

## IMPLEMENTATION OF INDEPENDENT LEARNING CURRICULUM IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF PROGRESSIVISM PHILOSOPHY

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**Abstract.** The aim of this research is to determine the implementation of independent learning curriculum from the perspective of John Dewey's progressivism philosophy. This research was carried out using a library research approach to explain relevant concepts. The research approach uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The research results that the independent learning curriculum initiated by the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology is in line with the flow of progressivism. The independent curriculum provides freedom for students and teachers in expressing ideas and expressions. The characteristics of an independent curriculum include project learning, essential material, and flexibility.

### INTRODUCTION

The curriculum and teaching materials are very important tools for the success of education. Curriculum changes are based on the awareness that the developments and changes that occur in social, national and state life in Indonesia cannot be separated from the influence of global changes, developments in science and technology as well as arts and culture (Widana, et. al. 2023). Apart from that, the educational curriculum reform that has been carried out. Judging from the 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004 (KBK), 2006 (KTSP), and 2013 curricula, it also does not have a positive impact on the development of quality in the world of education, so that up to now the quality of our education still low. The role of curriculum developers is very important for the world of education to achieve better learning processes and outcomes (Evi Yupani & I Wayan Widana, 2023). This article wants to describe in more detail how curriculum policies, curriculum changes, problems with curriculum changes, the impact of curriculum changes on learning in schools will be carried out. In this paper, an analysis of the independent curriculum as an educational innovation will be carried out from the perspective of philosophical schools.

Progressivism was first initiated by the philosopher John Dewey by campaigning for a progressivism system in the field of education. This system is part of the rejection of the previous system which was authoritarian and conventional. The humanist side is emphasized

more in the educational process. Education is based on natural motivation, freedom in making choices, and the desires (interests) of students (Darmada et al., 2020). The flow of progressivism is also influenced by the teachings about human goodness that is innate from birth and John Locke who is a figure in the philosophy of political freedom. In the educational context, the implementation of teaching and learning activities will experience success if it is able to involve active participation of students, so that they can gain experience to prepare them for life in the future (Pratiwi, 2021).

Progressivism is related to the concept of an independent learning curriculum that has been established by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. This policy will certainly change society's perspective, so it must be understood from a progressivism perspective. The independent learning curriculum is very suitable from the perspective of progressivism, because progressivism is a school of educational philosophy which shows that humans act progressively, constructively, actively and move dynamically. This flow emphasizes the changes that occur. It is hoped that students can face and solve various problems faced in adjusting to life. In learning, the student's position is no longer the object of learning (Arimbawa, 2023).

John Dewey was a progressive theorist, a pragmatist, a philosopher, and arguably the most influential American educator of the 20th century. Therefore, John Dewey is known as one of the "fathers" of the progressivism movement (Fadillah, 2017). The content of his thinking is the teaching of educational freedom which prioritizes humanism. The flow of progressivism philosophy emphasizes that education must be in line with the natural desires of the soul, polite, free, independent and without coercion (Faiz & Kurniawaty, 2020).

Progressivism believes in and tries to develop the principles of progress in the realities of life so that students can be better prepared to face the dynamics of life. This school emphasizes the term "progress" that students have the potential to make the surrounding environment better. Students with all their abilities can solve problems that originate from themselves, other people, or other factors. The independent curriculum is a curriculum structure prepared to support the implementation of new paradigm learning. In the independent curriculum, learning focuses on essential material and developing student competencies in each phase. Both students, educators and educational units have the freedom to determine and manage their learning process (Fadillah, 2017). Students have the opportunity to explore actual issues to support the development of the character and competency profile of Pancasila students.

According to Nadiem Makarim as Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Mendikbud Ristek), the essence of the independent curriculum is freedom of learning, namely a concept created so that students can explore their respective interests and talents. If previously in the 2013 curriculum students had to study all subjects (at Kindergarten to Middle School level) and would be majored in science/IPS at high school level, it is different with the independent curriculum (Raharjo, 2020). In the independent curriculum, students will no longer experience things like that. In the independent curriculum, students will no longer be 'forced' to study subjects that are not their main interest. Students can freely choose the material they want to study according to their individual interests. It is what is meant by the concept of independent learning (Sumandya et al., 2023). Apart from that, this curriculum also prioritizes project-based learning strategies. It means that students will implement the material they have learned through projects or case studies, so that understanding of concepts

can be achieved better. The name of this project is the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (Widana et al., 2023). This project is cross-subject in nature

## **METHOD**

This research is a kind of library research. The used method is a literature review. The literature review method in this research was used to identify the perspective of progressivism philosophy towards the independent learning curriculum. The stages of library research according to Maimunah & Mardiah (2019) are as follows: (1) selection of topics; (2) information exploration; (3) research focus; (4) collection of data sources; and (5) preparation of data presentation. This research is the result of a literature study from several previous studies.

