Mapping the national heroes in Indonesia to strengthen national identity in history learning

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Abstract. Indonesia has many national heroes because every year, it keeps increasing. The large number represents tremendous potential as a role model for character education. However, the role of national heroes as models for character building is still not optimal. The main problem that occurs is that the national heroes are not yet known as a whole. Therefore, this paper aims to identify national heroes in Indonesia through mapping. Researchers used content analysis on the 2013 curriculum documents, including history textbooks. Besides, researchers also use documents about national heroes from the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The results of the study show that since 1959-2019, Indonesia has had 186 national heroes. Most of them came from Central Java, East Java, and Yogyakarta. Heroes have relevance as material in history lessons. The most popular heroes in the textbook are Pattimura, Diponegoro, Sukarno, Moh. Hatta, and Hamengkubuwono IX. In terms of quantity, not all heroes have been accommodated in learning. It is because the number of national heroes continues to increase every year. In terms of distribution, learning has adjusted heroes from various regions. It is beneficial for eroding primordialism and raising awareness that all areas contribute to Indonesia’s existence.

1. Introduction

The best of education is exemplary. Through modeling, students are invited to explore experiences and see real values. Thus, exemplary becomes the most effective medium for fostering community character. In the context of historical education, exemplary is manifested by incorporating heroism in learning. The potential for learning about heroism in history learning in Indonesia is enormous. At the beginning of 2020, no less than 186 people have been titled national heroes. This number will continue to increase every year because the President will award the title of hero every November 10th. [1]

There are at least two reasons. Theoretically, heroes have an essential role in learning history. Learning with heroic values can generate emotional and affective aspects. It is in line with Albert Bandura’s opinion on social learning theory. He stated that individuals learn behavior by observation by imitating models. He claims that influential people are among the most-imitated models in society, some known as heroes. The essence of social learning is modeling, and modeling is one of the essential steps in integrated education. [2]

The second reason that reinforces the role of heroes in learning is the conceptual relationship between values and heroes. It is because the essential thing about heroes is the value they have. A person is considered a hero because of his values. In broad terms, heroes differ from ordinary people. They are considered to have carried out significant duties and responsibilities and contributed to society. Therefore, heroes’ moral character is universal, reflecting the community’s values and emotions in which they are [3] [4].

In history learning, historical figures become best practices in cultivating values. History learning has the potential as a medium for transmitting character values through past events and role models for heroes. In history, there is a hero who has exemplary values. [5]. Another study also states that teaching about heroism contributes to the development of national character. Julaeha’s research
explains that heroism’s value most prominently contributes to the character of responsibility [6]. These studies confirmed the vital role of heroes in history learning and character cultivation [3][4][7][8][9].

The existence of heroes has relevance in strengthening national identity [10][11]. In America, heroes are used as a representation of maintaining national identity [12]. In the Indonesian context, their existence also reinforces their identity as a nation. However, a hero’s importance as a role model in character education has not been optimally developed. Yudi Latif noted that we failed to transmit the examples of the nation’s heroes. History lessons narrow down to a series of years, wars, and royal genealogies to find moral messages in an event and character [13]. Furthermore, Ahmad explained that character cultivation, especially with heroic values, was still not optimal. These obstacles are found in teacher understanding, student behavior, implementation of learning, and the undeveloped school culture that supports character education [5].

The initial effort that needs to be made to reaffirm heroism in history learning is through mapping. Therefore, this paper intends to map the distribution of national heroes in Indonesia. Furthermore, this paper looks at strategies in teaching the value of heroism in history learning.

2. Methods
This research uses a content analysis technique for Indonesian history textbooks and documents of Indonesian national heroes published by the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. As a research method, the content analysis represents “a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena and is reduced to concepts that describe the research phenomenon by creating categories, pictures, a model, a conceptual system, or a conceptual map” [14]. Researchers studied two books used in history learning. The government’s first textbooks are the most recent updated editions in 2017 and 2018 [15][16][17]. Second, texts are published by Erlangga [18–20]. Textbooks released by the Ministry of Education and Culture were selected because they became a simple guide to learning and were available online. The textbook was chosen to take into account aspects of usability and completeness. The required edition of the Government Book was selected as the official version of the nation. The textbooks published by Erlangga were then chosen as a reference to the government-published books. Erlangga has been a prominent publisher of textbooks since 1952. It is appropriate to use it as a reference because of its long-standing position in the field of textbook publishing.

