Initiating an Independent Curriculum: A Study on the Implementation of Life Skills Eduction as a UNICEF Pilot Project in Bone Regency

Sarifa Nursabaha[1], Hamdan Juhannis[2], Sitti Syamsudduha[3], St. Mania[4]

[1] Postgraduate Student of Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar, Jl. Sultan Alauddin No. 63 Romangpolong, Gowa, Indonesia, email: sarifanursabaha84@gmail.com

[2] Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar, Jl. Sultan Alauddin No. 63 Romangpolong, Gowa, Indonesia, email: hamdanjuhannis@gmail.com

[3] Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar, Jl. Sultan Alauddin No. 63 Romangpolong, Gowa, email: st.syamsudduha@uin-alauddin.ac.id

[4] Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar, Jl. Sultan Alauddin No. 63 Romangpolong, Gowa, Indonesia, email: sitti.mania@uin-alauddin.ac.id

Abstract: This paper examines the Initiating Life Skills Education Self-Reliance Curriculum at the UNICEF Pilot Project Junior High School in Bone Regency. This type of research is qualitative. Data were collected using the interview method while the research instrument used an interview guide in the form of google form. This is done because it is difficult to collect data directly in the field because learning takes place online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The results showed that the implementation of the Life Skills Education Independence Curriculum at the UNICEF Pilot Project Junior High School in Bone Regency was proven in the fulfillment of the independence curriculum indicators initiated by Paolo Freire which included five aspects, namely in the Life Skill Education learning process there was a dialogical interaction, in Life Skill learning. Education teachers always give awards to students, in LSE learning each student is given the greatest opportunity to express themselves, the teacher seeks students to become subjects in order to answer the problems that arise in social reality and the teacher gives the opportunity for students to be free opinion.

Keywords: Curriculum, Independence, Implementation, Life Skills Education

1. Introduction

National education is not only aimed at developing the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and pious, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens, but also aims at forming independent students. especially in solving the problems of life. Independence is a soul that grows and develops along with the understanding and concept of life, which leads to the ability, will, tenacity, perseverance in pursuing the field in which they are involved (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Stumbo et al., 2009; Giesinger, 2018). Learning independence is independent learning, not depending on others, students are required to have their own activeness and initiative in learning (Niemi, 2002; Whitebread, et al., 2005; Benson, 2007; Benson & Voller, 2014).

Strengthening the character of independence in the current context is very relevant to overcome the moral crisis that is happening in our country. According to the ESQ review, 7 moral crises that occur in Indonesian society include a crisis of honesty, a crisis of responsibility, not thinking far ahead (visionary), a crisis of discipline, a crisis of togetherness, a crisis of caring, and a crisis of justice Zuhdi (2009). Whether we admit it or not, there is currently a real and worrying crisis in society involving our most valuable possessions, namely children. These crises include increasing promiscuity, increasing rates of violence against children and adolescents, crimes against friends, theft of teenagers, cheating habits, drug abuse, pornography, rape, and the deprivation and destruction of other people's property. So far, it has not been completely resolved. The behavior of our youth is also colored by the habit of bullying (bullying) and brawls at school. The consequences are quite serious and can no longer be considered as a simple matter because this action has led to a criminal act (Zubaedi, 2011). Schools integrate the implementation of character education through curriculum policies as stated in the curriculum documents, new student admissions, and social etiquette, which are good habits (Qoyyimah, 2016; Abdullah et al., 2019).

Bone District was used as a pilot for UNICEF in the application of Life Skills Education learning. Life Skills Education learning contains a number of life skills that are able to form the independence of students. Among the

contents of Life Skills Education learning that is instilled in children are; the ability to know oneself and others, express emotions in the right way, positive self-image, puberty, internet and social media, make friends, fall in healthy love, menstrual hygiene management (MKM), reproductive health, sexual health, gender equality, Human rights, peace and conflict, environment, sanitation, identifying problems/types of violations, designing solutions, techniques for making RPP PKH, follow-up plans, imagining change as part of the teacher's efforts to instill these life skills into every student so that they dare to face life's problems. in a reasonable manner, then proactively and creatively seek and find solutions so as to be able to deal with them appropriately.

