



Reconstructing John Dewey's Educational Philosophy: Its Relevance to Democratic and Experiential Learning in Contemporary Education

Wardatul Jannah¹, Ahmad Syukri², Badarussyamsi³, Bobby Yasman Purnama⁴

¹ Mambaul Ulum Islamic Institute, Jambi

^{2,3,3} State Islamic University of Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi

Article Info

Article history:

Received 05-01-2025

Revised 25-04-2025

Accepted 21-05-2025

Keywords:

John Dewey; educational philosophy; democracy in education; experiential learning.

ABSTRACT (10 PT)

John Dewey remains one of the most influential figures in modern educational philosophy, particularly through his ideas on democracy, experiential learning, and the active role of learners in the educational process. Nevertheless, rapid developments in educational systems, digital learning environments, and increasingly complex social challenges require a renewed interpretation of Dewey's educational philosophy. This study aims to analyze the fundamental principles of John Dewey's educational thought and examine their relevance to contemporary educational practices. Employing a qualitative library research approach, this study critically analyzes Dewey's major works alongside relevant scholarly literature to construct a comprehensive understanding of his educational philosophy. The findings reveal that Dewey viewed education as a continuous process of reconstructing experience through active participation, reflective inquiry, and democratic interaction. He rejected traditional teacher-centered instruction that positions learners as passive recipients of knowledge and instead advocated learning through meaningful experiences, collaborative problem-solving, and critical thinking. The analysis further demonstrates that Dewey's educational philosophy remains highly relevant for addressing contemporary educational challenges, particularly in fostering student-centered learning, democratic school culture, creativity, and lifelong learning. This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on educational philosophy by providing a contextual reinterpretation of Dewey's ideas and highlighting their significance for developing more inclusive, participatory, and experience-based educational practices in the twenty-first century.

This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.



Corresponding Author:

Wardatul Jannah

Jl. Purwosari, Talang Bakung, Kec. Jambi Sel., Kota Jambi, Jambi 36138

Email: wardatuljannah816@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Education has continuously evolved in response to social transformation, scientific advancement, and changing human needs. In the twenty-first century, educational systems are expected not only to transmit knowledge but also to cultivate critical thinking, creativity,

collaboration, communication, and democratic citizenship. These expectations have become increasingly important as societies confront rapid technological development, globalization, cultural diversity, and the widespread integration of digital technologies into everyday life. Consequently, educational institutions are challenged to redesign learning environments that enable students to become active participants in constructing knowledge rather than passive recipients of information. This paradigm shift has encouraged scholars and educators to revisit classical educational philosophies that continue to offer meaningful insights into contemporary educational practice.

Despite significant innovations in educational technology and curriculum development, many educational systems continue to be dominated by conventional instructional practices. Teaching remains largely teacher-centered, emphasizing memorization, standardized assessment, and the transmission of predetermined knowledge. Such practices frequently limit students' opportunities to engage in inquiry, reflection, collaboration, and authentic problem-solving. As a result, learning often becomes disconnected from students' lived experiences and fails to develop the competencies required in contemporary society. This condition has stimulated renewed scholarly interest in educational philosophies that advocate active learning, democratic participation, and experiential knowledge construction.

Among the influential educational philosophers whose ideas remain highly relevant is John Dewey. Recognized as one of the foremost representatives of pragmatism and progressive education, Dewey fundamentally transformed the understanding of education by positioning learners as active agents in the learning process rather than passive recipients of knowledge. His educational philosophy emphasizes that learning should emerge through meaningful experiences, reflective inquiry, and continuous interaction between individuals and their social environment. For Dewey, education is not merely preparation for future life; rather, education is life itself, continuously reconstructed through experience and reflective action (Dewey, 1916).

Dewey's educational philosophy was developed as a critique of traditional educational practices that viewed students primarily as objects of instruction. He argued that educational institutions should function as democratic communities where learners actively participate in solving problems, expressing ideas, and collaborating with others. Knowledge, according to Dewey, is not transferred mechanically from teacher to student but is constructed through inquiry and practical engagement with real-life situations. This perspective gave rise to the well-known principle of *learning by doing*, which remains one of the most influential concepts in modern educational theory (Dewey, 1938).

