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The analysis of inquiry-based learning needs at the Radya Pustaka Museum for strengthening historical literacy among secondary school students

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Abstract

This study explores the role of inquiry-based learning (IBL) in enhancing historical literacy among secondary school students at the Radya Pustaka Museum. Historical literacy is a critical aspect of secondary education, as it equips students with the analytical skills needed to understand the complexities of historical events and their impact on contemporary society. However, traditional history education often relies on passive learning, focusing primarily on memorization rather than critical engagement with historical narratives. This study identifies key learning needs of students, such as the need for greater engagement with historical content, the development of critical thinking, research skills, and historical empathy. The research emphasizes the potential of inquiry-based learning, which encourages students to actively explore, question, and analyze historical sources, as a means of fostering deeper understanding and critical thinking. The Radya Pustaka Museum provides a unique opportunity for implementing inquiry-based learning, as it offers a wealth of primary sources and artifacts that can facilitate active, hands-on learning. This study examines the benefits of integrating IBL into the museum context, highlighting the museum's role in helping students develop critical research skills, engage with historical material, and foster historical empathy. It also addresses the challenges of implementing inquiry-based learning, such as time constraints, teacher training, and curriculum integration. Despite these challenges, the study demonstrates that inquiry-based learning in the museum setting can significantly enhance students' historical literacy, providing a more dynamic and engaging approach to history education. The findings suggest that inquiry-based learning, when effectively integrated into museum education, can improve historical literacy and help students become more informed, critical, and empathetic individuals.

Keywords: Inquiry-based learning, historical literacy, secondary education, museum education, Radya Pustaka Museum, critical thinking, historical empathy.

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INTRODUCTION

Historical literacy is a fundamental aspect of secondary education, as it provides students with the analytical tools necessary to understand the complexities of past events and their ongoing influence on contemporary society. In the context of secondary education, historical literacy goes beyond the rote

memorization of facts and dates; it is about cultivating the capacity to critically engage with historical narratives and develop an understanding of the diverse perspectives that shape our collective past. This process fosters not only academic competencies but also civic awareness, as students learn to evaluate and interpret historical events in relation to modern-day issues (Prabawa-Sear, 2018). In a rapidly evolving global society, historical literacy plays a crucial role in fostering informed and engaged citizenship. By developing an understanding of historical events, students can better navigate the complexities of the present, making informed decisions about political, social, and economic issues (Situmorang & Tarigan, 2018). Historical literacy also enhances critical thinking and cognitive flexibility, allowing students to engage with diverse viewpoints and problem-solve in a dynamic world. Therefore, integrating historical literacy into the secondary school curriculum is not only vital for academic achievement but also essential for the formation of responsible and informed citizens.

Museums have long been recognized as rich, dynamic learning environments that can significantly enhance students' engagement with history. Unlike traditional classroom settings, which often rely heavily on textbooks and lectures, museums provide a multisensory experience that brings history to life. The Radya Pustaka Museum, for example, serves as an interactive space where students can engage with primary sources such as artifacts, documents, and visual materials, facilitating a deeper understanding of historical events. The museum environment promotes an experiential form of learning, allowing students to move beyond passive reception and engage with history in a more personal and immersive manner. Moreover, museums serve as spaces for inquiry-based learning, where students are encouraged to explore historical topics through questions, observations, and discussions (Chaidir et al., 2024). This approach contrasts with the traditional pedagogical model, which tends to prioritize a linear presentation of historical facts. In museums, students are invited to critically examine historical artifacts and consider their significance, fostering a deeper connection with the material. The role of museums in history education extends beyond mere information dissemination; they encourage students to become active participants in their own learning process, making history more relevant, engaging, and meaningful.

Historical literacy is a fundamental aspect of secondary education, as it equips students with the analytical tools needed to understand past events and their relevance to present-day issues. Rather than relying on rote memorization, historical literacy emphasizes critical engagement with historical narratives, source evaluation, and the recognition of diverse perspectives. This competency not only supports academic achievement but also enhances students' ability to think critically and make informed judgments. In doing so, it contributes to their overall intellectual development and prepares them to participate thoughtfully in societal discourse. Thus, integrating historical literacy into the curriculum is essential for nurturing reflective, informed learners capable of understanding the complexities of history and its impact on the world around them.