Freire (2013) explains the purpose of education according to the Law on the National Education System, namely education that is able to make Indonesian people whole, people who have independence and high responsibility. However, the main idea behind. Freire's education system is how education can provide freedom for students. How education can free students from mute culture and oppression. That is the meaning of liberating education according to Paulo Freire. If education as initiated by Freire is in its contextualization in the State of Indonesia, a multicultural education system can be implemented which is defined as a cultural diversity. However, in terms of multicultural education, it means the process of developing all human potentials that respect plurality and heterogeneity as a consequence of cultural, ethnic, ethnic and religious diversity (Oktaviani, 2020).

Departing from this background related to the importance of instilling independence in students, the researchers are interested in studying more deeply about initiating an independent study curriculum. Implementation of life skills education is being implemented in 12 Junior High Schools (SMP) as UNICEF pilot projects in Bone Regency

2. Methods

This research is a type of qualitative research. The data used in this study consisted of two types, namely primary data and secondary data. The primary data in this study are data obtained directly from informants in the field which are closely related to the problem under study, namely the idea of an independent curriculum for the study of implementation of Life skills Education as a UNICEF Pilot Project in Bone Regency. The main sources are trained teachers who apply the LSE curriculum at UNICEF pilot schools, district trainers, school principals, students, parents of students, and the local government in this case the head of the Education Office and Bappeda and UNICEF partner institutions in this case the Bone Women's Empowerment Institute. The total number of informants in this study was 33 people. Secondary data is an indirect source from informants, but through searching in the form of important documents related to research such as school strategic plans, institutional profiles, as well as other research supporting elements such as reference books and journals related to research. Data were collected using the interview method while the research instrument used an interview guide in the form of google form. This is done because it is difficult to collect data directly in the field because learning takes place online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Result and Discussion

Implementation of Life Skills Education Self-Reliance Curriculum at UNICEF Junior Pilot Project in Bone District

The curriculum holds a key position in achieving educational success, this is because the curriculum is related to determining the direction, content and process of education which ultimately determines the type and qualifications of graduates of an educational institution. Everyone has an interest in the curriculum, parents, teachers, the community are in control of education at all levels, levels and types of education. As leaders of formal education institutions, teachers, especially school principals and other policy-making officials, of course expect the growth and development of better, smarter and more capable children, youth and the younger generation. The curriculum has a big role in realizing these expectations.

To understand in more detail why LSE/PKH learning is called an independence curriculum, one of the LSE trainers, Sarifa Suhra, explained that LSE/PKH learning is called an independence curriculum because in LSE/PKH learning, teachers instill various kinds of independence in students. The basics of independence are instilled and trained and accustomed to in the daily lives of students both at school and at home. In this LSE/PKH learning, students are equipped with 13 life skills as provisions for their independence in living life.

The 13 skills are explained by Kasma, as follows:

There are 13 life skills that are implanted in this learning, namely 1. Self-regulation 2. Creativity 3. Critical thinking 4. Decision making 5. Decision making 6. Working together 7. Solving problems 8. Participating 9.

Managing stress and emotions 10. Resilience (resilience) 11. Empathy 12. Communicating 13. Appreciating differences.

Other independence that students gain when studying PKH is explained by. Ratnawati "Independence in managing daily life, managing emotions, independence in maintaining reproductive health, taking care of oneself during menstruation, and others." It seems that the independence conveyed by A. Ratnawati is related to the learning objectives of the LSE themes which include 22 themes as stated in the Teacher Work Guidebook and the Revised 2019 edition of the Student Guidebook for Life Skills Education for Junior High School Students. . This manual can be downloaded on this page; "http://bit.ly/modulpkh_bone".

Based on the theory of liberating education, Paulo Freire tries to instill an independence curriculum with the following indicators:

Dialogis Interaction between Students and Teachers

Life Skill Education learning allows dialogue between students and teachers, as stated by Mukhlis. Dialogic interaction occurs in every meeting because the teacher is only a facilitator, the learner plays an active role, asks the teacher and the teacher answers if there is anything the student asks. in fact, the learning uses discussions, roleplay, games and presentations of discussion results in front of the class. So, Life Skill Education learning is multidirectional and participatory that encourages interactive and dialogic occurrence in the learning process.

