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MUHAMMAD IQBAL'S ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY CONCEPT OF EDUCATION CONTEXTUALISED IN FACING THE DISRUPTIVE ERA

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Abstract

This article describes Muhammad Iqbal's Islamic philosophy concept of education contextualised in facing the disruptive era. Contextualise thought of Muhammad Iqbal's Islamic philosophy of education is necessary because the industrial revolution always bring impact to human life, including in the field of education. This study uses a qualitative research with hermeneutic literature review method. The important points of Iqbal's description of individuality, individual development, alignment between the material and the spiritual, and creativity in education are particularly relevant to our educational conditions today. For Iqbal, the main educational purpose is to strengthen individuality so as to understand his own potentiality. The development of individuality is a process in which humans must play an active role by conducting various experiments that are relevant to the spirit of times. The spirit of the disruptive era is the spirit of experimentation. But educational experiments, according to Iqbal will always have a moral and spiritual impact. So academics should not ignore the spiritual side of education. Spirituality will help students to find a balance of life in facing the negative effects of technology evolution.

Keywords: Islamic Philosophy of Education, Disruptive Era, Muhammad Iqbal.

INTRODUCTION

If we look at history, the industrial revolution always has a direct impact on human life, not least in education. For example, the third industrial revolution, which is synonymous with computerization and web-based connectivity developed in the 1980s and 1990s, had a significant impact in the fields of politics, economics and public education (Penprase, 2018, p. 211).

The Cambridge Dictionary (2020) defines the industrial revolution as a condition in which human work is done more by utilizing machine assistance than by using human hands. The industrial revolution requires the ability to adapt, the ability to learn, and think independently of each individual. Many research results show that students today will face new technologies and industries in the future, which they may never learn in school. Students today are required to continue to develop and renew their skills (Penprase, 2018, p. 219).

One of the side effects of the industrial revolution is the threat that observers call disruption. Francis Fukuyama in *The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order* (1999, p. 4) argues that disruption means disturbance or disorder. The disturbance arises from the dynamics of social life, politics, economics, and technology. And the biggest disturbance comes from technological change which then disrupts social relations in people's lives.

According to Kasali (2017), disruption is marked by innovation in various fields, not only in the realm of technology. Disruption also occurs in the fields of business, finance, and education. In the field of education, basic values regarding human beings and aspects of human intelligence have also shifted. For example, there is currently a theory about multiple intelligences that does not merely promote cognitive intelligence.

The education land will also face disruptive changes. The current education system may not be relevant in the future so it must undergo fundamental changes as a whole. So to face the era of disruption, the education system must be refined to answer the challenges of the times (Dhakidae, 2017, p. 13). Fundamental change does not mean having to imagine new values that might be relevant to be applied in facing the era of disruption, but also exploring old values that are superior and can be contextualized in accordance with the spirit of the times.

Considering this background, this study aims to describe the contextualization of Muhammad Iqbal's educational philosophy in the face of the era of disruption. This study uses a qualitative research with hermeneutic literature review method. Hermeneutics is a method to find meaning with contain description, interpretation and heuristics. The main source of this research is the book K.G. Saiyidain titled *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy* (1938) which is Saiyidain's interpretation of Muhammad Iqbal's poems in the collection of *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* published in 1918 (see Saiyidain, 1938).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research on the educational philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal has been carried out by previous studies, with a variety of different perspectives and focuses on this research.

Research on the philosophy of Iqbal's education was conducted by Hambali and Muhammad Yusuf Zulkifli (2017) in a study entitled *The Educational Thought of Muhammad Iqbal and Its Application Towards Indonesian Education*, presented at the International Conference on Innovative Pedagogy (ICIP) STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena Banda Aceh on 18-19 May 2017. This research explores the problem of individualism in Indonesian education which focuses on memorization. The results of this study indicate that Iqbal's philosophy of education is very relevant to be applied in the Indonesian education system because Iqbal emphasizes the spirit of intellectualism and the emphasis of intuition that is starting to be abandoned by the Indonesian education system.

Research by Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor and Imam Bahroni (2011) entitled *Iqbal's Philosophy on Islamic Education: a Historical Perspective* published in the Global Journal of Al-Thaqafah Vo. 1, Issue 1 December 2011 is also relevant . This study examines Iqbal's philosophical thinking about the concept of Islamic education in terms of historical perspective. The results of this study indicate that Iqbal has a view that there must be harmony between spiritual and material things in human life. Iqbal also criticizes contemporary thinking which places too much emphasis on rationality that it overrides intuition.

Imam Bahroni's research (2011) entitled *Individuality in the Educational Philosophy of Allama Muhammad Iqbal*, published in the Journal at-Ta'dib, Vol. 6, No. 1, June 2011 is also reviewed. This research focused on the understanding of individuality in the concept of Muhammad Iqbal's education. This research shows that individuality for Iqbal is not datum, but achievement. Iqbal emphasized that individuality is the basis of all aspects of education that must be considered by educators.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Brief Biography of Sir Muhammad Iqbal

Muhammad Iqbal is a Muslim intellectual, poet and education practitioner who was born in Sialkot, Punjab (now in Pakistan) on November 9, 1877. Iqbal began his formal education at the *Scottish Mission School* in Sialkot, before then he continued to *Government College* in Lahore. After earning a B.A. (*Bachelor of Arts*) in 1897 and received an M.A (*Master of Arts*) degree in 1899, in 1905 Iqbal continued his studies at Cambridge University in moral philosophy (Danusiri, 1996, p. 3-5).

