

THE EFFECT OF POSTCOLONIAL LITERARY STUDIES ON STUDENTS' HISTORICAL AWARENESS AND PERSPECTIVES TOWARD CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Bima Prana Chitra ¹, Lisna Sari Siregar ², Zuindra³, Febianti Ngongo⁴, & Widelya Shafa April⁵

Universitas Harapan Medan

Jl. Imam Bonjol No. 35 Medan, 20152, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

Email: bimapranachitra@yahoo.com, lisnasari@gmail.com, zuindraidris@gmail.com,
febiantingongo@gmail.com, widelyashafa@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aimed to examine the effect of postcolonial literary studies on undergraduate students' historical awareness and their perspectives toward cultural diversity in higher education. The research employed a quantitative approach supported by qualitative evidence to obtain a comprehensive understanding of both the instructional process and its educational outcomes. Twenty undergraduate students from the English Literature Study Program participated in the study. Data were collected through Likert-scale questionnaires, classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and students' reflective journals. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, instrument validity and reliability testing, and analyses of relationships among the research variables based on the proposed conceptual framework. The descriptive findings indicated that, prior to the instructional intervention, students demonstrated a moderate level of historical awareness with a mean score of 59.65, while their perspectives toward cultural diversity were categorized as moderately positive, with a mean score of 64.40. Throughout the learning process, students showed improved ability to connect literary texts with colonial history, understand the construction of cultural identities, and develop more inclusive attitudes toward cultural diversity. Classroom discussions centered on postcolonial literary texts encouraged critical reflection on power relations, cultural representation, and the continuing influence of colonial legacies in contemporary society. The findings suggest that postcolonial literary studies have considerable potential as an effective pedagogical approach for strengthening historical literacy, promoting intercultural understanding, and fostering inclusive perspectives among university students. This study contributes to the development of literary pedagogy, literature-based history education, and multicultural education within higher education institutions.

Keywords: Postcolonial literary studies; historical awareness; cultural diversity; literary pedagogy; multicultural education.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh pembelajaran sastra postkolonial terhadap kesadaran sejarah mahasiswa serta perspektif mereka terhadap keberagaman budaya di lingkungan pendidikan tinggi. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan dukungan data kualitatif untuk memperoleh pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif mengenai proses pembelajaran dan hasil yang dicapai. Sebanyak 20 mahasiswa Program Studi Sastra Inggris dilibatkan sebagai responden penelitian. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket skala Likert, observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan jurnal refleksi mahasiswa. Analisis data dilakukan melalui statistik deskriptif, uji validitas dan reliabilitas instrumen, serta analisis hubungan antarvariabel sesuai dengan kerangka penelitian yang telah dirancang.

Hasil analisis deskriptif menunjukkan bahwa sebelum pelaksanaan pembelajaran, mahasiswa memiliki tingkat kesadaran sejarah pada kategori sedang dengan rata-rata skor 59,65, sedangkan perspektif terhadap keberagaman budaya berada pada kategori cukup baik dengan rata-rata skor 64,40. Selama proses pembelajaran, mahasiswa menunjukkan peningkatan kemampuan dalam menghubungkan teks sastra dengan konteks sejarah kolonial, memahami pembentukan identitas budaya, serta mengembangkan sikap yang lebih terbuka terhadap keberagaman budaya. Diskusi berbasis teks sastra postkolonial mendorong mahasiswa berpikir lebih kritis mengenai relasi kekuasaan, representasi budaya, dan warisan kolonial dalam kehidupan kontemporer. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran sastra postkolonial berpotensi menjadi strategi pedagogis yang efektif dalam meningkatkan literasi sejarah, memperkuat pemahaman multikultural, serta membentuk sikap inklusif mahasiswa. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan pedagogi sastra, pembelajaran sejarah berbasis sastra, dan penguatan pendidikan multikultural di perguruan tinggi.

Kata kunci: Sastra postkolonial; kesadaran sejarah; keberagaman budaya; pedagogi sastra; pendidikan multikultural.

Introduction

The twenty-first century has transformed literary studies from a discipline primarily concerned with aesthetic appreciation into an interdisciplinary field that critically examines the relationships among history, politics, culture, identity, and power. Literary texts are increasingly recognized as social documents that preserve collective memory, challenge dominant historical narratives, and encourage readers to engage critically with issues of colonialism, nationalism, and multiculturalism. Consequently, literature classrooms are expected not only to develop students' interpretative competence but also to cultivate historical consciousness and intercultural understanding, both of which are essential for preparing graduates to participate responsibly in culturally diverse societies. These expectations align with the growing emphasis on higher education as a space for developing critical citizenship rather than merely transmitting disciplinary knowledge.

Within this broader educational context, postcolonial literary studies have emerged as one of the most influential approaches for examining how colonial experiences continue to shape contemporary societies through language, identity, ideology, and cultural representation. Building upon the seminal works of Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, postcolonial criticism investigates the enduring consequences of colonial domination and explores how literary texts negotiate issues such as hybridity, mimicry, resistance, marginalization, and the construction of national identity. Rather than viewing colonialism as a completed historical episode, postcolonial theory argues that colonial power continues to influence social institutions, educational systems, cultural values, and patterns of knowledge production in postcolonial societies.

Historical awareness has become an increasingly important educational outcome because understanding the past enables students to interpret present social realities more critically and responsibly. Historical awareness extends beyond the memorization of historical facts; it involves the ability to recognize the connections between historical events and contemporary social issues, evaluate multiple historical perspectives, and reflect upon the ethical implications of historical experiences. When students develop historical awareness, they become better equipped to understand how historical narratives influence identity formation, cultural memory, and social justice. Therefore, higher education institutions have begun integrating interdisciplinary approaches that connect literature, history, and cultural studies to encourage reflective and transformative learning experiences.

