Anarchism Paul Karl Feyerabend: His Concept and Dedication to Development of Contemporary Islamic Education

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Abstract

Education is a basic and very important activity for every individual. Through education, humans can gain knowledge about everything. Apart from that, education also influences human awareness in knowing God more deeply and understanding themselves. Therefore, quality education will provide the expected results, namely the use of an individual's intellectual abilities in all aspects of his life. Paul Karl Feyerabend is known as a controversial philosopher who put forward anarchist views in epistemology and scientific methodology. In the context of Islamic education, Feyerabend believes that freedom of thought, criticism and dialogue are important principles that must be emphasized in the learning process. The purpose of this research is to investigate the concept and dedication of Paul Karl Feyerabend in the context of contemporary Islamic education with an anarchist perspective. This research is library research with a qualitative approach that focuses on descriptive analysis based on data information obtained, including sources. primary or secondary. The results of the analysis show that in Feyerabend's view, the concept of anarchism is not about disorder or chaos, but rather about diversity, plurality, and criticism of authority and norms that inhibit freedom of thought and expression. Feyerabend's dedication to contemporary Islamic education can be seen in his efforts to promote freedom of thought, independent research and as a source of inspiration for developing alternative approaches to religious learning. The anything goes principle provides the basis for creating an educational environment that is inclusive, critical, and based on freedom of thought.

Keywords: *Anarchism, Paul Karl Feyerabend, Contemporary Islamic Education*

Abstrak

Pendidikan merupakan kegiatan pokok dan sangat penting bagi setiap individu. Melalui pendidikan, manusia dapat memperoleh pengetahuan tentang segala hal. Selain itu, pendidikan juga mempengaruhi kesadaran manusia dalam mengenal Tuhan dengan lebih dalam, serta memahami dirinya sendiri. Oleh karena itu, pendidikan yang berkualitas akan memberikan hasil yang diharapkan, yaitu penggunaan kemampuan intelektual individu dalam semua aspek kehidupannya. Paul Karl Feyerabend dikenal sebagai seorang filsuf kontroversial yang mengemukakan pandangan anarkis dalam epistemologi dan metodologi ilmiah. Dalam konteks pendidikan Islam, Feyerabend berpendapat bahwa kebebasan berpikir, kritis, dan dialog merupakan prinsip-prinsip penting yang harus ditekankan dalam proses pembelajaran. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menginvestigasi konsep dan dedikasi Paul Karl Feyerabend dalam konteks pendidikan Islam kontemporer dengan perspektif anarkismenya.Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan *(library research)* dengan jenis pendekatan kualitatif yang berfokus pada analisis-deskriptif berdasarkan informasi data yang diperoleh, baik itu sumber primer maupun sekunder. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa dalam pandangan Feyerabend, konsep anarkisme bukanlah tentang ketidakaturan atau kekacauan, tetapi lebih pada keragaman, pluralitas, dan kritik terhadap otoritas dan norma-norma yang menghambat kebebasan berpikir dan berekspresi. Dedikasi Feyerabend dalam pendidikan Islam kontemporer terlihat dalam upayanya untuk mempromosikan kebebasan berpikir, penelitian mandiri serta sebagai sumber inspirasi untuk mengembangkan pendekatan alternatif dalam pembelajaran agama. Prinsip *anything goes* memberikan landasan untuk menciptakan lingkungan pendidikan yang inklusif, kritis, dan berbasis kebebasan berpikir.

Kata Kunci: Anarkisme, Paul Karl Feyerabend, Pendidikan Islam Kontemporer.

Introduction

Human civilization in material terms in the modern era is undergoing varying degrees of progress, but it cannot be denied that the progress of civilization today is controlled by the Western world, which in turn has an impact on the colonization of the Western world against the Islamic world. The once glorious Islamic civilization has now disappeared due to the hegemony of the Western world. This progress of the Western world occurred mainly through their mastery of science and technology. However, on the other hand, humans are now beginning to realize that science and technology can also have negative implications, such as the emergence of global crises. In addition to having a negative impact, science and technology can also be said to provide pseudo-happiness (Adian Husaini, 2005: 40). The success of the dominance of modern science originating from the West is not due to the logic or reason used, but rather inclined to the influence of scientific beliefs and truths (Feyerabend, 1978: 23).

