Non-Formal Education and the Humanization of Education to Support Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for Indonesia's Golden Era

Sjafiatul Mardliyah[1] , Putri Aisyiyah Rachma Dewi[2], Rivo Nugroho[3] , Shobri Firman Susanto[4] , Desika Putri Mardiani[5], Monica Widyaswari[6] , Suji[7]

[1,2,3,4,5,6] Universitas Negeri Surabaya
Kampus Unesa Lidah Wetan Surabaya
[7]Universitas Jember
Jalan Kalimantan 37 Kampus Tegalboto Kotak Pos 159 Jember 68121
sjafiatulmardliyah@unesa.ac.id

Abstract. The implementation of basic education in the non-formal sector through equivalency education shows a form of 'partiality' that creates an educational problem referred to as neutrality. This condition emphasizes the need for critical analysis to understand how non-formal education becomes critical education in facing a future that may be entirely different. This study aims to discuss the history and thoughts of critical education to enrich the search for a desired educational model as part of social transformation. Understanding critical pedagogy requires recognizing its two fundamental aspects: as a paradigm of thought and as a social movement. As a paradigm, critical pedagogy aims to provide specific strategies and learning methods to foster a dialogue between knowledge and reality, creating new knowledge that reflects revolutionary ideals. This necessitates an egalitarian relationship between students and teachers. As a social movement, critical pedagogy emphasizes that education should be created by, for, and from the community to establish democratic principles and ensure freedom from oppression.

Keywords: *critical education, paradigm, social movement*

1   Introduction

In Indonesia, formal education has proven unable to meet the educational needs of the entire population of over 250 million people, who have diverse ethnic, linguistic, religious, socioeconomic, and other backgrounds. However, the government has provided non-formal education through equivalency education as an alternative to formal education. Equivalency education is a non-formal system designed for citizens of all ages who have not had the opportunity to attend formal

schools. It is known as "Kejar" (Learning Groups) Package A, equivalent to elementary school, Package B, equivalent to junior high school, and Package C, equivalent to senior high school. The provisions for equivalency education are outlined in the National Education System Law No. 20/2001, Article 26, Paragraph 6: "The results of non-formal education can be valued equivalently to those of formal education after undergoing an equivalency assessment process by an institution designated by the Government or Regional Government regarding national education standards." Every student who passes the equivalency exam has the same rights and status as the graduates of elementary, junior and senior high school who can enrol in higher education institutions or enter the workforce. The government administers equivalency education through two ways: first, through Sanggar Kegiatan Belajar or SKB (Learning Activity Center) under the City/Regency Education Office, and second, through Pusat Kegiatan Belajar Masyarakat or PKBM (Community Learning Activity Center or CLC) organized by civil society, as regulated by regulation of minister No. 81 of 2013 on the establishment of non-formal education units.

Non-formal education statistical reports in Indonesia, which were made in 2012, 2014, and 2015 (unfortunately, no similar official reports have been released since then), mention that the types of programs organized by non-formal education include equivalency education, courses, and CLC. Specifically, The statistics show that as of 2015, there were 457 institutions offering Package A, 5,015 offering Package B, and 6,897 offering Package C. Meanwhile, 19,139 institutions offered courses, and 11,500 organized Learning Activity Centers. The graph below illustrates the participation of learners in equivalency education based on data from 2012, 2014, and 2015.[1],[2],[3].
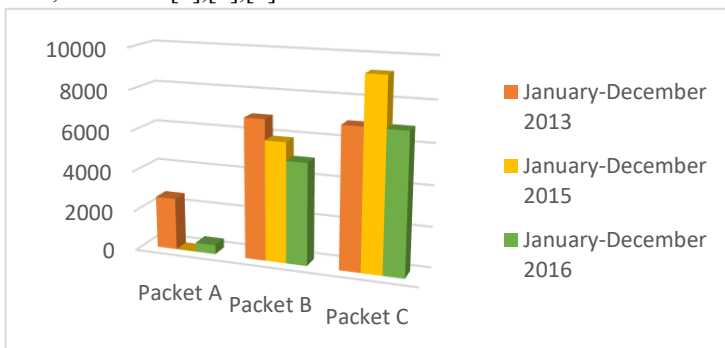

Fig 1: Overview of Equivalency Education by Type of Program in 2013, 2015, and 2016

Figure 1 shows that the high number of participants in Package C in 2014 indicates that the educational needs expected by learners for their personal development have been realized. However, another hypothesis that arises and can be considered is that this correlates with election moment such as local elections. It is commonly understood and known that the legal requirements of Package C can qualify individuals to sit in parliament seats.

