



Historical Foundations of Education: The Development of Education Through the Ages

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Abstract

This article examines the history of the education system in Indonesia, spanning from the prehistoric era to the Reform era. The objective of this study is to describe the dynamic development of the Indonesian education system across various historical periods. Employing a descriptive literature study method, this research synthesizes data from relevant academic sources. The results indicate that education in Indonesia is inherently dynamic, heavily influenced by shifts in social, cultural, and political landscapes, as well as prevailing power structures of each era. Education has transformed from an informal and exclusive system, initially restricted to the aristocracy, into a more structured, inclusive, and nationalized system. Furthermore, the modern national education system now integrates six strategic foundations historical, philosophical, psychological, sociological, science and technology (IPTEK), and juridical as the cornerstone for national development. This study asserts that the complexity of the current national education system is the product of a long historical dialectic, necessitating adaptive policy improvements to meet future global challenges. Therefore, understanding the history of education is crucial as an evaluative framework to design a more relevant, equitable, and high-quality educational system for all Indonesians.

Keywords: History; Education System; Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia has undergone a long process of transformation, influenced by various dynamic factors throughout history. These changes have been driven by national demands, the increasing influence of foreign cultures, shifts in political leadership, and the interests of particular social groups (Rambung et al., 2023). Throughout this historical journey, religion has played a significant role in the Indonesian educational system, even since the pre-colonial era. In addition to providing spiritual guidance, religion has served as a primary source of ethics and moral values for Indonesian society, which is characterized by diverse religious and cultural backgrounds (Alnashr, 2019).

The history of Indonesia's educational system demonstrates that education has experienced continuous development and has been shaped by various social, cultural, and political transformations over time (Nurwahyuni & Hudaidah, 2021). Education can be defined as all efforts made by adults in their interactions with children to guide their physical and spiritual development toward maturity (Purwanto, 2002). Furthermore, Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System states that Indonesian education aims to develop self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills required by individuals, society, the nation, and the state. This indicates that the objectives of national education encompass multiple dimensions of human and social life, enabling

individuals to survive and thrive within society and the nation.

Education is one of the principal pillars of national development, and the history of education in Indonesia reflects the nation's long journey in responding to various social, political, and cultural challenges (Nurfalah et al., 2024). During its early stages, Islamic education was conducted in a simple and informal manner through teaching activities carried out by Muslim scholars and merchants (Daud, 2021). Over time, educational institutions became more organized, contributing significantly to the intellectual and moral development of society.

These various definitions demonstrate that education can be viewed from different perspectives. Some scholars approach education from a psychological perspective, emphasizing individual growth and development, while others adopt a sociological perspective, highlighting its role in shaping society. As a result, numerous definitions of education have emerged. Nevertheless, there is a common understanding that education is a process through which individuals and communities are nurtured and empowered to survive and progress in life.

Education is not only concerned with present realities but must also be rooted in the past to foster human advancement and continuous development. Contemporary educational systems cannot be separated from the historical contributions of influential educational thinkers and the theories they developed. The ideas and experiences of previous generations provide valuable insights

that continue to shape educational practices and policies today.

Since the time of ancient Greek thinkers such as Socrates, Herodotus, and Thucydides, history has been regarded as a source of life lessons. This perspective is known as the *exemplar theory of history*, which views history as a guide for human conduct. History provides values and norms that can serve as references for daily life. Similarly, in Chinese civilization, history has long been regarded as a mirror of life. Historical writing traditions in China required each ruling dynasty to document the history of its predecessor. In ancient Rome, this idea was expressed in the famous phrase *historia vitae magistra*, meaning “history is the teacher of life.” According to this view, people can improve their lives by learning from historical experiences.

Studying history enables individuals to develop a comprehensive understanding of human life and society. History presents a wide variety of human experiences, conditions, and achievements across different times and places. No other discipline offers such a broad record of human experiences as history. Although religion, philosophy, and the social sciences also contribute valuable insights into human existence, each does so within its own framework. The holistic perspective provided by history is therefore expected to contribute to the development of a more integrated and mature human personality.

