

MOHAMMAD SJAFFE'I EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT: IT'S RELATION TO THE INDEPENDENT STUDY CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between Mohammad Sjafe'i educational ideas and the self-learning curriculum in schools. Education is an effort to help students develop normatively better in the intellectual, moral, and psychological dimensions. Mohammad Sjafe'i's educational thinking contains character values with the active-creative method he has developed, which can encourage students to learn actively and independently. This research is using qualitative descriptive methods. The data were obtained through interviews, observations, and document studies. The results of this study prove that Sjafe'i's thinking is in line with the current education curriculum in Indonesia, which implements an independent learning curriculum. An independent learning curriculum is a lesson plan that provides opportunities for students to study in a calm, comfortable, relaxed, enjoyable, and pressure-free manner to show their natural talents. This self-study curriculum focuses on student freedom and creative thinking.

Keywords: Sjafe'i Educational Thought, Independent Study Curriculum, INS Kayutanam

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji kaitan antara pemikiran pendidikan Mohammad Sjafe'i dengan kurikulum merdeka belajar di Sekolah. Pada dasarnya pendidikan merupakan upaya membantu siswa untuk berkembang secara normatif lebih baik dalam dimensi intelektual, moral, dan psikologis. Pemikiran pendidikan Mohammad Sjafe'i mengandung nilai-nilai karakter dengan metode aktif-kreatif yang dikembangkannya yang dapat mendorong siswa untuk belajar secara aktif, mandiri dan merdeka. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Data diperoleh dari interview, observasi dan studi dokumentasi. Pemikirannya ini sejalan dengan kurikulum pendidikan di Indonesia saat ini yang menerapkan kurikulum merdeka belajar. Kurikulum merdeka belajar didefinisikan sebagai desain pembelajaran yang memberikan kesempatan kepada siswa untuk belajar dengan tenang, nyaman, santai, menyenangkan, dan bebas tekanan, untuk dapat menunjukkan bakat alaminya. Kurikulum merdeka belajar ini menitikberatkan pada kebebasan dan pemikiran kreatif siswanya.

Kata kunci: Pemikiran Pendidikan Sjafe'i, Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar, INS Kayutanam



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INTRODUCTION

Mohammad Sjaf'e'i is one of the figures which is a strong pillar in the education mindset in Indonesia. One of the valuable legacies given by Sjaf'e'i in education in Indonesia is the Indonesische Nederland School (INS), established on 31 October 1926 in Kayutanam (Zed, 2012). Movements in various areas became one of the markers for the establishment of INS Kayutanam. INS Kayutanam was born as a reaction from the Indonesian people, especially the people of West Sumatra, towards the education system run by the Dutch East Indies government through Sjaf'e'i in the field of education.

INS is a school that was founded before Indonesia was born and aims to improve the living standards of Indonesian people who are more independent. The educational system of INS Kayutanam was from the thoughts of Mohammad Sjaf'e'i which is set forth in noble values to educate students. These noble values educate students to become: independent, hard working, responsible, people who dare to live freely and not depend on others, people who dare to be open and own a company (Marsidin, 2011).

In the INS Kayutanam curriculum, Sjaf'e'i divides into three areas of teaching, namely: academic (brain), creativity (hands), and noble character (heart). In the academic field, students are equipped with general knowledge like in public schools, although more emphasis is placed on mastery of the material and its application in the field. Meanwhile, the field of creativity is further divided into several sub-skills, such as carpentry, ceramics, craft, carving, painting, music studio, theatre, literature, and several other skills. Meanwhile, relating to spiritual intelligence are applied in the field of noble character. These three fields cannot be separated from one another, and all three must complement and support each other in the discourse on intellectual creation with noble character, integrity and work ethics (Marjanis, 2021).