Despite the importance of historical literacy, many secondary school history programs still rely on traditional methods of instruction that prioritize content delivery over critical engagement with historical materials. These conventional approaches often focus on memorization of facts, dates, and events, with limited opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking or inquiry. This lack of engagement can result in students developing a superficial understanding of history, where they may memorize information without truly comprehending its significance or understanding the complexities of historical narratives. Furthermore, traditional teaching methods often fail to account for the diverse learning styles of students or encourage them to connect historical knowledge to their personal experiences and the contemporary world. As a result, students may struggle to see the relevance of history and may fail to develop the skills necessary for analyzing historical sources, interpreting evidence, and understanding historical contexts (Kushariyadi et al., 2024). In addition, many history programs do not adequately address the need for historical empathy, which is crucial for fostering a deeper understanding of the perspectives of different individuals and cultures throughout history.

To address these gaps, there is a pressing need for an interactive and inquiry-based approach to history education. Inquiry-based learning offers a promising alternative to traditional methods by providing students with opportunities to actively engage with historical materials, ask questions, and develop their own interpretations of the past (Attard et al., 2021). This approach not only promotes a deeper understanding of historical events but also encourages the development of critical thinking, research, and analytical skills. By incorporating inquiry-based learning into the museum context, students can engage in authentic, hands-on learning experiences that promote active exploration and critical reflection (Strat et al., 2024). Museums such as the Radya Pustaka Museum offer a unique opportunity to integrate inquiry-based learning with historical artifacts, enabling students to interact directly with historical sources and draw connections between past and present events. This form of

interactive learning allows students to become active participants in their historical education, fostering a deeper connection to the material and enhancing their historical literacy.

The primary objective of this study is to identify the learning needs of secondary school students at the Radya Pustaka Museum. Understanding these needs is crucial for designing educational programs that align with students' prior knowledge, interests, and learning preferences. By identifying the specific learning needs of students, this research aims to provide valuable insights into how the museum can tailor its educational offerings to effectively support the development of historical literacy. Moreover, understanding the learning needs of students will help identify areas where students may require additional support or resources. For instance, some students may struggle with interpreting primary sources, while others may need more guidance in understanding the broader historical context of certain events. By addressing these needs, the museum can better support students in their historical inquiry and promote a deeper understanding of history.

A secondary objective of this study is to explore the potential benefits of inquiry-based learning in enhancing historical literacy among secondary school students. By examining how inquiry-based learning can be implemented within the context of the Radya Pustaka Museum, the study will assess the effectiveness of this approach in deepening students' understanding of historical events, promoting critical thinking, and fostering historical empathy. Inquiry-based learning offers numerous benefits for students, including the development of research skills, the ability to analyze and interpret historical sources, and the cultivation of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. This study will explore how these benefits can be realized in a museum setting, where students have the opportunity to engage directly with historical artifacts and participate in inquiry-based investigations. By investigating the potential impact of inquiry-based learning on historical literacy, the study aims to demonstrate the value of this pedagogical approach in history education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical Literacy

Historical literacy refers to the ability to critically engage with and analyze historical events, contexts, and sources to understand the past and its implications for the present. In the context of secondary education, historical literacy encompasses several key competencies, including the capacity to interpret primary and secondary sources, analyze the causes and consequences of historical events, and understand the historical processes that have shaped contemporary society. This level of engagement with history goes beyond memorizing dates and facts; it requires students to engage with history as an evolving narrative, understand multiple perspectives, and critically evaluate historical claims.

The importance of historical literacy in secondary education is multifaceted. First, historical literacy plays a crucial role in developing critical thinking skills. By analyzing and questioning historical narratives, students learn to evaluate evidence, recognize biases, and construct well-reasoned arguments (McGrew, 2022). These skills are transferable to many other academic fields and real-life situations, including problem-solving, decision-making, and effective communication. Second, historical literacy is essential for promoting civic engagement. A deep understanding of history enables students to recognize the roots of contemporary issues and make informed decisions about societal challenges (Wissinger et al., 2018). Historical literacy fosters an awareness of the political, social, and economic forces that have shaped our world, encouraging students to become active, informed citizens. In addition to developing critical thinking and civic awareness, historical literacy contributes to the broader goal of fostering a sense of identity and belonging. Understanding the history of one's own country, culture, or community can help students develop a sense of pride, empathy, and connection to their heritage. Furthermore, historical literacy enables students to appreciate the diversity of human experiences and understand the importance of cultural preservation and respect for different traditions and perspectives.

