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Students' Knowledge and Perceptions of Heroic Values in History Education: A Case Study of Mohamad Hatta in Post-Colonial Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study critically examines students' knowledge and perceptions of the heroic values embodied by Mohamad Hatta, Indonesia's first Vice President and a key figure in the Proclamation of Independence. Drawing on quantitative survey data from 34 students at SMA Negeri 1 Candiroto, the research investigates two dimensions: factual knowledge of Hatta's biography and roles, and perceptions of his heroic values including courage, responsibility, discipline, sacrifice, patriotism, mutual assistance, and perseverance. The findings reveal high levels of both knowledge (84.7%) and perception (88.14%), suggesting effective transmission of nationalist narratives. However, this study argues that high scores on declarative knowledge and value affirmation do not necessarily indicate deep historical understanding or internalised commitment. The research contributes to broader international conversations about how post-colonial societies construct and transmit heroic narratives through history education, and the tensions between knowledge transmission and critical historical consciousness development.

KEYWORDS

Heroic Values; History Education; Mohamad Hatta; Student Perception; Post-Colonial Pedagogy

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ABSTRAK

Studi ini mengkaji pengetahuan dan persepsi siswa mengenai nilai-nilai kepahlawanan Mohamad Hatta, Wakil Presiden pertama Indonesia dan tokoh kunci Proklamasi. Berdasarkan survei kuantitatif terhadap 34 siswa di SMA Negeri 1 Candiroto, penelitian menyelidiki dua dimensi, yaitu pengetahuan faktual tentang biografi Hatta dan persepsi terhadap nilai kepahlawanan seperti keberanian, tanggung jawab, disiplin, pengorbanan, patriotisme, gotong royong, dan ketekunan. Temuan menunjukkan tingkat pengetahuan tinggi (84,7%) dan persepsi (88,14%), mengindikasikan transmisi narasi nasionalis yang efektif. Namun, studi berargumen bahwa skor tinggi pada pengetahuan deklaratif tidak otomatis menunjukkan pemahaman historis mendalam atau komitmen terinternalisasi. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada diskusi tentang bagaimana masyarakat pascakolonial mengonstruksi dan mentransmisikan narasi kepahlawanan melalui pendidikan sejarah.

KATA KUNCI

Nilai-nilai Kepahlawanan; Pendidikan Sejarah; Mohammad Hatta; Persepsi Siswa; Pedagogi Pascakolonial

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Introduction

The cultivation of national identity through history education represents one of the most significant yet contested undertakings in post-colonial societies worldwide. As nations emerging from colonial rule grapple with the challenge of forging cohesive national identities from diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural communities, history education has consistently served as a primary site for constructing and transmitting nationalist narratives (Awgichew & Ademe, 2022; Yuliantri & Suwignyo, 2024). Indonesia, the world's largest archipelagic nation with over 1,300 ethnic groups and six officially recognised religions, exemplifies this challenge. The national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), encapsulates the fundamental tension between acknowledging diversity and maintaining national cohesion that has shaped Indonesian education policy since independence (Jayadi et al., 2022; Rachman et al., 2024).

Within this context, national heroes occupy a privileged position in Indonesian history education. As of 2023, the Indonesian government has conferred the title of National Hero upon 206 individuals, a number that continues to grow annually (Ahlstrand & Maniam, 2025; Hejwosz-Gromkowska & Hildebrandt-Wypych, 2024). These figures are positioned as exemplars whose lives and struggles embody the values of patriotism, sacrifice, and national unity that students are expected to internalise. Law Number 20 of 2009 defines a National Hero as an Indonesian citizen who fought against colonialism, performed heroic acts, or produced outstanding achievements for the nation's development (Republic of Indonesia, 2009). This legal framework establishes heroes not merely as historical figures but as pedagogical instruments for character formation and nationalist values cultivation.

