

## The Synergies Between Educational Philosophy Streams and Ki Hajar Dewantara's Ideologies in the Mardeka Belajar Curriculum

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**Abstrak:** The synergy between educational philosophical streams and the thoughts of Ki Hajar Dewantara is crucial in developing the concept of the "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum in Indonesia. This literature study aims to explore the fusion between relevant educational philosophical streams with the vision and principles advocated by Ki Hajar Dewantara in the context of developing the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum. The method used is descriptive analysis through a literature review drawn from relevant and credible academic texts to trace Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts and comprehend the fundamental concepts of educational philosophy underlying it. The findings from this analysis indicate that the synergy between educational philosophy and Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts within the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum holds immense potential in transforming Indonesia's educational system. By integrating philosophical principles and embracing Ki Hajar Dewantara's ideas, educators can create a curriculum that nurtures individuals with broad perspectives equipped with the skills and values necessary for thriving in the 21st century. The integration of these values in the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum can foster an inclusive, progressive learning environment oriented towards character development and individual potential. The application of synergy between educational philosophical streams and Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts in the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum can reinforce the essence of holistic and continuous education. Recommendations include the necessity of developing concrete strategies to integrate educational philosophical values with Ki Hajar Dewantara's principles in every aspect of the curriculum, providing training for educators to implement this approach, and conducting further research to evaluate the effectiveness of the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum implementation inspired by this synergy.s.

**Keywords:** Educational Philosophy, Ki Hajar Dewantara, Mardeka Belajar Curriculum

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## INTRODUCTION

Education constitutes a deliberate process aimed at establishing a structured learning atmosphere, fostering active engagement, and effectively harnessing learners' potential (Awaluddin et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2023; Umam et al., 2023). The profound transformations occurring within the realm of education significantly influence the present caliber of learners, as education not only serves as a catalyst for future generations but also as a producer of change. Its implementation profoundly impacts human life and stands as a cornerstone within any society, symbolizing a nation's or people's progression (Cole, 2022).

Education emerges as a pivotal factor in shaping an inclusive and sustainable society (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010). In the era of globalization, educational challenges encompass integrating multicultural values, educational philosophies, and critical thinking into a curriculum tailored to contemporary needs. Acknowledgment of education's role as the bedrock for character formation and individual comprehension of the world is widespread (Aningsih et al., 2022). In Indonesia's educational evolution, a novel concept, the "Merdeka Belajar" (Liberated Learning) Curriculum, has surfaced (Rambung et al., 2023). This

curriculum accentuates autonomy and freedom in learning, heralding a paradigm shift that demands courage and creativity from learners (Syamsiar et al., 2023).

A meticulous examination of the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum is indispensable, not solely for practical implications but also for philosophical comprehension. Through this lens, we can delve into educational philosophy through various schools of thought such as idealism, pragmatism, existentialism, and progressivism, reflecting on the philosophical legacy of Kihajar Dewantara, an Indonesian educational luminary. The incorporation of diverse educational philosophy streams is pivotal in grasping the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum's essence. How does Plato's idealism or John Dewey's pragmatism interpret the concept of freedom in learning? How does existentialism provide a platform for individuals to derive meaning from education? These inquiries serve as gateways to exploring the educational philosophy underpinning the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum.

Kihajar Dewantara, a pivotal figure in Indonesian education, made substantial contributions to fostering education grounded in freedom and justice (Syahrir et al., 2023). His philosophical legacy serves as a fundamental cornerstone in comprehending the essence of the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum, as both endeavors aim to cultivate intelligent, ethical, and competitive Indonesian individuals (Sulistyosari et al., 2023).

This critical inquiry endeavors to harmonize the educational philosophy inherent in the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum with Kihajar Dewantara's ideology. This intellectual discourse is poised to facilitate a profound comprehension of education in Indonesia, forging a philosophical narrative that bridges the past, present, and future, serving as a wellspring of inspiration.

Indonesia boasts a rich tapestry of cultural diversity, encompassing over 700 ethnicities and regional languages (Nanda, 2023). In confronting global challenges, harnessing and valuing this diversity as a pivotal educational resource is imperative. Concurrently, educational philosophy streams furnish a theoretical framework concerning education's aims, values, and methodologies. Philosophies such as progressivism, humanism, and constructivism offer varied perspectives on curriculum development.