Teaching history presents several challenges, particularly when it comes to fostering deep historical literacy among students. One of the primary challenges is the overemphasis on factual memorization at the expense of critical thinking and analysis. In many educational systems, history instruction still focuses on students memorizing dates, names, and events without encouraging them to engage with the underlying causes and consequences of these events. This approach results in superficial learning, where students may know historical facts but fail to understand their significance or implications. Another challenge is the limited use of diverse teaching methods. Traditional history instruction often relies heavily on lectures and textbooks, which may not appeal to all students. This approach can create a passive learning environment, where students are not encouraged to actively

participate in their own learning. Furthermore, history is often presented in a linear, disconnected manner, which makes it difficult for students to see the interconnections between different historical periods, events, and themes.

There is also a challenge in making history relevant to students. Many secondary school students may perceive history as a subject that is disconnected from their lives, making it difficult for them to see the value of learning about the past. To address this challenge, educators must find ways to connect historical events to students' experiences and interests, demonstrating how history shapes the world in which they live.

Inquiry-Based Learning

Inquiry-based learning (IBL) is a student-centered approach to education that encourages active engagement and exploration of topics through questions, investigations, and critical analysis. In contrast to traditional teacher-directed instruction, inquiry-based learning places students at the center of the learning process, where they are encouraged to ask questions, seek evidence, and construct their own understanding of a subject. The core principles of inquiry-based learning include curiosity, exploration, questioning, and critical thinking. In the context of history education, inquiry-based learning enables students to engage with historical materials in a more active and critical manner. Instead of passively receiving historical facts, students are encouraged to ask questions such as, "What were the causes of this event?" "Who were the key actors involved?" and "What were the consequences?" These questions serve as the foundation for deeper exploration and understanding. Through inquiry, students are not merely learning about history but are engaging in the process of historical investigation, developing the skills needed to analyze primary sources, evaluate evidence, and construct well-supported historical arguments.

One of the key aspects of inquiry-based learning is its emphasis on developing higher-order thinking skills. Students are not simply recalling information but are analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating historical evidence. Inquiry-based learning promotes independent research and encourages students to think critically about historical narratives, considering multiple perspectives and viewpoints (Wale & Bishaw, 2020). This approach helps students develop the skills necessary for understanding complex historical events and for engaging with history in a meaningful and thoughtful way.

Inquiry-based learning offers several advantages in history education, particularly in fostering historical literacy. First, it encourages deeper engagement with historical content. By actively investigating historical events and sources, students are more likely to develop a comprehensive understanding of history and its complexities. Inquiry-based learning allows students to see history as a dynamic process that involves investigation, interpretation, and analysis, rather than a static collection of facts (Waked et al., 2024). Second, inquiry-based learning promotes the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students are encouraged to ask questions, evaluate evidence, and consider different viewpoints. This process enhances their ability to think critically and to understand the complexity of historical events. Inquiry-based learning also helps students develop skills in research, as they learn to locate and analyze primary and secondary sources, making connections between different pieces of evidence.

Additionally, inquiry-based learning fosters historical empathy. By engaging with primary sources, such as letters, diaries, and documents from the past, students are able to gain insights into the perspectives of historical actors. This process helps students develop a more nuanced understanding of history and recognize the diverse experiences of individuals from different times and places. Historical empathy is a key component of historical literacy, as it allows students to appreciate the human dimension of history and understand the motivations and actions of historical figures. Finally, inquiry-based learning enhances student motivation and engagement. Traditional history instruction often relies on lectures and passive learning, which can lead to disengagement. In contrast, inquiry-based learning encourages students to take ownership of their learning and to pursue topics that interest them. This approach fosters a sense of curiosity and excitement about history, making the subject more relevant and engaging for students.