The significance of Dewey's educational thought extends far beyond the historical context in which it emerged. Numerous contemporary educational reforms—including student-centered learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, problem-based learning, collaborative learning, and experiential learning—reflect principles that are closely aligned with Dewey's philosophy. Likewise, current discussions concerning democratic education, inclusive classrooms, and lifelong learning frequently draw upon Dewey's conception of education as a continuous process of human growth and social participation (Biesta, 2006; Gordon & English, 2016). These

developments indicate that Dewey's philosophy remains an important intellectual foundation for understanding contemporary educational transformation.

Recent educational research further demonstrates the continuing relevance of Dewey's ideas across diverse educational contexts. Studies have shown that experiential learning contributes significantly to students' critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities by encouraging direct engagement with authentic situations rather than passive reception of information. Similarly, democratic classroom practices have been associated with stronger student participation, improved collaborative skills, and greater social responsibility. These findings reinforce Dewey's central argument that education should integrate intellectual development with meaningful social experience rather than treating learning as an isolated cognitive activity (Ord, 2021; Biesta, 2022).

Furthermore, the rapid expansion of digital learning environments has generated new debates regarding the relevance of classical educational philosophy in technologically mediated classrooms. While digital technologies provide unprecedented access to information, they do not automatically foster meaningful learning experiences. Without appropriate pedagogical foundations, technology-based instruction may simply reproduce traditional teacher-centered practices in digital form. Consequently, many educational scholars argue that contemporary educational innovation should continue to be guided by philosophical principles emphasizing active participation, reflective inquiry, democratic interaction, and authentic experience—principles that have long been articulated in Dewey's educational philosophy (Biesta, 2022; OECD, 2023).

Within the Indonesian educational context, these issues are equally significant. Current educational reforms, including the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, emphasize learner autonomy, differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and the development of higher-order thinking skills. These policy directions reveal substantial conceptual similarities with Dewey's progressive educational philosophy, particularly regarding the importance of learning experiences, student agency, and democratic participation. Nevertheless, educational implementation often remains constrained by examination-oriented practices, limited classroom interaction, and instructional approaches that continue to prioritize content delivery over meaningful knowledge construction. This discrepancy suggests that Dewey's educational philosophy deserves renewed scholarly attention, not merely as a historical educational theory but as a conceptual framework capable of informing contemporary educational reform.

Recent scholarly discussions have increasingly revisited John Dewey's educational philosophy from multiple perspectives. Rather than treating Dewey merely as a historical figure in educational thought, contemporary researchers have explored the applicability of his ideas to various educational contexts, including democratic education, curriculum development, inclusive education, digital pedagogy, and experiential learning. This growing body of literature indicates that Dewey's philosophy continues to provide a valuable conceptual foundation for addressing educational challenges in the twenty-first century.

Several studies have highlighted Dewey's contribution to democratic education. Gordon and English (2016) argued that *Democracy and Education* remains one of the most influential philosophical works for understanding the relationship between education and democratic society. They emphasized that democratic education should not simply introduce political values but should create learning environments where students actively participate in collaborative inquiry, dialogue, and shared decision-making. Similarly, Biesta (2022) maintained that Dewey's conception of democracy should be understood as an educational practice that enables individuals to develop the capacity for responsible participation within diverse communities. These studies demonstrate that Dewey's philosophy extends beyond classroom instruction and offers a broader vision of education as a means of strengthening democratic life.

Other researchers have focused on Dewey's concept of experiential learning. Ord (2021) explained that learning through direct experience remains one of the most effective pedagogical approaches for promoting reflective thinking and authentic knowledge construction. Instead of viewing experience as a supplementary element of instruction, Dewey regarded experience as the central medium through which learners continuously reconstruct understanding. Likewise, contemporary studies on inquiry-based learning and project-based learning have consistently identified Dewey's philosophy as one of their principal theoretical foundations because both approaches encourage students to investigate real-world problems, collaborate with peers, and construct knowledge through active engagement rather than passive memorization.

Within the Indonesian context, studies concerning John Dewey have also increased over the last decade. Arianto (2020) examined the relevance of Dewey's progressive educational philosophy to educational development in Indonesia and concluded that democratic participation and learner-centered instruction remain highly applicable to national educational reform. Similarly, Arifin (2020) emphasized that Dewey's educational philosophy encourages educators to shift their instructional orientation from knowledge transmission toward facilitating students' intellectual and personal development. Research conducted by Muflikhah and Khobir (2023) further expanded this discussion by demonstrating that Dewey's philosophical principles provide a strong conceptual basis for inclusive education because they recognize individual diversity and emphasize equal learning opportunities for every student.

