

Strengthening Student Character through Philosophical Foundations: A Systematic Literature Review on Pancasila, Idealism, and Realism in Indonesian Education

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Abstract: This study addresses the growing challenge of character education in the technological era, where rapid social change demands a strong and coherent philosophical foundation for education. The aim of this research is to examine how philosophical schools of thought particularly idealism and realism contribute to student character building, with Pancasila positioned as the national philosophical framework of Indonesian education. This study employs a qualitative approach using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. Relevant articles were collected from reputable academic databases using keywords related to educational philosophy, idealism, realism, character education, and Pancasila. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to select peer-reviewed journals that are relevant to the research focus, resulting in a synthesized analysis of selected studies. The findings indicate that Pancasila serves as a central and integrative philosophical foundation for Indonesian education. Idealism emphasizes universal values and absolute truth, which are essential for character formation, while realism highlights the importance of empirical experience and contextual learning. However, the implementation of these philosophies especially idealism faces significant challenges when they are not deeply integrated into curricula, teacher training, and educational practice. The study concludes that effective character education requires moving beyond philosophical concepts at the theoretical level toward practical, philosophically grounded pedagogical strategies. The novelty of this study lies in its integrative analysis of idealism, realism, and Pancasila within a single SLR framework, while its contribution is to provide a philosophical reference for policymakers and educators in strengthening character education that is contextually relevant and value-oriented in Indonesia.

Keywords: Character Building, Pancasila, Realism and Idealism, Philosophy of Education, Systematic Literature Review

A. Introduction

Teachers require a strong philosophical foundation to understand education as a coherent and value-oriented enterprise. Education cannot be adequately understood through a purely technical or fragmented perspective; rather, it requires a philosophical approach that provides both descriptive and normative guidance. Normative foundations are essential because educational goals are shaped by legal, philosophical, and religious principles that determine what education ought to achieve. Consequently, philosophical perspectives play a crucial role in guiding educational aims, values, and practices.

Educational theory encompasses various philosophical traditions, including pragmatism, idealism, and realism. While this article focuses on the philosophy of realism in education, it acknowledges that Indonesia possesses its own national educational philosophy, namely Pancasila. Therefore, although the study of diverse philosophical schools is necessary to enrich educational discourse, the implementation of education must remain firmly grounded in the values of Pancasila. Integrating insights from other philosophical traditions without departing from the foundational principles of Pancasila can strengthen the philosophical basis of education and help prevent conceptual misunderstandings that may lead to ineffective or misguided educational practices.

Idealism has long been recognized as an influential foundation in educational theory, particularly in its emphasis on spiritual development, universal values, and absolute truth. However, significant gaps remain regarding how idealist principles are operationalized in curriculum design and instructional practices aimed at character development. Moreover, limited empirical research has examined the effectiveness of idealism in diverse cultural and educational contexts. The relationship between idealist philosophical principles and concrete character outcomes such as integrity, empathy, and responsibility—has not been clearly defined. As a result, the extent to which idealism can meaningfully contribute to character education in contemporary educational settings remains an open question (AR & Ismail, 2024).

B. Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method conducted in accordance with the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines. The literature search was carried out using established academic databases, namely Scopus, ERIC, and Google Scholar. Reference management software (Mendeley) was used to organize the retrieved records and remove duplicate articles. The search process applied predefined keywords and Boolean operators, including “*philosophy of education*,” “*Pancasila*,” “*character education*,” “*idealism*,” “*realism*,” and “*systematic literature review*,” to identify relevant studies.

The inclusion criteria consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2014 and 2024, written in English or Indonesian, and focusing on educational philosophy and character education, particularly in relation to idealism, realism, and Pancasila. Exclusion criteria included conference proceedings, book reviews, non-academic publications, duplicate records, and studies that did not directly address the philosophical foundations of character education. The initial search identified a larger number of records, which were subsequently screened through title and abstract review. After this process, full-text screening was conducted, resulting in a final selection of 15 articles that met all inclusion criteria. The article selection process followed the PRISMA flow procedure.