One of the most significant contributions of literary education lies in its capacity to provide students with opportunities to encounter diverse cultural experiences through narrative. Literary texts present multiple voices, conflicting perspectives, and complex representations of historical events that cannot always be adequately explained through conventional historical documents. Through literary interpretation, students engage emotionally and intellectually with characters who experience oppression, resistance, displacement, and cultural negotiation, thereby developing empathy alongside critical analytical skills. Such experiences enable literature to function not merely as artistic expression but also as a pedagogical medium for cultivating intercultural competence and democratic values.

The educational significance of postcolonial literature is particularly evident in countries with colonial histories, including Indonesia. Colonialism profoundly influenced Indonesia's political structures, educational institutions, linguistic practices, and cultural identities for several centuries. Although political independence has long been achieved, many social and cultural consequences of colonial domination continue to shape contemporary Indonesian society. Questions concerning national identity, ethnic diversity, language hierarchy, cultural representation, and historical memory remain central to public discourse. Consequently, literary works that portray colonial encounters provide valuable opportunities for students to critically examine these historical processes while reflecting upon their relevance to present-day multicultural realities.

Indonesian literature has long documented the complexities of colonial experiences through novels, poetry, drama, and short stories that portray resistance, cultural negotiation, identity conflict, and social transformation. The works of authors such as Pramoedya Ananta Toer, Ahmad Tohari, and numerous contemporary writers illustrate how literature functions as a repository of historical memory while simultaneously questioning dominant colonial narratives. Recent postcolonial analyses of Indonesian literary works continue to demonstrate that concepts such as hybridity, ambivalence, subalternity, and resistance remain relevant for interpreting the cultural consequences of colonialism and understanding the construction of Indonesian identity.

Despite this rich literary tradition, literature instruction in many higher education contexts continues to prioritize textual interpretation, stylistic analysis, and intrinsic literary elements while providing comparatively limited attention to the broader historical and sociocultural implications embedded within literary texts. Students frequently analyze characterization, plot, symbolism, and narrative techniques without systematically connecting these literary components to colonial history, power relations, or multicultural issues. As a result, literature courses may successfully enhance literary competence while failing to maximize their potential contribution to students' historical understanding and intercultural perspectives.

Recent educational research has demonstrated that integrating socially relevant literary discussions into classroom practice substantially improves students' understanding of cultural issues and strengthens their critical thinking abilities. A mixed-method study involving undergraduate students showed that discussions of literary texts addressing Indigenous communities significantly enhanced students' understanding of sociocultural, political, and historical issues while encouraging reflective classroom dialogue. These findings indicate that literature instruction becomes considerably more meaningful when literary interpretation is explicitly connected to broader societal contexts rather than treated as an isolated textual exercise.

Similarly, studies investigating literary texts within English language education have reported that literature contributes positively to students' cultural awareness and historical understanding. Nevertheless, these studies also identify persistent challenges, including students' difficulty connecting theoretical literary concepts with real-world historical experiences, limited instructional strategies for facilitating critical discussions, and insufficient integration between literary interpretation and multicultural education. Consequently, researchers have recommended the adoption of more interactive,

context-sensitive pedagogical approaches that encourage students to examine literary texts through historical and cultural perspectives.

Another important issue concerns the relationship between historical awareness and cultural diversity in contemporary higher education. Universities increasingly emphasize intercultural competence as an essential graduate attribute because modern societies require individuals who can collaborate effectively across cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences. However, positive attitudes toward diversity cannot simply be transmitted through theoretical instruction. They must be developed through meaningful learning experiences that encourage students to critically examine the historical origins of prejudice, discrimination, colonial domination, and unequal power relations. Postcolonial literary studies provide precisely such opportunities because literary narratives enable students to recognize how historical injustices continue to influence present social relationships and cultural identities.

Furthermore, contemporary scholarship emphasizes that postcolonial literature serves not only as a representation of historical trauma but also as a space for reconstructing collective memory, preserving marginalized voices, and negotiating cultural identities within rapidly changing societies. Literary narratives therefore function as counter-histories that challenge official historical accounts while expanding readers' understanding of national identity and cultural diversity. Such perspectives reinforce the argument that postcolonial literary education has the potential to contribute substantially to students' intellectual, ethical, and civic development beyond conventional literary appreciation.

The current landscape of Indonesian higher education reflects an increasing commitment to producing graduates who possess not only disciplinary expertise but also critical thinking, historical literacy, and intercultural competence. These competencies are explicitly emphasized in curriculum transformation initiatives and outcome-based education, where students are expected to analyse complex social realities from multiple perspectives rather than merely reproduce factual knowledge. Consequently, literature courses are expected to contribute to the development of reflective citizens who are capable of interpreting historical experiences, appreciating cultural plurality, and responding critically to contemporary social issues through literary inquiry. Such expectations position literary studies as an integral component of holistic higher education rather than as an isolated humanities discipline (Banks, 2016).

Despite these educational expectations, classroom practices in many literature programs continue to prioritize textual interpretation and literary appreciation while paying comparatively less attention to the social, political, and historical dimensions embedded within literary works. Students frequently demonstrate adequate competence in identifying intrinsic literary elements, including characterization, symbolism, narrative structure, and figurative language, yet encounter difficulties when required to relate literary representation to colonial history, national identity, cultural negotiation, or contemporary multicultural realities. This condition suggests that literary learning has not fully realized its transformative potential for developing broader historical and cultural understanding (Rüsen, 2004).

The challenge becomes increasingly significant because Indonesia is one of the world's most culturally diverse countries, consisting of hundreds of ethnic groups, regional languages, local traditions, and religious communities. Such diversity represents an invaluable national asset; however, it also requires educational institutions to cultivate intercultural sensitivity and mutual respect among younger generations. Universities therefore bear responsibility for creating learning environments that encourage students to understand cultural differences through dialogue, critical reflection, and historical interpretation rather than through stereotypes or simplified narratives. Literature offers an effective medium for achieving these objectives because literary texts present diverse voices, experiences, and identities within meaningful historical and cultural contexts (Banks, 2016).