Ki Hajar Dewantara emerges as a central figure in Indonesian educational discourse. As the founder of Taman Siswa, he advocated for education accessible to all, irrespective of differences, emphasizing education's role in liberation and self-empowerment. The "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum represents the latest innovation in the Indonesian educational landscape. Emphasizing individual autonomy in organizing the learning process based on interests, talents, and individual needs, the curriculum also acknowledges multicultural values by integrating cultural diversity, language, and local traditions into the educational fabric.

The synergy between cultural diversity, educational philosophy streams, and Ki Hajar Dewantara's ideology remains pertinent. Applying these principles within the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum paves the way for a more inclusive education, one that respects differences, fortifies local identities, and offers avenues for each individual's optimal development (Aisyah et al., 2023).

In light of this study, the research aims to explore the integration between pertinent educational philosophy streams and the vision and principles espoused by Ki Hajar Dewantara within the context of developing the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum. It is anticipated that the findings of this research will furnish practical guidance for curriculum developers to craft an inclusive, diverse, and contextually relevant educational milieu aligned with contemporary advancements.

## METHOD

This research is a literature review, an approach involving data collection by understanding and studying theories from various literature related to the research subject. There are four stages in conducting a literature review, including preparing the necessary tools, compiling bibliographies, scheduling time, and reading as well as noting relevant information (Adlini et al., 2022; Darmalaksana, 2020). The critical thinking expressed in this paper is conducted through a literature review approach as the foundation of the literature. This approach is used to examine the Harmony of Educational Philosophy: A Critical Study of the Independent Learning Curriculum through the Lenses of Educational Philosophies and the Heritage of Kihajar Dewantara's Philosophy. The literature analysis involves various relevant sources, utilizing different academic databases and credible sources such as Google Scholar,

ResearchGate, Taylor & Francis. The focus on these issues is analyzed deeply based on bibliographic references, ultimately generating critical thinking that is expected to enrich the understanding of the independent learning curriculum. The stages in the literature review adopted a research model (Zed, 2008). The research scheme is presented in the form of a diagram as follows.

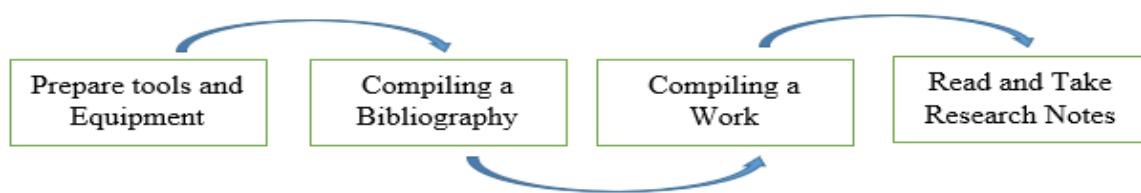


Figure 1. Literature Study Research Scheme

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Education plays a crucial role in nation-building. To ensure the quality of education, it is important to have a philosophical foundation underlying curriculum development. One influential stream of thought in the realm of education is the ideas introduced by Ki Hajar Dewantara. In the concept of "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum (Efendi et al., 2023), this curriculum principle aligns with the educational views advocated by Ki Hajar Dewantara, emphasizing the pivotal role of independence for students. The aim is not only to impart information to students but also to provide them with the freedom to grow and learn independently, albeit guided and supported by teachers and parents. Through the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum, there is a fusion of educational philosophy with the ideas of Ki Hajar Dewantara that have the potential to make a significant impact in the field of education.

Philosophy of education is a branch of philosophy that delves into the purposes, values, and principles of education. It serves as the basis for curriculum development because through educational philosophy, educational objectives can be clearly defined (Kardiyem et al., 2023; Nahdiyah et al., 2023). Ki Hajar Dewantara, a prominent figure in Indonesian education, has had a profound influence on the field. His thoughts were based on his life experiences and the educational principles he embraced.

One of the concepts advocated by Ki Hajar Dewantara is that every child possesses unique potential and should be given the opportunity to develop according to their talents and interests. This is highly relevant to the concept of the "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum, which grants learners the freedom to organize and develop their own learning.

