



DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION AND ITS APPLICATION IN INDONESIA PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

PENDIDIKAN DEMOKRATIS DAN APLIKASINYA DI INDONESIA PERSPEKTIF
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ABSTRACT

This study explores the application of democratic education principles in Indonesia from the perspective of Islamic education philosophy. It examines the opportunities and challenges of reconciling Islamic teachings with democratic education values, such as justice, consultation, and respect for human dignity. The article focuses on fostering critical thinking and intellectual autonomy among students, promoting inclusivity and celebrating diversity, and developing curricula and pedagogical approaches that align with democratic education principles. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of teacher training and professional development, community engagement and stakeholder involvement, as well as continuous monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of the implemented strategies. The study aims to provide insights into creating an educational environment that nurtures well-rounded individuals grounded in their faith while simultaneously empowering them to navigate the complexities of modern society.

Keywords: democratic education, islamic education philosophy, critical thinking, inclusivity, curriculum development, teacher training, community engagement, evaluation

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi penerapan prinsip-prinsip pendidikan demokratis di Indonesia dari perspektif filosofi pendidikan Islam. Artikel ini menelaah peluang dan tantangan dalam mengharmoniskan ajaran Islam dengan nilai-nilai pendidikan demokratis, seperti keadilan, konsultasi, dan penghormatan terhadap martabat

manusia. Fokus artikel meliputi menumbuhkan pemikiran kritis dan otonomi intelektual di kalangan siswa, mempromosikan inklusivitas dan merayakan keragaman, serta mengembangkan kurikulum dan pendekatan pedagogis yang selaras dengan prinsip-prinsip pendidikan demokratis. Selain itu, dalam pembahasan ini menekankan pentingnya pelatihan dan pengembangan profesional guru, keterlibatan masyarakat dan pemangku kepentingan, serta pemantauan, evaluasi, dan perbaikan berkelanjutan terhadap strategi yang diterapkan. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk memberikan wawasan dalam menciptakan lingkungan pendidikan yang memelihara individu-individu yang utuh, berakar pada keimanan mereka, namun sekaligus memberdayakan mereka untuk menavigasi kompleksitas masyarakat modern.

Kata-kata Kunci: pendidikan demokratis, filosofi pendidikan islam, pemikiran kritis, inklusivitas, pengembangan kurikulum, pelatihan guru, keterlibatan masyarakat, evaluasi

A. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of any nation. It is a powerful tool that can either perpetuate existing power structures or emancipate individuals and societies. In recent decades, the concept of democratic education has gained significant traction as a means of promoting critical thinking, active citizenship, and social justice. This approach to education is rooted in the belief that all individuals have an equal right to participate in the learning process and that education should foster an environment of mutual respect, dialogue, and empowerment.

According to Indonesian philosopher and educator Dewantara (1977), education is an effort to advance the growth of character (inner strength, intellect, and body of the child), in line with the development of the universe. This view aligns with the principles of democratic education, which emphasize the holistic development of individuals and their active engagement in the learning process.

Western philosopher and educational reformer Dewey (1997), often regarded as the father of progressive education, argued that education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience, and the process and the goal of education are one and the same thing. This notion resonates with the democratic education approach, which views learning as an ongoing, participatory process rather than a mere transmission of knowledge.

One of the key tenets of democratic education is the active participation of students in the decision-making processes that shape their learning experiences. As Indonesian educator and author Mul-khan (2002) asserts, education should not be a means of indoctrination but rather a process of empowerment, where students are

encouraged to think critically, question assumptions, and develop their own perspectives.

In the context of Indonesia, a nation with a rich cultural heritage and a diverse population, the application of democratic education principles holds immense significance. Indonesian philosopher Tan Malaka (2000) believed that education should be a vehicle for social transformation, promoting the values of equality, justice, and human dignity.

The integration of democratic education principles into Indonesia's educational landscape can contribute to the development of critical thinkers, active citizens, and agents of positive social change. As stated by Indian philosopher and educational thinker Krishnamurti (1953), education is not merely a means of earning a living, but a process of awakening the intelligence and cultivating a free mind.

Furthermore, the application of democratic education in Indonesia can play a crucial role in addressing societal challenges such as intolerance, radicalization, and the marginalization of minority groups. American educator and social activist Jonathan Kozol (2005) emphasized the importance of creating a learning environment that celebrates diversity, promotes understanding, and fosters a sense of belonging for all students.

In the context of Islamic education philosophy, the principles of democratic education find resonance with the Quranic teachings of justice, consultation, and respect for human dignity. As noted by Indonesian Islamic scholar Madjid (1992), Islam encourages the pursuit of knowledge, critical inquiry, and the development of rational and ethical reasoning, which are aligned with the democratic education approach.

The integration of democratic education principles into Islamic education can contribute to the formation of well-rounded individuals who are not only knowledgeable in religious teachings but also equipped with the skills and values necessary to navigate the complexities of modern society. Wahid (1989) stressed the importance of fostering an environment where students can engage in respectful dialogue, explore diverse perspectives, and develop a nuanced understanding of the Islamic faith and its relevance in contemporary contexts.

By embracing democratic education within the framework of Islamic education philosophy, Indonesia can nurture a generation of critical thinkers, responsible citizens, and ethical leaders who are

grounded in their faith while simultaneously being empowered to engage with the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Education should not only impart knowledge but also cultivate moral sensitivity, ethical reasoning, and a commitment to social justice.

However, the implementation of democratic education in Indonesia is not without its challenges. Cultural and societal norms, as well as entrenched educational practices, may pose obstacles to the adoption of this approach. Mangunwijaya (1998) cautioned, resistance to change and concerns over preserving traditional values can hinder the acceptance of progressive educational approaches.

