

## PROBLEMS OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN MODERN EDUCATION

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### ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

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**Background:** Modern man is a one-dimensional society (*one-dimensional man*); meaning that all sides of his life are only directed at one goal, namely the sustainability and improvement of the existing system, the system is none other than capitalism.

**Aim:** This paper tries to unravel the problems of learning activities in modern education in two perspectives, namely the psychological perspective and the philosophical perspective.

**Method:** This paper used qualitative research method.

**Findings:** Western learning theory has dominated and has a great influence in the realm of socio-cultural politics as well as in education. In influencing or dominating education from a psychological perspective, there are at least 4 views on learning theory.

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### KEYWORDS

*Problems; Learning activities; Modern education*

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## INTRODUCTION

Modern man is a one-dimensional society (*one-dimensional man*); meaning that all sides of his life are only directed at one goal, namely the sustainability and improvement of the existing system, the system is none other than capitalism. Engaging in this one goal means eliminating and suppressing other dimensions that are disapproving of and incompatible with the system. Modern society is repressive and totalitarian (Oppressive and comprehensive), such conditions pervade all areas of human life, both in the socio-economic, socio-political and socio-cultural areas and education (Sastrapratedja, 1983).

In fact, third world countries, including Indonesia, talkatively and without feeling shy, actually import and adopt the concept and education system developed in the West, an education system that only thinks about freedom without prioritizing responsibility and neglects efforts to strengthen moral and religious life (Al-Jamil, 1992).

Therefore, this paper tries to unravel the problems of learning activities in modern education in two perspectives, namely the psychological perspective and the philosophical perspective.

## METHOD

The researcher used qualitative method in conducting the research. The data were collected from various literature to generate the most plausible and contextual findings, along with discussion and conclusion.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Dominance of Western Learning Theory in Modern Education**

Western learning theory has dominated and has a great influence in the realm of socio-cultural politics as well as in education. In influencing or dominating education from a psychological perspective, there are at least 4 views on learning theory.

#### ***Behavioristic Theory***

*Behavioristic* is a study of human behavior (Hamalik, 2001). According to this flow view that learning is carried out with instrumental control of the environment. The teacher conditions such that students are learning or students want to learn. Thus, carried out by conditioning, habituation, imitation. Rewards and punishments are often offered in learning. The sovereignty of teachers in such learning is relatively high, while the sovereignty of students, on the other hand, is very low (Imran, 1996).

As it is known that learning according to the above understanding is an instrumental control that comes from the environment. Whether or not a person learns depends on the conditional factors provided by the environment. Therefore, this theory is also known as *conditioning* theory (Imran, 1996).

This learning theory proposed by psychologist behavioristic, they argue that human behavior is controlled by rewards or strengthening of the environment. Thus, learning behavior has a close relationship between *behavioral* reactions and the stimulus (Tadjab, 1994).

This theory is a theory that emphasizes the activities of the observed organism as manifested in the movement of body parts or in behavior. This behavioral theory asserts that in studying individuals what should be done is to test and observe their behavior and not observe the activities of the inside of their bodies (Nurani, 2001).

The theory of behavior was first developed by Pavlov, Watson, Gutri and Skinner. Within the *behavioristic* tradition there is a growing belief that development is an observable behavior that is learned through experience and the environment (Desmita, 2005).

#### ***Humanistic Theory***

This view that comes from humanistic psychology is the antithesis of the behavioristic view. According to this theory, learning can be done by students themselves. Thus, learning with this theory makes students always find out for themselves about something without much intervention from the teacher. The teacher's role in learning, namely teaching and learning, is relatively low. The sovereignty of students in learning is relatively high, thus making the sovereignty of teachers relatively low (Imran, 1996).

As previously mentioned, this learning theory is the *antithesis* of *behavioristic* learning theory. If in behavioristic learning is an instrumental control carried out by the environment, in the view of *humanistic* psychology, it is the opposite. That learning is done by giving maximum freedom to individuals (Imran, 1996).

*Humanistic* psychology believes that children are unique creatures, diverse, different from one another. The diversity that exists in children should be strengthened. Thus, an educator or teacher is not tasked with shaping children into human beings as desired, but strengthening the vision that already exists in the child himself. For this reason, an educator first helps children to understand themselves and does not impose their own understanding of students.

In the learning process, humanistic psychology says that if students get new information, the new information is personalized into them. It is wrong if educators assume that students will learn easily if teaching materials are neatly arranged and delivered well, because students themselves absorb and digest the lesson. The problem in learning is not how the teaching materials are delivered but how to help students pick the meanings and meanings contained in the teaching materials. If students can relate teaching materials to their lives, educators can be heartened because their mission has been successful (Suwarna, 2006).

This theoretical view reveals that learning is not just building cognitive qualities, but a process that occurs within the individual that involves all aspects of the existing domains, both cognitive, affective and psychomotor. The humanistic approach to learning is an emphasis on the importance of emotions, open communication, and the values that each student has for inductive thinking. This theory also emphasizes the experience factor and active student involvement in learning.

