

DETERMINING THE DEGREE OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGE STUDENTS STUDYING HISTORY IN RELATION TO ETHNICITY

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Abstract

This study set out to determine the degree of historical awareness among Indonesian college students about various ethnic groups, with a focus on Melayu and Batak ethnic groups. The four components of historical awareness are knowledge of historical events, comprehension of historical research techniques, interpretation of historical events, and historical utility perception. The subjects of this study were college students from two different universities: State University of Medan, which represented Melayu students studying history education, and University of Sumatera, which represented Batak students studying history education. Through the use of a historical consciousness exam, research data were gathered. Multiple-choice questions were developed as test instruments, which assessed knowledge of historical events, comprehension of historical research methodologies, and interpreting historical events, as well as considering the value of history. The proportion of the average historical consciousness scores for each ethnic group of college students was used to

examine the data. Overall, the analysis of the results revealed that Melayu college students scored 42% higher on the historical consciousness scale than Batak college students, who scored 39%. This indicates that Melayu college students have a greater level of historical consciousness than Batak college students. The T-test result indicates that there was no significant difference in the historical consciousness of Melayu college students and Minang ($df = 78$, value sig. $0.198 < 0.08$). One may argue that Melayu college students have the same amount of historical awareness as Minang students.

Keywords: *Historical Consciousness, Melayu College Students, Batak College Students*

A. Introduction

This essay addressed current concerns over educational fairness and quality in a multicultural society, particularly in Indonesia. This study specifically addressed the historical consciousness of the Melayu and Minang ethnic groups, taking into account their historical offenses against one other during the formation and construction of the Indonesian nation-state, while acknowledging the significant contributions made by other ethnic groups. The inference relates to the assessment of historical education in this country, with the aim of ensuring that the next generation remembers their country's past as a uniting element in the context of a heterogeneous society.

Because of how diverse Indonesian society is in terms of ethnicity, culture, and religion, the country is seen as being particularly pluralistic on a worldwide scale. The Unitary State Republic of Indonesia is home to more than 300 different ethnic groups (USRI). All ethnic groups appear similar at first glance, making it challenging to tell whether ones are Melayu, Batak, Sundanese, Minang, Dayak, Bugis, Madurese, and other ethnic groups. When they discuss, the disparities become more noticeable as more information about each ethnic group's "way of thinking" and "philosophy" is discovered.

Mochtar Naim¹ identified two traits—Minang and Melayu characters—that set apart the various ethnic groups that make up Indonesia. The traits of hierarchical, symbolic, feudalistic, and centralistic societies are reflected in Melayu character. On the other hand, the Minang character embodies the traits of decentralized, open, rational, democratic, and fundamentalist societies. According to Bahder Djohan, there has always been polarization in Indonesian history. The fact that the Melayu and Minang ethnic groups have contributed significantly to Indonesian history together is not a coincidence. The fragrant names of both ethnic groups have filled historical sheets in Indonesia.

Historical evidence demonstrates that both ethnic groups work together to resist Dutch colonization. They produce a large number of figures of national and even international stature. They have a variety of identities. In terms of religion and movement, Tuanku Imam Bonjol, Agus Salim, and Abdul Muis were present in addition to the Melayu leaders Diponegoro, Cokroanminoto, and Samanhudi. In addition to Soekarno, Sartono, and Ali Sastro (all of whom were of Melayu ethnicity), nationalist figures included Hatta, Sjahrir, and Yamin. Apart from Ahmad Dahlan (Melayu), each ethnic group has its own representatives in terms of religious leaders and educational institutions. On the other hand, there were also Hamka, Sjafe'i, Natsir, Hanifa, and other individuals (Minang). An equally remarkable number of women participated, Kartini played a Melayu woman, Siti Rohana Kudus played a Minang woman, and Rasuna Said played a Minang woman.

