

INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF KI HADJAR DEWANTARA'S PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

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ABSTRACT

Merdeka Curriculum, an educational initiative introduced by Nadiem Makarim, Indonesia's Minister of Education and Culture, has several differences with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's educational concept. In its implementation, the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes student freedom in determining the course of learning, promotes creativity, and encourages project-based learning. However, this may conflict with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept, which prioritizes the role of the teacher as a facilitator in directing student development. This research aims to understand the factors that cause this phenomenon by using Ki Hadjar Dewantara's perspective as an analytical tool. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature study method through several stages including library data collection, recording, reviewing data sources, and processing information. The results show that Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept of education also emphasizes student-centered learning by respecting their individuality and a holistic approach to education. Unfortunately, in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, the focus on respecting students' individuality and developing moral, emotional, and physical aspects may not be a priority. In addition, other important aspects such as education for students' daily lives may also not get enough attention in the Merdeka Curriculum. The link between learning in the curriculum and students' real lives may become less clear.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum, Thought, Ki Hadjar Dewantara.

Introduction

In the context of education, curriculum change is a common thing to do in order to improve the quality of learning and keep up with the times. The education curriculum is the main foundation for organizing a country's education system. In the curriculum, there are various components that are determined to achieve the desired educational goals. Curriculum assessment needs to be carried out innovatively, dynamically, and routinely in accordance with the times and advances in science, technology, and competencies demanded by society and graduate users. Therefore, curriculum adaptation is a necessity. In fact, with the rapid development of science, technology, and competence, education can no longer survive in a "comfort zone" by using the existing curriculum (Suryaman, 2020).

Kurikulum Merdeka, an educational initiative introduced by Indonesia's Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim, has become a hot topic of debate in the community. The concept marks a significant change in the approach to education in Indonesia with the aim of producing graduates who are better prepared to face global challenges and technological advancements. Despite its noble goals, the Merdeka Curriculum is not free from

pros and cons in the community. Currently, the independent learning curriculum is still considered an option in the education system, as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology is conducting socialization before making it a national curriculum. Thus, it is not mandatory for all schools to implement the independent learning curriculum (Rahmadhani et al., 2022).

The Merdeka Curriculum covers various aspects that have been highlighted and debated in the community. There are a number of arguments for and against the implementation of this concept. For some people, the Merdeka Curriculum is considered an innovative step in improving the quality of education and the relevance of the curriculum to the demands of the times. They believe that by integrating 21st-century skills, character development, and project-based learning, the Merdeka Curriculum can better prepare Indonesia's young generation to face global competition. According to (Kurniati & Kusumawati, 2023) Merdeka Curriculum is designed as a more flexible curriculum framework, with an emphasis on the core of the material and the development of student character and competencies. Its main characteristics that support learning recovery include the use of a project approach to develop social skills and character in accordance with the Pancasila Learner Profile, focus on crucial material, and provide flexibility for teachers to implement learning tailored to student needs.

However, on the other hand, there are also a number of criticisms of the Merdeka Curriculum. Some consider the sudden change and lack of adequate socialization as weaknesses in the implementation of this concept. The lack of adequate preparation and understanding by teachers and schools in dealing with these changes has been highlighted. In addition, there are concerns that the Merdeka Curriculum has not fully considered the real conditions on the ground and local needs, so its relevance is questionable. In addition, debates have also arisen regarding the assessment and evaluation system in the Merdeka Curriculum. Inconsistency and lack of clarity in assessing student performance create doubt and uncertainty in the learning process. The lack of involvement of stakeholders such as teachers, schools, and parents in designing and implementing the Merdeka Curriculum is also a concern that needs to be addressed. Based on research by Rosmana et al., (2023) in the situation at school, there are several obstacles in implementing the independent curriculum. These obstacles include the lack of teacher training related to the new learning paradigm, difficulties in preparing learning administration in accordance with the independent curriculum, difficulties in integrating the e-report application, and difficulties in changing the mindset of school members to be able to implement a student-focused learning approach.

