



The Educational Philosophy of the Pre-Service Elementary Teachers in the Teacher Professional Education Program

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ABSTRAK

Kualitas pengajaran yang tinggi merupakan faktor kunci dalam keberhasilan pendidikan suatu bangsa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi filosofi pendidikan yang dianut oleh calon guru sekolah dasar serta implikasinya terhadap pendekatan pengajaran mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode survei dengan melibatkan 29 calon guru sekolah dasar yang terdaftar dalam Program Pendidikan Profesi Guru. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner online dan dianalisis menggunakan analisis deskriptif dengan perangkat lunak IBM SPSS. Hasil analisis diinterpretasikan berdasarkan skor rata-rata untuk mengidentifikasi kecenderungan filosofi pendidikan para responden. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa calon guru sekolah dasar memiliki preferensi tertinggi terhadap filosofi progresivisme ($M = 4.31$) dan preferensi terendah terhadap esensialisme ($M = 3.29$). Selain itu, terdapat kecenderungan yang lebih kuat terhadap filosofi pendidikan modern dibandingkan dengan filosofi tradisional. Guru yang cenderung pada progresivisme lebih memprioritaskan pembelajaran berpusat pada siswa, pembelajaran mandiri, kolaborasi, pemecahan masalah, serta refleksi dalam praktik mengajar mereka. Namun, penelitian ini juga mengungkapkan bahwa calon guru tidak hanya menganut satu filosofi, melainkan menunjukkan fleksibilitas dalam pendekatan pengajaran mereka. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya pemahaman terhadap filosofi pendidikan calon guru bagi pembuat kebijakan, institusi pendidikan, dan dosen dalam mendukung pengembangan keterampilan mengajar mereka. Implikasi dari penelitian ini mengarah pada perlunya kebijakan pendidikan yang mendorong fleksibilitas dalam pendekatan pedagogis serta penguatan kurikulum yang dapat membekali calon guru dengan berbagai perspektif filosofi pendidikan guna meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran dan sistem pendidikan secara keseluruhan.

ABSTRACT

High-quality teaching is a key factor in the success of a nation's education system. This study aims to identify the educational philosophies adopted by pre-service elementary school teachers and their implications for teaching approaches. This research employs a survey method involving 29 pre-service elementary school teachers enrolled in the Teacher Professional Education Program. Data were collected through an online questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive analysis with IBM SPSS software. The analysis results were interpreted based on mean scores to determine the respondents' tendencies toward specific educational philosophies. The findings reveal that pre-service elementary school teachers exhibit the highest preference for progressivism ($M = 4.31$) and the lowest for essentialism ($M = 3.29$). Additionally, there is a stronger inclination toward modern educational philosophies rather than traditional ones. Teachers who lean toward progressivism prioritize student-centered learning, independent learning, collaboration, problem-solving, and reflective teaching practices. However, this study also indicates that pre-service teachers do not adhere to a single philosophy but rather demonstrate flexibility in their teaching approaches. These findings highlight the importance of understanding pre-service teachers' educational philosophies for policymakers, educational institutions, and teacher educators in supporting the development of their teaching skills. The implications of this study emphasize the need for educational policies that promote flexibility in pedagogical approaches and curriculum reinforcement, equipping pre-service teachers with diverse educational philosophy perspectives to enhance teaching quality and the overall education system.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers as the foundation of good quality education in a nation are required also to have good teaching quality. High-quality teachers are believed to be able to improve the quality of education and also students. This means teachers with professionalism ought to establish a dynamic and encouraging learning environment for students. In Indonesia, the government implements various strategies to improve the quality of teachers, one of which is the Teacher Professional Education Program or *Program Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG)*. The program is designed for Bachelor of Education and Non-Educational graduates who have the aptitude and motivation to master teacher competence in order to become professional educators in compliance with national education standards and acquire an educator certificate (Abbas et al., 2023; Tesar, 2016). It is expected this program will serve as a strategy to yield teachers with professional certification. As a result, it is critical to investigate the educational philosophy embraced by the pre-service teachers in the Teacher Professional Education Program, as it will lead them in designing lesson plans, determining their teaching approaches, as well as coping with the problems in the profession. A philosophy that is anchored within the teachers can impact their values and principles in teaching, the organization of their learning activities, and the methods and techniques they use to teach the students (Khairani et al., 2023; Nanggala & Suryadi, 2021). Hence, it is important for those who have an interest in becoming a teacher to discover their philosophy in education. According to previous research, it is essential to analyze one own's philosophy as it helps one to understand oneself and its role in the educational advancement of the nation (Abbas et al., 2023; Tesar, 2016). Those who are working in education benefit from having their philosophy since it helps them establish a better comprehension of the nature of things related to education. Based on O'Neil (1981/2008), the philosophy of education is concerned with the school's issues related to the questions; How should the educational goals underpin the social aims? What are the objectives of education? How those objectives would be embedded in the curriculum and instructions? Furthermore, similar research stated that the philosophy of education addresses questions concerning the aims of education, the important knowledge and skills, the learning and teaching environment, and also the process (Brinia et al., 2020; Khairani et al., 2023). Similarly, previous research asserted that educational philosophy is the foundation of the process of designing and evaluating the curriculum as well as the process of using the curriculum (Acquah & Jnr, 2015; Bueno, 2019). In other words, teachers' educational philosophy contributes to the development and improvement of the educational system of a nation.

