Ki Hajar Dewantara's Perspective on The Concept of Independent Education and Its Relevance to The Independent Learning in Indonesia

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Abstract
The study aims to analyze the concept of independent education in Ki Hadjar Dewantara’s (KHD) perspective and determine its relevance to the independent learning policy implemented in Indonesia. This study is a literature review of character analysis with the main objective of profoundly investigating KHD’s concept of education about independent education through documentation studies and interviews, which were then analyzed using Content Analysis. According to the findings of this
study, *KHD* presents the concept of independent education, starting from the purpose of educating students to liberate them esoterically, mentally, and physically by implementing Pancadarma, which is implemented in Taman Siswa, with among system using various methods that are continuously carried out from an early childhood to adulthood presented in the Taman Siswa. The concept of KHD’s independent education is relevant to that of independent learning in Indonesia today, in terms of its purposes, education system, teachers, and students.

**Keywords:** Independent Education, Pancadarma, Among System.

**INTRODUCTION**

KHD reveals that the impact of teaching is to help free human beings exoterically, whereas education frees humans esoterically (Dewantara, 1977). Education is the main pillar for liberating students in an ongoing process so that changes occur toward ideal external and internal potential as a unity to be achieved. Even in his acknowledgment, KHD emphasizes the accomplishment of spiritual values as the objectives of the very significant educational values (Thalib, 2017). Therefore, education is a guidance provided to students, which are carried out continuously, with various intelligence potentials, so that they can be physically and mentally independent, able to freely (independently) develop their unique (different) potentials with their respective nature (potentials). They will eventually find themselves a perfect human being (exoterically and esoterically) (Rindlo, 2020).

The human being uniqueness with very different intelligences according to their nature is described by Howard Gardner with his theory of *multiple intelligences*. This theory is so familiar to teachers because it provides a model to take an action in accordance with the belief that all students have predominance. Everyone is unique, and they have all components of intelligence combined in such a way that they have a unique way of contributing to the society life. Linguistic, logical, intrapersonal, interpersonal, musical, visual, kinesthetic, natural, and existential intelligences are examples of multiple intelligences. These intelligences are the ability to solve problems and create products that benefit one or more cultures in society. (Gardner, 2011, p. 10; Naisaban, 2004, p. 158–159).

Multiple intelligences must be realized because they cannot be created on their own. They are natural potentials according to the nature of virtue (God’s will). Because, according to William Stern’s convergence theory, psychic development is the result of
convergence between inner qualities and external situations of development, rather than being a result of innate traits or acceptance. (Stern, 2018, p. 49). The concept of convergence is also reinforced by Ibn Taimiyyah, stating that there are basic/innate factors and environmental influences, but the basic factors possessed by humans, according to Ibn Taimiyyah, tend to contain goodness. (Iqbal, 2015, p. 49). Needless to say, the main objective is that human beings are able to understand the benefits and harms of nature by guiding students down the right path of nature, so that they lead to community development, instead of individual development, according to the treatise (Taimiyyah, 1389, p. 664). Thus, to achieve multiple intelligences, two facilities are required, that is, the influence of innate potentials (according to nature) and the environment.

In order that the influence of innate potential and the environment develops optimally, it is necessary to carry it out on a continuous basis. According to progressivism, humans are capable of developing and refining the environment with their intelligences through scientific methods in order to solve problems in life, both individually and socially (Gutek, 1997, p. 138).

Progressivism views that environment, both human and non-human, is constantly changing. This is due to human beings' ability to learn new things, predict and anticipate what the future holds. In the world of education, progressivism contends that students should be given a freedom and independence to conduct experiments. They are expected to be able to independently find preferred solutions to any problems in the future by combining competence, self-skills, and learning outcomes (Barnadib, 2002, p. 58–59).