Data extraction was conducted systematically by identifying key information from each selected article, including the author(s), year of publication, research design, philosophical orientation, and main findings related to character education. The extracted data were then analyzed using a qualitative thematic analysis approach to identify recurring themes, dominant philosophical perspectives, and gaps in the literature. The synthesis of findings focused on how idealism and realism contribute to character formation within educational contexts and how these philosophies are positioned within the framework of Pancasila.

The results of the SLR were reported in a structured and coherent manner to provide a comprehensive overview of the philosophical foundations of education and their implications for character development. This approach ensured transparency in the review process and allowed the findings to be clearly linked to the research objectives and future research directions.

C. Results and Discussion

The term philosophy comes from two syllables in Ancient Greek, namely *philein* (love) and *Sophia* (wisdom). So etymologically philosophy is the love of wisdom. Operationally, philosophy has two meanings: as a process (philosophy) and as a result of philosophy (a system of theory or thought). Two of the five definitions of philosophy were put forward by (Muslim, 2023). Based on the results of the researcher's analysis of 15 journals that met the criteria, the researcher presents the following results:

Table 1. Article Selected Journals

No	Title	Writer	Objective Study	Research Methods	Research result	Conclusion
1	Exploring the Role of Educational Philosophy in Shaping Critical Thinking in the Technological Era	(AR & Ismail, 2024)	This research examines how the philosophy of education can help face the challenges that arise from technological developments and globalization in the context of education.	Studies Literature	Educational philosophy plays a significant role in developing critical thinking, creativity, and ethical values among students. The transformation of education in the digital age demands adjustments in teaching methods and curricula to remain relevant to current needs.	This study emphasizes the importance of integrating educational philosophy into educational practices to shape students' critical, creative, and responsible characters.
2	The Philosophical Basis of Idealism and the Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum	(Muslim, 2023)	Reviewing aspect philosophy of science Which focus on the aspect axiology (utility value) from profile Pancasila students independent curriculum Study.	Qualitative research with a literature study approach.	There is three dimensions which contain ethics descriptive there are four dimensions Which contains ethics normative And There is three dimensions Which contain metaethics ethics.	This focus on component axiological realm that is ethical components Which can reviewed in Pancasila student profile independent curriculum Study as follows Ethics global descriptive. Ethics normative, ethics metaethics
3	Hacking the Philosophy of Naturalistic Materialism Education in the Context of Elementary Education	(Alika K et al., 2023)	The object of research focuses on the relationship between the philosophy of materialism and naturalism and its implications in basic education in Indonesia.	Qualitative research with the method literature review.	Close relationship between the philosophies of materialism and naturalism in the educational context. Researchers found that the two complement each other and are often difficult to separate in their application. Materialism, a view that emphasizes materiality and empirical	This study highlights the importance of integrating naturalist and materialist philosophies in elementary education. The researchers recommend that educators consider both when designing curricula and teaching methods, so that

4	Connection Ethics with Branches of Philosophy	(Kiamani, 2023)	Give actual understanding about there is a close and inseparable relationship between ethics and the branch of philosophy	Qualitative	experience, interacts with naturalism, which prioritizes understanding and experiencing nature. Humans receive guidance from ethics about How live their lives through various daily behaviors. ethics helps people in adopting perspectives and behaviors Which appropriate moment live the life they. On Ultimately it will help us make decisions about the values that are manifested in attitudes and behavior that truly color and determine the meaning of our lives.	children can learn in a more holistic way and integrate with their natural environment. Ethics helps in adopting the right perspective and behavior while undergo their lives.
5	Philosophy of Education Islam Ontology Epistemology Perspective and Axiology	(Qadafi et al., 2024)	Determine Systematics of philosophy in general, namely epistemology, ontology, axiology, which discusses about use of knowledge	Literature review method (library research) with a qualitative approach.	Ontology is a philosophical science that discusses about essence everything that exists. Epistemology is a philosophical science that discusses how to seek knowledge and what is the knowledge like, while axiology is a philosophical science that discusses what knowledge is for That used.	The philosophy of education is theory or educational ideology that arises from the philosophical nature of an educator, from his experiences in education and life from his studies on various sciences related to education
6	Pancasila Education in the Review of Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology		The implementation of this nation's national education system reflects philosophical views rooted in	Library research or Library Research.	The philosophy of Pancasila education as soul from system national education in Indonesia must truly internalized as source values and references in	Pancasila educational philosophy as soul from the national education system in Indonesia and principles base from the