In the context of the pros and cons of the Merdeka Curriculum, it is important to conduct a comprehensive and objective analysis of this educational change. An in-depth evaluation can help highlight existing strengths and weaknesses, and identify areas that need improvement. Thus, a better way can be found in designing and implementing the Merdeka Curriculum with the desired expectations, namely improving the quality of education and the readiness of graduates to face complex and dynamic developments.

In this case, the independent curriculum can be seen and analyzed in Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept of education. The selection of Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophical thoughts has an important urgency in the context of education in Indonesia. Ki Hadjar Dewantara, also known as the Father of Indonesian National Education, has a significant

contribution to building and developing the education system in Indonesia. The concepts and values he taught are still relevant and provide valuable guidance in efforts to improve and strengthen the education system in Indonesia. Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thinking views education as an important tool in achieving sustainable development and creating a better society. According to Hidayat (Idris et al., 2023). Anies Baswedan, when serving as Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, even pointed out that Finland, which is considered one of the countries with the best education system in the world, has adopted Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thinking for more than two decades. This means that the concept of education in the thinking of the father of Indonesian education is of undoubted quality.

In Ki Hadjar Dewantara's view, education must be able to accommodate the needs and potential of each child individually. He emphasized the importance of education that strengthens the nation's cultural identity and character and provides fair opportunities for all children to develop optimally. The controversy that arose between the Merdeka Curriculum and Ki Hadjar Dewantara's views highlighted differences in educational approaches. The focus of this study aims to analyze the differences in the concept of the independent curriculum from the perspective of Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophical thinking.

Research Method

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature study method through several stages including library data collection, recording, reviewing data sources, and processing information involving the use of literature (literature) such as books, notes, and reports on previous research results as sources of information. A literature study is a data collection method that involves in-depth analysis of various sources such as books, literature, records, and reports related to the research issue being carried out. An important stage after researchers determine the research topic is to conduct a literature study (Sugiyono, 2012). At this stage, researchers will search for literature related to the theory and research topics that have been determined regarding the independent curriculum and Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophical thoughts. The procedure in this literature study review is carried out by collecting literature data, making notes, reviewing the data sources that have been obtained, and analyzing them to answer the problem formulation. The data sources in this study are primary data obtained from books and journals related to the independent curriculum and Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophical thoughts. After the researcher has collected relevant literature, the next step is to organize it in an organized manner so that it can be used in the study.

In library research, there are several stages that must be carried out by the researcher. The first stage involves collecting various research materials, such as empirical data from books, journals, official and scientific research reports, and literature relevant to the research theme. After that, the second step involves careful reading of the collected literature. While reading, the researcher needs to delve deeply into the content of the reading materials to find new ideas related to the research title. Next, the third step involves making research notes that record the key points discovered during reading and reviewing the literature. In the last step, the research notes will be processed or analyzed to obtain conclusions that will be compiled in the form of a research report (Zed, 2008).

Result and Discussion

Independent Curriculum

In the industrial era 4.0 which presents the development of education 4.0, the current approach to education increasingly requires an approach that focuses on results or what is known as Outcome-Based Education (OBE). This approach is also one of the directions of the independent learning curriculum. OBE is an educational approach that focuses on achieving concrete, predetermined results, such as student knowledge, abilities, and behavior. OBE involves curriculum development, assessment, and reporting that reflect the achievement of higher-level learning and mastery rather than simply accumulating credits (Suryaman, 2020). The Merdeka curriculum in its learning refers to several theories that generally recognize that meaningful learning in building competence requires improvisational efforts in forming knowledge (Suartana et al., 2021).

According to Swawikanti (Idris et al., 2023), an independent curriculum is an educational approach that allows students to deeply learn adequate concepts and skills through a variety of learning in the curriculum. This curriculum gives teachers the flexibility to choose adaptive educational tools according to student's learning needs and interests. Nadiem Makarim, who is responsible for developing the Merdeka Curriculum, explained that the core substance of this curriculum is "independent learning". This concept aims to enable students to develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities based on their talents and interests.

