

Gender Equality From R.A. Kartini's Perspective and Its Relevance in Education

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to examine the concept of gender equality in education which was echoed by Kartini during colonialism. This study found that there was relevance of the concept of gender equality at that time in the education system. Apart from that, this article also reveals how Kartini's thoughts can influence education, especially focusing on gender access, analyzes several forms of discrimination based on gender regarding educational rights during colonialism which had an impact on education policy, and analyzes the follow-up actions that must be taken in efforts to overcome gender equality in education. It begins with an analysis of the concept of gender equality in the global concept that occurred during colonialism which is drawn into Kartini's local concept of gender equality in education. Thus, we can get a gender policy concept that can be generalized in the world of education.

Keywords: Kartini, gender equality, education, colonialism.

Introduction

Kartini's ideas in her thoughts on gender equality in education were greatly admired by the Dutch during colonialism. Her courage to voice her condition as a Javanese woman who was confined to seclusion customs meant that she did not have the same rights in education as her older brother who was able to receive an education at *Hoogere Burgerschool* (HBS) in the Netherlands (Solekhah, 2018). Kartini blamed the customary system in force at that time, which had an impact on her. A Javanese woman does not have the right to receive education outside the home. This makes it taboo for women to leave the house. Apart from that, treatment between women and men is not the same (Windasari et al., 2023).

In Javanese etiquette, a woman must sit on her knees and bow when her father or older brother passes in front of her. Kartini felt the difference in rights even more when her father remarried a royal woman, which made her biological mother's status become *garwa ampi* and her stepmother became *garwa padmi* (main wife) (Marihandono et al., 2016). This happened because his stepmother came from a royal noble family. However, Kartini still holds the RA title. (Raden Ajeng) because her biological mother was her father's first wife because Kartini's father, who at that time still had *Wedono* status, was promoted to become Regent.

To become Regent, Kartini's father had to marry a royal woman. Kartini saw firsthand how unfair her biological mother was treated. He had to call him Yu to his biological mother (Marihandono et al., 2016). Her mother also had to look after Kartini's stepmother's children, and serve Kartini's stepmother's needs. Kartini's biological mother painstakingly carried out

every household task. He never complained one bit in front of his father. Kartini knew that her mother's heart was really hurt, but it was her obligation to her father that was able to make her get through those days patiently.

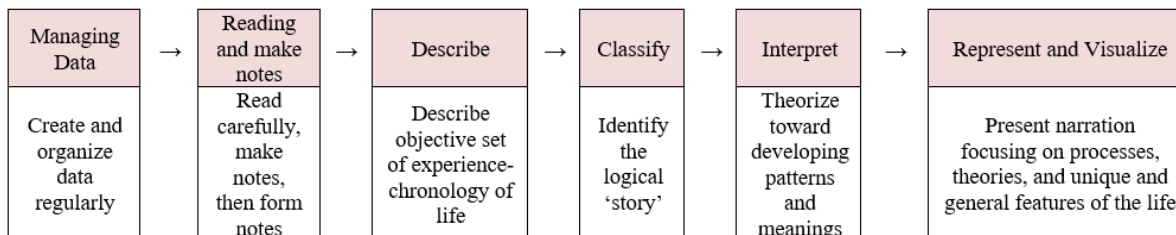
Kartini's thoughts were revealed when news of her death shocked the Netherlands. Many studies reveal Kartini's ideas which amazed and opened the eyes of the Dutch people to the importance of the Dutch East Indies (as Indonesia was known) for their nation. The first literature study was carried out by Stella, Kartini's friend from the Netherlands. Her name is Estelle Zeehandelaar, but Kartini's nickname is Stella. Stella opened Kartini's eyes to the role and position of women in Europe.

The significance of this research lies in Ra. Kartini's perspective on gender equality and its relevance in education. On a practical level, the research can provide insights into the implementation of gender equality in the education system, paving the way for increased participation and fair treatment for all individuals, regardless of gender.

On a theoretical level, the research can contribute to a deeper understanding of Ra. Kartini's thoughts and views on gender equality. Theoretical analysis can uncover how these concepts can be applied and made relevant in the context of contemporary education. Additionally, the research can serve as a foundation for the development of new theories that encompass the dimensions of gender equality in the realm of education.

Method

The method in this article study is a biographical research method and literature review with the main focus of exploring and explaining the chronology of life of the character's thoughts on the topic discussed (Sukoharsono, 2006, p. 5). The literature review obtained is then identified to lead to an interpretation of the character's thoughts based on patterns and meanings that develop so that a detailed picture of an individual's life emerges, which in this case is the relevance of Ra. Kartini's thoughts about gender equality in education. The procedure of the data analyze and interpretation of biographical research is as follows:



Source: (Sukoharsono, 2006, p.15-16).