			Pancasila.		strategic planning in the field of education in Indonesia. The Pancasila Education Philosophy must be implemented in a concrete and consistent manner so that the development of the Indonesian people as mandated in the great ideals of the Indonesian nation can be achieved with the basic principles of Pancasila values.	values of Pancasila, namely the principle of religiosity, the embodiment and appreciation of humanitarian values, adhering to the soul unity as nation, the spirit of respecting differences and respect for democratic life and the realization of the values of justice.
7	National Education Axiology Based	(Zulfahmi & Aprison, 2022)	Describe the benefits or mark axiology and its application in National Education.	Library research method.	The development of students' conceptual knowledge about national education based on axiology, the development of procedural knowledge to develop skills and the capacity of students to apply the principles of axiology, students are encouraged to develop their personalities to become man wise and moral with concern for education.	The National Education System is based on axiology, the foundation of which is the values of Pancasila, namely religious values which are the basis and source of values for mark humanity.
8	Objects of Study of the Philosophy of Science (Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology) and its urgency in Islamic studies	(Afriandi & Hakim, 2024)	The aim is to study ontology, epistemology, and axiology in the philosophy of science, as well as their urgency. in Islamic studies.	Qualitative research interdisciplinary in nature	Theology of Philosophy of science can help in understanding methodology and reasoning theological, as well as in evaluating different theological arguments. Sharia Philosophy of science can	The study of ontology, epistemology, and axiology in the philosophy of science has a high urgency in Islamic studies. A deep understanding of these

9	Philosophical Epistemology	(Pajriani et al., 2023)	This analysis aims to question how something happens, how we know it, how we distinguish it with others, and etc. about the state and condition of something in room and time.	Quantitative descriptive analysis	<p>help in understanding the methodology and reasoning of Islamic law, as well as in evaluating different interpretations of law. The philosophy of science can help in understanding the basics of Islamic ethics, as well as in applying Islamic ethical principles in various contexts.</p> <p>Epistemology is a branch philosophy Which study and about the way humans think. Epistemology Also meaningful science can be interpreted as knowledge. Science is something that is very fundamental in human life.</p>	<p>concepts will not only enrich academic discussions but also make a significant contribution significant towards the development and application of Islamic values in various aspects of life, epistemology, philosophy is a way of gaining knowledge with full love of wisdom. Epistemology discusses the process of acquiring knowledge, what must be considered to obtain true knowledge, what is true, and what constitutes a standard. Meanwhile, philosophy is taken from the Greek language, namely philosophia. The word philosophia consists of the words philein, meaning love (lore), and sophia, meaning wisdom (wisdom). So etymologically, the term philosophy means love of wisdom in the deepest sense. Therefore, if concluded from</p>
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10	Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology of Islamic Philosophy	(Ilmu & Islam, 2024)	Discuss draft ontology, epistemology, and axiology in Islamic education	Library research methods	Ontology explores the nature of education, epistemology focuses on the sources of knowledge and educational methods, while axiology emphasizes values in education. Finally, this article highlights the close relationship between these three aspects in the context of education. Their relationship to education is that ontology, epistemology, and axiology examine the existence of knowledge, how knowledge is acquired, and how to utilize it.	epistemology, philosophy is a way of acquiring knowledge with a full love of wisdom. Philosophy of education, with its ontology, epistemology, and axiology, provides a powerful framework for understanding and guiding Islamic education. Keywords: Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology, Philosophy of Education.
11	Existence Legal studies Under Review Study of Philosophical Epistemology	(Sidik, 2022)	See how actually, the existence of legal science, as well as What knowledge the law	Library Studies	Knowledge own law own its characteristics in a way Alone, Legal studies own characteristics Which different when compared with other sciences in general. The distinctive characteristics that are signs in legal science include, being normative and practical. And prescriptive	On the principle legal science have a study Which more specifically to legal norms. However, legal science also has perspectives and studies on ethics, morals, justice, legal cases, lawmaking, and the implementation of existing laws. Although legal science studies more normative matters. For Therefore,