Although sometimes perceived as "competition," Melayu and Minang ethnic groups are really complimentary and necessary to one another, particularly when it comes to thought patterns. The occurrence of dual-single figure Soekarno-Hatta is likely common of both ethnic

groupings. Soekarno represents the Melayu ethnic personality and way of thinking on the one hand, and Hatta represents the Minang ethnic personality and way of thinking on the other.

Despite coming from different geographical regions—Minang originated in the West Sumatra area—Melayu and Minang are able to live together and compliment one another. This is evident from the Minang ethnic group's preference for migrating to the Java area. The Minang ethnic group mostly studies and trades along the seaside. At the very least, the Minang ethnic group managed to integrate well with the Melayu population, who inhabited the island of Java. Although the Minang area was under emergency administration (also known as the Emergency administration of the Indonesian Republic, or EGIR), both regions' ethnic origins were formerly the center of governance.

Historical evidence demonstrates that the administrative seat of the Republic of Indonesia experienced the relocation of Melayu and Minang ethnic people during the physical revolution against the Dutch Colonial government (1945–1950). When Dutch colonists took over Medan as the center of administration, the Minang origin region experienced an ever-lasting emergency government. Prior to August 17, 1945, when independence was declared, Jakarta served as the government's administrative hub. However, on September 29, 1945, the Dutch Colonial Forces invaded Jakarta, the capital city, in an attempt to regain control over Indonesia. As a result, on January 4, 1946, Medan became the new location of the government's headquarters. On December 19, 1948, the Dutch launched their second military invasion of Medan, although these were dangerous times, and even captured Soekarno-Hatta as a President and vice President of the Republic of Indonesia.

Hatta immediately sent a letter to Syafruddin Prawiranegara wire and gave mandate to lead the immediate emergency government in Sumatra. Since December 1949, the emergency government took place under the Syafruddin Prawiranegara leadership on the earth of Minang ethnic until the Medan capital successfully retaken and seat of government returned to Medan capital on July 1949. By doing so, for approximately eight months, Minang ethnic area has become the center of emergency government in difficult times to save the sovereignty of Indonesian nation that has been proclaimed since 1945.

Historical facts also indicate that government control almost all dominated by the Melayu ethnic, but Minang ethnic has also held the reins of government, especially during the period Republic of Indonesian Union (RIU) on December 27th, 1948 until August 15th, 1950. At the time of RIU, Mr. Assa'at as the Minang people had been believed to be the functionaries while the President Republic of Indonesia as part of the RIU countries. Even-though Mr. Assa'at's positions as acting president Republic of Indonesia (as long as RIU period) is still debated and not formally written in Indonesia historical school book, but the historical evidence shows that Mr. Assa'at as Minang ethnic has had important role in the government of Indonesia in the past. On the other hand, It is not be denied that position of president since the independence of Indonesia as a whole was dominated by Melayu ethnic.

Talking about Java and Melayu ethnic indeed an interesting thing viewed from various sides. In terms of history, from prehistory to the present, various historic events in Indonesia as a nation much have happened in the area of Java ethnic origin. Java island is a prehistoric center and from there discovered ancient of human fossils. Java island became the center of international trade of ancient era, the center of

Hindu-Buddhist religious development, even until the arrival and spread of Islam by Wali Songo. Java island is also the power bases Dutch Colonial rule and implementation of the forced cultivation systems because of extensive agricultural land and fertile. Besides that, Java island also became the center of the movement Indonesian people's struggle to gain independence. In Java itself, Melayu ethnic have been a lot of experiencing and fill historical sheet in the collective life of Indonesian nation, although other ethnic groups are also experienced the same thing.

Minang area viewed from the background of history also has its own uniqueness. The coastal areas of West Sumatra, included West Sumatra now had ever been a port city in international trade activities, especially after Islamic religion entered. Islam also had pushed the progress of economic societies. Minang area then known as a producer of gold, coffee, and gambier. Even Islamic clerics Minang Dato' Ribandang has spread Islam to Goa-Tallo kingdoms in Sulawesi island⁶. Minang Ethnic on the other hand, no doubt also have an important role and significant contribution in the spirit of nationalism and the establishment of the Indonesian nation that is free from colonial rule.