From the information above, it can be understood that in the learning process of Life Skill Education, a dialogical interaction occurs at every meeting because the teacher only positions himself as a facilitator, it is the students who play an active role, asking the teacher and the teacher answering if there are things the students ask. In fact, the learning uses discussion so that questions and answers between students occur in groups and outside the group, even in certain themes learning uses role playing strategies so that the mental aspect appears, not infrequently learning is filled with interesting games (games) and presentation of results. discussion in front of the class is almost carried out on all themes. Meanwhile Rosdiana said; 'dialogic interactions between students and LSE teachers occur when the teacher gives material and asks students, the students are enthusiastic about responding with good and correct answers'. In line with this, H. Sumardi., said: 'Dialogic interactions between teachers and students occur because LSE learning touches the daily lives of students so that students are very easy to respond to and respond to questions asked by the teacher as well as if they discuss running smoothly in a pleasant dialogue atmosphere.

LSE Teachers Reward Students after Successfully Completing Certain Tasks

In Life Skill Education learning, teachers often give awards to students, as explained rewards are given to each student for doing something. The award can be in the form of applause, thumbs up, expressions of admiration such as motivational words (good, steady, good, very good, extraordinary, etc.). even in the matter of knowing themselves and others, each group must present certain figures from various backgrounds who have successfully reached the peak of their careers, it doesn't have to be old age, there is even a figure of children who have received the Nobel Peace Prize, namely Malala so that children are inspired. At the end of each presentation session, each group of students applauded guided by the LSE teacher. Even if the award is given to students with minimal achievements, the aim is to motivate students to achieve even more.

From this information, it can be understood that in Life Skill Education learning, teachers always give awards to students. There are many ways for teachers to reward students, including; Praise students both through words and with body cues. The words that are often used are; good, steady, good, very good, extraordinary etc. in addition to body cue words such as; applause, and thumbs up is something that is always done. The teacher motivates students to be active in learning, therefore, those who do not excel are given awards so that they can increase their learning motivation.

LSE Teachers Give Students Freedom in Expressing Themselves

In the learning process of Life Skill Education, the teacher provides opportunities for students to freely express themselves both in the introductory session in knowing themselves and others, as well as in other materials. A. Rarnawati, explained as follows:

Each student is given the greatest opportunity for self-expression which is integrated in a variety of learning activities that have been packaged in a fun way and eliminates awkwardness, shyness, and shame or hesitation for students to express themselves, especially when learning activities are packaged in the form of playing. roles, simulations, plays, group discussions and presentations.

From this explanation, it can be understood that in LSE learning, it meets the indicators of the independence curriculum because each student is given the greatest opportunity to express themselves. Self-expression is

integrated in a variety of learning activities that have been packaged in a fun way and eliminate awkwardness. All students are free from feeling shy, and shy or doubtful, instead all are happy, appearing with various expressions in participating in all LSE learning processes.

Teachers Seek Learners to Be Subjects in Order to Answer Problems That Arise in Social Reality

In LSE learning, teachers always strive for students to become subjects in order to answer problems that arise in social reality, this is stated by Mukhlis, as follows:

Learning in LSE discusses and is directly related to real life or the reality of students' lives such as going through puberty, menstrual hygiene, body imaging, expressing emotions and so on so that they are required to be the people who know the most about their own learning. In the learning process, children are trained with problem-solving materials through problem tree tools and goal trees to respond to social problems they face on a daily basis.

From this information, it can be understood that the indicators of the four independence curriculum according to Paulo Freire are; the teacher strives for students to become subjects in order to answer the problems that arise in social reality, has been fulfilled through LSE learning. This is proven by the material when the teacher raises examples of cases that are often experienced by students in everyday life. There are many examples of cases that must be solved through discussion and imagining if the problem is a natural student. Among the examples of these cases apart from

Reno and Rini, there are also cases of losing in a match, bullying cases, cases of being asked by mothers to pick up younger siblings at school but the activities are busy, what is the solution? To obtain solutions to all these problems, the teacher forms groups and then each group is given a problem and then asked to find a solution and write it down on flipchart paper and then pasted it on the wall. All groups discuss finding solutions by thinking critically.