The technique used in searching for articles uses keywords in electronic journals. The next stage is to review and summarize the literature. In the field of research, especially the creation of scientific papers, literature review is better known as a literature review. Therefore, it can be said that a literature review is an analytical activity that can take the form of criticism of research that is being conducted on a specific topic that is part of a scientific field.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Understanding the Independent Curriculum**

The independent curriculum is a curriculum that aims to hone children's interests and talents from an early age by focusing on essential material, character development and student competence. The independent curriculum has been tested in 2,500 driving schools. Not only in driving schools, this curriculum was also launched in other schools. According to data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology in 2023, there are 143,265 schools that have used the independent curriculum. This number will continue to increase as it comes into force.

The teaching system will change from initially nuanced in the classroom where discussions can take place to outside the classroom in the coming year. Students can discuss more with the teacher so that the nuances of learning will be more comfortable, learn through outing classes, and not only the teacher explains, but also forms the character of students who are brave, independent, clever in socializing, civilized, polite, competent, and not only relying on a ranking system that according to several surveys only disturbs children and parents. In fact, every child has talent and intelligence in their respective fields, so that students will be formed who are ready to work, competent, and virtuous in society (Pratiwi, 2021).

In response to this, Nadiem also made a breakthrough in assessing minimum abilities, including literacy, numeracy and character curves. Literacy does not only measure the ability to analyze reading content and understand the concepts behind it. For numeracy skills, what is assessed is not mathematics lessons, but an assessment of students' ability to apply numerical concepts in real life. Nadiem A Karim's concept of Freedom to Learn was driven by his desire to create a happy learning atmosphere without being burdened with achieving certain scores or grades. The main points of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture's policy 73 were contained in the Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture's presentation before education officials' provinces, districts/cities throughout Indonesia, Jakarta on 11 December 2019.

There are 4 main new policies of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, namely: (a) The National Examination (UN) will be replaced by the Minimum Competency

Assessment and Character Survey. This assessment emphasizes literacy and numerical reasoning skills based on PISA test best practices. The results are expected to be input for schools to improve the next learning process before students complete their education. (b) The National Standard School Examination (USBN) will be handed over to the school. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, schools are given flexibility in determining the form of assessment, such as portfolios, written works, or other forms of assignments. (c) Simplification of Learning Implementation Plans (RPP). According to Nadiem A Karim, one sheet of the RPP is enough. By simplifying administration, it is hoped that teachers' time in making administration can be diverted to learning activities and increasing competence. (d) In accepting new students (PBDB), the zoning system is expanded (excluding 3T areas).

For students who go through the affirmation and achievement route, they are given more opportunities from the PPDB system. Regional governments are given technical authority to determine these zoning areas Nadiem A Karim created the independent learning policy not without reason. This is because the 2019 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) research shows that the assessment results for Indonesian students only occupy sixth position from the bottom in the fields of mathematics and literacy, Indonesia is in 74th position out of 79 countries.

### **Positive Impact of Implementing the Independent Curriculum**

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum is an educational initiative that aims to develop students' creative, critical and collaborative abilities. Through the implementation of this curriculum, it is hoped that it can have a positive impact on students' holistic development. One of the positive impacts of implementing the Independent Curriculum is improvement students' ability to think critically. This curriculum encourages students to dare to express opinions, investigate and analyze the various topics they study. With a more interactive learning approach, students are invited to understand concepts in more depth and develop their abilities in analyzing, evaluating and making logical decisions. This will help students develop more critical thinking skills, so they can face and solve problems more effectively in the future.

Apart from that, implementing the Independent Curriculum can also improve students' creative abilities. This curriculum provides wider space for students to develop their creativity in expressing innovative ideas and solutions. In the learning process, students are encouraged to think "out of the box" and look for unique solutions to the problems they face. This will help students develop imagination, innovation and divergent thinking skills which will be useful in facing challenges in the real world.

Overall, the implementation of the independent curriculum can have a positive impact on student development. Increasing students' critical thinking abilities and creativity will help them become individuals who are better prepared to face changes and challenges in the future. Apart from that, a more interactive and participatory learning approach in this curriculum can also motivate students to learn more actively and feel more involved in the learning process.

## **Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum from the Perspective of Progressivism Philosophy**

According to the language, progressivism comes from the word progress which means advanced. Based on the Indonesian Dictionary, it is defined as progressive, meaning moving forward, aiming towards improving the current situation, and rising in stages. The word progressive can be interpreted as a direction towards progress, towards goodness, and becoming good. It can be interpreted that progressive is an action that leads to improvement. Progressivism is a philosophical ideology that aims for improvement towards a better direction by focusing on a process carried out by students (Novianti, 2019). Another opinion states that progressivism is rapid change in a positive direction (Fadillah, 2017).

