

The Philosophy of Perennialism

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Article History: Received on 22 June 2023, Revised on 28 August 2023,
Published on 17 September 2023

Abstract: Perennialism is a teacher-centered educational philosophy that focuses on timeless ideas and universal truths. Apart from that, the educational philosophy of perennialism means growing with time and being eternal. The view of this philosophy is to believe that the values and morals that develop in society are eternal. The role of this philosophy is to realize the abilities possessed by students as one of the basic potentials. Truth in this school is universal and constant. Educational objectives are material-centered (content-based, subject-centered), one of which is in the discipline of history. Perennialism suggests that the focus of education should be ideas that have survived through the centuries, believing that these ideas are as relevant and meaningful today as when they were written. This Educational Philosophy aims to prepare students for life by developing their intellectual and moral qualities through an emphasis on knowledge and the meaning of knowledge, serving to improve students' critical thinking skills in their search for individual freedom, human rights and responsibility through nature.

Keywords: Economics, Perennialism, Philosophy, Religion, Politics and Education

A. Introduction

The goal of perennialist education is to cultivate the power of thought, internalize universal truths, and ensure that students receive an understanding of the great concepts that Western society has established. This is the most flexible, conservative, and traditional philosophy. Perennialism encourages students to think critically and thoughtfully, which helps them become more rational. Etymologically, the term "perennialism" comes from the Latin word "perennial", which comes from the Latin word "perennis", which was later transformed into the English word "abdos", which means "eternal, everlasting, or eternal", and additionally "ism", which means school or understanding.

B. Methods

This article uses the article review writing method, which is done by collecting and comparing various kinds of data from journal articles related to perennialism in the study of philosophy by collecting 25 research journal articles. The data collection technique used is to collect some data and information from various sources which will later be used as references from several relevant sources, ranging from books to national and international journal articles.

C. Results and Discussion

According to Rahmadania et al., (2022) the basic principle of perennialism is to help students discover and internalize eternal truths, because truth contains eternal universal values. This truth can only be obtained through intellectual exercises that develop a systematic and logical mind. In Islamic educational philosophy, immortality is obtained through intuitive and intellectual training. Perennialism considers education to be the dissemination of knowledge about eternal truths. Since there is an equation between knowledge and eternal truth, knowledge is eternally true.

Meanwhile, according to Murtaufiq, (2014) perennialism theory is an educational theory that is strongly influenced by the principles of realism. Perennialism offers a conservative and traditional perspective on education and human nature. Perennialists argue that truth is eternal and universal, so that good education is also eternal and universal.

Still according to Murtaufiq, (2014) the purpose of education, for perennialist, the main purpose of education is to ensure that students gain an understanding of important concepts from Western civilization, which have the potential to solve problems that arise in the present or the past.

Curriculum, the focus is to teach eternal concepts and search for unchanging and eternal truths, as the natural and human worlds are the most important and unchanging. It's important to teach these unchanging principles to our children. Since humans are rational, their minds must be developed. Therefore, the development of the intellect should be given the highest priority in education. The curriculum emphasizes students' cultural understanding and the development of lasting discipline. Great works of literature and art, laws, or principles of science are the noblest human achievements.

The perennialist education curriculum focuses on materials and shows the importance of literature, mathematics, languages, history, and humanities. According to perennialists, the best way to gain lasting knowledge is to read and

talk about the great works of Western Civilization. Reading and talking about these great works produces discipline of the mind. Therefore, a teacher must have extensive knowledge of the discipline or material, have expertise in teaching the truth, and have no bad qualities. Teachers must be respected and their expertise should no longer be doubted. Schools are responsible for developing intellectual individuals who will provide hope for the future.

According to Hidayati & Surachmi, (2023) the application of perennialism in education is necessary so that individuals do not throw away existing cultural values. Thomas Aquinas considers students to be rational creatures, so that in the implementation of education in the classroom, students here occupy a leading position. It is believed that each student here has their own potential, so they just need to be guided so they can make the right conclusions. The desire to find the truth is what gives rise to curiosity, making students here always learn about things around them to satisfy their curiosity. The role of educators in this philosophy is as students who experience the learning and teaching process. The philosophy of sustainable education has 4 general learning principles that humans must have. First, truth is universal and does not depend on place, time and person. Second, good education involves the pursuit of knowledge of truth. Third, truth can be found in great works. Fourth, education is a liberating activity to develop the mind. One of the most important things that people often see in today's society is the problem of morality, as if they no longer live in the culture and values that are rooted in society. To improve the current chaotic social life, education is needed as a solution to overcome it.