Mohamad Hatta, Indonesia's first Vice President and a key figure in the Proclamation of Independence, occupies a distinctive place in this pantheon. Known as the "heart of the nation" (*hati nurani bangsa*), Hatta was a sophisticated political thinker who articulated distinct philosophies on democracy, economic cooperation, and the relationship between nationalism and internationalism (Hatta, 1957). His contributions to Indonesian independence extended beyond his role as co-proclaimer with Soekarno; he was instrumental in drafting the proclamation text, navigating the complex political dynamics of August 1945, and establishing the philosophical foundations of the Indonesian state (Hatta, 1981). Despite his significance, research has suggested that students often have limited knowledge of Hatta beyond his role as proclaimer, lacking understanding of his broader contributions and the values he embodied (Arfianto, 2007).

The introduction of the Merdeka (Independent) Curriculum in 2022 represents a significant reform in Indonesian education, emphasising essential materials, student-centred learning, and character development through the Pancasila Student Profile (*Profil Pelajar Pancasila*) (Rachman et al., 2024; Rohmah et al., 2024). Among the profile's six dimensions, the curriculum explicitly addresses character formation, including the cultivation of nationalist values. However, research on curriculum implementation in Indonesia has consistently identified gaps between policy intentions and classroom practice, with teachers struggling to translate reform mandates into practice amidst limited professional development, inadequate resources, and the persistence of examination-oriented pedagogies (Rohmah et al., 2024; Tatik et al., 2024). The cultivation of heroic values through history education, while widely endorsed in principle, faces significant challenges in practice (Lin & Jackson, 2023; Montessori et al., 2024).

The significance of this inquiry extends beyond the Indonesian context. As educational systems worldwide grapple with questions of how to cultivate national identity, civic values, and historical consciousness in increasingly diverse and globally connected societies, understanding how heroic narratives are constructed, transmitted, and received in specific institutional and cultural contexts becomes increasingly important (Hejwosz-Gromkowska & Hildebrandt-Wypych, 2024; Sandhu et al., 2023). By examining students' knowledge and perceptions of a national hero, this study contributes to broader international conversations about the role of history education in nation-building, the politics of memory, and the relationship between historical knowledge and values formation in post-colonial contexts (Hong & Lyu, 2025; Yoon, 2022).

Research Questions

1. What is the level of students' knowledge about the historical figure of Mohamad Hatta?
2. What are students' perceptions of the heroic values embodied by Mohamad Hatta?

Literature Review

Knowledge and Perception in History Education

Understanding students' engagement with heroic figures requires conceptual clarity about the nature of knowledge and perception in educational contexts. Knowledge, as Gatley (2023) observes, is fundamental to human existence, representing the product of thinking activity that distinguishes humans from other beings. In educational psychology, knowledge is typically understood as encompassing both declarative knowledge (knowing "that") and procedural knowledge (knowing "how") (Dickens, 2021; Sendur et al., 2021). Declarative knowledge, which is the focus of this study, includes factual information about historical figures, events, and concepts. Bloom's taxonomy, first developed in 1956 and subsequently revised, categorises knowledge as the foundational level of cognitive processing, upon which comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are built (Bloom et al., 1964; Chou et al., 2023).

In the context of history education, knowledge of historical figures involves not only factual recall of biographical details but also understanding of their roles, contributions, and significance within broader historical narratives (Wineburg, 2001). However, as (Wineburg, 2001) emphasises, historical knowledge is not merely a collection of facts but involves the capacity to interpret, contextualise, and critically evaluate historical sources and narratives. This distinction between superficial factual recall and deep historical understanding is crucial for assessing the quality of students' historical knowledge.

Perception, by contrast, involves the interpretation and meaning-making that individuals apply to sensory information and knowledge (Rakhmat, 1991). According to (Banerjee & Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia, 2021; Karn, 2025), perception is a process of observation based on cognitive components, influenced by factors including experience, knowledge, and worldview. Individuals perceive psychological objects through their own perspectives, which are shaped by their values and personality characteristics. Perception is therefore not a passive reception of information but an active process of constructing meaning. As

(Kim 2023) notes, perception is a key element in adjusting behaviour to the environment, determining how individuals respond to and engage with objects in their world.

