

Pragmatism-Philosophy of John Dewey's Education: Role and Position in Learning Information Literacy (Study in Educational Psychology)

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Abstract. As more information come to individuals in various formats and are not filtered, thus its authenticity and truth are questionable, demanding individuals to have adequate information literacy capabilities. Teaching information literacy can equip students with anti-plagiarism attitudes and encourage personal formation as superior learners. Pragmatism encourages learning information literacy by using experiences as a way to deal with new things both in personal and community life. The teacher directs the students' learning experience without confusing their interests and needs. However, pragmatism can be seen as a dangerous threat because it never considers the substance behind reality but tends to be at the level of practical science to solve problems faced by human beings. Indonesia, as a multicultural country, needs to develop information literacy learning based on a more democratic educational philosophy.

Keywords: *pragmatism, learning, information literacy.*

INTRODUCTION

Literacy is an individual's ability to use all the potential and skills possessed in his life. In terminology, information literacy is not an easy term to use; some say it is too library-oriented [1], [2]. For Indonesia, the term is translated into information literacy. The problem is the term literate is sometimes translated into literacy, and some say it as literacy. The term information literacy was

first coined by the Information Industry Association president Paul Zurkowsky, who stated information literates were people trained in the application of resources to their work [3].

The information literacy competency standards [4] include: (1) Students are able to determine the type and nature of the information needed. (2) Students are able to access information needed effectively and efficiently. (3) Students are able to critically evaluate information and sources and make selected information based on knowledge. (4) Students are able to use and communicate information effectively and efficiently, and (5) Students are able to understand economic, legal, and social issues around the use and access of information ethically and legally.

The aforementioned phenomenon impacts more and more diverse information coming to individuals in an unfiltered format, questioning its authenticity, validity, and reliability. In addition, information is available through various forms, including graphics, aural, and textual, which becomes a new challenge for individuals in evaluating and understanding it. Erratic quality and expanding the quantity of information pose a huge challenge to society. The diversity and breadth of information will not automatically create more informed citizens without being

equipped with the ability to use information effectively [5]–[8]. Information literacy skills will involve all the complex skills needed by a person to function effectively in various disciplines at university [9], [10].

To dissect education through philosophy, it is necessary to use philosophical postulate instruments, namely: (1) ontological related to the nature of reality and existence; (2) epistemology which deals with the nature of knowledge and is closely related to teaching and learning methods; and (3) Axiology related to values. Axiology is divided into ethics and aesthetics.

BASIC ONTOLOGY INFORMATION LITERACY

The ability of information literacy among students needs to be developed, both by the students themselves and by the instructor. Students with high information literacy skills will easily understand the context of information or material in the classroom; this will certainly be an input of new knowledge obtained by students accurately. Whereas for instructors, students with high information literacy skills are believed to be able to obtain instructional goals that have been previously designed (McWilliams & Allan, 2014). By having a capable information literacy ability, students will: (1) be able to determine the nature and extent of the information needed, (2) be capable of determining the information needed effectively and efficiently, (3) be able to evaluate the information and sources critically and include the information chosen into the knowledge base and value system, (4) be able to use information effectively to achieve certain objectives, and (5) understand many economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally [4], [12].

Ontologically, according to the flow of pragmatism, the reality is the interaction of individuals with the environment or experience. The interaction always changes. The reality arises because of the relationship between individuals or humans with the environment around them. Besides, reality

can also be caused by the experiences experienced by each individual.

Findings from the Program for International Student Assessment [13] show that students' scientific literacy in Indonesia is still low, proven by Indonesia's position at the bottom of 65 countries. In the same study, it was shown that Indonesia ranks 57th out of 65 countries in the reading interest category. Data from UNESCO (2006) states that Indonesia's reading position is 0.001% - meaning that of 1,000 people, there is only one person who has an interest in reading. Survey facts about the low literacy culture in Indonesia [13], [14]. Even the low level of information literacy is the cause of the spread of hoax news [15], [16]. So that the ability of information literacy in the media becomes a relevant need to be immediately carried out to develop the empowerment of netizens in responding to the spread of hate messages in the online realm, especially through social media [17]. Other research also found that there was an effective increase in the academic scores of students after they were given an information literacy strengthening program [18].

