



Prospective History Teachers' Experiences in Place-Based Education: A Qualitative Study on the Development of Social-Emotional Skills

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Abstract: 21st-century education requires teachers to be not only cognitively competent but also to have mature social-emotional skills, especially for prospective history teachers in facilitating historical empathy and managing sensitive discussions. Place-Based Education (PBE) offers a contextual learning approach that links historical material to local places and communities, thereby potentially serving as a vehicle for developing social-emotional skills through authentic learning experiences. This study aims to examine the application of Place-Based Education to develop the social-emotional skills of prospective history teachers. The research uses a qualitative approach, with data collected through learning observations, interviews, and documentation. The results show that place-based learning creates authentic learning experiences that encourage the development of relational skills, responsible decision-making, self-management, and social and self-awareness among students through direct interaction and contextual reflection. These findings conclude that Place-Based Education is a relevant pedagogical approach for integrating history learning with the development of social-emotional competencies in prospective history teachers.

Keywords: history learning; place-based education; social-emotional skills

Abstrak: Pendidikan abad ke-21 menuntut guru untuk tidak hanya kompeten secara kognitif, tetapi juga memiliki keterampilan sosial-emosional yang matang, terutama bagi calon guru sejarah dalam memfasilitasi empati sejarah dan mengelola diskusi sensitif. *Place-Based Education* (PBE) menawarkan pendekatan pembelajaran kontekstual yang mengaitkan materi sejarah dengan tempat dan komunitas lokal, sehingga berpotensi menjadi wahana pengembangan keterampilan sosial-emosional melalui pengalaman belajar yang otentik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami penerapan *Place-Based Education* dalam pengembangan keterampilan sosial-emosional mahasiswa calon guru sejarah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi pembelajaran, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran berbasis tempat menciptakan pengalaman belajar otentik yang mendorong berkembangnya keterampilan relasi, pengambilan keputusan yang bertanggung jawab, manajemen diri, serta kesadaran sosial dan diri mahasiswa melalui interaksi langsung dan refleksi kontekstual. Temuan ini menyimpulkan bahwa *Place-Based Education* merupakan pendekatan pedagogis yang relevan untuk mengintegrasikan pembelajaran sejarah dengan pengembangan keterampilan sosial-emosional calon guru sejarah.

Kata Kunci: keterampilan sosial-emosional; pembelajaran sejarah; place-based education



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Introduction

Education in the 21st century demands a fundamental transformation in the paradigm of teacher competence. Moving away from simply imparting information, teachers are now expected to be learning facilitators who can navigate the complexities of global challenges and equip students with a holistic set of skills. These professional competency requirements are no longer limited to mastery of subject matter and learning methodologies, but also include adequate social-emotional skills. These skills include self-awareness, empathy, teamwork, emotional management, and responsible decision-making, which are essential in classroom learning and social interactions in the school environment. However, recent studies show that teachers who rely heavily on technology-based teaching often demonstrate lower emotional competence, as digital tools can reduce opportunities for authentic teacher-student interaction when not carefully integrated. (König et al., 2020; Schutz & Pekrun, 2007).

This concern is particularly relevant in the Indonesian context, where rapid digital transformation in education has created both opportunities and challenges. As noted by Rasmitadila et al. (2024) the increasing emphasis on technology-based learning in Indonesia, requires stronger integration of social-emotional skills into teacher education and training programs. Thus, the urgency of developing social-emotional skills (SES) through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in teacher education, especially for prospective history teachers, is not only important but also a timely response to the evolving educational needs in Indonesian classrooms. Without these skills, history learning risks becoming merely the memorization of dry facts and failing to achieve its goal of building historical awareness and wisdom for future generations. Skills such as empathy, self-management, and responsible decision-making form the basis for students to adapt to the complexities of the future workplace (Chen et al., 2024).