In the context of Islamic education, it is currently faced with various challenges in an effort to provide a holistic, inclusive, and relevant understanding of religion to every Muslim. In facing these challenges, there is a need for innovative and alternative thinking that can inspire the development of more effective educational approaches. Paul Karl Feyerabend, a controversial philosopher known for his anarchist views in epistemology and scientific methodology, is one of the figures who has unique and innovative thoughts to be implemented in the context of Islamic education.

Paul Karl Feyerabend's epistemological anarchism in the context of Islamic education can make a constructive contribution in modernizing epistemological approaches in Islamic education studies. This approach also provides an opportunity to analyze Islamic education studies that are currently experiencing stagnation or rigor in their design. The focus is based on the understanding that education aims to pass on values as a guide for mankind in life, as well as to advance human civilization.

In this modern era, the author considers it important to revitalize and reconstruct Islamic education in order to produce an educational paradigm that is responsive to the challenges of today's world of education. Therefore, efforts are needed to dig deeper into Feyerabend's thoughts and contributions to contemporary Islamic education in order to enrich existing educational perspectives and provide better solutions in overcoming the challenges of Islamic education in the modern era.

By understanding the concept, role and dedication of Feyerabend anarchism to contemporary Islamic education, this research is expected to provide new insights, explore innovative potential in Islamic education, and identify practical implications that can be applied in the development of curriculum, teaching methods, and learning approaches that are more effective and relevant to today's needs.

Research Methods

The research method that the author uses is a qualitative research method, using a *Library Research approach* or literature research. The sources of this research data are primary and secondary such as literature including books, journals, essays, newspapers, verbal communication recordings and articles that have a correlation with the discussion in this paper, namely *Paul Karl Feyerabend's Anarchism: The concept and dedication to the development of contemporary Islamic education*. The data generated through observation and literature review will be managed using several techniques. Data analysis techniques are carried out in

several steps, namely reducing data where researchers select data. The next step is to present data that has gone through a reduction process. Then, the data that has been presented earlier will be interpreted through the data analysis process.

Results and Discussion

A. Overview of Anarchism Epistemology

A common understanding of anarchy is often associated with corruption and disorder, as well as acts of violence without governing rules. But actually, the true meaning of anarchy is not so. Feyerabend defined anarchism as a rejection of all forms of rule and government in society. The main principle of anarchism is the existence of freedom in society. Epistemological anarchism, developed by Paul Karl Feyerabend, a figure who was reluctant to label himself as a philosopher but preferred to be called an entertainer or entertainer (Feyerabend, 1996: 28).

The concept of anarchism, epistemology refers to the theory of epistemology that rejects the existence of methodological rules in the search for truth and no methodology has the authority to regulate the progress of science. In other words, science is an abstract art form that is not bound by any particular theory.

Anarchistic *methodology* does not aim to create chaos or chaos. Rather, the goal is to liberate the thinking of individuals (scientists) to make it broader, so that they can express their creativity. Feyerabend believed that human beings always develop their knowledge in unique ways, and through this method of anarchy, they can develop knowledge about themselves (Michael Dua, 2007: 175).

The emergence of anarchist thought was based on the dominance of the positivistic thought paradigm that emerged in the 19th century by a group of scientists in Vienna who were members of the Vienna

Circle (Vienna Circle or Vienna Circle). Auguste Comte, as the initiator of the positivism paradigm, was also influenced by Descartes' view which stated that the science that is the basis for all types of science is mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, and reaches its peak in social physics or sociology (Santoso, 2010: 150).

The paradigm assumes that something scientific is that which can be proven through observation and experimentation in the laboratory, so that it has an indisputable truth. For this reason, this group is also known as neo-positivism. The core ideas of this group are divided into four main principles, namely: (1) Refusing to separate between the natural sciences and the social sciences; (2) Regard statements that cannot be ascertained to be true as meaningless or irrelevant (non-sense); (3) Seek to unite all branches of science into one universal language; and (4) Considers the task of philosophy as an analysis of words or statements (Budi Hardiman, 2009: 27).