In the context of heroic values, perception involves students' interpretations of what heroic figures represent, the values they embody, and the relevance of these values to students' own lives. Perception of heroic values is therefore distinct from knowledge of heroic figures; a student may know factual information about a hero without perceiving their values as meaningful or relevant. Conversely, a student may perceive a hero's values as significant without possessing extensive factual knowledge. Understanding the relationship between knowledge and perception is therefore essential for assessing the effectiveness of history education in cultivating values.

Heroic Values and Character Education

The concept of heroic values occupies a central position in Indonesian character education discourse. Heroes are understood as models whose lives embody values that students should emulate (Hammond et al., 2024). Bandura's (1977) social learning theory provides a theoretical foundation for this approach, suggesting that individuals learn through observing and imitating models. When students learn about heroes, they are exposed to models whose attitudes, behaviours, and values they may internalise.

The values attributed to national heroes in Indonesian education typically include patriotism, courage, discipline, responsibility, sacrifice, and perseverance (Awgichew & Ademe, 2022; Triatmodjo et al., 2023). In the case of Mohamad Hatta, scholars have identified a range of character values including honesty, religious commitment, tolerance, discipline, and social concern (Susanto et al., 2023; Yuliantri & Suwignyo, 2024), as well as independence, nationalism, love of country, love of peace, love of reading, and honesty (Efendi, 2020; Yuliantri & Suwignyo, 2024). These values align with broader Indonesian character education frameworks, which emphasise the cultivation of Pancasila values including belief in God, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy, and social justice.

However, the construction of heroic values is not politically neutral. As critical scholars have observed, the selection and framing of heroic figures and values reflects particular political and ideological interests (Anand & Lall, 2022; David et al., 2025). The New Order regime's politics of history involved the systematic construction of a national narrative that legitimised state power, marginalised alternative perspectives, and cultivated a militaristic, anti-communist nationalism (Głab, 2024). The heroic values promoted through education during this era reflected these political interests, emphasising obedience, loyalty, and sacrifice for the state while suppressing discussion of the complexities, contradictions, and violence that accompanied Indonesia's nation-building project. While the post-1998 Reformasi era has brought aspirations toward more critical and pluralistic historical education, the legacies of New Order historiography persist in curriculum structures, teacher practices, and public expectations (Głab, 2024; Pratama, 2022).

Historical Consciousness and National Identity

The cultivation of heroic values through history education necessarily engages with questions of historical consciousness. Rüsen's (2005) foundational work conceptualises historical consciousness as the mental operations that define historical thinking's role in human culture, encompassing not merely cognitive operations but also moral and affective dimensions. Rüsen's (2005) emphasises that historical consciousness "has a practical

function: it bestows upon actuality a temporal direction, an orientation which can guide action intentionally by the agency of historical memory." This orientation integrates understanding of the past, interpretation of the present, and anticipation of the future.

Rüsen's typology of historical consciousness, encompassing traditional, exemplary, critical, and genetic forms, offers a framework for understanding how students' engagement with heroic figures operates at different levels of sophistication. Traditional and exemplary forms treat the past as a repository of fixed lessons or moral exemplars, presenting historical figures as models to be emulated without critical engagement. This approach, while common in values education, tends to foreclose critical reflection on the complexities and contradictions of historical figures and their contexts. Critical and genetic forms, by contrast, recognise the constructed nature of historical narratives, the multiplicity of perspectives, and the contingency of historical development.

