integrating cognitive understanding with ethical and emotional engagement.

Rüsen's typology of historical consciousness, encompassing traditional, exemplary, critical, and genetic forms, offers a framework for understanding how students' engagement with the past operates at different sophistication levels. Traditional and exemplary forms treat the past as repository of fixed lessons or moral exemplars; critical forms interrogate dominant narratives; genetic forms recognise historical change as dynamic and contingent (Rüsen et al., 2017). Crucially, each level entails distinct affective dimensions: emotional attachment to heritage, moral judgment, critical distance, or empathetic engagement with historical transformation. This framework suggests that affective learning in history cannot be separated from cognitive development but must be understood as integral to progressive sophistication of historical consciousness.

Complementing Rüsen's framework, Wineburg's (2018) work on historical thinking emphasises the unnatural character of genuine historical understanding. Wineburg argues that historical thinking requires overcoming presentism, the natural tendency to interpret the past through contemporary categories, and recognising the fundamental otherness of the past. This recognition is not merely cognitive but entails profound affective dimensions: discomfort confronting perspectives that challenge our own, ethical complexity of judging historical actors without anachronism, and empathy required to understand people whose worlds differ fundamentally from ours.

Wineburg's (2018) framework has particular relevance for understanding affective implementation in post-colonial contexts. Historical thinking, he argues, teaches us to go beyond our own image, brief life, and fleeting moment in human history. This capacity

for self-transcendence is inherently affective, requiring emotional openness, intellectual humility, and willingness to have certainties challenged. In societies where history education has been instrumentalised for nation-building, cultivating such critical historical consciousness poses distinctive challenges and possibilities (Awgichew & Ademe, 2022; Stoddard, 2022).

Historical Empathy as Cognitive-Affective Integration

The concept of historical empathy provides a crucial bridge between cognitive and affective dimensions of history education. Contemporary scholarship conceptualises historical empathy not as simplistic emotional identification with historical figures but as complex, multidimensional construct integrating cognitive and affective elements. Strand's (2025) recent research demonstrates that historical empathy encompasses three interrelated dimensions: historical contextualisation (understanding specific circumstances of the past), perspective-taking (grasping how historical actors understood their world), and affective connection (emotional engagement with historical experiences).

Research indicates that these dimensions are interdependent rather than separate. Students who develop stronger contextual understanding also demonstrate deeper affective engagement; conversely, affective connection can motivate more rigorous historical inquiry (Deng, 2024; Endacott et al., 2023; Karn, 2025). This interdependence challenges the assumption that cognitive and affective learning operate in separate spheres, an assumption that continues to shape classroom practice in profound ways.

The pedagogical implications are significant. Effective history education requires designing learning experiences that simultaneously develop students' cognitive historical thinking and their capacity for ethical reflection, perspective-taking, and emotional engagement with the past (Karn, 2025; Levstik & Barton, 2023). Yet research consistently finds that such integrated approaches remain exceptional rather than normative in classroom practice (Bartelds et al., 2020; Karn, 2025).

Post-Colonial Perspectives on History Education

Understanding affective implementation in Indonesian history education requires situating analysis within post-colonial theoretical frameworks. Scholars of post-colonial education have documented how educational systems in formerly colonised nations continue to bear colonial epistemologies' imprint, even as they pursue decolonisation agendas (Godsell et al., 2024; Iyer, 2025; Vandeyar, 2024). This epistemic dependency manifests in multiple ways: curricula that privilege Western historical narratives, pedagogies that emphasise rote learning over critical inquiry, and assessment systems that reward cognitive outputs while marginalising affective and ethical dimensions of learning.

In the Indonesian context, history education decolonisation has been protracted and contested. The early independence period saw efforts to replace colonial narratives with nationalist ones; the New Order era further instrumentalised history for state legitimisation; the post-1998 reform period has witnessed ongoing struggles over which histories should be taught and how (Eddyono, 2020; Kusno, 2025; Vickers, 2023). These struggles are not merely about content but about the very purposes of history education: whether history should serve national integration, critical citizenship, or both; what values history education should cultivate, and whose values these are.

These questions have profound affective dimensions. Recent scholarship emphasises that decolonising education in Indonesia still faces epistemic dependency on state-centred and Eurocentric narratives (Iyer, 2025; Kusno, 2025; Pratama, 2022). History education must move toward epistemic justice and critical pedagogy to reframe national identity and historical consciousness (Alvén, 2024; Iyer, 2025; Pratama, 2022). This movement requires not only cognitive reorientation but affective transformation, the development of historical consciousness that embraces complexity, acknowledges multiple perspectives, and engages ethically with Indonesia's diverse and contested past (Alvén, 2024; Karn, 2025; Pratama, 2022).