Progressivism seeks to advance education by employing flexible principles. This goal is more clearly achieved, according to John Dewey, if education is democratic. Education emphasizes freedom or independence for students based on their individual nature in order to develop optimally. Students, as educational subjects, must be guided as a distinct social group. As a result, teachers must be able to identify a wide range of talents, interests, and intelligences. The success of educational goals is measured by how teachers become facilitators, guiding students to explore their talents and interests to their full potential. Progressivism profoundly emphasizes several principles in learning, namely: 1) the educational process is student-centered, starting from and
ended by students; 2) students play their roles as active human beings; 3) teachers are facilitators, to guide, and to give directions; and 4) educational institutions seek a cooperative and democratic atmosphere; 5) students must focus on problem solving, instead of only mastering the subject matter.

Referring to the achievement of the independent education concept from KHD’s perspective, not only freedom of thought, but also the implementation of noble values inherited by KHD teachings. The education in his standpoint is religious universalist, integrating Indonesian culture and Islamic education (Altian Diisnan 2018; Asrori 2016; Kawuryan 2019; Kumalasari 2010; Wardani K 2010). The revitalization of the implementation of the KHD’s independent education concept can be an alternative for the current era of independent learning, by observing the teaching and learning conditions carried out in madrasas/schools to universities (Arini, t.t.; Subekhan & Annisa, 2018). This is done in an attempt to face challenges, anticipate impacts, and raise hopes for the global community by portraying the original Indonesian cultures (M. Abdullah, 2019; M. A. Abdullah, 2017).

As a national hero and the founder of national education, KHD’s ideas about the education system through among system have been widely studied and applied in educational institutions throughout Indonesia. Because of his comprehensive strategic thought about education in Indonesia by adapting the original Indonesian cultures, almost all aspects of life are always oriented to his thoughts, therefore, the Indonesian nation will never forget his services (Nata, 2005; Surjomiharjo, 1986, p. 1; Towaf, 2016, p. 127). This places him on the same level as world-renowned educators such as John Dewey, Montessori, Frobel, Peztalozzi, and Rabindranath Tagore (Tauchid, 1968, p. 73).

KHD’s concept of independent education, which has been used as a reference for National Education, eventually inspired the government's policy, the Ministry of Education and Culture, that freedom of learning should give freedom and autonomy to educational institutions, free from bureaucratization, lecturers are free from complicated bureaucracy, and students are given the freedom to choose skills that match their potentials. The KHD’s independent education concept, as the center of national education, should be reviewed by analyzing the extent to which the objectives, methods, materials, evaluation, and implementation of education within the framework of independent learning offered by KHD have a more complete common thread related to
current Indonesian government policies or have deviated from his concept. Based on the background and problems described above, it is important to analyze and explore the concept of independent education in KHDs’ perspective, including what elements are composed in the concept and how these relate to the concept of independent education in Indonesia today.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Library research was employed since the researchers directly investigated the text or manuscript (Zed, 2008, p. 4). This research specification is a study of figures using interpretive approaches (Hamzah, 2019, p. 19, 34). The relevant literatures were the main components for data searching related to KHD’s thinking and interpretation was based on the researchers' backgrounds, personal experiences, and cultural history (Hadi, 1983, p. 63). The objective is to perceive or interpret messages in the text delivered by KHD, then to seek the depth of information presentation by thoroughly picturing it back. (Beasley, 2000, p. 27–28; Hamzah, 2019, p. 19). The library research activities include selecting topics, exploring information, presenting, and evaluating the process (Kuhlthau, 2002, p. 29–171). In this study, documentation method was used to obtain documents with monumental writing, images, and even figures (Sugiyono, 2005, p. 82). This presentation made use of the primary source document taken from KHD’s work part I about Education, as well as the secondary sources in the form of previous books and researches which are relevant to the research being conducted. Whereas, interviews were used to support the documentation result data.