Although these studies have contributed significantly to understanding Dewey's educational philosophy, several limitations remain apparent. First, many previous studies primarily describe Dewey's philosophical concepts without critically reconstructing their interrelationships within the broader framework of contemporary educational transformation. Discussions frequently focus on isolated concepts such as pragmatism, progressive education, democracy, or experiential learning, while paying limited attention to how these principles collectively shape an integrated educational philosophy capable of responding to present educational challenges.

Second, previous studies generally position Dewey's philosophy within historical or theoretical discussions rather than examining its conceptual relevance to current educational reforms characterized by digital transformation, learner autonomy, collaborative knowledge

construction, and lifelong learning. As educational systems continue to evolve in response to technological innovation and increasingly complex social realities, there is a need for a more comprehensive interpretation of Dewey's educational philosophy that bridges classical educational thought with contemporary pedagogical developments.

Third, studies conducted in Indonesia tend to emphasize the compatibility of Dewey's ideas with national educational policies without sufficiently exploring the philosophical assumptions underlying these similarities. Consequently, Dewey's educational philosophy is often presented as a collection of educational principles rather than as a coherent philosophical framework that explains why democratic participation, reflective inquiry, experiential learning, and social interaction are inseparable dimensions of educational practice.

These limitations indicate the existence of a clear research gap. While numerous studies acknowledge the importance of John Dewey's educational philosophy, relatively few have attempted to reconstruct his educational thought as an integrated conceptual framework capable of explaining the philosophical foundations of contemporary learner-centered education. Moreover, limited attention has been given to synthesizing Dewey's principal educational ideas—including democracy, experience, reflective thinking, inquiry, and social participation—into a unified analytical framework that can be used to interpret current educational transformation.

Based on this gap, the present study offers a conceptual contribution by reconstructing John Dewey's educational philosophy through a comprehensive analysis of his major educational ideas and examining their relevance to contemporary educational practice. Rather than merely describing Dewey's thoughts, this study seeks to explain the internal coherence of his educational philosophy and demonstrate how its fundamental principles continue to provide meaningful guidance for addressing current educational issues. The novelty of this research therefore lies in its integrative reinterpretation of Dewey's educational philosophy, positioning his ideas not only as historical educational discourse but also as a dynamic philosophical framework that remains relevant for contemporary educational innovation.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the philosophical foundations of John Dewey's educational thought, reconstruct the relationships among its principal concepts, and examine their relevance to contemporary education. Through a qualitative library research approach, the study critically analyzes Dewey's major works alongside contemporary scholarly literature to develop a comprehensive understanding of his educational philosophy. It is expected that the findings will contribute to enriching educational philosophy discourse while providing a conceptual reference for educators, researchers, and policymakers seeking to strengthen democratic, participatory, and experience-based educational practices in the twenty-first century.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using the library research method to examine John Dewey's educational philosophy and its relevance to contemporary education. Library research was selected because the primary objective of this study was not to investigate empirical phenomena through field observation, but to critically analyze philosophical concepts,

theoretical arguments, and educational ideas presented in authoritative academic literature. This approach enables researchers to develop a comprehensive conceptual understanding by synthesizing diverse scholarly perspectives and interpreting educational theories within their broader philosophical context (Zed, 2018). The primary data sources consisted of John Dewey's major works that have significantly influenced the development of modern educational philosophy, including *Democracy and Education* (1916), *Experience and Education* (1938), and several other publications discussing pragmatism, progressive education, reflective thinking, and democratic learning. These classical works served as the principal references for identifying the fundamental principles of Dewey's educational philosophy.

To enrich the analysis and establish the contemporary relevance of Dewey's ideas, secondary data were obtained from peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, conference proceedings, and other academic publications discussing educational philosophy, experiential learning, democratic education, learner-centered pedagogy, and contemporary educational reform. Particular attention was given to recent publications published between 2020 and 2025 to ensure that the discussion reflects current developments in educational research while maintaining dialogue with Dewey's original philosophical framework.