Research shows that teachers' social-emotional skills are directly correlated with their ability to manage stress, build positive relationships with students, and ultimately reduce professional burnout (Ornaghi et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). Despite its obvious urgency, teacher education programs in many countries, including Indonesia, still face challenges in effectively integrating SEL development (Katz et al., 2020). One major problem noted in the literature highlights that the focus of SEL-related interventions tends to be directed at students in Teacher Professional Education (PPG) programs, both pre-service and in-service. In reality, however, many education graduates work as educators without first going through a PPG program, especially teachers who teach in private schools. As a result, the understanding of social-emotional skills for graduates who have not undergone PPG is not emphasized (Hagenauer et al., 2015; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Consequently, the bachelor's degree (S1) level, which is a crucial formative phase in the development of a teacher's professional and emotional identity, does not always receive adequate attention as a foundation for developing social-emotional skills through Social-emotional Learning (SEL)

Theoretically, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is a framework developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) that serves as the main foundation for understanding the importance of Social-Emotional Learning. This theory emphasizes that learning does not occur in an emotional vacuum, but rather that cognitive and emotional processes are closely intertwined (Naude et al., 2014). Therefore, a teacher with mature social-emotional intelligence will be better able to design relevant and meaningful learning experiences and serve as a role model for student character development (Jones et al., 2019). Failure to develop these competencies in prospective teachers risks producing educators who are technically and pedagogically skilled but emotionally fragile, which can lead to negative consequences such as poor classroom management, reduced student engagement, and increased teacher burnout (Hagenauer et al., 2015; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). The urgency

of mastering Social-Emotional Skills (SES) becomes even more apparent when viewed through the lens of history education. History teachers are not only responsible for conveying the chronology of events but also for fostering historical empathy, which is the ability to understand and relate to the perspectives of past actors (Bartelds et al., 2020). In addition, they must be able to facilitate discussions on sensitive and often traumatic issues, such as conflict, genocide, or social injustice, in a way that promotes critical thinking and emotional resilience among students (Eisman et al., 2025).

In response to these pedagogical challenges, the Place-based Education (PBE) approach has emerged as a promising alternative (Thomas, 2020). PBE is based on John Dewey's theory of experiential learning and constructivism, which emphasizes that learning becomes more meaningful when it is rooted in the real-life contexts and local environments of learners (Yemini et al., 2023). This approach encourages students to leave the classroom to interact directly with the community, landscape, and cultural heritage around them, using “place” as the primary text for learning (Zhu et al., 2024). In the context of history education, PBE is realized through outdoor activities, such as visits to historical sites, museums, or face-to-face meetings with local historical figures. However, this is where the second research gap lies. The literature on PBE in history education mainly focuses on cognitive impacts, including improved understanding of subject matter and enhanced critical thinking skills (Yemini et al., 2023). Studies that specifically and deeply explore how place-based learning experiences can serve as a vehicle for social-emotional skills are still minimal. Questions about how direct interaction with historical sites can trigger empathy, self-reflection, and social awareness in prospective history teachers are largely unexplored.

This study explicitly links Place-based Education (PBE) pedagogy with the development of social-emotional skills (SES). Rather than treating the two as separate constructs, this model proposes an integrated approach in which Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills are developed through engagement with local history. By emphasizing the affective domain as the primary outcome of Place-Based Education (PBE), the focus of learning shifts from merely “what students know” to “how learning experiences shape students’ feelings, reflections, and ways of relating to the world around them.” The relevance of this approach is becoming increasingly apparent in today’s technology-driven era. Many students spend most of their daily activities using digital devices, which has been linked to an increased risk of emotional regulation dysfunction, including irritability, decreased patience, and weakened interpersonal skills (Twenge & Campbell, 2018; Uhls et al., 2017). Integrating SEL into history learning through PBE provides a meaningful balance, offering students opportunities for empathy, reflection, and emotional growth within authentic communities and cultures. In this way, this study contributes by showing how learning about local history can address contemporary challenges in students’ social and emotional development in the digital age. This research will be conducted in a specific context, namely among students of the History Education program at the University of Riau who have taken Local History courses using the Place-Based Education (PBE) approach through visits to historical sites around Pekanbaru. Selecting this context offers novelty, as it will yield an authentic and in-depth understanding of Indonesian students’ experiences interpreting their local history, enriching global literature with non-Western perspectives.