B. *Against Method* as Criticism

The hegemony of positivism at that time fostered Feyerabend's ideas and criticisms of scientific specialization. Ideas that criticized philosophers and scientists were packaged in his controversial book entitled *"Against Method"*, which became a source of public debate from his time to modern times. Epistemological anarchism is based on the principle of "*Anything Goes*", which means that everything is permissible, and "*Proliferation*", which means development or growth. In other words, allowing science to grow and develop according to its own *passion* and allowing diverse perspectives and theories to emerge without considering the relevance of the theory. In the book, Feyerabend criticized the methods used by scientists who held that there was only one standard and

universal method of acquiring knowledge, which led to predictable scientific progress.

Feyerabend opposed the concept of idealism which regarded rationality as something universal and unaffected by the bias of subjectivity. According to him, other researchers should have the freedom to use different methods, so as to create various variations and creativity in science (Fathurrahman, 2006: 6). With the principle of "*anything goes*" or anything is allowed, Feyerabend wants the legitimacy of all forms of methodology to seek the truth of science without being bound by the system or rules that apply. According to him, all methods have their own functional limitations. So that there is no single method that applies universally (Prasetya, 1993: 55). In other words, scientists do not need to limit to just one practical method to solve a problem, but they can use a variety of diverse methods, both in interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and even transdisciplinary forms.

In summary, Feyerabend's epistemological anarchy with its *anything goes* principle means that there is no entity entitled to control science. In other words, he wanted no methodology to have complete power to regulate the progress of science. Feyerabend also stated that science is only one way to acquire knowledge, not the only one and not the main one. Therefore, the term anarchy is used to describe a state without leaders, where there is no single authority in determining the way of knowledge (Faradi, 2014: 242).

Epistemology of Islamic Education

Islamic education focuses and involves a harmonious merging of spiritual learning, purification of the soul, development of intellectual intelligence, and physical strengthening (Al-Ahnawi, 1968: 9). While the epistemology of Islamic education is a branch of science that examines sources, methods, and foundations of knowledge in the context of Islamic education. This epistemology involves an understanding of how knowledge in Islam is acquired, verified, and applied in an educational context. The epistemology of Islamic education is a field of science that studies the theory, concepts, management, and implementation of Islamic education in a substantive and comprehensive manner (Makki, 2019: 4). Based on this understanding, we can conclude that the scope of the epistemology of Islamic education is limited to the elements or components of Islamic education that are analyzed in detail, thus forming a specific theory or science. Here are some aspects that are the scope of the epistemology of Islamic education:

1. **The Essence of Knowledge in Islam**

There are several terminologies used in referring to science such as science, knowledge, *al-'ilm*, and science, all of which have different meanings that need to be specifically understood. Although often used interchangeably, each word has a different scope and weight of truth. This difference is not only related to the origin of the language, but also to the substance of the meaning contained. Therefore, in scientific discussions, it is important to consider these differences in meaning based on the views of experts who study them (Qomar, 2007: 104).

In the context of Islam, science does not produce absolute truth. The appropriate term to describe knowledge is *al-'ilm* because the word has two main components. First, the main source of knowledge is revelation or the Qur'an which contains absolute truth. Secondly, the methods used to study knowledge systematically and coherently are considered valid, since they all produce a part of truth and reality that is beneficial for solving problems. The presence of these two components suggests that *al-'ilm* has a stronger basis than science in

the Western context. The basis of al-'ilm comes from God who is Almighty and Vast in His knowledge (Qomar, 2007: 104).

In Islamic epistemology, scientific knowledge comes from both physical and non-physical realms. This means knowledge in Islam can be gained through observation of the senseable physical realms and an understanding of the metaphysical realms that cannot be sensed, such as God, angels, the grave, and the afterlife. Both of these realms are considered to have the same value as a source of knowledge of Muslims around the world. This approach is in contrast to Western epistemology which only recognizes the physical realm as the source of knowledge. In the Islamic view, things that are non-sensory, non-physical, and even metaphysical can also be known scientifically (Siswanto, 2011: 6).

2. Sources of Knowledge in Islam

The Islamic view of the source of science shows differences with modern philosophy and science. Muslims believe that knowledge is the gift of their God and can be obtained through various channels such as healthy senses, true news based on authority, common sense, and intuition. In terms of senses and common sense, there is no significant difference between the Western and Islamic views. In fact, the scientific methods used by scientists, such as empiricism, rationalism, inductive, and deductive, are supported by the senses and the ratio of reason. However, significant differences center in the scope of authority and intuition between the two.