This theory gave birth to various theories that focus on the problem of how each individual is influenced and guided by personal intentions that they relate to their own experiences. According to this theory, educators are expected to assist in developing students' self to recognize themselves as unique human beings while at the same time assisting students in realizing their potential.

### ***Cognitive Theory***

This view of cognitive psychology is a convergence of behavioristic and *humanistic views*. Thus, in cognitive theory learning is a combination of personal effort with instrumental control that comes from the environment. Therefore, the suitable learning method in this view is experimentation. Which resulted that in the view of behavioristic psychology the responsibility of students in learning is low while the responsibility of teachers is high. On the other hand, in humanistic view, the teacher's responsibility is low, while the student's responsibility is high. Meanwhile, from a cognitive perspective, the responsibilities of teachers and students are both moderate (Suwarna, 2006).

According to cognitive psychology, learning is an attempt to understand something. Efforts to understand something is done actively by the learner. These activities can be in the form of seeking experience, seeking information, solving problems, observing the environment, practicing, ignoring and other responses to achieve goals. Cognitive psychologists believe that prior knowledge is crucial to learning outcomes: what must be learned, what is remembered and what is easily forgotten (Suwarna, 2006).

One of the learning theories derived from cognitive psychology is information processing theory. According to this theory, learning is seen as a process of processing information in the human brain. While the processing by the human brain itself begins with observing (sensing) the information that is in the human environment, storing, symbolizing/coding/encoding the stored information, and after forming an understanding, it is then issued again by the learner.

### ***Gestalt Psychology Theory***

In addition to the three views above, there is a view from *the Gestalt theory* that learning is a totality effort from the individual, because the totality is more meaningful than the parts. According to *gestalt* theory, learning consists of simple stimulus responses without repetition

of ideas or thought processes. So that every experience is always structured. Every response that a person gives to a *simultaneous* is not actually directed to a part but is directed to something complex (Suwarna, 2006).

This school holds that the whole is more than its parts, that humans are organisms that are actively trying to achieve goals, that individuals act on influences inside and outside the individual. If someone learns he gets insight (Imran, 1996). *Insight* is obtained when he sees a certain relationship between the various elements in the situation so that the relationship becomes clear to him and thus solves the problem (Nasution, 1995).

From a philosophical perspective, there are 4 things that become the background, why is the theory of learning in modern education more dominated by the west? First, if we learn about the history of the development of science, we can't help but look back at the development of science in the western world because they do have a scientific foundation that is more systematic and carefully documented than the eastern world. The development of science in the western world is rooted in the Greek tradition based on *Logos, Ethos*, and *Pathos* (Mustansir & Misnal, 2007).

Second, there has never been an era like the present, when humans are so aware of their power over reality. Science and technology are developing faster, *positivist-empirical* science has proven its prowess so that it forces developing countries in this case Islamic countries to take it as a new paradigm. Thomas Kuhn explains the concept of a paradigm, namely: that in a certain period, social science is dominated by a paradigm, then that paradigm declines, and is replaced by a new paradigm. That is why the development of social science, occurred in a revolution (Arifin, 2003).

Third, According to Whitehead on history, religion in modern times has lost its grip on the world. According to Whitehead, there was a major reason for the decline. The reason is the stagnation that befell religious life. This stagnation is revealed from the conservatism and defensive attitude of the clergy in the face of changes in society caused by the development of science and technology (Sudarminta, 1994).

Fourth, the influence of *Aufklärung* (Enlightenment) which requires humans to be freed from state/religious absolutism and expects freedom, especially economic freedom, to produce the greatest happiness (*Capitalism-Liberalism*) (Djumhur & Danasuparta, 1974).

### **Advantages and Disadvantages of Western Learning Theory**

Behavioristic theory has advantages and disadvantages, in terms of advantages this theory is very suitable and appropriate when applied when students are not active or lack material due to lack of reading. In addition, this theory is able to motivate students by providing rewards and punishments so that learning becomes active. If students' good behavior is rewarded, the behavior tends to be maintained and even improved, while students who make mistakes will get punishment from the teacher. so that students do not repeat their disgraceful actions. Meanwhile, the weakness of the behavioristic theory tends to be that students are not creative and unproductive. Because the most active is the teacher so that the creativity and activeness of students becomes low.

The humanistic theory in learning has the advantage of being able to make students active, creative, and productive so that in every learning the teacher functions as a facilitator and directs students so that students do not dissolve in preoccupation when they are wrong there is

the teacher in providing direction. While the weakness of the humanistic learning theory is that the teacher is only the umpteenth person because the teacher is no longer the only source of learning and in the end the teacher does not get his role as an educator.

Cognitive theory in learning, which is a combination of behavioristic and humanistic theories, has the advantage of being able to create balanced learning and activeness in the learning process, which ultimately makes the class active both between teachers and students so that learning is smooth and orderly. However, the weakness of this theory is that in getting results from the learning process, from the behavioristic theory, the teacher is active and makes students less than optimal, while the humanistic theory makes students more active than the teacher. there is no dominant teacher and student and finally the learning outcomes are also rather maximal, namely moderate.

*Gestalt* theory in learning has the advantage of being able to make learning outcomes more perfect and comprehensive, while the drawback of this learning theory is the level of understanding of the results that are complicated and less detailed in learning.