The findings of this study are expected to provide empirical evidence of the potential of PBE as an effective strategy for preparing prospective history teachers who are not only academically competent but also socially and emotionally mature. Place-Based Education (PBE) offers unique advantages because it places learning in an authentic local context, strengthens students' sense of identity, and encourages critical connections between historical

content and community life (Gruenewald, 2003). Important competencies such as empathy, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills are increasingly important for fostering a positive classroom climate and managing sensitive discussions (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Therefore, integrating PBE and SEL provides dual benefits: enhancing the relevance and depth of history learning while preparing teachers to address contemporary classroom social-emotional challenges. This synergy underscores the need for this research. Based on this background, this study aims to explore in depth how learning experiences in Local History courses that adopt the Place-Based Education (PBE) approach can be a vehicle for developing social-emotional skills among prospective history teachers. This study will address the central question: “How does the process of student interaction with the local environment and community in place-based education contribute to the development of social-emotional skills?”

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. This design was chosen because of its high relevance for exploring phenomena in depth and holistically, particularly the process of developing social-emotional skills among prospective history teachers in the authentic context of implementing the Place-Based Education (PBE) approach (Achjar et al., 2023). Case studies allow researchers to investigate “how” and “why” a phenomenon occurs in a real and specific environment, thereby capturing the complexity of the interaction between learning experiences and the development of participants’ social-emotional skills (Iswadi et al., 2023). Primary data were obtained through semi-structured in-depth interviews. This interview approach allows researchers to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of their social-emotional skill development during the learning process in a flexible and in-depth manner (Juita et al., 2025). Research participants were selected using purposive sampling, with specific criteria that included being students in the History Education program at the University of Riau who had completed the Local History course (Sugiyono, 2021). Another key criterion is that students have fully participated in the learning process implemented using the PBE approach and demonstrated active and reflective participation, which involved field visits to relevant historical sites in Riau, such as Rumah Singgah Tuan Kadhi, Rumah Tenun, and Makam Pahlawan, as the central locations for PBE implementation. To complement and enrich the findings, this study also utilized secondary data analysis. The documents analyzed included reflection journals, structured assignments, and field trip reports compiled by students during the course. All data collected were analyzed using an interactive analysis model developed by Creswell & Creswell (2018).

Research Result

The Application of Place-Based Education in Local History Learning

Conventional history learning in the classroom often places students in the position of passive recipients of information sourced from texts. Books, articles, and documents become the only windows into the past. This approach risks creating decontextualization and turning history into a collection of names, dates, and events that are dry and isolated from the reality of students (Manning & Harrison, 2018). This condition limits understanding to a basic cognitive level, such as remembering and explaining, but does not address the affective and experiential dimensions (McComas, 2014). As a result, history is often seen as a dead subject irrelevant to contemporary life, posing a fundamental challenge for the development of future history teachers, who are expected to inspire their students.

The Place-Based Education (PBE) approach emerged as the antithesis of such non-contextual learning methods. By turning the surrounding environment into a learning laboratory, PBE fundamentally changes the medium of understanding. History is no longer just read but also felt, observed, and experienced firsthand. Early multisensory engagement with walking on the same ground as historical actors, touching artifacts, or hearing the echoes of events directly from the physical landscape creates a bridge between abstract textual narratives and concrete evidence that is spatially and temporally present in the students' environment. This process facilitates the transformation of understanding from textual to contextual and clear (Burga et al., 2023). When a prospective history teacher stands in front of an old building or on a field where a battle once took place, the narratives they previously read in books begin to take on dimension, scale, and atmosphere. They can imagine events more clearly, understand the geographical challenges faced by historical figures, and feel the place's atmosphere. This transformation goes beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge; it is a process of internalization that makes history come alive, authentic, and personally connected to students, who also occupy that historical space.

This profound transformation is clearly reflected in the experience of a history education student who took a Local History course grounded in Place-Based Education. In an interview, he sharply reflected on his change in perspective. He stated:

"I never imagined that Pekanbaru was directly connected to the Dutch East Indies. Facing colonizers like that. Because I didn't know much about the history of Riau at first, since I'm from outside Riau. So I thought the areas that were directly connected were the famous ones. Like Java, Makassar. Places like that. So I didn't know that the people of Riau also faced colonizers directly." (Interview with YSM, July 1st 2025).