In a general sense, a literature review typically involves identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing existing literature relevant to a particular research topic. This process helps establish the current state of knowledge in a given field and provides a foundation for the research being undertaken. If there are specific insights or techniques Sukoharsono has discussed regarding literature review, providing that information could help in offering a more accurate explanation. Finding literature relevant to the research topic, which may involve searching academic databases, libraries, or other sources of information. Choosing the most

relevant and high-quality literature to include in the review. This selection should be based on specific criteria, such as novelty, research methodology, or significance to the research topic.

Assessing the methodology, results, and interpretations of each selected piece of literature. This evaluation helps the literature review author to filter out the most relevant and valid literature. Integrating findings from the evaluated literature into the review. The author then organizes a synthesis of this literature and structures the literature review according to a predefined framework or conceptual framework. Crafting coherent and persuasive arguments or narratives that support the research topic and the objectives of the literature review.

Results

Gender Equality in a Global Concept

Feminist discourse has emerged since the Romantic period from 1750 to 1830 in England, which emphasized the small opportunities and rights of women. The UN General Assembly in 1970 adopted a global treaty enshrining women's rights: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Article 10.c. CEDAW encourages the elimination of all stereotypical concepts about the roles of women and men at all stages of the education system by implementing coeducation (Aragonés-González et al., 2020). In the 1970s, to address long-standing disparities in the Nordic countries, the government issued appropriate welfare programs and policies to address the gender gap (Larsen et al., 2021 p.1). Apart from that, around 1980 and 1990 there were many efforts to involve women in education, but these efforts were inconsistent due to the issue of wages for female workers (Shailaja & Madeleine, 2008, p.7). Thus, to legalize women's rights and autonomy over education, the Beijing Declaration was established in 1996. In Indonesia, Marah Rusli wrote the novel "Siti Nurbaya" (1922) and Sutan Takdir Alisyabana with the novel "Layar Terkembang" (1936) voiced emancipatory ideas connected to custom, forced marriage and polygamy (Anggraini, 2021).

From the description above, empirical data is obtained that the issue of gender equality has actually been discussed in almost all countries since the 1970s. And Kartini's letters reviewed were one of the triggers for the emergence of movements in almost several countries. Kartini's thoughts were used as an embodiment of efforts to encourage the elimination of forms of discrimination against the role of women. The question is as a priyayi, what aspects contributed to Kartini's conflicting thoughts about the limitations of her education. Kartini, who lived in the early 20th century, became a figure in the liberation of Indonesian women. Apart from Indonesia and the Netherlands, Kartini was known in several western countries, as evidenced by letters translated into several languages (Marihandono et al., 2016: 51). This fact is proof that the issue of gender equality is an international dilemma that must be resolved. The role of women in economic and educational activities can improve the standard of living of a family and even a country).

Discussion

Gender and Education from Kartini's perspective

Kartini's gender and social status limited her choice of activities. This also applies to other *priyayi*. For example, if *priyayi* became merchants, they would be ridiculed by people. They generally believed that not having blood as traders was their destiny (Geertz, 1960). It is even more difficult for women to work, which means it is not easy to get a better education. *Wong cilik* or "poor people" were peasants and poor people who suffered because of the cruel Dutch occupation. Feudalism in Java was a legacy of the Hindu caste, and Kartini was aware that feudalism forced her to live separately from the common people (Toer, 1962). This letter shows his empathy for poor and uneducated people, but he does not have the opportunity to help them.

"But I couldn't do anything, let alone do nothing, because of Father's position among our people. If I choose to work, it has to be on something that fits! Just for fun that will not embarrass my noble and high-ranking family" (Kartini & Sutrisno, 1979)

Kartini believes that true *priyayi* are those who have good morals and like to help people. He was sad because in Max Havelaar's story, a regent in Lebak oppressed his own people. On the other hand, he admired Pandita Ramabai, a social worker from India who helped and educated women, especially widows (Marihandono et al., 2016). Kartini's other letters that have not been published also contain the idea of educating female nobles and all female "poor people" to build civilization because women are educators for the family. However, this idea was rejected by those in authority. Many regents prefer their own children to be educated because they want themselves to be educated and not other people. The nobility do not like other people taking away their authority and privileges (Kartini & Sutrisno, 1979). Apart from that, political conditions also influenced the Dutch to be more careful in helping the Javanese people. Therefore, Kartini struggled with very limited support from the surrounding community.