The "Merdeka Belajar" Curriculum is a concept that empowers learners to choose and manage their own learning. Within this curriculum, students have the freedom to set learning objectives, choose learning methods, and assessments that align with their interests and talents. This concept aims to develop individuals who are independent, creative, and innovative (Jannah & Harun, 2023). With this concept, education creates a space for learners to grow holistically, enabling them to honor themselves and others (inner freedom) and become self-reliant (outer freedom). The inherent strength (nature) within each individual guides students to become capable of governing their lives without being dictated by others (Dewantara, 1936).

The strong synergy between the philosophy of education and the thoughts of Ki Hajar Dewantara forms a solid foundation for the concept of the "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum. In developing education that focuses on independence and freedom in learning, this approach offers innovative and effective solutions. By combining tested principles of educational philosophy with the visionary thoughts of Ki Hajar Dewantara, the "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum is capable of creating a learning environment that allows every individual to maximize their potential.

One of the advantages of this synergy lies in emphasizing learning that is relevant to real-life situations. The "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum ensures that the material taught is not only theoretical but also applicable in everyday life (Wahyudiono, 2023). Consequently, students can see the connection between what they learn in school and the world around them, thereby enhancing their motivation and interest in learning.

Moreover, the "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum also grants students the freedom to organize their own learning time and methods. In this approach, students are considered active learning subjects and play a significant role in the learning process. They are given the freedom to explore their own interests and talents, thus enabling them to develop their potential in the most effective ways.

The interconnection between the philosophy of education and the thoughts of Ki Hajar Dewantara with the concept of the "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum has a significant positive impact on the field of education. This synergy can enhance the quality of education, develop students' characters, and empower them in the learning process. It is crucial for educational policymakers to pay attention to and implement this synergy to achieve better educational goals. The "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum also addresses the needs of adaptable and competitive human resources by replacing monotonous learning with outdoor learning and emphasizing students' independence in 21st-century skills (Khusna et al., 2023). Present education emphasizes knowledge and technology, expecting students to possess the 4C skills (Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, and Creativity).

Understanding the essence of the philosophy of education and the teachings of Ki Hajar Dewantara, which serve as the foundation for the development of the "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum, is crucial. Hence, there is a need for specific and in-depth studies in this regard.

## 1. Ki Hajar Dewantara's School of Educational Philosophy and Approach

Philosophy of education refers to the study of the aims, essence, and hopes of education. It provides a framework for understanding the fundamental principles and theories that guide educational practices. Educational philosophy assists educators in making decisions regarding curriculum design, teaching methods, and evaluation strategies (Noddings, 2018).

The philosophical basis of education consists of a series of assumptions derived from philosophical principles that form the foundation in the field of education. Essentially, the philosophical basis of education reflects a framework of thinking about education derived from general philosophical principles such as Metaphysics, Epistemology, and Axiology upheld by a particular philosophical school. This perspective aligns with the viewpoint (Callahan & Clark, 1983) in their book "Foundations of Education," as well as Edward J. Power's perspective (1982) in his writings on Philosophy of Education, Research in Various Philosophies, Education, and Education Policy.

From both sources, it is understood that there is a significant connection between ideas in general philosophical branches and ideas within the educational domain. The philosophical basis of education encompasses ideas or concepts that have normative or guiding elements. The philosophical basis of education is considered guiding because it not only contains ideas about existing education factually but rather focuses on educational concepts that should or are expected (as an ideal representation), recommended by a particular philosopher to be a standard in the implementation of education or research in the field of education.

Various schools of philosophical thought in education represent different perspectives in understanding the essence, goals, and methods of education. Each school has its distinctive philosophical thoughts that, in turn, influence approaches to the learning and educational process. Some schools of philosophical thought in education include:

### a. The Philosophy of Idealism in Education

The concept of idealism in education, as examined in various studies, underscores a philosophical stance centered on the significance of ideas and the intellect in molding educational methodologies. (Khasawneh et al., 2023) delve into the influence of idealism on mathematics instructors in Al Ain City Schools, elucidating the ramifications of idealistic educational philosophies within specific settings. (Dardiri, 2017) conducts a comparative examination between the works of Sheikh Az-Zarnuji and Plato's idealistic philosophy, illuminating the connections and disparities between these philosophical outlooks.

