

P-ISSN: 2541-6960 | E-ISSN: 2549-8754

Yupa: Historical Studies Journal

Vol. 10, No. 2, 2026, pp. 87-95

<https://doi.org/10.30872/yupa.v10i2.6343>

Designing Historia Card for Indonesian National Disintegration Learning

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Abstract

This study examines the design and feasibility of Historia Card, a card-based instructional medium for learning Indonesian national disintegration in senior high school history education. The problem addressed is the tendency of history lessons on conflict, integration, and national cohesion to be delivered through verbal explanation, which limits students' contextual understanding and classroom participation. Using qualitative design research, the study involved needs analysis, prototype design, expert review, revision, and feasibility evaluation through interviews, classroom observation, questionnaires, and documentation. The findings indicate that teachers and students required a practical, visual, and discussion-oriented medium that could organize historical events, actors, causes, consequences, and values of national integration. Historia Card was therefore designed as a quartet-card medium combining concise historical information, visual cues, categorization tasks, and collaborative play. Expert validation and user responses showed that the medium was very feasible, practical, and engaging. The study contributes to history education by demonstrating how non-digital game-based media can support contextual historical understanding while remaining accessible for classroom use.

Keywords

educational cards; game-based learning; history education; historical thinking; Indonesian national disintegration

Article History

Received	Revised	Accepted	Published
24 February 2026	30 May 2026	05 June 2026	05 July 2026

How to Cite

Nuraini, I., & Azmi, M. (2026). Designing Historia Card for Indonesian National Disintegration Learning. *Yupa: Historical Studies Journal*, 10(2), 87-95. <https://doi.org/10.30872/yupa.v10i2.6343>



Introduction

History education is expected to help students interpret the past as a set of human actions, conflicts, choices, and consequences rather than as a sequence of isolated dates. In the topic of Indonesian national disintegration, this expectation is especially important because students need to understand how regional conflict, ideological tension, state response, and social memory shaped the effort to maintain national cohesion. International research on history education emphasizes that meaningful history learning requires students to connect substantive historical knowledge with historical thinking, including contextualization, causal reasoning, evidence use, and narrative construction ([Thorp & Persson, 2020](#); [Wilke et al., 2023](#)). Studies of historical contextualization also show that students need guided learning supports to connect events to broader political, social, and temporal settings ([Huijgen et al., 2018](#)). However, in many classrooms, history learning still relies heavily on teacher explanation, textbook narration, and memorization, limiting opportunities for students to discuss historical relationships and construct contextual understanding ([Anggraena et al., 2022](#); [Asmara, 2019](#); [Ofianto et al., 2024](#)).

The classroom problem identified in this study is consistent with a broader concern in history education: students often find historical materials difficult when the learning process does not provide concrete supports for organizing actors, chronology, causes, consequences, and perspectives. Game-based and gamified learning approaches have been widely discussed as ways to increase motivation, interaction, and active participation, but recent scholarship also stresses that educational games must be aligned with learning objectives and not used merely as entertainment ([Clark et al., 2016](#); [Plass et al., 2015](#); [Sailer & Homner, 2020](#); [Wouters et al., 2013](#)). Research on game-based learning in history education further suggests that games are useful when they help learners reason about historical content, collaborate, and engage with disciplinary questions rather than only recall facts ([Chou et al., 2024](#); [Lai & Hu, 2025](#); [Martínez-Hita et al., 2021](#)). These findings provide a conceptual basis for developing a non-digital card medium that is practical for classroom use but still oriented toward historical understanding.

Previous studies have explored card-based and game-based media in history learning, including quartet cards, sort cards, domino cards, Uno-based cards, and digital historical games ([Kamila & Hastuti, 2023](#); [Khotimah et al., 2025](#); [Lathifah et al., 2024](#); [Mauluddin, 2026](#); [Ramadani & Hastuti, 2020](#)). Such media generally show potential for improving interest and participation, yet several gaps remain. First, many game-based history media emphasize activity and motivation more than the explicit organization of historical relationships. Second, some digital games require technological access and teacher preparation that may not be feasible in all classrooms. Third, card-based media are often reported as products without sufficient explanation of how their components support historical thinking or contextual understanding. Studies on educational card games show that card formats can support classification, peer interaction, and learning design when the cards are connected to clear rules, meaningful prompts, and collaborative use ([Mavroudi et al., 2022](#); [Miralles et al., 2019](#); [Su & Cheng, 2014](#)). Therefore, the originality of Historia Card lies not merely in using cards, but in designing a printed quartet-card medium that links historical content, visual categorization, and discussion-based play to the specific topic of Indonesian national disintegration.