This topic is considered important because as a woman in the royal family, she faces a conflict between her personal needs and her role as a princess who must obey tradition and feudalism. Kartini fought against two enemies, namely paternalistic colonial exploitation and traditional Indonesian resistance to change (Solekhah, 2018). In Kartini's thinking, education was able to change the role of women in the family, and this was an action against Javanese traditions that had been passed down for generations.

Kartini's desire to continue her studies in the Netherlands never came true. In the end, Kartini and her two sisters, Kardinah and Roekmini, had the same thoughts and perspective. Kartini, assisted by her brother, founded a girls' school with a home-like atmosphere. The Kartini school curriculum is described as follows:

Table 1. Kartini school curriculum scheme (1903) (Marihandono et al., 2016)

Organizing	Subjects Approach	Life Approach	Skill
- School management is independent from the Government	- Read	- Manners	
	- Write	- Politeness	
- Located in the <i>Pendopo Kabupaten</i>	- Drawing (art)	- Handycrafts	

-
- Learning activities Monday-Thursday
 - Study duration 4.5 hours (08.00-12.30)
 - Students: Priyayi Children in Jepara City
-

Kartini's busy life managing her school made her forget her sadness at failing to attend school in the Netherlands. Young Kartini had a good literary spirit, her writings were often published in Dutch cultural magazines such as *Bijdragen tot de Tall, Land en Vokenkunde Van Nederlandsche Indie*. Apart from that, Kartini also wrote the book "*De Batik Kunst in Nederlandsch Indie en hare Geschiedenis*" or *Batik Art in the Dutch East Indies and its history* (Tashadi, 1985a). This was one of Kartini's efforts to introduce the culture and social life of the Jepara people to the Dutch. Kartini also introduced Jepara wood carvings at the *Ooest en West "East and West"* exhibition at Gravenhage. In the exhibition booth, Kartini told about the hut which was an artist's workshop for doing hand carvings (Tashadi, 1985b).

Kartini was proposed to by the Regent of Rembang, Raden Adipati Djojo Adiningrat. Kartini's marriage took place on July 24th, 1903 on the condition that Kartini could continue her dreams. Apparently Raden Adipati Djojo Adiningrat was an open-minded nobleman, so Kartini was still allowed to manage his school. After her marriage, Kartini continued her life by being a mother to her husband's children, accompanying her husband on his duties, and taking care of his school. Until September 13th, 1903, Kartini gave birth to a boy named Raden Soesalit who was in good health. However, 3 days after giving birth, Kartini's body weakened. Kartini died peacefully on the lap of her beloved husband Raden Adipati Djojo Adiningrat on September 17th, 1903.

From this story, the indicators of gender equality in education according to Kartini's thinking are justice and access to education and the right to attend are measured based on quantity and equal opportunities. Her courage to voice her ideals for educational opportunities for women (Saptadi, 2023).

Kartini's thoughts became more widely discussed by the public when she died. When she was a teenager, Kartini liked correspondence. As during her period of seclusion, she sent letters to Miss Estelle H. Zehandelaar, who was familiarly called Miss Stella. Kartini never met Miss Stella, but they became familiar through correspondence (Tashadi, 1985b). 106 letters from Kartini collected by JH. Abendon and published under the title *Door Duisternis tot Licth* (Habis Gelap Terbitlah Terang) which became a hot topic of conversation in the Netherlands (Tashadi, 1985) and here are some of his works:

Table 2. Western media that publish Kartini's thoughts

Writer	Contents
<i>Een Vergeten Uithoekje</i> Created by Mrs Nelie van Kol in the <i>Eigen Haard Newspaper</i>	Writing about the story of the young Kartini who has a literary talent and Roekmini, her sister, who has an artistic soul. Young Kartini

	voiced that the people of Jepara had a wealth of handmade carvings
<i>Letter of Javanese Princess</i> (1950) Created by Agnes Lonisey Symmers	Writing about Letters from a daughter of a Javanese nobleman who spoke out about eradicating the tradition of Javanese women being restrained and without justice
<i>Java et Ses Habitants</i> Paris, 1914 (4 th publications) Created by Y. Chailley	Writing about French translation of all Kartini Notes
Cli de Hart, Journalist for Java Bode Magazine, Netherlands	Cli de Hart writing all about Kartini's personality who wanted to uphold society and her life until the end of her life
Atlantic Montly Magazine (New York) (1919-1920)	Magazine containing translations of Kartini's letters sent to Mrs. Abendanon

Kartini's ideas became one of the triggers for the voice of justice movement in the dynamics of emancipation. Kartini's ideals and enthusiasm published in Western newspapers and magazines represent the impact of women's progress, especially in Indonesia, where Kartini broke the Javanese customs that had previously restricted her, bringing the idea of gender equality in education from the local to the global realm.