Furthermore, Doğanay and Sarı (2018) explore the effects of undergraduate education on the philosophical understandings of prospective educators, observing shifts in philosophical inclinations over time, including alterations in idealism. Zırhlioğlu and Yayla (2016) investigate how principles of educational philosophy such as perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and reconstructionism are

perceived by students in Education Faculties, offering insights into the diverse philosophical orientations within educational contexts. Additionally, (Aslan, 2022) discusses how the educational beliefs of primary school teachers influence their preferences in curriculum design, with particular attention to the role of idealism in shaping these preferences.

Collectively, these studies contribute to a deeper comprehension of the role of idealism in education, emphasizing its impact on educators, prospective teachers, and curriculum development. Idealism, with its emphasis on the supremacy of ideas and the intellect, continues to influence educational philosophies and practices, underscoring its significance in the field of education.

Idealism, as a philosophical standpoint, centers on ideal concepts or ideas, asserting that these have a greater existence than physical matter. In the educational context, idealism underscores the importance of intellectual and moral growth through the learning process (Siegel et al., 2018). Several influential figures have shaped the philosophy of idealism in education: Plato, an ancient Greek philosopher, founded the Academy in Athens and believed in guiding individuals toward understanding absolute truth through education (Yuana, 2010). Immanuel Kant, a prominent German philosopher, emphasized expanding knowledge and fostering moral capacity and autonomy in education (Rahman, 2020). Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel viewed education as a means to attain a higher understanding of reality, preparing individuals for rational thinking and heightened consciousness (Wardi, 2014).

The philosophy of idealism in education underscores the importance of moral values, critical thinking, and profound intellectual development, influencing educational approaches that prioritize character formation, deeper comprehension of knowledge, and holistic individual growth..

### **b. Philosophy of Constructivist Education**

The foundational concept of the Constructivist Perspective in Education is an essential framework stemming from the constructivism theory by scholars such as Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Jerome Bruner. This perspective emphasizes that learning is an active process, where individuals construct their knowledge through experiences and interactions within their environment (Costa-Lopes & Cunha, 2020). Within the educational context, constructivism highlights several concepts:

- 1) The role of education as a crucial model in individual development, aiding in understanding the surrounding world, constructing knowledge, and fostering critical and creative thinking skills (Zurna et al., 2022).
- 2) Education not only encompasses grasping academic concepts but also prepares individuals to face real challenges, including adaptation and solving new problems.
- 3) Humans transition from being "natural humans" to "cultural humans" through interaction with the environment, gaining profound knowledge about the surrounding world (Borisov, 2014).
- 4) The aim of education is to promote growth from lower levels of consciousness to "absolute thinking," which refers to the ability to think independently and critically (Kusumawati et al., 2022).
- 5) The importance of individual interaction with the environment in shaping knowledge, whether through observation, experimentation, or communication (Syihabudin et al., 2023).
- 6) The learning environment should stimulate individual thinking activities, creating a challenging environment and facilitating knowledge development.
- 7) The constructivist perspective views students as active agents in learning, with teachers as learning facilitators. This approach emphasizes the importance of discussion, reflection, collaboration, and problem-solving in learning. Despite its advantages, constructivism also faces criticism because not all knowledge can be self-generated by students and it requires more time for learning compared to traditional teaching methods.

Nevertheless, the foundational concepts of the constructivist perspective remain crucial views in the development of modern education, underscoring that learning is an active process that encourages students to construct their own knowledge through experiences and interactions (Murphy, 1997).

### **c. Realism in Education Philosophy**

Realism in education philosophy emphasizes the significance of objective reality and the existence of an external world that is independent of human thought (Forkner, 2023). Realism, in the context of

education, believes that knowledge exists independently and can be learned and understood by humans. Its primary focus lies in learning from the external world through empirical experiences, observations, and studies of physical phenomena and the universe.

The notion of realism in education suggests that education should reflect the real world, presenting students with facts, concepts, and theories that exist outside (Yuliyanti et al., 2023). The aim is to impart valid knowledge, derived from objective reality, enabling students to comprehend and apply this knowledge in everyday life.