Islamic education in Indonesia has evolved through a long historical process influenced by various social, cultural, and political dynamics within society (Basri, 2020). History plays a crucial role in shaping national identity and character. A society or nation cannot fully understand its identity or comprehend how it has become what it is today without understanding its history. History and national identity are closely interconnected. A deep and rich historical heritage strengthens the existence, identity, and character of a nation. Consequently, nations with strong historical awareness tend to take pride in and preserve their cultural and historical heritage.

The development of educational concepts cannot be separated from historical experiences that have evolved over time through changes in civilization and culture. These transformations have significantly influenced educational thought and practice. In the field of education, historical developments have contributed to changes in educational systems, the emergence of new educational policies, and innovations in teaching and learning processes. Understanding these developments helps educators and policymakers appreciate how educational systems have adapted to changing societal needs.

Education is an essential aspect of human life and one of the key factors in national development. Through education, individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, and moral values necessary for personal growth and improved quality of life. The history of education in Indonesia reveals a long and dynamic process of

development, beginning during the Hindu-Buddhist period, continuing through the colonial era, and extending into the Reform Era, during which educational systems have continuously evolved in response to societal demands and global developments (Aini & Alam, 2024).

Despite significant progress, education in Indonesia continues to face numerous challenges, including limited access to educational opportunities, disparities in educational quality, inadequate facilities, and curricula that are not always aligned with labor market needs. Furthermore, social, economic, and geographical factors continue to affect the equitable distribution of educational opportunities. For these reasons, understanding the historical development of education in Indonesia is important as a means of reflection and evaluation, helping to improve educational systems and create more equitable and high-quality learning opportunities for all members of society (Subair, 2024).

Understanding the historical development of education in Indonesia is essential because it provides valuable insights into how educational systems have changed over time and offers important lessons for future educational development. Historical knowledge enables educators, policymakers, and society as a whole to evaluate past achievements and shortcomings, thereby contributing to the creation of a more effective, inclusive, and sustainable educational system

for future generations (Azizah et al., 2024).

METHOD

The method used in preparing this article is a library research approach. Library research is conducted by examining various written sources and previous studies relevant to the topic under discussion. These sources may include books, scientific journals, research reports, official documents, and other academic publications, whether published or unpublished (Melfianora, 2019). This approach enables researchers to obtain comprehensive information and a deeper understanding of the historical foundations of education in Indonesia from various scholarly perspectives.

The literature study was carried out by identifying, collecting, reviewing, and analyzing relevant references related to the development of education in Indonesia. The collected data were then systematically organized and interpreted to provide a comprehensive overview of the topic. This study relies on secondary data obtained from existing literature, allowing the researcher to examine educational developments from historical, social, cultural, and political perspectives.

The data were analyzed using a descriptive method, which focuses on presenting and explaining information derived from the reviewed literature. Descriptive research aims to provide a general and systematic description of a particular phenomenon without testing hypotheses or establishing causal relationships

(Putra, 2015). Through this method, the researcher describes the historical foundations of education in Indonesia and traces its development across different historical periods.

The use of a library research approach is considered the most appropriate and effective method for this study because it allows for a comprehensive examination of educational history through existing scholarly works and documented evidence. The findings derived from the literature review serve as the basis for analyzing the historical foundations of education in Indonesia and understanding how educational systems have evolved over time.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Historical Foundations of Education

The historical foundation of education in Indonesia reflects the long development of educational systems and curricula from the pre-independence period to the present day. Educational practices in each era were influenced by the prevailing social, political, cultural, and religious conditions. During the pre-independence period, education was largely shaped by colonial interests, with educational policies designed to produce workers who could serve colonial administrations. Consequently, education functioned more as a tool for supporting colonial governance than as a means of developing the intellectual and moral capacities of the indigenous population (Pawero, 2018).

In the prehistoric era, education in Indonesia

was very simple and informal, taking place primarily within the family environment. Communities relied heavily on nature for survival, and educational activities focused on teaching practical life skills such as hunting, gathering food, farming, constructing shelters from natural materials, and producing tools and household equipment. Educational transmission occurred through direct observation and experience, enabling younger generations to adapt to their environment and sustain community life (Farid et al., 2023).