The teaching model applied by Sjaf'e'i is related to the curriculum model currently implemented in Indonesia, namely the self-learning curriculum. Some of the articles reviewed related to Mohammad Sjaf'e'i's educational thoughts regarding the self-learning curriculum are the writings of (Hera, 2020) explaining that the curriculum implemented at INS Kayutanam divides its teaching areas into three, namely academic (brain), creativity (hands) and noble character (heart). This is the same as the principle of an independent learning curriculum, which does not only focus on the academic field but also pays attention to the creative and spiritual fields of its students (Hidayat & Machali, 2012).

Furthermore, (Zed, 2012) explained that according to Sjaf'e'i, the best educational goal for Indonesia, as aspired by INS Kayutanam, is independent education, namely freeing students' minds from natural and human barriers to achieve "glorious glory" physically and spiritually. For this reason, the relationship

between Sjafe'i's educational thinking and the self-learning curriculum will be studied in depth in the discussion of this research.

METHODS

This research is using qualitative descriptive methods. The data were obtained through interviews, observations, and document studies. In addition, data was also collected through literature study by reviewing books, literature, notes, and reports related to the problem in this research (Nazir 1988). The data obtained were classified into units of analysis. The unit of analysis was determined based on the formulation of the problem. In this research, the technique used was the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman which consists of three components, namely: data reduction, data display and verification (Sugiyono, 2009).

Data reduction was carried out by conducting continuous and in-depth field research. The more often data collection were carried out in the field, the more the amount of data obtained would be numerous, complex and complicated. In order to overcome this, after going to the field, data analysis was immediately carried out through data reduction, by summarizing, selecting the main things, focusing on important things, looking for themes and patterns and discarding unnecessary data. Thus the data that has been reduced provides a clearer picture, making it easier for researchers to search for further data.

Data display was done after reducing the data that has been obtained. Displaying data was done to make it easier to understand what was happening, to plan further work based on what was understood. The next step was data verification that was conclusion drawing and verification. Verification was carried out repeatedly to obtain strong evidence, thus it could produce valid and credible research conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Muhammad Sjafe'i Educational Thoughts

Mohammad Sjafe'i is an actual figure for the Indonesian nation, especially in education. Sjafe'i was born on October 31, 1893 in Pontianak, West Kalimantan. Her biological mother is named Sjafiah, and she does not know her biological father because his father died when she was a baby. Sjafe'i has adoptive parents named Marah Sutan and Chalidjah. Since being adopted by Marah Sutan and Chalidjah, Sjafe'i has been brought up with the character and culture of the Minang people. Sjafe'i was indeed born in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, but he is a Minangkabau son. This is because he grew up in Minangkabau's nature and culture (Fauzi, 2022).

Apart from having a Minangkabau cultural and customary background, Sjafe'i was also raised and educated in a family with a high educational background. So it is not surprising that Sjafe'i has a high enthusiasm for the world of education. The education he received from his new family gave a strong pattern and style to Sjafe'i's educational thinking.

Mohammad Sjafe'i has provided a precious legacy in the field of education for Indonesia, namely a school called INS Kayutanam, which has survived to this day (Wati & Asri, 2021). According to (Sukirman, 2020), INS Kayutanam originally stood for Indisch National School (Dutch East Indies National School). During the Japanese

occupation, the INS abbreviation was changed to "Indonesia Nippon School," and after the proclamation became Indonesia Nationale School (INS).

INS Kayutanam was established in 1926. At that time had 75 students and consisted of two classes, class IA and IB, with the language of instruction being Indonesian. In 1939, progress continued with the construction of a hostel with a capacity of 300 people and 3 teachers' houses, and the number of students increased to 600 people (Hariadi & Dozan, 2022).

Mohammad Sjaf'e'i's educational thinking prioritizes skill education such as drawing, handwork, etc. According to (Barnadib, 1983), Sjaf'e'i completed his education and teaching by prioritizing expression lessons, namely drawing, singing and handwork. Sports and art lessons are also essential. Sjaf'e'i's educational thinking was also influenced by the thinking of John Dewey, who stated that the learning process is a way of capturing meaning with a simple method of an exercise, object, process, or event (Sikandar, 2015). Capturing meaning means knowing how to use it. Therefore, education must be able to direct the younger generation to understand the activities they find in society. The more activities they understand, the more meaning they get.