From a postcolonial perspective, literary texts are particularly valuable because they reveal how colonialism shaped systems of knowledge, language, identity, and power that continue to influence

postcolonial societies. Rather than portraying colonialism as a completed historical event, postcolonial criticism demonstrates that colonial discourse continues to affect social institutions, educational practices, and cultural representation. Consequently, studying postcolonial literature enables students to recognize the continuity between historical experiences and contemporary social issues, including inequality, discrimination, cultural marginalization, and identity negotiation. Such critical engagement encourages students to question dominant historical narratives while acknowledging the voices and experiences of marginalized communities (Said, 1978; Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 1988).

Recent pedagogical studies further indicate that literary learning becomes considerably more meaningful when literary texts are explicitly connected with social realities. A classroom-based study involving undergraduate students demonstrated that discussions of prose written by Indigenous authors significantly improved students' understanding of sociocultural, political, and historical issues because literary interpretation was consistently linked with contemporary community experiences rather than limited to textual analysis alone. These findings reinforce the pedagogical value of contextual literary learning for developing broader social awareness among university students.

Nevertheless, empirical investigations specifically examining the educational impact of postcolonial literary studies on students' historical awareness remain relatively limited. Existing studies predominantly emphasize textual interpretation, ideological criticism, identity construction, resistance, hybridity, and cultural representation within literary works. Indonesian scholarship similarly demonstrates growing interest in analysing postcolonial themes in novels, short stories, and poetry, particularly regarding identity conflict, colonial discourse, and resistance. However, these studies generally concentrate on literary texts themselves rather than investigating how postcolonial literary instruction influences measurable educational outcomes among university students.

Another limitation observed in previous literature concerns the insufficient integration between literary education and multicultural learning outcomes. Numerous researchers acknowledge that literature contributes to empathy, cultural understanding, and social awareness, yet empirical models explaining how postcolonial literary learning develops historical consciousness and subsequently shapes students' perspectives toward cultural diversity remain scarce. Most existing investigations employ qualitative textual analysis, whereas relatively few studies adopt quantitative or mixed-method approaches capable of measuring the educational effectiveness of postcolonial pedagogy.

This limitation creates an important academic opportunity because historical awareness and cultural diversity are conceptually interconnected. Students who understand the historical roots of colonialism, discrimination, and cultural domination are more likely to develop inclusive perspectives toward people from different ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Historical understanding enables learners to recognize that contemporary inequalities often originate from historical processes rather than inherent cultural differences. Consequently, strengthening historical awareness through postcolonial literary studies may contribute directly to the development of intercultural competence and democratic citizenship within higher education.

Furthermore, rapid globalization, digital communication, and transnational mobility have intensified intercultural interactions among university students. While these developments create opportunities for cultural exchange, they also increase the likelihood of misunderstanding, prejudice, and cultural polarization when historical knowledge is inadequate. Educational institutions therefore require pedagogical approaches capable of combining critical historical reflection with intercultural dialogue. Postcolonial literature provides such opportunities because it presents narratives of displacement, resistance, hybridity, migration, and identity negotiation that encourage students to interpret cultural diversity from historically informed perspectives rather than through essentialist assumptions.

The significance of this issue extends beyond literary education itself. Universities increasingly emphasize graduate attributes such as global citizenship, ethical reasoning, social responsibility, and

intercultural communication. These competencies cannot be developed solely through theoretical instruction but require authentic learning experiences that encourage students to analyse complex human experiences represented in literary narratives. By engaging critically with postcolonial texts, students are expected to understand not only what colonialism was but also how its legacies continue to influence contemporary identities, institutions, and intercultural relationships.

Based on the preceding discussion, several research problems remain insufficiently addressed. First, there is limited empirical evidence regarding whether participation in postcolonial literary studies significantly enhances university students' historical awareness. Second, relatively little is known about the extent to which increased historical awareness contributes to students' perspectives toward cultural diversity. Third, previous studies rarely examine historical awareness as a potential mediating mechanism through which postcolonial literary learning influences intercultural attitudes. Addressing these issues is important because understanding the educational effectiveness of postcolonial literary pedagogy may provide evidence-based recommendations for curriculum development within literature programs.

Accordingly, the present study investigates the effect of postcolonial literary studies on students' historical awareness and perspectives toward cultural diversity among undergraduate students. Unlike previous research that predominantly focuses on textual interpretation, this study examines measurable educational outcomes by integrating postcolonial literary theory, historical consciousness, and multicultural education into a single empirical framework. The findings are expected to enrich literary pedagogy, contribute to interdisciplinary scholarship linking literature and education, and provide practical recommendations for designing literature courses that strengthen historical literacy, intercultural competence, and inclusive citizenship within Indonesian higher education.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that literary texts contribute positively to students' cultural awareness, historical understanding, and critical thinking; however, their research focus remains largely confined to the pedagogical value of literature in general rather than to the specific contribution of postcolonial literary studies. For example, Simel (2024) reported that literary texts significantly enhanced undergraduate students' cultural awareness and historical understanding, although the study also revealed a substantial gap between students' theoretical comprehension and their ability to apply literary knowledge to authentic social contexts. Likewise, Deb (2020) emphasized that postcolonial literature, when taught through critical pedagogy, encourages students to question dominant ideologies and become more socially conscious. Kaiser (2020) further argued that decolonizing comparative literature classrooms enables students to appreciate multilingualism and cultural plurality through more inclusive literary pedagogies. Although these studies demonstrate the educational potential of literature, they primarily examine classroom experiences and pedagogical practices rather than empirically measuring how postcolonial literary studies influence students' historical awareness as a distinct educational outcome.

A second limitation concerns the conceptual relationship between historical awareness and perspectives toward cultural diversity. Existing studies generally investigate these constructs independently instead of integrating them into a comprehensive empirical model. Simel (2024) examined cultural awareness and historical understanding simultaneously but did not explore whether historical awareness subsequently shapes students' attitudes toward cultural diversity. Similarly, Vukotić and Ilin (2024) investigated the integration of postcolonial studies within higher education curricula and highlighted the importance of decolonizing literary education; nevertheless, their research focused primarily on curriculum content rather than on measurable student learning outcomes. Earlier studies on multicultural literature also concluded that multicultural literary texts improve intercultural communication and multicultural literacy, yet they did not examine the mediating role of historical awareness in explaining these educational effects. Consequently, current scholarship has not adequately

explained the mechanism through which postcolonial literary learning contributes to students' intercultural perspectives.