During the Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms, such as the Kingdoms of Tarumanegara and Kutai, education became more organized and focused primarily on religious teachings. Learning activities emphasized the study of Sanskrit, the Pallava script, religious doctrines, and martial arts. However, access to education was not equally distributed because society was divided into caste groups, namely Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras. Formal education was generally reserved for the Brahmin and Kshatriya classes, while members of the Vaishya and Sudra castes obtained knowledge mainly through family-based instruction and practical experience (Farid et al., 2023).

The arrival of Islam marked a significant transformation in the educational landscape of Indonesia. Islamic education initially developed through trade networks and the spread of Islamic missionary activities conducted by scholars and religious leaders. Educational institutions such as mosques, surau, and pesantren became centers for teaching Islamic knowledge. Instruction covered various aspects of Islam, including theology, ethics, worship practices, Qur'anic recitation, and the

traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. Islamic education played an essential role in expanding literacy and fostering religious understanding among the broader population (Farid et al., 2023).

During the sixteenth century, the arrival of Portuguese and Spanish colonizers introduced Christian educational institutions to the Indonesian archipelago. In addition to engaging in trade, the Portuguese actively promoted Catholicism and established schools to facilitate religious propagation. One of the earliest schools was founded in Ternate in 1536. Christian education expanded during this period and contributed to the spread of Christianity in several regions, although political conflicts and resistance movements eventually led to the decline of Portuguese influence in Indonesia (Purba, 2018; Nurwahyuni & Hudaidah, 2021).

Christian education continued to develop over subsequent centuries and was rooted in a long historical tradition extending from biblical times to the modern era. Christian educational principles emphasized fostering a close relationship with God and developing moral character based on Christian teachings. Educational methods inherited from Jewish traditions, as well as influences from Greek and Roman educational philosophies, contributed to the development of Christian educational practices. The teachings of Jesus Christ served as the central model for instruction, utilizing storytelling, parables, dialogue, and discussion as educational methods. Christian education continued to evolve through the efforts of church leaders and missionaries, maintaining its

influence well into the twentieth century (Purdayanto, 2021).

The Dutch colonial period brought significant changes to the educational system. Initially, educational opportunities were highly restricted and largely reserved for certain social groups. At the beginning of the twentieth century, criticism from humanitarian and social democratic movements in the Netherlands led to the implementation of the Ethical Policy in 1901. Although intended to improve indigenous welfare, education remained closely tied to colonial interests. During this period, forced labor practices and social inequalities persisted. However, growing nationalist awareness and the emergence of educational organizations after the National Awakening of 1908 encouraged Indonesians to use education as a means of promoting independence and social progress (Farid et al., 2023).

The Japanese occupation, which began after the Dutch surrender in 1942, introduced dramatic changes to Indonesian education. Japanese authorities closed Dutch schools, established new educational institutions, and implemented different policies. Although the caste-like distinctions of the colonial period were abolished, educational conditions generally deteriorated due to war, limited resources, and strict governmental control. Many teachers and students struggled to adapt to the new system, and the number of schools declined significantly. Nevertheless, some aspects of Japanese educational policies contributed to increased national consciousness and broader educational access among indigenous Indonesians (Ramadhani, 2021).

Following Indonesian independence, the Old Order period was characterized by efforts to establish a national educational system based on the philosophy of Pancasila. Between 1945 and 1950, much of the educational structure inherited from the Japanese era remained in place, although Bahasa Indonesia was adopted as the primary language of instruction. The government affirmed the right of all citizens to receive education regardless of social background. During the period from 1950 to 1966, several important educational laws were enacted to strengthen the national education system, including regulations governing basic education, higher education, and national educational principles (Fadli & Kumalasari, 2019).

During the New Order era, education became a central instrument for national development. Government policies emphasized political stability, economic growth, and educational expansion across Indonesia. Educational curricula evolved through several reforms, including the 1968, 1975, 1984, and 1994 curricula. Educational programs focused on Pancasila education, religious instruction, and citizenship education. While educational access expanded significantly, the system remained highly centralized, with standardized curricula, teaching methods, and evaluation procedures controlled by the government. Educational policies were often aligned with state interests and national development objectives (Safei & Hudaidah, 2020).