Content analysis was employed to process the texts found in the KHD's book part I about education, particularly in educational methods with rules and procedures and appropriate principles. It was then systematically processed by analyzing the redaction used by KHD, looking for similarities and differences with previous scientists, and analyzing their worthy reasons to strengthen and systematize the KHD’s thinking. Muhadjir, quoting Holsti, explained that the content analysis was carried out through series of processes, first, designing a text with rules and procedures. Second, the text was systematized by categorizing it. Third, focusing on theoretical contributions. Fourth, refering it to the manifested description. Fifth, drawing conclusions (Muhadjir, 2002). This analysis is addressed to focus on revealing and presenting how KHD
presented the concept of independent education and determined its relevance to the current Indonesian government policy.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of KHD's perspective of independent education begin with the concept of education, particularly the realization of independent students in their esoteric and exoteric lives. Students must pay attention to their position in accordance with their innate nature (potential). The realization can evidently be found in *Pancadarma* as a fundamental principle in the implementation of education. To help achieve an independent education as comprehensively as possible, KHD established *Tamansiswa* as an educational ‘house’ with a struggle nuance (Kurniawan, 2014). Therefore, the independent education held in *Tamansiswa* is based on *Among* system. It was KHD’s response to the colonial education system, which is more concerned with academic, coercion, and punishment. Whereas, the *among* system is filled with various noble values and methods adapted from an early childhood to adulthood, so that the ultimate goal of being independent esoterically and exoterically is the realization of a human being who is free to determine his/her life with potential and noble characters, optimally attained, particularly when he/she has grown in accordance with his/her respective nature (Dewantara, 1977).

1. KHD’s Perspective of Independent Education Concept

Education, as a factor triggering the freedom of human beings esoterically and exoterically, is a guide, according to KHD, in the development process, leading all the students’ nature as both an individual and a member of the community (social) to achieve the highest level of safety and happiness (Dewantara, 1977, p. 20). The guidelines meant by KHD relate to how students grow according to their own strength and skills in nature. Teachers simply guide the power that students have in order for them to improve their lives and development processes (Dewantara, 1977, p. 21). KHD also define education as an effort (attempt) to prioritize the children’s authority (character, inner strength), mind (intellectual), and physical aspects in a unity to capture the perfection of life and in harmony with their world (Dewantara, 1977, p. 14–15). The collaborated definition of education according to KHD can clearly be
referred to as a guidance that guides all the nature of students to advance the character (character, inner strength), mind (intellectual), and physical strength as a unity, both becoming individuals and community members (social) so they can achieve the perfection of life, harmony with their world, safety, and happiness as high as possible.

The term guidance or counseling described by KHD is consistent with the definition of education in etymology (literal) and terminology used by educational figures, particularly Islamic education experts. “Pendidikan” (education) is derived from the word "didik" (educate), which is preceded by prefix "pe" and following suffix "an" meaning "action" (things, methods, etc.), hence education is described as a method of educating people (Poerwadarminta, 1976, p. 250). In the Greek language, “pendidikan” (education) is referred to paedagogos, where paedos means “children” and agoge means “I lead, guide”. Paedagog refers to educator, or someone who provides guidance to children. Pedagogic, on the other hand, refers to action of guiding. In English, “pendidikan” is referred to "education," which means "guidance" or "development" (Purwanto, 1998, p. 3). Whereas, in Latin, it is termed “educere”, which means to introduce someone to something (knowledge) (Langgulung, 1998, p. 2).

KHD’s concept of education has a similar connotation to Al-Abrasyi’s interpretation, stating that it is an attempt to prepare a perfect human being, with reasonings, characters (morals), mind, body, smooth sentiments, love for their nation, sweet words for perfection and happiness in life. (al-Abrasyi, tt., p. 100). Similar to Al-Syaibany's definition, Islamic education is the process of changing behavior to be good to students, both at the individual level, in society, and in the natural environment, so that not only individual piety but also communal one is attained (Al-Syaibany, 1979, p. 339). It is also in line with the concept of education proposed by the Second World Conference on Muslim Education, which states that education strives to accomplish a balanced development of the human personality, both mind and soul, as well as students’ feelings and bodies (Second World Conference on Muslim Education, 1980).