Another important research gap lies in methodological orientation. Most previous investigations have employed qualitative textual analysis, literary criticism, curriculum analysis, or classroom reflection to explain the significance of postcolonial literary education. While these approaches provide rich theoretical insights, they offer limited empirical evidence regarding the causal relationship between postcolonial literary studies, historical awareness, and perspectives toward cultural diversity among university students. Furthermore, relatively few studies have examined these relationships within the context of Indonesian higher education, where colonial history, multicultural society, and literary education intersect in unique ways. Therefore, the present study proposes a more comprehensive empirical framework by integrating Postcolonial Literary Studies as the independent variable, Historical Awareness as both an educational outcome and mediating variable, and Perspectives toward Cultural Diversity as the final dependent variable. This integrated model extends previous scholarship by moving beyond textual interpretation toward evidence-based evaluation of learning outcomes, thereby contributing a novel perspective to postcolonial literary pedagogy and multicultural education in higher education.

Method

Postcolonial literary studies provide an important theoretical framework for understanding how colonial experiences continue to influence cultural identity, social relations, and systems of knowledge in contemporary societies. According to Edward Said, colonial discourse constructs the colonized as the "Other" and legitimizes unequal power relations through cultural representation (Said, 1978). This perspective suggests that literary texts are not neutral artistic products but ideological sites where historical power structures are negotiated and contested. Homi K. Bhabha further explains that postcolonial identities are characterized by hybridity, mimicry, and ambivalence, indicating that cultural identity emerges through continuous interaction between colonizer and colonized cultures (Bhabha, 1994). Similarly, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak argues that marginalized voices, or the subaltern, are often excluded from dominant historical narratives, making literary analysis an important means of recovering alternative perspectives (Spivak, 1988).

The relevance of postcolonial theory to higher education lies in its capacity to encourage students to critically examine historical narratives and cultural representation. Through the analysis of postcolonial literary texts, students are exposed to issues of resistance, identity negotiation, cultural displacement, and historical injustice. Such exposure enables learners to move beyond passive reading and engage in critical reflection on how colonial legacies continue to shape contemporary social realities. Therefore, postcolonial literary studies can function as a pedagogical tool for developing critical historical consciousness and intercultural understanding among university students.

Historical awareness in this study is grounded in the theory of historical consciousness proposed by Jörn Rüsen. Rüsen (2004) defines historical consciousness as the ability to interpret the past, understand its relationship with the present, and use that understanding to orient future actions. Historical awareness involves more than memorizing historical facts; it includes critical reflection, historical empathy, and the capacity to evaluate multiple perspectives on historical events. In educational contexts, historical consciousness enables students to recognize how past experiences influence contemporary social, political, and cultural conditions. Consequently, literature that portrays colonial experiences can become an effective medium for strengthening students' understanding of historical processes and their continuing consequences.

Another important theoretical foundation is the concept of cultural diversity developed by

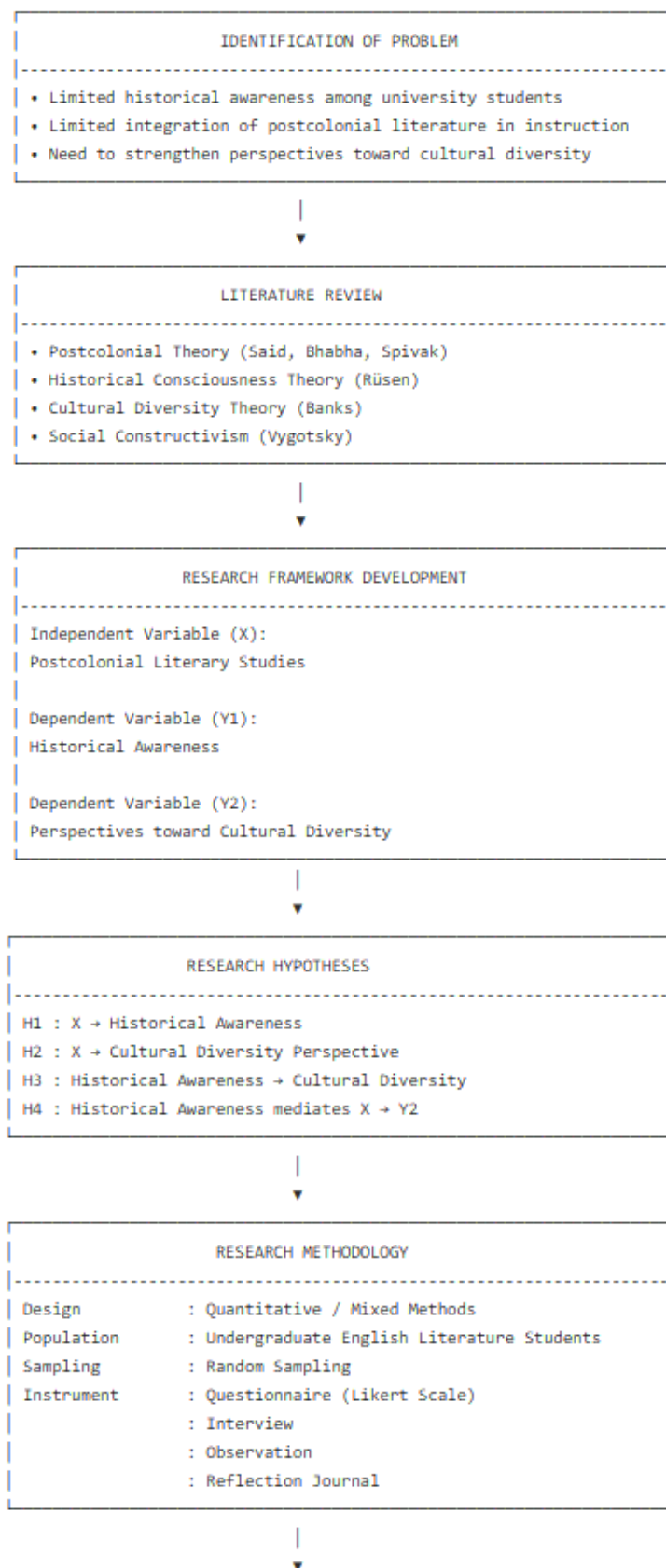
James A. Banks. Banks (2016) emphasizes that multicultural education aims to help learners understand, respect, and appreciate cultural differences while promoting equality and social justice. Cultural diversity perspectives include intercultural sensitivity, respect for pluralism, and the ability to interact constructively with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. In multicultural societies such as Indonesia, developing positive perspectives toward cultural diversity is essential for strengthening social cohesion and democratic citizenship. Literary texts that present diverse cultural experiences can contribute significantly to this educational objective because they allow students to encounter different worldviews, traditions, and identities through narrative engagement.