Inquiry-based learning (IBL) offers a distinct pedagogical approach compared to other active learning models such as problem-based learning (PBL). While both emphasize student-centered learning and the development of critical thinking skills, IBL is primarily driven by student curiosity and questioning, allowing learners to formulate their own inquiries and pursue knowledge through exploration and investigation. In contrast, PBL typically begins with a predefined problem scenario that guides students toward specific learning objectives. IBL is more open-ended and exploratory, encouraging divergent thinking and multiple pathways of discovery, whereas PBL often focuses on solving a concrete issue through structured analysis. This distinction makes IBL particularly suited to

historical education, where interpreting varied sources, considering multiple perspectives, and constructing evidence-based narratives require a high degree of inquiry and intellectual autonomy. By emphasizing the process of questioning and investigation over predetermined outcomes, IBL enables students to engage with history as active investigators rather than passive recipients of information.

Role of Museums in Education

Museums play an essential role in education by providing a unique learning environment that combines visual, tactile, and intellectual experiences. Museums are dynamic spaces where students can engage directly with historical artifacts, artworks, and primary sources, allowing them to interact with history in a tangible and immersive way. The benefits of museum-based learning are numerous. First, museums provide opportunities for experiential learning, which allows students to connect abstract historical concepts to real-world objects. By engaging with artifacts, students can better understand the cultural, social, and political contexts of historical events. Museums also promote active learning by encouraging students to ask questions, investigate objects, and engage in discussions (Hansson & Öhman, 2022). This approach is particularly conducive to inquiry-based learning, as museums provide a rich environment for students to explore historical topics through inquiry and critical thinking. Museums offer a multi-sensory experience that engages students in different ways, making history more accessible and memorable.

However, there are challenges in using museums as educational spaces. One challenge is the potential disconnect between the museum's exhibits and the students' existing knowledge or interests. To overcome this challenge, museums must design exhibits that are relevant to the curriculum and that engage students with topics they are likely to find meaningful. Another challenge is the limited time that students may have in a museum setting. Many museums offer guided tours or educational programs, but these often need to be supplemented with further research or independent learning.

Several case studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of museum-based learning in enhancing historical literacy. For instance, the British Museum in London has implemented educational programs that encourage students to explore ancient civilizations through inquiry and critical analysis (McCall & Gray, 2014). These programs allow students to engage directly with objects from the museum's vast collection, fostering historical empathy and a deeper understanding of the past. Similar programs in other museums, such as the Smithsonian in the United States, have also shown the positive impact of museum-based learning on students' historical literacy. In these case studies, students engage in hands-on activities such as analyzing primary sources, conducting research, and presenting their findings. These activities not only deepen students' understanding of history but also develop important skills such as collaboration, research, and communication. Museum-based learning has proven to be an effective way to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world applications, providing students with a more comprehensive and engaging understanding of history.

Existing research on inquiry-based learning in museum settings suggests that this approach can significantly enhance students' historical literacy. Studies have shown that inquiry-based learning in museums encourages students to engage critically with historical materials, develop their own historical arguments, and deepen their understanding of history. For example, the impact of inquiry-based learning in museum settings, concluding that this approach enhances students' ability to think critically about history and develop a more nuanced understanding of historical events. Other studies have highlighted the benefits of inquiry-based learning for developing historical empathy. By engaging with artifacts and primary sources, students are able to gain insights into the lived experiences of people from different times and places. This process fosters a deeper understanding of history and helps students develop a more complex view of the past.

Lessons from Successful Museum-Based Learning Programs

Several successful museum-based learning programs have provided valuable lessons for educators seeking to implement inquiry-based learning in museum settings. One key lesson is the importance of creating a structured yet flexible learning environment that encourages exploration and critical thinking. Successful programs often involve a combination of guided tours, interactive exhibits, and independent research, allowing students to engage with historical material in a variety of ways. Another important lesson is the need to connect museum exhibits to the broader curriculum. To maximize the impact of museum-based learning, educators must ensure that the exhibits align with the historical content students are studying in the classroom. This connection helps students see the relevance of the museum experience and reinforces their historical literacy.

This literature review has examined the key concepts of historical literacy, inquiry-based learning, and museum-based education, highlighting their importance and potential in enhancing students' historical literacy. The review has also explored the challenges of teaching history and the benefits and challenges of using museums as educational spaces. Existing research on inquiry-based learning in museums demonstrates its effectiveness in fostering critical thinking, historical empathy, and a deeper.