Data collection was conducted through systematic literature identification, selection, documentation, and classification. Relevant literature was identified using academic databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, ERIC, and Crossref through keywords including *John Dewey*, *educational philosophy*, *progressive education*, *experiential learning*, *learning by doing*, *democratic education*, and *contemporary education*. The selected literature was subsequently screened based on its relevance to the research objectives, scholarly credibility, publication quality, and conceptual contribution to understanding Dewey's educational thought.

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis combined with an interpretative philosophical approach. The analytical process followed four interrelated stages. First, all selected literature was read repeatedly to obtain a comprehensive understanding of Dewey's educational philosophy. Second, relevant concepts, arguments, and educational principles were coded and categorized into major thematic units, including democracy, experience, reflective inquiry, learner-centered education, social interaction, and educational reconstruction. Third, these themes were interpreted by examining conceptual relationships among Dewey's educational ideas and comparing them with contemporary educational discourse. Finally, the findings were synthesized into an integrated conceptual framework explaining both the philosophical foundations of Dewey's educational thought and its relevance to current educational practices.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis, this study employed source triangulation by comparing Dewey's original writings with interpretations presented in contemporary scholarly literature. Conceptual consistency was also maintained through continuous cross-referencing among primary and secondary sources, enabling a balanced interpretation while minimizing subjective bias. Rather than merely describing previous literature, this study critically synthesized diverse scholarly perspectives to construct a coherent interpretation of Dewey's educational philosophy.

The overall analytical framework was guided by interpretative inquiry, emphasizing the exploration of meanings embedded within philosophical texts and their implications for educational theory and practice. Accordingly, this study does not simply reproduce Dewey's educational ideas but reconstructs their conceptual relationships to demonstrate their continuing relevance for contemporary learner-centered, democratic, and experience-based education.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

According to John Dewey, a leading pragmatist researcher, supporting physical objects is one of the most fundamental activities.⁸ It is useless because it is not based on sound metaphysical principles. Consequently, philosophical analysis must be thorough and critical. People feel movement and change, but they only feel it in their minds. Get medical attention immediately if you are sick. If you want to be amazed, look no further than the instrument (Wasitohadi, 2014). The results of the effort can be seen as successful or not affecting the outcome. Investigating anything can help you figure out what it really is. The physical, social, and moral sciences can all benefit from this approach.

According to John Dewey, education is a means to an end—the development of fundamental abilities, both intellectual and emotional, that can be applied to the betterment of all people. Therefore, educational theory serves as the foundation of the field (Toenlioe, 2014). Education, according to John Dewey, is more purposeful and significant for anything new when it involves the restructuring or reconstruction of one's life experiences and events. Some people do not believe the accusation against them, which is their defense. "More purposeful" refers to the accumulation of one's life experiences, from birth to death, as a means of learning how to accomplish anything. Classes can be held in a variety of settings, including classrooms, homes, gyms, sports arenas, and even playgrounds. When applied to reality, pragmatism is generally a good and correct concept. As far as realists are concerned, all ideas are fundamentally at odds with objective reality. All that really exists is whatever is new. Thus, he befriended Zeno, whom James considered evil. The pragmatist's view is that only ideas that can be put into practice have value. To realists, this is utter nonsense because every idea within an idea is at odds with some aspect of objective reality. You cannot change reality. Likewise, James claims that he bet that he could defeat Zeno, whom he sees as an evil person.

John Dewey Biography

American John Dewey is widely known as the father of pragmatism. In addition to his reputation as a philosopher, Dewey has made his own name as an educational researcher, social critic, and social critic. His date of birth was October 20, 1859, and his date of death was June 1, 1952, both in New York. After completing his degrees in philosophy and education at several universities, he became famous in both fields. During his career, Dewey wrote forty books and almost seven hundred articles. In 1952, everything changed for Dewey. Two years after passing the candidacy exam in 1879, he began teaching. However, when he calmed down, he was able to complete his Ph.D. in philosophy (1884). After completing his Ph.D., he became a professor of