The Reform Era introduced substantial educational reforms through decentralization

policies. The enactment of Law No. 22 of 1999 granted greater autonomy to regional governments and educational institutions. School-Based Management was introduced to enhance local participation in educational decision-making, while the Competency-Based Curriculum sought to improve the quality of human resources. Further reforms were implemented through Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which emphasized the development of students' spiritual, intellectual, moral, and practical competencies in a holistic manner (Khaerudin & Rahmania, 2022).

In the modern era, educational development has been profoundly influenced by technological advancement, scientific progress, globalization, and social transformation. Modern education seeks to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and adaptability required to navigate an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world. Contemporary educational systems integrate traditional philosophical foundations with technological innovations and contemporary pedagogical approaches, ensuring that future generations are prepared to face global challenges while maintaining their cultural and national identity. Thus, the historical foundation of education demonstrates how educational systems continuously evolve in response to changing societal needs and global developments.

Philosophical Foundations of Education

The philosophical foundation of education refers to the effort to examine and understand the fundamental concepts, values, purposes, and

essence of education. Educational philosophy seeks to explore the nature of educational processes, the goals of education, and the relationship between education and human life. It serves as a guiding framework for educational practices, helping educators understand the deeper meaning and objectives behind teaching and learning activities. Therefore, educators are expected to possess a strong understanding of educational philosophy, as educational goals are closely connected to broader questions regarding the purpose and direction of human existence.

In the Indonesian context, the philosophy of national education reflects a combination of perennialist and progressive perspectives. The perennialist orientation emphasizes the preservation and transmission of cultural values, traditions, and national identity, while the progressive orientation focuses on the development of learners' potential, creativity, and adaptability to changing social conditions. This philosophical combination seeks to prepare students as responsible citizens who can participate in global society while maintaining their cultural roots and national identity (Giri et al., 2021).

One of the most influential philosophical figures in Indonesian education is Ki Hajar Dewantara, whose educational principles continue to shape educational practices today. His well-known philosophy consists of three interconnected principles: *Ing ngarsa sung tuladha* (in front, providing an example), *Ing madya mangun karsa* (in the middle, building initiative and motivation), and *Tut wuri*

handayani (behind, giving support and encouragement). These principles emphasize the educator's role not only as a source of knowledge but also as a role model, motivator, and facilitator who guides students toward personal growth and independence.

The philosophical foundations of education in Indonesia have evolved throughout different historical periods. During the prehistoric era, education was closely connected to family life and daily community activities. Educational practices were practical in nature, focusing on survival skills and the transmission of cultural knowledge from one generation to another. Learning occurred naturally through observation, imitation, and direct participation in community life.

During the Hindu-Buddhist period, educational philosophy was influenced by religious and social structures. Education was primarily managed by the Brahmin class and was generally informal. Vocational and occupational knowledge was passed down through hereditary systems associated with the caste structure. Educational opportunities were therefore determined largely by social status and religious affiliation.

The Reform Era, which began in 1998, brought significant philosophical changes to Indonesian education. Educational policies shifted toward greater democratization, learner-centered approaches, and inclusivity. The focus expanded from merely transmitting knowledge to empowering students to develop critical thinking skills, creativity, independence, and active participation in society. Educational reforms during this period emphasized equal opportunities,

decentralization, and the recognition of diversity within Indonesian society.

At the national level, the philosophical foundation of Indonesian education is rooted in Pancasila, as stated in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia. Pancasila provides the fundamental values that guide educational objectives, including belief in God, humanity, national unity, democracy, and social justice. These values serve as the basis for shaping Indonesian citizens who are morally responsible, intellectually capable, and committed to the welfare of society.

During the Old Order period, educational philosophy was strongly influenced by ideological considerations and efforts to strengthen national identity. Educational policies aimed to develop morally upright citizens who were democratic, socially responsible, and committed to national development. The system sought to cultivate individuals capable of contributing to society while maintaining loyalty to the nation and its foundational values.

In the New Order era, the philosophical foundation of education remained centered on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Educational policies were designed to create individuals who embodied Pancasila values and supported national development objectives. Education functioned as an instrument for fostering national unity, political stability, and economic progress. Consequently, educational programs emphasized character formation, citizenship education, and adherence to national ideals.

