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Innovative and Ethical Teaching Practices in History Education: Navigating the Complexity of 21st-Century Learning

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ABSTRACT

In today's 21st-century educational landscape, history educators need to adapt and diversify their approaches to remain relevant and impactful. Our study seeks to discern history instructors' pedagogical techniques to determine the most suitable method aligned with contemporary learning requirements and preferences. In this endeavour, we applied the grounded theory method to categorise the various teaching styles of history teachers at the senior high school level in South Tangerang City, Banten Province, Indonesia. Our research data were obtained from various sources, including interviews, field observations, and relevant literature. The data were collected from 24 history teachers from eight different schools. We analysed the data using open, axial and selective coding procedures. From the analysis, we found that in South Tangerang City, there are 9 teaching styles among history teachers: narrative, conservative, authoritarian, normative, adaptive, collaborative, imaginative, analytical, and innovative. To fully understand each of these teaching styles, we considered aspects such as the curriculum structure and the teaching methods used. The insights derived from these findings are of great value to history educators in Indonesia, offering them a clear direction for adapting and improving their teaching methodologies to meet the evolving educational demands of the 21st century. Moreover, this research sheds light on effective pedagogical strategies and plays a pivotal role in elevating the skill set, proficiency, and overall professional excellence of history teachers, specifically in South Tangerang City. In the future, follow-up studies can delve deeper into teacher characteristics or even create new categorisations, using more innovative approaches to broaden the horizon of history education in Indonesia.

KEYWORDS - history teacher; teacher teaching style; history learning; 21st-century learning; senior high school

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's rich ethnic diversity significantly shapes the individual traits of senior high school teachers [1]. These traits often correlate with distinct teaching methodologies and instructional techniques. Many history educators share a common ethnicity yet teach in regions with varied ethnic compositions [2], [3]. This scenario underscores the adaptability required of history teachers, as they may need to tailor their approaches to resonate with student populations whose ethnic backgrounds differ from their own. Moreover, the emphasis in senior high education has shifted towards nurturing competencies aligned with 21st-century skills (Sangrà et al., 2023). This suggests that the preparation and experience of history educators can greatly influence student outcomes. As such, history teachers must mould their teaching methods to the aspirations of 21st-century education, ensuring the continued enhancement of history instruction [6], [7]. Although most history teachers prefer storytelling, some use dominant and integrative methods [3], [8]. On the other hand, according to Evans (1989), the teaching styles of history teachers include five conceptions: storyteller, scientific historian, relativist/reformist, cosmic philosopher, and eclectic. History teachers' conceptions seem to be related to teachers' ideologies and pedagogical orientations [9]. Furthermore, other types of teachers' teaching styles include sensing type (S), feeling type (F), judging type (J), perceiving type (P), introvert type (I), extrovert type (E), intuitive type (N); and thinking type (T) [10].

In the Indonesian context, recent research suggests that history teachers with an imaginative approach align more with the entertainment aspect of history's function [1]. On the other hand, Ofianto et al. [4] indicated that history teachers' teaching styles tend to follow normative patterns that chronologically emphasise the educational function of history. Some teachers were also identified as adopting a conservative approach guided by the main textbook [11]. This phenomenon means that each teacher has a different approach to viewing and teaching history. History teachers' creativity level also correlates with their ability level. Therefore, teachers who apply account teaching methods with creative elements tend to encourage the development of students' creativity [12].

The ongoing advancements in science and technology have profoundly impacted the behaviours and actions of educators and their students [7]. Mirroring this evolution, Indonesia's updated curriculum has been designed to ensure that the younger generation is equipped with the skills relevant to the challenges of the 21st century [13]. While imparting knowledge about historical events is a fundamental responsibility of history educators, their role has expanded. Today, they are also entrusted with the vital task of nurturing positive traits in their students. For instance, fostering a collaborative spirit is essential, as this prepares students to address the multifaceted global and societal challenges that continually transform the world around them [1], [14], [15]. In this context, the scope of history education has widened significantly. It goes beyond simply recalling historical figures, dates, and locations. Instead, it seeks to enrich lessons with values and lessons that resonate with today's complex world. On another note, the art of recounting historical tales need not be a dreary affair. Historical storytelling can captivate and inspire with the right approach and creativity, proving that it does not always have to follow a mundane or monotonous pattern [16].

