

Research Article

# Use of Digital Applications as Interactive Media in History Learning: A Review of Literature Studies

Adilah Shobariyah\* & Wawan Darmawan

Department of Social Science Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia, 40154

\* Corresponding Author: [adilahshobariyah12@upi.edu](mailto:adilahshobariyah12@upi.edu) | Phone: +6289528583556

## ABSTRACT

The main challenge in learning history in the current digital era is the lack of understanding and knowledge of historical facts for students regarding the historical value contained in past events. In addition, the gap in access to technology also affects the effectiveness of learning, which ultimately impacts the quality of education. This study aims to explore the potential of digital media in learning history, especially to improve historical thinking skills in generation Z. The characteristics of this generation that is open to technology allow them to access historical information quickly and interactively. The method used in this study is a literature review with a qualitative approach, which analyzes various relevant literature sources. The results of the study show that digital media has a significant impact on enriching historical understanding, developing students' analytical skills, and fostering values of nationalism and love for the country. However, the challenges faced are low interest in reading and lack of digital literacy, which can hinder the maximum use of digital media. However, the use of digital media can increase learning motivation and provide a more flexible, interesting, and accessible learning experience at any time, so that it can help students understand history in a more enjoyable and effective way.

**Keywords:** Historical Thinking; Gen Z; Digital Media; History Learning

## 1. INTRODUCTION

History learning becomes a guideline for life in the past environment that is able to provide values to students to implement values and norms in various life events. History is related to the relationship in social life from individuals to groups to improve their understanding and mastery of current conditions. (Fitriani, 2022). In line with that, history learning is very closely related to the development of character values, attitudes, nationalism, love of the homeland, democracy, and patriotism. History learning forms students in the values that exist in the history of the Indonesian nation such as the practice of love of the homeland, which is then applied through the concept of historical thinking.

The concept of historical thinking in students through understanding knowledge about the past, which can be used to explain the development of social and cultural diversity and changes in society, so that they better appreciate and understand the meaning of Indonesian history. Students have the ability to find and develop their national identity in community life. According to (Abdi, 2020) studying history, there is a greater opportunity to transfer the values of wisdom contained in local culture. In line with that, learning history functions as a bridge between the past that cannot be observed directly with the present that can be felt directly by everyone, especially students. The history of the struggle from the past of the Indonesian nation in fighting for independence carried out by the heroes. The spirit of struggle from these heroes can be instilled in students, especially those who study History subjects. Awareness is very important for Indonesians to have a strong sense of nationalism. Education is the best place to realize this sense of national awareness. With knowledge of Indonesian history, especially for the zillennial generation, it is the mouthpiece for the nation's successors. It is hoped that the importance of this awareness will help increase interest and knowledge about Indonesian history to preserve history so that the next generation does not forget the struggle of the Indonesian nation in the past (Ramadhan et al., 2024).

The vision of instilling the importance of knowing and understanding Indonesian history can be implemented in students of current school age, where these generations can be categorized as children born in 1997-2012 or better known as Generation Z. The characteristics of the zillennial generation (Z) include: First, having an inclusive and progressive style that is open to differences and moving forward in actions and thoughts. Second, authenticity in interpreting identity

is reflected in the interpretation of information received in its time. Third, collaboration in carrying out individual and group work provides abilities that can be combined into something new. Fourth, the feeling of seeking attention carried out by young people in order to gain popularity in showing the success of achievements that are given appreciation. Fifth, instant gratification can be achieved through fast work, but requires high appreciation to build self-confidence. And finally, Sixth, a pragmatic attitude and idealism is a characteristic in maintaining concrete values (Diazaki & Mubarak, 2024).

Judging from its characteristics, generation Z is passionate and rich in insight and is an adaptive and responsive person to the sophistication of digital products/technology. The development of digital media must be considered seriously and responsibly. This is because in order for the digital era to bring benefits to life, we must be able to understand, master, and control the role of technology well. Education is the main media for understanding, mastering, and treating technology well. The role of educators as controllers must be carried out optimally. Educators must be able to help students use the digitalization of education in a more effective way. In order to get such a big impact, utilizing digital today must be used as well as possible (Adedo, 2024). In line with that, the digitalization of education offers many benefits, especially in history learning which can enrich students' learning experiences by providing wider access to historical information quickly and interactively. However, the challenge that arises is the gap in technological mastery between educators and students, as well as between regions, which shows inequality in access to adequate devices and internet connections (San Mikael Sinambela et al., 2024). The urgency of using digital media in history learning is very important because it can help overcome the limitations of conventional access to historical information and provide opportunities for students to be richer and more varied. Thus, the use of digital media in history learning can strengthen students' understanding of the development of national history and increase their involvement in the learning process.