According to Sjaf'e'i, this pattern of education between study and work will shape the character, social life, and behavior of students helping one another. Students are taught to work according to their nature and will for the next life, with the hope of being able to form young Indonesians who can stand alone, work alone, live freely, and do not depend on the government during their lives (Raharjo, 2010). Then another educational thinker who became Sjaf'e'i's reference was Kerschensteiner. Kerschensteiner's reasoning is that academic knowledge cannot be separated from skills. By sharpening skills, intellectual power will develop by itself (Simons, 2016).

Moreover, Sjaf'e'i aimed to eliminate the prevailing affliction within the educational realm, commonly referred to as verbalism. Verbalism, within the context of education, engenders individuals akin to those engaged in the art of confectionery, where the mold determines the shape of the cake (Hera, 2020). This mode of education, consequently, generates individuals lacking broad perspectives and adeptness in navigating both societal and educational aspects of life, rendering them superfluous and insignificant to the community.

The educational principles of INS Kayutanam initiated by Sjaf'e'i include: 1) prioritizing character education; 2) educating and teaching students to be more active and dynamic; 3) school is not for seeking diplomas or self-confidence (able to create their jobs); 4) actively developing talents and creativity; 5) Students are educated so they can work harder (Rahatja, 2008). Sjaf'e'i's educational thinking carries the concept of balancing work, feelings, and thoughts. This is then manifested in three areas of education, namely the hands, heart, and brain. According to Sjaf'e'i, these three elements will make students more creative, intelligent, and have noble character. If one of these three elements is lacking, it will make it difficult for someone to be well-received in society.

His educational philosophy is, "Don't ask for mangoes from the rambutan tree but make every tree bear sweet fruit" (Navis, 1996). What Sjaf'e'i said had a profound meaning and seemed very democratic. Every student, as an ordinary human being,

indeed cannot be separated from various shortcomings and imperfections and has its specialties. Human character, preferences, aspirations, skills, outlook on life, and lifelines differ. According to Sjaf*'i*, skills or craft education is used to revive interest in crafts and the willingness to work as an independent individual, not as a laborer or worker. An independent nation, according to Sjaf*'i* is a nation that has been educated as an independent nation. Not only with enthusiasm but with intellectual content and the ability to become an independent nation in the economic field.

Hand skills education is carried out using active-creative learning methods. The active-creative method is a method that sees the importance of harmonious teaching between students and their endogenous strengths (from within the students themselves). Then it is also adjusted to the talents of these students because this will help them study with enthusiasm, diligence, and perseverance (Magdalena, 2020). The philosophical foundation of the active-creative method is the reason given by God to humans, which can be reformed through creativity.

The simultaneous development of intelligence and creativity is attainable through the educational process, as asserted by (Setyabudi, 2011). An educational approach that fosters innovation will awaken a profound sense of liberation within the human spirit, transcending the confines that restrict growth. Only students who possess a sense of autonomy are capable of producing creative outputs. Sjaf*'i* posits that the true realization of Indonesia's significance and glory hinges upon the cultivation of high levels of creativity among its populace. While academic education emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual assets, an education centered on creativity serves to inspire and invigorate students, fostering their creative and innovative abilities, as well as instilling in them a competitive spirit. Moreover, such an education equips the younger generation with essential life skills, promoting independence. Consequently, students are not merely instructed to be creative; rather, they are guided to become not only individuals seeking employment but creators of new employment opportunities.

Furthermore, Sjaf*'i* endeavors to instill an entrepreneurial mindset within every student. They receive instruction on how to personally promote and sell their own creations, whether they be paintings, sculptures, or other handcrafted items. Additionally, Sjaf*'i* places significant emphasis on the significance of spiritual intelligence. This is due to the fact that intelligence, in its entirety, serves as a guiding force for students as they navigate their lives.