Indonesian history on the movement period and revival national proved that anti-colonial movement that first emerged were from Java and Minang (Sumatra). Both emerged as the leaders of nation transformation has obvious reasons. Java has high social change. While Minang was the first region which was experienced by Islamic reform in Indonesia under the Paderi leadership has been experienced a major change since the arrival of the Dutch Colonial. Migration tradition and establish relationship with the outside world make Minang ethnic open to new ideas. In terms of education, Melayu and Minang ethnics who have endured West education well aware of the condition as colonized nation.

Both ethnics group in domitable struggling to break away from the shackles of colonizers.

In its development after independence, Java is precisely became the target of other ethnics hatred in various regions in Indonesia. The hatred of other ethnic was caused by dissatisfaction to the central government policies which were considered unfair. This can be monitored on inequality of physical construction and imbalance in the management of available resources. As an impact, the gap appeared too wide and implicated on the foundations of social life, economics, politics, law and education.

Gaps in various areas of public life, especially Java and the outer (center and region) have caused nation disintegrated problems. Historical facts proved various kinds of upheavals ranging from Revolutionary Government Republic of Indonesia (RGRI), Republic of South Maluku (RSM), Free Aceh Movement (FAM), Free Papua Organization (FPO), and all of ethnic and religious conflicts were impact of various gaps in community life and threatening the integrity Republic of Indonesia. Fairness, equality, concord, and prosperity live together become the most essential thing to be improved in Indonesian community at this time.

There are many efforts that can be done to attain justice and equality for all communities in Indonesia. Although the gap also occurs in the field of education, but education has potential to actualized justice, equality and peace even the welfare of all groups of Indonesian societies. Education plays an important role in shaping a fair society, where equal rights are just not understood in shallow political issues but also in economic and cultural terms. Equal rights with regard to the issue of access, opportunities and influences. Education can reduce even tackling the source of imbalance in societies⁹. Education provides opportunities to

actualize equality access, opportunity and influence life together in various fields. In historical education, this effort can be realized by strengthening historical consciousness Indonesian people, especially young generations and intellectuals because they have capacity to unite all sections of society.

Young peoples and intellectuals of this nation trained to remember, analyze and take lessons from historical experience together in a diversity nation. Past experience of nation's predecessors teaches about how to behave and work together regardless of differences in ethnics background, culture and religion in order to build life together as a sovereign nation and equal with other nations. Lessons from previous generation obtained by studying history.

Studying history of Indonesia peoples from era to era, of course can be known the development viewed from various walk of life together. Portraits and facts about in equality or injustice as well causality will also be uncovered. This knowledge will certainly arouse historical consciousness, especially collective consciousness. This kind of historical consciousness is able to arouse feelings social and moral responsibility towards all forms of development of the nation. The expectation in the future imbalances in Indonesian societies can be overcome and a sense of justice can be enjoyed. For the younger generation now, especially those who studying history are certainly not easily lost in memory, especially about the various ethnic groups who had been united struggled against invaders in order to live together in the Homeland. Minang and Melayu ethnics are two among other ethnics in Indonesia who were active struggled for independence. The leaders of both ethnics group has equally been proving loyalty, togetherness and sacrifice to the nation. Although Minang ethnic classified as minorities than majority Melayu ethnics based

on the total number of Indonesian societies, but both were able to show equality in liabilities as citizens. Both ethnics of course have a remarkable historical consciousness and have had demonstrated highly the sense of moral and social responsibility.

Now, the next question is how about the level of historical consciousness of young generations of Melayu and Minang ethnics currently, whether by studying nation history, they have had qualified historical consciousness as a provision to build this nation in the future with a sense of justice. This question will be discussed further through the results of the research that has been done. The research question is: how is the level of historical consciousness of college student from Melayu and Minang ethnics seen from four aspect: knowledge of historical events, understanding of historical research methods, finding meaning of historical events, and viewing historical usefulness?