Method

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a qualitative case study design to investigate affective domain learning implementation in history education at SMA Negeri 01 Mayong. The qualitative approach was selected for its capacity to generate rich, contextualised understanding of educational practices unfolding in natural settings (Creswell & Poth, 2023). Unlike quantitative methods that privilege measurement and generalisation, qualitative inquiry enables researchers to explore meanings participants attach to their experiences, tacit knowledge shaping practice, and complex interplay of factors influencing educational outcomes.

The case study design was specifically chosen for its appropriateness in examining contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts, particularly when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin & Campbell, 2018). As a single-site case study, this research does not seek statistical generalisability but rather what scholars term naturalistic generalisation, the capacity of rich, detailed case descriptions to illuminate broader patterns and generate insights applicable to similar contexts (Lee & Saunders, 2017). The selection of SMA Negeri 01 Mayong was purposive: the school represents a typical Indonesian public senior high school with diverse student body, standard curriculum implementation, and teachers facing common challenges of resource constraints and large class sizes characterising many Indonesian secondary schools.

Data and Sources of Data

Data for this study were drawn from multiple sources to enable comprehensive understanding of affective domain implementation. Primary data sources included teacher informants, two history teachers at SMA Negeri 01 Mayong selected for their experience and willingness to participate in extended inquiry. Both teachers held formal qualifications in history education and had substantial teaching experience within the Indonesian curriculum system. Their perspectives were essential for understanding how teachers conceptualise affective learning, design instruction, and navigate implementation challenges.

Student informants from Grade XI social sciences classes were selected to represent diverse academic achievement levels and engagement patterns. Student perspectives were critical for understanding how affective dimensions of instruction are experienced,

interpreted, and responded to by learners. Direct classroom observation of history lessons across multiple sessions documented teacher-student interactions, instructional strategies, student engagement patterns, and explicit and implicit communication of affective outcomes. Documentary evidence including curriculum documents, lesson plans, assessment materials, and school policy documents relevant to affective domain implementation provided insight into formal expectations and institutional frameworks shaping classroom practice.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred over a structured period from September 20-27, 2023, with follow-up verification activities extending into October 2023. This timeframe, while relatively brief, enabled concentrated observation of multiple instructional sessions and in-depth engagement with participants. The research team employed three principal data collection techniques.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with both history teachers and selected students. Teacher interviews explored conceptualisations of affective learning, instructional strategies employed, perceived challenges, and professional development needs. Student interviews investigated perceptions of history instruction, affective engagement with historical content, and awareness of affective learning objectives. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Non-participant observation of history lessons was conducted across multiple class sessions. Observers documented instructional activities, teacher-student interactions, student engagement behaviours, and explicit and implicit communication of values and attitudes. Observation protocols focused on identifying instances where affective dimensions were addressed, strategies employed, and student responses. Documentary evidence including curriculum documents, lesson plans, and assessment materials was collected and analysed to understand formal framework for affective implementation, with particular attention to articulation of affective objectives in lesson plans and alignment between stated objectives and observed practice.

Trustworthiness of Data

To ensure research trustworthiness, this study employed multiple strategies aligned with qualitative research standards. Triangulation was pursued across three dimensions: sources comparing teacher, student, and observational data; techniques cross-verifying interview, observation, and documentary evidence; and time comparing practices across multiple instructional sessions. This triangulation enabled identification of convergent patterns while also revealing tensions and contradictions that enriched understanding.

Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with participants and soliciting feedback on interpretations. This process helped ensure that researcher interpretations accurately reflected participant perspectives and enabled participants to correct misunderstandings or add nuance. Prolonged engagement with the setting, while limited by research timeframe, was enhanced through multiple site visits and sustained interaction with participants. Researchers maintained detailed field notes documenting contextual factors and reflexive observations.