In the modern era, educational philosophy is

influenced by several major philosophical traditions. Idealism, inspired by the ideas of Plato, emphasizes the development of moral values, truth, and intellectual excellence. Realism contributes the view that education should help individuals understand the objective realities of the world through observation, reason, and scientific inquiry. Pragmatism, meanwhile, stresses the importance of experience as the foundation of learning and encourages educational practices that are practical, problem-solving oriented, and responsive to societal needs. Together, these philosophical perspectives continue to influence contemporary educational theories and practices, shaping educational systems that balance moral development, intellectual growth, and practical competence.

Psychological Foundation

The psychological foundation of education refers to the understanding of human mental development and behavior as a basis for implementing educational processes. This foundation serves as a guideline for educators in understanding the psychological characteristics of learners from childhood to adulthood. By understanding students' psychological development, educators can design learning experiences that are appropriate to their needs, interests, abilities, and stages of growth. Psychological foundations help ensure that educational activities are carried out effectively and support the optimal development of learners.

Educational psychology plays an important role in developing effective teaching and learning

strategies. It focuses on the learning process and the factors that influence it, both internal factors such as motivation, intelligence, and emotions, and external factors such as family, school, and social environments. Educational psychology is a branch of psychology that studies human behavior and development within educational contexts, providing valuable insights for improving learning outcomes and educational practices.

One of the major approaches within educational psychology is humanistic psychology. Humanistic psychology emphasizes human uniqueness, self-actualization, and personal growth. Humanistic education seeks to develop individuals holistically by addressing emotional, social, mental, and practical aspects of learning. Humanistic learning theory argues that effective learning occurs when education is centered on the learner and helps individuals understand themselves and realize their full potential. This approach assumes that every person possesses unique capabilities and that intrinsic motivation is a key factor in successful learning. Therefore, learning should provide opportunities for students to explore their interests, express themselves, and develop their abilities in a supportive environment.

Another important psychological perspective is cognitive psychology. Cognitive psychology explains how the human mind receives, processes, stores, and retrieves information during learning. This theory emphasizes that learning is a mental process involving perception, understanding, memory, reasoning, and problem-

solving. By understanding cognitive processes, educators can help students develop effective learning strategies and improve their ability to comprehend and retain information. Cognitive learning theory also highlights that learning outcomes are influenced by the way students organize and interpret knowledge rather than merely responding to external stimuli.

Behaviorist learning theory also contributes significantly to educational practice. This theory views learning as a change in behavior resulting from experience and interaction with the environment. Behaviorism emphasizes observable behavior and the relationship between stimulus and response. Through repetition, training, reinforcement, and punishment, desired behaviors can be strengthened while undesirable behaviors can be reduced. Consequently, behaviorist approaches are often applied in classroom management and habit formation, particularly when developing positive behavioral patterns among students. Although behaviorism views learners as responding to environmental stimuli, its principles remain valuable for shaping discipline, responsibility, and positive learning habits.

Sociological Foundation

The sociological foundation of education is based on the understanding that human beings are social creatures who live and interact within communities. Sociology studies human relationships, social groups, and social structures, while sociology of education examines how these social factors influence educational processes. This foundation provides important insights into how education functions within society and how

educational institutions contribute to social development. Education is closely connected with the social environment because it reflects the values, norms, traditions, and expectations that exist within a community.

Sociology of education encompasses various aspects of social interaction, including relationships between teachers and students, classroom dynamics, school organization, and the influence of broader social systems on education. Education serves as a process of socialization through which individuals learn cultural values, norms, beliefs, and behaviors necessary for participating effectively in society. Through education, societies transmit their cultural heritage from one generation to the next, ensuring social continuity and stability. Therefore, education not only develops individual competence but also prepares learners to become active and responsible members of society.

The sociological foundation has influenced the development of educational theories by emphasizing the role of education as an agent of social change. Schools are not merely institutions for transmitting knowledge; they also prepare students to become responsible citizens, contribute to societal development, and participate actively in social life. Education helps shape individuals who are capable of adapting to societal changes and contributing positively to their communities. As a result, educational institutions are expected to cultivate social awareness, civic responsibility, and a commitment to the common good.