The descriptions above confirm that the ability of information literacy among students becomes important in the context of learning. Teaching information literacy equips students with anti-plagiarism attitudes and encourages personal formation as an independent learner and prepares someone to be a producer of information or knowledge (knowledge producer) based on ethical and scientific principles [19]–[21].

BASIC EPISTEMOLOGICAL INFORMATION LITERACY

The students' ability of information literacy is not only influenced by the level of the students' intelligence but also their ability to manage how to learn well and efficiently. Individuals make causal attributions to create their successes and failures, thus developing a sense or desire to improve their ability to overcome the challenges of information literacy in the future is essential [22].

Individuals must be able to maintain/save basic information to learn new material and apply concepts for problem-solving and deeper scientific research [23]. To do this, students must use a variety of independent learning strategies. Given the various kinds of motivational constructs and learning strategies in one study can help to predict success better. This allows them to memorize information and relate new and previously learned material [24]–[26].

In addition to the internal dimensions of learners, mastery of information literacy skills also involves things outside the individual. The involvement of individuals in the learning class will certainly color the attitudes or behaviors of students in implementing and completing their studies. When the classroom atmosphere tends to be positive/conducive, students will display better academic behavior. Individuals will be influenced to be positive, motivated, more curious in learning, and challenged in learning the material [27], [28]. This shows that the culture or class culture that occurs will have an impact on students' academic behavior.

The cultural aspects of the classroom are reflected through, for instance, curriculum, school policies, teaching methods, and student-teacher communication patterns. This aspect will build students' cognitive skills integrated with learning behavior in relation to their information literacy abilities [29], [30]. The students' ability in information literacy will be colored by the classroom situation in which it is located. Learning settings in the classroom affect how students develop the patterns of understanding, the patterns of seeking, and the patterns of obtaining information to obtain knowledge [31].

According to pragmatism, the results of knowledge from individual experience are carried out by scientific methods. Each individual's experience is investigated for its existence by scientific methods. The reality in the view of pragmatism is a reality that is not fixed and constantly changing. Changes in reality also require changes in the understanding of reality. If reality changes

continuously, then what is needed is a transformation in understanding reality. The transformation appears in the epistemological approach according to pragmatism. Epistemology involves individuals, organisms, and the environment. Individuals interact with the environment to live, grow, and develop. This interaction can change the environment or even change individuals. Knowledge is a transaction between individuals as learners with their environment. The basis for this interaction is the concept of change. Each interaction may have some general aspects or experiences that can be transferred for subsequent interactions. So, individuals will change and so will the transactions. The truth for pragmatism is when a concept works and is able to be used to solve problems.

AXIOLOGICAL BASIS FOR INFORMATION LITERACY

The usefulness of information literacy is not only necessary as an autonomous science but is also needed to provide the best possible basis for broad education as a civilized civilizing process. Therefore the value of information literacy is comprehensive as a competency to examine the basics of the possibility of acting in practice through controlling negative influences and increasing positive influences in education.

According to the flow of pragmatism, value refers to a condition. The situation is the condition obtained from the interaction of individuals with the environment or experience. Good experience or interaction will lead to good values. Since the reality in the metaphysical approach of pragmatism is a reality which is not fixed but continues to change, the values that follow will continue to change. The concept of value in the view of pragmatism is situational, depending on the situation and environment. Value is relative to time, place, and circumstances. Relating to old values that have been maintained and are no longer sufficient, it is necessary to retest the underlying assumptions.

Pragmatism is an attitude of method and philosophy that uses the practical consequences of thought and belief as a measure of truth, including in the field of education [32], [33]. Our experience goes on and everything we think is right in the development of that experience is always changing, because in practice, what we think is right can be corrected by subsequent experiences.

Mastery in information literacy will make an individual as someone who is able to determine the type and nature of information needed. Individuals are able to access information needed effectively and efficiently, are able to critically evaluate information and sources and make selected information on the basis of knowledge, are able to use and communicate information effectively and efficiently and are able to understand economic, legal, and social issues around their use and accessing information ethically and legally.

IMPLICATIONS OF PRAGMATISM ON LEARNING INFORMATION LITERACY

The application of the philosophy of pragmatism in learning basically is trying to emphasize on methods and positions rather than systematic philosophical doctrines that investigate experimentation used in all fields of human experiences, one of which is in education. The philosophy of pragmatism in education is critical of previous philosophical systems. Like the forms of flow materialism, idealism, and realism. In the philosophy of pragmatism, education must teach learners how to think and adjust to changes in society. Someone who wants to create their future, he must make the truth because the future is not something that is entirely determined by the past. An action will have meaning if there are practical consequences or tangible results which benefit human life. The past and the future are something that has and hasn't happened. Meanwhile, the present is a fact, so face the present reality with great struggle.