In his research, Muslikh revealed that the independent curriculum is based on four philosophical schools, including first, the flow of progressivism, which emphasizes the importance of the formation of creativity in education. Creativity can be realized through the creation of activities and a natural atmosphere that can change a person's way of thinking and attitude. Second, constructivism focuses on learning based on direct observation of learners' experiences. Knowledge is formed through construction and measurement based on these experiences. This school argues that knowledge can only be obtained through the use of the five senses, and humans who do not optimize their five senses are considered stagnant in their development toward a perfect human being. Third, the humanism school sees learners from the point of view of their originality and intelligence. The success of learning depends on the ability to develop the thoughts, attitudes, and skills of each learner with all their uniqueness and characteristics. Fourth, the anthropological school, namely this school considers humans as creatures who can be independent but also depend on others and have a tendency toward religious values (Muslikh, 2020). Thus, the Merdeka Curriculum pays attention to the principles and views of the four schools of philosophy in developing an educational approach that is holistic and in accordance with the needs and uniqueness of each learner.

Ki Hadjar Dewantara's Philosophical Thoughts

Ki Hadjar Dewantara, previously known as Raden Mas Soewardi Soerjaninggrat, changed his name to Ki Hadjar Dewantara in 1922. He was born in Yogyakarta on May 2, 1889, and came from a noble family of Yogyakarta, as the grandson of Pakualam III. His father was K.P.H. Suryaningrat and his mother was Raden Ayu Sandiyah. The environment in which Ki Hadjar Dewantara grew up had a great influence on his sensitivity to art, culture, and religious values. By adopting a new name, Ki Hadjar Dewantara gained the freedom to interact with the community, which in turn facilitated the acceptance of his struggle by the

community at that time (Marisyah et al., 2019). On 28 November 1959, Ki Hadjar Dewantara was recognized as an "Indonesian National Hero". Then, on December 16, 1959, the government designated Ki Hadjar Dewantara's birthday as "Indonesian National Education Day". Because of this, Ki Hadjar Dewantara is honored as the "Father of National Education". During his lifetime, Ki Hadjar Dewantara has created various works that include books on Education, Culture, Politics, and Society, as well as his history and struggles (Yanuarti, 2017).

In the among system, Ki Hadjar Dewantara conveyed two main concepts, namely natural nature and independence. Natural nature involves limits in developing a child's natural potential in forming a personality. According to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, humans are creatures that cannot be separated from nature. Although it is impossible to escape from this nature, humans can achieve happiness by being in line with nature, which also includes progress (Suparlan, 2015). Independence means the freedom to organize oneself by maintaining order and harmony in a common life. Students are given the will to think in developing their thinking abilities, creativity, and talents without any hindrance from others. Ki Hadjar Dewantara explained that in the context of Taman Siswa, independence means having the right and responsibility to manage oneself by paying attention to the order and peace of society. Independence is considered a very important prerequisite in education, with the belief that humans naturally have the duty to maintain, improve, advance, and perfect their personal lives (Nurhalita & Hudaidah, 2021).

Tripusat Pendidikan is an educational concept proposed by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the founder of National Education in Indonesia. This concept refers to three educational environments that include education in the family, education in formal educational institutions such as schools or universities, and education in the community. In the education pathway, there are formal, non-formal, and informal education that complement and enrich each other, as stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system, especially in Article 13 paragraph 1 (Febriyanti, 2021). In order to achieve overall educational goals, Ki Hadjar Dewantara proposed the tripartite concept as follows. First, the importance of education in the family environment; parents have the main responsibility for educating children, and it is not given to other parties.