To achieve the nature of education mentioned, KHD requires the implementation of the following main articles in carrying out education: first, all tools, methods, and efforts must be adapted to the nature of circumstances (natuurlijkheid, reliteit). Second, the nature of circumstances is stored in different customs depending
on the nature of each person's life, so efforts are required to achieve an orderly and peaceful life. Third, customs are influenced by time and place. Fourth, knowing a consistent life line, by looking at developments from the past to the present to plan for the future, and fifth, modernization has facilitated the interference of world influences. As a result, it is necessary to be extra cautious in deciding which ones to glorify and which ones to harm, and to always remember that the advancement of science and human life is due to the God's power (Dewantara, 1977, p. 15).

2. The Principles of Independence in Pancadarma

To achieve an independent human being, it is necessary to implement KHD’s education system which applies the principles of independence found in Pancadarma (Principles: Independence, Nature, Culture, Humanity, and Nationality) (Majelis Luhur Persatuan Taman Siswa, 2017; Soeratman, 1985). Students are given the rights to be independent in their learning, free to apply what they have learned in order for it to be internalized. According to KHD, independent education means giving students professional freedom in order for them to achieve their ideals. Therefore, Taman Siswa strives to create human beings who are both physically and mentally independent. This means that students are always free to use their own nature to regulate themselves and to not rely on others by adjusting their nature. Taman Siswa has prioritized each student’s independence for an orderly and peaceful spirit since its inception employed *ngemong* or *among* method to educate. According to KHD, this system is fundamentally contradictory to the Western education system, which focuses on orders and punishments that hinder the students’ development (Dewantara, 1977, p. 48–49).

According to Islam, freedom must be implemented in accordance with relevant moral norms and responsibilities for individuals and society. The true independence is an ability to control passions and motives in the heart that can cause human beings to deviate. Islam provides an explanation for independence, namely: (Langgulung, 1983, p. 61)

a. Focus on maintaining a harmonious relationship among the principles of liberty, brotherhood, and equality.

b. Focus on having independent attitude which expresses gentleness, tolerance, and full of brotherhood and love in accordance with applicable norms.
c. Focus on implementing morals and human dignity so that they are in harmony with their respective rights as individuals and social beings.

d. Freedom must be beneficial in order to obtain the security of living together.

e. Individual freedom is guaranteed in life and does not interfere with public orders and rules.

f. Enforcing religious freedom, noble characters, and responsibility in accordance with common sense and aesthetics.

There is a point of relevance in the principles of *pancadarma* and Islamic views regarding the independence or freedom in education. Students' freedom in education becomes meaningful when they are given the freedom to seek out and create their own experiences, but at the same time teacher’s guidance and counseling are bestowed. Although independence is necessary for successful learning, guidance and counseling for the growth and development of potential according to the child's nature is always provided so that no violation occurs (Djohar & Istiningsih, 2017).

3. Independence in *Taman Siswa*

KHD has created an education system which is a struggle education (Kurniawan, 2014). The system should give students independence as much as possible in order to maintain their esoteric and exoteric growth in accordance with their nature (Majelis Luhur Persatuan Taman Siswa, 2017, p. vi). His educational philosophy is fundamentally opposed to Western-style education. The concept of KHD education is not only relevant to struggle education, but also to the culture of the Indonesian nation. The educational system is rich in indigenous educational concepts to Indonesian culture.