According to Romansah, (2017) Philosophy that is still relevant and can be passed on from generation to generation is considered perennial philosophy. This is also considered to be able to transcend changing philosophical trends and styles. Especially in the last seventy years, the term "perennial philosophy" has become so popular that many books and articles have tried to thoroughly explain its meaning. The question of the true meaning of perennial philosophy is not an easy one to answer, and the answer becomes increasingly difficult as time goes on. Many philosophers from various schools and eras have tried to answer that question, claiming that their philosophy is still relevant.

According to Lailisna, (2022) perennialist educational theory is a theory that actually tries to 'restore' local wisdom and culture in the past. In fact, not everything that is 'old' is bad or worthless. In this case, perennialist education is a solution process for several things that are considered to deviate from values and norms, social and cultural order and natural sustainability. Even humans themselves have an equally important position in this matter. Some stories from ancient times, humans with good civilization, can be a very philosophical historical journey. Perennialism considers modernity to be the result of human thought; however, human thinking is

not always limited to what is good; error exists. To maintain human survival, the union of human body and soul must always be built and maintained without stopping.

According to Suryandari, (2023) Plato's Perennialism argues that everyone can build knowledge and information independently through social interaction with people who are more capable. There is no need to provide assistance until students are able to learn independently. Thematic learning encourages students to talk or share ideas with peers and other people, in accordance with Plato's theory of Perennialism, which wants student-centered learning.

According to Junaidi, (2016) this basic truth is an eternal truth, which according to the Koran has been taught to every prophet and apostle. However, the manhaj or sharia brought by the prophets and apostles is not the same, so according to Nur Cholis Madjid, this difference is the basis for the reality of the plurality of religions which is indeed God's will. In this way, Islam not only protects, but also provides religious justification for plurality or what is called multiculturalism.

According to Sulaiman, (2013) education must focus on a strong ideal culture. Therefore, perennialism views education as a way back, or a process of returning humans to their current condition as in the culture in question. Perennialism sees no convincing path other than a return to the principles that have shaped human habits and personalities apart from ancient and medieval cultures.

According to Astutuk & Khojir, (2023) The philosophy of Perennialism is largely about looking at what has been and what will continue to happen and offering a different perspective that brings people back to their spiritual origins rather than delving into glimpses of physical life that often leave people fascinated and confused. Man loses himself. By returning to the spiritual center, one can gain a holistic view of oneself, nature, and the world. The philosophy of Perennialism is that there is the same knowledge and religious message in every religion and esoteric tradition. These messages appear under different names and take different forms and symbols. Perennialist philosophers argue that a "sick" culture exists in the modern world which is plagued by chaos, confusion and disorder, which causes many crises in all aspects of human life. Perennialism offers an alternative centered on purely cultural principles. One of the "regressions" is selected. It was a return to the common ideal underlying medieval and ancient actions. These theories encompass intellectual, practical, and moral principles that are essential to cultural progress.

According to Tapung, (2015) in the modern and postmodern centuries, the failure of wisdom in its various dimensions causes various tragedies that are detrimental to humans. This failure occurs because people overestimate their own abilities and

forget reality. The nature of reality is not considered to be a pleasant basis for human life; that is eternity or immortality, and that is where the diverse images of humans in this world come from. Therefore, there needs to be an effort to deepen and understand the nature of this world so that humans can recover and build their lives well and correctly. By exploring and understanding the nature of this world, humans will be better able to explore and understand noble values such as wisdom, truth, justice and humanity. These virtues are already present in human life and remain strong against any change. They prevent people from becoming weak and failing in their lives.

According to Amalia, (2019) to understand the complex reality of religion and diversity, perennialists use a mystical approach. They try to find the roots of religiosity from various forms of religion in the understanding of the divine aspect, and ideally try to find the nodal points of this diversity of understanding, so that they can achieve a transcendental understanding of the One. God is existentially one. According to perennial philosophy, religion is seen from two sides: exoteric and esoteric. Schuon draws a line between the exoteric and the esoteric. Exoteric (exoteric) are things that are known and done by all members of a group that adheres to a particular ideology, while esoteric are things that are only known and done by some members of a group that adheres to a particular ideology. According to Schuon's thesis, all religions are basically the same or essentially the same, but their form is what differentiates them.

According to Latifah, (2016), basically, perennial philosophy studies things that already exist and will continue to exist, and offers alternative perspectives to help humans return to the basis of their own spirituality. In this way, they can avoid being immersed in the joys of material life, which often lead us to be deceived and encourage various actions that are not in accordance with our humanity. So, humans will have a more holistic understanding of themselves, nature and the world after returning to the center of their spirituality. However, Perennial philosophy does not intend to eliminate formal religious diversity. Instead, he defended "formal religions" and attempted to find solutions to transcendent and esoteric spiritual problems.