philosophy at Michigan (1884–1889). He started classes in Minnesota in 1889. Although he returned to Michigan in the last year of 1889. His election as chief justice took place during this session. He joined the faculty at Michigan as an assistant professor and later became a professor after completing his degree. He stayed at the Michigan School of Education until 1894 to complete his degree. In 1894, John Dewey reached the University of Chicago. From 1894 to 1904, he was the dean of the philosophy department during that time. He was also responsible for the education branch in addition to the religion department. He formulated his pedagogical stance while in Chicago (Soejono, 2000). The Laboratory School, now called the Dewey School, was also founded by him at the same time. In his role as a school, he conducted experiments to verify hypotheses. He challenged the educational status quo, which had long focused on testing students' memorization abilities (Mualifah, 2013; Supriatna, 2021). After this, he encouraged women to be more open and creative in various problem-solving efforts. During his 10 years in Chicago, he worked hard to apply his pedagogical theories and train others to do the same. He was an instructor from 1904 to 1931 at Columbia University, New York. When he died in 1952, he was 93 years old. In the book "Philosophy of Science" by Sudarsono it is stated that:

“John Dewey was born in Burlington in 1859. After completing his studies in Baltimore, he became a leading faculty member at the University of Chicago from 1895 to 1904 and then at Columbia University from 1904 to 1921.”(Junaidi, 2016)

He eventually moved to the East Coast after being expelled from the University for his disagreements with the administration. The American Psychological Association removed Dewey from his post in 1899. As professor emeritus at Columbia University and Teachers College, he began his tenure in 1904 and remained until 1930. 5 The American Philosophical Association elected him president in 1905. He had been an active member of the USTF for many years. Deans of the New School were James Harvey Robinson, Thorstein Veblen (an economist), Charles A. Beard, and John Dewey. Perhaps Dewey's most influential work was "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), in which he criticized long-standing assumptions and practices in psychology.

Dewey's life has influenced many people in the United States. His literary and artistic works also contributed significantly to this influence. Psychology, published in 1891, was his first book. In 1891, the book *Outlines of a Critique Theory of Ethics* was published. Four years later, in 1894, *The Study of Ethics: A Syllabus* was published again. While a professor at the University of Chicago, he published works such as: *My Pedagogic Creed* (1897), *The School and Society* (1903), *Logical Conditions of a Scientific Treatment of Morality* (1903). While at Columbia University, he wrote a number of books, including: *Ethics* (1908), *How We Think* (1910), *The Influence of Darwin and Other Essays in Contemporary Thought* (1910), *School of Tomorrow* (1915), *Democracy and Education* (1916), *Essays in Experimental Logic* (1916), *Reunstruction in Philosophy* (1920), *Human Nature and Conduct* (1922), *Experience and Nature* (1925), *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *Art as Experience* (1934), *A Common Faith* (1934), *Experience and Education* (1938), *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), *Theory of Valuation* (1939), *Education Today* (1940), *Problems of Men* (1946), *Knowing and The Known* (1949).

Analysis of John Dewey's Philosophical Views

John Dewey's ideology for parents was pragmatism (Junaidi, 2016). He believed that the essence of philosophy was to give people something to hold on to as they did things. This meant that experience, not unproven theoretical assumptions, should be the basis of the foundation. Assessing and planning projects with a critical eye is the next step in laying the foundation. In the process of engaging in their work, philosophers must strive to become more human. Thus, the principles and values of the system inform the building of the foundation. The family must be deeply rooted in the "experience" within it, then rest from it, and then return to it. This encounter is the foundation of this instrumentalist framework.

In the School of Chemistry at the University of Chicago, John Dewey built his apparatus. Here, Dewey transformed the classroom into a learning community that used real-world events to impart wisdom to students. Students could work in groups and hone their collaborative skills in this lab. Reflections on the key events surrounding Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution (1809–1882) by John Dewey. Life on Earth is an ongoing process that begins at the most basic level and continues to improve. It is full of movement, not stillness. Each of us grows and changes. It is clear from this quote that John Dewey was using the theory of evolution. The power of education to shape a person's education was a realization for him. John Dewey's view of humanity as a whole. Humans are social and unique (Arifin, 2020). As social beings, we act in response to the world around us. The quality of a person's living space can affect their health for both good and bad. John Dewey reasoned that, in order for a person's living environment to have a positive impact on a person's life trajectory, that environment must be well organized.

Reflections on the key events surrounding Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution (1809–1882) by John Dewey. Life on Earth is a continuous process that begins at the most basic level and continues to improve. It is full of movement, not stillness. Each of us grows and changes. It is clear from this quote that John Dewey used the theory of evolution. The power to shape one's education is something he understood (Mualifah, 2013).