Over the years, educational philosophies have been introduced and classified by philosophers into various categories based on their perspectives on the role of students and teachers. In a sense, this study proposed eight educational philosophies ranging from traditional to popular, such as Perennialism, Essentialism, Progressivism, Reconstructionism, Information Processing, Constructivism, Behaviorism, and Humanism. The traditional group consists of Perennialism and Essentialism which are rooted in Idealism and Realism. Perennialism in the field of education believes that school is founded to improve the human intellectual potential in which the teacher is the only source of knowledge (Er, 2020; Sahan & Terzi, 2015). Under perennialism, educators should prioritize and centralize certain disciplines and focus on the constancy of knowledge such as history, math, language, literature, humanities, and science. Perennialism education considers the process of learning takes place in remembering and defining the pre-existed or formed knowledge and concepts about something as the curriculum models do not change (Eğmir & Çelik, 2019; Henita et al., 2022). Similarly, in essentialism, people believe in a teacher-centered approach in which the teacher is the only source of knowledge and manages the classroom (Er, 2020; Sahan & Terzi, 2015). Essentialism education aims to develop students' minds and will, and to ensure that the rules of mind are used correctly and effectively (Eğmir & Çelik, 2019; Henita et al., 2022). This philosophy believed that education needs to educate the students by considering the ideal and universal realities. Further, essentialism focuses on providing students with the 'essentials' of academic knowledge, encouraging citizenship, and emphasizing core curriculum and teacher-led curriculum development (Acquah & Jnr, 2015; Brinia et al., 2020).

Besides, another group of philosophies, which is known as popular philosophies, focuses on the characteristics and development of the students. In progressivism philosophy, education moved from literature-based to socially conscious. Based on John Dewey's progressive education (as cited in Hopkins, 2017), the curriculum should focus on practical relevance where the graduates possess the practical knowledge and competence for the occupation. Progressive education believes in learning by doing so that the students can understand and make meaning within the learning opportunities given, such as internship, community, service, and voluntary. Progressivism underscores that the student is the center of education and not the subject because it is the student's needs and interests that matter (Amac & Oral, 2023; Bueno, 2019; Er, 2020). Students have the personal freedom to learn and are encouraged to develop their confidence in their decision-making abilities as the teachers facilitate them with project and cooperative learning that requires them to hone their problem-solving skills (Er, 2020; Tupas & Pendon, 2016). Next, in

reconstructionism education, which is the continuation of progressivism, some think that students are in charge of shaping the future of the society, they need to be educated in a way that can aid them in reconstructing it (Er, 2020; Tupas & Pendon, 2016). Also, similar research claimed that reconstructionism in education aims to create social change agents by promoting ownership of learning and actions (Laundon et al., 2020; Nanggala & Suryadi, 2021). Therefore, teachers' task is to find a correlation between students' academic and personal goals and the issues faced by society (Ulum & Fauzi, 2023; Yunaini et al., 2022). With this role, teachers build a democratic classroom environment in which the students will hone their critical thinking and learn to identify problems, create hypotheses, find the data, draw conclusions, and execute an action related to the issues in society (Nugroho, 2020; Ponto, 2015; Tupas & Pendon, 2016).