This interview excerpt clearly illustrates the turning point in understanding that is central to the PBE approach. The interview excerpt, which reflects the students' surprise in the phrase "I didn't realize that Pekanbaru was directly involved with the Dutch East India Company," demonstrates the success of the Place-Based Education (PBE) approach in triggering a transformation that extends beyond mere cognitive understanding. The process of deconstructing the initial misconception that significant historical events occurred only in national narrative centers, such as Java or Makassar, through direct investigation of local sites fundamentally catalyzes the development of social-emotional skills. When prospective teachers encounter concrete evidence that contradicts their prior knowledge, they cultivate self-awareness by recognizing their own biases and limitations. This experience not only strengthens cognitive understanding of a location's past but also fosters historical empathy, an important component of social-emotional skills (Karn, 2024). By forming personal connections with events, students develop empathy for the struggles, fears, and hopes of historical actors, laying the foundation for transformative history education (Almqvist Nielsen, 2025).

To achieve this transformative understanding, the place-based education approach is applied in the Local History course through a series of systematic, structured stages. This process ensures that field trips are not just educational tours but in-depth historical investigations. The following are the stages of implementation of activities applied to historical sites around Pekanbaru:

Table 1. Application of the PBE approach in local history education

Activity	Description
Grouping and Theme Determination	At the beginning of the course, students were divided into small groups (4-5 people) to encourage

		collaborative learning. Each group was given the responsibility of researching a specific historical site in Pekanbaru as their main theme. For example, Group A focused on the Rumah Singgah Tuan Kadhi to research the role of Pekanbaru in the trade and administration of the Siak Sultanate.
Preparation and Preliminary Research		Before the field trip, each group is required to conduct preliminary research on their chosen site. They must gather information from textual sources such as books, digital archives, and scientific articles. This stage is very important to equip students with a basic knowledge framework so that they can make more focused and targeted observations.
Pre-Departure Briefing		One week before the activity, the lecturer conducted a technical briefing session. This session covered travel logistics, the ethics of visiting cultural sites, and, most importantly, field data collection methodology. Students were trained in participatory observation, interviewing techniques with informants (such as caregivers, community leaders, or artisans), and effective visual documentation methods (photography and videography) to capture the historical essence of a place.
Field Activities (Historical Investigation)		While in the field, students did not act as tourists, but rather as young researchers. At Tuan Kadhi's Guest House, they observed the architecture of the building, looked for details that reflected its historical function, and interviewed the manager about stories that had been passed down orally.
Reporting Results and Reflections		After returning from the field, each group processed the data they had collected. They transcribed interview results, analyzed photos and videos, and synthesized their field findings with their preliminary research. The final results of this activity were reported in various formats, ranging from research papers and multimedia presentations to short documentary videos or mini-exhibitions in class. At this stage, students not only reported facts but also reflected on how their firsthand experience at the historic site had changed their understanding and feelings about local history.

Source: Research Data, 2025

Place-Based Education (PBE) plays a crucial role in local history studies by reconfiguring the subject–object relationship between students and historical discourse (Üztemur & Dere, 2023). This approach transforms history from a distant domain of knowledge into an integrated matrix that encompasses participants' identities, environmental landscapes, and life experiences. Thus, PBE empowers students to transition from passive recipients of knowledge

to active producers of interpretation, researchers with sharp critical tools, and individuals equipped with empathy and reflective awareness of their own location at the intersection of time and place. This approach transforms history learning from knowledge that feels distant and separate into an understanding that is integrated with learners' identities, the environments in which they live, and their life experiences. Through the Place-Based Education (PBE) approach, students no longer play the role of mere recipients of knowledge, but become active subjects who interpret history, conduct critical studies, and develop empathetic sensitivity and reflective awareness of their position in the context of space and time.