John Dewey's view of humanity as a whole. Humans are social and unique. As social beings, we act in response to the world around us. The way a person lives can greatly affect their health, for better or worse. Consequently, according to John Dewey, a well-regulated human environment is necessary in order to have a positive impact on the course of human life.

However, humans also exist as distinct entities. One person's natural talents and abilities differ from another person's. This is due to the fact that, ultimately, it makes no difference whether two people are born into identical environments; what matters is that they share the same experiences and talents. Why? Because each of us has the capacity to develop specific skills (Muflikhah & Khobir, 2023). Consequently, human activity influences and is influenced by the state of a particular environment. This leads John Dewey to conclude that, ultimately, it is people who make their lives worthwhile. Just as each person's innate nature is different, each person's code structure is also unique. The foundation of these drives is changeable, rather than fixed or built. Their ability to adapt to their environment is compromised (Dewey, 2003). Dewey argued that this capacity is inherent in human nature or psychological makeup and is developed in

response to one's immediate social environment. This is because when a person's behavior reflects their environment, "biases" arise. They are able to adjust these biases to their environment. The previous discussion clearly shows that there are two things that influence human development: first, internal variables such as a person's abilities, and second, external influences such as the conditions of their community. Here John Dewey explains why a well-organized society is essential to the nurturing of human potential and the development of human skills.

Analysis of John Dewey's Views on Education

Philosophy, according to John Dewey, should be the basis for human endeavor, not based on unproven theoretical assumptions, but on real experience. Critically assessing and planning projects are important steps in building a solid educational foundation. For Dewey, the essence of philosophy is to help humans become more human (Arifin, 2020). Therefore, the principles and values of the educational system must be based on experience as the main foundation. This experience serves as the basic framework for Dewey's instrumentalist approach.

In the context of education, John Dewey emphasized that the most effective learning is done through direct experience and experimentation. Education, he said, should be more than just a means to acquire knowledge. Education should also help individuals develop stronger beliefs and a more stable way of life. The ideal learning process includes active participation in activities that involve open discussion about the interests and welfare of students.

Dewey criticized the traditional educational model that tends to treat students as objects rather than subjects of learning. He rejected the notion that education only relies on external factors, such as classroom instruction, subject matter, or the physical environment. This old model often views schools as places where students only hear and receive instructions, without direct connection to real life. Such an approach, Dewey argued, fails to recognize that each child is a unique individual capable of reaching his or her full potential in a dynamic environment that offers meaningful experiences (Akbar, 2015). Dewey advocated a democratic method of education, in which each student is responsible for developing the inspiring values that guide their social interactions. In his view, the primary purpose of education is to encourage and foster the growth of democratic ideals, making education a tool for creating a more inclusive and just society.

The evidence is in the data gathered through reflective thinking, a method of thinking that begins with an issue to be investigated. Reality is important to the believer, and John Dewey argued this in the following ways: *First*, collecting all the data thoroughly and evaluating its signals. Logic and objectivity are required throughout the inquiry process. *Second*, the tests suggested and how quickly they are administered. The act of conveying important information and emotional competence to individuals and the wider community is what John Dewey meant when he spoke of education.

To better understand humanity's ongoing struggle to adapt its guiding traditions to new scientific discoveries and political ideologies that challenge the status quo, one can turn to philosophy. The process by which a culture can combine its old and new ways of life is best exemplified by its philosophical traditions (Saifullah, 2013). To enhance both, education is

necessary. The progressive school of thought divides education into two distinct areas: psychological and sociological.

The ability to identify the root causes or characteristics that determine a child's developmental delays is essential for educators, according to sociological theory. American psychology draws on pragmatism and behaviorism, two schools of thought within the discipline. Based on the sociological concept, it is important for students to be aware of which rules can be ignored. John Dewey argued that this pedagogical concept, which serves a social purpose, must be based on social life. Thus, schools are social groupings, and education is a social activity.

Doing and experimenting should be the essence of learning, John Dewey said. Every person should be courageous, curious, and energetic. Education should be reimagined as a continuous journey that fosters intellectual growth and sustains the spark of life, not simply a stepping stone to adulthood. To achieve social efficiency, education must empower individuals to engage in activities that benefit society as a whole.