Besides being known as a philosopher and practitioner in the fields of education and law, the name Muhammad Iqbal is quite famous as a poet. Iqbal's writings covered a variety of themes, with various forms of writing, ranging from scientific work, prose, to poetry. One of Iqbal's notable works is the collection of poems of *Rumuz-i Bikhudi*, published in 1918 in Lahore. The book was written in Persian and is a translation of Iqbal related to the concept of *insan kamil* (Danusiri, 1996, p. 11).

Muhammad Iqbal's Islamic Philosophy Concept of Education Contextualised in Facing the Disruptive Era

Muhammad Iqbal is an intellectual who wrote a lot about the reconstruction of Islamic thought. Iqbal's idea of reconstructing Islamic thought, for example, can be found in the book *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, first published in 1974. In this book, Iqbal focuses more on the reconstruction of the discourse of religious philosophy in Islam and the spirit of Islamic traditions, touches on the recent developments in various fields of human knowledge (Iqbal, 2008, p. 1).

Iqbal's themes are more dominant in discussing the reconstruction of Islamic discourse, and only a few mentioned theoretical education philosophy. Therefore, related to the search for Iqbal's thoughts about the philosophy of Islamic education, the researchers interpreted the substance of Iqbal's poetry more closely with the philosophy of education. Efforts to interpret Iqbal's poems in the field of educational philosophy, including those carried out by K.G. Saiyidain in *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy* (1938).

Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain is an Indian figure in education who has served as a secretary in the Ministry of Education of the Government of India. Saiyidain was born in Panipat, one of the historic cities in the Indian state of Haryana. He writes in Urdu and English. His book entitled *Andhi Mein Chirag* won the Sahitya Academy Award in 1963. While his book entitled *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy* (1938) became a reference for many academics from various countries. In 1967, the Government of India gave Saiyidain the highest civilian honor for his contribution to the Indian education sector (Datta, 1987, p. 987).

K.G. Saiyidain in *Iqbal's Educational Philosophy*, divides Muhammad Iqbal's Islamic educational philosophy into several key words, namely: the concept of individuality, individual development, material and spirituality, creativity and superior character (Saiyidain, 1938). The description of the contextualization of Muhammad Iqbal's concept of Islamic education in facing the era of disruption in this study will refer to some of these keywords.

a. Individuality

The concept of Iqbal's educational philosophy basically emphasizes individuality. An educator, according to Iqbal must not impose any educational program for his students without understanding the individual potential of these students. Living organisms, for Iqbal, are a set of complex and perfect individuality (Saiyidain, 1938, p. 11). The creation of a superior society, in other words formed from the abilities of each individual. Referring to the concept, the most substantial thing in education is to explore the individual potentials of each student.

For Iqbal, the most urgent educational goal is to strengthen the individuality of all people so that they can realize their own potential (Saiyidain, 1938, p. 13). Departing from the concept of Iqbal's individuality, every learning, both the method or curriculum, must refer to the potential of each student, not students who must be forced to follow a diverse curriculum. The concept of Iqbal's individuality will be very useful in facing the challenges of the present age.

Every educational strategy that will be applied in the face of the industrial revolution and the era of disruption, according to Bryan Edward Penprase, must consider the human condition, in this context the students. The latest technology always brings shifts and impacts on all people with various socioeconomic levels. It takes a deep understanding of the condition of each student. The way that can be taken to understand the diverse conditions of students is to foster intercultural understanding and uphold human rights. Such an approach must be supported by an interdisciplinary and global curriculum that can be applied by each student outside the classroom, so that what is prioritized is the development of various skills and interpersonal skills. This kind of skill will be very useful for students in facing the industrial revolution (Penprase, 2018, p. 219).

b. Development of Individuality

The development of individuality is a creative process in which human must play an active role. For Iqbal, every individual must not remain passive by merely adjusting to his environment. Everyone must be encouraged to develop their individuality. When everyone adapts to his environment, he will not have a critical attitude. Yet for Iqbal, if a community wants to stay alive in its strong cultural roots, there must be criticism of the traditions and values that develop in the community. And only in that way can they understand and maintain their identity (Saiyidain, 1938, p. 24-26). The spirit of individuality of students, according to Iqbal must be encouraged by the teacher. It is very important for teachers to build individual awareness of their students. A new personality of a student will be well formed if awakened by the teacher. It is this individuality that will bring up the students' creative goals.