The prevailing Western scientific tradition is a rejection of truth based on scientific authority. This happens because the truth is accepted without criticism and testing in it, and is limited to relying on individual expertise. So that its acceptance is only a priori. The same is true for intuition, where judgments given without reflection and without controlled processes will result in the absence of confidence in the knowledge gained through intuition. However, it differs in the Islamic view, where authority and intuition are considered as channels of knowledge that can be recognized by humans (Qomar, 2007: 109).

The Islamic view states that the main source of knowledge is Allah alone (Al-Shaibany, 1979: 247). And science sometimes needs to be developed through collaboration between rational approaches and intuition. Reasoning has limitations that can be corrected through the help of intuition. While the gift of intuition still needs to be well regulated, reasoning efforts are needed to systematically structure the knowledge gained through intuition. That is, reason and intuition need each other. Intuition cannot be separated from reason, and vice versa, reason cannot be separated from intuition (Qomar, 2007: 151-152).

In conclusion, although there are differences between revelation and reason, and between religion and philosophy, these differences do not preclude harmonization between the two. In the right context, revelation and reason, as well as religion and philosophy, can complement each other and make a positive contribution to achieving a more comprehensive understanding and spiritual and intellectual balance.

3. The concept of method according to Muslim scholars

In Islamic education, there are various methods according to Islamic

thinkers that can be used to convey knowledge and facilitate the learning process.

a. Imam Al-Ghazali

Imam Al-Ghazali paid considerable attention to Islamic education. He not only pays attention to what is taught, but also how education can be effectively delivered. Imam Al-Ghazali pays great attention to teaching methods especially in religious education for learners. He showed examples of exemplary methods to shape the mindset of learners, develop morality, and instill virtues in them. The teaching method according to Al-Ghazali can be divided into two parts, namely religious education and moral education. In the method of religious education, Al-Ghazali began with memorization and understanding, then continued with strengthening beliefs and justifications, and finally strengthened the creed through the enforcement of postulates and supporting explanations.

Al-Ghazali states that morality is an attitude embedded in one's soul that without doubt and spontaneity will give birth to various good deeds with ease and smoothness without considering them first (Al-Ghazali, 1998: 109). He believes that religious education is an important foundation in the formation of children's character and morality. Religious education not only provides knowledge about religious teachings, but also helps children understand the values of good ethics, manners, and rules of life.

b. Shaykh Ibn Khaldun

Some of the learning methods launched by Ibn Khaldun include the phasing method or *Takrir*, this is a practice of learning students who are carried out repeatedly and gradually (gradually). Rihlah method or *comparative study and* Munadzarah method *or discussion with dialogue (Khaldun, 2004).*

Ibn Khaldun stated that an educator not only needs to impart knowledge to his students so that they become knowledgeable individuals and continue to improve their knowledge in the learning process. However, an educator also has an obligation to improve methods in presenting knowledge to learners (Nasution, 2020: 69).

c. Shaykh Az-Zarnuji

The principles of educational methodology always show a double aspect, on the one hand concerning the child's learning process, and on the other hand concerning the role of the teacher as a teacher. To study the thought of Az-Zarnuji, it is necessary to first present two principles of modern education as a reference. Learning methods are based on almost equal mental qualities among students, which allows the development of common teaching methods that can be applied in the classroom. However, it is important to remember that each student has detailed differences in their physique, temperament, and intelligence. Therefore, there is still a need for teaching methods that can meet the specific needs of each individual.

Az-Zarnuji proposed the first principle in education that involves memorization and comprehension. He stressed the importance of repetition and memorization in learning, which has become a common practice in Islamic education. Pupils are taught to

repeat one letter repeatedly, because the more it is repeated, the better the comprehension. In addition, he also underlined the importance of memorizing orally as an easier way, with teachers structuring the subject matter in verse form. The next step is comprehension and note-taking, which according to Az-Zarnuji should be done after understanding the concept and before memorizing it. According to him, taking notes before memorizing will cause mental fatigue, reduce intelligence, and waste time (Az-Zarnuji, 2004: 49).

