JOHN DEWEY ON THE AIM OF EDUCATION:
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

MS. JARIYA SORNMAYURA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION
ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY OF THAILAND
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The philosophy of education is the application of philosophical supposition to educational problems. As the practice of education leads us to philosophical ideas or to the foundation of philosophy of education, there are two opposing approaches to the practice of education in modern times. They disagree on what children should learn, whether in relation to virtue or to what is best for life. Besides, there are questions in regards to whether education ought to be directed toward children's intellect than children's growth. It is true to say that good educational aims can lead to good educational practices, and good educational practices can also lead to good educational aims, nevertheless, the aim of the philosophy of education as the means to guide children or learners to find appropriate instruments will help them reach the final goals of life to live effectively and harmoniously.

This dissertation deals with the two opposing approaches in the philosophy of education, namely progressivism and traditionalism or non-progressivism. The renowned educator, John Dewey, claims that pragmatic philosophy, which is based upon the Darwinian theory of natural selection, can lead to a good educational aim. Dewey's attack on traditionalism's dualistic conception is one of the central themes of his philosophy. If Darwin's theory is the one important factor of Dewey's thought that gives
light to scientific explanation, then traditionalism's dualistic conception could no longer hold. The idea of evolution affected not only the conception of nature, but also theories of knowledge and of value, and eventually, education.

According to Dewey's progressivism, Darwin's idea of evolution and the changes in natural species implies changes in knowledge. For Dewey, knowledge means knowing or doing. It is dynamic and subjects to continuous change, as it derives from experience. For traditionalists, Plato and his followers, knowledge is permanent and unchanging because the objects upon which knowledge is built are permanent and unchanging. For Plato, knowledge is "what is"; it is more than doing which focuses on basic education, and can be attained from recollecting, reading, writing, and so on. Besides, knowledge can be attained through reason.

Dewey claims that the notion and the concept of child-centrist or progressive education emphasizes the individual child's needs and interests through experimental method in the framework of "learning by doing", and can enable and develop the child's whole life. Dewey's child-centrist approach is opposed to traditionalism's teacher-centrist approach, which focuses on intellectual discipline through subject matter. Dewey uses the concept of growth to represent his progressivism in education. Dewey believes that education is life; traditionalism asserts that education is preparation for life.

The researcher discovers that both Dewey's child-centrist and traditionalism's teacher-centrist educations are vital for today's education, nevertheless they are not sufficient for the development of a child's whole life. Dewey's child-centrist education is necessary and sufficient for the development of children's skills and practical activities but is not sufficient for the children's whole life as it lacks a knowledge base, which is
attained from intellectual subject discipline or textbooks. For the traditional approach, teacher-centrist education is necessary and sufficient for the development of the intellectual subject discipline as the foundation of the child’s life but not sufficient for enabling and developing the child’s experiences or practical activities in daily life. Therefore, to have a good educational aim and good educational practice in order to develop the child’s whole life, a reconciliation of the two approaches is definitely necessary. It is upon such an assertion that this research is dedicated.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Education has been on the agenda of the world community for a long time. There is widespread belief that education is a fundamental human right. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948, states, “Everyone has the right to education. Education should be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages…” Education has its process, and its activities concerning the life and development of human beings. Children, as the most basic of human resource of the world, need to be well-educated in order to bring prosperity to their own life and their society. In order to achieve this, well-prepared teaching is essential. Well-prepared teaching must be based upon the thought pattern of the philosophy of education of each teacher or of each school’s policy.

Today, there are several basic theories that are used to justify educational practice, which have assumed great roles in contemporary education. Different philosophies of education produce different concepts of school, learning and teaching. Teachers are critical to and play a decisive role in the process of successful education of children. Today’s teachers have their own styles of teaching, which spring from the three main basic theories: Progressivism, Essentialism, and Perennialism which hold that education must emphasize experience, knowledge, and virtue respectively. Progressivism is called the progressive or liberal approach; essentialism and perennialism may be called the traditional or non-progressive approach. This research is intended to provide a critical analysis in terms of progressivism and traditionalism in education. Which one has the most valid philosophical position that should be used
as the best system in education to produce well-educated child? Nevertheless, the researcher holds that it is essential firstly to understand the fundamental ideas of the three concepts of the philosophy of education. In fact, to study and analyze the concept of each of the basic of philosophies of education is to know its characteristics, the teaching style of teachers, and the learning style of students in given schools. We shall begin with an examination of Dewey’s conception of his education philosophy of “progressivism”.

Progressivism stresses experience. It refers to the progressive educational movement in America in the mid-20th century that searches to create a better world through an experience-centered education that states “Education must always be grounded in present experimental activity” (Groome, 1980, p.10). It believes that knowledge and values can only be attained after experience has become primary in education (Strain, 1971, pp.13-14). Dewey was recognized as the prime leader of this movement in education. He is also considered as the one who has made the most significant contribution to the development of such educational thinking in the twentieth century. For Dewey, the aim of education is ‘Growth’ and the main goal is expressed in the sentence that “Education is life.” For him, “Since growth is the characteristic of life, education is all one with growing; it has no end beyond itself” (Dewey’s DE, 1916, p.2). Growth is a cumulative movement of directed action. It is an all-round physical, intellectual, social and moral development of the potentialities of an individual (Seetharamu, 1970, p.19).