The seeds of the nation's descendants are being educated through *Taman Siswa*, which was established by KHD in order to develop students’ potentials. To that end, KHD created *Among* system, which is an educational system based on the principles of independence and nature (*Pancadarma*) (Kurniawan, 2014). *Taman Siswa* was founded as a response to the Western school model, which was more concerned with coercion and punishment, and is known in Dutch as "regering tucht en orde," whereas *Taman Siswa* used the term "orde en vrede" aimed at providing an orderly and peaceful education.
This means that Taman Siswa exists in order to maintain the continuity of students' esoteric lives, to avoid coercion, and to carefully observe so that they grow in accordance with their nature. All of these are required to bring in an independent human being, which means that no order is given, mind to self-command, and to stand on their own (Dewantara, 1977, p. 13–14). To bring in an independent human being, Taman Siswa employs the following principles: (Dewantara, 1977, p. 48–49):

First, acknowledging every human being's rights to self-regulation by adhering to the rules or norms of unity in the realm of life. Education that emphasizes order and peace (orde ven Vrede) by giving students as much independence as possible while caring for them with as much attention as possible for their growth and development according to their own nature is then referred to as the Among system.

Second, education must be capable of producing an independent human being, including freedom of mentality, mind, and energy. Not only is knowledge imparted, but is also educated to find good and useful knowledge for the sake of students' esoteric and exoteric interests for the benefit of living together.

Third, in the future, education must avoid focusing solely on intellectual intelligence, as this will lead to a life that is not independent and separating educated from ordinary people. So education must apply its own culture as a guide for the future that is in harmony with its own nature, peace, and civilization, and this nation, then, deserves to be in touch with foreign nations.

Fourth, changing the emphasis from a small-scale teaching to a broader scope, that is, education for the large number of people, because the strength of this nation lies in how large the number of people's strengths.

Fifth, in order to achieve the principles of independence, freedom, and liberty, one must try to the best of one's ability while remaining open to the support of others. However, if the support threatens the independence of mind and soul, it must be rejected.

Sixth, relying on one's own strength, meaning that the budget (all expenditures) from one's own business by carrying the burden independently, in Dutch it is called "Zelfbedruipingsystem," which means that all education that wishes to pursue remains consistent by standing on one's own.

Seventh, educators must have approaches to students without being physically
or mentally bound, and with a pure heart, not demanding rights, but giving themselves to serve students.

*Taman Siswa* clearly points out that education must serve the purpose of liberating children as a whole (nationally), developing them in accordance with their nature, either in terms of free of mind, soul, and energy, or based on their own strengths.

### 4. Independence in *Among* System

To continue the concept of *Pancadarma*'s noble values that were implemented in Taman Siswa, KHD implemented *among* system. It is essentially a product of education system, which is in contrast to the practice of Western education, which is defined as a system of command, punishment, order, and intellectualism. The KHD’s *among* system is defined as an education system that values students' individuality, making it more humane and humanizing human beings in the concept of independence. The *among* system is KHD’s response to the Eastern cultural education philosophy, which is an education system that fully controls, governs, and guides children proportionally, which closely connotes to momong, among, and ngemong (Javanese) (Dewantara, 1977, hlm. 13).

Among system education adheres to the principles of independent learning in *Pancadarma*, employing democratic values and being very humanist. According to KHD, in education, we should not simply lead students, but also take a part in their activities, particularly when they are on the wrong track, nor is justified to treat them in a permissive way, *ngujo*, or leave children on their own, implying that the KHD’s education system implements normative corridor limitations. The KHD’s democratic understanding is a democracy with limitations, mainly dealing with *ngujo* (Javanese) behavior (leaving, permissive) to treat children. We merely observe them in order that they grow in accordance with their nature, that is, in accordance with themselves (Djohar & Istiningsih, 2017b, hlm. 1).

The *among* system requires a peaceful state of order and discourages punishment. The punishment that KHD desires to is how students are assigned kinesthetic or academic tasks, ended up with treatment using *among* system guidance, so that they do not feel pressures. The principles of *among* system encourage them to
achieve independence so that their mind can rule their body with their own strength. With this system, they will do everything consciously, sincerely, and joyfully. This has been done extensively with active learning, which is full of creativity and a fun learning atmosphere.