Several previous studies have shown that the transformation in the process of learning history in the midst of rapid technological developments makes technological progress a source of learning for students to encourage access to fast learning resources (Saputra, 2024). In addition, other studies show that the tools used in conveying information in the learning process are systems used to design, manage, and evaluate the learning process. This has an important role in improving the quality of education (Rais et al., 2024). The purpose of this study is to explore the potential of digital media as an effective tool in learning history, especially to improve historical thinking skills in generation Z. Given the characteristics of Gen Z who are very open to digital technology and information, digital media is expected to be a tool that connects them with a deeper understanding of history. In utilizing digital media, students can more easily access historical information, understand the development process of the Indonesian nation, and recognize the social and cultural diversity that forms national identity. History learning that integrates technology can help develop the values of nationalism, love for the homeland, and the spirit of the heroes' struggle. Along with that, this study aims to reduce the gap in technological mastery between educators and students. Using digital media, it is hoped that more effective learning can be created and the inequality of access to technology can be reduced, so that all students, without exception, can feel the same benefits (Lim, 2021).

The novelty provided in this study lies in the development of digital media as an effective means in learning history to improve historical thinking skills in generation Z. This study integrates technology in learning history, with the aim of connecting students with a deeper understanding of history through easier access to historical information, social diversity, culture and nationalism values. In addition, this study also focuses on efforts to reduce the gap in technology mastery between educators and students, as well as between various regions, by utilizing digital media to create more effective and equitable learning.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The methodology of this study uses a literature review technique using a qualitative approach to examine the role of digital media as a means for Generation Z in historical thinking in history learning. This study focuses on collecting literature from various sources such as websites, Google Scholar, textbooks, journals and articles that are relevant to the topic being studied. The process of data analysis and report writing. The source of information comes from the material. Furthermore, the author conducts data analysis by organizing and classifying the information collected to provide a deeper understanding of the role of digital media in the role of digital media in history education (Apriliyana, 2024). In the data analysis section, the author uses thematic analysis techniques to filter information from various literatures and simplify the findings based on emerging themes, in order to draw conclusions that can support the research objectives. The author also triangulates sources to ensure data validity by verifying information from various sources that can increase the accuracy and credibility of the research results. This approach aims to avoid bias and misinterpretation, as well as to produce more reliable findings regarding the use of digital media in history learning.

The author can provide a clear picture of how digital media influences the historical thinking process of the zileneal generation, as well as increasing their understanding of the history of the Indonesian nation. This study shows caution in selecting data, applying source triangulation, verifying information to avoid bias and errors in interpretation, and producing reliable findings.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Utilization of Digital Media in History Learning

Globalization is marked by the sophistication of technology bringing various changes in various aspects of life, so that there are positive and negative impacts on community life. Generation Z has a full role in utilizing existing technology so that it has become a routine that must be faced. (Heri Widiastuti et al., 2021). In line with that, the Development of IPTEK (Science and Technology) has a very significant role in changing the way of learning and teaching history, education is in the spotlight for many people in carrying out challenges that will continue to change according to existing standards. Technology is adjusted to individual needs in utilizing history learning in particular. According to (Saputra, 2024) the following, there are several technological developments that influence history learning:

1. Connecting information quickly, using the internet can access historical information sources *online*, from archives, websites, books and others (Muhayanah, 2024);
2. *platforms, online learning* allows students and educators to interact through discussion forums, assignments and quizzes carried out online, which is something that can be carried out outside the reach of the school environment so that learning can be adjusted to time conditions.(Popp, 2013);
3. The digitization of historical sources, including archive sources and other historical collections that have been digitized, including photographs and artifacts, is a form of technological development so that students can more easily access these sources without having to go directly to the location of the incident or the historical site.(Roberts, 2016);
4. Increasing Learning Interest, digital technology in history learning can increase students' interest in learning by providing more interesting and relevant materials. However, it is important to ensure that the use of technology does not reduce students' ability to think historically and analytically about historical sources.(Popp, 2013);
5. The challenge of digital literacy, technology offers many benefits, there needs to be good digital literacy to sort and analyze information critically. Literacy education is needed to ensure that students can use technology effectively in learning history (Raibowo et al., 2023).