3. Results and Discussion
3.1. Mapping of National Heroes in Indonesia
From 1959-2019, the President has awarded 186 titles of national heroes. The concept of a hero in Indonesia is very different from some other countries. In the United States, heroes are closely related to figures who play a role in the war for the independence revolution. In France, the hero is a meritorious figure who is widely eaten by the Pantheon. Their number is less than 100 [1]. In Indonesia, this number is still increasing every year. Overall, the distribution of national heroes until early 2020 can be seen in figure 1.
Figure 1. Distribution of national heroes in Indonesia

Figure 1 shows the distribution of national heroes until early 2020. The darker it is, the more national heroes there will be. The map also shows that most of the national heroes come from the island of Java. Provinces with the highest number of national heroes from the island of Java are Central Java (33), East Java (23), Yogyakarta (20). After that, West Sumatra was followed by 16 national heroes.
Figure 2. Distribution of national heroes by region

The trend above proves that the java-centric is still strong in the appointment of heroes. However, this trend appears to have begun to wane after the Reformasi. Since the change of government in 1998, the proposal of national heroes from various regions has increased. Of the 186 heroes, 49 were appointed by Sukarno, Suharto appointed 53. The remaining 54 heroes were established during the Reformasi period.

Figure 3. Distribution of national heroes per region and awarding period

Figure 3 shows that, during the Reformasi era, there was a process of equalizing national heroes. Sulawesi was the area that received the most heroes after the Reformasi. Then Sumatra followed. It indicates that recognizing regional figures’ role has been well-opened at a national level.

Figure 4. Distribution of national heroines

However, national heroes are still dominated by male heroes. At the beginning of 2020 there were only 15 heroines. Their number is only 8.06%. They are (1) Malahayati (Aceh), (2) Cut Nyak Dhien (Aceh), (3) Cut Nyak Meutia (Aceh), (4) Fatmawati (Bengkulu), (5) Siti Walidah (DI Yogyakarta), (6) Dewi Sartika (West Java), (7) Nyi Ageng Serang (Central Java), (8) Kartini (Central Java), (9) Siti
Hartinah (Central Java), (10) Martha Christina Tiahahu (Maluku), (11) Andi Depu (West Sulawesi), (12) Opu Daeng Risaju (South Sulawesi), (13) Maria Walanda Maramis, (North Sulawesi), (14) Ruhana Kuddus (West Sumatra), and (15) Rasuna Said (West Sumatra). [9,21]

The periods of the life of national heroes in Indonesia come from different eras. The oldest national heroes date from the 16th and 17th centuries. Meanwhile, the youngest is Harun and Janatin, who died in 1968 due to the Singapore government’s legal death. The distribution of heroes by period is (1) 7% from the VOC Period (17-18 centuries); (2) 15% came from the period of British-Dutch East Indies colonialism (19th century); (3) 18% came from the National Awakening period (early 20th century), (4) 30% came from the Revolution period (1945-1949); and (5) 30% are from the Post-Revolutionary Period (starting in 1950). [9]

![Figure 5. Distribution of national heroes by period](image-url)

3.2. National Heroes in History Curriculum

In the history curriculum, heroes have high relevance. Several essential competencies accommodate the role of heroes as subject matter. It can be seen in the Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 37 of 2018 [22]. Some of the competencies that are following the heroic values are as follows.

| Class | Competencies | Coverage Period |
|-------|--------------|-----------------|
| XI    | 3.2 Analyzing the Indonesian nation’s resistance strategy against colonialism in Europe (Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, British) up to the 20th century. | Colonialism in Indonesia |
|       | 3.6 Analyzing the role of national and regional figures in the struggle for Indonesian independence. | Indonesian Revolution |
|       | 3.9 Analysis of the roles and values of Bung Karno and Bung Hatta’s struggle as proclaimers and other figures in the proclamation | Indonesian Revolution |
| XII   | 3.2 Assessing the roles and values of national and regional figures’ struggles to maintain the integrity of the Indonesian state and nation during the period 1945-1965 | Indonesian revolution and post-revolution |

Competencies related to national heroes appears to be more dominant in class XI. In class XI, the material covers the period from the entry of colonialism into the revolution. There were 117 national heroes in this period. It means that 62.9 percent of the national heroes were living during this period.
In Class XII, the scope of the material presented in Indonesian history covers the post-revolutionary period, from the recognition of sovereignty in 1949 to the Reformasi period. [9]