Parents indirectly also act as teachers who shape children's behavior provide knowledge and become examples in children's education. The family is the first environment where children receive education and guidance, considering that most of the child's life occurs in the family environment so children's education is greatly influenced by the family. Second, education in the school environment is a continuation of education in the family environment. Education at school is obtained by students through a system that is regular, organized and follows strict rules and requirements. The success of education at school is highly dependent on the education provided in the family environment. Both schools and families can play a role and complement each other to achieve the desired educational goals. Third, education in the community has a significant role after education in the family environment and education in the school environment. Education that occurs in the community begins when children leave the family and school environment. Therefore, the community has an important role in the context of education. With the involvement of the community in the process of educational development, they will feel connected and start to feel responsible for the progress of the school.

Ki Hadjar Dewantara also argued that education involves a process to elevate human dignity, by raising people to the level of humanity. He conveyed this through the education trilogy motto, which consists of:

Tut Wuri Handayani, which means that a teacher should provide encouragement from behind. For example, if a student has a hobby of singing, the educator should follow that interest. Thus, when the student finishes their education, they automatically have skills that match their talents. Because a smart person must have motivation from within himself, not from others. The role of educators in this Tut Wuri Handayani principle is to develop students' talents first, followed by encouragement and motivation.

Ing Madya Mangun Karsa, which means that teachers must provide initiatives and ideas to students. In this case, an educator has the ability to inspire and excite students. The implementation of this motto is seen when the educator is in the midst of students with the aim of providing motivation so that all students can unite to achieve a common goal. The role of educators in this principle is to provide motivation to foster students, through ways such as providing motivation to learn, appreciating student achievement, and showing patience and kinship.

Ing Ngarsa Sung Tulada, which means that a teacher must be an example and show good actions in front of his students. Therefore, the task of educators is not only limited to delivering knowledge to students but also must be creative in delivering learning. This approach can create a pleasant learning atmosphere, where students are not afraid to speak openly in front of the teacher. The role of educators according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara is not only as facilitators of learning but also as learning partners for students. In this view, education is not only concerned with the transfer of knowledge, but also with helping students develop their potential, providing encouragement, arousing enthusiasm, and setting a good example.

According to Ki Hadjar Dewantara's view, the Paguron System is a form of a national education system that aims to pass on cultural values in Indonesian society. The idea of paguron includes the understanding that paguron has a role as a center of education that includes three things, namely as a place of teachers, a place of learning, and a place of education in the community. In today's society, there are many modern pesantren that have developed both in big cities and villages. The paguron system was chosen based on direct observation of community life. The reason for Ki Hadjar Dewantara's choice of the patron system was that the pondok system he promoted had enormous benefits (Tarigan et al., 2022).

Analysis of the Merdeka Curriculum from the Perspective of Ki Hadjar Dewantara's Philosophical Thought

The Merdeka Curriculum is an initiative introduced by Nadiem Makarim, Indonesia's Minister of Education and Culture, with the aim of changing the approach to education in Indonesia. This curriculum aims to give students more freedom in determining their learning path and expanding their creativity. On the other hand, Ki Hadjar Dewantara is an Indonesian educational figure who put forward the idea of "education for life" and the importance of paying attention to students' individuality.

Ki Hadjar Dewantara always pays attention to the psychological dimension of human life, because humans have creation, creativity, and work. To develop the whole person, all of these aspects need to be developed in a balanced manner. If development only focuses on one

aspect, then human development will be unbalanced. Ki Hadjar Dewantara argued that education that only emphasizes intellectual aspects will keep students away from society. Unfortunately, education today only focuses on developing thinking skills, while paying less attention to developing emotions and imagination. If continued, this will make humans lose their humanity. From a socio-anthropological point of view, the uniqueness of humans compared to other creatures is culture. Thus, one effective method to improve humanity is through cultural development. However, culture has diversity in society. Ki Hadjar Dewantara himself changed his name to reflect a change in educational approach, from satria pinandita to pinandita satria. This reflects a shift in role from spiritual teacher to spiritual teacher with a knightly spirit, ready to protect the country and the people. For Ki Hadjar Dewantara, a teacher should have superior character and spirituality before becoming a hero who guides students to become defenders of the country. In other words, the first role of an educator is to be a good role model before functioning as a facilitator or teacher.

