

Integration Of Philosophy in The Modern National Education Curriculum

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Abstract: This research aims to analyze the importance of the integration of philosophy in the national education curriculum, focusing on its contribution in shaping a more holistic and character-building oriented education. The method used is qualitative research with a descriptive-analytical approach to library research, analyzing literature from figures in the philosophy of education such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Syed Naquib al-Attas, as well as global education policy reports. The findings of this study show that philosophy has an important role in directing the educational curriculum, not only in the development of cognitive competence, but also in the formation of students' morals and ethics. This study found that the integration of philosophy in the curriculum can overcome the problem of fragmentation of values and the inalignment of educational goals with social realities. The results of this study underscore the need for a more critical, reflective and value-based approach to the curriculum, which not only meets the demands of the job market, but also shapes socially responsible and ethical individuals. This research makes a significant contribution to educational reform by providing a theoretical basis for the development of a curriculum that is more comprehensive and relevant to the challenges of the times.

INTRODUCTION

The educational curriculum is a core element in the education system that functions to determine the direction, goals, and results of the learning process (Hermawan et al., 2020). As the main determinant in the educational process, the curriculum not only consists of a set of teaching materials that are systematically arranged, but also reflects the worldview and values believed in by a nation or society. In Indonesia, as in many other countries, the educational curriculum tends to focus on achieving cognitive competencies and technical skills that can meet the demands of the job market (Muslimin, 2023). This approach prioritizes measurable and practical results, but often ignores the moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions that are fundamental aspects in shaping students' character (Aziz, 2023). Fragmentation in the curriculum that emphasizes the achievement of competencies without considering character formation can lead to the loss of the philosophical direction that should be the main basis in formulating national education goals (Arsyad & Sauri, 2024). This creates an imbalance in the education system that should not only develop intellectual abilities, but also form virtuous and responsible individuals.

In recent years, Indonesia has introduced the Merdeka Curriculum, which is expected to provide more freedom for students to explore their interests and talents independently

(Muslimin, 2023). The curriculum aims to provide more space for creativity and freedom of learning, however, despite offering more flexible policies, major challenges remain in strengthening ethical and philosophical values in education. The Merdeka curriculum offers flexibility for students, but there are still difficulties in creating a thorough integration of technical skills and moral values in the curriculum (Muslim, 2023). This underscores the need to review and strengthen the philosophical basis in the design of the existing curriculum, so that education can further emphasize the formation of balanced character and reduce the fragmentation of values that occur.

Education should not only aim to produce skilled individuals who are ready to face the challenges of the job market, but also to form a whole human being in all aspects both intellectual, moral, ethical, and spiritual (Ulfah et al., 2023). Therefore, the philosophy of education has a very important role in designing a more holistic curriculum (Boniole & Campaner, 2020; Nasir et al., 2024). Philosophy not only offers abstract theories, but provides clear directions on how education should form individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also of strong moral character and ready to live a life with clear ethical values. Thus, philosophy provides a foundation in the development of a curriculum that can enrich an educational dimension that is often overlooked, namely character building.

Figures of philosophy of education such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas have emphasized the importance of integrating philosophy in education to create students who not only have knowledge, but also wisdom in dealing with it. Dewey, with his experiential learning approach, teaches the importance of connecting theory with practice and social life, so that students can develop a more applicative and relevant understanding to their reality (Nardo, 2022). Freire, with the concept of liberation education, emphasizes the need for critical awareness in education that aims to liberate individuals from social injustice (Gomes, 2022). Meanwhile, al-Attas proposes the importance of integrating science with moral values in the Islamic education system, in order to form human beings who are not only technically competent but also have high ethical and spiritual awareness (Moosavi & Alatas, 2024).

Facing the existing educational challenges, it is very important to dig deeper into how philosophy can be integrated into the Indonesian education curriculum (Iwan Pranoto et al., 2023; Prasetya, 2020). The integration of philosophy can create a balance between the achievement of technical skills and the development of moral character, as well as bring together the rational, ethical, and spiritual dimensions in education. Thus, philosophy can provide a firmer foundation in designing a more humane curriculum, not only preparing students for the world of work, but also for a more meaningful life (Shahjahan et al., 2022; Shih, 2024). Therefore, this study aims to explore how philosophy can be integrated in the Indonesian education curriculum and to examine the urgency of strengthening philosophical foundations in the formation of a curriculum that can provide clear direction for the formation of students' character. The research also aims to contribute to educational reform by proposing a more holistic approach to the curriculum, which focuses not only on the technical aspect, but also on character formation and a deep moral understanding.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with library research methods that are descriptive-analytical and critical-philosophical. This approach was chosen to explore the meaning, structure, and urgency of the integration of philosophy in the educational curriculum, as well as to analyze the contribution of philosophy to the formation of holistic educational inputs and outputs. This method allows researchers to examine philosophical concepts in depth and evaluate their relevance to the conditions of the educational curriculum in Indonesia.