How about a national hero in a textbook? In government-published books, only 69 national heroes are mentioned. However, only 23 were equipped with photos. Meanwhile, only 18 heroes were mentioned more than ten times. Meanwhile, in the book published by Erlangga, the number of heroes mentioned is more diverse, namely 78 people. Thirty-eight of them are accompanied by photographs. Of the two books, the most popular heroes were Pattimura, Diponegoro, Sukarno, Muhammad Hatta, and Hamengkubuwono IX. All of these heroes were discussed in class XI. [9]

In the textbook, there are obvious flaws. Books have not reached proportionally to the number of national heroes. It happens because national heroes are increasing every year. Therefore, this affects the national recognition of national heroes. However, in terms of distribution, the heroes reviewed in the textbook have considered regional proportionality. The heroes checked came from various provinces with various roles. Heroes are historical actors. As actors, they have two positions in historical education. First, historical actors are part of a historical event. Second, historical actors are taught as a form of biography. Introducing heroes in learning has its advantages to strengthen national identity. Adejumobi said that psychologically, students are more interested in people and their actions than in broader societal problems. For them, history must be centered on individual lives. The second advantage is that students are better able to understand motives and activities of social groups through the study of personal human reasons and activities. [23] introducing characters into a strategy of “humanizing history.” From here, students get examples of values, thoughts, actions, sacrifices for lofty ideals. [24]

Learning about heroism has relevance to strengthen national identity. From the distribution of volunteers, almost all provinces have figures with the title of hero. The spread of heroes in most parts of Indonesia indicates that all regions have contributed significantly to strengthening Indonesia as a nation and a country. It is stated in Law Number 20 of 2009 that “National Hero is a title given to an Indonesian citizen or someone who fights against colonialism in an area that is now the territory of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia who has died or died for the sake of defending the nation and state, or who During his lifetime, he performed heroic acts or produced outstanding achievements and works for the development and progress of the nation and state of the Republic of Indonesia.” [25] It means that national heroes have a contribution to the country. Many recognized national heroes are more in acknowledging a region’s existence and assistance in the national arena. Ayzumardi Azra admitted it. He stated that the national heroes’ album is seen more as a regional representative on the national scene for local people. It is the area recognized for its progress and struggle for the Indonesian nation. Not surprisingly, many regions are competing to propose their figures as national heroes. The national hero represents almost all regions in Indonesia, from Sabang to Merauke. [9]

Therefore, it is necessary to have a strategy for instilling heroic values. Sanchez argues that it is required to use various sources and learning media so that learning about heroes runs more effectively [3]. It is because heroes have a strategic role in cultivating values so that their representation in learning needs to be packaged attractively. Through attractive packaging, hero inspiration can be genuinely useful for students. Resources used for education are recommended to use primary documents [8]. By using primary forms, students are invited to investigate the existence of local figures around their residence. With this, students’ historical thinking abilities are awakened. On the one hand, students show their active participation as part of a democratic society.

Another idea was conveyed by Colby, who proposed a narrative approach. He saw that narrative learning was very much in line with learning about heroism. In this case, students are invited to carry out investigations based on stories from heroes as historical actors. By analyzing heroes’ life stories, students can achieve a more humanist and empathetic understanding of history. Also, they better understand how historical actors perceive the past [7].
4. Conclusions

Heroes become one of the models in historical education for character strengthening. It is in line with Bandura’s social learning theory. In terms of distribution, Indonesia has 186 national heroes at the beginning of 2020. This number will increase at the end of each year. The mapping of national heroes is done by looking at how they are distributed in each province. The distribution of national heroes shows the contribution of heroes in each region. National heroes scattered in each region and period indicate the contribution of each area to strengthen national identity. With this mapping, students are expected to be able to recognize the diversity of national heroes in Indonesia. After getting to know this diversity, students are also invited to see that each region in Indonesia supports each other in fighting for national unity.

On the one hand, the introduction of heroes in history learning is beneficial for character development. It is because various values can be emulated from a hero. These values, among others, can be seen from the attitude of self-sacrifice and action to prioritize the interests of the wider community. Thus, heroes can become inspirational figures for students. By analyzing the life stories of heroes, it has facilitated students in achieving a more humanist and empathic understanding of history and understanding how historical actors perceive the past.

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