Another critical aspect of understanding equivalency education is recognizing the service providers who offer these educational services to the community. These providers are responsible for assessing the quality of educational institutions' outputs. The entities that conduct equivalency education in Indonesia are depicted in the following graph:
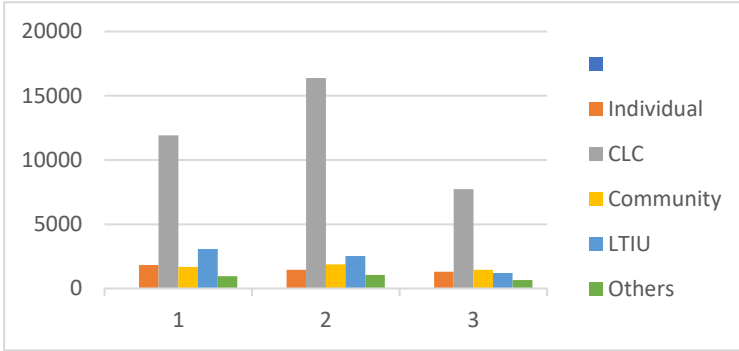
Notes:
CLC = Community Learning Center
LTIU = Local Technical Implementing Unit

Fig 2. Organizers of Equivalency Education Learning Groups in Indonesia According to Non Formal Education Statistics for 2013, 2015, and 2016

The graph above shows that equivalency education is primarily organized by community groups rather than the government through learning activity center. Overall, the percentage of equivalency education provided by the government is less than ten percent (9.84%), compared to 90.16% by community groups. In addition, 62.59% of equivalency education is organized by learning activity centers. .[1],[2],[3].

An interesting point in this discussion is the emergence of CLC as a non-formal education institution around 1998, influenced by the reform movement that changed governance from centralization to regional autonomy. The following graph shows the growth of CLC over the past three periods. .[1],[2],[3].
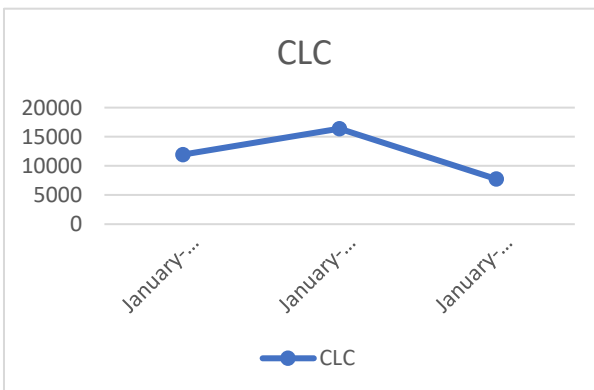
Fig 3: Number of Community Learning Center

The graph shows the fluctuating presence of CLC, particularly concerning funding for equivalency education as discussed earlier. Some CLC emerge with substantial government funding, often linked to managerial connections with ruling elites. However, they may cease to operate without continued financial support.

However, among the many CLC mentioned, there are independent ones that are economically, socially, politically, and ideologically autonomous. Examples include schools like Sekolah Master (Masjid Terminal), Sanggar Anak Akar, Sanggar Anak Alam Yogyakarta, SDKE Mangunan, SMP Alternatif Qaryah Thayyibah, Sokola Rimba, and Sekolah Darurat Kartini which have diverse educational designs influenced by various factors. These CLC serve as alternative schools, addressing dissatisfaction with formal education's teaching methods, teacher-student relationships, burdensome curriculum, rising costs, and difficulty adapting to mainstream education. Heir presence challenges the dominance of formal schooling systems and shifts perspectives on education practices among parents and children.

The above description proves that the provision of primary education through non-formal pathways like equivalency education demonstrates a distinct bias. This highlights a educational issue known as neutrality. This condition underscores the critical importance of analysis to address how non-formal education emerged as a critical educational movement and is truly intended to prepare for a future that can be completely different. This study aims to outline its history and ideas to enrich efforts in finding desired educational models as part of social transformation.

2   Method

This study uses text literature that uses secondary data sources on non-formal education statistics in Indonesia. The references used relate to critical education to provide a description of non-formal education models as a substitute for formal education in Indonesia. Data analysis was carried out using a pattern of drawing conclusions that intersects with the themes of neomarxian critical educational theories.

