A Study of Philosophical Foundations of 2013 Islamic Education Curriculum in Indonesia

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Abstract: This article provides a thorough analysis of philosophical foundations for the 2013 Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam-PAI) curriculum in Indonesia. The analysis is carried out to examine and observe some philosophical foundations in the 2013 curriculum, discuss the significance of the philosophical foundations in the 2013 curriculum, and examine the philosophical foundations associated with PAI Curriculum. Comprehensive analysis is applied to various documents related to the 2013 Curriculum, the 2013 PAI Curriculum, and several relevant references. Furthermore, the results show that the philosophical foundations of the 2013 Curriculum are perennialism, essentialism, experimentalism, and social reconstructivism. They provide philosophical answers about educational goals, educators and students, educational content, and interaction processes. The philosophical foundation for the 2013 PAI curriculum automatically is the same as the 2013 curriculum, and it just needs to be adapted to the characteristics of PAI.

Keywords: Philosophical foundation, curriculum, Islamic Education (PAI).

1. Introduction

For over eight years since the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum, the discussion over the philosophical foundations of the Islamic Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam-PAI*) Curriculum in Indonesia has always been crucial (Tolchah, Moch & Mu'ammar, 2019; Bashori et al., 2020; Husni, 2016; Suharto, 2018; Azra, 2018). A philosophical foundation is defined as a basic or a turning point based on the view of philosophy (Lackéus, 2016; Hodgson, 2020; Martin, 2017; Gialamas et al., 2016). Academically, philosophy is defined as the effort to describe and state a systematical and comprehensive view of nature and the position of humans (Syaodih, 2012).

The 2013 PAI curriculum is part of the 2013 Curriculum. Thus, the philosophical foundation of the 2013 PAI Curriculum is the same as the composing of the 2013 Curriculum. A philosophical foundation plays a pivotal role in composing a curriculum (Vinogradov, Andrey I. et al., 2016; Ornstein, Allan C. & et al, 2016; Brent, 2016). For that particular reason, this article analyses some philosophical foundations of the 2013 Curriculum, discusses the significance of a philosophical foundation within a curriculum and outlines the philosophical foundation for the 2013 PAI Curriculum.

2. A Philosophical Foundation of 2013 Curriculum

Based on the framework for the 2013 Curriculum in attachment 1 of the Government Regulation Number 59 Year 2014_a, which contains a philosophical foundation, it is stated that the 2013 Curriculum was developed through a combination of some philosophy, namely:

1) Local culture is the educational root that aims to develop the nation in the present and the future. The issue has caused the 2013 Curriculum to be developed based on the cultural diversity of Indonesia, aiming at developing the nation at present and developing the basis for a better future. Preparing the students' future has always been the concern of the curriculum, meaning that the curriculum is an educational plan for the life of the young generation. Thus, preparing for the future of this nation's youth is the primary duty of the curriculum. To prepare students' present and future, the 2013 Curriculum is currently developing learning experiences that provide students with a wide range of opportunities to master some essential competencies needed for their lives. At the same time, the curriculum is still aiming to develop the students' ability as the cultural heir and those concerning the problems currently faced by the nation.

2) The students are creative cultural heirs. Based on this philosophy, the nation's previous achievement in various activities has to be written in the curriculum for students to learn. Education is a process that provides an opportunity for students to develop their potential to reason and achieve outstanding academic performance. It is done by providing meaningful insight into what they have observed, listened to, read, and studied from the cultural heritage from the cultural perspective following the students' physical and psychological maturity. The 2013 Curriculum develops the students' ability to think rationally and brilliantly and positioning cultural excellence to be learned. It increases students' pride and applies it to their personal lives, social interaction, and cultural interaction.

3) Education develops intellectual intelligence and academic achievement through disciplinary education. This philosophy determines that the content of the curriculum is disciplinary education, and the learning process is the learning of disciplinary education (essentialism). This philosophy aims to develop the intellectual ability and academic achievement.

4) Education aims to develop the present and future better than the past. It is conducted by various intellectual, communications, social, awareness, and participation abilities of students to build a better life for the nation and the culture (experimentalism and social reconstructivism). Through this philosophy, the 2013 Curriculum aims to develop students' potential to think reflectively in solving social problems within society and build a better life for a democratic society.

