



# Dehumanization of Education in Indonesia

Danu Eko Agustinova<sup>(✉)</sup>, Hieronymus Purwanta, Sariyatun, and Leo Agung Sutimin

Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta, Indonesia

danu\_eko@uny.ac.id, {hpurwanta, sariyatun,

leoagung}@staff.uns.ac.id

**Abstract.** Education dehumanization occurs when the implementation of education has obscured human values. National education at this time also does not reflect the face of humanist education following the mandate of the 1945 Constitution. The practice of providing education in Indonesia starts from a policy pattern that does not focus on the essence of education to the educational process which has not been able to realize the true nature of education, namely humanizing humans. This dehumanization occurs when education only emphasizes the cognitive aspect, standardization of education that limits creativity and potential development of students. The educational goals are dwarfed to fulfill the needs of the industrial economy. Education should be able to touch intellectual and spiritual aspects to create an educational climate that prioritizes human values.

**Keywords:** dehumanization · national education · education

## 1 Introduction

Education is a process to improve the standard of human life for the better. Education is carried out to develop the potential of each individual to create competent humans, cultured humans, and humane. Achmad Dardiri in Dwi Siswoyo et al. (2013: 32) explains that education is an activity between humans, which is carried out by humans and is intended for humans. Therefore, humans and education are two things that cannot be separated. Education is a need that must be met so that a life that is always developing and progressing is created. In general, Sugihartono et al. (2013: 3–4) define education as a conscious and deliberate effort made by individuals and groups to change behavior towards maturity through teaching and training. This definition explains that humans consciously organize education for human life itself.

In essence, education is to develop human potential from the intellectual and spiritual aspects. In other words, the educational process includes the teaching of knowledge or transfer of knowledge and teaching of values or transfer of value. Science and values have an important position in the implementation of education so that it gives birth to humans who are not only intelligent but also moral. A person can be said to be educated if he has skills in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects and can actively make changes in social life (Dewi, 2019: 100). Law on the National Education System No. 20/2003 has also clearly outlined the purpose of education, In other words, a learning environment for

students to actively develop the potential for religious spiritual strength, self-discipline, personality, intellect, noble personality and abilities necessary for themselves, society, state and nation.

Experts also agree that education has the main goal of forming intelligent and moral human beings. Since thousands of years ago Socrates has stated that the essence of education is to form “good and smart” individuals, namely someone who is both intelligent and virtuous (Suwardani, 2020: 95). This means that education must touch the spiritual aspects of humans, not just the intellectual aspects. Indonesian education leader Mr. Ki Hadjar Dewantara also stated that two things must be synergized in the educational process, namely “teaching” and “education”. He further explained that the meaning of teaching is to liberate humans outwardly, while education is to liberate humans inwardly. Sugiarta et al. (2019: 131) conclude that education has a deeper meaning than teaching because it covers the whole person including intellectuals, morals, and character.

The nature of education seems to have not been fully implemented in the implementation of the educational process in Indonesia. The current education system or policy in Indonesia tends to be flexible (Masyitah, 2019: 14). This flexibility in the implementation of education in Indonesia can be seen from the frequent changes in education policy following changes in the leadership or position of the minister concerned. Often the changes made are less able to touch the substance of education itself. Such conditions cause various problems in national education that cannot be completely resolved and even tend to increase. The current education system in Indonesia can be said to have not been optimally following the essence of education to form humans who are superior in achievement and have noble character. Existing education tends to try to give birth to a generation that is ready to compete intellectually in the future.

The current era of globalization has changed the concept of education a lot which diminishes the values of humanism. The reality of education in Indonesia currently only produces graduates who are cognitively capable but lack character. A person’s success in education is only measured by numbers or grades. Especially in the current era of globalization, education is a way to produce output that is intended to meet the needs of the industrial economy. A person takes education only to obtain provisions in the future so that they can work and earn money. The concept of such education has been rooted in the national education system which with various slick narratives is intended for national development. Educational orientation that measures a person’s success based on technology and overrides humanist intelligence will give birth to materialistic, hedonistic, consumptive humans, and have low human values (Dewi, 2019: 114).

Dehumanization is a basic problem in the education process in Indonesia that must receive attention. How education has become so capitalist has diminished the values of humanism. Existing education only sees the final result without seeing the process. The knowledge or cognitive aspect is a measure of one’s educational success. This is one form of dehumanization of education that has ruled out individual potential and abilities in the affective and psychomotor aspects. According to Dwiningrum (2016: 164), current national education has not provided an opportunity for each individual to optimally develop their respective potentials, lacks humanism (humanity) values, and tends to weaken the cultivation of ethical and aesthetic values. This kind of education system has deviated from the nature of education which should be humanizing.