From a sociological perspective, educational

objectives should align with societal needs and expectations. Schools function as institutions that prepare students for social participation by fostering values such as cooperation, responsibility, citizenship, and social awareness. Effective education requires collaboration between schools, families, and community leaders to ensure that educational goals reflect the aspirations and needs of society. Such cooperation strengthens the relationship between education and social development, making educational outcomes more relevant and meaningful.

Curriculum development is also influenced by sociological considerations. Educational curricula should reflect the cultural values, traditions, aspirations, and social realities of the communities they serve. Because society continuously evolves, curricula must remain flexible and responsive to social changes in order to maintain relevance and effectiveness. Educational programs should prepare learners to face contemporary social challenges while preserving important cultural values and identities.

In the educational process, schools act as social institutions that reinforce societal norms and values. Schools contribute to social control by promoting positive behaviors and discouraging negative habits. Through appropriate teaching strategies and learning experiences, students develop communication skills, social competence, empathy, and the ability to interact effectively with others in diverse social settings. Consequently, education serves as a bridge between individual development and social progress.

Tut Wuri Handayani Foundation

One of the most important educational foundations in Indonesia is the philosophy of Tut Wuri Handayani introduced by Ki Hajar Dewantara. This philosophy emphasizes that education should guide learners in their natural growth and development while respecting their individuality. Education is viewed as a process of nurturing children so that they can develop their potential and become responsible members of society. This philosophy remains highly relevant because it places learners at the center of the educational process while recognizing the important role of educators as guides and facilitators.

Ki Hajar Dewantara formulated the educational principle known as the Among System, which consists of three key concepts: Ing Ngarso Sung Tuladha, Ing Madya Mangun Karsa, and Tut Wuri Handayani. Ing Ngarso Sung Tuladha means “in front, setting an example.” This principle emphasizes that educators and leaders must serve as role models by demonstrating exemplary behavior and moral conduct that students can emulate. Educators are expected to embody the values they teach so that students can learn not only through instruction but also through observation.

Ing Madya Mangun Karsa means “in the middle, building initiative and motivation.” This principle highlights the educator’s role in encouraging, inspiring, and motivating learners while actively participating in the educational process. Teachers should foster creativity, enthusiasm, and confidence among students through meaningful interactions and support. By

being actively involved in the learning process, educators can help students develop their abilities and maintain a strong desire to learn.

Tut Wuri Handayani means “from behind, providing encouragement.” This principle underscores the importance of allowing students to develop independence while educators provide guidance, support, and motivation. Rather than controlling every aspect of learning, teachers should empower students to grow and learn autonomously. This approach promotes self-confidence, responsibility, and lifelong learning skills among learners.

Ki Hajar Dewantara also introduced the concept of Tri Nga, consisting of *ngerti* (understanding), *ngrasa* (feeling), and *nglakoni* (practicing). This concept suggests that true education should not only develop intellectual understanding but also emotional appreciation and practical application of knowledge and values. In addition, he proposed the concept of Tri Pantangan, which encourages individuals to avoid abusing authority, engaging in manipulation, and violating moral principles. Together, these concepts form a comprehensive educational philosophy that continues to influence Indonesian education and contribute to the development of students’ character and personality.

Science and Technology Foundation

Science and Technology serve as an important foundation for modern education. Education plays a crucial role in transmitting, developing, and applying scientific and technological knowledge for the advancement of society. The rapid development of science and technology has transformed nearly

every aspect of human life, making it essential for educational systems to adapt and prepare learners for an increasingly complex and competitive world.

Science and technology represent the cumulative results of human efforts to understand natural phenomena and create innovations that improve quality of life. In education, scientific and technological advancements significantly influence curriculum design, teaching methods, learning resources, and educational management. Consequently, educational institutions must continuously update their practices to remain relevant in a rapidly changing environment and to equip students with competencies needed in the twenty-first century.

The relationship between science, technology, and education is reciprocal. While education contributes to the development of scientific knowledge and technological innovation, advancements in science and technology also shape educational content and delivery methods. The integration of technology into education has expanded access to learning opportunities and improved the efficiency of educational processes. Students can now access information from various digital sources, participate in online learning environments, and engage in interactive educational experiences that were previously unavailable.