B. Method

This study used quantitative research method. Research subjects were Melayu and Minang college student ethnics. Melayu college students taken from History Education Department, Medan State University (YSU), while Minang college students drawn from History Education Department, University of Sumatera (USU). Research subjects were taken through stratified sampling, i.e. college students at the 1st and 3rd year.

Table 1. Research Subjects

Ethnics Year	Melayu	Minang	Total
First	20	8	28
Third	16	26	42
Total	36	34	70

Data collection about college student historical consciousness of Melayu and Minang ethnics done through the historical consciousness test in the form of associative multiple choice. Test instrument consists of four devices, i.e knowledge of historical events, understanding of historical research method, finding meaning of historical events and viewing historical usefulness. Content validity instruments analyzed by Aiken"s formula³². Content validity index of instrument (v) obtained from calculation sum of score six raters (n) in Likert scale four categories (c).

$$V = \frac{\sum S}{[n(c-1)]}$$

The criteria for determining content validity done by comparing the value of V calculated and the value of V table. The value of V table is the minimum index of content validity which is viewed from the number of raters and rating categories (see. table V, Aiken). Because of number raters were six and number rating categories were four, then minimum value of content validity index in table V was 0.78. Content validity index of historical consciousness can be seen in table 2 below.

Table 2. Content Validity Instrument of Historical Consciousness

Instrument Aspects	Vcalculated	Decision
1. Knowledge of historical events	0.78	Valid
2. Understanding of historical method	0.78	Valid
3. The meaning of historical events	0.78	Valid
4. Historical usefulness	0.78	Valid

Reliability instrument analyzed by using Alpha Cronbach through SPSS.17 software. Coefficient reliability Cronbach"s Alpha 0.789. It means that instrument of historical consciousness can be said reliable.

Table 3. Reliability instrument

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.789	80

C. Results and Discussion

Data test of historical consciousnesses were analyzed by using percentages technic to identify level of historical consciousness between college students of Melayu and Minang ethnics. The results of the study described as follows.

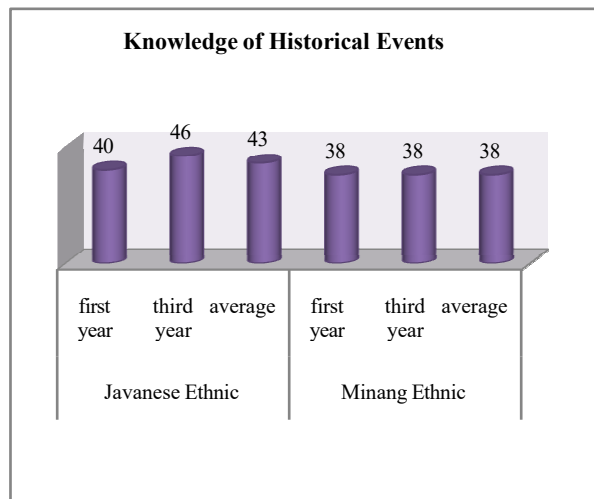


Figure 1. Percentage Level Mastery of Historical Knowledge of College Student of Melayu and Minang Ethnics

Figure 1 shows identifying result of percentage historical consciousness level between Melayu and Minang college students. Average of mastery historical knowledge college students Melayu 53%, while Minang college students 48%. It means that level of historical consciousness Melayu college students on aspect historical knowledge is higher 5% from Minang college students. It can be understood if viewed in terms of quality education and availability readings source. In Java,

especially in Medan, quality education and availability learning resources (reading materials) better than in West Sumatra (Minang).