Sociologically speaking, for Dewey, “Life is a self-renewing process, through action upon the environment” (Dewey’s DE,1916,p.2). Therefore education is essentially a social process. On this he further states: “when education is based upon experience and educative experience it is seen to be a social process” (Dewey’s EE,
In fact, Dewey's progressive education is a connection between education and social action in democracy. Dewey believes that schools should teach students how to be problem-solvers, by helping students learn how to think rather than simply rote-learning of voluminous information. This means that students should participate in their learning. Dewey considers that schools should focus on practical activity rather than impartation of knowledge alone. Dewey also believes that schools should help students learn how to live and work cooperatively with others. Bowen sums up the progressive approach to education as follows:

The child's interests and needs are regarded as the main factor in deciding what should be taught, and instrumental and practical knowledge is given a place in the curriculum. Activity methods and learning by discovery replace formal instruction as the dominant process, and examination and testing are given less stress. The teacher's role is seen as one of encouraging the development of individual potentialities rather than molding children according to some preconceived pattern. He becomes a guide more than an external authority figure and thus coercive techniques are used only as a last resort, if at all. Life in the school related wherever possible to life outside the school, and education is seen as an enrichment of the present at least as much as a preparation for the future (Bowen, 1987, pp.14-15).

In contrast to progressivism, the traditional approach in terms of essentialism understands that education shall be based upon the foundation of knowledge. This conservative or traditional position emphasizes the priority of knowledge. It aims at the "Attainment of values that asserts adequate experience is achieved through the process of acquiring knowledge" (Strain, 1971, pp.13-14).
As those who hold the Perennial view of traditional education, virtue is of the utmost importance. Being called Perennialism, it stresses *virtue*. It believes that virtues, whether absolute or relative, external or internal, transcendental or intrinsic in human nature, are the key to the understanding of human existence. Virtues are prior to the knowledge and experiences we have. Therefore, virtues are primary functions in education (Strain, 1971, p.14). This theory is based upon the foundation of Aristotelian conceptions of human nature, the nature of society, and the nature of good. In *Experience and Education*, Dewey views the traditional education as follows:

Their main purpose or objective is to prepare the young for future responsibilities and for success in life, by means of acquisition of the organized bodies of information and prepared forms of skill, which comprehend the material of instruction. Since the subject matter as well as standards of proper conduct is handed down from the past, the attitude of pupils must, upon the whole, be one of docility, receptivity and obedience. Books, especially textbooks, are the chief representatives of the lore and wisdom of the past, while teachers are the organs through which pupils are brought into effective connection with the material. Teachers are the agents through which knowledge and skills are communicated and rules of conduct enforced. (Dewey's EE, 1963, p.18)

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1 There are two groups in Perennialism, neo-Aristotelianism and neo-Thomism. Both schools center their thought on the principles of truth, beauty, and the goodness. Pratte points out that both groups, the neo-Aristotelianism and the neo-Thomism protest loudly in opposition to those who stress materialism, empiricism, and empirical knowledge at the expense of prior knowledge, reason, and absolute truth. Moreover, both groups are in complete accord concerning the notion that the principles of education are everywhere the same, whether we find ourselves in the United States, in France, Canada, or in West Germany. For details discussion, see Richards Pratte's: *Contemporary Theories of Education*. (Toronto: In text Education Publishers-College Division, 1971), p.187
In this assertion, the schools exist to perform certain functions in society. Schools provide students with certain traditional virtues and skills, facts, and knowledge (Pratte, 1971, p.29). This position emphasizes the essentials of basic subject matter: reading, writing, and arithmetic for elementary school pupils, and geography, grammar, history, science, foreign language, and mathematics for secondary school students. It opposes the focus of progressive education (Strain, 1971, p.13).

Traditional education can be called subject-centered/subject-centrist or teacher-centrist. It relies on direct teacher instruction, recitation, memorization, and logical analysis. It insists that all students should stay in school to receive essentially the same education. For them, the aim of education is “wisdom,” and the goal is “preparation for life,” assuming that “the direction in which education starts a man, will determine his future life” (Plato, 1991, p.136).

Bowen further states the basic tenets of the traditional approach to education as follows:

The authority of the teacher is stressed and his role is seen as one of instilling in his pupils a required body of set subject matter. Little attention is paid to individual differences or children’s interest, children are expected to remain quiet and passive and, to this end, coercive techniques are common. The school is cut off from outside life and what goes on within seen primarily as a preparation for the future rather than an enrichment of the present. The basic stress is on the knowledge to be acquired and it is this that determines the aims; notions such as development of potentialities or self-realization being largely ignored...The full program being open only to the intellectually gifted. (Bowen, 1987, p.14)
The fact is clear, there cannot be adequate understanding of education if knowledge of the psychological dimension is lacking in our discussion. In taking on the psychological dimension in education, we shall analyze and clarify the justification for education in terms of human nature. The consideration of human nature in education is important to set the purposes of education in order to enable educators to plan proper educational curricula efficiently. Upon such an understanding, in addition, we may assure education to accomplish the task to achieve human goal of living satisfactorily.

