

The Use of Documentary Video-Based Digital Media in Improving Students Interest in Learning History at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology in education has encouraged teachers to adopt innovative learning media to enhance students' interest in learning, particularly in history subjects, which are often perceived as monotonous and less engaging. This study aimed to examine the utilization of documentary video-based digital media in improving students' interest in learning history at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on an in-depth understanding of the implementation of documentary video media in history learning for grade XI students. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed inductively to interpret the meaning of the findings. The results revealed that the use of documentary videos significantly increased students' interest in learning history by presenting historical events in a more concrete, contextual, and engaging manner through audiovisual elements. Students demonstrated greater enthusiasm, improved understanding of historical concepts, and increased participation in discussions and learning activities. Teachers utilized documentary videos through systematic stages, including content selection, introductory explanation, video screening, reflective discussions, and evaluation activities. However, several challenges were identified, including limited technological infrastructure, unstable internet connectivity, time constraints, and varying levels of students' visual literacy. Despite these obstacles, teachers remained committed to integrating documentary videos as an effective digital learning medium. In conclusion, documentary video-based digital media contributed positively to increasing students' interest in learning history and created a more interactive, meaningful, and student-centered learning environment.

Keywords: *Documentary Video, Digital Learning Media, Learning Interest, History Learning.*

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INTRODUCTION

Educators are one of the essential elements in shaping and creating quality human beings. According to the Indonesian National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, education is defined as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process in which students actively develop their potential to possess spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed for themselves and society (Desi et al., 2022:7912).

The development of digital technology in the 21st century has brought significant changes to various aspects of human life, including the field of education. These changes require the education sector to adapt to technological advancements so that the learning process can be carried out effectively and remain relevant to the demands of the times (Rina Apriana et al., 2026).

In this digital era, education has introduced various innovations in learning methods. One of the most interesting innovations today is the use of documentary video-based learning media in history education at senior high schools. Along with the rapid advancement of modernization, education plays a crucial role in human life, distinguishing humans from other living beings (Sarni, 2026). At present, education also has a significant impact on the development of human thinking patterns. To improve the quality of education, innovation is needed both in curriculum development and learning methods. Creating quality education requires an effective learning system supported by the use of unique, engaging, and enjoyable methods, models, strategies, and learning media. Appropriate learning stages will certainly influence students' understanding of the material delivered by teachers and supported by learning media (Sarni, 2026).

Learning media are one of the important components in the teaching and learning process. In the use of media, educators or facilitators should pay special attention to every learning activity. The selection of learning media is one way to create enjoyable learning experiences and enhance students' enthusiasm during the learning process. Video media, due to their engaging nature, can motivate students to better understand material presented in audiovisual forms (Wulandari, 2023).

Related to the use of learning media, one medium that can support the learning process is documentary video media. Documentary videos are fact-based audiovisual media that record and depict events, objects, and issues occurring in real life. Through informative visual presentations and narratives, documentary videos are able to provide deeper perspectives, helping students understand reality in a more contextual manner (Hermansyah, 2022). Documentary videos are used to convey messages, information, and complex knowledge in a simpler and more concise way, making them easier to understand. Documentary films are produced based on real or original events (Amirah Zahra Muthi, 2023).

In addition, documentary videos function not only as sources of factual information but also as promotional tools for products or brands. Many large companies produce short documentary videos about their history before achieving success, hoping to influence viewers. The purpose is to attract audiences to their products and increase their interest in purchasing or owning them (Deli & Hendro, 2023).

The low interest in learning history among students at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang is caused by several factors: (1) monotonous teaching methods, (2) learning materials perceived as difficult and less relevant, (3) limited use of learning media, (4) students' internal attitudes and motivation, and (5) the learning environment (Preliminary Observation Results, February 12–14, 2025).

Syah (2003), as cited in Andini Pratiwi (2024), states that learning interest factors consist of three categories: internal factors, external factors, and learning approach factors. The first category, internal factors, includes physiological aspects such as physical condition and muscle tension (*tonus*), which indicate students' level of fitness and may influence their enthusiasm and learning intensity. The second category, external factors, consists of social and non-social environmental factors. The third category involves learning approaches, referring to the techniques or strategies students use to effectively study specific subjects. Components of learning interest include internal factors such as motivation, talent, intelligence, and physical condition, as well as external factors such as family, school, mass media, and social media. In addition, various aspects determine teachers' ability to teach history by utilizing documentary video media.

In history learning activities, students engage in several learning activities that can be implemented through the use of documentary video media, such as watching and discussing videos, conducting video analysis, discussing ethical issues and perspectives, and preparing summaries followed by presentations (Preliminary Observation Results, February 12–14, 2025).

This is further supported by the research of Firmansyah, Putri, and Maharani (2022), which found that the use of documentary video media in history learning can enhance students' interest and understanding of historical materials. Documentary videos are able to present historical events in a visual and engaging manner, making it easier for students to understand and remember the material being taught. In addition, the use of documentary videos can encourage students to become more active in discussions, analysis, and the exploration of various historical perspectives.

