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Perspective of Critical Pedagogy

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Abstract

The critical pedagogy perspective is currently being promoted in education to advocate for inclusion and equity. However, few have considered the prospect of its application in the role of education towards poverty alleviation. This research discusses the contribution of Paulo Freire's thoughts on the idea of pedagogy of the oppressed which discusses the education of the oppressed. The education of the oppressed is education for humans who are involved in fighting for their freedom from the shackles of structural poverty created by education. Oppression referred to by Paulo Freire is any form of thought, structure, system, or culture that dominates, blackmails, deprives, dehumanizes, and prevents others from affirming themselves as dignified human beings. This research uses a systematic or narrative review to examine various theoretical literature and empirical research then analyzes all source materials using content analysis techniques. The results show that education can reduce poverty, as it will provide opportunities to get a decent education that can encourage participation in more decent work. In addition, critical education will increase critical awareness in solving problems and communicating through various means. This research argues that education plays a role in reducing poverty. Not only that, through the view of critical pedagogy, it can encourage individuals to be able to develop the potential they have in themselves, so that they can live independently. Critical pedagogy should be taught to students from an early age to generate critical thinking in addressing the realities of life.

Keywords

education, poverty, critical pedagogy

1 Introduction

Poverty is one of the biggest challenges facing humanity today, amidst the rapid development of technology and information. Poverty affects the quality of education and public health. This occurs due to the lack of fulfilment of the supporting life needs to achieve livability. Poverty is a serious problem and until now almost all countries in the world have experienced this problem. Poverty can be described as a hereditary problem faced by humans from time to time (Amofah & Agyare, 2022). Additionally, poverty is a long-term dilemma that is still ongoing today and has the potential to oppose sustainable development. Development in a country is not only in the economic aspect but the impact felt from the existence of development that has implications for welfare and livability. Poverty is a common task to be combated and has been on the political agenda in recent years at various conferences and state meetings (Hofmarcher, 2021). Poverty is faced by vulnerable groups of people who experience difficulties in resources to fulfil basic needs such as shelter, nutritious food, proper health, clothing, and other supporting needs. Despite this, several government policies have targeted these vulnerable groups through assistance for living needs, business capital, health subsidies, education funding subsidies, and other programs. However, some of the programs provided by the government to these vulnerable groups have not been fully distributed evenly. This has led to social inequalities in the community.

One of the impacts of poverty is on the ability to think critically, which is used to analyze information, evaluate arguments, and make reasonable judgments. This is the main capital for a person to be able to escape from poverty because this ability encourages forward thinking and changes living conditions. Poverty conditions that occur in several countries affect restrictions on access to education and health. Education is a central and fundamental suggestion that can develop critical thinking skills. However, the poverty that afflicts a family force them to prioritize basic needs such as food and shelter compared to

the need for proper education. As is the case in Indonesia, which is still facing the problem of poverty. Based on data obtained from Indonesia's 2020-2045 Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN), the percentage of poor people still has not reached the government's target of 7 to 6.5 per cent. But, based on data collected from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) for the period 2020 to 2022, the percentage of poor people is still at 9 per cent. The decline in the percentage of poor people in Indonesia tends to be slow and stagnant (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020)

Based on the data presented above, the problem of poverty affects the quality of education because higher education is associated with lower poverty levels. Based on several studies that have been conducted previously, education can be used to alleviate poverty because someone who has an education can easily access jobs and other opportunities (Purnomo, Istiqomah, & Suharno, 2020). Thus, the potential of the education sector to alleviate poverty can be one of the solutions to this problem. Without access to proper and quality education, children who come from weak economic backgrounds are unable to develop the analytical and reasoning skills used for critical thinking. Poverty can limit the range of experiences and perspectives a person has. Individuals from poor economic groups tend to be less able to contribute to various activities and have limited access to events. As a result of this tendency, they have a narrow mindset and are less able to understand the dynamics of life that occur. Moreover, poverty can lead to a sense of helplessness and hopelessness.