Further, it is necessary for us to see the importance of the human role in terms of a proper understanding of human nature in both progressivism and traditionalism in education. There are two main basic views about human nature that lead to the formulation of educational theories and, subsequently, their curricula: The first view assumes that people are weak, and need a well-structured and disciplined society. All power is given to the monarch or government so that society can be kept in order. Human beings have freedom, but their freedom is limited. This is the view of the so-called authoritarianism. The second view holds that people are rational, fair, honest, freedom-seeking, and need a less-structured and less dominating government. This view claims that people are most free and government is to be used for the purpose of protecting those rights. This view represents that of liberalism or the democratic system.

These two views of human nature are very important in understanding the relationship between people in society. How can these two views of human nature be applied in educational theories and practices?

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2 There cannot be an adequate understanding of education without the knowledge of the three aspects of education: the philosophical aspect (the grounds for educational practice), the psychological aspect (the nature of human individual), and sociological aspect (man as a social being). See John Strain’s Modern Philosophies of Education. (NY: Random House, 1971), pp.4, 16
For Progressivism, the idea of freedom is connected with the individual. It is an idea that based upon the liberal or democratic view. Dewey states in *Freedom and Culture* that "the advance of liberalism encourages a hope that the human mind will some day return to the freedom it enjoyed two thousand years ago, namely, physical liberty, in which human beings associate and live together with one another as it is summed up in the word *Culture*." Human nature is the factor, which in one way, or another always interacts with environmental condition of culture. In this assumption, Darwinian struggle for existence and survival of the fittest was used as ideological support. The idea that human nature is inherently and exclusively individual is itself a product of a cultural individualistic movement" (Dewey’s FD, 1939, p.6, 21). Man is basically and wholly only a biological organism (Archambault, 1966, p.195).

All this brings us to Dewey’s progressivism on the child-centrist approach in education that stresses individual freedom, which he called democratic education. In fact, this assumption of human nature expresses itself in the child-centrist approach of Dewey’s progressivism, which puts much emphasis on the concept of growth, open-education, individualized instruction, and self-education. The idea of Dewey’s democratic education, which is centered on human individuality, is contrasted to traditionalism that is based on the idea of freedom under authoritarianism.

In “*Freedom and Culture*”, Dewey states that the human nature of traditional education, the old doctrine, was tied up with the ethical belief that political democracy is a moral right and that the laws upon which it based are fundamental moral laws that every form of social organization should obey (Dewey’s FD, 1939, p.5). It is clear that idea of freedom on Dewey’s progressivism promotes the individual freedom in such a manner as to emphasize that men are free to do things by themselves voluntarily, and

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they are not to be governed by any authority. On the contrary, the idea of freedom in traditionalism emphasizes the idea of the rationality of the State, which governs men with authority. In this situation, men are ruled by the State, which dictates reasoning. Consequently, the traditionalist considers the democratic as promoting unruly freedom in a State. It leads people’s lives to become chaotic and undisciplined. The traditionalist believes that man is rational. Such assumption is a good foundation for the idea of the State’s rationality.

Both progressive and traditional approaches to education have exercised their respective roles in presenting the importance of knowledge in contemporary education of schools and society today. The purpose of this research is to analyze and study Dewey’s view on the aim of progressive education: namely, “to grow and to enable individuals to continue their education” (Dewey’s DE, 1916, p.101), and as it is contrast to the traditional view on the aim of education.

In order to reach the proposed aim of education, Dewey proposes the idea of freedom as a means. His idea of freedom guarantees the fundamental human right as stated in the Article 26 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights - that everybody has rights and should be free in education.

Following such theory, Dewey’s progressive education prepares students for the real world, in which the teachers use real-life situations to teach the students, instead of teaching from a textbook. For him, this is only the way to go to assure the freedom of the learner.

If Dewey’s aim of education on child-centeredness of progressive education is valuable and sufficient for the development of a child’s whole life, then progressivism is true and should be accepted and followed all the way through.
On this score, traditionalists have argued against the progressive’s child-centrist approach of Dewey. They hold that Dewey’s concept of freedom of students leads students to be indulged or to learn without discipline. As child-centrist education emphasizes “interests and learning needs” of students, it would certainly lead the students to disregard the knowledge of subject matter and deprive them of true education. Some even say that students, being children, cannot make a rational choice or decision in their learning. Others further assert that child-centrist education advocates that students have authority over their teachers. These are all legitimate concerns about the problem with the aims of education which lead to the central questions of whether Dewey’s aim of education is valid, true, and justifiable.

The debate between Dewey’s educational progressivism and traditionalism has been going on for a long time among philosophers, academic thinkers, and educators. In summary, they may be all right in theory and their theories may be all true. Though the researcher tends to agree with Dewey’s progressivism in education, nevertheless the researcher finds it hard to affirm his child-centrist approach to be the only truth and totally acceptable in the light of the philosophy of education.

The researcher’s position is that the best form of education should not take one position over the others; it should not emphasize only either progressive or traditional approach to education. In short, the researcher’s position is that teachers should not limit themselves to only one educational philosophy, nor shall they commit to only one style of teaching. Teachers should master various philosophies and teaching styles in their educational practices.

Since clearly education is vital to ensuring success in life, it is the researcher’s opinion that the overall purpose of education is for all children to attend school; to gain education; to develop knowledge, skills, and to form virtuous character, morality
and spirituality, to enable them to contribute to society, and to have respect for higher
authority. Therefore, we need to further realize that both the child-centrist
progressivism and the teacher-centrist traditionalism in education are vital and crucial
for today's education. Growth, which is the primary aim of Dewey's education
requires that teachers base their teaching on the child's real life is necessary and
sufficient for the development of child's skills, practical activities, and thinking; but is
not sufficient for the child's whole life, as it apparently lacks the academic standard
which can be attained from the subject-matter or the textbooks.