According to Nurrochman & Fauziati, (2023) perennialism argues that, especially in the order of moral, intellectual and sociocultural life, the world today is full of chaos, uncertainty and disorder. The solution to this situation is to return to the values that were a strong way of life in ancient times. "Education as cultural regression", or "education as a way back", is a perennialist perspective which considers education as a process of returning to the current human condition, the current value of education as in past cultures, or the value of past education which is considered an ideal culture or appropriate values to apply in the present (Ahmadi, 2014). Education is responsible for providing knowledge about the principles of definite,

absolute and eternal truth found in a culture that is considered ideal. Perennialism holds that the principles of education are timeless and universal. "Perennialism" comes from the statement that the basic principles of education repeat themselves and never change.

According to Yasyakur et al., (2021) the main principle of perennialist education is to encourage students to discover and internalize eternal truths, because eternal truths contain permanent and universal characteristics. In Islamic educational philosophy, eternal truth is obtained through intuition, not just through intellectual exercise; this truth can only be obtained through intellectual exercises that make the mind systematic and organized. Knowledge is the source of truth; truth always has something in common. Education must look for patterns so that students can adapt, balance between world truths and essential truths.

According to Afiyah, (2020), adherents of the perennialist philosophy argue that training and developing thinking (mental discipline) is a very important part of the learning process, or what they prioritize during the learning process. Therefore, educational and theoretical programs generally center on developing thinking skills and discipline. According to this theory, education is defined as an activity that focuses on improvement and change. The development of science and technology has resulted in brilliant achievements for humans in the modern world, which has demonstrated unmatched development in human civilization. Aristotle, one of the important figures in this school, stated that the development of human qualities depends on an emphasis on training and habituation. Therefore, awareness of mental discipline should be instilled and developed from childhood.

According to Habsari, (2013) the learning method used by perennialists is reading and discussion, namely reading and discussing famous works in order to discipline their minds. The teacher not only functions as an intermediary between the world and the soul of the student; They also act as students who experience the learning process. In addition to enabling the potential for self-discovery, teachers provide moral authority to their students because they position themselves as more experienced and qualified professionals compared to their students. Teachers must have more actuality and perfect knowledge.

According to Arfan, (2014), the application of perennialism in Islamic religious education includes, among other things, determining educational goals by referring to eternal sources of truth, namely the Al-Quran and Hadith. Cultural inheritance is also an urgent matter in perennialism, this aims to continue to preserve past culture which is considered the most ideal. Learning materials are more centered on traditions and the thoughts of previous scholars. Curriculum development is like that used in perennialism, namely the subject centered model. Material that must be included includes insights into the thoughts of previous scholars, passing on past

culture, as well as how other religions are false (truth claims). In choosing the method that maintains many students in the truth of Islamic nature regardless of religion, the Prophet Muhammad's teaching method in teaching the Islamic religion was chosen.

According to Putri, (2021) in perennialist pedagogy, students have the most important position because they are considered rational beings. It is believed that every student has extraordinary potential and only needs guidance to convey the truth correctly. This urge to seek the truth gives rise to curiosity, which encourages students to continue studying what is around them to answer their curiosity. The role of educators in this philosophy is as students who share the learning and teaching process.

According to Ulya, (2022) the theory of perennialism emphasizes that noble values and religious standards began to erode in the past. Therefore, the 2013 curriculum, which uses a scientific approach in the learning process, is designed specifically for the child's development process so that it is able to encourage children's character, personality, morality and morals. This can have a positive impact on children so that they become virtuous individuals in their environment. Early childhood education offers an alternative for instilling moral values and religious habits through children's habituation. This is in line with the perennialist perspective on education, which argues that education should create peace in society.

According to Nuryamin, (2019) Perennialism views education as cultural regression or education as a way back, a journey back, or a process of returning the current human situation and culture to the way it was in the past by reusing general values or principles that have become a strong outlook on life. , firm, and ideal in the past, including in the Middle Ages. Therefore, it can be said that the purpose of education is to give people knowledge about certain, absolute and eternal truth values that exist in a culture that is considered ideal.

According to Nanggala & Suryadi, (2021) perennialism is a type of educational philosophy that focuses on building students' intelligence and personality. Apart from the fact that they did not contribute significantly normatively to the idea of an independent campus, this movement indirectly provides a logical understanding of how important it is to instill community values and culture as the nation's educational identity and orientation. Perennialism helps Indonesia remain prosperous as a country that adheres to Pancasila and the Constitution, including its philosophical foundations, policies and educational practices. Additionally, it helps minimize the negative impact of the liberalization of higher education undertaken in the country. This requires clear boundaries in education policy, especially at high levels.