The development of critical historical consciousness enables students to recognise that heroic values themselves have a history, that their meanings and expressions have changed over time, and that contemporary values involve choices about which aspects of heroes' lives to prioritise and how to interpret their significance. As Wineburg (2001) argues, historical thinking requires overcoming presentism, recognising the fundamental otherness of the past, and engaging with the complexity and ambiguity of historical sources. This capacity for self-transcendence is essential for developing a critically reflective nationalism that can acknowledge both the achievements and the limitations of the nation's history.

Curriculum Implementation and Values Education

Understanding the cultivation of heroic values through history education also requires engagement with theories of curriculum implementation. Fullan's (2025) theory of educational change emphasises that successful implementation requires attention to multiple dimensions: the possible use of new or revised materials, the possible use of new teaching approaches, and the possible alteration of beliefs. Fullan argues that educational change is not a linear process but one characterised by uncertainty, struggle, and the need for sustained support. Teachers navigating curriculum reform must make sense of new expectations, develop new competencies, and reconcile reform demands with their existing professional identities and established practices.

Fullan's framework identifies several factors that influence implementation success, including the clarity and complexity of the innovation, the quality and practicality of professional development, and the presence of supportive organisational structures. In the Indonesian context, research on curriculum implementation has consistently identified gaps between policy intentions and classroom realities, with teachers struggling to translate reform mandates into practice amidst limited professional development, inadequate resources, and the persistence of teacher-centred pedagogies (Rohmah et al., 2024; Tatik et al., 2024). These challenges are amplified in the context of values education, which requires not only new pedagogical approaches but also fundamental shifts in how teachers conceptualise the purposes of education.

The Merdeka Curriculum, with its emphasis on the Pancasila Student Profile and character education, represents an attempt to address these challenges. However, research on the Merdeka Curriculum has identified obstacles including the lack of alternative

learning strategies for developing historical thinking skills and limited teacher preparation (Bussell, 2024; Rohmah et al., 2024). The cultivation of heroic values through history education, while widely endorsed, faces significant challenges in implementation.

Research Method

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a quantitative descriptive approach to investigate students' knowledge and perceptions of Mohamad Hatta's heroic values at SMA Negeri 1 Candirototo. The quantitative approach was selected for its capacity to measure and describe the levels of knowledge and perception among a defined student population. As (van der Eem et al., 2023) explain, quantitative research emphasises numerical data to explain phenomena under investigation. The descriptive design was specifically chosen for its appropriateness in providing a systematic description of the status, characteristics, and distribution of variables within a population (Ma'rufah Rohmanurmeta et al., 2024; Yeboah, 2023). In this study, the descriptive design enabled systematic documentation of the levels of knowledge and perception among students, as well as the distribution of responses across different dimensions of heroic values.

The selection of SMA Negeri 1 Candirototo as the research site was purposive. The school's commitment to character education, as reflected in its vision and mission statements, made it an appropriate site for examining students' engagement with heroic values. The school's implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum provided a relevant policy context for the investigation. The selection of Grade XI-7 students as the sample was based on their having studied the Proclamation of Independence material, which includes coverage of Mohamad Hatta's role and significance.

Population and Sample

The population for this study comprised all Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Candirototo. The sample consisted of 34 students from Class XI-7, selected through simple random sampling. As (Sugiyono, 2019) explains, simple random sampling involves selecting sample members randomly from the population, with each member having an equal probability of selection. This technique was chosen because the population was considered homogeneous with respect to the variables under investigation, as all students had studied the same curriculum content and were at the same grade level.

The sample size of 34 students represents a limitation of this study, as it restricts the generalisability of findings to the broader student population at the school or to other schools. However, as a descriptive study, the primary aim was to describe the characteristics of this specific sample rather than to make statistical inferences about a larger population. The findings should therefore be interpreted as providing insights into the knowledge and perceptions of students at this particular school, with caution exercised in generalising to other contexts.