Teachers Give Students the Opportunity to Freely Argue and Realize That It is the Right of All Human Beings

LSE learning provides opportunities for students to freely express their opinions and make them aware that this is the right of all human beings, as stated by Mukhlis, as follows:

In the LSE learning process the teacher provides the widest opportunity to express opinions where in LSE / PKH there are no opinions and questions that are considered stupid or considered unimportant and every teacher emphasizes this every time they teach so that students are really encouraged to freely express their opinions. and also there is a special material that discusses human rights that trains and gives them an understanding to be sensitive to human rights.

From this information, it can be understood that the teacher gives students the opportunity to freely express their opinion and make them aware that this is the right of all human beings. Even in the learning process there are many group work sessions. Learning in groups and in each group is arranged so that it is heterogeneous consisting of men and women, intelligent and less intelligent, rich and poor and the teacher assures students that everyone respects others because all have the right to be respected as God's creatures without discrimination even in the matter of making friends. Bullying is strictly forbidden even if it's just playing.

If you pay attention to the various explanations from several informants regarding the realization of all indicators of the independence curriculum as illustrated in Paulo Freire's theory of liberating education in which a dialogue and respect for human rights are demanded which is manifested in the form of respecting every process, promoting the concept of liberation education, the teacher seeks students become subjects in order to answer the problems that arise in social reality, and the existence of freedom of opinion and thought is a human right. So, it is very appropriate if LSE learning is referred to as an independence curriculum. Therefore, this curriculum should be applied not only to the 12 UNICEF pilot project schools but also to every school in Bone district and even outside Bone district. Given this, it is very beneficial for the formation of the character of independence for students from an early age.

4. **Conclusion**

The implementation of the Life Skills Education Self-Reliance Curriculum at the UNICEF Pilot Project Junior High School in Bone Regency is proven in the fulfillment of the independence curriculum indicators initiated by Paolo Freire which include 5 aspects, namely: 1) In the Life Skills Education learning process, Dialogic interactions occur at every meeting because the teacher only positioning himself as a facilitator, it is the students who play an active role, asking the teacher and the teacher answering if there are things that the students ask. 2) In learning Life Skill Education, teachers always give awards to students. There are many ways for teachers to reward students, including; Praise students both through words and with body cues. The words that are often used are; good, steady,

good, very good, extraordinary etc. 3) In LSE learning, each student is given the greatest opportunity to express themselves. Self-expression is integrated in a variety of learning activities that have been packaged in a fun way and eliminate awkwardness. 4) The teacher strives for students to become subjects in order to answer the problems that arise in social reality. 5) The teacher gives students the opportunity to freely express their opinion and make them aware that this is the right of all human beings.

References

1. Abdullah, I., Hudayana, B., Kutanegara, P. M., & Indiyanto, A. (2019). Beyond school reach: Character education in three schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 9*(3), 145-145.

2. Benson, P. (2007). *Autonomy in language teaching and learning*. Language teaching, 40(1), 21.

3. Freire, P. (2013). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (pp. 131-139). Routledge.

4. Giesinger, J. (2018). The independence of education. On Education. *Journal for Research and Debate, 1*(1), 1-3.

5. HS, S. ., & S, S. (2021). Scientific Approach in Improving Science Learning Activities of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Students. Middle Eastern Journal of Research in Education and Social Sciences, 2(2), 85-109. https://doi.org/10.47631/mejress.v2i2.227

6. Oktaviani, D. (2020). *Pendidikan Yang Membebaskan Menurut Paulo Freire*. Availabe from: https://www.academia.edu/38272809/Pendidikan_Yang_Membebaskan_Menurut_Paulo_Freire?auto=download,.

7. Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Oxford University Press.

8. Qoyyimah, U. (2016). Inculcating character education through EFL teaching in Indonesian state schools. *Pedagogies: An International Journal, 11*(2), 109-126.

9. Stumbo, N. J., Martin, J. K., & Hedrick, B. N. (2009). Assistive technology: Impact on education, employment, and independence of individuals with physical disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 30*(2), 99-110.

10. Whitebread, D., Anderson, H., Coltman, P., Page, C., Pasternak, D. P., & Mehta, S. (2005). Developing independent learning in the early years. *Education 3-13, 33*(1), 40-50.

11. Zubaedi. (2011). *Desain Pendidikan Karakter: Konsepsi dan Aplikasinya dalam Lembaga Pendidikan* Cet. I. Jakarata: Kencana

12. Zuhdi, D. (2009). *Pendidikan Karakter.* Yogyakarta: UNY Press.