Independent Study Curriculum

Etymologically, the term "curriculum" comes from the Latin "*currere*," which means running on the field of play, so it means the arena where the match is held (Robert, 1976). Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI) defines the curriculum as a learning device system applied to educational institutions in Indonesia. In addition, (Rani, 2020) also explains the notion of curriculum as an indicator of a management system that is arranged systematically and includes several processes, namely detailed plans, program development, and learning implementation. A curriculum is an organized collection of knowledge arranged in various subjects (Ornstein &

Hunkins, 2009). The curriculum is also a teaching plan or educational program that will be given to students to achieve predetermined educational goals.

In Indonesia, the implementation of the curriculum has undergone various changes and improvements, namely from 1947, 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997 (1994 curriculum revision), 2004 (Competency-Based Curriculum), and the 2006 curriculum (Unit Level Curriculum). Education), and in 2013 the government, through the ministry of national education, changed it back to the 2013 Curriculum (Kurtilas). In 2018 there was a revision of the Revised Kurtilas (Hasanah et al., 2022). In 2022 a new curriculum appears, namely the self-learning curriculum.

The independent learning curriculum is a policy breakthrough launched by the Minister of National Education, Nadiem Makarim, which aims to return the authority to manage education to schools and local governments (Rodiyah, 2021). The authority to manage education is manifested in the form of granting freedom to schools and local governments in planning, implementing, and evaluating education programs implemented in schools concerning the principles of independent learning policies established by the central government to achieve national education goals (Junaidi, 2020).

The goal of national education is to improve the quality of Indonesian human resources and have superiority and competitiveness compared to other countries (Dacholfany, 2017). Excellent and competitive human resources are manifested in students with noble character and high reasoning power, especially in literacy and numeracy.

There are four new policy points from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud, 2019), including 1) The National Examination (UN) is replaced with a Minimum Competency Assessment and Character Survey. This assessment emphasizes literacy and numerical reasoning skills based on best practice PISA tests. Unlike the National Examination, which is held at the end of the education level, this assessment will be carried out in grades 4, 8, and 11. These results are expected to be input for educational institutions to improve the learning process further before students complete their education; 2) The National Standardized School Examination (USBN) will be submitted to schools. Based on the Ministry of Education and Culture, schools are given freedom in determining the form of assessment, such as portfolios, writing, or other forms of assignments; 3) Simplification of Learning Implementation Plans (RPP). According to Nadiem Makarim, one page is enough to make a lesson plan. Through administrative simplification, it is hoped that the teacher's time consumed in administrative processes can be diverted to learning activities and increasing competence; 4) In the acceptance of new students (PPDB), the zoning system is expanded (excluding 3T areas). More opportunities are provided for students who take the affirmation and achievement path compared to the PPDB system. The local government is given the authority to determine the zoning of this area.

Through an independent study policy, the Minister of Education and Culture, wants to create a fun and conducive learning atmosphere for students (Suhartono, 2021). Independent learning, according to the Minister of Education and Culture, departs from the desire that scholarly outputs produce even better quality and no

longer produce students who are only good at memorizing but also have sharp analytical skills, reasoning, and comprehensive understanding in learning to develop themselves (Saleh, 2020). With this independent learning policy, the Ministry of Education and Culture hopes that the application of the curriculum in the learning process must be fun, accompanied by the development of innovative thinking by teachers. This can foster a positive attitude in students in responding to learning. Independent learning is a learning process that naturally achieves freedom of thought and innovation in education.

The essence of independent learning is exploring the most significant potential of teachers and students to innovate and improve the quality of learning independently, which means not only following the bureaucratic educational process but innovations that can advance education in producing globally competitive human resources (Saleh, 2020). Implementing an independent learning curriculum will become more relevant and interactive, where project-based learning will provide broad opportunities for students to explore factual issues actively. Schools can choose three options for implementing an independent curriculum (Rahayu & Fitriani, 2019). They *first* applied several principles of an independent curriculum by not changing the school curriculum used. *Second*, using an independent curriculum using learning tools that have been prepared. *Third*, using an independent curriculum by developing their teaching tools. The advantages of having an independent curriculum are. *First*, it is more straightforward and in-depth because it focuses on important material and developing student competencies in the market. *Second*, it is more independent, where students do not have specialization programs in high school. Teachers teach according to their students' ability and level of development to develop curriculum and learning according to their characteristics. Schools have advantages.