According to Nur, (2015) the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which is a basic guideline for the Indonesian people to see differences, will find its place by using the foundation of eternal philosophical understanding. Like the eternal philosophy which believes that the essence of reality basically comes from a single thing, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* also believes that the Indonesian nation is essentially one, namely the Indonesian nation, regardless of differences in ethnicity, religion, class, language, or anything else within it. With such an understanding, conflicts originating from differences will automatically disappear, which will result in a safe and peaceful life for the nation and state.

According to Lukmanul et al., (2023) The philosophy of perennialism is in line with Islamic education, which recognizes ancient values as long as they do not conflict with Islamic law. Values: The values maintained are definitely good values rather than bad values. Maintaining good values is more important than creating new values whose benefits are not yet clear. Knowledge should not be separated from *adab* in Islam. In fact, *adab* exceeds knowledge, in Arabic terms, *al-adabu fauqul ilmi*. Every science has etiquette, so before teaching various religious disciplines, the *ulama* instill the etiquette of seeking knowledge in their students.

According to Astuti, (2023) perennialism emphasizes that the main goal of education is to help students understand and achieve their life goals. This shows that the basic principles are universal and permanent. The way forward is to develop one's intellectual and mental discipline. These educational objectives are implemented through a content-based curriculum, subjects that emphasize literature, mathematics, languages, humanities and religious studies. The Islamic educational philosophy continues with a focus on Allah and the Koran. Education must provide lessons related to the revelation of Allah SWT to realize this truth. In this case, Islamic education is closely related to the perennialist approach in curriculum development. Perennialism is actually very suitable for use in educational contexts that focus on subjects, both in the curriculum and in the teaching strategies and frameworks used during the teaching process. The key components of the perennial teaching methodology are the application of discussion techniques, problem solving, research, studying the intellectual capacity of each individual student. At the same time, curriculum and teaching materials are developed to encourage students' creative potential. In the perennialism paradigm, education must be based on potential so that the needs of all people are met.

According to Asmadewi, (2021), from a comparison between the objectives of the Islamic religious education curriculum and the philosophy of perennialist education, it can be said that the objectives of the Islamic religious education curriculum and perennialist education are both quite relevant. The aim of the curriculum, seen from both points of view, is essentially the same, namely to form human beings who are accustomed to being independent in the context of their personal life, social life,

nation and state and living as creatures who believe in the Almighty God (religion). Thus, the aim of perennialist education with Islamic religious education can be said to be quite relevant. To achieve the goals of Islamic education, a good and relevant curriculum is one that is integrated and comprehensive and makes the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah a guide to life. As we know, the main teachings of Islam include: matters of Aqidah (faith), shari'ah (Islam), and morals (ihsan). In terms of curriculum, perennialism believes that content, or subject content, is the most important thing in the curriculum. The content of the subject must be correct and precise. Perennialism says that education must be based on noble values, norms and religion. They believe that education is a teaching and learning process that is based on noble values, norms and religion that have been applied previously. Because teachers have noble abilities and values, education must be focused on teachers to produce people who follow standards and are steadfast on the path of truth. After analyzing the content and learning materials of Islamic religious education and perennialism education, it can be concluded that the content and materials used in perennialism education and Islamic religious education have similarities. Therefore, the curriculum used in perennialist education and Islamic religious education can be considered relevant.

D. Conclusion

Perennialism is a philosophical school that adheres to eternal values and norms. This school of perennialism believes that there is no other way but to return to the general principles that already exist and are the basis for behavior and all actions that occurred in ancient Greece and the Middle Ages. The development of the philosophy of perennialism can be seen from ontology, epistemology and axiology. In the world of education, perennialism views that the aim of education is to help students obtain and realize eternal truths. What this means is that this school considers truth to be universal and constant. According to the philosophy of perennialism, school is a place for students to become acquainted with the best results from the socio-cultural heritage of the past. The method used by perennial philosophy is a method that always prioritizes students' freedom of thinking through discussion, problem solving, research, discovery and reading.

E. Acknowledgement

The author expresses gratitude to Muhammad Kristiawan, the lecturer of the course 'Philosophy and Development of Educational Management Theory,' for guiding and imparting a wealth of knowledge during the course. Furthermore, the author acknowledges that this article review is far from perfect, given the limitations of the author's knowledge. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly anticipated. In conclusion, the author hopes that this research will be beneficial and

contribute positively to the development of knowledge in the future and the welfare of society.

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