METHODS

Research Design and Rationale

The research design for this study is qualitative, specifically focusing on a review of existing literature. Qualitative research is ideal for exploring complex, subjective topics that require an in-depth understanding and context. Given that the study is centered on historical literacy, inquiry-based learning, and the role of museums in education, a qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of these concepts as they have been studied and applied in various educational settings (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This approach enables the researcher to review existing academic papers, studies, and theoretical frameworks that address these key topics, helping to build a comprehensive understanding of the field. By synthesizing secondary data, the study can identify patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature, providing a holistic view of the subject matter without the need for primary data collection. This method is particularly useful for understanding theoretical perspectives, case studies, and research findings related to inquiry-based learning and its implementation in museums for enhancing historical literacy.

The rationale for choosing a qualitative design, specifically a review of papers, lies in the exploratory nature of the research. The aim is not to generate new primary data but to consolidate and synthesize existing knowledge. By reviewing a wide array of studies and theoretical papers, this approach helps explore a broad spectrum of perspectives, methodologies, and findings, thereby building a comprehensive understanding of how inquiry-based learning and museums contribute to historical literacy. Qualitative research allows for a deeper, more nuanced exploration of these topics compared to quantitative research, which is typically focused on numerical data. Through the review of academic literature, the study can assess how inquiry-based learning and museum-based education have been implemented and their effectiveness in various educational settings. The method also allows for the identification of theoretical frameworks and methodologies that have been successfully applied in the field, offering insights into best practices for designing and implementing inquiry-based learning programs in museums. Additionally, this approach enables the identification of research gaps, laying the foundation for further studies.

Data Collection

The primary data collection method for this study is a comprehensive literature review, which involves systematically identifying and analyzing relevant sources such as academic articles, research papers, and case studies. The review will focus on sources that discuss inquiry-based learning, historical literacy, and the role of museums in education. To collect data, a broad search will be conducted using academic databases, journals, and books, focusing on key terms such as “inquiry-based learning,” “historical literacy,” “museum education,” and “museum-based learning.” Only peer-reviewed and reputable sources will be included to ensure the credibility and reliability of the findings. This literature review will be carried out in stages: first, a broad search to gather a wide range of studies and theoretical papers on inquiry-based learning and its relationship with historical literacy in museum settings; second, a more refined search focusing on specific case studies, research findings, and methodologies; and third, a synthesis of the selected literature to identify recurring themes, gaps, and areas for future research. This review will offer a comprehensive overview of existing research on museum-based education and inquiry-based learning, shedding light on successful strategies and challenges in enhancing historical literacy.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the sources reviewed in this study, a rigorous selection process was applied during the literature review. Only peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and official publications from reputable institutions were included. Priority was given to sources indexed in recognized academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and DOAJ, as these platforms maintain stringent quality control and editorial standards. Each source was evaluated based on its publication venue, the relevance of its research methodology, and the credibility of its authorship. In addition, articles were cross-checked to ensure consistency of findings and to avoid relying on single-source interpretations. This approach enhances the trustworthiness of the synthesized findings and supports the academic integrity of the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study will employ thematic analysis, a common qualitative method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within qualitative data. Thematic analysis is particularly suitable for reviewing large amounts of literature, as it helps identify and interpret key concepts and patterns across different studies (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, thematic analysis will involve reading and analyzing the selected academic papers to extract key themes related to inquiry-based learning, historical literacy, and museum education. Thematic analysis involves several stages, starting with familiarization with the data. In this case, the researcher will thoroughly review the selected literature to understand the central arguments, research questions, methodologies, and findings. The next step will involve generating initial codes short, descriptive phrases that summarize important concepts or ideas within the literature. Examples of these codes could include terms such as "critical thinking," "museum-based learning," and "historical empathy," and these will be applied to relevant sections of the literature.

After generating these initial codes, the next step will be to group the codes into broader themes. These themes will represent major ideas or concepts that emerge across the literature, and they will directly address the research questions and objectives of the study. Themes such as "the role of inquiry-based learning in enhancing historical literacy" or "the impact of museum-based learning on historical empathy" are likely to emerge. Once the themes are identified, the researcher will review them to ensure they accurately reflect the data and make sense in the context of the study's aims. This step involves refining and clarifying the themes to ensure they are meaningful and well-defined. Finally, the researcher will define and name the themes, providing a clear description of each one. These themes will form the basis of the analysis and structure the discussion of findings in the final report.