Research data was obtained through a literature review from two main source categories: first, literature reviews from recent scientific articles that discuss the thoughts of prominent educational philosophers such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, which provide a theoretical foundation on the relationship between philosophy and education; Second, secondary literature in the form of scientific articles, journals, and education policy reports that focus on the development of a global education curriculum. The literature selection is based on thematic relevance to the topic of integration of philosophy in education, the credibility of the source, as well as its proximity to the local context of Indonesia and the latest global educational developments.

Data analysis was carried out with a conceptual interpretation approach to philosophical texts, as well as a synthesis of thoughts from educational figures to find common ground and differences in their views on the integration of philosophy in education. The research procedure includes four main stages: (1) the collection of literature relevant to the research theme; (2) identification and classification of key concepts such as integration, philosophy, values education, and a holistic curriculum; (3) analysis of the relationship between concepts using the thinking approach of educational and philosophical figures; and (4) the preparation of reflective and applicable conclusions as a theoretical and practical contribution to the reform of the national curriculum.

This approach is based on the great theory of Immanuel Kant, who stated that philosophy serves as a critical basis for understanding the structure and limits of knowledge, as well as providing a framework for evaluating the value and purpose of education itself. Kant stated, "The task of philosophy is not merely to describe the world but to guide the way in which we experience it" (Kant, 2024). Thus, philosophy not only provides a theoretical basis, but also serves as an instrument of reflection that can guide curriculum changes to be more holistic, ethical, and transcendental.

RESULT

The Concept of Integration and Its Relationship with Philosophy

The concept of integration in the context of education refers to the effort to combine various disciplines into a whole, cohesive learning system, which is not fragmented. In the epistemology of education, integration is not just the unification of knowledge structures, but also the adaptation between the main sources of knowledge, such as revelation, reason, intuition, and empirical experience. This kind of integration reflects a monotheistic view of reality, in which all forms of knowledge come from God and aim to bring man closer to Him. This view is in line with what was suggested by figures of philosophy of education

such as John Dewey and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. Dewey, through an experiential learning approach, emphasizes that meaningful education must connect theory, practice, and social context integrally (Charles et al., 2024; Gomes, 2022; Mulyani et al., 2025). In his view, the separation of disciplines in the curriculum will only alienate students from real life. Meanwhile, al-Attas emphasized the importance of integration between science and ethics, as well as the restoration of manners in the Islamic education system to achieve a holistic and harmonious understanding. Through the integration of philosophy in the curriculum, education becomes not only a place to gather knowledge, but also to shape the character and morals of students as a whole. These findings show that the philosophy of integration in education serves not only to assemble knowledge, but also to direct education to the formation of individuals who have a deeper understanding of the relationship between science, ethical values, and spiritual life.

The Essence and Position of Philosophy in Education

Philosophy has a very important position in education, not only as a theoretical basis, but also as a methodological and normative foundation in formulating the goals, content, and direction of education itself. The philosophy of education serves as a critical basis that examines basic assumptions about people, knowledge, and society that are grounded in curriculum design (Ongesa, 2020). In this context, philosophy provides a framework for determining deeper educational values and goals, which go beyond mere mastery of technical skills or the achievement of academic outcomes. According to Immanuel Kant, philosophy not only describes the world, but also directs the way we experience it, namely by guiding individuals in understanding the purpose of their lives through education that has direction and meaning (Kant, 2024). In this case, philosophy serves as a perspective formation on what should be taught, how to teach it, and what that education should achieve. Philosophy in education teaches that the goal of education is not only to form competent individuals in the cognitive realm, but also to build strong moral and spiritual character (Karim et al., 2024). Therefore, philosophy not only becomes the basis of thought in education, but also becomes a guide in creating a curriculum that includes ethical, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions, all of which aim to form a whole human being.