Examples of technological advancements in education include online learning platforms, digital libraries, virtual classrooms, educational software, and various forms of interactive learning media. These innovations have enhanced

educational accessibility and quality, allowing learners to access information and learning resources more effectively. As technology continues to evolve, education must adapt accordingly to prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to face future challenges and contribute meaningfully to society.

Legal Foundation

The legal foundation of education consists of the laws, regulations, and policies that govern educational practices and institutions. This foundation provides the legal framework necessary for organizing, implementing, and improving educational systems. Legal regulations ensure that education is conducted systematically, fairly, and in accordance with national goals and societal needs. Through legal provisions, the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders in education can be clearly defined and protected.

In Indonesia, the primary legal basis for education is the 1945 Constitution, particularly Article 31, which guarantees every citizen the right to education. This article also stipulates that citizens are required to undertake basic education and that the government is responsible for financing it. Furthermore, the Constitution mandates the state to establish a national education system aimed at promoting intellectual development and national progress. These constitutional provisions demonstrate the government's commitment to ensuring educational opportunities for all citizens.

The Indonesian education system is further regulated by Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. This law outlines the objectives, structure, administration, and

implementation of education throughout the country. It serves as the principal legal framework for educational development and reform. The law emphasizes that education should develop learners' spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed for individual and societal life.

Additional legal regulations include Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, which establishes standards for professional educators, and Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, which provides guidelines for educational quality assurance. Moreover, Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection guarantees every child's right to receive education and instruction appropriate to their needs and development. These regulations collectively support the implementation of quality education and the protection of learners' rights.

The legal foundation ensures that education in Indonesia operates within a clear and structured framework. It protects the educational rights of all citizens, promotes equal access to quality education, and supports the achievement of national educational goals. Through these legal provisions, education serves as a means of developing knowledgeable, skilled, ethical, and responsible individuals who can contribute positively to society, the nation, and the state.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of the historical foundations of education and the development

of education over time, it can be concluded that education is a continuously evolving process and is never static. Education constantly undergoes changes in response to social, cultural, political, scientific, and technological developments in every era. Since the earliest stages of human civilization, education has existed, although in a very simple form, primarily through families and surrounding communities with the main purpose of sustaining life and transmitting cultural values from one generation to the next.

As human civilization advanced, education also developed and became more structured. During the Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic kingdoms, education was largely organized through religious institutions that emphasized spiritual, moral, and practical knowledge. However, during the colonial period, education was often utilized as an instrument of power and control, resulting in unequal access for the broader population. This demonstrates that educational systems have historically been influenced by prevailing political authorities and societal interests.

Following Indonesia's independence, education was redirected toward national development goals, particularly the mission of educating the nation and improving the quality of human resources. Various reforms and policies were introduced, including curriculum development, the expansion of educational access, and efforts to improve the quality of teachers and educational institutions. Throughout the Old Order, New Order, and Reform Era, the educational system continued to evolve in

response to societal needs and the changing demands of the times.

In the modern and contemporary eras, educational development has accelerated significantly, particularly due to technological advancements. Learning is no longer confined to traditional classrooms but can take place flexibly through various digital platforms and technologies. Education now emphasizes not only the acquisition of knowledge but also the development of skills, creativity, critical thinking, and character formation. This transformation highlights the crucial role of education in preparing future generations to face global challenges and opportunities.

Furthermore, the development of education is supported by several foundational dimensions, including historical, philosophical, psychological, sociological, scientific and technological, and juridical foundations. These foundations provide essential guidance for designing and improving educational systems. By understanding the historical development of education, valuable lessons can be drawn from the past to enhance current educational practices and formulate more relevant and effective educational policies for the future.

Therefore, it can be affirmed that education is a dynamic and continuous process. The evolution of education throughout history reflects humanity's ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life through knowledge, skills, and character development. Consequently, understanding the historical foundations of education is essential to ensure that future

educational systems become more effective, adaptive, and capable of addressing the challenges of an increasingly complex and changing world.

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