During the among system practice, dynamic social transactions (not ignoring one another) occur between teachers and students, resulting in a social construction that is not based on individualism, but developing strong social solidarity instead. This means, the among system has explicitly transformed the education system into a social system. The educational mechanism of among system is based on KHD’s Trilogy Leadership, namely Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha, Ing Madya Mangun Karsa, and Tutwuri Handayani. It is a very functional learning aid model if applied to the right target (Dewantara, 1977; Djohar & Istiningsih, 2017b).

According to KHD, education with the among system is carried out in order to achieve free, independent human beings and to shape themselves according to their nature. To prepare the curriculum, it is necessary to adhere to the guidelines agreed upon by the among system education for the development of intelligence, the realization of a fully-shaped human being with independence, humanist, nationality, democracy, and kinship characteristics. Such an educational philosophy, in the writers’ view, is a very human and noble education system. A system of education that places students in a humane manner (Djohar & Istiningsih, 2017b, hlm. 2).

Several key terms in KHD’s among system are line with Indonesian education aspirations, as well as Islamic education (Marwah dkk., 2018; Mashari & Anna Qomariana, 2016; Sukarman, 2017). This system treats more humanist (Mustaqim, 2017) (humane) through momong or ngemong, democratic and independent, self-regulated characteristics in the frame of education as a social system (Aziz Q dkk., 2018), through the concept of three educational centers, which is also relevant to the noble values found in the Qur’an as the main basis of Islamic education, even though it is applied to the millennial generations (Azizah, 2018; Sukarman, 2017), meaning that the among system remains relevant to these days (Wangid, 2009).

Al-Abrasyi mentions that the implementation of Islamic education democracy is carried out by having student accustomed to relying on their own abilities and determining their own future in accordance with their basic potential (al-Abrasyi,
1996, hlm. 57). Students' potentials consist of innate (fitrah al-gharizah) and external potentials (fitrah al-munazalah), which guide and directs innate potentials in order that students grow in accordance with their nature (Madjid, 1991, hlm. 8). Among the character traits that the among system education brings in democratic principles are guiding students to get used to expressing opinions and respecting each other and appreciating opinions both between teachers and students or among students, according to their nature, disposition, and strength. Precisely in education, students must express what they feel, according to what they desire to, so that they can truly feel free in living their life (Daradjat, 1994, hlm. 30), and this is where the roles of ngemong or momong govern them.

The among system also follows the principle of equality, providing equal learning opportunities for all students (Nata, 2000, hlm. 67), and respects students' dignity as taught by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH in his efforts to liberate the oppressed by abolishing slavery in Mecca (Nata, 2000, hlm. 67). Education, strengthened by Abdurrahman Saleh Abdullah, should not be compelled on students, but should respect every ability, provide equal opportunities, and take into account the diversity of students (A. S. Abdullah, 1990, p. 84). In line with that, the Indonesian National Education System is governed by the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003. In fact, the among system is an important component of the KHD-initiated concept of independent education.

5. The Relevance of KHD's perspective of Independent Education to the Independent Learning Policy in Indonesia

Analysis of the concept of independent education in the KHD’s perspective towards independent learning in Indonesia can be seen in the aspects of policy, educational objectives, learning systems, teachers, and students.

a. The Independent Learning Policy in Indonesia

Indonesia is currently implementing an independent education or independent learning, with the target of benefiting the current living generations,
preferably known as generation Y\(^1\) and Z\(^2\). The education process has been discussed in various levels of education in Indonesia, thanks to the Minister of Education and Culture's Policy on Independent Education. Freedom to learn, according to Nadiem Makarim, is the freedom of thinking. It can be stated that:

*First*, the concept of "Independent Learning" is a solution to the problems that teachers face during the educational process. *Second*, reducing the teachers’ burden in carrying out their profession, being independent or free in determining learning assessments with appropriate tools, being free from learning administration fulfillment, and being free from pressure, criminalization, and politics toward teachers.