John Dewey challenged the status quo in education, the objectification of students (Dewey, 2024). He strongly opposed the conventional wisdom that schools should be lecture halls, disconnected from the real lives of students, because that is how traditional education viewed them. This perspective held that educational resources (such as professors, textbooks, and physical buildings) should take precedence over students.

The traditional wisdom about the learning and development of children with disabilities is fundamentally flawed because it ignores the fact that children are distinct individuals who absorb knowledge from their environment and develop to their full potential. Consequently, we need a democratic education system. The concepts that will govern our common life are open to all adult learners. Education as a scientific field is inherently tied to philosophical questions, such as the role of schools in promoting and developing a democratic worldview. Through education, people are able to develop new habits and unlearn old ones (Ersanda, 2022). Furthermore, schools are where the relationship between doing and thinking, between experimenting and reflecting, is first revealed. As a byproduct of introspection, moral development is another area that education can help students achieve.

John Dewey argued for intellectual autonomy. Education is essential for the revitalization and transformation of society (Feinberg & Torres, 2001). You can grow into a braver and more intelligent person by investing in your education. In addition, it is essential for students to know and respect basic human rights and duties. In this democratic educational culture, all students are encouraged and given the opportunity to actively engage in decision-making, designing activities, and completing them.

The pursuit of knowledge or learning is an ongoing process. The struggle for theory development continues in the realm of thought and experimentation. The curriculum system, he said, is flawed because it prioritizes decisions made at the top rather than addressing problems at the ground level. With a more realistic view, Dewey opposed classroom practices that prioritized teachers over students (Wulandari, 2020). Physical abuse and brainwashing would end the possibility of human choice in schools.

While teaching and researching education, Dewey put his beliefs into practice. As a result, he abandoned traditional teaching approaches, which he believed were based entirely on memorization and listening comprehension. Furthermore, he argued that engaging in meaningful classroom discussions and problem solving requires student involvement and creativity. This provides a framework for understanding John Dewey's educational views, including participatory and progressive pedagogy.

The "participatory education" approach to the classroom is one that actively seeks and accepts student input. Students must be actively involved in their own education. Simply having children listen, follow, obey, and imitate the teacher is not enough. Instead, once students understand the basics, they are motivated to express their views on the topic and work together to overcome obstacles. Because of this shift, the role of the teacher becomes more of a facilitator, responsible for guiding students to master the material. Students must be able to think creatively, develop their skills, and have emotional intelligence (Mualifah, 2013). The participatory education paradigm brings to the fore the concept of learning through problem solving and practical application. Along with theoretical knowledge, one must be directed toward practical life applications throughout their educational journey. To be successful in the corporate world, students pursuing a degree in accounting, for example, need to study accounting theory and practice.

Democracy, pluralism, and student agency form the foundation of the participatory learning paradigm. In this view, educators have a more facilitative role, allowing students to share ideas, collaborate, and express themselves (Arianto, 2020). As they learn, students are often left to fend for themselves. So the next step is for children to figure out how to solve their own difficulties. John Dewey argued that progressive education must begin with the premise that humans are social creatures whose strength lies in their ability to adapt and thrive in authentic contexts (Hansen, 2012).

Education, in the progressive ideology view, must be centered on the needs of each individual child (Gordon & English, 2016). Rather than focusing on children, Baba focuses on students who are better than others—those with exceptional reason and intelligence. Students' academic achievement and personal growth should be enhanced as a result of their educational experiences. From a progressive perspective, as a social and psychological component of the educational process. Sociological studies have shown that in order for parents to help their children reach their full potential, they must first be aware of what potential is present. In contrast, when looking at the US from a psychological perspective, we can observe influential conditions, such as behaviorism and pragmatism.

In order for students to demonstrate their own learning in progressive education, active learning, often called "learning by doing," is essential. When learning, children use an active and methodical approach. The humanistic view of humans as social beings endowed with an innate capacity to develop and grow must be the basis of educational practice. The foundation of progressive education is practice that puts children and communities first.

CONCLUSION

Philosophy should be the foundation of all human endeavors, grounded in real experience, not merely in unproven theoretical assumptions. With a critical eye, projects can be more thoroughly assessed and planned, laying a solid foundation for action. The essence of philosophy is to help philosophers become more human, with principles and values playing a vital role in building that foundation. In the context of the family, this foundation should be “experience,” which allows the individual to learn from it before returning to the process of reflection. This encounter with experience forms the basis of an instrumentalist framework.