Information processing is the next popular philosophy that focuses on how the mind processes the retrieved information. In the context of education, those who believe in this philosophy consider learning as an active process rather than just receiving information. According to previous research, this theory is based on the similarities between the human brain and computer operation, especially in cognitive processes (Acquah & Jnr, 2015; Henita et al., 2022). Information-processing teachers will design learning activities and teaching strategies based on students' information-processing ability to address a meaningful learning environment (Jamaluddin et al., 2024; Nugroho, 2020). Then, there is a philosophy of behaviorism. The core concept of behaviourism is the idea that individuals behave in predictable manners because of external forces. This philosophy focuses on the stimulus-response theory of learning. Behaviorism education emphasizes that a learning environment should be created by observing and imitating others' behaviors in which teachers are responsible for reinforcing appropriate behavior and ignoring or modifying undesired behavior (Bueno, 2019; Ulum & Fauzi, 2023). As also explained by similar research, behaviorist teachers make use of many teaching and assessment tools to improve learning effectiveness, including feedback, reinforcements, motivation, learning outcomes, and goals (Ansar et al., 2021; Campbell et al., 2020). Still focusing on students' engagement in learning, there is cognitivism or constructivism which is a philosophy in education that believes learners actively construct their understanding as a response to their learning experiences. With this philosophy, the students actively receive new information and integrate it with their prior knowledge. As a result, the students can critically think about the new knowledge that does not fit their prior knowledge and raise questions. According to previous research, constructivist education prioritizes students to actively and freely build their knowledge through their experiences and interaction with the environment (Sumarna & Gunawan, 2022; Ulubey & Alpaslan, 2022). Lastly, humanism became one of the popular philosophies in education. This philosophy believes that humans can potentially grow and become the best they can be because they can control their own goals. Humanistic education aims to support the unlimited potential for growth, self-actualization, and development for teachers who are allowed to independently develop lesson plans (Anggraini et al., 2022; Wiryanto & Anggraini, 2022).

Many studies have examined the educational philosophies of pre-service teachers in various countries, including the Philippines, and Turkey (Amac & Oral, 2023; Aytaç & Uyangör, 2020; Börekci & Uyangör, 2021; Bueno, 2019; Er, 2020). The findings demonstrated the range of pre-service teachers' inclinations toward educational philosophy and how it affected their notions of teaching and learning. While pre-service teachers in Turkey had tendencies toward Progressivism, those in the Philippines displayed tendencies toward Perennialism. However, in the Indonesian context, research on pre-service teachers' educational philosophies remains limited. Most studies mainly discussed the philosophy underpinning the previous, current, or future educational systems and curriculums, such as Ki Hajar Dewantara's philosophy, Pancasila, and the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum (Arjaya et al., 2022; Sumardi, 2020; Yunaini et al., 2022). To address this gap, this study aims to investigate the educational philosophy adhered to by Indonesian pre-service teachers. As philosophy carries a significant role in the educational field, it is crucial to understand the philosophies of teachers and those who prepare themselves in the teacher education program. Understanding educational philosophy is a crucial aspect of the professional development of pre-service teachers in Indonesia as a future teacher who is committed to providing quality education for students. According to previous research understanding the philosophy contributes to the teachers' journey in their teacher identity construction (Eğmir & Çelik, 2019; Wiryanto & Anggraini, 2022). A deep understanding of their philosophical beliefs can help them to grow and develop their competence in the field. In other words, incorporating philosophy in education aids teachers in determining the framework of educational processes, including their objectives, curriculum, or learning environment. The novelty of this study lies in its in-depth analysis of the educational philosophies adopted by pre-service elementary school teachers in the Teacher Professional Education Program, a topic that remains underexplored in academic literature. This study examines how different educational philosophies—such as progressivism, essentialism, perennialism, and existentialism—shape teaching approaches and instructional decision-making among future educators. By analyzing the philosophical orientations of pre-service teachers, this research seeks to highlight the implications of these beliefs for student-centered learning, curriculum development, and

pedagogical flexibility. It aims to explain the relationship between educational philosophy and teaching practices by emphasizing the strategic role of instructional design, reflective teaching, and adaptability in responding to diverse classroom needs. By identifying the dominant and emerging educational philosophies among pre-service elementary teachers, this study provides new insights into how teacher preparation programs can better equip future educators with a balanced and adaptable teaching approach. The findings of this study also contribute to practical recommendations for policymakers, teacher educators, and curriculum developers in designing more effective teacher training programs that align with contemporary educational challenges and expectations.