*Third*, providing a concrete picture of the problems that teachers face when teaching in educational institutions, starting from the issues of new students admission (input), teacher administration in learning (including lesson plans, core learning activities, to USBN-UN (output).

*Fourth*, teachers must be at the frontline in producing the nation's future generations by designing interesting learning atmosphere and conditions that draw students’ attention so that they can be useful for teachers and students in the future (Mustaghfiroh, 2020, p. 141–147).

There are four main policies made by the ministry of education, namely (Bagus Kurnia PS, et.al., 2020):

1. The National Examination (UN) is abolished, changed with the Minimum Competency Assessment and Character Survey. In this case, the literacy and numeric competencies on the PISA test are more paid attention. This model is implemented in grade IV, VIII and XI to get results and input, so that the process of improvement in learning can be carried out before they graduate. This is of course different from the National Examination which is conducted at the end of the school level.

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\(^1\) Generation Y (born between 1980 and 1995) is better known as millennial generation or millennials. This generation makes use of instant communication technology, such as E-mail, SMS, instant messaging, and the like. This is due to the fact that Generation Y grows up during the internet era.

\(^2\) Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2010) is more socially connected through cyberspace. This generation has been exposed to technology since childhood, is very familiar with smartphones, and is classified as a creative generation. Traits/Characteristics: Preferring social activities to previous generations, preferring to work in start-up companies, multi-tasking, preferring to technology and an expert in operating it, caring for environment, easily influenced by the environment in terms of products or brands, being intelligent and quick in retrieving information.
2. The National Standardized School Examination (USBN) is fully delegated to educational institutions, allowing its format to be customized to individual needs, such as portfolios, written works, and others.

3. One page-based Lesson Plan (RPP). A simple lesson plan will decrease teachers' administrative burdens, allowing them to focus more on improving learning and increasing competence.

4. The use of zoning system in the new students’ admission (PPDB). In this PPDB system, new students with achievements who take a part in the affirmation and achievement are given more opportunities. The regional government is mandated the authority to improve zoning techniques in the regions.

b. The Relevance of KHD’s Concept of Independent Education to the Indonesian Government Policy

According to the findings of a study of the "Independent Learning" policy launched by the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim, there is a harmony between the concept of "independent learning" and that of KHD’s education. Both concepts emphasize independence and educational institutions' flexibility in exploring the maximum potentials owned by students who, by nature, have diverse skills and potentials.

1. The Objectives of Education

Based on the first Taman Siswa principle, an individual’s right is to be able to regulate himself/herself by paying attention to peaceful order of unity in society’s life. Hence, education must encourage students to be as independent as possible while also fostering the growth and development of their inward and outward potentials in accordance with their nature. According to the convergence theory, student development is determined by a combination of innate potential and environmental influences (Stern, 2018), with education playing a role.

There are several innate potentials a student owns. This shows that every child holds multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2011). This is relevant to the Indonesian government's policy that independent education must be able to provide flexibility to students who are not bound by, for example, the National Examination, which only measures intellectual intelligence. Students' intelligence is considerably higher than that, as stated in Article 3 of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System.
The main objective of national education is to help students develop their full potentials as human beings with faith and fear of God the Almighty, noble characters, being healthy, knowledgeable, skillful, creative, independent, and eventually becoming democratic and responsible citizens. These will not come true unless the concept of independent education is implemented in practice.

2. Learning System

The *among* system is KHD's response to education efforts in creating independent human beings as large in number as possible, both physically and mentally, in accordance with their respective nature, which is carried out continuously from childhood to adulthood. This conforms to John Dewey's concept of progressivism, which requires the principle of flexibility in order to promote democratic education, giving students independence and freedom, and allowing students' potentials to develop properly (Dewey, 1964). In accordance with the government policy, the National Examination and National Standardized School Examination have been abolished. Graduation is truly suited to each student's unique competence and characteristics, as it should be.