3   Social-Historical Context of Critical Pedagogy Thought

The concept of critical pedagogy gained prominence through the work of Paulo Freire (1921-1997), a Brazilian educator and thinker who advocated for education as a means of resistance against state hegemony. Freire's critical pedagogy emerged from his reflections and life experiences.[4] Professor Richard Shaull, in the English foreword of the book "Education for Critical Consciousness," showed that Freire's profound experience with hunger as a child motivated him, at the age of eleven, to dedicate his life to fighting hunger so that other children would not suffer as he experienced.[5]

Freire's ideas on critical pedagogy were not the only ones contributing to the emergence of a more humanistic education. Around the same time, Ivan Illich (1926-2002) presented his thoughts, challenging long-held educational assumptions. His book Deschooling Society advocated for a cultural revolution to create a more dignified education system.

Critical pedagogy is deeply rooted in the thoughts of Karl Marx (1818-1883), leading to a series of thinkers categorized as Marxian or Neo-Marxian. Neo-Marxism critically engages with and seeks to develop Marx's ideas, often incorporating intellectual traditions such as critical theory, psychoanalysis, and existentialism. This perspective is significantly influenced by Hegel (1770-1831), Nietzsche (1844-1900), and Sigmund Freud, and is based on the assumption of a connection between macro-level processes like culture and the effects on individual psychology and consciousness.[6]

Henry Giroux and Michael Apple, influential contemporary thinkers in critical pedagogy, adopt the ideas of Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979) and Paulo Freire. Herbert Marcuse was a German sociologist and philosopher and a member of the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt School was a group of philosophers affiliated with the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany. The early period of the Frankfurt School began in 1930 when Max Horkheimer was appointed its Executive Director. The thinkers associated with the Frankfurt School never defined themselves as a group or 'school.' They shared a common intellectual interest in Neo-Marxism and cultural criticism. This focus on cultural criticism eventually led to the development of cultural studies. Each thinker applied these ideas in different ways and to different subjects of study. The early Frankfurt School thinkers, later referred to as Neo-Marxian, and the first generation of the Frankfurt School included Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979), and Erich Fromm (1900-1980). The most prominent figure of the second generation of the Frankfurt School was Jürgen Habermas (1927-2009).[7]

4   Thoughts on Critical Pedagogy

In recent times, education has been repeatedly tested to determine whether it simply legitimizes or perpetuates existing social systems and structures, or whether it should instead play a critical role in driving social change and transformation towards

justice. This section aims to trace the emergence and interconnection of critical pedagogy thoughts to create an easily understandable framework.

The emergence of critical education is directly influenced by Marxist thought (1818-1883) and its derivatives, such as neo-Marxist critical education, Freirean dialogical education, Maoist education, and others. The influence of Marxist perspectives on educational theory and policy is significant, with Marxism generating widely spread analyses and ideas among intellectuals, spanning beyond socialist or Marxist nations to various European and American countries. These critical educational ideas emerged as a challenge to traditional and liberal educational models, which were perceived as failing to uphold human dignity and instead fostering dehumanization.

The essence of critical pedagogy can be summarized in two key aspects: as a philosophical approach and as a social movement. Philosophically, critical pedagogy seeks to develop learning strategies that encourage dialogue between knowledge and reality, generating new knowledge aligned with revolutionary ideals. The relationship between students and teachers should be equal. As a social movement, critical pedagogy implies that education should be created by, for, and of the community to establish democratic principles and freedom from oppression.

Referring to the Frankfurt School's thought, several foundational ideas can be introduced into education: first, critical enlightenment. In this context, the critical theory developed by the Frankfurt School analyzes power struggles between groups and individuals in society. In the context of critical pedagogy, these struggles occur within schools. Critical pedagogy argues that dominant groups can legitimize the status quo to gain various benefits. Second, critical emancipation. Second, critical emancipation. This emancipation seeks to understand how societal groups gain power to control social life. Here, critical theory aims to uncover the forces that support their social status and position. Equally important is the effort to understand the domination of power and its influence on individuals in building a democratic society. Third, the reconceptualization of critical theory serves as a tool to understand the complexity of power dynamics that permeate and dominate individual consciousness, ideology, literature, teaching, and various discursive practices in society.