Based on the philosophical foundations, none can specifically be applied to develop the curriculum, resulting in

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highly qualified human resources (Maseleno, Andino & et al, 2019; Embong, Rahimah & et al, 2017). Related to the educational philosophy, all of the four summaries of philosophical foundations of the 2013 Curriculum can be further analyzed. The first philosophical foundation stated that "The root of education is the local culture which aiming at developing the life of this nation both in the present and the future." The second philosophical foundation stated that "the students are creative cultural heirs." Both of these foundations are in line with the philosophy of perennials, one of philosophy which states that education should be returned to those controlling the medieval era, as it was the soul that has guided the human so that they understood the existence of the life which has rationally determined (Muhaimin, 2005).

Perennialism believes that there has been some long-lasting thought and is still relevant to the current situation since the idea was first established. Perennialism is an educational philosophy based on Neo-Thomism's philosophy (Muhaimin, 2005; Perks, 2018). It is a belief that appeared in the Catholic church of Italy and Germany in the mid-19th century, which follows the belief of Thomas Aquinas (Achmadi, 2001). Thomas Aquinas was a philosopher and theologian from the 13th century. His thought was implemented as a solid and trusted foundation as he was believed to balance rationality and belief. Thus, his teaching was studied in some secular European universities in the 13th century (Russel, 2004; Thompson, 2003; Muhaimin, 2005). Perennialism focuses more on immortality, idea, truth, and beauty than the cultural heritage and the social impact. Knowledge is considered far more important than what happens in everyday life. Any education based on this belief has emphasized absolute truth, universal truth regardless of time and space. If we pay close attention to its appearance, the belief was developed in European agrarian aristocratic society, which was more past-oriented. The education was based on humanity, personal formation, and mental characters using the expository and assimilation learning model (Syaodih, 2012).

In the third philosophy, it is mentioned that the 2013 Curriculum is based on essentialism. Essentialism believes in higher education values, which owns a proper position in the culture (Muhaimin, 2005). The philosophy expected humans to return to essential academic knowledge and character improvement. The essentialism developed within the industrial area in the United States of America; hence, science was a significant concern rather than humanity. The pragmatism was strong as the youth were prepared for the workforce directly after finishing their studies (Syaodih, 2012). Essentialism is similar to perennials in terms of their orientation toward the past. Education-based on perennialism and essentialism is categorized as classical education (Kooli, 2019; Ranjitkar, 2020).

In the fourth philosophical foundation, it is mentioned that experimentalism and social reconstructivism are the foundation of the 2013 Curriculum. Experimentalism is one of the philosophies that believed that finding the truth is through experiment and empirical facts. According to Latasha Holt (2020), experimentalism was John Dewey's contribution to the educational world. It is believed that someone can acquire the knowledge through experiences-centered experiments; "*Dewey boldly identified experimentalism, which centered on human experiences, as the method in which an individual could grow with personal knowledge.*" In line with the spirit of experimentalism, the selected learning contents should stimulate students to perform experiments. The experiments will provide experience for the students, and it will become knowledge. Other writers argued that Dewey was developing a cognitive approach since its characteristics stress more on the cognitive aspects and the development of the aspects (Muhaimin, 2009). This statement indicates that the 2013 Curriculum has guided students toward creating through experimenting with obtaining the knowledge they need based on empirical evidence.

The following philosophical foundation for the 2013 curriculum is social reconstructivism. This belief aims to solve all of society's problems by an educated society. Syaodih (2012) claimed a social reconstructivism-based curriculum focused on society's problems. The model of this curriculum was based on the interactional education stream. It is an educational concept that focuses on the thought that humans are social beings, emphasizing two-sided interaction between teachers and students and vice versa (Syaodih, 2012).

Furthermore, education is not self-implemented; it is communal-implemented. Cooperation and interaction are needed to solve the nation's educational problems to achieve national education's goal. Thus, both parents and society have to get involved in the learning to become an indicator of fastening the social reconstruction curriculum. Those statements are the hidden agenda of the social reconstructivism philosophical foundation. Overall, the philosophical foundation of the 2013 Curriculum has shown the eclectic basis of perennialism, essentialism, experimentalism, and social reconstructivism.

3. The Significance of a Philosophical Foundation within Curriculum

The philosophical foundation in the curriculum becomes significant because philosophy provides philosophical answers to the goal of education, which the educators and students; what the content of education, and how the process of educational interaction (Syaodih, 2012). Education aims to achieve what it is dreamed of; the state sets its national education goals, as does Indonesia. According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, national education aims to develop students' potential. It is to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have a noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. That's the quality Indonesian people need, especially starting from the young generation.