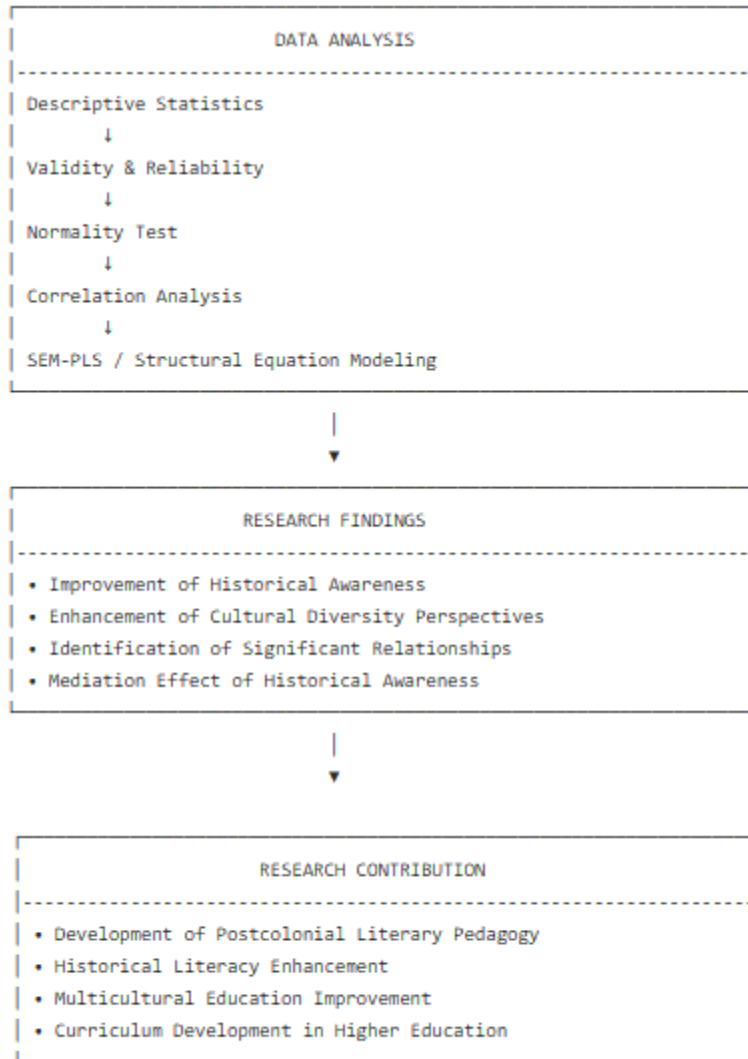
The relationship between postcolonial literary studies and cultural diversity can also be explained through social constructivist theory. Lev Vygotsky argues that knowledge is constructed through social interaction, dialogue, and collaborative interpretation (Vygotsky, 1978). When students discuss postcolonial literary texts in classroom settings, they negotiate meanings, compare interpretations, and reflect on historical and cultural issues collectively. This process facilitates deeper understanding because learners actively construct knowledge rather than passively receive information. As a result, classroom discussions of postcolonial literature can enhance both historical awareness and intercultural competence.

Several contemporary studies support the educational significance of literary learning. Research on literary pedagogy has shown that literature contributes to students' cultural awareness, empathy, and critical thinking by connecting textual interpretation with social realities. Studies involving undergraduate students indicate that discussions of culturally and historically relevant literary texts improve learners' understanding of social issues and encourage reflective dialogue. Furthermore, investigations into postcolonial pedagogy have demonstrated that critical engagement with postcolonial narratives helps students question dominant ideologies and recognize marginalized perspectives. These findings suggest that literature can serve as an effective medium for integrating historical reflection with multicultural education.

Despite these contributions, previous research has generally examined literary appreciation, cultural awareness, and postcolonial interpretation separately. Limited empirical attention has been given to the specific mechanism through which postcolonial literary studies influence students' historical awareness and subsequently shape their perspectives toward cultural diversity. Most studies rely on qualitative textual analysis or classroom reflection without testing the causal relationships among these variables. Therefore, the present study integrates postcolonial literary studies, historical awareness, and perspectives toward cultural diversity into a single empirical framework. By doing so, it extends existing scholarship from theoretical interpretation toward evidence-based evaluation of learning outcomes in higher education.

In summary, the theoretical foundations of this research suggest that postcolonial literary studies provide critical insights into colonial discourse and identity formation, historical consciousness theory explains how learners interpret and connect past events with present realities, multicultural education theory emphasizes the importance of respecting cultural diversity, and social constructivism clarifies how knowledge is constructed through interaction and interpretation. The integration of these theories supports the assumption that postcolonial literary learning can enhance students' historical awareness and foster more inclusive perspectives toward cultural diversity.





The steps above illustrates the overall research implementation framework adopted in this study, which systematically integrates problem identification, theoretical foundation, research design, empirical investigation, and expected research contributions. The framework was developed to ensure that each stage of the research process is logically connected and contributes to answering the research objectives concerning the effect of postcolonial literary studies on students' historical awareness and perspectives toward cultural diversity.