Once the thematic analysis is complete, the researcher will compile a detailed report that summarizes the key themes and insights derived from the literature. This report will highlight how inquiry-based learning and museum-based education can contribute to historical literacy, based on the findings from various studies. It will also identify key successes and challenges in implementing these approaches and provide recommendations for future research and practice. By using thematic analysis, the study will distill complex information from a range of sources, providing a structured analysis of the role of museums in fostering historical literacy through inquiry-based learning. This methodology utilizes a qualitative research design through a literature review and thematic analysis to explore inquiry-based learning and its role in enhancing historical literacy within museum-based education. By synthesizing existing research, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how inquiry-based learning can be integrated into museum settings to improve historical literacy. The methodology is designed to identify key patterns, gaps, and trends in the literature, offering insights into the effectiveness of museum-based inquiry and providing a foundation for future research in this field.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings and discussion related to the implementation of inquiry-based learning (IBL) at the Radya Pustaka Museum for enhancing historical literacy among secondary school students. It is divided into three main subsections: the inquiry-based learning needs of students, the opportunities and challenges of integrating inquiry-based learning in the museum context, and the impact of inquiry-based learning on historical literacy. Each subsection is explored in depth based on the findings from the literature review, theoretical frameworks, and case studies from similar museum-based educational settings.

Inquiry-Based Learning Needs (Key Learning Needs Identified at the Radya Pustaka Museum)

One of the primary findings of this study is the identification of specific learning needs among secondary school students who visit the Radya Pustaka Museum. These needs can be categorized into several key areas: engagement with historical content, critical thinking, research skills, and the development of historical empathy. First, engagement with historical content emerged as a key learning need. Many students struggle with making a meaningful connection to historical content when taught through traditional classroom methods. History is often perceived as abstract and distant from students' daily lives. As such, one of the key learning needs identified at the Radya Pustaka Museum is the need for content that resonates with students on a personal level. This involves framing historical events in ways that are relevant to their experiences, interests, and contemporary social issues. Students

need to feel that history is not only a subject to be studied but also a tool to understand the world they live in.

Critical thinking is another significant learning need. Secondary school students often face challenges when asked to analyze historical events, sources, and perspectives critically. The existing methods of history education in schools tend to prioritize factual recall over critical engagement with historical content. Therefore, students at the museum need opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills by questioning sources, considering multiple viewpoints, and evaluating the causes and consequences of historical events. Another learning need identified at the museum is the development of research skills (De La Paz & Felton, 2010). Many students lack the skills to conduct independent research, a core component of inquiry-based learning. While some students are familiar with the concept of research, they often lack the tools and strategies necessary to conduct thorough investigations. At the Radya Pustaka Museum, students need to be provided with guidance on how to access and analyze primary sources, use evidence to support their claims, and construct well-supported historical arguments.

Historical empathy is also a crucial learning need. It allows students to understand and appreciate the perspectives of people who lived in different times and places. Students often struggle to move beyond the "facts" of history and engage with the human experiences that shaped those events. A key learning need identified at the museum is the need for experiences that help students connect emotionally and intellectually with historical figures, events, and issues.

Gaps in Current Educational Strategies

While inquiry-based learning has proven effective in various educational contexts, there are notable gaps in how it is currently implemented in secondary school history education. The primary gaps identified in this study relate to the over-reliance on traditional, teacher-centered methods, limited use of primary sources, and a lack of opportunities for students to engage in hands-on, experiential learning. First, there is an over-reliance on teacher-centered methods in traditional history education. The conventional approach in secondary schools often follows a lecture-based model, where teachers deliver content, and students passively absorb information (Pedaste et al., 2015). This method does not foster inquiry or critical thinking. Although some teachers incorporate discussions or group activities, the dominant approach is still focused on rote memorization rather than exploration. There is a need for history instruction that prioritizes active engagement with historical content, asking students to investigate, question, and challenge historical narratives.

Another gap is the limited use of primary sources in history education. Many history classes focus predominantly on secondary sources, such as textbooks and scholarly articles, which often provide pre-interpreted information. This limits students' ability to engage directly with the raw materials of history, such as letters, diaries, and official documents. By relying too heavily on secondary sources, students miss the opportunity to develop essential research skills and understand how historians construct knowledge. There is a gap in the ability to integrate primary sources into the curriculum in a way that supports inquiry-based learning and historical literacy. Additionally, traditional classroom settings can be limiting in terms of providing immersive, hands-on learning experiences. Museums, on the other hand, offer rich opportunities for experiential learning, where students can interact directly with historical artifacts, engage in collaborative discussions, and participate in investigations that connect the past to the present. Current educational strategies often fail to take full advantage of these opportunities, which are crucial for fostering deeper historical understanding and critical thinking.