Thick description of the setting, participants, and practices enables readers to assess transferability of findings to other contexts. Detailed contextual information about the

school, community, and educational policy environment supports informed judgment about applicability (Creswell & Poth, 2023; Flick, 2025). This comprehensive approach to trustworthiness ensures that findings are credible, transferable, dependable, and confirmable.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an iterative, thematic approach consistent with qualitative research conventions. The analysis process comprised several phases aligned with Miles et al.'s. (2020) framework. Data reduction involved systematic review and condensation of interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence. This process entailed identifying relevant passages, coding for thematic content, and organising data according to emerging categories. Initial codes were derived both from the theoretical framework (deductive coding) and from patterns emerging from the data (inductive coding).

Data display organised condensed data into thematic matrices and narrative summaries to facilitate pattern identification and cross-case comparison. Displays enabled systematic examination of relationships between concepts, identification of convergent and divergent patterns, and testing of emerging interpretations against the full range of evidence. Conclusion drawing and verification were conducted iteratively through constant comparison of data across sources and techniques. Emerging interpretations were tested against discrepant cases and alternative explanations. Final conclusions were grounded in the full range of evidence and subjected to member checking to enhance credibility.

The analysis process was guided by the research questions while remaining open to unexpected findings. This flexibility enabled identification of themes not anticipated in the initial framework, including the significant gap between teachers' conceptual understanding of affective learning and its operationalisation in practice, a finding that became central to the study's conclusions.

Results

Teacher Conceptions of Affective Domain Learning

The study revealed significant variation in how history teachers conceptualised affective domain learning, with important implications for classroom practice. Both teachers demonstrated awareness of the theoretical framework derived from Bloom's taxonomy, articulating the distinction between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. As one teacher explained, the affective domain relates to emotions, interests, and students' attitudes in receiving what is taught, as well as the values students gain after learning. This understanding aligns with Bloom et al. (1964) formulation of the affective domain encompassing interest, attitudes, values, and appreciations development.

However, this conceptual awareness did not translate into sophisticated pedagogical framework for affective implementation. When pressed to elaborate on affective learning operationalisation, teachers' responses remained general and procedural rather than substantive. Affective outcomes were described primarily in behavioural terms, students listening attentively, participating in discussions, demonstrating respect, rather than in

terms of deeper cognitive-affective integration that scholars such as Ammert et al. (2022), Edling et al. (2022), Kohut (2020) and Wineburg (2018) emphasise.

Notably, teachers conceptualised affective learning in history predominantly through the lens of nationalist values and disciplinary values. Nationalism was the most frequently mentioned affective outcome, with teachers describing history education's role in cultivating sense of nationalism, discipline, and student learning motivation. This emphasis reflects persistent influence of nation-building function of history education in Indonesia, where history has long been understood as vehicle for fostering national identity and loyalty (JASKULOWSKI, 2023; Kusno, 2025; Pratama, 2022).

Disciplinary values, including respect for historical evidence, appreciation for historical method, and recognition of historical significance, received less explicit attention. When mentioned, these were typically subsumed under broader behavioural categories rather than articulated as distinct historical competencies. This pattern suggests that teachers' conceptual framework for affective learning remains tethered to general educational discourse rather than grounded in specific epistemic demands of historical inquiry.

Most significantly, teachers did not articulate a framework connecting affective learning to historical consciousness development in Rüsen et al.'s (2017) sense, the capacity for temporal orientation, ethical reflection, and meaning-making that integrates past, present, and future. Affective learning was understood as cultivation of desirable attitudes rather than as integral to sophisticated historical thinking enabling students to navigate complexities of historical interpretation and contemporary significance.

Pedagogical Strategies and Their Limitations

Teachers employed a range of pedagogical strategies intended to address affective dimensions of learning, including varied teaching methods such as lecture, discussion, presentation, question-and-answer, and assignment; diverse learning models including Problem Based Learning, Two Stay Two Stray, Project Based Learning, and Shortcut; and multiple media such as mind mapping, infographics, Canva, PowerPoint, video, and LCD projection. This variety reflects genuine effort to create engaging learning environments responsive to diverse student needs.

However, observation revealed significant gaps between the rhetoric of variety and the reality of practice. The lecture method remained dominant, with other strategies employed intermittently and often superficially. Discussion sessions, while nominally participatory, frequently followed predictable patterns in which a small number of students dominated while others remained passive. Project-based learning, while mentioned as a strategy, was observed only in limited forms, with projects often serving as summative assessments rather than as vehicles for sustained inquiry.