On the other hand, the idea of the authority of teachers in traditional education
which is based upon "Wisdom" in which teachers stress teaching of knowledge as the
foundation of the child's life is also necessary but not sufficient for developing the
child's experiences and practical activities in daily life.

Apparently there are two main approaches in educational practices:
Progressivism emphasizes that the child with his needs and interests should be
respected above all else, they asserts that personality and character, freedom and
initiative, spontaneity, and change are the keynotes of the Progressive theme.
Traditionalism emphasizes curriculum, heritage of the past, knowledge and
information, guidance and discipline, the old and the past, these values stream from
traditionalists (Berger, 1966, p.126).

In fact, education should impact on the life of the child to make them hope to
succeed and to strive for the very best in life, by a reconciliation of the two
approaches. It is the researcher's view that the success of a child's life heavily
depends upon the ability of educators, philosophers and government to determine the
balance between learning through intellectual study or subject matter, and learning
through practical study or activity.
This study is divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter I provides a summary of the progressive and traditional approaches based upon the three general characteristics of philosophy of education: progressivism, essentialism, and perennialism.

Chapter II presents Dewey's educational philosophy of progressivism. It divides into five parts, namely, the historical background of Dewey's progressivism; Dewey and the concept of natural selection; Dewey and the concept of experience; Dewey and the concept of child-centrist education; and Dewey and the concept of democracy and freedom.

Chapter III presents Dewey's progressivism concerning the aim of the child-centrist approach. It also presents the distinction between Dewey's progressivism and traditionalism in terms of different educational focuses.

Chapter IV focuses on the analysis and criticism of Dewey's aim of education in the child-centrist approach. It also presents essential arguments between progressivism and traditionalism in education with proper presentation of the researcher's position. In fact, it is not the intent of the researcher to indiscriminately accept or refute either progressivism or traditionalism. The researcher attempts to make necessary reconciliatory remarks on the two opposing thoughts in educational philosophy as her contribution to contemporary education.

Chapter V presents the conclusions, implications of the study, and suggestions and recommendations for further study.
CHAPTER II

DEWEY’ S PROGRESSIVISM

To understand Dewey’s Progressivism we have to begin with his philosophy. John Dewey (1859-1952) was an American pragmatic philosopher, educator, psychologist, social critic and political activist whose writing and teaching have unending influence on education in the United States and worldwide. Dewey has single-handedly made the most significant contribution to the development of educational thinking in the twentieth century. Dewey was the founder of what became known as the progressive education movement, which was considered as the newest idea in education of his time. For Dewey, the aim of education is growth and development of the whole child, for which his progressive educational approach is called child-centrist education.

This chapter aims at giving a credible account of the general aspects of Dewey’s philosophy of education, Progressivism, which is divided into five main parts: First, we begin with the background of Dewey’s progressivism by presenting a survey of Dewey’s life, his work, and the influences on his preliminary thought; second, we shall explore Darwin’s theory of evolution as a precondition for Dewey’s progressivism in terms of the concept of changeability; third, the discovery of pragmatism as necessary ground for his experimentalism or instrumentalism which was used in students’ experimental learning; fourth, we shall focus on the Child-Centrist Approach, which leads us to determine Dewey’s philosophy of education in terms of educational theory and practice; and last we shall focus on the discussion on Dewey’s democratic assertion of individual freedom in education as his child-centrist approach so stresses. The discussion on all these five main parts shall serve as
foundation for further analysis of Dewey's progressivism on the aim of education as
the core of this study, presented in chapter III and IV.

2.1 Historical Background of Dewey's Progressivism

Dewey was born in Burlington, Vermont, U.S.A., October 20th, 1859. He
studied at the University of Vermont where he was awarded his BA degree in 1875.
During his time in university, he began his interest in philosophy, which was related
to theology. The trend of philosophy of the time was that of intuitionism. Intuitionism
believes that the fundamentals of logic, metaphysics, and ethics can be reached
directly by the human mind through the sense of intuition and independently of the
sense of experience. This school believes in dualism, that mind and body are
separated. Dewey found it hard to accept such a belief and tried hard to avoid it. As
Talisse has observed, "Intuitionism retained many of the standard philosophical
dualisms from which Dewey was trying to escape; in the view of the intuitionists,
mind is separate from body, experience from intuition, fact from value, etc" (Talisse,
2000, p.3).

After his graduation, Dewey spent two years teaching science in a school in
Pennsylvania. It was during this time that Dewey was drawn to Darwin's theory of
evolution. Later he became a graduate student of philosophy at Johns Hopkins
University and he was much influenced by the experimental psychology of G. Stanley
Hall, Charles Sanders Peirce's pragmatism, and George Sylvester Morris's work on
Hegel. At this time, Dewey was particularly interested in the work of Morris1. In
Talisse's book On Dewey, Talisse states that Morris introduced Dewey to the absolute
idealism of the German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel. Hegel's philosophy was

1 At Johns Hopkins philosophy department, Dewey studied with three lecturers: G. Stanley Hall who
came a distinguished child psychologist, Charles Sanders Peirce who was the founder of pragmatism,
and George Sylvester Morris who was a Hegelian.
thoroughly anti-dualistic. With its emphasis on synthesis and continuity, Hegel’s system contrasted sharply with the intuitionism that Dewey had learned at the University of Vermont. Dewey was satisfied with Hegel’s absolute idealism in the sense of continuity and abandoned Hegel’s idealistic metaphysics for his own perspective, which is called experimentalism. In Philosophy of John Dewey: A Critical Analysis, Felman also indicates that Dewey wrote in his paper that he fully acknowledged this debt to Hegel.