Table 2. Analysis of Kartini's thoughts on gender equality and its relevance with education

No	Writer (Year)	Book/Article Title	Analysis
1	Tashadi (1985)	RA Kartini	Kartini's three areas of struggle included women's emancipation, the struggle for educational progress and national insight. The founding of the Kartini school was the starting point of the national movement which triggered the founding of the <i>Boedi Oetomo</i> youth organization (1908) and the movement of other women's organizations, such as the <i>Merdeka Puteri</i> Association in Jakarta (1912), <i>Women's Pawiyatan</i> in Magelang (1915), <i>Wanita Susilo</i> in Palembang (1918), and <i>Wanita Hadi</i> in Jepara (1915)
2	Dri Arbaningsih (2005)	Kartini dari Sisi Lain: Melacak Pemikiran Kartini tentang Emansipasi	The formulation of Kartini's ideals is the realization of a new, just world, based on moral education that is oriented towards reason and morals based on the religious teachings adhered to by the family.

No	Writer (Year)	Book/Article Title	Analysis
3	Efatino Febriana (2002)	Kartini Mati Dibunuh: Membongkar pemikiran Kartini dan Freemason	Kartini's letter tells of the hopes, ideals and critical views of Javanese women who must be free from restrictive customs, such as not being able to go to school, having to marry men they don't know and being willing to be polygamous (Febriana, 2010)
4	Prof. Dr. Djoko Marihandono (2016)	Sisi Kartini Lain	<p>Chapter I. The Other Side of Kartini Kartini's idea about the heavy duty of women who are the central figure of the family. Kartini's struggle not only saved women's social position, but also as a bearer of peaceful thoughts, and a pioneer in women's progress, and the beginning of women's schools and women's movement organizations.</p> <p>Chapter II. Kartini's Nature of Thought Feminism in Kartini's thinking includes a collective scope related to women's obligations in society and the family. The role of women as the first educators, includes cultural, intellectual and political emancipation, where all forms of emancipation can be achieved with education</p> <p>Chapter III. A Glance About The Representation Of Raden Ajeng KARTINI Kartini was the driving force for emancipation which opened awareness, awakening and the process of forming a nation that was united and independent from colonialism. Media and intellectual means are the main supporting elements in the spread of emancipation ideas (Marihandono et al., 2016)</p>
5	Alimatul Qibtiyah (2009)	Indonesian muslim women and the gender equality movement	The gender equality movement is closely related to women's organizations. Religious and secular organizations still tend to view women as supporters rather than leaders. Most of the female activists came from the priyayi or upper middle class community who had broader relationships, such as Kartini who was helped by her father and grandfather.(Qibtiyah, 2009)

No	Writer (Year)	Book/Article Title	Analysis
6	Heny Solekhah (2018)	Kartini: A Priyayi And Her Confronting Thoughts About Limited Education During Dutch Colonialism	Kartini was a <i>priyayi</i> who had progressive thoughts to free herself and women from the shackles and inferiority of tradition, feudalism and religion. As a feminist, she challenges the horizontal relationship between men and women and the vertical relationship between all classes in her society. Her limited education was caused by the cessation of support from her father who tried to marry her off to another nobleman. Feudalism and Colonialism also restricted him from getting work or helping people from lower social classes. Apart from that, the absence of Arabic language teaching in Islamic education also had an impact on the way he interpreted religion.
7	Tri Riya Anggraini, (2021)	Gagasan Emansipasi Wanita melalui Konsep Tokoh Kartini	Kartini's thoughts about education were influenced by Islamic teachings. Kartini's idea of emancipation is freedom and equal rights for men and women but without abandoning their obligations as a wife.
8	Robiatul Adawiyah dan Laksmi Rachmaria (2021)	Mitos “kanca wingking” perempuan jawa dalam film kartini (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes)	The results of the study show that there are strong gender stereotypes among Javanese women. Karti Haris called her biological mother Yu because Kartini's father remarried a noble woman who became the main wife or <i>garwa</i> Padmi, while Kartini's mother was only the daughter of a Kyai, even though she was the first wife, she was only <i>garwa ampil</i> (concubine). The position of a woman is <i>kanca wingking</i> which has connotation and denotation. The denotational meaning is a woman as a wife who accompanies her husband to take care of the household, educate children and share problems with friends, when the husband is on duty for the community, while the connotative meaning is that the position of women is lower than men, when men (father/brother) passing in front of him, women had to sit bowed and worship, then