Fundamentally, the Place-Based Education (PBE) approach in local history learning also serves as an integral vehicle for developing social-emotional skills by shifting the learning process from classrooms, which tend to be emotionally sterile, to real-world contexts rich in stimuli and social interaction. Research findings show that students' direct interaction with historical sites can elicit deep emotional responses that go beyond mere intellectual observation. A number of participants expressed deep emotional responses, including awe, grief, and sadness, accompanied by physiological responses such as goosebumps when at the research site. This affective experience became a gateway to a more humanistic understanding of history. Students no longer viewed historical sites as mere inanimate objects or old buildings, but as spaces with an "atmosphere" and "soul" that recorded and echoed past events. This emotional resonance was seen as a crucial first step in the process of internalizing the historical values inherent in a place.

The intensity of this emotional experience directly contributes to the awakening of historical empathy. Students reported that by standing at the physical location where events took place, they could imagine and almost "feel" the struggles, hopes, or suffering of historical figures. These feelings arose not from reading texts, but from the quiet atmosphere, the physical condition of the buildings, or the surrounding landscape that served as silent witnesses. One student shared their experience of empathy while at a site associated with forced labor:

"Right there at the location, I saw photos of the past, at the train station monument, and I began to imagine what it must have been like to be them, working from morning until night without. It was no longer just a story in a book, but rather... a heavy feeling that lingered in that place. Suddenly, I felt very sorry for them and respected their struggles."
(Interview with WFS, July 5th 2025)

Furthermore, the process of empathizing with historical figures was found to trigger personal reflection and self-awareness among students (Lazarakou & Babalis, 2021). After experiencing hardships in the past, many participants spontaneously compared their current lives to those struggles. Expressions of gratitude for the ease and freedom they enjoy emerged, along with a new awareness of their role as the next generation with a responsibility not to forget history. This reflection demonstrates a process of internalization, in which history is not only knowledge about the past but also a mirror for understanding oneself and the context of one's current life.

Turning to group dynamics, the research findings indicate that conducting field activities collaboratively is an effective way to hone students' relational skills. The group work process, which begins with the planning stage, preliminary research, field investigation, and report writing, requires students to interact intensively. Unlike individual assignments, these field projects require each member to rely on one another to achieve common goals. Interview data show that this dynamic encourages students to step out of their comfort zones and actively engage in team-based work. Specifically, students report significant improvements in communication, negotiation, and collaboration skills. Communication is key in task allocation

to avoid overlap, such as who is responsible for taking photos, who interviews sources, and who records observation findings. Negotiation processes often occur when there are differences of opinion regarding the focus of the research or the interpretation of field findings. As explained by one of the participants:

"Since our group consisted of two different classes who did not know each other, this activity helped us become closer and made communication smoother and more natural. Communication during discussions about assignment reports also became less formal than when we were not friends." (Interview with SM, July 9th 2025)

This interview excerpt provides strong empirical evidence that the Place-Based Education approach plays a strategic role in achieving cognitive learning objectives beyond its primary goals. By providing an authentic learning context that requires active collaboration, PBE effectively facilitates the development of important soft skills. This approach successfully breaks down initial social barriers in heterogeneous groups, transforming them into cohesive teams with improved communication, collaboration, and negotiation skills to achieve shared academic goals.

Place-Based Education in improving students' social-emotional skills

The results of the study show a fundamental shift in the understanding of learning, from simply transferring facts to facilitating meaning for students. This shift is an important foundation for educators to design more meaningful learning experiences. This practice aligns with John Dewey's theory of experiential learning. According to Dewey, learning is not a passive process of receiving information, but an active cycle that involves direct experience and reflection to draw meaning from that experience (Schmidt, 2010). The application of place-based education directly applies this principle, where students not only read about history but experience it firsthand at the location, interact with it, and then reflect on the experience to build authentic and lasting personal understanding (Sheppard et al., 2019).

Furthermore, analysis shows that direct interaction with "places" (historic sites) significantly contributes to the development of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) skills, particularly Self-Awareness and Social Awareness (Weissberg et al., 2013). Self-awareness is honed when students are asked to reflect on changes in their feelings and understanding after a visit, a process of introspection triggered by the experience at the site. Meanwhile, Social Awareness develops through ethical interactions with the environment and community, such as when interviewing caregivers or community leaders. Through these activities, students learn to understand the community's perspectives and values, fostering empathy that goes beyond mere textual understanding.