Educational realism also emphasizes the crucial role of the teacher as a mediator who assists students in understanding the external world. Teachers are regarded as knowledge sources guiding students to comprehend objective reality. Teaching methods that support realism often include the use of experiments, observations, and case studies to provide a deeper understanding of real-world phenomena.

At the core of Realism in Education Philosophy is the idea that knowledge exists externally and can be accessed by individuals through empirical experiences, observations, and studies of objective reality. This philosophy emphasizes learning from the real world as the primary basis in the educational process.

#### **d. Filsafat Pendidikan Progresivisme**

Filsafat pendidikan progresivisme menekankan pentingnya pengalaman dan pembelajaran aktif bagi siswa. Berakar pada ide-ide John Dewey, filsafat ini menganggap bahwa pendidikan seharusnya menyesuaikan diri dengan kebutuhan dan kepentingan siswa. Progresivisme percaya bahwa pembelajaran yang berpusat pada siswa, di mana mereka terlibat dalam eksperimen, proyek, dan aktivitas praktis, adalah kunci untuk mengembangkan pemahaman yang mendalam dan keterampilan praktis. Guru dalam progresivisme berperan sebagai fasilitator pembelajaran, membantu siswa memahami dunia melalui pengalaman mereka sendiri. Pendekatan ini juga mendorong kolaborasi, refleksi, dan pemecahan masalah sebagai elemen penting dalam proses pembelajaran. Tujuannya adalah untuk menghasilkan individu yang mampu berpikir kritis, kreatif, dan siap untuk beradaptasi dengan perubahan dalam masyarakat. Filsafat ini sangat dipengaruhi oleh tokoh-tokoh pragmatisme seperti Charles S. Peirce, William James, John Dewey, dan juga aliran eksperimentalisme Bacon (Saragih et al., 2021).

#### **e. The Perennial Philosophy of Education**

Perennialism, as a philosophy of education, strives to apply values or norms considered eternal and timeless throughout human history (Astutik & Khojir, 2023). Perennialism does not intend to merely commemorate the past but rather aims to rekindle the belief in fundamental values of the past to confront the challenges of human life in the present and future. In this context, perennialism regards the culture, customs, and traditions they uphold as something perpetual and timeless without boundaries of time. They believe that these values remain relevant and can serve as a guide in addressing various human life issues, not only in the present but also in the future.

Perennialism, as a philosophy of education, emphasizes the permanence of values deemed eternal and universal. At its core, this approach holds the conviction that there exists a set of values, knowledge, and truths that are fixed and everlasting, which can be imparted to the next generation (Jumadi, 2023). Several key points of perennialism are:

- 1) Focus on Classical Works: This approach highlights the importance of studying classical works and cultural heritage believed to hold eternal and universal values. They believe that fundamental truths can be found within these classical works.
- 2) Clear Educational Goals: Perennialism emphasizes clear educational objectives, namely transmitting knowledge that is eternal and universal to younger generations
- 3) Importance of Moral and Ethical Education: Perennialism stresses the development of morality and ethics stemming from enduring universal values, seen as the foundation for shaping individual character.

- 4) Teaching by Experts: This approach supports the idea that education should be delivered by experts or teachers with profound knowledge of these eternal values, based on methods tested over time.
- 5) Continuity and Stability: Perennialism believes that essential knowledge and values do not change significantly over time, thus education should maintain stability and continuity in teaching fundamental material.

Perennialism has contributed by underlining the importance of education centered on values considered eternal, constant, and universal in establishing a strong and consistent educational foundation. However, this approach has also faced criticism for being seen as insufficiently attentive to the changes in time and the dynamics of knowledge advancement.

#### f. The Philosophy of Essentialism in Education

The Philosophy of Education Essentialism is a perspective that emphasizes the importance of learning fundamental knowledge and skills considered essential for all individuals. Its core principle revolves around focusing on core subjects such as mathematics, science, language, history, and literature. Essentialism believes that education should emphasize learning fundamental materials to prepare students to face the real world. Its goal is to establish a strong foundation of knowledge for every student, deemed crucial for their future success. Essentialism emphasizes academic discipline, teacher authority, and a clearly structured curriculum to ensure that students acquire knowledge considered vital in their lives. (Guslinda et al., 2023; Sahin, 2018) state that the philosophy of essentialism is based on a humanistic view that life should be filled with creativity and happiness by engaging in positive endeavors.