This article reports a combined needs analysis, product design, and feasibility evaluation of Historia Card. The objective is to explain how teacher and student needs were translated into a card-based learning medium and to assess whether the resulting medium is feasible for senior high school history learning. The central argument is that Historia Card can function as an accessible instructional bridge between factual historical content and contextual historical understanding when its design requires students to classify information, compare events, discuss relationships, and connect disintegration cases to the broader idea of national integration. The article contributes to history education by offering a locally grounded, non-digital example of game-based media development that remains aligned with international concerns about historical thinking, classroom practicality, and evidence-informed instructional design.

Method

This study employed a qualitative design research approach. Design research was selected because the study did not only describe a classroom problem but also developed, revised, and

evaluated an instructional product in response to that problem. Recent discussion of educational design research emphasizes the importance of methodological fit between the research problem, design intervention, data sources, and intended practical contribution ([Jacobsen & McKenney, 2024](#)). In this study, the intervention was Historia Card, a card-based medium designed to support learning of Indonesian national disintegration through visual categorization and collaborative classroom interaction.

The procedure consisted of three connected stages. The first stage was needs analysis, which identified students' learning difficulties, classroom conditions, teacher needs, and the characteristics of the material. The second stage was prototype design, in which the findings from the needs analysis were translated into card components, visual layout, historical categories, learning instructions, and game mechanisms. The third stage was evaluation, which included expert review, revision of the prototype, and feasibility assessment based on validation and user responses. This sequence follows the logic of product-oriented design research, where the design process generates both a practical product and knowledge about why the product may work in a particular educational setting ([Celik, 2023](#); [Jacobsen & McKenney, 2024](#)).

The study was conducted in class XII-A1 at a private Islamic senior high school in Samarinda. To reduce ethical identity risk in international publication, the school is referred to in general terms rather than foregrounded as the central identifier of the article. The participants consisted of one history teacher and five students selected randomly from the class. The teacher was involved because the teacher understood the instructional constraints, curriculum requirements, and classroom routines related to the topic. The student participants were included to represent user perspectives on difficulty, attractiveness, readability, and practicality. The limited number of student participants is treated as a design-stage limitation rather than as a basis for broad generalization.

Data were collected through interviews, classroom observation, questionnaires, and documentation. Interviews explored difficulties in learning the topic of disintegration, expectations for learning media, and perceptions of the Historia Card prototype. Classroom observation focused on learning interaction, student attention, use of existing media, and the extent to which students connected historical events with broader national issues. Observation was conducted during the learning period from July to October 2025. Questionnaires were used to evaluate material feasibility, visual and media design, language clarity, and practicality. Documentation included prototype drafts, validation notes, revised card designs, and classroom records related to the development process.

Data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively by organizing the findings into themes of learning needs, design decisions, validation results, and user responses. Interview and observation data were compared with questionnaire findings to determine whether the identified needs were reflected in the design and evaluation of the medium. Questionnaire scores were interpreted using feasibility categories, while open comments from validators, the teacher, and students were used to refine the design. The analysis therefore emphasized alignment among problem identification, design rationale, validation evidence, and the feasibility claim. The study does not claim to measure learning effectiveness experimentally; instead, it evaluates design feasibility and practical readiness for classroom use.