Recent studies have outlined various teacher teaching styles based on their approach to teaching in multiple classrooms. However, research focusing on the teaching styles of history teachers is an interesting topic, especially in the high school environment in South Tangerang City, Indonesia. South Tangerang City still needs to be considered an underdeveloped area with a low quality of education to date; one of the factors is the quiet competence of teachers. Therefore, the Indonesian government has implemented a policy by launching the "Merdeka Curriculum" to promote local potential [17]. This provides an opportunity for schools and teachers to leverage their local strengths to compete amid global dynamics. Therefore, this study examines the complexity of history teachers' teaching styles in addressing history learning across various learning styles. Thus, this study fills a research gap by identifying gaps in previous research on the challenges faced by different kinds of teachers in learning development. Therefore, history teachers' teaching styles must be adjusted to the concepts and demands of 21st-century learning characteristics.

In Indonesia's history education realm, there has been a noticeable gap in the exploration of the teaching methodologies used by history teachers in senior high schools, especially regarding modern 21st-century learning paradigms. This gives the researcher a unique opportunity to delve into, analyse, and classify the various teaching approaches employed by history educators in these senior high schools, specifically within the context of 21st-century educational standards. The findings from this investigative endeavour have the potential to offer fresh and invaluable perspectives to the broader academic community, with particular emphasis on the domain of history instruction in Indonesia. At its core, this research is driven by the ambition to discern and systematically organise the diverse teaching methodologies adopted by history educators, aligning them with the distinct curriculum they operate within.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Teacher's Teaching Style in History Learning

History teaching can engage students if designed to entertain and stimulate their imagination [18]. Teachers can trigger students' imagination in history subjects by telling historical stories, sharing narratives about past events, or expressing the teacher's aspirations [19]. Similarly, educators with an innovative teaching approach, particularly in 21st-century history instruction, ought to demonstrate the ability to introduce novel and creative strategies within the classroom teaching dynamics [20], [21]. Whereas teachers with a conservative style tend to focus learning on the delivery of facts, teachers with a normative style can motivate students well because they apply an approach that emphasises the value of each lesson [10]. In addition, teachers with an inspirational style build close relationships with students due to their relaxed approach as it relates to the teacher's ideology and relevant pedagogical orientation [22].

Teachers set an example by engaging students in various activities inside and outside school [23]. Interactions between students and teachers often involve shared interests, which can motivate students [24]. In addition, imaginative teachers with verbal teaching approaches that stimulate students' imagination play an important role in fostering students' interest and motivation to learn [25]. In essence, incorporating imaginative teaching techniques promotes students' enthusiasm and drive in the classroom. When engaged in history lessons with educators who champion an innovative teaching approach, students' motivation to learn typically does not wane. This is primarily because their fascination with history has been effectively ignited. As primary role models in the educational journey, history teachers must be at the forefront of innovation. By employing a diverse range of creative and fresh teaching strategies, they can pique students' innate curiosity. This heightened sense of intrigue and eagerness to learn becomes foundational for students as they advance to tertiary education [26].