The second principle is *Mudzakarah, Munadzarah, and Mutharahah*. *Mudzakarah* involves question-and-answer interaction between learners, where they ask each other questions to evoke memories of the subject matter that has been learned (Az-Zarnuji, 2004: 51). *Munadzarah*, meaning "view", is a method of small group discussion with about 5-6 students. Next is *Mutharahah* or commonly called class discussion. In this method, group members give each other criticism of each other's opinions. This discussion is conducted to solve problems that have been presented previously collaboratively.

C. Anarchism's Dedication to Contemporary Islamic Education

In the context of Islamic education, the principle of anything goes can provide space for various approaches and diverse thoughts to develop and enrich learning. This encourages Islamic educators and academics to explore new and alternative perspectives in teaching and understanding Islamic teachings. Islamic education methods were developed by Muslim scientists with different

characteristics. One method is proposed by one character, then another character's method comes to compensate.

Certain methods that previously dominated Islamic education, were later replaced by other methods as a form of refinement and criticism of the shortcomings of the implementation of previous methods. Indirectly, this is in the principle of *anything goes*, so that no one method or approach should inhibit or limit other methods or approaches (Kurdi, 2015: 20).

However, there is still a paradigm of some groups that apply certain methods and consider them to be the most correct. For example, in Islamic boarding schools, the Az-Zarnuji method is considered the best and the only one worth following because it has become a good tradition. On the other hand, such restrictions can hinder the development of Islamic education and the advancement of educational science. Meanwhile, many experts believe that education is something dynamic (Hermawan, 2020: 33).

In the development of Islamic education, some Muslim scholars are concerned about the stagnation of Islamic education methods. They propose epistemologies and methodologies that are considered to provide solutions in Islamic education. In addition to those mentioned earlier, the author takes the example of a relevant figure in this context, namely Fadzlur Rahman, a Muslim intellectual and scientist.

Fadzlur Rahman stressed that the transformation of Islam begins through education. There are three approaches to education reform. First, Islamize modern secular education. This is done by incorporating the core concepts of Islam, which have two objectives: (a) shape the character of students with Islamic values in

individuals and society, and (b) enable modernly educated experts to integrate Islamic values in their field of study (Fazlur Rahman, 1985: 131). The second approach simplifies the traditional curriculum with the goal of reducing unnecessary material. And the latter integrate new sciences.

Fadzlur Rahman proposed a change to the purpose of Islamic education which was defensive and limited to the afterlife. According to him, the purpose of Islamic education should include both the life of the world and the hereafter, and have a basis derived from the Qur'an (Fazlur Rahman, 1967: 315). His view of Islamic education required him to initiate a method called *Double Movement*, which is an interpretation that involves a "double movement" that moves from the current condition to the condition when the Qur'an was revealed, then back to the present (Fazlur Rahman, 1985: 5). This method is offered as one of the *problem solving* various problems as described earlier.

The *Double Movement* method in Islamic education acts as a tool for integrating Qur'anic values in modern education. This method builds a deep understanding of Islamic teachings and encourages the development of relevant education. With a "double movement" between the present and the age of the Qur'an, this method keeps traditional roots dynamic and adaptive. It also strengthens a holistic understanding of the relationship between the world and the Hereafter, and raises awareness of the importance of applying Islamic values in life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the presentation of Paul Karl Feyerabend's Epistemological Anarchism research: His Concept and Dedication to the Development of Contemporary Islamic Education, it can be concluded that Paul Karl Feyerabend's epistemological anarchism has the potential to encourage development in Islamic education. The principle of *"anything goes"* proposed by Feyerabend gives freedom to explore various perspectives, theories, and methods of education without rigid restrictions. So as to reduce the monopoly of one approach or method against another, enrich the discourse of Islamic education, and produce more diverse innovations.

However, it is important to recognize that Feyerabend's epistemological anarchism can also pose challenges in the development of Islamic education. Excessive or uncontrolled freedom of thought can lead to capriciousness, confusion, and a decrease in the quality of education. Therefore, it is important to maintain a balance between freedom of creative thought and the need for a clear structure and orientation in the context of Islamic education.

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