In analyzing a curriculum from a particular perspective, the first thing that needs to be understood and distinguished is the components of the curriculum. The curriculum consists of several components, namely objectives, content, methods/strategies, and evaluation. Regarding objectives, based on the previous explanation, the main objective of the Merdeka curriculum is to develop students' intellectual abilities, attitudes, and skills based on their talents and interests. If we connect the objectives of the independent curriculum described above with the definition of education according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the objectives of the independent curriculum look too limited. This is due to its focus only on how learners can self-actualize well, without paying attention to the aspects expressed by Ki Hadjar about the importance of learners' understanding of community culture (Idris et al., 2023). Today, in an era of rapid technological advancement, most individuals are affected by the significant development of information technology. Many people are seduced by such advanced technology, thus neglecting other important aspects of their lives. Things like strengthening interpersonal relationships, participating in social activities in the community, valuing others more than technological achievements, and so on.

Seeing what happened in the field and comments from one of the teachers, in its implementation, this independent curriculum did not have any influence in changing the progress of education, in the case of teachers continuing to teach in the same way, the same model, the same practices, and ordered by the same principal. The training conducted in the independent curriculum which lasted for 3 (three) days, 7 (seven) days, or more than 1 (one week) did not study what the independent curriculum was at all, but all teachers in the training learned about teaching administration. The teacher's competence is copying teaching administration on the internet. 4 (four) teacher competencies, namely pedagogic, personality, professional, and social, all of these will not be scrutinized, or examined by the principal. However, what is checked is the teaching administration. Naming related to lesson plans alone is renamed, syllabus too, and other technician terms are replaced. This means that teacher competence is TU competence, where teachers leave the classroom to complete the administration so that teachers are considered the best if they complete teaching administration. These policies do not have a clear and rational concept.

Although Nadiem Makarim's Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes student freedom and creativity, there are some aspects that may conflict with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept of

education. Here are some differences that can be identified, namely first, the role of the teacher, in Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept, the teacher has an important role as a facilitator in guiding students and helping their personal development. However, the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes students' freedom in determining the course of learning, so the teacher's role may become more limited. Second, student-centered learning: Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept emphasizes student-centered learning, respecting their individuality and needs. However, the Merdeka Curriculum, while providing student freedom, may not provide the same focus on respecting student individuality. Third, the holistic approach, Ki Hadjar Dewantara proposed a holistic approach to education, which involves developing students' intellectual, moral, emotional, and physical aspects. Meanwhile, the Merdeka Curriculum may focus more on aspects of student creativity and freedom in determining the material of interest. Fourth, Education for life, Ki Hadjar Dewantara emphasizes the importance of education that is relevant to students' daily lives. On the other hand, the Merdeka Curriculum may not clearly emphasize the link between learning in the curriculum and students' real lives.

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn is that there are differences between the Merdeka Curriculum introduced by Nadiem Makarim and Ki Hadjar Dewantara's educational concept in the implementation process. Some aspects of the Merdeka Curriculum may not be fully in line with the principles proposed by Ki Hadjar Dewantara. Some notable differences include the possibly more limited role of teachers, less focus on respecting students' individuality, and limitations in considering holistic aspects of education. While the Merdeka Curriculum may have good intentions, namely providing students with freedom and creativity, it is important to consider that Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role as a facilitator, a holistic approach to education, and student-centered learning. In the process of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, it is necessary to consider how to maintain a balance between providing freedom to students and ensuring respect for the educational principles proposed by Ki Hadjar Dewantara. Although there are differences between the Merdeka Curriculum and Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept in the implementation process, it is important to revisit and consider the long-standing educational principles proposed by Ki Hadjar Dewantara so that a holistic approach to education and attention to student individuality is maintained.

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