## 2 Ease of Use Discussion

Dehumanization is a term to describe a condition that eliminates human nature. Dehumanization is the opposite of humanization (Syahrani, 2017: 36). Humanization is defined as the process of making humans according to their nature as humans. In other words, humanization is humanizing humans. Dehumanization has the opposite meaning, namely the process of making humans not by their nature as humans. As a result, human values are fading and disappearing. Dehumanization is characterized by a decline in the value system which is manifested by the loss of sensitivity to noble values (Dewi, 2019: 103). Sulton (2016: 40) states that a dehumanization is a perfect form of demoralization. He further explained that a dehumanization is an act that is carried out directly or indirectly by ignoring humanist values that should be highly upheld by humans. When values, norms, and ethics are no longer upheld in various aspects of life, that is where the dehumanization process occurs.

According to Haslam (2006), dehumanization can be seen through the human dimension, which consists of, first, “human uniqueness” which refers to the attributes that distinguish humans from other animals. Such as decency, morality, and thinking. When this unique attribute is not found in humans, then explicitly or implicitly humans can be equated with animals, such as small children, immature, rude, irrational, and retarded. Second, “human nature” refers to human attributes in humans, such as emotion, warmth, and flexibility. If these natural human traits do not exist, then they are explicitly or implicitly equated with objects or machines that are cold, stiff, bruised, and have no appreciation (Bastian and Haslam, 2011: 295).

Dehumanization or humanitarian crisis appears along with the development of an increasingly modern era. Modern humans who tend to use reason (reason) have faded humanist values (humanity). The domination of this ratio causes humans to think of themselves as absolute subjects while something outside of themselves, both nature and other humans, is an object that can be controlled according to their will. The development of technology in modern times is also the root of the emergence of a humanitarian crisis. As time goes by, machines and technology become increasingly important and influence the order and norms of life that are formed (Dewi, 2019: 94). The social space is getting narrower in line with the emergence of the electronic space, causing the loss of social learning in human relations. Advances in technology also encourage humans to develop without limits. Humans have become very ambitious to advance themselves which gradually fades their human side.

The humanitarian crisis has had an impact on the shift in the educational paradigm. The existing education system increasingly obscures and eliminates human values. This condition can be called the dehumanization of education where the essence of education to humanize humans is increasingly being eroded. In the practice of formal education, dehumanization can be seen from the pattern of educational policies, the learning process, and the implementation of education in schools that involve all components of education whose implementation overrides the values of humanism. Syaoran (2017: 37) states that all forms of malpractice or those that violate human rights in education can be referred to as dehumanization. This kind of education does not provide an opportunity for each individual to develop his potential.

Arnold Toynbee, a British historian and philosopher describes the rise and fall of civilization in history in his work “Civilization on Trials or Challenges and Responses.” which are referred to as “challenge and response.” Challenges consist of significant problems that cannot be solved in time and place. While the response or the answer lies in the next generation whether it is positive, negative, or passive. Toynbee is concerned about the fact that the progress of modern technology or “modern civilization” does not change human life for the better materially, but creates social injustice in the distribution of wealth created by technological innovation (Rugina, 1998: 663).

Researchers have explored the existence of “marketization” of education, this is focused on how economic restructuring is manifested in education related to the creation of new markets for capital investment and guaranteeing the mass sale of new information and communication technologies. Educators put forward ideological criticism of this practice because it violates the values of education and the work of educators is considered a business (Apple and Singh, 2005: 14). The orientation of education has turned into a commodity of power and the interests of the educational capitalist rulers (Dwiningrum, 2016: 155). In essence, equal access to education is only a myth and cannot be enjoyed by all children of the nation. The reality is that poor children still have difficulty enjoying education even though they have achievements.

National education at this time also does not reflect the face of humane education by the mandate of the 1945 Constitution. The practice of providing education in Indonesia has not been able to realize the true nature of education, namely humanizing humans. Respect for the dignity and human rights in education has not been fully optimal. Starting from the pattern of policies that do not focus on the essence of education to the education process that is not humane, this causes dehumanization in education in Indonesia. This kind of education system will not be able to produce intelligent human beings with noble character in accordance with the goals of national education. Education becomes a means to produce human resources who are ready to work so that the approach used only emphasizes the cognitive aspect, while the affective and psychomotor aspects are ruled out. Harry S. Broudy (1973: 68) states that humanism in education occurs when emotional aspects, self-identity, and social relationships are emphasized in the educational process and reduce the dominance of formal studies of academic disciplines.