Mohammad Sjaf'e'i and Educational Thought of Independent Study Curriculum

Independence means not being bound or not depending on certain people and parties and being free to do anything. Freedom of thought means using reason to consider and decide things independently, not bound, and not dependent on certain people or parties (Teguh, 2017). Independent human thinking is the ability to critically and objectively follow the primary form of the scientific process while still making the rationality of the heart a form of balance. John Dewey confirmed this view, which later became Sjaf'e'i's foundation when he founded INS Kayutanam, that a school must be objective (scientific rational) but not central. Schools have an ideological function. Their existence is not only to teach students how to think effectively (rationally and scientifically) but also to help students regarding the highest wisdom in solving the most convincing intellectual problems related to the most critical human problems. (O'Neil, 2002).

In independent thinking, Sjaf'e'i and John Dewey argued that the reconstruction of experience in education must be directed to achieve social efficiency, so education must become a social process. The social process as a condition *sine qua non* for forming independent human thought includes at least two factors. *First* is solid social contact between individuals (educators and students) in learning, which is used to introduce students' individual and social realities. The *second* factor is communication, namely

the process of transforming knowledge from educators to students to make sense of the world through dialogue. Through both the rationality of the heart, free human thinking is not wishful.

The method used by Sjaf'e'i is similar to current educational theory developments and educational practices that are applied in learning to optimize students' abilities. In Indonesia, the curriculum currently used is an independent learning curriculum launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture as a response and solution to current educational problems in Indonesia. One of them is the occurrence of learning loss or delays in learning that occurred due to the Covid-19 pandemic in the last two years (Darsono, 2022). To recover learning losses that occur under certain conditions. For this reason, academic units or groups of educational teams need to develop a curriculum with the principle of diversification by the requirements of students, academic departments, and regional potential.

The form independent learning curriculum structure is extracurricular activities, projects to strengthen Pancasila student profiles, and extracurricular activities as stated in the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Number 162 of 2021 that the primary curriculum framework consists of a) curriculum structure; b) learning outcomes; and c) the principles of learning and assessment. In the self-learning curriculum, each activity must result in a project. In this case, the school often holds exhibitions to display various student works. Even though they don't have a large yard, they work with parents or agencies to support the collection implementation.

The structure of the self-learning curriculum above is similar to the INS Kayutanam curriculum. In the educational field, students are equipped with general knowledge like in traditional schools, although more emphasis is placed on mastery of the material and its application. In comparison, creativity is further divided into several sub-skills, such as carpentry, ceramics, crafts, carving, painting, music studios, theater, literature, and several other skills. At the same time, matters related to spiritual intelligence are applied in the field of noble character. These three fields cannot be separated from one another. All three must complement and support each other in the discourse of intellectual creation with noble character, integrity, and work ethic.

According to Martaliza, a class XI history teacher at SMA N 15 Padang, also said that there is a connection between the independent learning curriculum and Sjaf'e'i's educational thinking . The independent curriculum also focuses on the work and projects produced by class XI projects that are carried out as part of the lesson. In history lessons, projects carried out by visiting historical sites in the city of Padang and then the results of the project are written and oral reports such as videos. In class X the projects in nature such as projects for recycling waste, hydroponics, cosmetology, embroidery, shaving hair, etc. The results of these projects can be in the form of works and written reports.

The implementation of the independent learning curriculum in history subjects at SMA N 15 Padang is deemed to be in accordance with what has been set by the government, the independent learning curriculum is actually not much different from the 2013 curriculum (Martaliza, 2022). Where in the learning process students are

required to be active by conducting discussions or projects, before starting learning students have also looked for their own references, so they don't just accept what is conveyed by the teacher.