The uniqueness of SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang makes it an interesting site for research, as it strongly aligns with the results of preliminary observations. One of its main distinctive characteristics is the considerable gap between the availability of learning facilities and the utilization of digital media, particularly documentary videos, in the history learning process. The school already has adequate basic facilities, such as classrooms, laboratories, a library, and internet access; however, the use of technology to support learning remains very limited, especially in history subjects.

Based on this background, the present study is expected to provide an overview of the effectiveness of documentary video media in improving students' interest and achievement in history learning at the school. In addition, this study may serve as a reference for schools and teachers to begin utilizing digital media in history learning so that the learning process becomes more engaging and meaningful for students. Therefore, this study is entitled "*The Use of Documentary Video-Based Digital Media in Improving Students' Interest in Learning History at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang*", in line with current educational developments and needs.

Based on the background above, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How can documentary videos improve students' interest in learning history at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang?

2. How do teachers utilize documentary-based digital media to improve students' interest in learning history at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang?
3. What obstacles do history teachers face in utilizing documentary video-based digital media at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang?

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at describing the utilization of documentary video-based digital media in enhancing students' interest in learning history in grade XI at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang. This study aimed to gain an in depth understanding of the utilization of digital media in history learning through experiences at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang.

According (Sugiyono, 2013) qualitative research is a research method grounded in postpositivism, meaning that this method is generally used to examine research objects in their natural conditions. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument, with data collection techniques carried out through a combination of methods. Data analysis in this study was conducted inductively, and the results of qualitative research place greater emphasis on meaning rather than the generalization of research findings

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on previous observations, the use of documentary video as a learning medium had never been applied in history learning, particularly in understanding historical concepts. Therefore, the effectiveness of documentary video media in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang was still considerably low. History teachers' ability to utilize digital media in the form of documentary videos to enhance students' interest and engagement in history learning remained insufficient, resulting in a very low level of student learning interest. This can be seen from several factors contributing to the low student interest, including lack of student attention and enthusiasm, less varied teaching methods, limited learning media, facilities, and infrastructure, an unsupportive learning environment, and subject matter perceived as difficult and irrelevant. A prior observation conducted on 110 grade XI students at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang revealed that interest in learning history was still very low, with 70 students (63.6%) showing no interest and only 40 students (36.4%) showing interest in history learning.

RESEARCH RESULT

Based on the research findings, the following are the results of the observations and interviews conducted:

1. The Use of Documentary Videos in Enhancing Students' Interest in Learning History at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang

The integration of documentary video media in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang has proven to have a positive impact on the learning interest of grade XI students. The use of this audiovisual media was designed to present historical events in a concrete and meaningful manner, replacing conventional approaches that tend to be

monotonous. Based on interview and observation results, students stated that they found it easier to understand the context of historical events through visual presentations or documentary videos compared to reading texts.

Teachers implemented structured strategies in utilizing this media by providing an introduction to the material, presenting relevant videos, asking students to take notes on important points, and conducting reflective discussions afterward. This approach transformed videos from being merely a source of entertainment into a stimulus for critical thinking. In addition, documentary media served as a solution for equalizing access to learning, considering that not all students had adequate learning resources at home.

Observations of students' assignment results further strengthened these findings. Several students provided lengthy and detailed explanations in their responses, reflecting deep intellectual and emotional engagement. Some students even independently rewatched the videos outside classroom hours, indicating the development of sustained intrinsic interest. Thus, documentary videos not only increased students' interest in learning history but also strengthened conceptual understanding, analytical thinking skills, and awareness of national values among students. These findings are consistent with the study by Haris Firmansyah (2022), which showed that the use of documentary films in history learning could enhance students' learning interest while strengthening their understanding of historical events through contextual visual presentations.

2. The Utilization of Documentary Digital Media by Teachers in Enhancing Students' Interest in Learning History at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang

The utilization of this media was not carried out spontaneously but through systematic stages that included content selection, video editing, introductory explanation, video presentation, and post-screening evaluation. During the preparation stage, teachers adjusted the selected videos to the basic competencies being taught, including trimming irrelevant sections to ensure time efficiency during the learning process. Before the screening, teachers provided an introduction by explaining the historical context, time period, and key figures featured in the video. This functioned as an activator of students' prior knowledge, enabling them to develop cognitive readiness in receiving new information. After the screening, teachers conducted reflective discussions and assigned written tasks in the form of summaries or analyses based on guiding questions. This strategy encouraged students to think critically, connect the video content to present-day life, and express their understanding independently. Some teachers also implemented collaborative approaches through group presentation assignments, which helped develop students' sense of responsibility, confidence in expressing opinions, and communication skills.

In addition to the cognitive dimension, teachers also integrated the affective dimension by linking the content of the documentary videos to moral values and national character education. Infrastructure limitations, such as unstable internet connectivity,

were addressed by downloading videos for offline use, allowing the learning process to continue without technical disruptions.