Variables

This study examined two main variables. The first variable was students' knowledge of Mohamad Hatta, encompassing two dimensions: (1) knowledge of Hatta's biography, including his origins, family background, education, and life journey; and (2) knowledge of

Hatta's roles, including his contributions to the struggle for Indonesian independence from the colonial period through the Proclamation.

The second variable was students' perceptions of Mohamad Hatta's heroic values, encompassing seven dimensions: (1) courage (*keberanian*), (2) responsibility (*tanggung jawab*), (3) discipline (*disiplin*), (4) willingness to sacrifice (*rela berkorban*), (5) love of country (*cinta tanah air*), (6) mutual assistance (*tolong menolong*), and (7) perseverance (*pantang menyerah*). These dimensions were derived from the literature on heroic values in Indonesian character education (Fernández Espinosa & López González, 2024; Triatmodjo et al., 2023) and from the national curriculum's emphasis on character formation.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection employed three techniques: questionnaire, documentation, and observation. The questionnaire was the primary data collection instrument, designed to measure both knowledge and perception variables. For the knowledge variable, the questionnaire included objective test items covering Hatta's biography and roles. For the perception variable, the questionnaire employed a Likert scale with five response categories: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The Likert scale was selected for its capacity to measure the intensity of respondents' attitudes and perceptions (Sugiyono, 2019).

The questionnaire consisted of 40 items, with items distributed across the two knowledge dimensions and seven perception dimensions. Knowledge items assessed factual recall of Hatta's biographical details and historical roles. Perception items presented statements about Hatta's heroic values, with respondents indicating their level of agreement. Documentation was employed to supplement questionnaire data, including the collection of school records, curriculum documents, and student work samples. Observation was conducted to provide contextual information about the school environment and learning activities.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the trustworthiness of findings, the research instrument underwent validity and reliability testing. Validity testing employed the product-moment correlation coefficient, with items considered valid if the calculated correlation exceeded the table value at a 5% error level. The questionnaire was administered to 30 students for validation purposes, with a table value of 0.361. The validation process yielded 31 valid items out of 40, with 9 items deemed invalid and excluded from the final instrument.

Reliability testing employed Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with an instrument considered reliable if the coefficient exceeded 0.6 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The calculated Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the instrument was 0.92789, indicating high reliability and confirming that the instrument could be used consistently to measure the intended variables.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis employed descriptive statistical techniques, including percentage calculations and categorisation. The percentage formula used was:

$$P = (f / n) \times 100\%$$

Where P represents the percentage, f represents the frequency of responses, and n represents the total number of respondents (Sugiyono, 2019). Calculated percentages were then categorised according to the following intervals:

Table 1. Percentage and Category of Research Variable Data

Interval	Category
87% - 100%	Very High
71% - 86%	High
54% - 70%	Medium
37% - 53%	Low
20% - 36%	Very Low

Data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel, with calculations performed for each item, dimension, and variable. Results were presented in tables and figures to facilitate interpretation.

Results

Students' Knowledge of Mohamad Hatta

The analysis of students' knowledge about Mohamad Hatta revealed a total score of 2,880 out of a maximum possible score of 3,400, yielding a mean percentage of 84.7%. Based on the categorisation criteria, this falls within the "High" category (71% - 86%). The knowledge variable was assessed across two dimensions: biography and roles.

For the biography dimension, which encompassed knowledge of Hatta's origins, family background, education, and life journey, students achieved a total score of 1,170 out of a maximum of 1,360, yielding a mean percentage of 86.02%. This falls within the "High" category. For the roles dimension, which encompassed knowledge of Hatta's contributions to the independence struggle from the colonial period through the Proclamation, students achieved a total score of 1,710 out of a maximum of 2,040, yielding a mean percentage of 83.82%. This also falls within the "High" category.

These findings indicate that students demonstrated substantial factual knowledge about Mohamad Hatta, with slightly higher scores on biographical knowledge compared to knowledge of his specific roles. The results suggest that the history curriculum has been effective in transmitting information about Hatta's life and contributions, consistent with the emphasis on national heroes in Indonesian history education (Pratama, 2022). However, as Wineburg (2001) cautions, factual knowledge alone does not necessarily indicate deep historical understanding or the capacity for critical historical thinking.