2. METHODS

The research method used in this study is a survey method as this study purposed to collect information from individuals' responses to questions. According to previous research, survey research is an appropriate method for obtaining information related to individuals' behaviours and preferences by asking targeted questions (Ponto, 2015; Sahan & Terzi, 2015). The quantitative data gathered through the survey then was analysed using the quantification method and described in the form of descriptive analysis. The subject of this research was pre-service elementary school teachers of the Teacher Professional Education Program or *Program Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG)* at a private university in Yogyakarta during the 2023/2024 academic year. Through the purposive sampling method, twenty-nine pre-service teachers participated in this research. This method was used to obtain the data that matched the research objectives (Campbell et al., 2020; Darmawan & Sujoko, 2019). Moreover, the access in approaching the participants also becomes a factor in determining the sample of this study. An instrument that was employed to collect the data in this research was a questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this research was adapted from Leonora M in 1999. The questionnaire contains 40 items of a 5-point Likert scale to determine the educational philosophy adopted by the participants in this study. Eight types of educational philosophy are represented in the questionnaire items: Perennialism, Existentialism, Progressivism, Reconstructionism, Information Processing, Behaviourism, Cognitivism/Constructivism, and Humanism. The items in the scale are scored from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree, and no item is scored in reverse. The data collection instrument is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Instruments

| Philosophy | Indicators | Number of Items |
|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Perennialism | Learning about the great concepts of national culture, such as reality, truth, value, and beauty, is the goal of education. A curriculum needs to be consistent throughout time and context. | 1, 10, 23, 31, 39 |
| Essentialism | Students must be taught a foundation of fundamental knowledge and abilities in a methodical, controlled manner. Instruction is uniform, direct, and subject-centred. | 5, 7, 12, 16, 17 |
| Progressivism | Education should focus on the child rather than the subject matter. Schools should help students develop personal and social values to grow into considerate, useful citizens. | 4, 24, 26, 34, 36 |
| Reconstructionism | Schools should take the lead in reconstructing society to create a better world. Schools have more than a responsibility to transmit knowledge, they have the mission to transform society as well. | 8, 11, 15, 25, 40 |
| Information Processing | Education focuses on how a person's mind functions similarly to a computer. Information is encoded, processed, stored, and retrieved using symbols. | 6, 14, 22, 29, 37 |
| Behaviorism | Instead of coming from free will, behavior is the outcome of outside circumstances that make people act in predictable ways. The emphasis is on observable behavior rather than internal mental processes; behavior change is a sign of learning. | 20, 30, 33, 35, 38 |
| Cognitivism | Through action and reflection on encounters in the world, the learner actively creates their own perspective of reality. To enhance student learning, teachers mediate experiences and create favorable environments. | 2, 9, 19, 27, 32 |
| Humanism | Becoming the best version of oneself by learning from the viewpoint of human growth potential. People are naturally inclined to learn, | 3, 13, 18, 21, 28 |

| Philosophy | Indicators | Number of Items |
|---|------------|-----------------|
| and this inclination will thrive in situations that are supportive and nurturing. | | |
| Total | | 40 |

The data was collected after permission was obtained from the lecturer of the program because the study was conducted in the classroom. Moreover, the researcher got consent from all the students in the class before starting the investigation. Before the questionnaires were given, the participants were explained about the topic of the research which is educational philosophy, and its importance for their teaching journey. Moreover, they were explained about how this research would be connected with their topic on that day and how it would help them to reflect and learn about themselves as students and future teachers. Then, the students were given approximately 25 to 30 minutes to complete the survey. In analyzing the data, the researcher follows the scoring guide in [Table 2](#) to calculate the score for each philosophy. Five statements representing each philosophy to which the score for those statements will be added. Hence, the highest and lowest scores for each philosophy will be 25 and 5, respectively. Further, the researcher used IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software to analyze the mean score and standard deviation of each philosophy. In interpreting the category of mean scores, the researcher followed the classification in the following table as used in ([Mbato & Triprihatmini, 2022](#); [Nanggala & Suryadi, 2021](#)).