12	Influence The Rationalist Philosophy of Mathematics: The Thoughts of Immanuel Kant	(Taufik Qurohman, 2022)	To know the influence of the rationalist philosophy on mathematics according to thought Immanuel Kant.	Studies library	Philosophy which Contributing to the development of the philosophy of mathematics, which is developing to examine how it arises, the procedures, and what constitutes truth, namely the rationalist school. Kant stated that the method for obtaining mathematical truth is to treat mathematics as a priori knowledge. In a way specific, validity objective of the mathematical knowledge obtained through form a priori that allows obtaining sensory experience.	the existence of legal science can be seen as A treasure trove of knowledge. Mathematics is arithmetic and geometry is a scientific discipline nature synthetic and independent One with others. His works, the Critique of Pure Reason and the Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics, concluded that mathematical truths are synthetic a priori truths. Logical truths and derived truths only through definition then analytical truth.
13	Inner Streams Perspective Education Philosophy	(Khaerunnisa et al., 2024)	This study examines schools' education from a philosophical point of view and provides a deep understanding of the ideological framework and ideas each school regarding the goals, methods and processes of education	Qualitative and library methods	Materialism School of Educational Philosophy This school holds the view that the essence of realism is material, not spiritual, or super natural. The idealist school is one of the schools of thought that is considered to have an important role in the world of education.	Schools in Education from a Philosophical Perspective may include a detailed analysis of the views of each school, such as: Permanence, essentialism, progressivism, constructivism, humanism, realism, and idealism.
14	Studies Comparative	(Laily Navi'atul	This is to examine three	This research is in	There are three schools of	Philosophy Western

	Study of the Main Schools of Educational Philosophy Islam and the Philosophy of Education West	Farah, 2022)	schools of philosophy education Islam and the main schools of western educational philosophy.	the form of library-based research. research)	Islamic educational philosophy. These schools are the religious-conservative school Which represented Imam Ghazali, the religio-rationalist school represented by the Ikhawanus Shafa group, and the pragmatic-instrumental school represented by Ibn Khaldun. Within Western educational philosophy, there are four main schools: progressivism, essentialism, perennialism, and reconstructionism.	education is divided into several schools of thought, including: progressivism, essentialism, perennialism, and reconstructionism.
15	Study of the Nature, Purpose, and School of Educational Philosophy in the MBKM Curriculum	(Chrismastianto et al., 2023)	Analyzing the nature, purpose, and flow philosophy education in the curriculum MBKM can provide benefits to stakeholders as material for thought and discussion to produce relevant and contextual recommendations for efforts to improve the quality of education. in Indonesia.	Library research	The educational philosophy schools that influence the MBKM curriculum are progressivism, pragmatism, existentialism, and critical pedagogy. play a role important in the foundation thinking preparation of MBKM curriculum substance	The nature and purpose of the MBKM curriculum is a realm of knowledge that is able to formulate normative rules and values that serve as guidelines for human behavior in relating to the surrounding community place where he lives

The synthesis of the 15 reviewed journal articles reveals that philosophical inquiry is consistently positioned as the foundational process underlying educational thought. Across the literature, philosophizing is described as beginning with critical questioning, doubt, and reflective contemplation rather than acceptance of established assumptions. This pattern of thinking often characterized as radical, speculative, and synoptic serves as the epistemological basis for educational philosophy. The reviewed studies emphasize that education, as a practical field, is inseparable from philosophy, functioning as its applied dimension. Consequently, educational philosophy operates through ontological, epistemological, and axiological considerations that shape understandings of reality, knowledge, and values in educational practice.