B. History Teachers and 21st Century Learning

In the 21st-century education era, teachers must consider and implement new and innovative learning approaches [7]. The evolving educational landscape requires teachers to wear multiple hats – they must act as traditional educators while simultaneously facilitating active learning. Hence, beyond the mere conveyance of academic content, it becomes imperative for teachers to integrate a range of tools, technological aids, and supplementary resources to enhance the effectiveness of modern teaching techniques. The primary objective behind this is to cultivate and enhance students' essential "soft skills." Attributes like effective communication, teamwork, analytical thought processes, and inventive thinking are paramount, especially in disciplines like history, and they need to be nurtured meticulously [13], [27]. With this 21st-century learning approach, students will not only acquire knowledge of historical facts. They will also engage in learning experiences that allow them to deeply and meaningfully hone and apply 21st-century skills. Thus, teachers have a key role in shaping students as knowledge and as individuals with adaptability and competencies relevant to future demands.

With the development of technology, integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the classroom can improve skills that match the needs of the 21st century [5], [28]. Syarifuddin et al. [14] asserted that to face the complexity of 21st-century challenges; one must have specific abilities that include (a) the ability to think critically and solve problems effectively, (b) the ability to communicate effectively and collaborate with others, (c) the ability to be creative and innovate in learning approaches; (d) information literacy which includes the ability to search, assess, and use information wisely; (e) media literacy that enables individuals to understand, evaluate and utilise media critically; (f) information and communication technology (ICT) literacy that enables individuals to use technology competently and critically; (g) flexibility in adapting to changes and challenges that continue to emerge; and (h) leadership and responsibility skills that enable individuals to take the initiative and be accountable for their actions and decisions.

From the above details, it is evident that educators are pivotal in elevating teaching standards and crafting a learning environment that aligns with today's skill demands. Consequently, when evaluating the skill preparedness of history teachers, the criteria encompass their proficiency in nurturing the 4C skills (comprising critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication), their competence in deploying Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-driven instruction, their skill in imparting depth and relevance to the learning process, and their capability to merge traditional with modern, through blended teaching methods [29]. These concepts provide the theoretical basis for identifying the teaching styles used by history teachers.

3. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method with a Grounded Theory (GT) approach. GT aims to develop new theories or expand existing ideas based on data obtained from the field [30], [31]. According to Corbin and Strauss [31], the steps in GT research include (a) selecting the GT design as the research approach, (b) identifying the process to be investigated with the guidance of the research questions, (c) obtaining permission and accessing the research site, as well as ensuring the protection of the participants and site; (d) selecting the theoretical sample; (e) conducting data coding, including open, axial, and selective coding. Utilising the GT methodology, we sought to understand the teaching styles employed by high school history educators. This approach enabled us to view the subject from multiple angles. Additionally, based on participants' feedback and input, we aimed to either formulate new theories or expand on existing ones related to their teaching methods.

In this research, the term 'participants' denotes the individuals who actively contributed during the data-gathering phase, serving as primary sources of information in the field [32]. To determine the sample, a snowball sampling technique was employed. The contributors to this investigation were high school educators selected from a pool of eight educational institutions in South Tangerang City, Banten province. The primary objective behind adopting this strategy was to gain insights into the pedagogical methods used by these high school educators, especially in the context of contemporary history instruction paradigms. A total of 24 history educators, aged 27 to 50, were involved in the study and identified as participants 1 through 24. It is noteworthy that each of these educators possessed formal qualifications in history education and professional teaching certifications.

A combination of interviewing, observational, and literature review methodologies was employed for data acquisition. Comprehensive face-to-face interviews with history educators were a primary method for extracting detailed insights into their pedagogical practices. The discussion encompassed topics such as the integration of the independent curriculum, distinctive teaching styles, instructional techniques, student engagement throughout learning sessions, and educators' strategies for assessing academic progress. An observational approach was also incorporated to witness firsthand how educators navigated specific scenarios during history lessons. Furthermore, a thorough review of relevant literary sources was undertaken. This review was instrumental in pinpointing key theories pertinent to the central research question, laying a solid foundation for subsequent discussions and interpretations of the study's findings.