Results and Discussion

Needs Analysis in History Learning

The needs analysis showed that history instruction in class XII-A1 was still largely centred on the teacher's explanations and verbal delivery. Students perceived the topic of Indonesian national disintegration as difficult because it involved multiple conflicts, actors, causes, consequences, and connections to national unity. Observation indicated that students were more attentive when the teacher used concrete examples and visual aids, but existing learning media did not yet provide a systematic way for students to organise historical relationships. Interview responses also suggested that the teacher needed a medium that was easy to prepare, did not depend on digital infrastructure, and could be used for small-group discussion. Students expected a medium that was visually attractive, easy to read, and helpful for remembering the relationship among events. These findings are conceptually important because history education does not only require student engagement; it also requires tools that help learners contextualise events, discuss causality, and relate historical cases to broader social and civic meanings ([Gestsdóttir et al., 2021](#); [Huijgen et al., 2018](#); [Thorp & Persson,](#)

2020). Thus, the needs analysis directly informed the decision to design a printed card medium that combines concise historical information, visual classification, and collaborative play. This finding supports the use of structured learning media that can organize content, sustain attention, and facilitate learner engagement during classroom activities (Henrie et al., 2015; Mayer, 2024).

Designing Historia Card as a History Learning Medium

The design of Historia Card translated the needs analysis into concrete media components. The medium was developed in a quartet-card format so that students could classify historical information by theme, event, actor, chronology, and consequence. Unlike conventional card games that primarily ask students to collect matching sets, Historia Card uses the set-building mechanism as an entry point for historical discussion. Each card is intended to encourage students to read a concise historical description, identify its category, compare it with related cards, and explain why the event is connected to the broader issue of national disintegration and integration. This design responds to research showing that learning games are strongest when game rules, feedback, collaboration, and content representation are aligned with explicit learning objectives (Clark et al., 2016; Plass et al., 2015; Sailer & Homner, 2020; Vrcelj, 2023). The printed format also addresses classroom practicality because it does not require internet access, digital devices, or complex technical preparation. This decision is consistent with the wider value of analog learning games, which can foster tactile interaction, peer communication, and classroom accessibility when they are carefully aligned with learning goals (Singleton et al., 2025).



Figure 1. Initial design of Historia Card before expert review

Figure 1 shows the initial design of Historia Card before the expert review process. At this stage, the media had already included historical figures, event categories, and visual components, but several design aspects still required improvement, particularly color consistency, layout clarity, material density, and game variation.

Table 1. Revision components and design rationale of Historia Card

Revision Component	Revision Rationale
Color selection and visual appearance	The color selection needed to be reconsidered to make the visual appearance of the cards more attractive and more suitable for the learning topic.
Layout and material organization	The layout needed to be adjusted to clarify each material component and ensure consistency across all cards.
Theme-based color consistency	The use of consistent colors for each card theme was needed to help users distinguish one theme from another more easily.
Text density on the cards	Some material explanations were too lengthy for card content, so the information needed to be shortened and made more concise.
Cover design	The bright colors on the card cover were considered less suitable for the topic of national disintegration, which required a more contextually appropriate visual tone.
Game variation	Additional action cards were needed to increase variation in the game mechanism and prevent the learning activity from becoming monotonous.

Table 1 shows that the media revision focused on improving learning functions rather than merely changing the visual appearance. Adjustments to color, layout, component consistency, and game variation were made so that students could more easily read the cards, distinguish categories, and follow the game mechanism. The revision process is consistent with design research principles in which prototype improvement is based on expert feedback, user needs, and the observed fit between design features and learning purposes (Jacobsen & McKenney, 2024; Mavroudi et al., 2022). In this study, design decisions were not treated as decorative choices; they were linked to the need to make historical information visible, comparable, and discussable.



Figure 2. Historia Card design after the review and revision process

After review and revision, Figure 2 shows Historia Card was designed as a printed visual medium that combines historical content, visual layout, and a game mechanism. Illustrations, color, and typography function as cognitive cues that help students identify categories and recall the relationships among events. This use of visual and verbal cues is consistent with multimedia learning principles that emphasize the need to reduce unnecessary cognitive load and guide learners' attention to relevant information (Mayer, 2021). The game mechanism requires students to read, ask, match, justify, and discuss the information on the cards. These actions are important because historical understanding develops when students actively connect evidence, context, causality, and interpretation rather than only receiving factual explanation. Recent studies in history education games show that scaffolding and collaborative problem solving can support students' use of historical thinking in game-based environments (Chou et al., 2024; Martínez-Hita et al., 2021; Wilke et al., 2023). Although Historia Card is non-digital, it follows the same instructional principle: the game structure should guide students toward historical reasoning, not merely toward play.