More fundamentally, pedagogical strategies observed did not systematically integrate cognitive and affective dimensions of learning. Affective outcomes were typically addressed through explicit moralising at lesson conclusions, with teachers conveying wisdom and benefits students can gain from learning history, rather than through pedagogical design enabling students to develop affective engagement through historical inquiry itself. This pattern reflects what scholars have identified as tendency to treat affective learning as add-on to cognitive instruction rather than as integral to historical understanding (Bartelds et al., 2020; Endacott et al., 2023; Karn, 2025).

The classroom environment itself presented constraints on affective implementation. Large class sizes of 30 to 40 students per class, limited time, and pressure to cover extensive curriculum content all militated against sustained, interactive pedagogy fostering deeper affective engagement. As one teacher noted, with so many students, providing individual attention and truly observing attitude development becomes extremely difficult.

Assessment of Affective Outcomes

The most significant gap between policy and practice emerged in assessment domain. Teachers acknowledged that affective assessment presented fundamental challenges. The affective aspect cannot be seen through grades but through observation, because the affective aspect lacks benchmark in its assessment. This recognition of affective assessment difficulty, while accurate, led to minimal systematic assessment rather than development of more sophisticated assessment approaches.

Teachers described assessing affective outcomes primarily through direct observation of student behaviour during lessons, noticing which students participated actively, demonstrated respect, or showed enthusiasm. However, observation lacked systematicity: there were no clear indicators or behavioural criteria, no structured observation protocols, and no regular recording of observations. As a result, affective assessment remained impressionistic and inconsistent.

This pattern reflects what scholars have identified as broader neglect of affective assessment in educational practice. Research consistently finds that the affective domain remains the most overlooked of the three domains identified by Bloom and Krathwohl's committees (Oteng et al., 2023). In this study, teachers' acknowledgment of affective assessment difficulty served to justify minimal attention rather than to motivate development of more adequate approaches.

The consequences of this assessment gap were significant. Without clear assessment frameworks, affective learning objectives remained aspirational rather than operational. Teachers could not determine whether students were actually developing attitudes and values that affective instruction aimed to cultivate. Students, for their part, were largely unaware that affective outcomes were even being assessed, suggesting that implicit curriculum message was that cognitive outcomes mattered while affective outcomes did not.

Student Perspectives on Affective Learning

Student interviews and observations revealed complex picture of student engagement with affective dimensions of history education. Most students reported finding history interesting when teachers employed varied methods and media, and many expressed appreciation for wisdom and benefits teachers conveyed through historical examples. As one student explained, history teaches us not to repeat past mistakes and to take good examples from historical figures.

However, student engagement was uneven and often superficial. While some students demonstrated genuine enthusiasm and active participation, others remained passive or disengaged. Observation documented significant variation in student behaviour: some students listened attentively, asked questions, and participated in discussions; others talked among themselves, appeared distracted, or completed other work during lessons.

This variation was not simply individual differences but reflected limitations of pedagogical strategies employed.

Notably, students were largely unaware that affective learning was deliberate instructional objective. When asked about learning outcomes in history, students focused on content knowledge, including events, dates, figures, causes and consequences, rather than on attitudes, values, or ethical reflection. This finding suggests that implicit classroom curriculum communicated that cognitive outcomes were real purpose of history education, with affective dimensions serving at best as incidental byproducts.

Students' limited awareness of affective learning objectives may also reflect nature of affective outcomes being pursued. When affective outcomes are framed primarily as behavioural compliance including attentiveness, respect, discipline and nationalist values, they may not be experienced as distinct learning objectives but rather as normal expectations of classroom participation. This conflation of affective learning with behavioural conformity represents significant impoverishment of affective domain's potential.

Discussion

The Persistence of the Cognitive-Affective Divide

The findings reveal a persistent and consequential divide between cognitive and affective dimensions of history education. Despite teachers' conceptual awareness of the affective domain and stated commitment to holistic education, classroom practice continued to privilege cognitive outcomes while treating affective learning as secondary, incidental, and difficult to assess. This pattern is not unique to Indonesia but reflects what scholars have identified as a global tendency in educational practice (Levstik & Barton, 2023; Shepard, 2023; Zembylas et al., 2020).

However, the Indonesian context adds distinctive dimensions to this pattern. The history curriculum's explicit emphasis on nationalist values and character education creates particular expectations for affective outcomes, yet these expectations are not matched by adequate pedagogical frameworks, assessment tools, or professional development (Baron et al., 2021; Pratama, 2022; Smets & Tuithof, 2024). Teachers are expected to cultivate nationalism, discipline, and other values without clear guidance on effective methods or determination of success. This gap between expectation and support creates conditions for superficial, incidental affective instruction observed in this study.