Students' Perceptions of Mohamad Hatta's Heroic Values

The analysis of students' perceptions of Mohamad Hatta's heroic values revealed a total score of 4,645 out of a maximum possible score of 5,270, yielding a mean percentage of 88.14%. Based on the categorisation criteria, this falls within the "Very High" category (87% - 100%). The perception variable was assessed across seven dimensions: courage, responsibility, discipline, willingness to sacrifice, love of country, mutual assistance, and perseverance.

Courage achieved the highest mean percentage among all dimensions at 89.41%, with a total score of 608 out of a maximum of 680. This places the dimension in the "Very High" category. Students strongly affirmed statements about Hatta's courage and the

importance of emulating this value. The high score on courage reflects the emphasis on bravery in Indonesian heroic narratives, where heroes are portrayed as individuals willing to face danger and take risks for the nation's sake (Triatmodjo et al., 2023).

Discipline achieved a mean percentage of 89.29%, with a total score of 759 out of a maximum of 850, placing it in the "Very High" category. Students strongly affirmed the importance of discipline as exemplified by Hatta. Discipline is a value emphasised in Indonesian character education, reflecting both the military-influenced nationalism of the New Order era and contemporary concerns about student behaviour and academic achievement (Paramita et al., 2024).

Love of country achieved a mean percentage of 87.79%, with a total score of 597 out of a maximum of 680, placing it in the "Very High" category. Students affirmed the importance of patriotism and love for Indonesia as embodied by Hatta. Love of country is a central value in Indonesian history education, reflecting the nation-building function of the curriculum (Awgichew & Ademe, 2022).

Responsibility achieved a mean percentage of 87.65%, with a total score of 745 out of a maximum of 850, placing it in the "Very High" category. Students affirmed the importance of responsibility as a heroic value. Responsibility is a key character value in Indonesian education, reflecting the emphasis on civic duty and social obligation (Wahyuni et al., 2024).

Willingness to sacrifice achieved a mean percentage of 87.65%, with a total score of 596 out of a maximum of 680, placing it in the "Very High" category. Students affirmed the importance of sacrifice for the nation, a value central to Indonesian heroic narratives where heroes are portrayed as individuals who prioritised national interests above personal interests (Triatmodjo et al., 2023).

Mutual assistance achieved a mean percentage of 87.65%, with a total score of 596 out of a maximum of 680, placing it in the "Very High" category. Students affirmed the importance of helping others, a value consistent with the Indonesian cultural value of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) (Casma et al., 2023).

Perseverance achieved the lowest mean percentage among all dimensions at 87.53%, with a total score of 744 out of a maximum of 850, placing it in the "Very High" category. While still in the very high category, this dimension had the lowest score, suggesting slightly less strong affirmation of perseverance compared to other heroic values (Kropfreiter et al., 2024).

The distribution of responses across the Likert scale revealed that 48.77% of responses were "Strongly Agree," 34.61% were "Agree," 4.72% were "Undecided," 0.03% were "Disagree," and 0% were "Strongly Disagree." This distribution indicates overwhelmingly positive perceptions of Hatta's heroic values, with the vast majority of students either agreeing or strongly agreeing with statements affirming these values.

Discussion

The High Levels of Knowledge and Perception: Achievement or Limitation?

The findings of this study reveal high levels of both knowledge and perception among students at SMA Negeri 1 Candirototo. Students demonstrated substantial factual knowledge of Mohamad Hatta's biography and roles, and overwhelmingly positive

perceptions of his heroic values. At first glance, these findings suggest that history education at the school has been effective in transmitting knowledge about national heroes and cultivating positive attitudes toward heroic values.