Feasibility Evaluation of Historia Card

The feasibility evaluation of Historia Card was conducted through questionnaires and feedback from validators, the teacher, and students. The assessment covered content validity, media appearance, language clarity, practicality, and potential use in history learning. Expert validation indicated that the medium was very feasible. Teacher and student responses also suggested that Historia Card was easy to use, visually attractive, and helpful for organizing the topic of Indonesian national disintegration. These findings should be read as evidence of feasibility rather than as proof of learning effectiveness. The study shows that the medium is ready for classroom use and further testing, but it does not yet provide experimental evidence of learning gains. This careful interpretation is important because international studies of game-based learning caution that engagement alone is insufficient; learning benefits depend on the quality of design, scaffolding, and alignment with instructional objectives (Clark et al., 2016; Wouters et al., 2013).

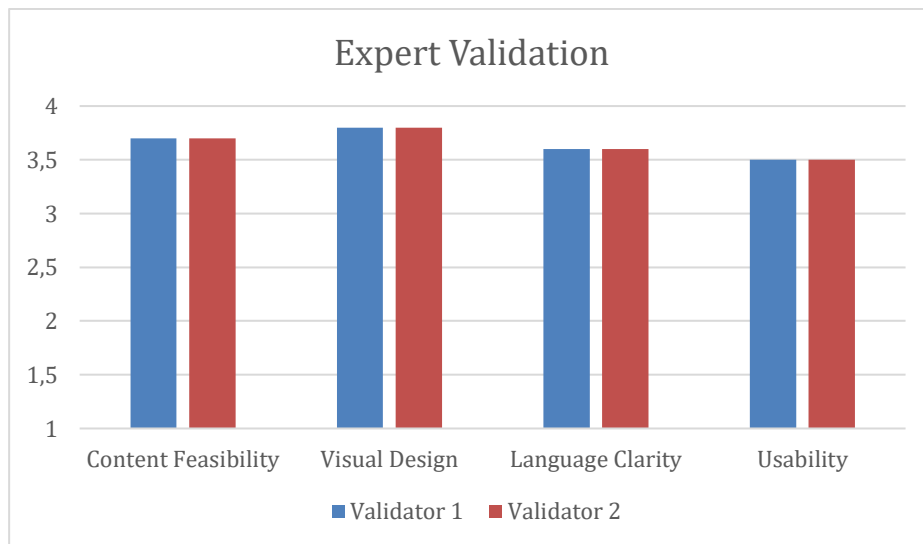


Figure 3. Expert validation results for Historia Card

Figure 3 indicates that all validation aspects reached the very feasible category. Aspect 1 refers to content or material feasibility, Aspect 2 to visual appearance and media design, Aspect 3 to language clarity, and Aspect 4 to practicality of use. The high score in the material aspect suggests that the historical content was considered appropriate for the topic and student level. The media design score indicates that visual layout and card components were viewed as suitable for classroom use. The language score shows that the information on the cards was considered readable, while the practicality score supports the claim that the medium can be used without complex preparation. Together, these validation results support the argument that Historia Card is a feasible prototype for history learning, while also indicating the need for future studies to test its effect on students' historical thinking and learning outcomes.

Conclusion

This study concludes that Historia Card is a feasible instructional medium for learning Indonesian national disintegration in senior high school history education. The medium was developed from a needs analysis showing that students required visual, practical, and interactive support for understanding a historically complex topic. The design translates those needs into a quartet-card format that organises events, actors, causes, consequences, and values of integration through reading, matching, and collaborative discussion. The main contribution of the study is to show that non-digital game-based media can support contextual history learning when the game mechanism is intentionally connected to historical thinking and classroom practicality. However, the study is limited to design feasibility, expert validation, and user response in one classroom context. It does not yet measure the effect of Historia Card on historical thinking, retention, or comparative learning achievement. Further research should therefore conduct classroom implementation with larger groups of participants, compare Historia Card with other instructional media, and examine how the medium affects students' ability to contextualise events, reason causally, and discuss the meaning of national integration.

Funding Statement

This research received no external funding.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declare no conflict of interest. If a conflict exists, it must be disclosed clearly.

AI Use Disclosure

The author used generative AI tools only for language editing and proofreading. The author reviewed and verified all content and remains fully responsible for the manuscript.

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