Overall, the successful utilization of documentary videos was strongly determined by the active role of teachers as adaptive and innovative designers and facilitators of learning media, oriented toward achieving curriculum objectives.

3. Challenges Faced by History Teachers in Utilizing Documentary Video-Based Digital Media at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang

The implementation of documentary video-based digital media in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang still faced several challenges, both technical and non-technical. These obstacles included limitations in digital infrastructure, students' visual literacy skills, learning time management, and restricted access to technology in students' environments.

From a technical perspective, unstable internet connectivity and limited multimedia equipment became the main barriers. Not all classrooms were equipped with projectors, requiring teachers to compete for the use of shared facilities. To anticipate internet-related problems, teachers downloaded videos for offline use; however, they still encountered risks of file format incompatibility with school devices.

From a pedagogical perspective, students' ability to understand documentary content varied considerably. This condition affected the limited time available for in-depth discussion and exploration of learning materials, considering that history lessons were allocated only two hours per week.

As expressed by Agus, a grade XI history teacher:

“According to Agus, the challenges that arise do not necessarily hinder the use of digital media but rather serve as evaluation materials for future improvement. ‘We still try to use videos because the benefits are substantial. However, there must be support from the school, especially regarding equipment and internet access. If these issues are resolved, I am confident that history learning will become far more engaging and effective,’ he stated at the end of the interview” (Wednesday, September 24, 2025).

This statement emphasizes that the challenges faced by teachers are primarily technical in nature and can be addressed through school policy support and improvements in facilities. Teachers' commitment to continuous innovation becomes an important factor in sustaining digital media-based learning.

Overall, the existing challenges did not reduce teachers' enthusiasm for utilizing documentary videos as an effective learning tool to enhance grade XI students' interest in learning history at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang cannot be separated from various efforts made by teachers to increase students' interest in learning, particularly in a subject that is often perceived as theoretical and heavily based on memorization. Learning innovation through the utilization of digital media, especially

documentary videos, has become one of the strategies implemented to address the problem of low interest in learning history among grade XI students. Documentary videos are used not merely as visual entertainment but as learning resources that combine historical facts with emotional and aesthetic experiences. The use of this media provides students with the opportunity to directly observe representations of past events through authentic images, sounds, and narratives, making the learning process more vivid and meaningful. Teachers play a role not only as facilitators but also as designers who direct the use of media to ensure its relevance to learning objectives. Based on the field research findings, the following discussion explains in depth how documentary videos enhance students' interest in learning history, how teachers utilize them pedagogically, and the various challenges encountered in their implementation at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang.

The research findings indicate that the use of documentary videos was able to create a more engaging and contextual learning experience for grade XI students at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang. Documentary screenings presenting historical events visually and narratively transformed learning from being merely text-based into a real experience that stimulated both students' emotional and cognitive aspects. Students found it easier to understand the material because they could directly observe representations of historical events through moving images and informative narratives. This condition aligns with the *Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning*, which states that learning becomes more effective when information is delivered through a combination of visual and auditory channels, thereby helping students understand the material more meaningfully (Nurhatmi, 2025).

The utilization of documentary digital media by history teachers at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang was carried out through careful planning and adjusted to the characteristics of grade XI students. Teachers played a role not only as presenters of material but also as designers of meaningful learning experiences. Documentary videos were selected by considering the topic, level of material complexity, and duration of instruction to ensure effectiveness and maintain students' attention. This approach is consistent with the *Instructional Design Theory*, which emphasizes the importance of the stages of analysis, design, implementation, and evaluation to ensure that learning media provide optimal impacts (Reigeluth & Yunjo, 2020).

The utilization of documentary video-based digital media in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang encountered several challenges originating from technical, pedagogical, and environmental aspects. Teachers faced limitations in technological infrastructure, such as unstable internet connectivity, limited multimedia equipment, and the school's geographical conditions affecting access to digital resources. These barriers reduced teachers' flexibility in preparing and presenting documentary videos optimally. These limitations are in line with the findings of the study by Ika, Utami, and Fazriah (2021), which stated that limitations in technological facilities and internet connectivity remain dominant obstacles in the implementation of digital media in schools, particularly in areas where access to technology is still uneven.

CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that the utilization of digital media in the form of documentary videos in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Balaesang was able to significantly enhance the learning interest of grade XI students. This media provided an engaging and contextual learning experience through the combination of visual, audio, and narrative elements that fostered curiosity, emotional engagement, and students' intrinsic motivation. Teachers played an active role as facilitators who guided the learning process through the stages of introduction, video screening, and reflective discussion, making the learning process more interactive and meaningful. Technical constraints such as limited facilities, internet connectivity, and students' media literacy posed challenges that require attention, yet did not hinder teachers' enthusiasm for innovation. Overall, the implementation of documentary videos proved effective in bringing history learning to life and has the potential to enhance students' quality of understanding as well as their appreciation of historical and national values.

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