

***Merdeka Belajar* in the View of Ki Hadjar Dewantara and Its Relevance for the Development of Character Education**

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Abstract

This study aims to describe how Merdeka learns in the view of Ki Hadjar Dewantara and its relevance for character education developers. Character education is very important and must be carried out, because it forms the character of the nation which is one of the objectives of a national education. Character education is not new, but in its implementation efforts educators and educational units are still not optimally implementing character education. Nevertheless, character education continues to be pursued until today, character education continues to be implemented, strengthened, and continues to be developed including in the independent curriculum through the character of Pancasila students. Philosophically, character building through character education is needed and needs to be given to students to achieve the nation's educational goals. In line with the view of Ki Hajar Dewantara, education will not be separated from the values of character (ethics), physical, and mind of students who will later become 'humans' in society. So that character education has an important role to develop the potential of students and become a virtuous Indonesian society. In this study, the literature review method was used. This method addresses information published in a particular field of study within a specific period. A literature review can be a simple summary of sources, but usually has an organizational pattern and incorporates summary and synthesis. The data collection technique is to search for relevant journals or books. The data analysis technique used is the theory of Miles and Huberman which includes the stages of data reduction, data presentation and conclusions.

Keywords: *Merdeka Belajar, View of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, Character Education.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a medium that has a role in educating the nation's life and bringing a nation to the era of enlightenment. Education is one of the milestones in eradicating knowledge poverty, solving the problem of ignorance, and solving the nation's problems that occur. Education must be able to realize a complete human being, because education functions as a process of awareness of humans to be able to know, understand and understand the religiosity of everyday life. The progress of the world of education today cannot be separated from the role of educational figures as the main actors. According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, defining education itself can be called an effort to guide all the natural or basic forces that exist in children as individuals and as members of society. The preamble of the 1945 Constitution states that the purpose of establishing the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia is one of them to educate the life of the nation. An intelligent nation is a nation that is ready to face all problems in the future. According to article 3 of Law No. 20 of 2003, the purpose of

national education is as a forum to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. Seeing from the many goals expected in the formation of the state regarding education, the development of education in Indonesia is slightly irrelevant to the 1945 Constitution.

Ki Hadjar Dewantara revealed that the impact of teaching is to help liberate humans exotically, while education liberates humans esontrically (Dewantara, 1977). Education is the main pillar to liberate students in a continuous process so that there is a change towards the ideal external and internal potential as a unity to be achieved. Ki Hadjar Dewantara emphasizes the achievement of spiritual values as the goal of very significant educational values (Thalib, 2017). Therefore, education is coaching given to students, carried out continuously, with various intelligence potentials, so that students are able to be independent physically and spiritually, able to

freely (independently) develop unique potentials with their respective natures.

Ki Hadjar Dewantara (KHD) views that the meaning of education and teaching has differences in understanding the purpose of education. For him, teaching (*onderwijs*) is part of the concept of education as a whole. Teaching refers to the process of providing useful knowledge to develop students' life skills, both physically and mentally. Meanwhile, what is referred to as education (*opvoeding*) is any effort that aims to provide guidance or guidance to all the natural potential possessed by a student. The purpose of such efforts is to give students the strength to strive to achieve the most optimal level of safety and happiness, both in an individual capacity and as part of society. Based on KHD's view that education and teaching are crucial steps in preparing students to face challenges and obstacles in various aspects of life in the future. Including life in society and culture, with a wider scope (Anisah, 2009; Irawati et al., 2022)

Recently, Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim launched the "Free Learning" movement, which is freedom of thought. The purpose of independent learning is so that teachers, students, and parents can get a pleasant atmosphere. It is expected that from Merdeka Belajar, teachers and students can be free in thinking so that this can be implemented in teacher innovation in delivering material to students, not only that students are also facilitated in independent learning because students are facilitated in innovating and creativity in learning (Ainia, 2020, p. 96).

As is known, the Merdeka Curriculum was launched by Mendikburistek in February 2022 as one of the Merdeka Belajar programs to improve the quality of learning. The Merdeka curriculum focuses on basic material and on character development of the Pancasila Student Profile (PPP). The Pancasila Student Profile which was born from the anxiety of moral degradation of the nation's generation, especially among students, due to a mentality that is not ready to face the era of communication and digitalization is one of the important elements in the implementation of

the Independent Curriculum. The phenomenon of anarchistic attitudes, student fights, exposure to pornography and pornoaction, drug abuse, to bullying that is widely reported in the mass media is a concern for many parties, especially parents. The implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum encourages all components of the educator unit, ranging from school principals, teaching staff, education staff and students. All move and learn to understand the concept of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, especially the substance of the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for students (Nurzila, 2022, p. 90).