The core ideas of critical education theorists are generally divided into Marxian and neo-Marxian groups. The Marxian group includes Marx himself, Lenin, and Antonio Gramsci. The neo-Marxian group, initiated by the Frankfurt School, emphasizes both theoretical and practical aspects of critical education. Notable figures in critical education as both theory and social movement include Paulo Freire, Ivan Illich, and Henry Giroux.

5   Alternative Education: Non-Formal Education for the Humanization of Education

Alternative education that relies on the critical education paradigm has various forms and targets according to the conditions of each community. However, the goal of

teaching society to be more empowered is a target that must be given priority. The forms of alternative education initiated by various groups in society vary greatly and by the communities that have been their partners. Alternative education is developed by grassroots communities, for example through education for rural, coastal, and urban women's groups, street children, domestic workers, and so on.[8] The following describes the forms of alternative education organized by the community.

5.1. Ciliwung Girls' School.

Ciliwung Women's School is an alternative school run by mothers who live on the banks of the Ciliwung River. This school was founded around 2002, inseparable from the role of an NGO called Kapal Perempuan. Awareness to develop has made this school continue to survive for 3 years. So far, there are 20 school participants. It is in this school that they develop a critical attitude, awareness, and solidarity.

Ciliwung Women's School is not like most schools that wear uniforms, shoes, carry bags and go to class. They held it in the village alley. Not even school every day. Only Mondays and Tuesdays from 13.00-15.00, after they cook and take care of the household. There are no school nameplates or school symbols in general.

Ciliwung Women's School not only teaches to understand gender and social issues through classes. They also learn using methods such as playing theater, poetry, and singing. They also learn how to be independent and manage finances for their sustainability.

One of the methods used by Ciliwung Women's School students is to manage aid funds. They agreed that when they received aid funds, they would not immediately distribute them to members. They implemented this commitment when they received aid funds from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment of IDR 2 million divided among 20 school members, so each person only received around IDR 100 100,000. According to them, this amount is too small and the allocation may not be clear. For this reason, they agreed that the funds would be collected in the treasury and managed to produce results.

They also provide electricity payment services to residents. They can pay the electricity bill for each resident's house in advance with a service of only 3 thousand rupiahs per house. Apart from making money, this service can also help residents to pay for electricity. From the proceeds from selling these services, now the Ciliwung Women's School still holds the full amount of aid funds and has received an additional collection of around 8 hundred thousand. The money can be used for several purposes, such as buying food if there are guests and expenses for demonstrations.

Meanwhile, for theater, they have done many performances. All the stories and actors are mothers themselves. They formulate together the theme, storyline, roles, and their acting. This process of togetherness grows stronger among them. The stories they tell also reflect the mothers' own experiences and are strengthened by their education at the Ciliwung Women's School.

The existence of the Ciliwung Women's School has indeed attracted a lot of attention. Efforts to continue maintaining the school and its activities have not only received reactions and challenges from internal members but also from outside parties. Internal obstacles that are always considered by mothers who attend this school usually

come from their husbands, especially regarding permission to attend school. Not all husbands permit their wives because of domestic problems, such as fear of household chores not being taken care of, their children being neglected or not being able to serve their husbands. Apart from that, this school is also considered an attempt to fight against their husbands, which is why many husbands don't allow it.

The most difficult challenge is that this school is considered a tool to spread a particular religion to its members. This issue disrupted teaching and learning activities. Fortunately, this religious issue did not continue for long because the Ciliwung Women's School is really for education.

The real result of the Ciliwung Women's School is that it makes women critical and empowered. They are more able to be independent and determine for themselves what their needs are. They not only become critical of family matters but also respond to socio-political problems that occur, such as the increase in fuel prices. Now they can respond to every government policy. They can assess the impact of policies, whether positive or negative so that they can react to events that occur.

What also has a positive impact on this school is the building of a sense of solidarity with others. The Ciliwung Women's School teaches that solidarity is very necessary in togetherness, especially in a diverse community environment.

What also has a positive impact on this school is the building of a sense of solidarity with others. The Ciliwung Women's School teaches that solidarity is very necessary in togetherness, especially in a diverse community environment. The Ciliwung Women's School also instills that solidarity is not only for those at school but also for those outside school.[9]

5.2. Kartini Emergency School

The presence of the Kartini Emergency School cannot be separated from the role of two women, Rossy and Rian. This school was first established in 1996. Building this school is not too difficult. Apart from the services of the Twin Teachers (as Rossy and Rian are known) who spent their savings, the construction of this school received support from the local community, so the costs were not too high. Its presence can help them send their children to school for free.