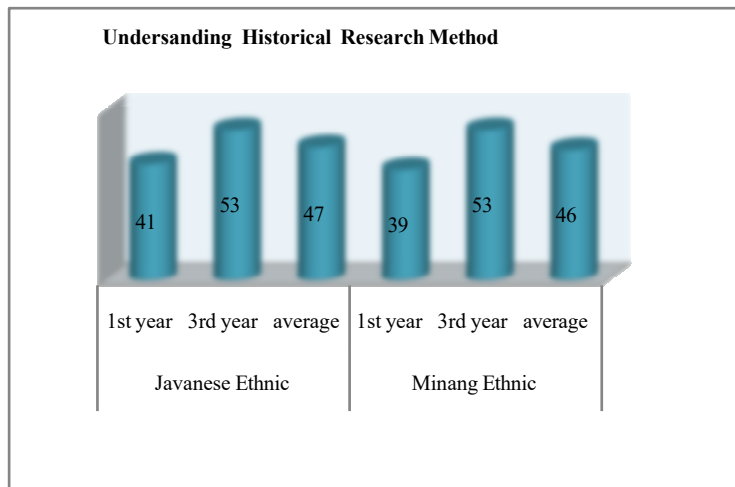


Figure 2. Percentage Level Understanding College Students ethnic of Melayu and Minang on Historical Research Method

Figure 2 shows that Melayu college students understanding about historical research methods do not much differ from Minang college student. The differences of both ethnics only 1%. Average understandings on historical research method of Melayu college students were about 47%, while Minang students were around 46%. It means that understanding of both college students ethnic could be said to be at an equal level. It showed that both ethnic groups have the same ability to understand the procedures working of historical research.

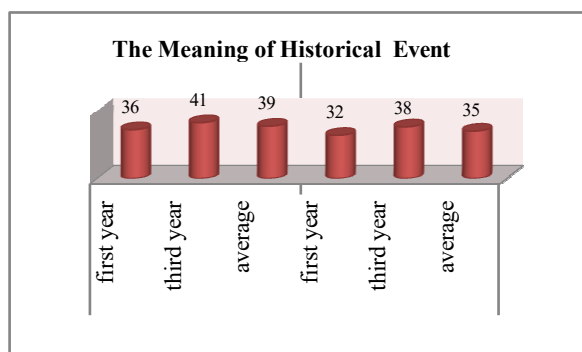


Figure 3. Percentage Level of Ability College Students of Melayu and Minang Ethnic in Finding the Meaning of Historical Events

Figure 3 shows percentage level historical consciousness viewed from aspect the meaning of historical events between Melayu college students and Minang. Giving meaning of historical events is characterized by the ability in finding significance such values or impact of historical events. Melayu college students have better ability in finding meaning of historical events than Minang college students. Average percentage of Melayu college student ability in discovering significance of historical events was 58.5%, higher than Minang college students' ability (35%). Melayu college students superior 3.5% in finding meaning or significance historical events.

Perchance, this could be understood by tracing back national Indonesian history. No doubt that since prehistoric era, the Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms era, the period of arrival and Islamic civilizations, Colonial era, national movement era and revolution, Old Orde, New Orde until Reformation, Melayu plays an important role in Indonesian history. Of course, the historical experience spawned its own meaning for Melayu ethnic. No wonder if Melayu ethnic has relatively better ability in finding meaning historical events from their predecessors' historical experience.

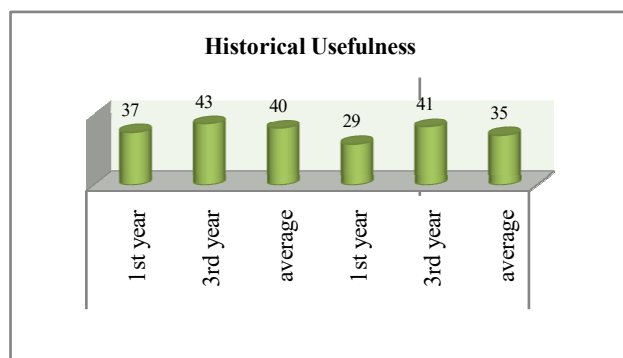


Figure 4. Percentage Level of Ability Melayu College Students and Minang College Students in Viewing Historical Usefulness

Historical consciousness of Melayu and Minang college students on aspect of historical usefulness as seen in figure 4 shows the difference 5%, ie 35% and 40%. The average percentage of Melayu college student abilities in viewing historical usefulness 40%, while Minang college students 35%. It means Melayu college students have higher ability in viewing historical usefulness. Availability of historical books and resources in Java, especially in Medan had given good chance for the Melayu college students to read more historical books and visit historical site. They can view dan feel practical use of history for their ability.