Meanwhile, the results of field observations at a number of high schools in Padang show that the educational principles developed by Mohammad Syafei are clearly visible in the learning process in the classroom, including independence and the formation of attitudes (character). In accordance with the Independent Curriculum, students are given more freedom in choosing and determining their own way of learning according to their potential. This is known as differentiation learning. This learning model is no longer centered on the teacher, but instead is centered on the needs of students. Therefore the PBL (Problems Based Learning) and PJBL (Project Based Learning) learning models are the main choice of teachers in high schools in Padang. This phenomenon can be seen in the teaching and learning process carried out by the teacher in the classroom.

Likewise, the formation of student attitudes is carried out through character education. This is clearly seen in the teaching modules made by the teacher, as well as the teaching and learning process carried out in the classroom. The development of character education is carried out through the values of the Pancasila Student Profile which must be formulated in each teaching module made by the teacher. These values include: faith and piety, global diversity, independence, mutual cooperation, critical reasoning, and creativity. In order to implement these character values, the content is integrated into learning materials, in addition to practical application in Pancasila Student Projects in various forms and dimensions. This is as expressed by a high school teacher in Padang: "*the development of character values is not only carried out in the classroom during the learning process, but also outside the classroom through various Pancasila Student Projects*" (Interview with Al Masri, Teacher at SMAN 10 Padang, December 12, 2023).

Sjaf*e*'i in (Mudyahardjo, 2012) emphasized that the curriculum must function to (1) develop imagination, logic, work/practice, and character; (2) develop a concrete understanding or concept. The first function can be derived through learning to use the mother tongue, gardening, composing, playing, cutting, forming clay, and playing drama. The second function can be derived through demonstration lessons, acting, gardening, and manual work with clay, paper, rattan, bamboo, palm leaves, and others for the benefit of geography, history, and natural sciences.

CONCLUSION

Sjaf*e*'i's educational ideas were used as an education system in the schools he founded by integrating three main components: The brain for general knowledge; The hands for creativity and The heart for fostering noble character. Sjaf*e*'i's educational thinking is related to the curriculum currently implemented in Indonesia, namely the self-learning curriculum. In practice, each independent learning curriculum activity must also produce projects or students' work by their respective interests and talents. Projects include embroidery, sewing, cooking, makeup, cutting hair, recycling skills, and other crafts. Then the results of student projects will be exhibited in exhibitions

held directly at their respective schools. This project was held with the aim that each student has their skills or hands-on skills so that after graduating from school, students will not only have knowledge in the academic field but also have high skills and creativity. This is the same as the educational concept applied by Sjaf'e'i at INS Kayutanam. With this independent learning curriculum policy, its application in the learning process must be enjoyable and accompanied by the development of innovative thinking by the teacher. This can foster a positive attitude in students in addressing learning. In addition, implementing the self-learning curriculum will be more relevant and interactive, where project-based learning will provide broad opportunities for students to explore factual issues actively.

There are several weaknesses that occur in the implementation of the Independent curriculum in schools. Based on this research, the implementation of the Independent curriculum may be hindered by limited resources in schools. A curriculum that involves a wider range of independent and self-directed learning requires adequate facilities, equipment, and teaching staff. If schools lack sufficient resources, the implementation of this curriculum may be limited or suboptimal. Teachers are key to the implementation of the Independent curriculum. They need to have a deep understanding of inclusive and student-centered approaches and methodologies. However, not all teachers may be ready or trained to effectively implement this curriculum. Significant efforts are required in teacher training and professional development to enable them to adopt the necessary approaches. Also, it's important to remember by the stakeholders that implementing a new curriculum always involves transition and change. This process can bring uncertainty and confusion among students, teachers, and school staff. Clear communication and strong support from the school and government are needed to address this uncertainty and facilitate a smooth transition.

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