The flow of progressivism was born based on dissatisfaction with the implementation of traditional education, which tends to be authoritarian, and students tend to be used as objects of learning. This flow is rooted in the spirit of American political renewal. The emergence of progressivism began in 1918. Its development could be felt at the beginning of the 20th century. One of the influential thoughts in progressivism was John Dewey. John Dewey's thoughts inspired the development of progressivism.

The concept offered by John Dewey is that students in learning are positioned as subjects (Faiz, 2020). Students as individuals must be ready to face life's challenges according to their times. The abilities they have must be used to build criticality and progressive reasoning power. Reasoning abilities can be obtained from previous experience to find solutions to every problem that will be faced. In relation to this, the teacher's role is only limited to being a facilitator to help students develop concepts. It can be concluded that this learning approach is student-centered (student center learning).

### **Progressivism Perspective on the Independent Learning Curriculum**

According to language, the origin of the word progressivism begins with the word 'progressive' which means moving forward. In the Indonesian Dictionary the word 'progressive' means oriented towards improvement now; towards progress; and rising levels. So, the word progressive can be interpreted as a change towards progress and improvement. The birth of progressivism was motivated by society's dissatisfaction with the implementation of education which tends to be coercive and very traditional, where students cannot gain freedom in the learning process. Another opinion states that the flow of historically based progressivism education emerged in the 19th century, but only experienced rapid development at the beginning of the 20th century, especially in the United States.

Progressivism is a flow that requires a process to provide better change. Progressivism comes from the words progress, which means progress, and ism, which means flow or understanding. In this flow, every process carried out is aimed at making things better. Apart from that, progress is directed towards things that can be used to face complex challenges as time goes by. The challenges of contemporary developments will be faced by both students and teachers. In the educational context, the implementation of teaching and learning activities will experience success if it is able to involve active participation of students, so that they can gain experience for future life.

Students and teachers in the perspective of progressivism are two elements that support each other. Students' independence in determining goals and choices is part of the process of progress. Students who are given freedom to learn can be interpreted as being free to express



and think (Anwar, 2022). Progressivism places limitations on teachers where the teacher's function is limited to being a facilitator and motivator (Fadhillah, 2017). A similar view states that progressivism provides color to the curriculum which focuses on students as subjects and teachers as facilitators (Sekarwati, 2021).

The independent curriculum is a refinement of the 2013 Curriculum in line with the flow of progressivism (Novianti, 2019). Improvement is carried out as the previous curricula, Improvement with the aim of a good form of alignment with progressivism, which is a form of independence of students and teachers in determining goals. The independent learning curriculum is an effort in freedom of thought and expression. Students who can think and express experience are needed, both themselves and others. Experience from oneself is valuable in students. Experience will motivate students to express and reason better. In addition, experience from other parties is also needed by students to be used as motivation or reflection. With that experience, students in the independent curriculum are given ample space to pour and distribute it.

Things that can be described from the relationship between progressivism and the independent learning curriculum, including the administrative burden on teachers will be reduced, simpler learning plans, a more pleasant learning atmosphere, free space for expression, increasing teacher competence along with advances in technology and civilization, respecting human students with different characters, and flexibility in innovating and creating.

## **CONCLUSION**

The concept of independent learning education in the perspective of progressivism philosophy has the same concept and goal, which is to want a much better change in the implementation of education. The philosophy of progressivism views that students are required to always be progressive or progress, act constructively, think critically-imaginatively-innovatively, and move actively. It certainly has relevance to the concept of education, the concept of independent learning applied by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia today which provides educational independence to students, teachers, and educational institutions. The concept of independent learning education presents a natural learning space allowing children to grow and develop according to their interests and talents so that the goal of forming individuals with character can be realized. Independent learning which prioritizes independence and independence in its learning approach is considered in line with the Progressivism Education Philosophy.

There is a compatibility between the independent curriculum and Ki Hadjar Dewantara's conception of education. The suitability of the concept is viewed from philosophical and pedagogical aspects. In the philosophical aspect, the alignment of the concept of the independent curriculum with the concept of education of Ki Hadjar Dewantara includes 1) the concept of the independent curriculum prioritizes character development in line with the concept of education according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara as a character building process; 2) The independent curriculum has a philosophical foundation based on local culture in line with one of the ideas of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, namely the Trikon principle where in the aspect of continuity it is expected that the attitude of students has cultural elements or cultural preservation; 3) The concept of an independent curriculum also emerged based on the desire to create happiness and ethics in children.

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