The cognitive-affective divide has deeper theoretical implications. As Rüsen et al.'s (2017) work on historical consciousness makes clear, cognitive and affective dimensions of historical understanding are not separate but fundamentally intertwined. Historical consciousness involves not merely knowing about the past but making meaning from it, a process integrating cognitive understanding with emotional engagement, ethical reflection, and temporal orientation (Lévesque & Croteau, 2022; Thorp & Persson, 2020). When history education separates cognitive from affective learning, it produces not more rigorous historical thinking but diminished historical understanding failing to prepare students for complexities of historical interpretation and contemporary significance.

Similarly, Wineburg's (2001) conception of historical thinking as capacity to recognise fundamental otherness of the past entails profound affective dimensions: discomfort of encountering perspectives challenging our own, humility required to acknowledge limits of understanding, and empathy needed to engage with people whose worlds differ

fundamentally from ours. When history education reduces historical thinking to cognitive operations while neglecting these affective dimensions, it produces not better historical thinkers but students lacking emotional and ethical resources to engage meaningfully with historical complexity.

Post-Colonial Dimensions of Affective Implementation

The findings also illuminate distinctive challenges of affective implementation in post-colonial contexts. The emphasis on nationalist values in Indonesian history education reflects ongoing nation-building project in a post-colonial state. History education has been repeatedly reshaped to serve national integration, with affective outcomes including patriotism, loyalty, and national pride central to this project (Pratama, 2022; Stoddard, 2022; Sung, 2020). However, this instrumental approach to affective learning creates tensions with critical historical consciousness development.

When affective learning is framed primarily as prescribed values cultivation, it becomes a form of what scholars have termed epistemic dependency, the reproduction of state-centred narratives that marginalise alternative perspectives and critical engagement (Abbey & Wansink, 2022; Pratama, 2022; Stoddard, 2022). Students are expected to develop positive attitudes toward the nation and its official history, but they are not necessarily equipped to grapple with historical complexity, acknowledge multiple perspectives, or engage ethically with difficult histories. This pattern reflects what scholarship on decolonising education identifies as persistence of colonial epistemologies even in post-colonial contexts (Hennessey, 2024; Iyer, 2025; MacDonald & Kidman, 2022).

The challenge, then, is to reconceptualise affective learning in history education not as prescribed values inculcation but as cultivation of what (Rüsen et al., 2017) term genetic historical consciousness, the capacity to understand historical change as dynamic and contingent, recognise human agency and structural forces in shaping historical outcomes, and engage ethically with the past in ways informing present action and future possibility. This reconceptualisation requires moving beyond nationalist narratives transmission toward pedagogical approaches enabling students to interrogate narratives, consider multiple perspectives, and develop their own ethical orientations toward the past (Abbey & Wansink, 2022; Hemmler et al., 2021; Manning et al., 2024).

Implications for Pedagogical Practice

The findings suggest several implications for pedagogical practice in history education. First, effective affective implementation requires deliberate pedagogical design rather than incidental attention. Affective outcomes cannot be achieved through moralising at lesson conclusions but must be integrated into learning experiences engaging students cognitively and affectively with historical content (Deng, 2024; Sheppard, 2023). Research on historical empathy demonstrates that such integration is possible when students are supported to engage with primary sources, consider multiple perspectives, and reflect on ethical dimensions of historical interpretation (Bartelds et al., 2023; Conner & Graham, 2023).

Second, affective implementation requires clear assessment frameworks enabling teachers to determine whether students are developing attitudes, values, and ethical orientations that affective learning aims to cultivate. The absence of such frameworks in this

study led to impressionistic, inconsistent assessment that undermined seriousness of affective objectives (Adu-Boahen, 2024; Bartelds et al., 2023; Ndomondo, 2024). Developing assessment approaches that capture affective learning complexity, including observation protocols, reflective journals, and performance assessments, represents crucial priority for professional development and curriculum reform.

Third, effective affective implementation requires professional development equipping teachers with pedagogical content knowledge needed to integrate cognitive and affective dimensions of historical learning. Teachers in this study demonstrated conceptual awareness of the affective domain but lacked pedagogical frameworks to operationalise this awareness in practice (Cinnamon et al., 2021; Oattes et al., 2022; Tuithof et al., 2023). Professional development should address not only affective learning theory but its practical implementation, including strategies for designing integrated learning experiences, facilitating discussions engaging students affectively, and assessing affective outcomes.