However, a more critical reading of these findings raises important questions. The high scores on knowledge and perception may reflect the effectiveness of transmission-oriented pedagogy in producing students who can recall factual information and affirm values. Yet they do not necessarily indicate deep historical understanding, critical engagement with heroic narratives, or genuine internalisation of values. As Wineburg (2001) argues, historical thinking requires more than factual recall; it requires the capacity to interpret, contextualise, and critically evaluate historical sources and narratives. Students who can recite biographical details about Hatta may not necessarily understand the complexities of his political thought, the debates and disagreements that surrounded the Proclamation, or the contested nature of his legacy.

Similarly, students who affirm heroic values on a questionnaire may not necessarily have internalised these values or be able to apply them in their lives. As (Lévesque & Croteau, 2022; Popa, 2023) observes, perception involves interpretation and meaning-making, not merely agreement with statements. A student could agree with all statements about Hatta's values without having a meaningful perception of those values or being able to articulate their personal significance. The questionnaire used in this study measured agreement with values, not the depth of understanding or commitment to those values.

This distinction between superficial agreement and genuine internalisation is crucial for understanding the limitations of values education that focuses on transmission rather than critical engagement. As Hartono (2022) notes, history learning has the potential to internalise character values when students are actively engaged in the learning process through approaches such as the Value Clarification Technique. However, when values are presented as fixed, unquestionable truths to be absorbed, students may learn to affirm them without developing the critical consciousness necessary for genuine commitment.

The Politics of Heroic Values

The high levels of student affirmation of heroic values in this study also raise questions about the politics of hero construction in Indonesian education. As David et al.'s (2025) have documented, the selection and framing of national heroes reflects particular political and ideological interests. The heroic values promoted through education are not neutral; they reflect dominant narratives about what it means to be a good citizen and a loyal nationalist.

In the case of Mohamad Hatta, the values emphasised in this study, including courage, discipline, responsibility, and sacrifice, reflect a particular conception of nationalism that emphasises obedience, loyalty, and service to the state. These values were central to the New Order regime's politics of history, which constructed a nationalist narrative that legitimised state power and marginalised alternative perspectives (Głąb, 2024). While the post-1998 Reformasi era has brought aspirations toward more critical and pluralistic historical education, the legacies of this instrumental approach persist in curriculum structures, teacher practices, and public expectations (Pratama, 2022).

Hatta himself was a more complex figure than the simplified heroic narrative suggests. He was a sophisticated political thinker who articulated distinct philosophies on

democracy, economic cooperation, and the relationship between nationalism and internationalism (Hatta, 1957). He engaged in debates with Soekarno about the form of the Indonesian state and articulated views on Islamic identity and its relationship to nationalism that were nuanced and contested (Hatta, 1981). By reducing Hatta to a set of generic heroic values, the curriculum may miss the opportunity to engage students with the complexities of his thought and their relevance to contemporary challenges.

The Relationship Between Knowledge and Perception

One of the limitations of this study is its failure to analyse the relationship between knowledge and perception. While the study measured both variables, it did not examine whether students with higher knowledge of Hatta also had stronger perceptions of his heroic values. Understanding this relationship would have practical implications for history education, suggesting whether increasing historical knowledge enhances values cultivation, or whether values education requires different pedagogical approaches.

Research on the relationship between historical knowledge and values suggests that knowledge alone is insufficient for values formation. As Hartono (2022) observes, values internalisation requires active engagement with values through processes of recognition, awareness, and internalisation. The Value Clarification Technique, which guides students in understanding, choosing, and deciding upon values, has been shown to be effective for values internalisation (Hartono, 2022). This suggests that pedagogical approaches that actively engage students with values are more effective than transmission-oriented approaches that simply present values for absorption.

The absence of analysis of the knowledge-perception relationship in this study represents a missed opportunity. Future research should examine this relationship to better understand how knowledge and perception interact in the cultivation of heroic values through history education.