Kartini Emergency School has four places. The first hour of teaching for the Twin Teachers is 07.00-10.00 at the Kartini Ancol Emergency School. Once finished, 10.00-13.00 continue to Rawabebek Emergency School. Then from 13.00-15.00, the Twin Teachers continued teaching at the Pluit Skills school. After the whistle, they went home first, to the Kelapa Gading area, North Jakarta. After Maghrib, they continued teaching at the Kartini Muara Angke Emergency School, in the skills sector. They do this quite busy activity every day, from Monday to Saturday.

They both have a unique appearance, namely with their distinctive round hats and the colors of the clothes they choose. The aim is to show cleanliness, neatness, and discipline. Amid a dirty atmosphere, they remain clean and tidy. Their appearance is also to show how they respect the environment.

The most basic aim of the activities they carry out is to eradicate poverty by 'cutting its chains', both structurally and culturally. They believe that each person has their own

work ethic, as well as their abilities, it just depends on the opportunities that open up and the individual's willingness to escape the trap of poverty.

Environmental factors influence their daily behavior. Resigned to fate which sometimes makes them not do anything to change themselves. The Twin Teachers believe that the people under the bridge can work and develop themselves as long as there is opportunity and there are people who encourage and provide various skills or basic capital that make them confident.[10]

5.3. Coastal Environmental Education Sanggar Karang Bokori

Sanggar Karang Bokori, located in Southeast Sulawesi, provides alternative education in the form of knowledge at an early age about the importance of maintaining ocean balance. The background to its founding is due to the increasing use of explosives so that fish, which is the daily food of the population in this area of Southeast Sulawesi, is decreasing. Apart from also seeing the condition of residents' houses located on the edge of the sea, which are vulnerable to being swept away by waves due to gradation.

The education carried out by this studio is to introduce elementary school-age children to more about corals, the sea, and everything related to the coastal environment.

In this educational concept, girls and boys are not differentiated. All of them are given knowledge about the coastal environment around them and are not molded into the gender roles that society usually holds. for example, girls are not directed to stay at home while boys sail to the sea. Both were given support to realize the importance of preserving the environment. The educational concept they apply is made as attractive as possible and applies equally to male and female students. The concept of fun or play is the most important thing implemented in this school.[11]

5.4. Feminist Education for Marginalized Women

Feminist education is one of the schools of educational models that wants to build critical awareness and critical analysis of reality while encouraging transformative actions for justice and equality. Feminist education aims to build women's critical awareness by inviting them to recognize the structural causes of oppression, subjugation and subordination that women experience in their daily lives. From here, women are invited to see themselves as history makers, not just passive objects.

Thus, women's critical awareness becomes a very important element in the process of women's empowerment which enables them to fight against domination and oppression which are legitimized by the value system and patriarchal structures. One example of a method that is often used is a method that invites women to reflect on their bodily autonomy by feeling their bodies from head to toe. Through this method, women begin to critically recognize their bodies, including their reproductive organs, which have previously been taboo to discuss openly in public spaces.

The experience of Kapal Women in poor communities in Jakarta and disaster victims in Aceh shows that this method can raise women's awareness of how little information they have about their bodies and how limited their bodily autonomy is. They then understand that women's bodies are a battle arena in the context of a society

that prioritizes male leadership. From this new understanding, it is then shown which values, structures, and institutions have legitimized women's alienation from their bodies. Women's critical awareness is starting to build slowly and it is hoped that in the end, a way of seeing and critically analyzing women will develop in looking at reality and the world.[12]

5.5. Qaryah Thayyibah School

Qaryah Thayyibah School (QT School) is a non-formal educational institution that serves the education of its students at the secondary education level which was founded among the surrounding farming community. This learning community, which is more often called Bumbung Berdaya or Resource Center, is a place for learning residents to access production resources, including information resources. This institution offers liberating education based on the philosophy of education for all groups. The educational concept applied by this institution is a learning concept that is based on the context of local life. The substance of education developed is to emphasize the beneficial value of each ongoing learning process.

The founder of this school was the son of a respected kyai in his community. The figure of a kyai provides authority that can mobilize and break down the local community's helplessness regarding the importance of equitable education.[13]

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that education empowers individuals through various situations. It's important to note that education allows people to become aware, enlightened, empowered, and to change their behavior.[14] Therefore, education creates educational philosophy, ideology, paradigms, theories, and practices that drive social change towards a better and more humane society.

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