Since national education goals are still philosophical and abstract and will take a long time to achieve, medium-term goals are needed, commonly known as institutional goals, and short-term goals are called instructional goals (Dakir, 2004). According to Abuddin Nata (2003), there is still a gap between the expected educational goals and

the reality of education graduates. It is essential to determine the goals of education and what should be taught in the educational process. The educational goals and content are then translated into the curriculum. According to E. Mulyasa (2005), the curriculum becomes a learning design that has a very strategic position in all learning activities and is a determinant of educational processes and outcomes. The curriculum design contains various teaching materials and learning experiences from the past, present, and future, designed and planned systemically by following applicable norms (Dakir, 2004).

The educator and students also require a philosophical answer because it is related to human nature and the surroundings. Associated with the question of how the process of educational interaction, philosophy can determine what strategy is used to lead to achieving the aspired goals.

Furthermore, it is necessary to discuss the significance of each of the philosophical foundations expressed or implied in the 2013 Curriculum Basic Framework. As discussed in the previous section, there are several philosophical foundations of the 2013 Curriculum, namely perennialism, essentialism, experimentalism, and social reconstructivism.

Perennialism is significant because this philosophical foundation provides a way out for education to focus more of its attention on an ideal culture that has been tested and tough. According to perennialism, the main task of philosophy is to find a clear goal (Jalaluddin & Abdullah, 2014).

Perennialism argues that the main task of education is to prepare students' intellectual maturity by providing knowledge (Jalaluddin & Abdullah, 2014). According to perennialism, it is necessary to provide knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic for the basic level, because this knowledge becomes the basis for obtaining other knowledge. Perennialism states that teachers play a pivotal role in developing students' potentials through the teaching process. Perennialism also influences the division of curricula for elementary, secondary, tertiary, and adult education to develop the students' potential (Jalaluddin & Abdullah, 2014).

The significance of the essentialism flow lies in the main emphasis in passing on culture to the next generation because the old culture has provided benefits for human life and has been tested in various conditions. So it is deemed necessary to make culture the basis for the knowledge and skills provided to students to become valuable members of society. The essentialism style refers to the philosophy of idealism and realism (Muhaimin, 2005; Amri, 2017). Idealism holds that it is impossible to obtain knowledge following reality because knowledge is mental or psychological (Bakhtiar, 2018). Realism argues that knowledge is declared accurate and appropriate under reality (Bakhtiar, 2018). Perennialism and essentialism include classical educational concepts. The classical education curriculum prioritizes educational content that comes from disciplines that experts have compiled without the participation of teachers and students. Teachers play a dominant role in determining content, methods, and evaluations in the classical education curriculum, while students passively receive teaching from the teacher (Syaodih, 2012).

As previously explained, experimentalism is a theory developed by John Dewey. John Dewey did not only hypothesize in developing his theory; he devoted all kinds of effort in his life to prove it. He published about 1000s works that include a lot of valuable information about each individual who learns through experiences throughout his life, and each individual needs life experiences to increase knowledge. Human life experiences contribute to decisions taken to deal with future situations. John Dewey's ideas about experimentalism provided a leadership norm for American thinkers and other activists from the Progressive era through the Great Depression in the United States (Holt, 2020). To research his beliefs, Dewey started his school in 1896 called the Dewey Laboratory School. The school was officially named the University Elementary School under his supervision. Dewey used schools as experimental laboratories to promote the study of teaching, learning, and administration, not as models for other educators and schools to imitate (Holt, 2020).

The significance of experimentalism lies in the legacy left by Dewey that learning is a process of experiential growth, always in a state of "becoming" and, if properly managed, increases but never reaches completeness or finality (Holt, 2020). The basic principles of experimentalism have a closer philosophical connection with the flow of pragmatism. The pragmatic concept is to influence the "here and now" and see life as an issue that matters right now, not as a problem that has judgments of the last days or some other metaphysical place. This statement is inseparable from Dewey's belief that "the individual moves from one situation to another, his world, and environment, expands or shrinks. A person does not find himself living in another world but in different parts or aspects of the same world (Holt, 2020). When associated with the curriculum, the curriculum by experimentalism is a curriculum by the era of the students. It is very contrast when associated with perennialism and essentialism, which tend to be classical education concepts that maintain inherited values.