Kant’s influence on Dewey’s thought led him to complete his dissertation on Kantian psychology under the direction of Morris. After completing his doctorate in 1884, he found work as an instructor in Michigan. At Michigan, Dewey taught courses in ethics, history of philosophy, logic, and psychology. Dewey wrote several articles as well as his first book. Dewey’s book Psychology appeared in 1887. In Psychology, Dewey tried to demonstrate that the findings of scientific psychology confirmed the idealistic metaphysics of Hegel (Talisse, 2000, p. 5). Dewey was active in the Student Christian Association at Michigan, and was a member of the First Congregational Church where he taught Bible classes. His interest in social, political and economic issues grew increasingly, as he continued to struggle with the issue of religion. During the time at Michigan, Dewey’s thinking began to shift away from Hegelianism and towards the approach of William James, having become acquainted with his book The Principles of Psychology. In fact, James’s Principles of Psychology, appearing in 1890, was by far the greatest single influence in changing the direction of Dewey’s thinking. Dewey found in James’s thought a new source of inspiration, as it came from the same Darwinian outlook. “Dewey himself has said,
this behaviorist theory of psychology acted as a ferment to transform his old belief’ (Kilpatrick, 1952, p.219). Dewey opposes the traditional philosophy or the old belief, in dualism that separates mind from body. Dewey makes no such separation of mind and body. Talisse rightly observed that:

Like Dewey, James rejected the dualistic categories of traditional philosophy; however, unlike Dewey, James did not take refuge in the idealistic metaphysics of Hegel. Instead, James sought continuity by way of the functionalism implicit in evolutionary biology. Dewey used James’s text in his 1891 seminar; according to Dewey, the Principles initiated a “new direction and quality” in his thought. Dewey’s work throughout the early 1890s attests to James’s influence (Talisse, 2000, p.5).

It can be said that Dewey’s educational philosophy begins with his reading of James’s psychology, which is the study of the behavior of groups of men, a form of the so-called social psychology. Dewey sees that man is able to study morals as an effort to make his life better to live. Dewey uses his psychology, his logic, and his ethics to construct his philosophy based on the methods of science.

As for Dewey’s indebtedness to Hegel, he borrowed Hegel’s ideas and developed them from his own thoughts with a new interpretation, which carried him far away from his original idealistic position of Hegelian thought. In fact, Dewey later rejected Hegelian idealism to opt for pragmatism. Dewey’s pragmatism shall be discussed in the next section.

In 1894, Dewey joined the staff of the University of Chicago as a head of its new department of philosophy, psychology and pedagogy. At this time, Dewey became interested in social problems. He did not join any church in Chicago. In 1896, he founded the University Laboratory School, known as Dewey School.
Accordingly, it is in this Laboratory School, that experimentalism became increasingly important as an expression of Dewey's philosophy. Most of Dewey's influential educational works emerged from these laboratories. They were, among others, *My Pedagogic Creed* (1887), *The School and the Society* (1900), and *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902). All these works represent his philosophical and psychological principles, which were developed from the trial and error experiments in and out of the Laboratory School. Therefore, the Laboratory School is known as the place where he introduces experimental educational practices, which modified his philosophy of education. During this period, Dewey began to move away from Hegelian Idealism and moved in the direction of naturalistic experimentalism.

In 1899, Dewey was elected president of the American Psychological Association. Dewey's life has been mostly involved with social issues. Dewey believed that the "Philosopher must be constantly engaged with the issues facing society at large and that philosophy is essentially social criticism" (Talisse, 2000, p.7).

In 1904, he moved to Columbia University in New York and became increasing interested in the philosophy of education. In 1905, he was elected to be the president of the American Philosophical Association. *Democracy and Education* appeared in 1916 and became a major work in the philosophy of education. Dewey was quickly recognized as the leader of the progressive movement in education, and has been considered an important educational theorist ever since (Talisse, 2000, p. 7).

During the years 1919 to 1921, he was invited to lecture in Japan and China. He also did research in Turkey, Mexico, South Africa, and the (then) Soviet Union. Dewey greatly influenced the education theory and practices in these countries through these lectures and researches.
Dewey officially retired in 1930 and continued as Professor Emeritus at Columbia University until 1939. Yet Dewey’s retirement from teaching did not mark a retreat from his philosophical and political involvement. Dewey continued tirelessly to promote democracy (Talisse, 2000, p.8). He died in New York on 1 June 1952. During his life, Dewey wrote 40 books and over 700 articles.