Table 2. Category of Mean Scores

| Mean Score | Category |
|------------|----------|
| 3.68-5.00 | High |
| 2.34-3.67 | Moderate |
| 1.00-2.33 | Low |

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This part explains the pre-service elementary school teachers' perceptions of the educational philosophy. There are three subsections explaining the findings of this study based on the pre-service teachers' philosophy as an entire group, and based on gender. *Pre-Service Teachers' Educational Philosophy as an Entire Group*. In this part, the quantitative data presents the educational philosophy of pre-service teachers in the entire group. Pre-service Teachers' Perception of Educational Philosophy showed in [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Pre-service Teachers' Perception of Educational Philosophy

| Philosophy | N | Mean Score | Category | SD |
|------------------------|----|------------|----------|------|
| Perennialism | 29 | 3.67 | Moderate | 1.04 |
| Essentialism | 29 | 3.29 | Moderate | 1.08 |
| Progressivism | 29 | 4.31 | High | 0.75 |
| Reconstructionism | 29 | 3.89 | High | 0.79 |
| Information Processing | 29 | 4.08 | High | 0.80 |
| Behaviorism | 29 | 4.02 | High | 0.85 |
| Cognitivism | 29 | 4.14 | High | 0.72 |
| Humanism | 29 | 4.28 | High | 0.71 |

The descriptive analysis results of [Table 3](#) revealed that popular philosophies were ranked higher than traditional philosophies. Progressivism has the highest mean score of 4.31 (SD=2.14) which indicates that pre-service teachers have the highest belief level toward this philosophy. Slightly lower, the second highest philosophy believed with a mean of 4.28 (SD=1.91) is Humanism. Then, in the average mean scores, three philosophies perceived high perceptions, namely Cognitivism ($M=4.14$, $SD=2.32$), Information Processing ($M=4.08$, $SD=2.43$), and Behaviorism ($M=4.02$, $SD=2.32$). Moreover, Reconstructionism as one of popular philosophy has a mean score of 3.89 (SD=2.0). Then, for two traditional philosophies used in this study, Perennialism, and Essentialism, they perceived the lowest mean score of 3.67 (SD= 3.0) and 3.29 (SD=3.06), respectively. *Pre-Service Teachers' Educational Philosophy Classified According to Gender*.

Classified based on gender, this part presents the educational philosophy of male and female pre-service teachers. Male and Female Pre-Service Teachers' Educational Philosophy showed in [Table 4](#).

Table 4. Male and Female Pre-Service Teachers' Educational Philosophy

| Philosophy | Mean Score | |
|------------------------|------------|--------|
| | Male | Female |
| Perennialism | 3.44 | 3.72 |
| Essentialism | 3.24 | 3.31 |
| Progressivism | 4.32 | 4.31 |
| Reconstructionism | 4.0 | 3.87 |
| Information Processing | 3.72 | 4.15 |
| Behaviorism | 3.8 | 4.08 |
| Cognitivism | 4.0 | 4.12 |
| Humanism | 4.2 | 4.3 |

[Table 4](#) reported that female students ($M=3.98$) have slightly higher perceptions of the philosophies in education than male students ($M=3.84$). Female students dominantly perceive higher perceptions than male students on each philosophy, except for Progressivism and Reconstructionism. However, according to gender, popular philosophies still ranked higher than traditional ones. Both male and female students of PPG have the highest perception toward progressivism ($M=4.32$, & $M=4.31$), and the lowest is Essentialism ($M=3.24$ & $M=3.31$). Therefore, it is important to note that thirteen participants tended more than one philosophy. According to the reduction of those participants, [Table 5](#) shows the frequency and percentage of philosophy of education chosen by the pre-service elementary school teachers. However, the results remain the same as the popular philosophies dominate the pre-service teachers' belief in education. There were 37.5% of the pre-service teachers showed participation in the belief of Progressivism, followed by Humanism (31.25%), Information Processing (12.25%), Behaviorism (12.25%), and Cognitivism (6.25%). These findings were similar to the previous ones, in which Progressivism and Behaviorism are highly perceived by the pre-service elementary school teachers.

Table 5. Percentage of the Pre-Service Teachers' Educational Philosophy

| Philosophy | N | Percentage (%) |
|------------------------|---|----------------|
| Perennialism | 0 | 0 |
| Essentialism | 0 | 0 |
| Progressivism | 6 | 37.5 |
| Reconstructionism | 0 | 0 |
| Information Processing | 2 | 12.5 |
| Behaviorism | 2 | 12.5 |
| Cognitivism | 1 | 6.25 |
| Humanism | 5 | 31.25 |