The philosophy of essentialist education adheres to five main principles. First, learners are taught established educational basics that depict universal characteristics. Second, all students must be exposed to specific core subjects including philosophy, literature, grammar, science, and other significant works, which, for instance, cultivate wisdom and intellect. Third, particular knowledge identified as core must be systematically and rigorously instilled in students. Fourth, children should be seen as learners who need to be molded and developed appropriately. Lastly, education should be seen as preparation for life rather than an imitation of life (Acquah et al., 2017).

## 2. The important elements of educational philosophies and Ki Hajar Dewantara's perspective on education

The influence of educational philosophies as well as Ki Hajar Dewantara's views has significantly contributed to the evolution of curriculum, teaching methods, as well as the goals and principles expressed in both formal and informal educational contexts. Therefore, conducting an in-depth analysis of the elements that are integral to the learning process becomes crucial. This will aid in understanding the essence of the applied teaching methods and the values intended to be instilled in education.

**Table 1.** Analysis of important elements from schools of educational philosophy

No	School of Educational Philosophy	Important Elements
1	Idealism	Viewing that ideas or thoughts are the main aspect of reality. They believed that eternal knowledge and universal ideas were the foundation of education
2	Constructivism	Assumes that learning is an active process in which individuals construct their own knowledge through experience and interaction with their environment.
3	Realism	Emphasizes the importance of objectivity and the existence of an external world that can be understood through observation and experimentation. They believe that education should teach existing facts.
4	Progressivism	Views that education should adapt to individual needs, promoting critical thinking, creativity, and hands-on experience.

5	Preennialism	Focuses on knowledge and values that are considered timeless and universal, emphasizing learning from classical works and values that do not change over time
6	Essentialism	Emphasizes understanding core or essential aspects of education such as mathematics, science, language, and history, as well as preparing students with basic skills.

**Table 2.** Elements of Ki Hajar Dewantara's (KHD) perspective on education

No	Perspektif KHD	Elemen Penting
1	Independent Education	Putting it forward education that gives freedom to individual For develop potency they in a way independent without pressure from outside
2	Based Education Culture Local	Emphasize importance education rooted in values local and Indonesian culture while still open to knowledge global knowledge
3	Independence and Creativity	Push creation independent, creative, and thoughtful students critical , no only smart in a way academic but also have Skills practical For life daily.
4	Education as Investment Social	See education as investment important for progress social and prosperity something nation, no only For increase ability individual, but also as investment in progress public in a way whole.

Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts reflect an approach that appreciates freedom, creativity, and the richness of local culture in the educational process. He was also steadfast in advocating for personal independence and social investment as crucial elements shaping individual character and advancing the progress of the nation as a whole. Dewantara believed that an education emphasizing these values would bring significant benefits to individual development as well as the advancement of the country.

### 3. Mardeka Learning Curriculum

#### a. Draft Curriculum Mardeka Learning

"Freedom of Learning," translated as "Merdeka Belajar," is a concept that emphasizes student-centered learning and the development of critical thinking skills. It aims to create an inclusive and flexible learning environment that caters to diverse student needs and interests. Merdeka Belajar encourages students to feel ownership of their learning journey and promotes lifelong learning.

Education, as a crucial foundation for individuals in facing the modern era (Rachman et al., 2023), continues to evolve, and the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum becomes an approach that considers the freedom of learning, individual differences, and a personalized approach to learning (Mubarak, 2022). This concept is based on the freedom of learning, appreciation of individual differences, and differential learning. Its goal is to produce a generation ready to face changing times with creativity and relevant skills (Devi et al., 2024).