In summary, the factors that led Dewey to build his fruitful educational philosophy are his life, his community, and educational background.4

2.2 Dewey and the Concept of Natural Selection

Dewey has a distinctive conception of philosophy. Dewey’s philosophy of education would not have been acceptable to people if it had not been for his acceptance of Darwin’s theory of biological evolution. In fact, the formative influence in Dewey’s life was the upsetting effect of Darwinian evolution upon the prevailing philosophic thought of his time.

Most of Dewey’s thought, including his philosophy of education is deeply influenced by his interest in the implications of Darwin’s theory of evolution. “In laying hands upon the sacred ark of absolute permanency, in treating the forms that had been regarded as types of fixity and perfection as originating and passing away, the ‘Origin of Species’ introduced a mode of thinking that in the end was bound to

4 His home and community background constituted a true creative factor in helping to determine his life and thought. He was born of old-stock Puritan ancestry and was reared in small town Vermont. The simple, practical living of his family and community, the prevailing grass-roots attitude toward life’s problems, the absence of significant class distinctions, the strong moral background particularly as embodied in his mother- these, we may be reasonably sure, gave to Dewey his deep-rooted inclination toward democracy, his common sense joining of thought and act, and his deep interest in morality and the welfare of men. These initial attitudes were in fact deep-rooted and remained active with Dewey throughout his life. Another factor that influenced Dewey’s life commitment to philosophy came from his college university study. Dewey as an undergraduate at the University of Vermont became specifically interested in the theory of evolution and therein started toward philosophy. This beginning he later pursued in postgraduate study at Vermont under H.A.P. Torrey, but more importantly under George S. Morris at Johns Hopkins. See. Kilpatrick. “John Dewey and His Educational Theory. Educational Theory, Oct 1952, p.217”)
transform the logic of knowledge, and hence the treatment of morals, politics, and religion" (Dewey's ID, 1910, pp.1-2).

Dewey was impressed by the theory that emphasizes continuity. While Dewey was studying at the University of Vermont, he was exposed to the theory of evolution through the teaching of G.H. Perkins, and Lessons in Elementary Physiology, a text by T.H. Huxley, the famous English evolutionist. The theory of evolution by means of natural selection had an impact upon Dewey's thought. We can say that his philosophy is based on the principle of change and process.

The researcher thinks that it would be better to know the emergence of Darwin's evolutionary idea and how it has influenced education. One of Darwinism's consequences was a change in the character of philosophy in America. Before Darwin, Philosophy was in effect an adjunct of religion. Henry Morris says in Long War Against God that:

Gradually, however, Deism and Unitarianism infiltrated the colonies, especially in New England, undermining the supernatural aspects of Christianity, even though there was still a commitment to the concept of a personal transcendent God who had created all things in the beginning. Pre-Darwinian evolution also made its impact, especially the idea of "long ages." This belief of the ancient pagan religious was reintroduced into England ...Also, the famous "nebular hypothesis" for the evolutionary origin of the solar system, introduced in continental Europe...including the leading Christian biologist, Asa Gray, who would soon become Darwin's main propagandist in the United States (Morris, 1989, pp.45-46).
On Asa Gray’s idea of evolution, Dewey asserts that he virtually follows the Darwinian principle. As Dewey puts it, “some naturalists, like Asa Gray, favored the Darwinian principle” (Dewey’s ID, 1910, p.12).

Later the evolutionary idea was introduced into American schools and colleges. Horace Mann, a Unitarian, was the leader in promoting normal schools for the training of teachers. By 1860, state teachers’ training had a strong control over what was taught to teachers. After that, the circumstances of education experienced great change. The state legislatures and teachers’ associations gained control over the textbooks. At this period of time, The National Education Association (NEA), formed in 1857, became the most powerful labor union in America. Soon after that, the progressive education emerged in the time of John Dewey, who was born in the year that Darwin’s Origin of the Species was published. “The *Origin of Species*, given to the world in 1859, the year Dewey was born, was just then having its greatest effect on all the intellectuals of the time” (Kilpatrick, 1952, p.218).

Darwin’s theory of evolution has greatly influenced Dewey’s progressive education. As Samuel L. Blumenfeld writes in NEA: *Trojan Horse in American Education* that “An absolute faith in science became the driving force behind the progressive...the most important idea that would influence the educators was that of evolution – the notion that man, through a process of natural selection, had evolved to his present state from a common animal ancestry” (Blumenfeld, 1984, p.43).

Before we discuss the impact of Darwin’s theory on Dewey, whose philosophy of education is inspired by the theory of evolution, we shall examine the philosophical implication of Darwin’s theory of evolution in particular. In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Craig states the basics of the evolutionary theory that:
According to the biological theory of evolution the variety and forms of life on earth are the result of descent with modification from the earliest forms of life. The theory does not attempt to explain the origin of life itself, nor does it apply to the history of changes of the non-biological parts of the universe, which are also often described as ‘evolutionary’... Charles Darwin ...who offered the mechanism, natural selection, which is accepted as a primary process by which evolutionary change is effected (Craig, 1998, p.476).

Darwin's theory of evolution articulated in *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and its application to human beings in *The Descent of Man* (1871) states that the complex forms of life had evolved from simple forms of life through a process of natural selection. “Natural Selection” occurred through what Darwin called a “struggle for existence”, in which those representatives of a species that possessed characteristics that gave them an advantage in the struggle survived, while those who lacked these characteristics, did not. Darwin’s theory suggested that the universe was random, where the fittest displaced the older. This is a mechanical theory of the workings of nature, which had assumed that nature worked according to natural laws and logic. Therefore, it can be said that the natural selection is a principle of Darwin’s theory of evolution.