Philosophy and education are two phases in one business. Philosophy is to think about

and consider better values and ideals, while education is an effort to realize those values and ideals in life and human personality. To educate is to realize the values that philosophy has contributed, starting from the younger generation to guide people to develop values in their personalities, and institutionalize them in their lives.

The philosophy of pragmatism education argues that children learn more and faster when teachers encourage their natural curiosity, not make them rigid and disciplined subjects by traditionally giving punishment as in past education [34]. Therefore, pragmatism uses various games as learning tools. From there, he formed a more modern educational methodology. In his observations, he found that the way children learn many things is the same as adults; the only difference is the information they need to solve problems based on their perspectives. Therefore, according to him, education is not an end in itself but will be meaningful in the context of solving problems. Teachers in the educational perspective of pragmatism are not teachers who are fixated on the textbook but teachers who are required to be creative. Teachers must learn to maintain that students enjoy learning by seeing the world from the children's point of view and adults' point of view [35].

It is clearly seen that the flow of pragmatism in education presents another nuance for the world of education that is commonly known. Pragmatism positions students as a very important party and must be understood properly and correctly. With a good and correct understanding of the students' needs, it is expected that students can enjoy the education system applied to them.

The implications of pragmatism in learning information literacy are as follows: The purpose of learning is to use experiences as a means of solving new things in both personal and community life. The pragmatist believes that education must teach someone about how to think and adjust to changes in society. The curriculum is designed using experience that has been tested but can be changed if needed.

Education focuses on the good life of the present and the future. Pragmatism education curriculum contains proven experiences, which are in accordance with students' interests and needs. Learning methods prioritize the use of problem-solving methods as well as methods of inquiry and discovery [36]–[38]. In practice (teaching), this method requires a teacher who has an opportunity, friendly, a mentor, open-minded, enthusiastic, creative, socially conscious, ready to be alert, patient, cooperative, and serious so that the learning based on experience can be applied to students and what they aspire to achieve. The teacher's function is to direct the students' learning experience without interfering in their interests and needs. In learning, the role of a teacher is not "pouring" his knowledge into students. Everything learned by students must be in accordance with their personal needs, interests, and problems. Pragmatism requires students to face problems by reconstructing the environment to find solutions they needs [39].

CONCLUSION

The concept of pragmatism was originally put forward by Charles Sandre Peirce in 1839. In that concept, he stated that something could affect if it contains practical results. On another occasion, he also stated that pragmatism is basically not a philosophy, not metaphysics, and not a theory of truth, but rather a technique to help humans solving problems [37], [40], [41]. From those statements, it seems that Pierce wants to emphasize that pragmatism is not a theoretical science learned to do philosophy and to seek truth, not a metaphysical since it never thinks of the nature behind reality, but the concept of pragmatism which tends to be at the level of practical science to help solving problems faced by humans.

Reviewed in "Meaning, scope & functions of philosophy of education" (2016), it seems that Pierce's way of thinking is nothing more than a desire to realize pragmatism as a science that orientates itself to the practical meaning of the consequences caused by an

action. If it does not cause practical consequences, then there is no meaning in it. Therefore, a motto emerges, "What does not make a difference does not contain meaning." What was most destructive in their philosophy? A view that there is no general moral law, there is no general truth, and all truth is not final. It results in subjectivity, individualism, and these two are enough to shake life, threaten humanity, and even humanity itself.

The philosophy of pragmatism has become a kind of spirit that nourishes the body of ideas in the ideology of capitalism, in which the West has spread it out throughout the world through colonialism. In this context, Pragmatism can be seen as dangerous because it has taught the two sides of the same error to the world - namely the standard of truth of thought and the standard of human action. For this reason, those responsible for humanity cannot avoid the noble, challenging task of taming the danger of Pragmatism by studying and criticizing it, as a strategic foundation for the deconstruction of Pragmatism. Indonesia, as a multicultural country, must develop a democratic philosophy of education. Strategies to develop such an educational philosophy can be based on a synthesis which combines global progressive education and the value of Indonesia's modern local style [43].

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