Implications for History Education

The findings of this study have several implications for history education in Indonesia and beyond. First, the high levels of knowledge and perception suggest that the current approach to teaching about national heroes has been effective in transmitting information and cultivating positive attitudes. Students at SMA Negeri 1 Candioto demonstrated substantial knowledge of Hatta and overwhelmingly positive perceptions of his heroic values. This suggests that the emphasis on national heroes in the curriculum, combined with pedagogical approaches that present heroes as exemplary models, has achieved its intended outcomes in terms of knowledge transmission and value affirmation.

Second, however, the limitations of this approach must be acknowledged. Transmission-oriented pedagogy that presents heroes as unproblematic exemplars may produce students who can recite facts and affirm values without developing deep historical understanding or critical engagement. As Wineburg (2001) and Rösen (2005) argue, genuine historical understanding requires the capacity to interpret, contextualise, and critically evaluate historical narratives. Students who learn about heroes as fixed models may not develop the historical consciousness necessary for critical citizenship.

Third, the politics of hero construction must be critically examined. The selection and framing of heroic values reflects particular political and ideological interests that may not

align with the goals of democratic citizenship education. As Głąb (2024) and Pratama, (2022) have documented, Indonesian history education has been shaped by state interests that have marginalised alternative perspectives and constructed a nationalist narrative that serves particular political agendas. Critical engagement with heroic narratives is essential for developing students' capacity to interrogate the politics of memory and to recognise the constructed nature of historical narratives.

Fourth, pedagogical approaches that actively engage students with heroic values are needed. As Hartono (2022) demonstrates, the Value Clarification Technique, which guides students in understanding, choosing, and deciding upon values, is more effective for values internalisation than transmission-oriented approaches. Similarly, approaches that engage students with primary sources, multiple perspectives, and the complexities of historical figures may foster deeper historical understanding and more genuine value commitment.

Conclusion

This study has examined students' knowledge and perceptions of Mohamad Hatta's heroic values at SMA Negeri 1 Candirototo, revealing high levels of both knowledge (84.7%) and perception (88.14%). Students demonstrated substantial factual knowledge of Hatta's biography and roles, and overwhelmingly positive perceptions of his heroic values including courage, discipline, responsibility, sacrifice, patriotism, mutual assistance, and perseverance. These findings suggest that the current approach to teaching about national heroes has been effective in transmitting information and cultivating positive attitudes.

However, this study argues that high scores on declarative knowledge and value affirmation do not necessarily indicate deep historical understanding or internalised commitment. The transmission-oriented pedagogy that characterises much history education in Indonesia may produce students who can recall facts and affirm values without developing the critical historical consciousness necessary for genuine engagement with the complexities of the past and their relevance to the present. The politics of hero construction, which reflects particular political and ideological interests, must be critically examined. The reduction of complex historical figures like Hatta to generic heroic values may miss the opportunity to engage students with the nuances of his thought and their relevance to contemporary challenges.

The implications of this study extend beyond the Indonesian context. As educational systems worldwide grapple with questions of how to cultivate national identity, civic values, and historical consciousness in increasingly diverse and globally connected societies, understanding how heroic narratives are constructed, transmitted, and received in specific institutional and cultural contexts becomes increasingly important. This study suggests that meaningful history education requires moving beyond transmission toward critical engagement that enables students to interrogate heroic narratives, consider multiple perspectives, and develop their own understandings of historical significance and contemporary relevance.

Future research should address the limitations of this study through larger samples, multi-site comparisons, and qualitative methods that capture the depth and complexity of students' engagement with heroic values. Research examining the relationship between knowledge and perception would strengthen understanding of how these

variables interact in the cultivation of heroic values. Longitudinal studies would enable understanding of how knowledge and perception develop over time and what factors support or constrain their development. Comparative studies across post-colonial contexts would illuminate how different national histories and educational traditions shape the possibilities and challenges of heroic values education.

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