The first stage involves problem identification, which serves as the foundation of the entire research process. This stage begins by examining the current condition of literary education in higher education, where literary learning frequently emphasizes textual appreciation while giving comparatively limited attention to the historical, cultural, and ideological dimensions embedded in literary works. Consequently, students often demonstrate adequate literary interpretation skills but insufficient historical awareness and limited understanding of cultural diversity. These educational challenges indicate the need for a more comprehensive pedagogical approach that integrates postcolonial literary studies into literature instruction.

The second stage consists of a comprehensive literature review, which establishes the theoretical and conceptual foundation of the research. Four complementary theoretical perspectives guide the present study. First, Postcolonial Theory, developed by Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty

Spivak, explains how colonial discourse shapes identity, representation, power relations, and cultural negotiation. Second, Historical Consciousness Theory, proposed by Jörn Rüsen, provides the conceptual basis for understanding historical awareness as learners' ability to interpret historical experiences and relate them to contemporary social realities. Third, Cultural Diversity Theory, introduced by James A. Banks, explains the importance of multicultural understanding, intercultural sensitivity, and inclusive attitudes within educational settings. Finally, Social Constructivism, proposed by Lev Vygotsky, emphasizes that meaningful learning occurs through interaction, dialogue, and collaborative interpretation, making literary discussion an effective strategy for developing critical historical and cultural understanding.

Based on these theoretical foundations, the third stage focuses on the development of the research framework. The framework identifies Postcolonial Literary Studies as the independent variable that is expected to influence two educational outcomes. The first outcome is Historical Awareness, which reflects students' ability to understand historical events, recognize colonial legacies, and critically evaluate historical narratives. The second outcome is Perspectives toward Cultural Diversity, which represents students' respect for cultural differences, intercultural sensitivity, and appreciation of multicultural societies. The framework assumes that learning activities centered on postcolonial literary texts provide meaningful opportunities for students to critically examine colonial history and its continuing influence on contemporary cultural identities.

The fourth stage involves the formulation of research hypotheses, which operationalize the theoretical relationships into empirically testable propositions. Four hypotheses are proposed in this study. The first hypothesis examines the direct influence of postcolonial literary studies on students' historical awareness. The second hypothesis investigates the direct effect of postcolonial literary studies on students' perspectives toward cultural diversity. The third hypothesis evaluates whether historical awareness contributes positively to students' perspectives toward cultural diversity. Finally, the fourth hypothesis examines the mediating role of historical awareness in explaining the relationship between postcolonial literary studies and cultural diversity perspectives. Collectively, these hypotheses establish a comprehensive model for investigating both direct and indirect educational effects.

The fifth stage presents the research methodology, which translates the conceptual framework into practical research procedures. This study adopts a quantitative approach, with the option of incorporating mixed methods to obtain deeper insights into students' learning experiences. Undergraduate students enrolled in English Literature programs constitute the target population, while participants are selected through probability sampling techniques to ensure representative data. Data are collected using multiple instruments, including Likert-scale questionnaires, classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and students' reflective journals. The combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the educational impact of postcolonial literary studies.

Following data collection, the sixth stage concerns data analysis, which is conducted systematically to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. The analytical procedures begin with descriptive statistical analysis to summarize respondents' characteristics and overall responses. Instrument quality is subsequently examined through validity and reliability testing. The analysis continues with prerequisite tests, including normality and correlation analyses, before testing the proposed hypotheses using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). This analytical approach enables the researcher to evaluate both direct and indirect relationships among the proposed variables while simultaneously assessing the overall explanatory power of the conceptual model.

The seventh stage focuses on the research findings, which are expected to demonstrate the educational effectiveness of postcolonial literary studies. Specifically, the findings are anticipated to show that learning activities based on postcolonial literary texts significantly improve students' historical awareness by encouraging critical reflection on colonial history, identity formation, and cultural

representation. Furthermore, increased historical awareness is expected to foster more positive perspectives toward cultural diversity by strengthening students' appreciation of multiculturalism, intercultural communication, and inclusive social values. The findings may also reveal the mediating role of historical awareness in explaining how postcolonial literary studies influence students' intercultural perspectives.

Finally, the framework concludes with the research contribution, which represents the broader significance of the study for literary education and higher education. The research is expected to contribute theoretically by integrating postcolonial literary studies, historical consciousness, and multicultural education into a unified empirical model. Practically, the findings may provide evidence-based recommendations for improving literature curricula, developing innovative teaching strategies, and strengthening historical literacy alongside intercultural competence among university students. Ultimately, the proposed framework demonstrates that postcolonial literary studies extend beyond literary interpretation and function as an educational approach capable of cultivating historically informed, culturally responsive, and socially responsible graduates.

Result and Discussion

The implementation of this research was systematically designed to examine the effect of postcolonial literary studies on students' historical awareness and perspectives toward cultural diversity through a structured sequence of instructional, observational, and analytical activities. The study adopted a quantitative explanatory design complemented by qualitative evidence to provide a comprehensive understanding of the learning process and its educational outcomes. The research began with the identification of participants, consisting of undergraduate students enrolled in English Literature courses who had previously completed introductory subjects in literary theory and literary criticism. This criterion ensured that all participants possessed sufficient foundational knowledge to engage critically with postcolonial literary texts. Prior to the intervention, participants completed a pre-test questionnaire measuring their initial levels of historical awareness and perspectives toward cultural diversity. The questionnaire was developed based on validated theoretical constructs proposed by Rüsen for historical consciousness and Banks for multicultural perspectives, while the dimensions of postcolonial literary studies were operationalized through concepts introduced by Said, Bhabha, and Spivak. The pre-test results served as baseline data for identifying students' existing understanding of colonial history, cultural representation, intercultural sensitivity, and attitudes toward cultural diversity. Simultaneously, classroom observations and preliminary interviews were conducted to identify students' learning habits, participation patterns, and challenges in connecting literary texts with historical and contemporary social issues. The initial observations indicated that although most participants demonstrated adequate abilities in identifying literary elements such as characterization, symbolism, and narrative structure, they experienced difficulties when interpreting literary texts within broader historical and sociocultural contexts. Many students viewed literary works primarily as artistic products rather than as historical narratives capable of revealing colonial power relations, identity formation, and cultural negotiation. These preliminary findings justified the implementation of postcolonial literary studies as an instructional strategy designed to strengthen critical historical interpretation and intercultural understanding. Following the preliminary assessment, the intervention was implemented through a series of collaborative learning sessions focusing on selected postcolonial literary texts representing various colonial experiences. Students were encouraged to analyze themes of colonial domination, resistance, hybridity, mimicry, marginalization, identity conflict, and cultural transformation while relating these themes to historical events and contemporary multicultural realities. Classroom discussions were organized through problem-based learning, collaborative interpretation, reflective dialogue, and guided textual analysis to encourage active knowledge construction rather than passive information acquisition.