Within the framework of GT research, there is a dynamic interplay between data collection and analysis, with both processes often undertaken cyclically. This study's data analysis was broken down into several distinct phases. First was the 'open coding' phase, during which particular phenomena were pinpointed, labelled, christened, and organised into specific categories. Following this, 'axial coding' primarily focused on establishing and understanding the interconnections and interrelationships between the previously identified categories. The final phase was 'selective coding', as Saunders et al. (2018) detailed. In this concluding phase, a comprehensive review of all data and the codes established in prior stages was undertaken. According to Corbin & Strauss (1990), researchers discern narrative trends during the selective coding segment and construct overarching narratives that seamlessly blend the categories elucidated during the axial coding process.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data gathered from interviews and observations revealed a diversity of teaching approaches, identifying nine distinct teaching styles employed by history educators at senior high schools in South Tangerang City, situated in the Banten Province of Indonesia. The defining traits of these nine methodologies were categorised according to the study's codified outcomes. These outcomes emphasise the purpose and essence of teaching history and align with the contemporary context of 21st-century education. A more detailed breakdown and representation of these teaching styles are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. History Teacher Teaching Style Indicators

Type of Teaching Style	Teaching History Teacher Characteristics
Narrative Teacher (P4, P6, P16)	History teachers emphasise the delivery of material with strong stories; History teachers show discipline in terms of collecting learning administration; In presenting the material, relying on government textbooks; Limited use of other historical sources.
Conservative Teacher (P11, P13, P6)	History teachers emphasise conventional historical facts; History teachers are disciplined in the collection of learning administration; History teachers tend to rely on textbooks in presenting the material because they believe that the material in the books is sufficient and are limited in using other learning resources.
Authoritarian Teacher (P2, P3, P13)	History teachers hold a strong authority role in the classroom. History teachers tend to give instructions firmly and expect students to follow instructions with high discipline; The use of learning resources still needs to be improved.
Normative Teacher (P9, P10, P19)	This type of teacher only follows standards or norms that are considered guidelines or rules that must be followed or obeyed, especially those that have been decided by government regulations; History teachers show discipline in terms of collecting learning administration; In presenting the material, teachers tend to be more varied in choosing learning resources.

Adaptive Teacher (P5, P20, P24)	History teachers can adjust teaching methods and learning strategies according to students' needs and level of understanding; History teachers are less focused on administrative aspects as they prioritise the development of learning tools; History teachers consider material development important, so students' understanding is wider than textbook content.
Collaborative Teacher (P8, P21)	The history teacher collaborates with students and encourages them to work together in the history learning process; This teacher creates an environment where students are encouraged to discuss, share ideas, and work together in exploring and understanding historical materials; Teachers should be more focused on administrative aspects as they prioritise the development of learning tools.
Imaginative Teacher (P14, P17, P18)	The history style uses creativity and imagination to make the history learning experience interesting and engaging for students; History teachers utilise elements such as simulations, role plays, art projects or other creative activities to bring history "alive" in the classroom; History teachers should be more focused on administrative aspects as they prioritise the development of learning tools.
Analytical Teacher (P1, P5, P12, P15)	The history style emphasises the development of student's critical analysis skills of historical documents and sources; History teachers develop their materials as some of the available materials can lead to differences of opinion; History teachers utilise different sources, including articles and journals from the internet, print media, videos of historical content, and resources such as historical actors, relics and historical sites.
Innovative Teacher (P7, P19, P22, P23)	History teachers utilise new, creative and unconventional learning methods and strategies to facilitate students' historical understanding; Innovative teachers try to integrate new elements such as technology, creative projects, simulations, or other learning strategies that can make the history learning experience more interesting and relevant for students; Analytical and innovative teachers also develop their materials as some available materials can lead to differences of opinion; Teachers actively create learning resources like modules, student worksheets, history comics, and learning blogs.