Examining John Dewey’s principles of education, he emphasized that learning is most effective through direct experience and experimentation. Dewey believed that individuals should be active, courageous, and curious. Therefore, education needs to be transformed from simply a means of acquiring knowledge to a process that helps one develop solid beliefs and a more stable life. Participation in activities is seen as a continuation of the education that comes from open discussion of the individual’s interests and well-being.

Dewey’s main criticism of the traditional model of education is its treatment of students as objects rather than subjects of learning. He rejected the conventional view that prioritizes external factors such as classroom instruction, subject matter, and physical location. In the traditional approach, schools are only a place for students to listen, receive instructions, and are separated from real experiences. Dewey argued that this approach ignores the uniqueness of children as individuals who have the potential to develop optimally in a dynamic and meaningful environment. Therefore, he implemented the application of democratic educational methods. In this method, each student is responsible for developing inspiring values that will guide their social interactions. Education, according to Dewey, aims to support and foster democratic ideals through the growth of values and experiences.

REFERENCES

- Akbar, T. S. (2015). Manusia Dan Pendidikan Menurut Pemikiran Ibn Khaldun Dan John Dewey. *Jurnal Ilmiah Didaktika*, 15(2), 222–243.
- Anwar, M. (2015). *Filsafat pendidikan*. Kencana.
- Arianto, D. (2020). Relevansi Pemikiran John Dewey Pada Pendidikan Di Indoensia. *Tarbiyatul Misbah (Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan)*, 13(2 Desember), 322–330.
- Arifin, N. (2020). Pemikiran Pendidikan John Dewey. *As-Syar’i: Jurnal Bimbingan & Konseling Keluarga*, 2(2), 168–183.
- Dewey, J. (2003). *Democracy and Education*, p. 383, edisi Muzayyin Arifin, Filsafat Pendidikan Islam. Bandung: Pustaka Setia.
- Dewey, J. (2024). *Democracy and education*. Columbia University Press.
- Ersanda, P. A. (2022). Eksistensi Pemikiran John Dewey Dalam Pendidikan Di Indonesia. *Sindang: Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah Dan Kajian Sejarah*, 4(2), 134–140.
- Feinberg, W., & Torres, C. A. (2001). *Democracy and education: John Dewey and Paulo Freire. Education and Society*, 59.
- Gordon, M., & English, A. R. (2016). John Dewey’s democracy and education in an era of globalization. In *Educational Philosophy and Theory* (Vol. 48, Issue 10, pp. 977–980). Taylor & Francis.

- Hansen, D. T. (2012). *John Dewey and our educational prospect: A critical engagement with Dewey's democracy and education*. State University of New York Press.
- Junaidi, M. (2016). Pragmatisme. *Dar El-Ilmi: Jurnal Studi Keagamaan, Pendidikan Dan Humaniora*, 3(1), 37–51.
- Mualifah, I. (2013). Progresivisme John Dewey dan Pendidikan Partisipatif Perspektif Pendidikan Islam. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Jl. A. Yani 117 Surabaya*, 1(1), 101–121.
- Muflikhah, I. K., & Khobir, A. (2023). Paradigma Filsafat John Dewey dalam Pendidikan Inklusi. *PUSTAKA: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Pendidikan*, 3(4), 272–281.
- Saifullah, I. (2013). *Kurikulum dan Perubahan Sosial: Analisis-Sintesis Konseptual Atas Pemikiran Ibnu Khaldun dan John Dewey*. Naskah Aceh & Ar-Raniry Press.
- Soejono, A. (2000). Aliran baru dalam pendidikan. In (*No Title*). CV. Ilmu.
- Supriatna, U. (2021). Manajemen pendidikan dalam konstelasi progresivisme (Telaah filsafat pendidikan john dewey). *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama*, 13(2), 337–348.
- Toenlio, A. J. E. (2014). *Teori dan Filsafat pendidikan*. Penerbit gunung samudera [grup penerbit pt book mart indonesia].
- Wasitohadi, W. (2014). Hakekat Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif John Dewey Tinjauan Teoritis. *Satya Widya*, 30(1), 49–61.
- Wulandari, T. (2020). *Teori progresivisme John Dewey dan pendidikan partisipatif dalam pendidikan islam*.