Critical Analysis of the Current Condition of the Curriculum

The current condition of the educational curriculum shows the dominance of a technocratic and pragmatic approach that prioritizes the achievement of cognitive competencies and practical skills that can be directly applied in the job market. This approach tends to ignore the ethical, spiritual, and social dimensions that should be an integral part of educational goals. Modern curriculums, both in Indonesia and in many other countries, focus more on achieving academic standards and teaching efficiency, which ultimately results in a fragmented education system, where knowledge is taught sectorally and separate from real-life contexts. This leads to a neglect of the formation of student character, which should be an important aspect of education. In Indonesia, curriculum changes that have occurred in recent decades, such as the transition from KBK to KTSP, the 2013 Curriculum, to the Independent Curriculum, are often not based on in-

depth philosophical studies (Muslimin, 2023; Prasetya, 2020). These changes are more administrative and reactive to political policies or global demands, rather than the result of philosophical reflection that considers the goals of education as a whole (Mubarok et al., 2021). As a result, the educational curriculum often does not have a solid foundation in providing direction and meaning for the development of students as whole individuals. These findings affirm the need for a more holistic curriculum approach (Nasir et al., 2024), which integrates students' knowledge, values, and character development, with a strong philosophical foundation to create an education that is more meaningful and relevant to the challenges of the times.

Facts of Curriculum and Education

The facts about curriculum and education show that despite increased access to education in different parts of the world, the quality of education is often still hampered by overly technocratic and pragmatic approaches. Curricula in many countries, including Indonesia, focus more on achieving measurable standards, such as test scores and academic achievement, which ignore the moral, ethical, and social dimensions that should be an integral part of education. At the global level, even though access to education is increasingly open, critical and reflective thinking skills among students are declining (Aziz, 2023). This indicates a crisis of values in the modern education system, which often only prioritizes measurable results, such as test scores, without considering character building and a deeper understanding of life. This leads to a disorientation in educational goals, where students are no longer prepared to become individuals who are not only academically intelligent, but also thoughtful, ethical, and able to contribute positively to society (Mubarok et al., 2021). Therefore, there is a need for curriculum reforms that not only focus on technical achievements, but also integrate more holistic educational values, which include ethical, social, and spiritual dimensions.

The Role of Philosophy in Shaping Educational Inputs and Outputs

Philosophy plays a very important role in shaping educational inputs and outputs. In terms of input, philosophy provides the basis for character formation and reflective thinking in students and educators. The philosophy of education teaches that learning should be more than just the teaching of technical knowledge; it should involve the formation of a moral attitude, ethics, and a deep understanding of life (Shahjahan et al., 2022). Through a critical and reflective philosophical approach, education can create individuals who not only master information, but are also able to reflect on and evaluate the knowledge gained in the context of life values. The philosophy of education also pays attention to the role of teachers as educators who are more than just material presenters, but as supervisors who shape the character and understanding of students as a whole (Muslimin, 2023; Ngene, 2023). This is in line with Paulo Freire's thinking that education should be a tool to liberate individuals from social injustice and develop critical awareness (Gomes, 2022). In terms of output, philosophy guided education aims to produce individuals who are not only intellectually competent, but also ethical, reflective, and social. The results of a good education are when students are able to think critically, have

a deep ethical understanding, and are able to contribute positively to society (Ongesa, 2020; Schaffar & Wolff, 2024). Therefore, the integration of philosophy in the educational curriculum is essential to ensure that education produces not only work-ready individuals, but also thoughtful, ethical, and socially responsible human beings.

Philosophical Implications for the Direction of National Curriculum Reform

The philosophical implications for the direction of national curriculum reform emphasize the importance of strengthening the philosophical basis in curriculum development. Education should not only be directed to meet the demands of the job market or global standards, but must also pay attention to the moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions that are the main foundation for the formation of students' character (Falaqi et al., 2025; Hermawan et al., 2020; Muslimin, 2023). Curriculum reform driven by a holistic educational philosophy will result in an education system that focuses not only on the mastery of knowledge and skills, but also on the formation of individuals who have noble values and a deep understanding of life (Nasir et al., 2024). The philosophy of education as developed by figures such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Syed Naquib al-Attas, teaches that the curriculum must emphasize the development of critical thinking, social awareness, and ethics that lead to social transformation (Aziz, 2023; Nasir et al., 2024; Ongesa, 2020). Curriculum reform based on this philosophy will allow education to respond to the increasingly complex challenges of modern and postmodern times, by making room for the formation of individuals who are not only skilled, but also reflective and critical thinking (Iwan Pranoto et al., 2023; Mubarak et al., 2021; Muslimin, 2023). Thus, the application of philosophy in curriculum reform is a strategic step to create a more comprehensive education system, which is not only oriented towards short-term goals, but also on the formation of a whole human being, who is ready to face global challenges and fight for social justice. These reforms, if implemented consistently, can build a generation that is more critical, ethical, and responsible in dealing with various changes in the world.