Darwin defines the term ‘Natural Selection’ in *The Origin of Species* as “the preservation of favorable variations and the rejection of injurious.” Where the

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5 A struggle for existence inevitably follows from the high rate at which all organic beings tend to increase. Every being, which during its natural lifetime produces several eggs or seeds, must suffer destruction during some period of its life, and during some season or occasional year; otherwise, on the principle of geometrical increase, its number would quickly become so inordinately great that no country could support the product. Hence, as more individuals are produced than can possibly survive, there must in every case be a struggle for existence, either one individual with an other of the same species, with the individuals of distinct species, or with the physical conditions of life. It is the doctrine of Malthus applied with manifold force to the whole animal and vegetable kingdom See. Charles, Darwin 1859, *The Origin of Species*. NY: Bantam Book, p. 55
variations neither useful nor injurious would not be affected by natural selection, and would be left a fluctuating element, as we see in the species called polymorphic (Darwin, 1859, p.69).

Darwin cautiously applied this theory to human evolution and that of society. *The Descent of Man* plants the seeds of Social Darwinism, which is the concept that the theory of evolution could be applied to competition, survival of the fittest, and progress in society. This is the so-called Social Darwinism developed by the British philosopher Herbert Spencer. In fact, Darwin's theory of evolution can be summarized as “the claims that involve two central theses: that present and past forms of life are all descended from one or few primitive life forms (descent with modification); and, second, that a primary mechanism of evolutionary change is the mechanism of natural selection (Craig, 1998, p.478).

How does Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection work? The question about species is a good answer to the above question. How do species of animals come to be as they are? According to Darwin, all species are interrelated, there are a few original species but they develop into many. In the theory of evolution, there is a constant struggle for existence, which is, based on the natural selection, the varieties among the same species. All species as beings have to struggle for their existence by trying to survive in the environment. The survivor is the fittest through natural selection.

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6 Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) is the British philosopher who subscribed to Darwin's theories, and whose writings in some ways anticipate Darwin. Spencer argued that Darwin's theories were applicable to the evolution of societies. He believed that societies of necessity develop and progress through competition, and he used the term "survival of the fittest," which is often incorrectly associated with Darwin. Spencer articulated his views with an eye to making his theories available to the general public. Beginning with *Social Statics* (1851), which predates Darwin, he expounded his "synthetic system of philosophy" in works ranging from *First Principles* (1862) to works on psychology, biology, and, finally, sociology.
Dewey’s theory of natural selection placed the study of human origin with biological processes that govern the evolution of all organisms. Its notion ran against the notion of design in nature. In the pre-evolutionary thought like Plato and Aristotle\(^7\), it is believed that the species on earth were typified by an idea or form that exists in a transcendental world. This philosophical view has a great chain of being that God has created. Traditional philosophy believes in God’s creation that is the notion of design, which has direction and purpose. Thus, traditionalists view Dewey’s progressivism, which is influenced by theory of natural selection as being blind, without direction, and with no purpose. In *Pragmatism from Peirce to Davidson* Murphy mentions about the meaning of “species” in the time of Plato and Aristotle that it referred to the fixed realities. But for Dewey it became the idea of change. As Murphy puts it:

As Dewey points out in “*The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy*”, the very combination of the words ‘origin’ and ‘species’ embodied an intellectual revolt and introduced a new intellectual temper. For the word ‘species’ is derived from the scholastic translation of the Greek word that, with Plato and Aristotle, came to denote those fixed realities that were genuine objects of knowledge. Once species themselves had been brought into the world of change, once they came into and went out of existence, philosophers could no longer feel justified in assuming the superiority of the fixed and final, and change and origin could no longer be justifiably treated as signs of defect and reality. For Dewey, *the influence of Darwinism on philosophy* “resided in its having conquered the phenomena of life for the principle of transition, and

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\(^7\) As for the term “species”, Aristotle gave the name, Eidos. This term the scholastics translated as species.
thereby freed the new for application to mind and morals and life” (Murphy, 1990, p.63).

Kilpatrick agrees with the above point, which is shown in the situation that leads Dewey to develop his own creative philosophical thinking. (Kilpatrick, 1952, p. 218)

Darwin’s theory of evolution had much influence on Dewey’s thought in education. In fact, Dewey and James were friends in philosophy in the USA. While James’ Principles of Psychology (1890) is indebted to the Darwinian view, Dewey’s thoughts on science, education, man and society were as well much indebted to the theory of evolution. As evolution focuses on change, it must be a positive change that is a change for the good; therefore we may conclude that nothing is ultimately good in itself except positive change for the better. According to this understanding, Dewey asserts that religious persons who disagree with Darwin’s theory are conservative. Dewey rejects absolute value/ truth or God. Therefore, the most positive value of absolute good is the positive change for better. “Religious consideration lent fervor to the controversy, but did not provoke it. Intellectual, religious emotions are not creative but conservative” (Dewey’s ID,1910, p.2).