The contribution of this learning model to students is not limited to these two aspects; it encompasses all five core social-emotional skills. The relationship between each stage of the learning activity and the development of these competencies can be identified systematically. The table below details how each specially designed learning activity promotes the integrated development of students' five social-emotional aspects.

Table 2. Identification of the development of students' social-emotional aspects in PBE

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)	Student Development Indicators	Learning activities in place-based education (PBE)
Relationship Skills	Students actively practice collaboration and effective communication skills in small groups. They also build professional	Division of tasks within the group: Collaborate from the outset to determine the focus of

	relationships while interacting with and interviewing informants in the field	the research and share responsibilities.
Responsible Decision Making	Students are given the responsibility to examine the topic in depth. They must make constructive and ethical decisions, from choosing credible research sources to presenting their findings accurately.	Fieldwork: Communicate effectively with sources to gather information.. Theme Selection: Each group is responsible for one site, encouraging ownership of the learning process.
Self-management	Students demonstrate initiative and discipline in managing their time and tasks, from conducting preliminary research independently, managing field data, to completing final assignments in various formats (reports, videos, exhibitions).	Preliminary Research & Reporting: Students must evaluate information and decide on the best way to represent history responsibly. Preparation and Preliminary Research: Students are required to independently search for sources to build a knowledge framework.
Social Awareness	Students develop empathy and understanding of the perspectives of others (community leaders, caregivers) and the local community. They also learn and apply social ethics when visiting cultural heritage sites	Reporting Results: Processing raw data into a structured final project. Before departure: Lecturers provide explanations about visit ethics and how to interact with the community.
Self-Awareness	Students can reflect on how their experiences at historical sites have changed their understanding and feelings about local history.	Field Activities: Conduct interviews with informants and participatory observation to understand the local socio-cultural context. Reporting Results and Reflection: The final stage explicitly asks students to reflect on changes in their understanding and feelings.

Source: Research Data, 2025

These findings reinforce the argument that PBE and other affective education approaches are indeed effective in fostering KSE. This study addresses existing gaps. Many previous PBE studies tend to focus on the context of science or environmental education. This research makes a more specific contribution by presenting a structured, replicable pedagogical model for social science courses (local history) at the higher education level. This model explicitly maps each stage of learning—from preparation, orientation, investigation, to reflection—to the five

domains of ESD. Thus, this study not only shows “that” PBE is successful but also shows “how” educators can systematically design that success.

PBE creates an authentic learning environment for developing relationship skills, which is fundamentally different from simulative or role-playing approaches in the classroom. This arena is authentic because it places students in real-world social situations that are fraught with complexity and uncertainty, rather than in controlled hypothetical scenarios (Yemini et al., 2023). When students work collaboratively in groups to design, implement, and report on historical investigations, they are confronted with real interpersonal dynamics, such as negotiating task distribution, managing differences of opinion, and persuasive communication to achieve common goals. This process shows that relational skills are not formed through normative instruction, but rather through social practices that occur situationally and continuously, as also shown in the findings of Azzahra et al, (2024).

In addition to the group’s internal dynamics, student interactions with external parties—such as key informants, site managers, or community leaders—expand the relational learning space that cannot be fully replicated in the classroom. The process of interviewing and field communication requires students to build relationships spontaneously, practice active listening skills, and adjust their communication style according to the social context they encounter. These interactions have real and not entirely predictable consequences, offering a richer and more profound social learning experience than controlled learning scenarios. These findings are consistent with the argument that PBE allows learners to experience social relations as a living practice, not merely as a pedagogical concept (Gruenewald, 2003; Mannion & Adey, 2011).

In this context, students are also faced with the need to make independent and responsible decisions. Determining research themes, selecting historical sources, and compiling narratives of study results place students in the position of decision-makers who must simultaneously consider academic, ethical, and social aspects. This decision-making does not stand alone but is closely intertwined with the social relationships that have been built, both within the group and with the local community. Within the SEL framework, this process reflects the development of contextual and reflective responsible decision-making (Casel, 2020), and reinforces the findings of Mameli et al, (2019) regarding the importance of ownership of the learning process in shaping students' academic and moral responsibility.