Paulo Freire calls the dehumanization that occurs in education with the term “banking style” education. He analogized this kind of education by placing teachers as customers and students as empty accounts that were ready to be filled by their customers (Abdillah, 2017: 1). This educational concept positions the teacher as the subject and the student as the object. Students as learning actors become parties who only follow the educational process that has been determined by educators and education providers without being given more opportunities to develop themselves according to their potential. Such educational practices make students passive, uncritical, and intellectually oppressed. The output of this kind of education is of course students with low social awareness and are closed because the education they get is not by their reality. The dehumanization of education makes students increasingly distant from their essence as human beings who are free to develop and think critically.

Educational practices that place students as objects are a problem in the education culture in Indonesia. The dominance of teachers in learning makes students so passive in

the educational process. Students are not allowed to develop according to their potential but are indoctrinated to follow the educational standards that have been set. Their freedom in thinking and developing creativity in the classroom is limited by the will of the teacher who declares himself to be the party who knows better and plays a role as a source of knowledge for students. Syaoran (2017: 36) views the practice of dehumanization in education as occurring when students are seen as objects of learning and through indoctrination methods, they are regulated and dictated in such a way as robots. The will and aspirations of students are less heard because they are constrained by binding educational standards. Good teachers should view their students as human beings, not objects (Gunnison, 1976: 167).

Dehumanization also occurs when all students are considered the same regardless of the different potentials of each individual. Educational practices in Indonesia tend to generalize students so that the education provided is also uniform. Each individual has conditions that should be recognized and distinguished. Syaoran (2017: 37) agrees that the educational process is carried out without paying attention to the differences of each individual, both physically and mentally, which can be called education dehumanization. The learning process should not contain coercion and pressure that hinder the potential development of students. The education system must provide the widest opportunity for students to develop themselves and their talents. Dwiningrum (2016: 161) states that humanist education is when what is learned impacts students' self-development.

The freedom of learning for students is limited because the curriculum content is too dense. Indonesian education experts and observers highlight the burden of material that must be mastered by students is considered too much. As a result, the existing curriculum is not able to realize the nature of education as a process to change the behavior of students by their development into creative, innovative, and independent individuals. Rustam Abong (2015: 38) also states that so far, our curriculum has not fully emphasized the independence and multidimensional development of students. A curriculum that is too dense will suppress and limit the development of students' creativity because they are too focused on pursuing mastery of the existing material. This kind of education is far from humanistic values because it curbs individual freedom to develop their potential. Their opportunities to expand their knowledge and increase their learning experience are small.

The right of students to express and develop themselves according to their wishes is limited when the teacher's teaching style is authoritarian. In this type of teaching, the teacher always directs and determines all student activities in learning. With this learning style, students have few opportunities to participate and decide the best way in their learning activities (Djuwarijah, 2002: 29). This means that students' freedom and creativity are hampered and limited, so they cannot develop optimally. This learning condition still occurs in the practice of education in Indonesia. Students become parties who must always submit to everything determined by the teacher. Their space for creativity becomes narrow because learning tends to go one way. In other words, learning is still teacher-centered. The learning model that limits the rights of students as creative and critical learning subjects is far from humanistic. Good teachers should have an awareness that is shown through their behavior that teaching is a human relationship so that they recognize the uniqueness of individual perceptions (Gunnison, 1976: 167).

The approach taken in our education is still too focused on the development of cognitive aspects only. Students are filled with various kinds of knowledge with the assumption that educational success is measured by the amount of knowledge gained. As a result, the potential and abilities of other students have not been maximized. Education should include the development of three aspects, namely cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitudes), and psychomotor (actions). Emphasis on cognitive aspects or knowledge alone resulted in the cultivation of human potential, especially emotional learners are not optimal. This reality is contrary to the function of national education according to Law no. 20 of 2003 Article 3 which reads “National education develops skills and values national character and civilization in the context of shaping national life with the aim of fostering the potential of students to believe in Almighty God and become God-fearing people. Is to shape. Become a noble, healthy, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent, democratic and responsible citizen.”