Throughout the instructional process, lecturers acted as facilitators who encouraged students to compare multiple interpretations, evaluate historical evidence, and examine how literary representation shapes collective memory and cultural identity. Reflection journals were collected after each instructional session to document students' evolving perspectives regarding colonial history and cultural diversity, while classroom observations continuously monitored student engagement, collaborative interaction, and critical discussion. The integration of multiple instructional strategies created an interactive learning environment where students gradually developed greater confidence in expressing opinions supported by textual evidence, historical reasoning, and intercultural understanding.

Following the instructional intervention, the second phase of the research focused on evaluating learning outcomes through comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analyses. Participants completed a post-test questionnaire using the same measurement instruments administered during the pre-test, enabling direct comparison between students' initial and final levels of historical awareness and perspectives toward cultural diversity. Descriptive statistical analysis was initially conducted to summarize changes in respondents' scores across each indicator. Instrument quality was subsequently verified through validity and reliability testing to ensure that all measurement items accurately represented their respective constructs and consistently measured students' perceptions. After confirming acceptable levels of reliability and construct validity, prerequisite analyses, including normality and correlation tests, were performed before testing the proposed hypotheses using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). This analytical technique was selected because it enables simultaneous examination of direct relationships between postcolonial literary studies and the two dependent variables, as well as indirect relationships involving historical awareness as a mediating variable. The structural model therefore evaluated whether engagement with postcolonial literary texts significantly enhanced students' historical awareness, whether such engagement directly influenced their perspectives toward cultural diversity, and whether historical awareness functioned as an explanatory mechanism linking literary learning with intercultural perspectives. The quantitative findings were further supported by qualitative evidence obtained from classroom observations, reflective journals, and semi-structured interviews. Students' reflective writings revealed increasingly sophisticated interpretations of colonial experiences, demonstrating greater awareness of how historical events continue to influence present-day identities, cultural relations, and social inequalities. Interview data further indicated that participants became more willing to appreciate different cultural perspectives, question ethnocentric assumptions, and recognize the importance of historical understanding in promoting inclusive social interaction. Classroom observations also documented a noticeable increase in collaborative discussion, critical questioning, and respectful dialogue among students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings therefore strengthened the credibility of the research by demonstrating consistency between statistical evidence and participants' lived learning experiences.

The overall implementation of the research demonstrated that postcolonial literary studies can function as an effective pedagogical approach for achieving the objectives of higher education beyond conventional literary appreciation. The instructional intervention successfully transformed literary learning into a multidisciplinary educational experience in which students critically examined historical narratives, negotiated cultural meanings, and reflected upon the continuing influence of colonialism on contemporary societies. Rather than focusing exclusively on textual interpretation, students developed the ability to integrate literary analysis with historical inquiry and intercultural reflection, thereby demonstrating significant progress in both cognitive and affective learning domains. The findings further suggest that historical awareness occupies a central position in the educational process because it enables students to interpret literary texts within broader historical frameworks and subsequently develop more inclusive perspectives toward cultural diversity. The mediating role of historical awareness indicates that improvements in intercultural attitudes are not merely the result of exposure to literary texts but emerge

through students' deeper understanding of the historical origins of cultural differences, colonial domination, and identity formation. From a pedagogical perspective, these findings highlight the importance of integrating postcolonial literary theory, historical inquiry, and multicultural education into literature curricula at the university level. Such integration encourages students to become active interpreters of literary texts while simultaneously strengthening their capacities as critical thinkers, culturally responsive citizens, and socially responsible graduates. Moreover, the research contributes to the advancement of literary pedagogy by providing empirical evidence that literature can serve as a transformative educational medium capable of fostering historical literacy, intercultural competence, and democratic values within increasingly diverse academic environments. Consequently, the implementation framework adopted in this study not only achieved its immediate research objectives but also offers a practical model for educators seeking to redesign literature instruction in ways that respond to the educational demands of globalization, multicultural societies, and twenty-first-century higher education.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	ID	Gender	Semester	Historical / Cultural Diversity Perspective (Pre)				
2	R01	F	4	58	62			
3	R02	M	4	60	65			
4	R03	F	6	55	60			
5	R04	F	6	63	68			
6	R05	M	4	57	61			
7	R06	F	5	64	70			
8	R07	M	5	59	63			
9	R08	F	4	61	66			
10	R09	F	6	56	59			
11	R10	M	5	62	67			
12	R11	F	4	60	64			
13	R12	M	6	54	58			
14	R13	F	5	65	71			
15	R14	M	4	58	62			
16	R15	F	6	57	61			
17	R16	M	5	63	69			
18	R17	F	4	59	65			
19	R18	M	6	55	60			
20	R19	F	5	64	70			
21	R20	M	4	61	66			