Description: P = History teacher participant

The findings illuminated that the teaching methodologies of history educators in senior high schools are largely defined by their styles, which are inherently tied to the nuances of history education. Nevertheless, some of these styles still need to integrate characteristics pertinent to 21st-century learning dynamics more robustly. These observations align with our preliminary anticipations, particularly about the teaching styles of history instructors that encapsulate the core objectives of history education. This research has identified nine distinct teaching styles adopted by history educators. Leading the list, the "narrative-focused" style emphasizes the art of storytelling. Educators adhering to this approach lean heavily on narratives, employing them as powerful tools to introduce, elucidate, and vividly depict historical events for their students [9]. Secondly, the conservative-type teaching style refers to an approach to teaching history where teachers primarily emphasise conveying conventional historical facts [33], [34]. They focus on factual aspects such as dates, months, years, characters' names and places in history. This approach is often associated with rote learning methods. Conservative history teachers emphasise mastery of basic information in account learning [35]. They may believe that understanding specific historical facts is an important foundation before students can conduct deeper analyses or evaluations of recorded material. While this approach may help students understand and remember important historical facts, there is also an argument that learning methods that rely heavily on memorisation may be considered traditional and less appealing to some students.

The third teaching style is authoritarian, where the teacher plays a strong authority role in the classroom. They tend to give strict instructions and expect students to follow instructions with great discipline. Authoritarian teachers often make decisions without much student participation and provide little room for discussion or exchange of opinions [15]. Fourth, normative-type teachers with this type only follow standards or norms that are considered guidelines or rules that must be followed or obeyed, especially those that have been decided by government regulations [36]. Furthermore, the fifth teaching style is the adaptive teacher, which refers to a teaching approach in which the teacher adjusts teaching methods and learning strategies to students' needs and levels of understanding. Adaptive teachers recognise that each student has a different learning style and level of performance, so they strive to provide learning experiences that suit individual needs [37]. Sixth, history teachers' teaching style is collaborative. This means that history teachers work closely with students and encourage them to collaborate during the history learning process. This teacher creates an environment where students are encouraged to discuss, share ideas, and work together in exploring and understanding historical materials [38].

The seventh teaching style of history teachers is imaginative teaching. This teaching style uses creativity and imagination to make the history-learning experience interesting and engaging for students. This teacher may utilise elements such as simulations, role plays, art projects, or other creative activities to bring history "alive" in the classroom [39], [40], [41]. Using this approach, imaginative history teachers seek to create experiences that are not only informative but also provoke students' imagination and interest. They may invite students to experience or act out the roles of historical figures or even design art projects or exhibitions related to the studied topics. The eighth teaching style is the analytical teacher, which refers to teachers emphasising the development of student's critical analysis skills of historical documents and sources. This type of history teacher encourages students to consider multiple perspectives, dissect historical evidence, and develop a deeper understanding of historical context [42], [43]. In teaching analytical history, students are encouraged to question, analyse and interpret historical information critically. Teachers can invite students to dissect historical texts, examine sources, and consider the implications of historical events. The ninth teaching style is innovative teachers, using new, creative, unconventional learning methods and strategies to facilitate students' historical understanding. Innovative teachers seek to integrate new elements such as technology, creative projects, simulations, and other learning strategies to make the history learning experience more engaging and relevant for students. Innovative approaches in history teaching aim to motivate students, stimulate creative thinking, and create memorable learning experiences. It also helps prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the ever-changing modern era [7], [18].

It's essential to recognise that these teaching methodologies often overlap; for instance, a teacher might concurrently employ both an authoritarian and analytical approach. This underscores the need for history educators to adopt a multifaceted approach in the classroom. Additionally, various curriculum components utilised in history instruction, such as lesson structuring, educational resources, and the integration of teaching media, were elaborated upon. Teachers exhibiting conservative, authoritarian, and normative styles are committed to thoroughly managing educational administration. In contrast, educators characterised by adaptive, collaborative, and imaginative techniques tend to emphasise administrative details less and focus more on enhancing teaching tools. However, those with analytical and innovative approaches display a balance, maintaining discipline in administrative tasks while also diligently following the instructional procedures outlined in their planning documents. Regarding content delivery, teachers with conservative, authoritarian, and normative persuasions typically rely heavily on textbooks, deeming the content comprehensive and unnecessary supplementary material [11], [44]. Conversely, educators with adaptive, collaborative, and imaginative styles view the expansion of materials as crucial, ensuring that students are not confined to textbook content alone. Those aligned with analytical and innovative types also adapt and expand upon their content, recognising that existing materials can sometimes foster divergent interpretations.