Experience through place-based education also encourages students' self-management by requiring independence in managing time, organizing field data, and completing final research products. In this qualitative study, self-management is understood as an adaptive process arising from the interaction among task structure, the complexity of the field context, and accompanying social dynamics. These findings are consistent with Alvi & Gillies (2021) who emphasize that authentic learning based on real experiences contributes to strengthening self-regulation and independent learning among students.

Furthermore, students' direct involvement in local communities fosters social awareness and cultural sensitivity. Through interviews and participatory observation, students not only acquire factual knowledge but also understand history as a living and layered social experience. This social awareness stems from students' ability to view historical events from the perspective of local communities, thereby enriching their understanding of the relationship between the past and the present social context. These findings support (Soucy et al., 2025) view that PBE has transformative potential in fostering empathy, social awareness, and sensitivity to cultural diversity. Learning experiences at historical sites also trigger emotional engagement, encouraging students to reflect on changes in their understanding and attitudes toward local history. This reflection shows that place-based history learning not only activates the cognitive

dimension but also shapes students' self-awareness through affective responses that arise from direct experience. In a qualitative approach, reflection is understood as a process of constructing meaning that is personal and contextual, as emphasized in Kolb & Kolb (2012) experiential learning theory. The self-awareness that develops through this reflection strengthens the integration between PBE and SEL in history learning.

Overall, this study shows that Place-Based Education provides a pedagogical framework that enables the development of students' social-emotional skills through an interconnected process involving social relationships, decision-making, self-management, social awareness, and self-reflection. These findings are not intended to be generalized, but rather to provide an in-depth understanding of how PBE is interpreted and implemented in the context of history learning in higher education. Thus, this study enriches the literature on PBE and SEL by emphasizing the processual dimension and authentic experiences as the foundation for meaningful and humanistic history learning.

The findings of this study have significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on PBE and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) by empirically demonstrating the specific mechanisms through which the PBE model in the context of history education can holistically integrate the development of the five domains of social-emotional skills. This study moves beyond mere correlations to demonstrate a structured pedagogical model. Practically, these findings offer concrete recommendations for Teacher Education Institutions through Subject Teacher Working Groups (MGMP). MGMPs are advised not only to equip prospective history teachers with content knowledge but also with pedagogical competencies to design and facilitate place-based learning. The history education curriculum needs to be enriched with training in project design, ethical community engagement, and authentic assessment methods that measure students' historical understanding and social-emotional development.

However, this study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. Given the qualitative, limited-scope design that focuses on a single group of students at a specific institution, these findings have high contextual validity. However, they cannot be generalized to a broader population. Therefore, future research is needed to expand and validate these initial findings. Some suggested directions for further research include: (1) quantitative studies using standard instruments to statistically measure the impact of implementing this model on students' KSE; (2) longitudinal studies to track whether increases in empathy, civic engagement, and understanding of local history persist in the long term after students complete the course; and (3) comparative studies that replicate this model in different geographical, cultural, and institutional contexts to test its adaptability and scalability.

Conclusion

This study concludes that prospective history teachers interpret Place-Based Education (PBE) as a learning approach that provides authentic experiences through direct involvement with local places and communities. The application of PBE allows students to experience history learning as a contextual social practice, so that the learning process is not limited to understanding the material, but also involves interaction, reflection, and interpretation of the social realities around them. The results of the study show that place-based learning experiences contribute to the development of students' social-emotional skills. Relational skills develop through group dynamics and interactions with external parties that require effective communication, empathy, and the ability to build relationships in real situations. Responsible decision-making is formed through student involvement in determining the focus of study, selecting historical sources, and compiling historical representations that consider academic

and ethical aspects. Self-management emerged along with the demands of independence in managing time, tasks, and data during field activities. In addition, direct interaction with local communities encourages the development of social awareness and cultural sensitivity, while reflection on field experiences strengthens students' self-awareness as learners and prospective history educators. Thus, this study answers the research question by showing that the application of Place-Based Education not only functions as a contextual learning strategy but also as an effective pedagogical arena for integrating history learning with the development of social-emotional skills of prospective history teachers. These findings emphasize the importance of developing history learning designs based on local experiences and contexts as part of efforts to prepare prospective history teachers who are not only academically competent but also socially and emotionally prepared to carry out their professional roles.

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