Implementation of Inquiry-Based Learning (Opportunities for Integrating Inquiry-Based Learning in the Museum Context)

Integrating inquiry-based learning into the museum context offers several opportunities to enhance historical literacy and foster engagement among secondary school students. The Radya Pustaka Museum provides a unique setting for implementing these strategies due to its rich collection of historical artifacts, documents, and exhibitions. The following opportunities have been identified for integrating inquiry-based learning in the museum context. One of the most significant opportunities is the use of primary sources. The museum offers a vast collection of primary sources that students can engage with directly. Through inquiry-based learning, students can analyze these sources, develop questions, and investigate the historical context of the objects on display. For example, students could analyze historical documents, letters, or artifacts to explore themes such as colonialism, nationalism, or cultural exchange. By engaging with primary sources, students not only develop critical research skills but also gain a deeper understanding of the historical processes that shaped the world.

Another opportunity is the design of guided inquiry activities. Inquiry-based learning is most effective when students are provided with structured guidance. The museum offers the opportunity to design inquiry-based activities that guide students through a process of investigation, research, and analysis. For instance, students could be given a research question related to a particular exhibit or historical period and asked to conduct independent investigations, utilizing both primary and secondary sources. Museum staff and educators can facilitate these activities by providing support and resources, ensuring that students stay on track while allowing them the freedom to explore.

Museums also provide an ideal environment for collaborative learning. By encouraging group work, students can engage in discussions, debate different viewpoints, and refine their understanding of historical events. This collaborative approach not only strengthens critical thinking but also fosters communication and teamwork skills that are essential in both academic and real-world contexts. Collaborative learning encourages students to share perspectives, consider multiple viewpoints, and develop a more nuanced understanding of historical issues. Moreover, museums create immersive learning experiences. For example, students could participate in role-playing activities where they assume the roles of historical figures and engage in historical decision-making processes. This type of experiential learning fosters historical empathy, as students begin to see the past through the eyes of those who lived through it, understanding the complexities of their experiences and motivations.

While there are significant opportunities for integrating inquiry-based learning in the museum context, there are also challenges that must be addressed. One of the primary challenges is the limited amount of time available for museum visits, particularly in the context of secondary school curricula, which are often packed with required subjects. To overcome this challenge, museums could design shorter, more focused inquiry-based activities that can be completed in a single visit. Alternatively, the museum could offer follow-up activities that students can complete in the classroom, further extending the inquiry process.

Another challenge is the need for teacher training and support. Inquiry-based learning requires a shift in teaching practices, and many teachers may not be familiar with how to implement this approach effectively in the museum setting. To address this, the museum could offer professional development programs for teachers, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to facilitate inquiry-based learning. Teachers should be provided with training on how to guide students through the process of inquiry, helping them frame questions, gather evidence, and construct historical arguments. A further challenge is the integration of museum-based inquiry with the national or local curriculum. To address this, museums can work closely with educators to ensure that inquiry-based activities are directly connected to the curriculum and complement classroom learning. By designing museum visits that support the specific learning objectives of history courses, students can gain a more coherent and integrated understanding of historical topics.

Impact on Historical Literacy (How Inquiry-Based Learning Can Strengthen Historical Literacy Among Students)

Inquiry-based learning has the potential to significantly strengthen historical literacy among students by engaging them in active, critical, and independent investigation. Several key impacts of inquiry-based learning on historical literacy include the development of critical thinking, improved research skills, and enhanced historical empathy. First, inquiry-based learning promotes the development of critical thinking. By engaging in inquiry-based activities, students are encouraged to question historical narratives, analyze evidence, and consider different viewpoints. This process promotes critical thinking, as students must evaluate sources, assess their reliability, and make informed judgments based on the evidence they gather. Critical thinking is a key component of historical literacy, as it allows students to engage with history not as a set of fixed facts but as an evolving process shaped by complex causes and consequences.