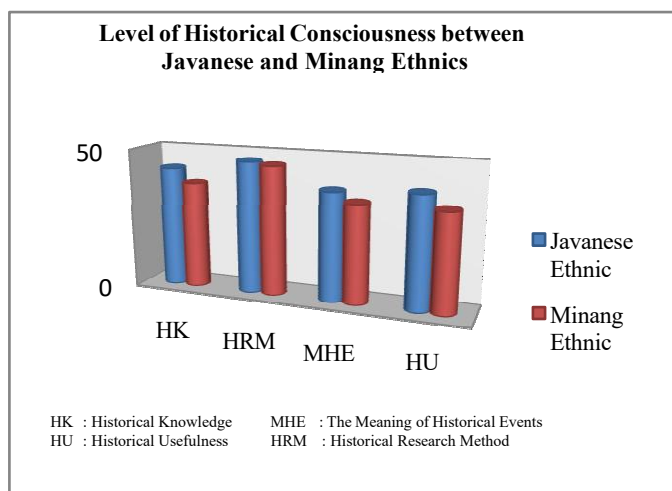


Figure 5. Percentage Level of Historical Consciousness Melayu and Minang College Students

Percentage of identification results of historical consciousness level between Melayu and Minang college students showed in fig.6. As a whole, level of historical consciousness of Melayu college students higher [224]

than Minang college students in four aspects highlighted. Significance of this differ more analyzed through compared mean between two ethnic groups. The significance of mean scores differences both of ethnics groups were analyzed through t-test by using SPSS.17 software (see. Table 4 below).

Tabel 4. Independent Samples Test

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means								
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Score	Equal variances assumed	1.917	.188	-.398	68	.734	-.905	2.291	-5.278	3.667
	Equal variances not assumed			-.390	65.489	.732	-.905	2.275	-5.249	3.638

T-test result shows that, at $df = 78$, value sig. $0.198 < 0.08$, it mean that the level of historical consciousness between Melayu college students and Minang did not differ significantly. It could be said that the level of historical consciousness of Melayu college students were equal as Minang college students. Although percentage level historical consciousness of Melayu college students were higher 3% compare to Minang students, but this differences is not significant.

D. Conclusion

The identifying results shows that the level of historical consciousness of Melayu college students equal with Minang college students. Overall level of historical consciousness both ethnics were on fairly high condition. This is become alarming for Indonesian society as a multi-ethnic nation. During this time, it's believed that one of the unifying factors of Indonesian nation-state is due to historical factor. If historical consciousness of Indonesian young generation is at an alarming level, continuation of the nation's life of course will be at stake. It warrant concern by various parties. Do not let the young generation forget history of their own nation.

Based on this research study, researchers proposed following suggestions. First, government policies need to accommodate all groups of society in order that equality and justice continue to be improved, such as the renewal of history education curriculum focuses on role and cooperation of individuals or ethnic groups in Indonesia. Assa'at as Minang figures who had proved his contribution to Indonesian nation-state, but have not received the recognition it deserves, even still debated. Properly, while there was accurate and no contrary to Pancasila and the Constitution, the Government needs to adopt policies in order that justice is perceived by Minang ethnic or other ethnic in same case. Third, Campus (especially in Java) needs to accommodate learning community multi- ethnic/cultural to accommodate all college students from diverse ethnic groups from Java outside. Ethnics differences of course affect the methods, ways of teaching, medias, and learning environment. Values relating to social justice needs to be emphasized such as equality, tolerance, and careness.

Other researchers can conduct similar research to identify level of historical consciousness of other ethnic college students in Indonesia, for [226]

example, Batak, Sundanese, Bugis, Madurese college students, and so on. Such research is expected to strengthen historical consciousness of individual nor collective as a nation' generations.

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