The concept of individuality offered by Iqbal is closely related to the concept of *insan kamil* (superior human concepts). The theme of *insan kamil* is very dominant in *Rumuz-i Bikhudi*. For Iqbal, the individuality that reflects our human beings must work together with other individuals to realize the ideal life on earth. The lexical meaning of *Rumuz-i Bikhudi* itself is a symbol of self-negation. If individuality only lives in isolation, one time its energy will disappear (Saiyidain, 1938, p. 27-29). In other words, although Iqbal's philosophy of education emphasizes individuality, at a later stage these individuals must move collectively.

Developing individuality will have a direct impact on the development of society. The growth of individuals who are critical and have strong cultural roots, will give birth to a critical community and have strong cultural roots as well. From a strong society, the identity and culture of a nation will be maintained.

In Iqbal's view, a country's education system must reflect its culture. But it is unfortunate that lately many third world countries seem to have their roots in Western culture. The effect is that they neglect their noble history and culture, adopt Western systems of education rawly and forget their originality. Related to originality, Iqbal writes in the *Rumuz-i Bekhudi* (Saiyidain, 1938, p. 27-29):

What is originality of thought and action?

An urge to revolution.

What is originality of thought and action?

A renaissance of national life.

It is the source of life's miracle.

Transforming granite into the purest of pearls.

Iqbal explained that the originality of the thoughts and actions of a society must be encouraged by revolutionary steps. Only with original thought supported by the communal movement can a national revival arise. The revolution is always accompanied by an experimental step: breaking down the domain of knowledge that is already considered established and refusing to be intellectually regulated by the more dominant party (in this case: the Western world). For Iqbal, originality is the source of life's miracle. However, originality without revolutionary action will only be in vain, because it is the revolutionary action that will be able to turn granite into the purest pearl (*transforming granite into the purest of pearls*).

c. Spirituality, Creativity and Excellent Character

Iqbal's educational philosophy emphasizes the importance of spirituality. The spirituality referred to by Iqbal is not only related to the relationship between humans

and God, but also the relationship between humans and nature. This view has practical implications that education must have intellectual, moral, and aesthetic significance for nature. Education must have a stake in solving everyday problems, especially environmental problems. Educational methods and curricula must consider applications in the social sphere. These educational methods must also encourage the emergence of independent activities of students to be able to solve various problems of life (Saiyidain, 1938, p. 62-64).

Departing from Iqbal's views on the spirituality of education, it can be interpreted that intellectual groups should not place knowledge only as science, but science for practice, especially practices that have implications for social and environmental problems. In the intellectual sphere, for example, the spirituality of students can be built through a curriculum that not only focuses on the theoretical sphere, but also the practical sphere. Education is not only done in the classroom, but also outside the classroom. In the moral realm, the application of spirituality is not only related to rote learning, but also application, namely how students practice the moral values contained in learning. These values are also practiced in the aesthetic realm.

In addition to the spirituality side, the importance of creativity is also emphasized by Iqbal. According to Iqbal, one of the advantages of humans is their creativity. It is human creativity that makes humans able to survive and shape life in the universe. Humans become God's partners in creating changes in the universe, and human creativity will continue to grow and be unlimited (Saiyidain, 1938, p. 91-93).

Iqbal's thoughts about human creativity are very relevant in the context of life in the era of disruption. The era of disruption has several negative impacts on the creative landscape, which in certain scenarios, technology can limit and disrupt the means of creation (World Economic Forum, 2018, p. 4). But with its creativity, humans will be able to find solutions to solve various problems that arise. Creativity is one of the human capital to keep surviving in the face of radical changes in life. In the context of education, Iqbal's view of creativity can also be interpreted that education should be directed to ignite the emergence of student creativity. Every student must be supported to be able to show their creativity in accordance with their interests and abilities.

Iqbal's educational philosophy concept rejects uniformity of creativity. According to Iqbal, it is important for every educational institution to clearly map the potential of every student, so that the creativity that arises from each individual is something original. The originality of a student is closely related to his environment, so that a good environment will form a superior character. To ignite the originality and superior character, students must be kept away from fear, because fear can weaken a person's

superior character (Saiyidain, 1938, p. 126-129). That fear can be eliminated by emphasizing that failure is not a disgrace, and giving praise when the student successfully shows a result of his creativity.

CONCLUSION

The disruptive era brought threats and turmoil in social life. One way out to reduce the negative impact of the era of disruption is to prepare a generation that is able to adapt and think independently, through education. Muhammad Iqbal's educational philosophy emphasizes the character building of each student, such as individuality, collective awareness, spirituality, creativity, and superior character. With this capital, students will be ready to face the challenges of the times in their future lives.

With individuality, every student can explore their own potential. With collective awareness, each individual will be able to play his role in the life of society, which in this case is related to spirituality. Technology evolution also has the negative effects that changes the society become more materialistic. Spirituality will help students to find a balance of life. A person's spirituality will lead to the emergence of students' awareness that as an educated person, he must have intellectual, moral, and aesthetic significance for humans and nature. With his creativity, he will be able to survive and adapt to change. With these capitals, it is expected that superior human character can be relied upon in the face of an era of disruption filled with various shocks. Based on the explanation above, Iqbal's Islamic philosophy concept of education can save students from several negative impacts of the disruption era.

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