

Decolonizing psychology education in the Indonesian context: Toward a socio-historically engaged pedagogy

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Introduction

In this chapter, we aim to discuss our experiences as educators at a university in Indonesia, which increasingly feel socio-historically alienating and mechanistically standardized under the dominant neoliberal orientation. Specifically, we will reflect on our experiences through a decolonial lens, situating the current state of Indonesian universities in relation to the ongoing reproduction of colonial logics that shape the approach to higher education in the country.

We argue that the diminishing role of universities in Indonesia as a foundation for critical voices and solidarity results from a historical disconnection that has marginalized the thoughts of Indonesian educational philosophers. Historically, these thinkers played a crucial role in developing educational models that fostered solidarity and resistance against injustices and oppressions, especially during the colonial era. By drawing insights from these philosophers, we contend that decoloniality in the context of higher education in Indonesia involves intentional endeavours to resist alienating education—education that disconnects universities from their societies, reinforces existing social hierarchies, marginalizes the underprivileged, and discourages learners from questioning and engaging with societal issues.

In doing so, we will engage in an archival retrieval of the works of notable Indonesian philosophers, educators, and social activists—such as Driyarkara (1913–1967) and Mangunwijaya (1929–1999)—who are recognized for their contributions to education, knowledge sovereignty, and humanity. Both figures were instrumental in the history of Indonesian education and developed their philosophies within the broader context of the anti-colonial movement. Their key ideas emphasize education as a humanizing pathway toward compassion-based solidarity and dignified humanity, reflected in Indonesian concepts such as *belarasa* and *kesetiakawanan*. Additionally, we will describe how we have put our commitment to resisting alienating education into practice through our newly established postgraduate program in critical psychology.