A dominant theme emerging from the synthesis is the positioning of philosophy as a guiding framework for curriculum design, instructional methods, educational objectives, and the roles of teachers and students. The findings suggest that differences in educational practice are largely determined by the philosophical perspectives adopted by educational practitioners. In the Indonesian context, several studies explicitly identify Pancasila as the philosophical “soul” of the national education system, providing normative direction for character education and value formation. However, the literature also indicates that this philosophical positioning often remains at a conceptual level, with limited articulation of concrete pedagogical models that translate Pancasila values into classroom practices. This suggests the presence of an implementation gap between philosophical ideals and educational realities.

When compared with the broader international literature on educational philosophy, similar patterns emerge. International studies on idealism emphasize the cultivation of moral reasoning, spiritual development, and universal values, while realism highlights empirical learning and adaptation to social realities. However, global research increasingly stresses the need for contextualized and pluralistic approaches to character education, particularly in culturally diverse societies. In contrast, the Indonesian literature reviewed in this study places stronger emphasis on normative unity through Pancasila, with less attention to pedagogical flexibility and classroom-level implementation. This comparison indicates that while Indonesian educational philosophy is strong in normative orientation, it requires further methodological elaboration to remain responsive to contemporary educational challenges.

One of the most significant challenges identified in the reviewed studies concerns the application of idealism in modern, pluralistic educational contexts. Idealism’s emphasis on absolute truth and universal values raises important questions regarding inclusivity, cultural diversity, and critical dialogue. The literature suggests that without careful pedagogical mediation, idealist principles risk being interpreted rigidly, potentially limiting students’ capacity for critical engagement and ethical reasoning in diverse social settings. Reconciling idealism with pluralism therefore requires an interpretative approach that frames universal values as dialogical rather

than dogmatic, allowing students to internalize character values through reflection, experience, and social interaction.

Overall, the findings indicate that while philosophical foundations particularly idealism and Pancasila provide a strong normative basis for character education, their effectiveness depends on meaningful integration into curriculum design, teaching strategies, and teacher professional development. The absence of detailed implementation frameworks in the literature highlights the need for educational models that bridge philosophical theory and classroom practice. Addressing this gap is essential to ensure that philosophical foundations do not remain abstract ideals but become transformative forces in shaping students' character and moral agency.

D. Conclusions

This Systematic Literature Review demonstrates that a clear philosophical foundation is essential for effective character education. The synthesis of the reviewed studies confirms that Pancasila functions as an integrative and normative framework for Indonesian education, providing moral and ethical direction for character formation. Idealism contributes a strong emphasis on universal values and absolute truth, while realism strengthens learning through empirical experience and contextual relevance. However, the findings reveal a persistent gap between philosophical concepts and their practical implementation, particularly in curriculum design and classroom practices. For educators, these findings highlight the importance of translating philosophical values into concrete pedagogical practices, such as value-based learning activities and reflective teaching approaches. Curriculum developers are encouraged to embed Pancasila values explicitly within learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessment models, rather than treating them as abstract ideals. For policymakers, the results suggest the need for policies that support philosophically grounded teacher training programs and curriculum frameworks that integrate idealism and realism within the national philosophy of Pancasila. This study is limited by its reliance on selected academic databases and peer-reviewed journal articles, which may exclude relevant local studies, policy documents, or grey literature. In addition, the review focuses primarily on the Indonesian educational context, and most of the analyzed publications are written in English and Indonesian, which may limit the inclusion of broader international perspectives. Future research should move beyond conceptual analysis by employing qualitative case studies to examine how teachers practically integrate idealist principles such as moral reasoning and value internalization into daily lesson planning and classroom interaction. Comparative studies across different cultural and educational systems are also recommended to assess the adaptability of idealism and realism within diverse contexts. Furthermore, empirical research evaluating the impact of philosophically grounded curricula on students' character development would provide stronger evidence to support policy and practice.

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