Education is no longer a humanization process. Human values in education are getting lost because the main goal of education has shifted to a process to produce capable development actors. By putting aside the cultivation of values and character, education is transformed into an intellectual factory that produces an intelligent but not virtuous generation. Humans are getting further away from their essence as humans who uphold the values of humanism. The humanistic task of education is becoming increasingly obsolete. This is evident from the rampant violations of ethics and social norms in society, especially among students. Therefore, Sharon (2017: 116) states that the education needed today is one that can integrate character education with an education that optimizes the cognitive, physical, socio-emotional, creative, and spiritual development of students.

Humanist education is getting lost because realizing it or not, the purpose of education has been reduced to meeting the needs of the industrial economy. In other words, a person takes education with an orientation to get provisions to make money or work. The output produced from education is humans who have expertise or skills that are tailored to market needs. This means that education is interpreted as a process to teach and hone individual skills at work. George R. Small (1968: 195) states that education aimed at instilling raw skills (language, mechanics, or business) means that the existing educational process is nothing more than an invasion of technology. In the end, education revolves around job techniques and production quotas. Education is no longer to humanize humans but to make humans economic slaves that dwarf the true nature of humans.

The spirit of education as a process of character formation is getting lost because the administration of education is too busy with administrative matters. The new policies issued only improve the academic side, not improve the quality of education that should be humanist education. The quality of the learning process between teachers and students in the classroom is getting less attention. Teachers as educators and teachers are too busy with administrative matters such as making lesson plans (RPP), syllabus, teaching materials, and others which are quite burdensome. As a result, teaching tasks that should be prioritized are neglected. The implementation of learning becomes minimal and seems less than optimal. The reality of this kind of education is far from the essence of humanist education. Therefore, it needs to be clarified again that the task of the teacher is not only

limited to fulfilling professional responsibilities but more than that, namely as educators. In this case, Sopian (2016: 95) states that expert teachers must be able to touch the core of the humanity of students through the lessons given.

Teachers as educators lose their identity and integrity. The main task of the teacher is to teach students who have been neglected and have harmed the nature of humanism in education. Working as a teacher is no longer a call to the heart to educate and shape students as noble people. So it's not surprising that nowadays it is rare to find teachers who have high dedication to serve as educators who give all their time and attention for the welfare of students. Carrying out the duties of a teacher is only limited to fulfilling job responsibilities. Sopian (2016: 95) states that the purpose of forming teachers is not only to have technical skills but also to have educational tips and professionalism. He further explained that professional teachers are teachers who have expertise in educating and teaching and have autonomy and responsibility.

National education which has been indicated by the dehumanization process needs attention. Criticism of educational policies and practices that are not humanist needs to be given to restore the true nature of education to humanize humans. Existing education must be able to give birth to a superior and quality generation so that it can become the successor of an advanced nation. To restore the nature of education as a humanization process, awareness and cooperation from all education actors are needed. The government as an education provider must be able to issue educational policies that prioritize human values. Schools as educational institutions should create a humane educational environment and climate. Likewise, teachers as educators must provide opportunities and space for students to develop their potential without any pressure and restrictive limitations. As Hugh Gunnison (1976: 163) states that humanistic education implies that the focus of teachers, classrooms, and schools is on humans in which there are values of honesty, empathy, and concern.

All systems, policies, and educational practices that encourage dehumanization need to be reorganized. Education is not just about imparting knowledge through the materials taught in the classroom. Students need to get value and character education so that they touch the spiritual and emotional aspects that have an important role in growing human values. Education must be able to touch the human aspect of students, not only intellectually. Once again it should be emphasized that the purpose of education is to form intelligent and virtuous human beings. Humanization of education also means that each individual can develop his potential optimally. Each student has different potentials and characteristics that must be accepted as they are, so they need to be allowed to develop. Educational standards that generalize students are not by the values of humanism because it limits their rights to develop themselves.

### 3 Conclusion

The basic problem in education in Indonesia is the occurrence of dehumanization. The development of an increasingly sophisticated era has shifted the education paradigm that humanizes humans. The current national education practice is only a transfer of knowledge process, while the transfer of value process is only rhetoric. The development of intellectual and spiritual aspects has not become a necessity in education. This is

getting more and more chaotic when changes in education policy often occur following changes in leadership where the changes made are less able to touch the substance of education itself. As a result, the dehumanization of education in Indonesia is growing. Education dehumanization occurs when the existing education system obscures and eliminates human values. This can be seen in the current education system in Indonesia which is not in accordance with the essence of education to form humans who excel in achievement and have noble character.