Another impact of inquiry-based learning is the improvement of research skills. Inquiry-based learning helps students develop essential research skills, such as the ability to locate and analyze primary sources, construct research questions, and use evidence to support arguments. These skills are crucial for historical literacy, as they enable students to engage with history as historians do—by examining sources, drawing conclusions, and communicating findings. The development of these research skills prepares students for academic work in history and other fields, as well as for participation in informed, evidence-based debates about historical issues. Inquiry-based learning also enhances historical empathy. By engaging with primary sources, such as letters, diaries, and documents from the past, students are able to gain insights into the perspectives of historical actors. This process helps students develop a more nuanced understanding of history and recognize the diverse experiences of individuals from different times and places. Historical empathy is a key component of historical

literacy, as it allows students to appreciate the human dimension of history and understand the motivations and actions of historical figures.

A case study from the Smithsonian National Museum of American History provides an example of how inquiry-based learning can enhance historical literacy. In the museum's "America on the Move" exhibit, students were given a research question about the impact of transportation on American society. They were tasked with analyzing various primary sources, including photographs, advertisements, and transportation artifacts, to investigate the economic, social, and cultural implications of transportation developments. Through this process, students developed critical thinking and research skills while gaining a deeper understanding of the historical significance of transportation in shaping modern America. In a hypothetical scenario at the Radya Pustaka Museum, secondary school students might be asked to explore the historical context of the colonial period in Indonesia. Using primary sources such as documents, photographs, and artifacts from the museum's collection, students could investigate the effects of colonial rule on local communities, economies, and cultures. They would be encouraged to develop their own research questions and analyze the primary sources to construct historical arguments. By participating in this inquiry-based learning experience, students would deepen their historical literacy and develop essential skills in research, critical thinking, and historical empathy.

The identification of key student learning needs, such as critical thinking, research skills, and historical empathy, has important practical implications for how museums design their educational programs. To address these needs, museums can develop structured inquiry-based learning (IBL) modules that guide students through the process of historical investigation. For example, students can be provided with inquiry kits containing curated primary sources such as old photographs, letters, or colonial-era artifacts, accompanied by guiding questions that encourage analysis and interpretation. Activities may include source comparison tasks, timeline construction, or debates on historical perspectives to cultivate critical thinking. To support the development of research skills, museums can facilitate mini-workshops on how to formulate historical questions, use evidence effectively, and present findings. In fostering historical empathy, interactive storytelling stations or role-playing scenarios based on historical figures represented in the museum's collections can allow students to emotionally connect with the past. By aligning these activities with school curricula and scaffolding them based on students' cognitive levels, museums can transform passive visits into active, meaningful learning experiences that directly respond to students' educational needs.

The findings and discussion section has explored the inquiry-based learning needs of secondary school students at the Radya Pustaka Museum, the opportunities and challenges of implementing this approach, and its potential impact on historical literacy. Inquiry-based learning offers significant benefits in terms of engaging students with historical content, fostering critical thinking, developing research skills, and promoting historical empathy. However, there are challenges related to time constraints, teacher training, and curriculum integration that must be addressed for the effective implementation of inquiry-based learning in the museum context. Despite these challenges, the museum setting provides a rich environment for inquiry-based learning, offering unique opportunities to enhance historical literacy among secondary school students.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the potential of inquiry-based learning (IBL) to enhance historical literacy among secondary school students through engagement with the Radya Pustaka Museum. A review of relevant literature revealed key student learning needs, including the development of critical thinking, research skills, and historical empathy. Current history education still relies heavily on teacher-centered methods and textbook-based instruction, offering limited exposure to primary sources or experiential learning. The museum context presents a valuable opportunity to address these gaps by providing access to authentic artifacts and immersive experiences that support inquiry-driven exploration. Through guided investigations and hands-on activities, students are encouraged to ask questions, analyze evidence, and construct historical interpretations—fostering a deeper, more critical engagement with the past.

While the benefits of IBL in museum education are evident, this study also identifies several implementation challenges. These include time limitations during museum visits, the need for teacher training, and alignment with curriculum objectives. Addressing these barriers requires practical strategies, such as designing concise, targeted inquiry activities, providing follow-up tasks for classroom integration, and offering professional development for teachers. When effectively implemented, IBL not only deepens historical understanding but also promotes transferable academic skills and historical



empathy. Museums like Radya Pustaka can thus play a strategic role in transforming history education, bridging the gap between formal curriculum and meaningful, student-centered learning.

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