Educators who identify with adaptive, collaborative, imaginative, analytical, and innovative teaching styles emphasise expanding the scope of historical materials. Their focus is not limited to local history; it also ensures that the content remains engaging and pertinent to students. This approach aims to shift students' dependency away from standardised government textbooks. This methodology also aims to foster and enhance students' critical thinking abilities [3], [6]. Regarding sourcing educational materials, teachers who lean towards narrative, conservative, authoritarian, and normative styles tend to have a narrower range of historical sources they utilise. Meanwhile, those with normative and inspirational teaching styles use a wider range of learning resources. Conversely, educators who subscribe to adaptive, collaborative, imaginative, analytical, and innovative teaching methodologies cast a wider net, incorporating a range of materials. Their resources range from online and print articles and journals to videos that encapsulate historical narratives. They also tap into primary sources such as

testimonies from historical figures, artefacts, and notable historical locations. Moreover, truly innovative educators even craft their learning materials, such as instructional modules, student activity sheets, history-themed comics, and educational blogs [25], [28].

5. CONCLUSION

The study indicates that the pedagogical approaches adopted by history educators in senior high schools are congruent with the unique features of history instruction. Yet there remains a need for certain teaching methodologies to encapsulate the tenets of 21st-century educational practices more comprehensively. Nine styles of history teachers were identified in this study. First, the narrative style emphasises the delivery of material with a strong narrative approach. Second, the conservative style emphasises teaching conventional historical facts. Third, the authoritarian style demonstrates strong authority in the classroom by giving strict instructions. Fourth, the normative style follows standards or norms as teaching guidelines. Fifth, the adaptive type allows adjustments to teaching methods according to student needs. The collaborative style encourages students to work together to understand historical material. Seventh, the imaginative style utilises creativity to make learning history more interesting. Eighth, the analytical style emphasises the development of critical analysis skills for historical sources. The innovative style employs creative, novel learning methods to facilitate students' historical understanding. It is also noted that some teachers combine elements of several teaching styles. In addition, history teachers need to pay attention to administrative aspects and the development of learning tools in teaching history. Educators should also contemplate diversifying their teaching resources by integrating digital platforms and traditional print media. Additionally, there is significant value in incorporating tangible elements, such as interacting with individuals who played historical roles, exploring genuine artefacts, and visiting historical landmarks. Pioneering teaching strategies in history are designed to pique students' interest, foster creativity, and leave a lasting impact on their learning journey. Such contemporary methods resonate with the evolving requirements of today's educational landscape.

The findings of this study advocate that teachers and senior high school institutions bolster the proficiency of history educators in orchestrating history lessons, keeping in step with worldwide advancements, particularly in technology and scientific domains. For optimal results, educators must deeply understand their unique history of teaching methodologies. This awareness will enable them to better align their approaches with the educational imperatives of the 21st century. The core emphasis of the research is dissecting the specific attributes of the varied teaching styles used by history teachers. However, this study has limitations in scope and sample, so the findings cannot be directly applied to other areas. Further research is needed to confirm and extend these findings and to more specifically link history teachers' teaching style types to student performance and learning outcomes. In addition, the relationship between teachers' mastery of technology and learning quality warrants further exploration. Nonetheless, the findings suggest that adaptive, collaborative, imaginative, analytical and innovative teachers are more likely to use technology creatively to improve the quality of history learning.

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