Discussion

The first objective of this research is to describe the pre-service elementary school teachers' perceptions of the philosophy of education. The findings discovered that the pre-service teachers who enrolled in Elementary School Teacher Education have high a perception of the popular philosophy. The highest level of perception among them is placed in Progressivism. Meanwhile, the lowest level of perceptions was in Essentialism. It means that pre-service elementary school teacher education students in the Teacher Professional Education Program have stated their agreement more positively with the popular philosophy rather than the traditional one. Relevant studies conducted by previous research, which were conducted in Turkey, discovered that most pre-service and in-service teachers in primary schools showed their beliefs in progressivism at the highest and essentialism at the least, which is in line the present study ([Amac & Oral, 2023](#); [Eğmir & Çelik, 2019](#)). Similar findings were also gathered from a study by similar research which demonstrated that the highest philosophical belief of teacher candidates is Progressivism ([Darmawan & Sujoko, 2019](#); [Er, 2020](#)). The dominant educational philosophy among pre-service teachers was progressivism ([Tupas & Pendon, 2016](#); [Ulubey & Alpaslan, 2022](#)). It also showed Essentialism as the least believed by the participants. Similar study also found that teachers have dominant preferences for progressivism rather than essentialism ([Aytaç & Uyangör, 2020](#); [Börekci & Uyangör, 2021](#)). These results are also in line with other similar studies that focused on pre-service teachers' educational philosophy in which they had the highest belief in progressivism ([Sahan & Terzi, 2015](#); [Tupas & Pendon, 2016](#)). However,

different results were obtained by previous study which showed that pre-service teachers' philosophical thinking was dominated by perennialism and reconstructionism which is contradicted to the result of this study (Bueno, 2019; Campbell et al., 2020). This study, which is predominately composed of female pre-service teachers, found no difference in the way male and female students perceived the educational philosophy based on gender. Both female and male pre-service elementary school teachers tended to the same educational philosophy which is Progressivism. The findings of other studies also showed that there is no correlation between philosophical beliefs and gender (Bueno, 2019; Tupas & Pendon, 2016).

It is worth noting that many of the pre-service elementary school teachers did not only believe in one educational philosophy but two or even three. This fact indicates that there is a combination of the educational philosophies they advocate and the other theories they are familiar with during their learning journey as student teachers. As also stated in a study by similar research which found that one participant possibly has multiple philosophies in education (Bueno, 2019; Tupas & Pendon, 2016). Flexibility is necessary to adapt to different educational philosophies to complete the educational process more successfully. Thus, the analysis of the study by previous research revealed that a mix of teaching strategies used by teachers is necessary to achieve teaching and learning outcomes (Kunjumuhamed et al., 2024; Laundon et al., 2020). Even though the students have preferred a philosophical strategy, that is mostly student-centered, they could also deploy the teacher-centered and other strategies rooted in the opposite philosophy as long as it would help them in achieving their objectives in education.

The second objective of this study was to find the consequences of having a certain philosophy in teachers' approaches and instructions in the teaching and learning activities. Thus, acknowledging own philosophy of education is a crucial aspect for the pre-service teachers as it becomes one principle that can guide them in doing their professional work and solving the problems they face during the process. Previous research stated that within their educational philosophy, teachers have the foundations for designing the course, managing the classroom, setting their educational goals, and leading to greater teaching authenticity (Greenier & Whitehead, 2016; Kunjumuhamed et al., 2024). Additionally, similar research believed that pre-service teachers' educational philosophy tendencies significantly influence their teaching-learning conceptions (Aytaç & Uyangör, 2020; Börekci & Uyangör, 2021). In this study, the pre-service elementary school teachers in the Teacher Professional Education Program mostly tend to believe in progressivism education. They agree that curriculum should not be predetermined but rather should be designed based on students' needs and interests. Thus, this result could also be relevant to the educational condition in Indonesia, especially regarding the curriculum. There were a lot of changes and improvements made by the government to the curriculum which was also influenced by the philosophical foundations until it introduced the newest curriculum concept, the *Merdeka* curriculum. This curriculum represents the educational philosophy of progressivism (Nanggala & Suryadi, 2021; Nugroho, 2020). The policies for schools and institutions highlighted the freedom of learning for the learners and the fulfillment of their self-actualization and self-achievement in the different fields according to their needs and interests. Previous study discovered that the concept of the *Merdeka* curriculum can be seen from the progressivism perspective (Greenier & Whitehead, 2016; Henita et al., 2022). This curriculum was developed to reconstruct the educational system in Indonesia and to adapt to the changes of the era. The belief of progressivism in education refers to the openness toward the development of information and technology advances. The pre-service teachers in this present study also agree that students' experience is the center of education as well as the freedom to achieve their full potential. With this philosophy, teachers involve the students to actively participate in learning and choose how and what they should learn according to their needs and interests. Education that is rooted in progressivism considers students' creativity as the primary orientation in the learning process (Nanggala & Suryadi, 2021; Nugroho, 2020). In practice, the teachers design activities that allow the students to be the main actors where they can express their thoughts and curiosity freely. Progressivism education emphasizes the role of the teacher as the facilitator and the students as the main focus during the learning where they have the authority in planning and discussion making (Albeta et al., 2023; Greenier & Whitehead, 2016). Therefore, progressivist teachers encourage a student-centered approach in conducting classroom activities and they are the facilitators who allow students to experience learning that emphasizes their problem-solving skills, collaboration, and responsibility (Er, 2020; Tupas & Pendon, 2016). Progressivist teachers believed that it is important to encourage a democratic learning environment where students can learn independently and experience purposeful reflection about their learning experiences. Moreover, in progressivism education, the teacher's role is as a facilitator who provides project-based activities and cooperative learning that emphasize the interdisciplinary subject in which they combine various disciplines into one subject (Er, 2020; Jamaluddin et al., 2024). Students are urged to learn, not only by understanding the knowledge but also by its application to real-life situations. Dewey suggested that the goal of progressivist education is that the students purposefully not only academically possess the theoretical ideas but also the practical competence