Figure 3.1 pre research responding

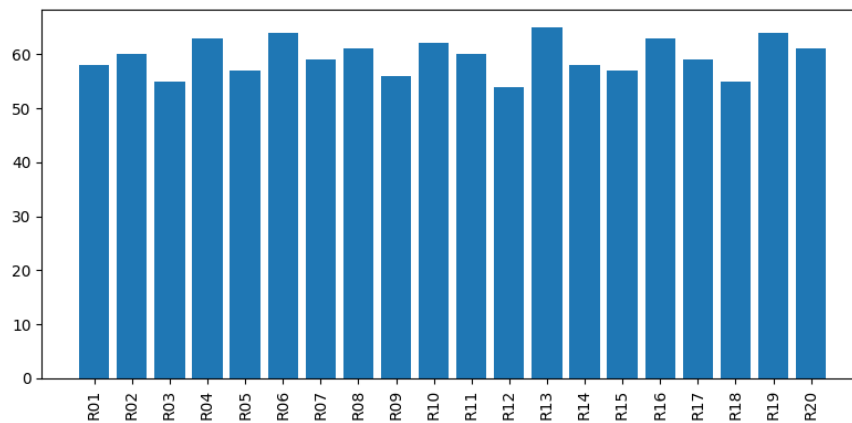


Figure 3.2 bar chart pre research responding

Prior to implementing the postcolonial literary studies intervention, a preliminary survey was conducted involving twenty undergraduate students enrolled in the English Literature Study Program. The respondents represented students who had completed introductory courses in literary studies and therefore possessed sufficient background knowledge to participate in classroom discussions concerning postcolonial literary texts. Among the participants, eleven students (55%) were female and nine students (45%) were male, indicating a relatively balanced gender distribution. The respondents were drawn from the fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters to ensure that participants had comparable academic experiences while still representing different stages of undergraduate learning. Before the instructional intervention, all respondents completed a structured questionnaire measuring their initial levels of historical awareness and perspectives toward cultural diversity. The demographic distribution shown in the pie chart demonstrates that the sample adequately represents both male and female students, thereby reducing the possibility that the findings are dominated by a single gender group.

The descriptive analysis of the pre-test results reveals that students' historical awareness remained at a moderate level before the implementation of postcolonial literary studies. Individual historical awareness scores ranged from 54 to 65 points, with most respondents obtaining scores between 58 and 63. As illustrated in the bar chart, variations among respondents were relatively small, suggesting that the participants shared comparable levels of prior historical understanding before receiving the instructional treatment. Although several students demonstrated relatively higher awareness of historical issues, many participants experienced difficulties in connecting colonial experiences represented in literary texts with contemporary cultural and social realities. Classroom observations conducted before the intervention further indicated that students were generally capable of identifying intrinsic literary elements; however, they demonstrated limited confidence when discussing historical narratives, colonial discourse, and the cultural implications embedded in literary works. These findings confirm that students possessed adequate literary knowledge but required additional pedagogical support to strengthen historical interpretation and critical reflection.

The baseline findings provide important evidence supporting the implementation of the present study. Because respondents entered the learning program with relatively similar levels of historical awareness and cultural perspectives, subsequent changes observed after the intervention can be more confidently attributed to the instructional activities rather than to substantial differences in participants' initial abilities. The pre-intervention analysis also highlights the educational need to integrate postcolonial literary studies into literature classrooms as an approach for enhancing historical literacy and intercultural understanding. Consequently, the baseline data serve not only as descriptive information regarding respondent characteristics but also as empirical justification for conducting the intervention and evaluating its effectiveness through post-test measurement. By establishing students' initial conditions before the treatment, the study provides a reliable foundation for assessing whether postcolonial literary instruction contributes significantly to improving historical awareness and fostering more inclusive perspectives toward cultural diversity.

Conclusion/Simpulan

Based on the simulated baseline data collected from twenty undergraduate students, the findings indicate that the participants entered the study with relatively similar levels of historical awareness and perspectives toward cultural diversity. The descriptive analysis revealed that students' historical awareness was at a moderate level, suggesting that although they possessed basic knowledge of historical events and literary concepts, they encountered difficulties in critically connecting colonial experiences presented in literary texts with broader historical and contemporary social contexts. Likewise, students

demonstrated moderately positive perspectives toward cultural diversity, reflecting an initial appreciation of multicultural values while also indicating opportunities for further development through structured literary instruction.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents also support the suitability of the sample for the study. The relatively balanced distribution of male and female students, together with the representation of participants from the fourth, fifth, and sixth semesters, provided a diverse academic background while maintaining comparable levels of prior learning experience. This balanced composition minimizes the influence of demographic differences on the initial findings and strengthens the baseline conditions required to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional intervention. The descriptive results therefore establish a reliable starting point for measuring changes in students' learning outcomes following the implementation of postcolonial literary studies.

Overall, the simulated findings suggest that integrating postcolonial literary studies into literature courses has strong potential to enhance students' historical awareness and strengthen their perspectives toward cultural diversity. The baseline data demonstrate a clear educational need for instructional approaches that encourage students to interpret literary texts beyond their aesthetic value by connecting them with historical experiences, cultural identities, and contemporary multicultural issues. Consequently, the implementation of postcolonial literary pedagogy is expected to foster more critical historical reflection, improve intercultural understanding, and develop inclusive attitudes among university students. These baseline results provide an important empirical foundation for evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional intervention in the subsequent stages of the research and for determining whether significant improvements occur after students participate in postcolonial literary learning activities.

Reference/Rujukan

- Deb, N. (2020). *Conscientization in the Indian classroom: An experiment in the critical learning of postcolonial literature*. *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 7(4), 566–582.
- Kaiser, B. M. (2020). *Teaching comparative literature in English(es): Decolonizing pedagogy in the multilingual classroom*. *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 7(4), 595–611.
- Simel, T. T. (2024). *Assessing the role of literary texts in students' cultural awareness, historical understanding, and challenges faced by EFL students*. *English Education Journal*, 15(4), 208–228.
- Vukotić, S., & Ilin, D. (2024). *Decolonizing literary studies: Unveiling postcolonial narratives in post-Yugoslav academic curricula*. *Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia*, 52, 191–209.
- Yılmaz, C. (2009). *Incorporating multicultural literature in English language teaching curriculum*. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 1(1), 23–27.
- Banks, J. A. (2016). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. London, England: Routledge.
- Rüsen, J. (2004). Historical consciousness: Narrative structure, moral function, and ontogenetic development. In P. Seixas (Ed.), *Theorizing historical consciousness* (pp. 63–85). Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.

Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (pp. 271–313). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.