No	Writer (Year)	Book/Article Title	Analysis
			social opportunities were limited, women were not allowed to go to school outside the home, and polygamy for men was permitted (Adawiyah & Rachmaria, 2021)
9	Rusna Windasari, Anshari, dan Kembong Daeng (2023)	Analisis Gender dalam Novel Geni Jora dan Kartini Karya Abidah El Khalieqy: Kajian Kritik Sastra Feminisme	Based on research conducted, researchers found forms of gender discrimination against women including: marginalization, subordination, stereotypes, and violence. (Windasari et al., 2023)

From the results of the analysis above, the author can conclude that there are several indicators of gender equality in view of the Kartini crisis. There are 4 principles of justice that refer to reason and morals, including:

1. Opportunity to get an education
2. Life without violence and discrimination
3. Get creative
4. Social life (nation)

The four principles above were championed by Kartini in an effort to eliminate marginalization and stereotypes of women in Javanese customs through education. Because an intellectual society minimizes gender stereotypes.

Gender Equality in Education

Gender equality is presented as a key pillar in this general branding effort as a set of values, policies and practices that unite the Nordic region and differentiate it from the rest of the world (Larsen et al., 2021). A study in China proves that women overall have equal access to elite universities in China and overall there is no significant difference between the two genders in the chances of entering elite universities (Luo et al., 2021). However, elementary school student teachers are even less aware of the potential gender gap (Miralles-Cardona et al., 2021a)). This shows that gender education is absent from the teacher preparation curriculum. As for the three dimensions measured based on the SAGE index, the areas of greatest concern for gender equality in education are: (1) achieving institutional commitment to implementing and evaluating gender equality (GE) in teaching; and (2) making students aware of the possibility of unfair and discriminatory treatment (Miralles-Cardona et al., 2021b). Ending all discrimination against women and girls is not only a fundamental human right, but also essential for a sustainable future; it is proven that empowering women and girls helps economic growth and development (Vázquez, 2023).

For sustainable development, the empowerment of women and girls is an important factor for driving economic growth and social development (Krajewski et al., 2020). The government has regulated legislation that indicates gender equality issues, since CEDAW was declared,

one of which is Law no. 7 of 1984 concerning Ratification of the Convention Concerning the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. One example of discrimination in education, for example, is that school boards may have less confidence in the competence of female supervisors to oversee new school services ((Shakeshaft et al., 2007).

Schools have the capacity to take action to change value systems to identify and analyze gender inequalities and modify academic content to avoid invisible women's injustices in learning materials(Aragonés-González et al., 2020). This will determine students' attitudes, behavior and values in the social environment(Garcia et al., 2023). Elements that influence the educational process to fulfill gender rights include: 1) learning methods, 2) learning content and processes, 3) assessment strategies, 4) subject selection, 5) management of learning outcomes, and 6) relationships between peers (Subrahmanian, 2005). Gender equality or rights in education refers to the rights of men and women to non-discrimination in educational opportunities in every aspect described above. This further suggests that educational institutions must function in a way that does not impose or perpetuate gender stereotypes that exert psychological influence and/or encourage institutional barriers to the full range of possibilities that boys and girls, men and women, can enjoy with education.

Conclusion

The context of the history of the gender equality movement in Indonesia cannot be separated from the formation of women's organizations. Education promotes gender equality which is the key to creating a more peaceful, prosperous life, a healthy and sustainable world. But for education to fulfill its potential, both girls and boys must benefit equally. The existence of indicator elements of the learning process that involve gender collaboration is proof of the relevance of action in the education system at an early stage to promote gender equality. Schools have the capacity to take action to change the value systems they transmit, by identifying and analyzing gender inequalities and modifying academic content to avoid the historical invisibility of women and sexist stereotypes. Barriers such as not having a method that is easy to apply in the classroom and a lack of adequate teacher training, considering the complexity of the problems faced. Current legislation includes these indications, but actual implementation is still lacking.

Research Recommendation on "Gender Equality from the Perspective of Ra. Kartini and Its Relevance in Education" is an important and insightful topic. Consider conducting a case study in a specific school or educational institution to evaluate the extent to which Ra. Kartini's principles of gender equality are reflected in policies, practices, and student experiences. Compare Ra. Kartini's thoughts on gender equality with the modern framework of gender equality concepts. Identify similarities and differences to assess the relevance of her ideas and their applicability in the current context.

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