To overcome these challenges, a comprehensive and sustained effort is required. This effort should involve stakeholders at all levels, including policymakers, educators, religious leaders, and community members. Indonesian educational researcher and policy analyst Rachman (2018) emphasized the importance of capacity-building initiatives, teacher training programs, and awareness campaigns to promote the understanding and effective implementation of democratic education principles within the context of Indonesian society and Islamic education philosophy.

Additionally, ongoing research and evaluation are essential to assess the impact of democratic education on student outcomes, social cohesion, and the overall quality of education in Indonesia. As noted by American educational researcher and author Linda Darling-Hammond (2010), by gathering data and analyzing the effectiveness of this approach, policymakers and educators can make informed decisions, refine strategies, and ensure that democratic education practices are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of diverse communities.

In conclusion, the application of democratic education principles in Indonesia, through the lens of Islamic education philosophy, holds immense potential for fostering a more inclusive, just, and intellectually vibrant society. According to Hamka (1984) eloquently stated, education should not merely transmit knowledge but should cultivate wisdom, nurture compassion, and inspire individuals to become agents of positive change in their communities and the world at large.

B. DISCUSSION

The application of democratic education principles in Indonesia's educational landscape, particularly through the lens of Islamic education philosophy, presents both opportunities and challenges.

At its core, democratic education aligns with the fundamental values of Islam, such as justice, consultation, and respect for human dignity. However, its practical implementation requires a careful examination of sociocultural contexts and a willingness to embrace progressive educational approaches.

Reconciling Islamic Teachings and Democratic Education Principles

One of the critical tasks in applying democratic education in the context of Islamic education philosophy is reconciling the teachings of Islam with the principles of democratic education. This involves a nuanced understanding of Islamic texts and traditions, as well as a recognition of the dynamic nature of religious interpretations. By emphasizing the Quranic teachings that promote critical thinking, consultation, and the pursuit of knowledge, Islamic educators can create a harmonious synthesis between religious values and democratic educational practices.

Fostering Critical Thinking and Intellectual Autonomy

A core aspect of democratic education is the cultivation of critical thinking skills and intellectual autonomy among students. Within the framework of Islamic education philosophy, this can be achieved by encouraging students to engage in respectful dialogue, question prevailing assumptions, and develop a nuanced understanding of religious teachings in contemporary contexts. By promoting an environment of open inquiry and intellectual freedom, Islamic educational institutions can nurture a generation of well-rounded individuals grounded in their faith while simultaneously equipped to navigate the complexities of modern society.

Promoting Inclusivity and Celebrating Diversity

Democratic education emphasizes the principles of inclusivity and the celebration of diversity. In the Indonesian context, where cultural and religious pluralism are deeply rooted, the application of democratic education within Islamic educational settings can play a vital role in fostering social cohesion and mutual understanding. By embracing diverse perspectives, promoting empathy, and cultivating a sense of belonging for all students, Islamic educational institutions can contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and just society.

Curriculum Development and Pedagogical Approaches

The implementation of democratic education in Islamic educational settings requires a comprehensive review and revision of curricula and pedagogical approaches. This involves incorporating principles of active learning, participatory decision-making, and student-centered methodologies. Islamic educators must be willing to adapt and innovate, drawing inspiration from both traditional Islamic sources and contemporary educational theories and practices. Collaborative efforts between educational experts, religious scholars, and community stakeholders are crucial in developing curricula that balance Islamic values with democratic educational principles.

Teacher Training and Professional Development

The successful application of democratic education in Islamic educational settings hinges on the preparedness and competence of educators. Teacher training and professional development programs should be designed to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and mindsets to facilitate democratic learning environments. This includes training on student-centered pedagogies, conflict resolution, facilitation of respectful dialogue, and the promotion of critical thinking. Additionally, ongoing support and mentorship for educators are essential to ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of democratic education practices.

Community Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement

Achieving a successful integration of democratic education principles within Islamic educational settings requires active community engagement and stakeholder involvement. This includes collaboration with religious leaders, policymakers, parents, and community organizations. By fostering open dialogue, addressing concerns, and building a shared understanding of the benefits of democratic education, Islamic educational institutions can gain the support and trust of the broader community, thereby facilitating a smoother transition towards more democratic and inclusive learning environments.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement

The implementation of democratic education within the context of Islamic education philosophy should be accompanied by robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. This involves collecting and analyzing data on student outcomes, social impact, and the overall

effectiveness of the implemented strategies. By continuously assessing and refining the approach, Islamic educational institutions can ensure that their practices remain relevant, responsive, and aligned with the evolving needs of students and society. This iterative process of evaluation and improvement is crucial for the long-term success and sustainability of democratic education initiatives within Islamic educational settings in Indonesia.

C. CONCLUSION

The application of democratic education principles within the framework of Islamic education philosophy in Indonesia holds immense potential for fostering a more inclusive, just, and intellectually vibrant society. By integrating the values of equality, freedom, critical inquiry, and respect for diversity with the rich traditions and teachings of Islam, Indonesia can nurture a generation of ethical leaders, responsible citizens, and agents of positive social change.

However, this endeavor requires a careful reconciliation of seemingly divergent perspectives, a willingness to embrace progressive educational approaches, and a sustained commitment to capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement. Importantly, ongoing research and evaluation must be conducted to assess the impact of democratic education on student outcomes, social cohesion, and the overall quality of education in Indonesia. With a nuanced understanding of Islamic teachings, a strong emphasis on promoting critical thinking and intellectual autonomy, and a genuine celebration of diversity, Islamic educational institutions can pave the way for a transformative learning experience that empowers individuals, fosters mutual understanding, and contributes to the development of a more harmonious and equitable society.

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