The author emphasizes that technology has brought significant changes in history learning for Generation Z, by providing easier access and more interactive learning methods. However, challenges such as the need for good digital literacy and the development of historical thinking skills remain important concerns in the process of history education in this digital era.

#### 3.2 The Impact of Digital Media on Historical Thinking Skills

In digital media people think about historical thinking skills have a significant impact on historical attitudes in history learning. This increase in understanding is the main highlight that is very prominent is the concept of history. Learners can access various historical resources such as archives, collections, artifacts through digital technology in online form. This makes it easier for learners to deepen historical topics that they do not understand (Firmansyah et al., 2022).. In addition, technology improves learners' historical thinking skills in historical sources by facilitating access, training their critical analytical skills, and teaching them to interpret historical documents, identify, and evaluate the state and relevance of these historical sources. Therefore, digital technology helps strengthen analytical skills that are important in historical thinking.

Learning is influenced by digital media, through technology and more innovative teaching methods with the use of interactive tools, simulations, and multimedia that attract students' attention and facilitate their understanding. Technology helps students work collaboratively and independently by providing a variety of educational resources. In addition, technology helps more effective and accurate assessments, allowing educators to track student progress in real-time and provide quick and relevant feedback. In addition to improving the quality of learning, this increases student engagement and desire (Aulia et al., 2023).

Digital media has the potential to improve students' skills in synthesizing and evaluating historical information better. Using digital tools such as multimedia presentations, students evaluate different perspectives on history and discover patterns and trends that might be missed in conventional learning. Therefore, the use of digital media not only enhances students' history learning experiences, but strengthens their ability to think historically comprehensively (Firmansyah, 2024).

The author emphasizes that digital media has a significant positive impact on students' historical thinking skills in history learning. Through easy access to digital archives and collections, students can deepen their understanding of complex history. Technology can train their critical and analytical thinking skills through the analysis of diverse historical documents. In addition, the use of multimedia and interactive tools makes learning more interesting and creative, enriching the learning experience. Technology allows educators to provide faster and more precise feedback, improving the quality of learning. With this, the integration of digital media in enriching historical thinking skills and creating more effective and enjoyable learning.

### 3.3 Challenges and Application of Digital Media in History Learning

The application of digital media in history learning must be built as creatively as possible so that students and educators do not create a boring learning process. The development of the era makes it easier for us to provide high opportunities for students to explore and develop their creativity in digital literacy, but educators also have a responsibility to guard the school environment which requires a role in digital literacy, especially facilitating the search for information that has been used by most students in accessing learning materials. (Hobbs, 2013). A more contextual learning method is needed to be able to create an interactive multimedia learning method that allows students to obtain historical information online according to their needs. Multimedia-based history learning can be in the form of multimedia platform applications in the form of YouTube videos, Instagram and TikTok that can be accessed via mobile phones, laptops or PC computers and the like (Susanto et al., 2019).

According to (Hidayanti, 2021) the challenges that arise from the rapid progress of technology in history learning, it covers several aspects, namely:

1. Students do not have an interest in reading, in this section, the interest in reading is not balanced with the increasing use of the internet. Students are considered not yet able to control the use of the internet as a whole to interact as social beings and seek information. (Alrianingrum et al., 2024);
2. Digital literacy education is still mostly carried out at the university level, while the majority of active internet users do not only come from university circles. (Polonyi, 2016).

The abundant digital information resources are produced by the advancement of technology and the internet today. Everyone has unlimited access to the internet. Generation Z has been familiar with technology since childhood and relies on the internet to interact, learn and enjoy entertainment. They easily use digital devices and social media, making technology a primary tool in their daily activities (Sormin et al, 2019). Therefore, there is a huge opportunity to incorporate digital technology into history learning. This technology increases student engagement and increases their interest in history, it can also improve a dynamic and enjoyable learning environment.

Using digital technology in history learning, students can more easily provide wider accessibility to historical resources. Through the internet and various digital platforms, students can access various historical archives, artifact collections, and relevant documentation more easily. Giving students the opportunity to conduct independent research exploration, exploration and reflection on historical material in a more in-depth and personal way. Therefore, using digital technology in history learning is not only about solving problems, but also producing a more meaningful and relevant learning experience for students (Firmansyah, H., 2024). The author emphasizes that the application of creative digital media has a significant positive impact on history learning to avoid a boring process for students. The development of technology provides great opportunities for students to develop their creativity and digital literacy, but educators have a responsibility to supervise and direct the use of technology wisely. Interactive multimedia-based learning that can be accessed through various devices will improve historical understanding effectively. However, the challenges faced such as low interest in reading and lack of digital literacy among students, require special attention. However, with the advancement of technology that offers access to extensive historical resources, students can more easily explore and research independently. The integration of digital technology in history learning not only overcomes challenges, but also opens up great opportunities to create a more dynamic, relevant and enjoyable learning experience for students which ultimately increases their interest and understanding of history.