DISCUSSION

Global education today faces major challenges in the face of an era of rapid change triggered by globalization, technology, and ever-evolving social dynamics. One of the main problems that arises is the curriculum approach that focuses too much on the mastery of technical skills and cognitive competence, which often ignores the moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions (Hermawan et al., 2020). This education system that is oriented towards the achievement of numbers and measurable standards leads to the fragmentation of knowledge, where students are taught various separate disciplines without paying attention to the relationship between the science and the values behind it (Muslimin, 2023). As the world progresses rapidly becoming more connected, this raises concerns about the ability of education to form individuals who are not only skilled, but also wise, critical, and responsible towards others and the world.

In Indonesia, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is the latest effort to respond to this challenge by providing greater freedom for students to explore their interests and talents independently. This curriculum prioritizes flexibility, provides space

for more student-centered learning and prioritizes freedom in choosing subjects that suit their interests (Muslim, 2023). Education should not only aim to produce skilled individuals who are ready to face the job market, but also to form a whole human being with moral, ethical, and spiritual values (Aziz, 2023; Ulfah et al., 2023). Therefore, the philosophy of education has a very important role in designing a more holistic curriculum, which is not only limited to cognitive achievement and technical skills, but also to the formation of students' moral and ethical character (Falaqi et al., 2025; Shih, 2024). Philosophy-based education can provide clear direction on how education should shape students' character and ethics, as well as provide a framework of thinking that can strengthen the foundation of more meaningful and self-building-oriented learning.

However, although a number of developed countries have successfully integrated philosophy in their curricula, many other countries, including Indonesia, are still stuck in a narrow curriculum approach and focus on measurable outcome standards (Iwan Pranoto et al., 2023). Although the Independent Curriculum tries to address this challenge by providing more space for students' creativity, it often overlooks the importance of integrating moral and philosophical values in Education (Nasir et al., 2024; Ulfah et al., 2023). An overemphasis on technical skills and academic standards can lead to a loss of ethical and social dimensions in education, which in turn reduces students' ability to think critically and responsibly in the face of larger global issues.

The philosophy of education offers a variety of approaches that can answer this challenge. John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Syed Naquib al-Attas emphasize the importance of education that focuses on the formation of students' character and morals, as well as the development of critical thinking skills (Charles et al., 2024; Kant, 2024; Karim et al., 2024; Morais et al., 2023; Nardo, 2022; Torres & Yan, 2022). The integration of the philosophy of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Syed Naquib al-Attas in the educational curriculum, especially in the context of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia, has had a huge impact in the formation of a more holistic and humanistic education. Philosophy-based education provides a solid foundation to overcome fragmentation in the curriculum that often ignores the ethical, spiritual, and social dimensions of education. Therefore, it is important for Indonesia to explore and integrate relevant philosophical values into the national education curriculum. This will create an education that not only prepares students for the workforce, but also for a more meaningful life, full of socially conscious, critical, and responsible.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to analyze the importance of the integration of philosophy in the national education curriculum, as well as the role of philosophy in shaping education that is holistic, character-building-oriented, and ready to face the challenges of the times. This research makes a significant contribution to solving problems related to the fragmentation of values and the misalignment between educational goals and evolving social realities, by offering philosophy as a basis for strengthening a more valuable and meaningful curriculum. The impact of the results of this study shows that philosophy not only serves as the basis of educational theory, but also as a driver of change in curriculum design that

is more critical, reflective, and humanistic. The excellence of this research lies in its approach that integrates the thinking of figures of educational philosophy such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Syed Naquib al-Attas, which provides a new perspective in formulating a curriculum that is not only based on technical skills, but also on ethics and spiritual values. It is hoped that this research can provide insight into the reform of the educational curriculum in Indonesia and in the world at large, with implications for developing education that is more inclusive, ethical, and oriented towards the formation of a whole human being, not only ready to work but also ready to contribute to a more just and sustainable society.

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