The problem of poverty that occurs from generation to generation in almost all countries indicates that there is a need to evaluate the various policy systems that apply. If so far pedagogy is only understood as a method of learning and education, then there needs to be a broader understanding that pedagogy can be a paradigm of life or a deep view of seeing relationships with the world and with other people. The critical pedagogy paradigm is critical because it questions the power relations that exist in society to produce certain social patterns (Wattimena, 2018). Thus, critical pedagogy provides insights to oppose and criticize the phenomenon of poverty that occurs, so there is a need for evaluation and accountability of the authorities. By doing so, it is hoped that it can create a more just world, thus providing opportunities for everyone to access more appropriate education and improve the degree of prosperous life. The purpose of this study is to determine the role of education's role in poverty alleviation from the perspective of critical pedagogy. The results of this research are expected to be information for the government and policymakers to formulate an equitable education system so that it can be accessed by all people.

2 Methods

Education is an opportunity that can be utilized by all elements of society without any exceptions. Education is the main joint in life that leads a person to a more decent life. This reason makes education mandatory for the next generation of the nation. However, other things must be considered related to education, the need for support needs that not everyone can access. The problem of poverty that occurs in developing countries is a major challenge in developing quality education equity. This affects the quality of human resources produced by a country.

This research uses qualitative research methods which generally include data in the form of words rather than numbers (Busetto, Wick, & Gumbinger, 2020). Data were obtained through the collection of information from scientific journals, scientific articles, and online news published in the period 2018-2023. Data collection was carried out through online searches to collect data related to the effect of poverty on education. In addition, the online search method was also carried out to find out the role of education in poverty alleviation efforts from the perspective of critical pedagogy.

The data collection technique in this research uses journal reviews, scientific articles, and online news related to the role of education in poverty alleviation efforts. A review of journal articles was conducted to determine the impact of education on poverty alleviation. The analysis in this study was carried out descriptively interpretative which emphasizes descriptive data analysis and in-depth interpretation and discusses coherently (Elliott & Timulak, 2021). The data obtained was then analyzed through three stages. First, reduction which is the selection, sorting, and grouping of data which is then organized to find the correlation of the role of education in poverty alleviation. Second, the presentation of data presented in the form of a narrative is complemented by the sources referred to. Third, verification is done by concluding with the questions underlying the researcher's questions.

3 Effect of Education and Poverty Level

The poverty that occurs in developing countries seems endless and various efforts have been made to overcome the effects of poverty. Likewise, in Indonesia, the problem of poverty occurs to this day. Based on data collected from the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2020, the poverty rate increased by 27.55 million people and the poverty rate was around 10.19 per cent. This happened because of the COVID-19 pandemic, so several companies made layoffs as a result some employees were affected and experienced unemployment. In 2021, the poverty rate in Indonesia decreased by 26.50 million people with a poverty rate of 9.71 per cent. This happened because of the stimulus of capital assistance and social assistance to reduce the poverty rate (Zaqiah, Triani, & Yeni, 2023). Efforts made by the government are expected to reduce poverty so that it has an impact on a better life. A better life can start from the awareness of the importance of education, it becomes the basis for a paradigm of thought and a person's perspective on reality.

Poverty is often associated with poor performance and gender inequality, especially in developing countries. This is reinforced by the difficulty of accessing credit funding due to low wages that make it impossible to repay debts. In addition, parents with low education are less likely to educate their children, as they tend not to value education. The lack of community resources in poor communities tends to affect the quality of education in schools. Lastly, as the labour market has been fragmented, the benefits of education in poor and remote areas are unlikely to deter investment in education. In a situation of financial inclusion, education has an important role in helping individuals access and use better educational facilities.

Increased education will have implications for increasing the quality and productivity of a person because they can take advantage of opportunities to develop and achieve prosperity. When traced in-depth, currently globally, more than 100 million children around the world, especially in poor countries, do not have access to proper education (Baedowi, 2017). In addition to this, the failure of the government's policies also has an impact on education equity. (Bernstein, 2006) in his book *All Together Now: Common Sense for a Fair Economy* says that helping the poor to get a good and proper education is a strategic step to reduce a country's poverty rate. Knowledge in the form of experience and skills will have an impact on the opportunities and quality that result from the education process. In line with this, Indonesia has Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, the implementation of education has provided a clear operational basis for the education service system. The characteristics of the improvement of the education system are equality of opportunity to get an education, the achievement of justice in terms of the distribution of learning facilities, justice in the elements of service, and the absence of discrimination in the education process (Baedowi, 2017). The effect of the improvement of the education system will provide broad opportunities for groups of people from weak economies because they have been accommodated through equitable policies. Clarity in the education delivery system will have implications for openness of views to respect each other's policies.