Viewed from a philosophical perspective, modern western learning theory has several advantages, namely:

- a) Having a strong logical positivist epistemological foundation, science is based on belief and intellectual certainty (scientific attitude) whose truth can be proven based on testable methods, estimates and thoughts. Truth is a never-ending process, not something that stagnates in a normative and dogmatic icy (Mustansir & Misnal, 2007).
- b) The influence of this epistemology and view of reality (metaphysics) has caused modern western civilization and culture to develop rapidly. So, in this case Roger Bacon said, "Knowledge is power " (Mustansir & Misnal, 2007).

Although western learning theory has been able to produce technology and science so rapidly, the implications for perspective, culture and thinking patterns that only justify the empirical reality greatly affect and determine the education system they develop, an education system that refers to the paradigm of liberalism. In this way, a generation that glorifies freedom is born, regardless of the ethical terrain, norms and religion. This means, the development of science and technology through the education system that is so rapid in the West, is also accompanied by the emergence of a generation that actually degrades its own human dignity (Dehumanization).

### **Application of Western Learning Theory in Religious Education**

It is better if we are critical synthesis, take the good critically among the methodologies offered by the west, but discard various thoughts that deviate from religious thought. Why is that?

Educational science is different from science and technology which is exact and definite, the science of education as human findings is relative, because human education depends on the system. The product of human character that will be produced depends on the system and the environment that forms it. So, the education and psychology science produced will certainly depend on how the system and the values adopted by the system are. In other words, we cannot simply adopt western educational and psychological theories.

Until now, there is still a strong assumption in the wider community that religion and science are two entities that cannot be reconciled. In other words, science does not care about religion and religion does not care about science. That is a picture of educational practice and scientific activities in the country today with various negative impacts caused and felt by the wider community. Therefore, inappropriate assumptions need to be corrected and straightened out (Barbour, 1996).

Religion in a broad sense is God's revelation, which regulates human relations with God, oneself, and the environment, both physical, social and cultural globally. This set of rules, general values and basic principles is what is actually called *Shari'a*. The holy book of the Qur'an which was revealed is a guide to ethics, morals, wisdom and can become the theology of science and the Grand Theory of Science. Wahyu never claims to be a science qua science as the secular sciences often claim.

### **Analysis of Problems and Alternative Solutions**

From a philosophical perspective, there are three fundamental problems of modern western theory, namely from the metaphysical, epistemological and ethical aspects. Metaphysical foundations are very important for an epistemological building. Because this foundation is very influential for the epistemological building, the classification system, and the methodology it uses. The doubt or rejection of many Western scientists towards the metaphysical world has led to the limitation of the scope of science to sensory objects or mere material substances (materialism – secularism). Science then only deals with *observable entities*. Science that is positivist-empirical eventually produces an ethical view that is free of value.

The best solution in this case according to Amin Abdullah is to use a Theanthropocentric - Integralistic approach (Abdullah, 2002). Theanthropocentrism is a view that recognizes the combination of two kinds of sources of knowledge, namely knowledge that comes from God and knowledge that comes from humans. Integralistic is a change in the resacralization movement, deprivatization of religion and the end is dedifferentiation (Unification and reconciliation). If differentiation requires separation between religion and other sectors of life, then dedifferentiation requires the reunification of religion with other sectors of life, including religion and science.

Religion provides a benchmark for the truth of knowledge (*Dharûriyyah*: Right, wrong), how knowledge is produced (*Hâjiyyah*: Good, bad), the goals of knowledge (*Tahsiniyyah*: benefit, harm). The dimension of axiology in the theology of science is important to underline, before humans go out to develop science. The rest is the human right to think about the internal dynamics of science. In addition to scientific ontology (Whatness), scientific epistemology (Howness), religion emphasizes the axiological dimension of science (Whyness).

Some of the examples below will provide an overview of the integralistic-style science along with the prototype of the integrative scientist it produces. An example can be taken from the science of Islamic Economics, where it is clear that there is a unifying practice between God's revelation and the findings of the human mind. There are BMI (Bank *Muamalat*), BNI Syariah Bank, agrobusiness, transportation, marine, and so on. Religion provides ethics in economic behavior including profit sharing (*Al-Mudharabah*), and cooperation (*Al-*

*Musyarakah*). There is a process of objectification of religious ethics into religious knowledge that can benefit people of all religions, non-religious, or even anti-religious.

## CONCLUSION

Western learning that has succeeded in developing science and technology turns out to leave a gaping hole, a hole that forgets human existence for humanity (Dehumanization). Human success in creating giant technologies has turned out to be a boomerang for human life itself. The technological giants created by humans seemed to turn around to hit their own creator, namely humans.

Therefore, efforts are needed to synergize science and religion, because religion tries to restore the noble values of science, so that science does not become a boomerang for human life. Religion will emphasize that science and technology are *instruments* in achieving prosperity, not goals.

With various modern human problems caused by the failure of western theory, now is the time to bring up an integral epistemological foundation that does not dichotomy between science and religion with theanthropocentric-integralistic epistemology.

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