The significance of the philosophical foundation of social reconstructivism can be seen through the main objectives of this curriculum. Syaodih (2012) mentioned that the primary goal of the social reconstructivism curriculum is to provide students with challenges, threats, obstacles, or disruptions faced by people (conflict theory). The point is how students are provided with real problems in society. Therefore, the curriculum prepared for students must provide sufficient knowledge about various pressing social problems and how to deal with these problems. Examples of problems related to the social reconstruction curriculum include human rights issues and oppressed community groups.

4. The Philosophical Foundation of the 2013 Islamic Education (PAI) Curriculum

PAI is classified as a general subject of group in 2013 Curriculum. Thus, the philosophical foundation of PAI follows the 2013 Curriculum described in the previous section of this article. The PAI curriculum's philosophical foundations are perennialism, essentialism, experimental-

ism, and social reconstructivism. By looking at the background of each philosophical foundation of the curriculum analyzed previously, it is necessary to adjust the philosophical basis to the PAI curriculum so that there is no conflict with the characteristics of the PAI curriculum.

Muhaimin's (2003) study related to the philosophy of Islamic education can be used as reference material for the philosophical foundation of the PAI curriculum by PAI educators. Muhaimin (2003) concluded that there are five typologies, namely: perennial-essentialist Salafi, perennial-essentialist Mazhabi, modernist, perennial-essentialist contextual-falsification, and social reconstruction. These typologies offer several blends of terms for the philosophical foundation of PAI.

Salafi-essentialist perennials are regressive and conservative in defending the values of the *Salaf* era, as well as having an Islamic education perspective that is oriented towards the Salafi era. The function of Islamic education is to preserve the values and culture of the *Salaf* era society (Muhaimin, 2003). Its characteristics are to answer educational problems in Salafi discourse through a textual understanding of the texts.

Perennial-essentialist *Mazhabi* is regressive and conservative in defending the values and thoughts of their predecessors because these values are considered established. The giving of *Syarh* and *Hasyiyah* marks its characteristics to the thoughts of the predecessors. The function of Islamic education is to preserve and maintain values, culture, and traditions that have existed for a long time (Muhaimin, 2003).

The modernist typology emphasizes free and open thinking but is still bound by the values contained in divine revelation, progressive and dynamic to the demands of the times. One of its characteristics is being tolerant when accepting opinions related to educational thoughts from anywhere and anyone. The function of Islamic education is to develop students' potential, potential interaction efforts with environmental demands, continuous reconstruction of experience (Muhaimin, 2003).

Perennial-essentialist contextual-falsification emphasizes regressive and conservative attitudes, especially in religious education. It accepts the concept of education, a less radical reconstructive attitude. Islamic education insight focuses on the continuity of Islamic education thinking responding to the development of science and technology and social change. The function of Islamic education is to develop the optimal potential of students and foster religious and human values in the development of science and social change (Muhaimin, 2003).

Social reconstruction emphasizes a progressive, dynamic, proactive and anticipatory attitude in dealing with science and technology developments, demands for change, and it is future-oriented. Social reconstruction is characterized by being opened-ended in the Islamic education system, and is responding quickly to current demands. The functions of Islamic education include fostering the creativity of students; enriching human cultural treasures; preparation of productive workforce (Muhaimin, 2003).

The philosophical foundation based on the philosophy of Islamic education above can be used as a guide for PAI educators in implementing the 2013 PAI curriculum. PAI educators in schools and madrasah become curriculum developers directly in the classroom. Therefore, PAI educators must be equipped with an adequate understanding of the philosophical foundation. This understanding can be obtained in the college for teacher training before becoming an educator or participating in training after becoming an educator.

5. Conclusion

The philosophical foundations of the 2013 curriculum are combinations of several philosophical schools such as perennialism, essentialism, experimentalism and social reconstructivism. The significance of the philosophical foundation in the curriculum because philosophy provides philosophical answers to the main problems in education related to educational objectives; the educators and students; the content of education; and the process of educational interaction. Islamic Education subject (PAI) are included in the general subjects of group A in the 2013 curriculum structure. Therefore, the philosophical foundations of Islamic Education subject also follow the philosophical foundations of the 2013 curriculum.

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