Comparative and International Perspectives

The findings resonate with international research on affective domain challenges in history education. Studies from European contexts similarly document teachers' difficulties in assessing historical empathy and integrating affective dimensions with cognitive historical thinking (Bartelds et al., 2020; Mocnik, 2025; Zembylas et al., 2020). However, the Indonesian case reveals distinctive features shaped by post-colonial nation-building imperatives and the specific history of curriculum instrumentalisation under authoritarian rule.

Comparative analysis suggests that while affective implementation challenges are global, their specific manifestations are shaped by national historical contexts, curriculum traditions, and political cultures (Awgichew & Ademe, 2022; Bleeze, 2024; Skårås, 2021). In societies with established democratic traditions and critical historical cultures, teachers may have greater latitude to explore multiple perspectives and controversial issues. In post-colonial societies with recent authoritarian histories and ongoing nation-building projects, affective learning may be more constrained by expectations of value conformity and national loyalty.

This comparative perspective underscores the importance of contextualised approaches to pedagogical reform. Universal prescriptions for affective implementation must be adapted to specific national and institutional contexts, taking account of curriculum traditions, teacher preparation systems, assessment regimes, and political cultural factors that shape possibilities and constraints for pedagogical innovation (Dickens, 2021; Lidher et al., 2024; Weuffen, 2022).

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. As a single-site case study, findings are not statistically generalisable to other contexts, though they may offer insights applicable to similar Indonesian secondary schools. The relatively brief data collection period limited understanding depth; extended observation over a full academic year would enable richer understanding of how affective implementation evolves over time. The study focused on teachers' and students' perspectives but did not include systematic analysis of curriculum documents at the national level, which would illuminate policy context shaping classroom practice.

Future research should address these limitations through multi-site studies examining affective implementation across diverse Indonesian contexts, including schools with different characteristics (urban-rural, public-private, high-performing-low-performing) and different curriculum orientations. Longitudinal studies would enable understanding of how affective implementation develops over time and what factors support or constrain its development. Comparative studies across post-colonial contexts would illuminate how different national histories and educational traditions shape possibilities and challenges of affective implementation.

Additionally, research examining student learning outcomes more directly would strengthen understanding of whether and how affective implementation influences student development of historical consciousness, ethical reasoning, and civic engagement. Intervention studies testing specific pedagogical approaches to integrating cognitive and affective dimensions would provide evidence for effective practice. Research on teacher professional development would illuminate what forms of support most effectively enable teachers to implement integrated cognitive-affective history education.

Conclusion

This study has critically examined affective domain learning implementation in history education at an Indonesian secondary school, revealing persistent disjuncture between policy aspirations and classroom practice. Despite teachers' conceptual awareness of the affective domain and stated commitment to holistic education, affective learning remained peripheral to classroom practice, treated as incidental supplement to cognitive instruction rather than integrated dimension of historical understanding.

The findings demonstrate that meaningful affective implementation requires more than teacher awareness or policy mandates. It requires deliberate pedagogical design integrating cognitive and affective dimensions of historical learning, clear assessment frameworks enabling teachers to determine whether affective objectives are being achieved, and professional development equipping teachers with pedagogical content knowledge needed for effective implementation. It also requires reconceptualising history education purposes in post-colonial contexts, moving beyond prescribed nationalist values inculcation toward critical historical consciousness cultivation that embraces complexity, acknowledges multiple perspectives, and engages ethically with the past.

The implications extend beyond Indonesia. As history educators worldwide confront the challenge of preparing students for democratic citizenship in increasingly pluralistic societies, integrating cognitive historical thinking with affective engagement has become urgent. The findings suggest that this integration requires not only pedagogical innovation but also fundamental rethinking of what history education is for and what it means to learn history well. History education that separates cognitive from affective learning produces not more rigorous historical understanding but diminished historical consciousness failing to prepare students for historical interpretation complexities and contemporary significance.

Ultimately, this study argues that the affective domain in history education is not merely about cultivating desirable attitudes or values but about enabling students to develop historical consciousness necessary for meaningful engagement with the past and its relevance to present and future. This is a task of profound importance in post-colonial

societies navigating national identity, historical memory, and democratic citizenship complexities, and one deserving far greater attention from researchers, policymakers, and practitioners alike.

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