Opportunities in obtaining an education will provide the ability to develop through experience and mastery of understanding gained during learning. The higher the level of education, the more knowledge and experience will increase, so that it will produce qualified and competent human resources. Good quality has an impact on improving welfare or generating more income than community groups that do not have educational experience. Through education, it can be a bridge to save oneself from the shackles of poverty (Lestari, Pasha, Oktapianti, & Noviarita, 2021). Education is a fundamental development goal and key to shaping one's ability to cope with a rapidly changing life. Based on the new growth theory, it emphasizes the importance of the role of policymakers to encourage the improvement of human capital to increase productivity. Strategic steps that can be taken are through education investment to improve the high quality of human resources as indicated by the skills and abilities possessed (Zaqiah et al., 2023). Awareness to achieve a better life needs to be built and emphasized in the community so that there is encouragement to get out of the shackles of poverty.

Education is not only learning to do something but is one of the important elements in improving human quality capital. (Hardana et al., 2023). Quality human resources will encourage the progress of a country so that countries that have quality human resources will have advantages in various fields. Based on human capital theory, a person increases income through increased education which can provide opportunities for achieving socio-economic welfare. In contrast to the failure of educational development, it will give birth to social problems such as unemployment, crime, drug abuse, and moral degradation. This will be a social burden on the government. Thus, it can be concluded that higher a person's level of education will encourage the productivity of human resources. This has a broad impact on welfare and the

achievement of a decent life. So that quality and equitable education can reduce the poverty rate of a country.

The destructive impact of poverty has hampered economies in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) (Shi & Qamruzzaman, 2022). Not only that, the scarcity of economic resources in low- and lower-middle-income countries hurts educational engagement and resulting participation in education. The relationship between education and poverty has been researched extensively in empirical studies. Based on research conducted by Bharit and Dhongde in the United States for the period 2018-2021, shows that there is a relationship between low education and quality education. In addition, the study shows that individuals with middle and higher-standard education will be more fortunate than those with substandard education (Hofmarcher, 2021). So it can be said that higher education results in higher income. Thus, based on the results of the above research, a person who gained a higher education can help reduce poverty levels and accelerate obtaining opinions that ultimately support an increase in living standards.

3.1 The Role of Critical Pedagogy in Poverty Alleviation

Poverty is a phenomenon that is officially recognized in all countries of the world. One of the serious problems that occur in a country is due to poverty, so the problem of poverty should not be ignored. All people in the world certainly have a joint commitment to overcoming poverty, starting through government policies and the lifestyle applied. This has an important meaning both theoretically and practically in solving the problem of poverty. Poverty that occurs in society has a relationship with the education process in a country. According to a figure Lin Chengdong who coined the theory of poverty alleviation through education argues that education has an anti-poverty function and can help the poor to break the cycle of poverty (Tian & Ming, 2022). In addition, there are influences and functions of education in efforts to reduce poverty. In the long run, poverty alleviation through education can boost the local economy, increase the income of the poor, and increase the proportion of education investment. Therefore, the ideology for poverty alleviation through education has gradually shifted from the pursuit of accessibility justice to a process.

Education is a conscious effort that makes people critical of the situations and conditions they face so that they can solve problems in life. Education that is appropriate to the target can help increase opportunities for humans to overcome life problems such as the problem of poverty. Critical pedagogy education focuses on developing humans independently and critically. This is an important foundation for the poor to have the ability to realize what they face in life so that they can be free from poverty. In other words, critical pedagogy helps to free themselves and can contribute to changing the situation of life for the better, especially out of poverty (Thị Tuyết Vân, 2018). The problem of poverty has become the main agenda in the country's development, so various efforts have been made to reduce the problem of poverty. The presence of the problem of poverty will have an impact on other areas of life, such as low health quality, access to adequate housing, and security in life.