This concept allows for more freedom for schools, teachers, and students in the learning process. The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum seeks to integrate Ki Hajar Dewantara's views on Education to explore the essence of Education by prioritizing open-mindedness, self-directed learning, and creativity (Poulo, 2001). In its implementation, this curriculum has several key points, including:

- 1) Strengthening Literacy and Numeracy: Focus on basic reading, writing and numeracy skills for each student, with a student-centered approach and using technology.
- 2) Competency Based Learning: Prioritizes the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes that are relevant to the times.
- 3) Curriculum Flexibility: Provides greater space for schools and teachers to adapt the curriculum to local needs and student potential.
- 4) Increasing the Role of Teachers as Learning Facilitators: Teachers are expected to be active companions in the learning process.

- 5) Empowering Technology in Learning: Utilizing technology to improve the quality of learning and face digital challenges.
- 6) Inclusivity: Ensuring equal opportunities for all students, including those with special needs or diversity.
- 7) Differentiated Learning: Teachers design and deliver lesson materials by considering students' individual differences.
- 8) Creativity and Innovation Development: Encourage students to develop critical thinking skills, creativity and innovation.
- 9) Holistic Assessment: Evaluation that involves various aspects, not just tests or exams, to understand student progress as a whole.

The Independent Learning Curriculum is intended to provide more space for the development of students' potential and needs, emphasizing creativity, technological utilization, inclusivity, and comprehensive evaluation (Indarta et al., 2022). Its aim is to cultivate a generation ready to face future challenges. This curriculum is a response to pervasive changes, especially in meeting the needs of human resources that require competitiveness and flexibility. The monotonous learning approach has been a constraint for students to showcase their potential and skills. With the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum, learning approaches beyond the classroom will replace the traditional approaches limited to classroom spaces. The 21st-century education model emphasizes students' abilities to independently develop skills. The role of teachers is crucial in implementing the 21st-century education model in line with the Independent Learning Curriculum within the school environment. Education in this era highlights the role of knowledge and technology in the growth of students as future human resources. Therefore, it is expected that students will possess the 4C skills, encompassing critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, to adapt to various situations they encounter.

#### **b. Objectives, Principles, and Methodology Underlying KMB**

The aim of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is to provide greater freedom and flexibility to schools, teachers and students in designing and developing learning processes that suit local needs, potential and context. This aims to create a generation that is better prepared to face global challenges, more creative, adaptive, and has skills that are relevant to changing times. The principles underlying the Independent Learning Curriculum include:

- 1) Openness and Freedom to Learn. Encourage students to think critically, independently and creatively, and provide freedom for schools and teachers to design curricula according to local needs.
- 2) Equality and Inclusivity. Ensure that every student, including those with special needs, gets equal opportunities in education.
- 3) Development of Relevant Competencies. Prioritize the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes that are relevant to the needs of the times.
- 4) Curriculum Flexibility. Providing greater space for schools and teachers to adapt the curriculum to student needs and potential.
- 5) Use of Technology. Utilizing technology to support and improve learning effectiveness.
- 6) Competency Based Learning. Encourage learning that focuses more on developing relevant competencies, skills and understanding for students.

The methodology underlying the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is to provide flexibility and freedom for educators to develop curriculum, teaching methods and assessments that suit students' needs and context. This allows the use of a variety of learning methods, including project-based learning, online and offline learning, technology empowerment in learning, experience-based learning, and differentiated learning approaches. The aim is to improve the quality of learning by considering student diversity and better developing their potential.

#### **c. Comparison between KMB elements and Ki Hajar Dewantara's principles in education**

The Independent Learning Curriculum (KMB) has several elements that are in line with Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational principles. The following is a comparison between the elements of the KMB and Ki Hajar Dewantara's principles in education

**Table 3.** Comparison of KMB elements with Ki Hajar Dewantara (KHD) principles in education

No	KMB elements	KHD principles in education
1	Independence Learning and Creativity	KMB elements such as strengthening literacy and numeracy, development creativity, learning based competence, as well empowerment technology in learning
2	Freedom Study	KMB concept about flexibility curriculum, learning differentiate, as well inclusivity
3	The role of the teacher as Facilitator	Enhancement the role of the teacher as facilitator
4	Learning Based Openness and Inclusivity	Draft inclusivity in KMB
5	Holistic Assessment	Principle evaluation holistic in the KMB considering aspect skills , knowledge, and attitudes student

Even though there are differences in context and implementation, Ki Hajar Dewantara's basic principles regarding freedom of learning, inclusion, the role of the teacher, and holistic assessment can be seen as being in line with the elements emphasized in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum

#### 4. Synergy between Educational Philosophy and Ki Hajar Dewantara's Thoughts in the Independent Learning Curriculum

The integration of Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy and thoughts in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum creates a strong synergy thereby enhancing the educational experience for students. By incorporating philosophical principles, such as holistic individual development and the cultivation of moral values, the curriculum becomes more comprehensive and meaningful.

Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts regarding education, such as the importance of character formation and promoting cultural identity, are in line with the objectives of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. Its emphasis on individual empowerment through education is in line with the student-centered Merdeka Belajar approach. By incorporating their thinking into the curriculum, educators can create a learning environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking, and social responsibility.

Each school of educational philosophy has unique approaches and principles, which are often connected to specific aspects of education. The following is an analysis of the relationship between several aspects of education, schools of educational philosophy, Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts, and the Independent Learning Curriculum (KMB)

**Table 4.** Analysis of the relationship between several aspects of education, schools of educational philosophy, Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts, and the Independent Learning Curriculum (KMB)

No	Genre Philosophy	Educational Aspect	KHD Thoughts	KMB
1	Idealism	Aspect: Idealism emphasize importance ideas, values, and thoughts more tall in education. Focus on development reason and morality .	Ki Hajar Dewantara also emphasized moral and intellectual values in education . Draft wisdom and values life reflected in his view to education	KMB strengthens moral and intellectual values This with give room For enter values deep cultural and moral curriculum , in line with idealism
2	Constructivism	Aspects: Constructivism emphasizes student centered, constructive learning knowledge through experience and interaction with environment	Ki Hajar Dewantara push based learning experience and provide freedom in exploration knowledge	KMB adopted empowering approach student in learning, possible flexibility in curriculum and provide freedom to teachers and students in development of appropriate learning processes
3	Realism	Aspect: Realism emphasizes experience real and objective knowledge	Connection with Ki Hajar Dewantara: Even though Ki Hajar Dewantara more emphasizes moral and character development, he also acknowledged importance knowledge gained from experience direct	In KMB, teachers and students pushedFor explorebased learning experience, possible introduction direct to knowledge
	Progressivism	Aspects: Progressivism emphasizes an engaging approach solution problems, experiments, and learning contextual	Ki Hajar Dewantara push preparatory education student For role active in solve problems in society .	KMB provides chance for student For involved in learning contextual and encouraging experimentation thinking critical and innovative
	Preennialism and Essentialism	Aspects: Preennialism and Essentialism emphasizes knowledge universal foundations and fixed values	Ki Hajar Dewantara also considered it values basic, ia give more emphasis Great for moral and character development individual .	In the KMB, there is emphasis on strengthening ability basic, like literacy and numeracy , but also provide room for development relevant skills with the times

This relationship shows that the various schools of educational philosophy and thought of Ki Hajar Dewantara have a connection that can be found in the principles contained in the Independent Learning Curriculum. Although approaches and emphases may differ, these elements influence and shape various aspects of KMB, reflecting different values and principles in educational contexts.

## 5. Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Synergy

Integrating Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy and thoughts into the Merdeka Belajar curriculum brings several benefits. First, encourage a holistic approach to education, focusing not only on academic achievement but also on the development of character and values. Second, encourage students to become active participants in the learning process, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility. and third, helping to preserve and promote Indonesia's cultural heritage, because Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts are firmly rooted in the Indonesian context.

However, implementing this synergy can also pose challenges. One challenge is the need for comprehensive teacher training to ensure that educators are equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively integrate philosophy and pedagogy in their teaching practice. Additionally, there may be resistance to change from traditional educational institutions and stakeholders. Overcoming these challenges requires collaborative efforts from educators, policy makers, and society.

## CONCLUSION

The synergy between educational philosophy and Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts in the Independent Learning Curriculum has enormous potential in transforming the Indonesian education system. By integrating philosophical principles and embracing the ideas of Ki Hajar Dewantara, educators can create a curriculum that fosters well-rounded individuals equipped with the skills and values necessary to thrive in the 21st century. It is important for educators and policy makers to realize the importance of this synergy and work to make it happen.

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