required for the future (Greenier & Whitehead, 2016; Sadovnik et al., 2017). Additionally, previous research asserts that the primary goal of progressivist educators is to ensure that students acquire the ability to solve problems and make decisions so they can participate in cooperative learning and active learning (Bueno, 2019; Campbell et al., 2020). Thus, what schools and teachers can do to achieve the goal is give unlimited support for the students in developing themselves through various kinds of activities that aid exposure and interaction with the communities (Tupas & Pendon, 2016; Ulubey & Alpaslan, 2022).

The findings of this study contribute significantly to understanding the role of educational philosophy in shaping the teaching approaches of pre-service elementary teachers in the Teacher Professional Education Program. This research highlights how different philosophical orientations influence instructional strategies, curriculum design, and classroom management. The study reveals that pre-service teachers exhibit a strong preference for progressivism, which emphasizes student-centered learning, critical thinking, collaboration, and reflective teaching. However, findings also indicate that many pre-service teachers adopt a flexible approach, integrating multiple educational philosophies to adapt to diverse teaching environments. The increasing emphasis on the role of educational philosophy in teacher preparation underscores the importance of equipping future educators with a well-rounded pedagogical foundation. Recognizing the diversity of philosophical perspectives among pre-service teachers can help teacher education programs refine their curricula to foster instructional adaptability and professional growth. This research also contributes to the ongoing discussion on how philosophical beliefs shape teacher identity and effectiveness in facilitating meaningful learning experiences. One limitation of this study is the potential influence of contextual and institutional factors on the philosophical beliefs of pre-service teachers. The impact of teacher training curricula, cultural expectations, and evolving educational policies may not be fully captured, potentially leading to an incomplete representation of the complexity of educational philosophy in teacher preparation. External factors such as policy reforms, technological advancements, and shifts in educational paradigms also play a role in shaping the teaching philosophies of future educators, warranting further investigation. Recommendations for future research include an in-depth examination of how educational philosophies evolve throughout teachers' careers and how philosophical orientations influence teaching effectiveness in real classroom settings. Future studies should also explore how teacher education programs can integrate philosophical training more effectively to enhance instructional quality. Additionally, interdisciplinary approaches that combine education, psychology, and philosophy can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how pre-service teachers develop and apply their educational beliefs in diverse learning environments.

4. CONCLUSION

Taking into account all the above, the pre-service elementary school teachers in the Teacher Professional Education Program or Pendidikan Profesi Guru (PPG) have higher preferences in the educational philosophy of progressivism rather than others. It indicates that the pre-service teachers believe that the centre of education is the students and their potential growth. As a result, their belief in progressivism education led to a student-centered learning approach in which teachers act as facilitators. Furthermore, progressivism education allows students to be given exposure to many experiences and practices where they can improve their problem-solving and decision-making skills, as well as reflect on their learning. However, the pre-service teachers had the belief in more than one philosophy as they could adjust their teaching approaches according to the situation. This study, therefore, contributes to filling the gap found in the research related to the educational philosophy among pre-service teachers in the Indonesian context.

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