Currently, national education does not reflect the face of humanist education in accordance with the mandate of the 1945 Constitution. The pattern of policies that do not focus on the essence of education and the education process that is not humane causes dehumanization in education in Indonesia. The educational practice still places students as passive objects and is directed according to the educational standards that are made. They are also considered equal so that the existing potential cannot develop optimally. The creativity of students is limited by the curriculum content that is too dense. In addition, the learning model that is still teacher-centered greatly limits the space for students to be more creative and critical. Teachers as educators tend to ignore the nature of teaching because they are too busy with the administrative burden of learning. More broadly, the existing education only focuses on developing the cognitive aspect so that the human aspect is sidelined.

The implementation of education needs to be returned to its essence so that it can realize the goal of education to give birth to a generation of intelligence and character. All components and actors of education must synergize with each other to realize humanist education. Education must be able to touch intellectual and spiritual aspects to create an educational climate that prioritizes human values. In the current era of globalization, humanity must become values that are always upheld. Do not let sophisticated technology erode the human side of humans. That's where the vital role of education as a humanization process so that its implementation must always support the creation of superior, intelligent, and virtuous humans as the essence of education itself.

## References

- Abdillah, R. (2017). Analisis Teori Dehumanisasi Pendidikan Paulo Freire. *Jurnal Aqidah dan Filsafat Islam*, 2(1), 1–21.
- Abong, R. (2015). Konstelasi Kurikulum Pendidikan di Indonesia. *AL-TURATS*, 9(2), 37–47.
- Apple, M. W., Kenway, J., & Sinh, M. (2005). *Globalizing education: Policies, pedagogies & politics*. Peter Lang.
- Bastian, B., & Haslam, N. (2011). *Experiencing dehumanization: Cognitive and emotional effects of everyday dehumanization*. Psychology Press.
- Broudy, H. S. (1973). Humanism in education. *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 7(2), 67–77.
- Dewi, E. (2019). Potret Pendidikan di Era Globalisasi Teknosentrisme dan Proses Dehumanisasi. *SUKMA: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 3(1), 92–116.
- Djuwarijah. (2002). Gaya Mengajar Guru dalam Proses Belajar Mengajar. *JPI FIAI Jurusan Tarbiyah*, 6(5), 27–32.
- Dwiningrum, S. I. A. (2016). Menciptakan Belajar yang Humanis Tantangan Pendidik yang Profesional dan Berkarakter. *Jurnal Pembangunan Pendidikan: Fondasi dan Aplikasi*, 4(2), 154–165.
- Dwi Siswoyo, D. K. K. (2013). *Ilmu Pendidikan*. UNY Press.

- Gunnison, H. (1976). Humanistic education and teacher education. *ETC: A Review of General Semantics*, 33(2), 162–170.
- Masyitah, E. (2019). Humanisasi dalam Paradigma Pendidikan yang Nyaris Terabaikan. *Jurnal Al-Insyiroh: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 5(1), 14–21.
- Rugina, A. N. (1998). Dehumanization of modern civilization and a new. *Emeraldinsight Publication International Journal of Social Economics*, 25(5), 663.
- Sahroni, D. (2017). Pentingnya Pendidikan Karakter dalam Pembelajaran. *Prosiding Seminar Bimbingan dan Konseling*, 1(1), 115–124.
- Small, G. R. (1968). Humanism in education. *The Clearing House*, 43(4), 195–197.
- Sopian, A. (2016). Tugas, Peran, dan Fungsi Guru dalam Pendidikan. *RAUDHAH: Jurnal Tarbiyah Islamiyah*, 1(1), 88–97.
- Sugiarta, D. K. K. (2019). Filsafat Pendidikan Ki Hajar Dewantara (Tokoh Timur). *Jurnal Filsafat Indonesia*, 2(3), 124–136.
- Sugihartono, D. K. K. (2013). *Psikologi Pendidikan*. UNY Press.
- Sulton. (2016). Realitas Pendidikan Nilai di Lingkungan Keluarga, Sekolah dan Masyarakat. *Jurnal Dimensi Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 5, 38–48.
- Suwardani, N. P. (2020). “*Quo Vadis*” Pendidikan Karakter dalam Merajut Harapan Bangsa yang Bermartabat. UNHI Press.
- Syahrani. (2017). *Humanisasi dalam Administrasi dan Manajemen Pendidikan*. CV. Global Press.

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter’s Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