Character education is very important and must be carried out, because it forms the character of the nation which is one of the objectives of a national education. Character education is not new, but in its implementation efforts educators and educational units are still not optimally implementing character education. Nevertheless, character education continues to be pursued until today, character education continues to be implemented, strengthened, and continues to be developed including in the independent curriculum through the character of Pancasila students. Philosophically, character building through character education is needed and needs to be given to students in order to achieve the nation's educational goals. In line with the view of Ki Hajar Dewantara, education will not be separated from the values of character (ethics), physical, and mind of students who will later become 'humans' in society. So that character education has an important role to develop the potential of students and become virtuous Indonesian society (Nurzila, 2022, p. 7078).

METHOD

In this study, the literature review method was used (Asih et al., 2021; Gall et al., 2003). This method addresses information published in a particular field of study within a specific period of time. A literature review can be a simple summary of sources, but usually has an organizational pattern and incorporates summary and synthesis. A summary is a

recapitulation of important information from a source. Synthesis can be a reorganization, or overhaul, of that information. It may provide a new interpretation of the old material or combine the new with the old interpretation.

The object of research is an article about Merdeka Belajar in the view of Ki Hadjar Dewantara and its Relevance for character education developers. The data collection technique is to look for journals or books that are relevant to the research title. The data analysis technique used is the theory of Miles and Huberman as contained in the research (Sustiyo Wandi Tri Nurharsono 2013) which includes the stages of data reduction, data presentation and conclusions.

Results and Discussion

The Essence of Free Learning

The independent learning program is a program designed by the government to handle education in Indonesia, with the aim of producing students who excel in facing future challenges. This statement is contained in an article written by Suyanto (2020), the author can conclude that *Merdeka Belajar* is a policy designed by the government to make a big leap in aspects of education quality to produce students and graduates who excel in facing complex future challenges. So the concept of independent learning is to provide freedom of thought and innovation to students, this is confirmed in research (Scientific et al. 2020). Basically, freedom of thought is civilized in educators, if there is no freedom of thought in educators, it is impossible for this to also happen to students.

In the teaching and learning process so far it happens in the classroom only, but it will be different in the coming year students can learn outside the classroom so that students can export their creative ideas instead of just listening to the teacher teach with lectures, it is a boring thing for students. Through this, it can encourage students to be more confident in appearing in public, easily adjust themselves to their environment, have creative and innovative ideas. This Merdeka Belajar focuses on the Merdeka Belajar given to students, students learn independently and use

their creative ideas. In this case, the teacher becomes a facilitator for students so that students do not get out of the context of the material they are learning, and in this case the teacher must prioritize his students over their career interests.

With this independent learning program can encourage education in Indonesia and make education in Indonesia more enjoyable, participants will no longer be burdened with rankings. However, the purpose of this Merdeka Belajar is to form students who are virtuous, competent, and ready to engage in society in accordance with their fields. There are several new policies of the Minister of Education and Culture related to Merdeka Belajar, which can be seen in the research (Nursalim and Surabaya 2022), the author can conclude the policies including:

1. There is a change from the National Examination (UN) to Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM) and character survey. This is done so that the literacy and numeracy of students increases and students have character in accordance with the values contained in Pancasila.
2. Simplification of RPP/ RPL. Teachers only need to make 1 RPP sheet in which learning activities or learning procedures have been drawn.
3. PPDB zoning system. The zoning system is expanded (excluding 3T areas. For students who go through the affirmation and achievement path, more opportunities are given from the PPDB system. Local governments are given the authority to determine final proportions and determine zoning areas. Equitable access and quality of education need to be accompanied by other initiatives by local governments, such as teacher redistribution to schools that lack teachers.

Ki Hajar Dewantara's Conception of Education in a Review of Educational Philosophy

Ki Hadjar Dewantara once proposed the concept of education Tri Pusat Pendidikan to realize the goals of education, namely:

1. Family education
2. Education in the realm of college

3. Education in the realm of youth or society.

In addition to the Tricenter of education, Ki Hadjar Dewantara put forward the teachings of Trikon. Trikon's theory is an effort to foster national culture which contains three elements, namely:

a. Basic Continuity

The basis of continuity means that the culture, culture or lifeline of the nation is continuous or repeated, continuous and uninterrupted.

b. Concentric Basis Concentric basis means that in developing culture must be open, but also critical and selective of the influence of the culture around

c. The basis of convergence means that in building the character of the nation, together with other nations, the character of the world must be built as a unity of the world community or convergent, without having to sacrifice the identity of one nation and another.

Ki Hadjar Dewantara inserts culture in children and inserts children into culture from an early age, namely Taman Indria (toddlers). This learning concept is Tri No, namely:

1. Watch passively with all five senses.
2. Niteni is marking, studying, observing what the five senses perceive
3. Nirokke is imitating the positive to prepare for child development

Ki Hadjar Dewantara's concept of education

The concept of Ki Hadjar Dewantara Education is liberating education with the aim of independence. Freedom means that everyone can choose to be anything, provided that there is respect for the independence that others have as well. The vision of Ki Hadjar Dewantara education was again echoed by President Joko Widodo. The slogan of education Ki Hadjar Dewantara who liberated as the most famous figure in the history of Indonesian education, left a legacy of a concept, namely liberating education. This concept is embodied in three mottos in Javanese, in *ngarsa sung tulada*, in the middle of *mangun karya, tut wuri handayani*. That is, in the front gives an example, in the middle encourages, and in the back gives

encouragement. The motto *tut wuri handayani* is enshrined in the logo of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophical views on *Merdeka Belajar* and its elevation in the development of character education in Indonesia.