3. Teachers

Students must be placed at the center of learning process. Therefore, KHD requires every teacher to always recognize their ability, with their potential based on their nature (innate). Teacher must be a facilitator who always encourages and guides them to find learning experiences through their own efforts, while also collaborating with parents to ensure their development. Teachers should also follow the MERDEKA (independent) learning principles, which are 1) Challenging and Fun. 2) Effective and Efficient. 3) Rational and Realistic. 4) Democratic. 5) Empathy. 6) Creative, Contextual, and 7) Equitable (Majelis Luhur Persatuan Taman Siswa, 2017). This exemplifies that teachers have a greater responsibility, particularly in the current era, not only in terms of professional abilities but also developing the students’ character and personality in accordance with their needs and environment/world. In such era of independent learning, *rahmatan lil alamin* values such as humanism, cooperation, social-prophetic, tolerance, exemplary, dialogical, and improving self-quality are surely important in guiding students (Mucharomah, 2017).
In accordance with the government's policy during the independent learning era, teachers do not have to be imprisoned by a great number of teaching administrations, so that they can put more focus on fostering students. For example, the Lesson Plan (RPP) can be simplified so that they can focus more on learning and improving their competence. As a result, the teacher's roles in learning process are more active and dialogical, and they can maximize their position as a facilitator in exploring and uprising their students' various potentials by designing various experiences that can stimulate students to think and act. (Rosyadi, 2017).

4. Students

Education in the concept of KHD’s goal is how students can be directed and guided based on the competencies they have based on their nature, so that they can achieve physical and spiritual independence, thoughts, and energy to live independently and in society. (Dewantara, 1977). This promotes convergence and progressivism in the effort to develop multiple intelligences in each child. That every child's intelligence is not only one, that is innate to every child according to their nature, but that education is an important factor carried out continuously with the concept of democratic education in accordance with the progress of the times. (Dewey, 1964; Gardner, 2011; Stern, 2018).

This is relevant to the government policy that gives each student the freedom to choose based on their potential and talents in a democratic manner. As evidenced by the abolition of the National Examination, also known as the National Standardized School Examination. Furthermore, students are given the rights to independence by taking the Semester Credit System (SKS) outside the university for a maximum of two semesters, or 40 credits, and can take credits in different study program at the same university for one semester, or 20 credits (Dirjen Pendidikan Tinggi Kemendikbud RI, 2020, p. 4).

Based on the discussion above, KHD believes that the concept of independent education is truly constructed in such a way, from early childhood to adulthood, with various perspectives and scientific disciplines. Therefore, true independence is the freedom of mind, soul, and body in accordance with the Pancadarma principles, which are implemented in the among system in Taman Siswa. It is very relevant to what the Indonesian government is presenting today with independent learning, so that students
can be free to develop according to their own nature, providing more direct experiences in learning, and teachers can guide and become good facilitators. Educational institutions must provide their educational supports for students’ changes, and there must be a good synergy between educational institutions and parents as a part of three educational centers.

CONCLUSION

KHD's perspective is very comprehensive that it adopts ideas from various scientific disciplines, as well as ones from Western figures and the Islamic world. He is determined to design the concept of education, with "independence" as the core of his educational objectives. He began by grounding the concept of Pancadarma in *Taman Siswa*, then implemented the among system (*momong, among, and ngemong*) with graded methods from early childhood to adulthood, so that at the peak level, adult learners can find esoteric and exoteric independence, namely making an individual with sovereignty of noble characters.

This is in line with the Indonesian government's learning independence policy, which states that new students have the rights to independence based on their innate potentials. Teacher as a facilitator and mentor puts more focus on each student's ability. As a result, students in high schools and levels below do not take the National Examination. Students have the option to study outside of the university or beyond their study program.

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