### 3.4 Recommendations for Effective Digital Media Implementation Strategies

Digital media is developing rapidly along with current technological developments, so that it can be utilized in the learning process, including the following:

#### 1. Learning Resources

Digital media has become a very important tool in education, providing various benefits as a learning resource. First, it allows easy access to a variety of information from all over the world. Resources such as journals, articles, educational videos, and *online courses* can be accessed anytime and anywhere, expanding the scope and depth of knowledge available to learners. Second, digital media offers incredible learning flexibility. Learners can learn according to their own schedule which is helpful for those with limited time such as workers or parents. Digital media allows the use of various learning formats such as text, audio, video, and animation that can meet the various learning styles of learners, both visual-auditory and kinesthetic. Third, digital media allows the customization of learning materials according to the individual needs of learners, providing a more personalized and effective learning experience. Fourth, digital learning resources are available for free or at an affordable cost compared to traditional textbooks and printed materials (Masdar Limbong et al., 2022).

#### 2. Access New Resources

Through digital media, educators and educational institutions can easily update learning content to reflect the latest developments in various fields of science. Digital technology allows adjustments to the needs of student materials so that they can understand the material accessed more and repeatedly. The use of digital media helps develop technological skills that are very important in today's digital era. These skills can be appreciated in academic conditions that can use the central role of technology. Helping to reduce educational gaps and provide more equitable learning opportunities for all students. Using digital media with interesting and interactive content can increase student motivation and involvement in the learning process. And finally using digital media in education is an important step towards a more inclusive and adaptive education system that is ready to face future challenges (Kuncoro et al., 2022).

#### 3. Increase Motivation

In the use of digital media, offering interesting content is the most important thing to increase students' motivation and involvement in the learning process. First, facilitating collaboration and interaction between students and educators can increase their involvement in the learning process and strengthen communication and teamwork skills, in professional life. Second, playing an important role in increasing students' motivation and involvement. Providing interesting content, feedback and facilities for collaboration to create more interesting and effective content. Third, creating a more interactive learning atmosphere. Students participate in the involvement of building technological skills that are very important in this digital era (Adedo, 2024). The author emphasizes that digital media plays a vital role in the learning process by providing easy access to a variety of flexible and personalized learning resources. Digital media allows learners to access information anytime and anywhere, offering a variety of learning formats that can be tailored to individual learning styles. In addition, digital media allows for fast and relevant material updates, as well as developing crucial technological skills in this digital era. The use of digital media increases student motivation through interesting and interactive content. This encourages active student engagement, strengthens collaboration between education and students, and improves communication and teamwork skills that are important in the professional world. All these benefits, the integration of digital media in education has the potential to create a learning system that is more inclusive, adaptive, and ready to face future challenges (Faturrohman, 2024).

## 4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the discussion above shows that the use of digital media has an important role in learning history, providing a significant positive impact on the learning process, especially in improving students' historical thinking skills. Digital technology makes it easier for students to access various historical sources that were previously difficult to reach, such as archives, artifact collections, and historical documentation, through online platforms. This provides a more interesting, interactive learning experience, and is relevant to current developments. As explained in this study, technology provides wider access to historical resources, allows students to explore more deeply, and develop analytical and critical thinking skills towards historical documents. The use of interactive multimedia also makes history learning

more creative, increasing students' interest and motivation in learning history. In addition, technology allows educators to provide fast and accurate feedback, which improves the overall quality of learning. However, although technology brings many benefits, there are challenges that need to be considered, such as low interest in reading among students and the need to improve digital literacy. Good digital literacy education is important so that students can sort and analyze information critically. In addition, the development of more contextual learning methods and interactive multimedia-based learning must also be considered so that history learning remains interesting and not boring. This study shows that digital media can create more inclusive, adaptive, and future-ready history learning. However, there are challenges such as dependence on technology and digital literacy issues that must be overcome so that the use of digital media can be optimal. Therefore, recommendations for further research are the development of more creative learning methods and ensuring effective digital literacy training for educators and students. The limitation of this study lies in the lack of data on the implementation of digital media in several areas that do not yet have adequate access to technology. Further research can dig deeper into strategies to overcome these problems and expand the application of technology in history education.

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