According to the view (Cahyo and Kistoro 2021), the author can conclude that education is a determinant of a person's growth and development, through education a person can determine his nature, with this then a person will achieve happiness and salvation. Through Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thoughts about *Merdeka Belajar* in accordance with his thoughts, namely the purpose of education is both to encourage change in students, and provide freedom for students to develop their ideas if they do not go out of the values adopted by Indonesian society and are expected to provide benefits to their environment. Based on the view (Multidisciplinary, Knowledge, and Ainia 2021), the author can conclude that a child born into the world is like blank paper that has not been crossed out in ink and the child can cross out the ink as he wishes. The independent learning program launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture is in line with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thoughts on Education, with the hope that it will be carried out in Indonesia well. The essence of *Merdeka Belajar*, namely freedom of thought aimed at students and teachers, thus encouraging the formation of a free spirit character because students and teachers can explore knowledge from their environment, which so far students and teachers have learned based on material from books or modules. If in Indonesia the independent learning program runs properly, eating will produce students who have character in accordance with the values of Pancasila and have a caring attitude towards their environment. The Ministry of Education and Culture launched a policy as the author explained earlier, it is in line with the ideals of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, namely in education considering the balance of creation, taste and karsa. Usually, before the national exam, students and teachers and parents have a worry that if their children cannot take the exam, they

will be threatened with not graduating from school. In the latest policy, the *Merdeka Belajar* for students and teachers does not mess around with national examinations, but schools can make assessments of students in accordance with the provisions. The assessment in question is first in the form of a character survey which includes knowledge of diversity, mutual cooperation, students will be motivated to care about the surrounding environment and practice the values of Pancasila in everyday life. Second, literacy surveys in the form of ways to reason and use language, this encourages students to reason and understand using good and correct Indonesian. Third, numeracy surveys in the form of mathematical understanding, students are encouraged to think critically in problem solving. The attitudes in the assessment above are relevant to Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thoughts regarding the Tricenter of education received by students in three sides, namely: family environment, college environment, and community environment. These three environments have an educative influence in the formation of students' personalities. Ki Hadjar Dewantara hopes that in education teachers can apply their motto, namely in *ngarsa sung tuladha*, in the middle of *mangun karsa tut wuri handayani*. This statement is in line with Haidar's statement (Musyafa 2015) which the author can emphasize that according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, an educator is also expected to be able to educate students by holding the motto of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, namely, *ing ngarsa sung tuladha* (upfront giving examples), *ing madya mangun karsa* (during building ideals), *tut wuri handayani* (following and supporting him).

Based on this motto, teachers in educating must have a family spirit, joint nature and independence. Independent teachers here are the same as the Ministry of Education and Culture's statement regarding the simplification of RPP so that teachers are preoccupied with a complicated administrative system, which also has an impact on teaching quality. Teachers must have a professional attitude and easily get along with students and the environment.

The independent learning policy initiated by the Minister of Education and Culture has relevance to the development of character education. So far, education emphasizes more on aspects of knowledge, so that aspects of character and skills are less touched. To develop character education, strategies are needed according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara which the author got from the seminar Widodo, Bambang (2017), including first, education is a cultural process to encourage students to have an independent and independent spirit. Second, shaping the character of students to be national, but open to international developments. Third, build students' personalities to be pioneer-spirited. Fourth, educating means developing potential or talents that are the nature of each student.

Of the four attitudes above must exist in Education and must be developed. In order to produce students and graduates who are intelligent, have a national spirit and have noble morals. The future of Indonesia in the future is influenced by the current generation, therefore teachers, students, parents must have high collaboration in order to create superior students and have benefits for their environment. (Devian, 2022).

CONCLUSION

From the explanation described above, it can be concluded that the *Merdeka Belajar* program issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture is the right step in education with the aim of preparing a generation that is tough, intelligent, creative, and has character in accordance with the values of the Indonesian nation. The purpose of independent learning is relevant to Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophical view of education considering aspects of balance of creation, taste, and karsa. The independent learning program in practice provides freedom for students and teachers to express their creative ideas, so that their talents and skills will be channeled. The independent learning program in its implementation develops character values. With *Merdeka Belajar*, students are expected to practice more implementation of the values of the Indonesian nation in everyday life and the surrounding

environment. To achieve an ideal education and in accordance with the values of the Indonesian nation becomes a shared responsibility and awareness.

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