Paulo Freire is a Brazilian philosopher who is most famously regarded as a great thinker focusing on the philosophy of education and pedagogy. Paulo Freire was born into a situation of extreme poverty and cruel rule. This background encouraged Freire to combine his study of life experiences to give birth to a new and revolutionary perspective on the education model. The main purpose of his thought is to educate people who have the potential of themselves and the power to change themselves for the better. Paulo Freire in his work entitled "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1972) carried out the mission of critical pedagogy by building a network of marginalized and disadvantaged peasant communities to access facilities to raise awareness and the meaning of life today (Freire, 2020). In this case, Paulo Freire engages peasants in problem-based education which is different from the traditional banking education model with a dialogue technique model. Dialogue with farmer groups is not only to learn from each other but to find a common solution by changing the community's perspective. Farmers who are members of the dialogue group will be free from pressure and feelings of being outsiders in exchanging ideas. The dialogical approach of critical pedagogy is one way that is believed to be able to overcome poverty because it is closely related to the nature of inequality. Thus, the effectiveness of this pedagogy can encourage us to get out of the problem of poverty that is built through human critical consciousness (Soler-Gallart, 2023). This happens because learners can be aware of life situations and try to find solutions to the problems they are facing.

Through this pattern, critical pedagogy plays the role of education as liberation and awareness. Liberation is understood as liberation from the bondage of poverty and ignorance, while awareness is understood as an awareness of one's role and position in the social relations of society (Nur & Asdiniah, 2021). Critical pedagogy can be understood through two sides of meaning, first critical pedagogy is a

paradigm of thinking that is built through critical thinking to question and criticize education including systems, policies, theories, and others. Second, critical pedagogy is a social movement that is expected to give birth to egalitarian, humanist, democratic education with a critical thinking foundation (Pernantah, 2020). Through the foundation of critical pedagogy, it is hoped that it can encourage people who have a background of poverty to be able to overcome life problems and achieve prosperity.

Critical pedagogy is fundamental in life, especially for the lives of vulnerable people such as those in poverty. In these conditions, many people do not have the opportunity to determine the direction of life and contribute more to society, due to lack of opportunities and limited access. Critical pedagogy can be a means to build awareness and encourage social change. Critical pedagogy is a paradigm of thought and theoretical action that can change the situation in society through critical thinking about government policies. If the situation and conditions of poverty that occur in society are left unchecked, the poor become helpless and fall into a situation of blame, guilt, and shame. As a result, they indirectly build a life barrier between themselves and society. The conditions of poverty that occur in the community will usually affect their powerlessness and alienation. For these problems, action is needed to push out of poverty through community meetings to exchange ideas and solutions to problems. This strategy is a real step that must be taken to change the perspective and change the habits of the poor so that they can get out of poverty.

4. Conclusions

This research found that poverty that has occurred in the community for generations until now is a common problem that must be resolved by changing the perspective and paradigm of thinking of the government and the community itself. The attitude of indifference about the conditions of poverty makes the poor isolate themselves and there is no encouragement to get out of poverty. Furthermore, education equality should be carried out to provide equitable access to education. This is one of the factors that encourage people's enthusiasm to continue their education. Critical pedagogy has a role in poverty alleviation because it encourages people to think critically through the paradigm of liberation and awareness of the situation and conditions faced by the poor. Through these activities, it is expected to be able to encourage the community to criticize and realize the importance of getting out of the poverty zone that limits various access and opportunities for a decent life. The research was very limited with data derived from descriptive analysis of journals, scientific articles, and online web. Therefore, further research is needed related to the role of critical pedagogy in efforts to overcome poverty in developing countries and can be complemented with broad-scale in-depth interview informant data. Analysis related to the role of critical pedagogy can be the basis for the formulation of educational policies and social policies for poverty alleviation. In addition, other researchers can use analysis from various perspectives to complement data related to the role of critical pedagogy in poverty alleviation.

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