In The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy, Dewey expounds his objections and ideas based on Darwin’s theory which he disagrees with the Absolute of traditional philosophy. Dewey was not the first one who denied the validity of the assumption of any such Absolute. There are several philosophers and thinkers who attacked the Absolute of traditional philosophy⁸. As Dewey puts it:

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⁸ Almost exactly 200 years ago, David Hume had brilliantly launched the initial attack against the age-old tradition of the Absolute. So impressive was he, for a short while, it carried even Immanuel Kant in the same direction. Later, the revolts of Nietzsche and the early Bergson sprang, in part at least, from their unwillingness to view life and its potentialities under the darkening shadow of an Absolute. William James renewed the attack, and recent anthropologists have provided valuable material with which to sustain it. There were others. But John Dewey, I believe, was the first to undertake a frank and
The Darwinian principle of natural selection cut straight under this philosophy (that of design). If all organic adaptations are due simply to constant variation and the elimination of those variations which are harmful in the struggle for existence that is brought about by excessive reproduction ...” (Dewey’s ID, 1910, p.11).

Dewey continues, saying that he is not interested in an intelligence that shaped things once for all but the intelligence, which things are even now shaping. “... There is no call for a prior intelligent causal force to plan and preordain them. Hostile critics charged Darwin with materialism and with making chance the cause of the universe... the discussion of design versus chance...” (Dewey’s ID, 1910, pp.12-13)

Pratte observes the influence of Darwin on American education as divided into two phases: The Social Darwinians, which focuses on life adjustment education or natural selection, and the Deweyans, which focuses on life environmental education or experimentalism.

According to the theory of natural selection, Pratte also observes that progressive education stresses individual child’s progress, growth and development conceived with a scientific explanation. As he puts it:

Progressive education, a social and biological theory whose origin lies in the second-half of the nineteenth century, stresses progress, growth and thorough criticism of the entire absolutistic tradition, and to search systematically for an alternative that would suit better the needs of modern man in the world of today. See Conrad P. Homberger. An Introduction to John Dewey. (Educational Theory, vol.5. no.2. April, 1955), p.100.

9 During this phase natural selection theory tended to dominate American education; the social Darwinians had their day... this theory moved from a narrow life adjustment. Educational psychological theory of adjustment replaced a theory of education dedicated to maneuvering the individual into making an “adjustment” to the environmental situation. Another phase... was coextensive with the natural selectionist movement and is often identified as dominated by the theory of “progressive education.” The Deweys had their day. See. Richard Pratte. (Contemporary Theories of Education,1971), pp.2-3.
development, survival of the fittest...and the need for adaptation. Perhaps its greatest contribution was its attack on the older, traditional theory, which extolled the dichotomy between man and nature. Natural selection is an adapted Darwinism which exhibits great faith in the power of man to adapt to an ever-changing environment...emphasized individual differences, advocated and regarded the child as an active learner" (Pratte, 1971, p.28).

It is obvious that Darwin's theory of natural selection is the foundation of Dewey's progressivism. With the natural selection, there is no longer belief in unchanging or absolute truth as man is relative to the conditions, which nature provides. The theory of natural selection maintains that man is in the changing world and must live in accordance with nature or natural law. To survive and to continue living well, man has to adapt himself to the environment in the universe undergoing constant change. The natural selectionists reject religious belief that God created the universe and all its creatures including man. Thus, they do not believe in the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Instead, they believe in the story of evolution of primitive forms of life.

According to the theory of natural selection, man has evolved over a long period of time from other less complex forms of life. Human beings can be traced back through their primitive ancestors, to apes, even to certain forms of sea life, and finally to single cell. All living beings which themselves are resulted from certain material forces of life, which in turn resulted from physical and chemical reactions

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10 Within such a theory, as long as man is subject to the process of natural selection, his existence on earth shall depend solely upon learning of the operations of natural evolution. Pratte summed up the views on natural selection as follows: First, nothing is permanently fixed, or final, or ultimate and perfect, as the Aristotelian and Christian conceptions of the world suggested. Second, man's conception of himself as a creature set apart in an instantaneous act of divine creation was seriously put in jeopardy. Third, nature provides the conditions and man is expected to find out what will help him in his struggle for survival. See. Richard Pratte, (Contemporary Theories of Education.1971), p.72.
among nonliving things. Man ultimately, then, has evolved from nonliving, completely material things. Consequently, man is no different in kind from any other material objects. Therefore, one can conclude that man did not start in the Garden of Eden but in the slime, the bottom of the sea, or from something of a powerful matter, and so on.

Briefly speaking, the educational aspect of Darwin's theory of evolution leads us to the knowledge that it can be related not only to man and nature but also to man and society. Man's quest for knowledge is not only for his own sake but also for his survival. This means that man has to adapt himself to the change in his surroundings, and in this way man as an individual or in a group may improve his chances of survival and success by adopting the practical activities given by nature. Under such conditions, knowledge will emerge from the discovery of individual and groups in society as Darwin asserts that the theory of evolution through natural selection has its relation to man's power of selection. He further states “man by selection can certainly produce great results, and can adapt organic beings to his own uses, through the accumulation of slight but useful variations, given to him by the hand of Nature” (Darwin, 1859, p.53).

To the question how does Dewey utilize Darwin's theory of evolution to explain the development and progress in education, the answer lies in his concept of change and growth. As Dewey's educational philosophy focuses on the progressive education movement that emphasizes the student's need and interest, he believes that students' experiences through activity are primary in education. Education shall help students to learn and to adapt themselves to the environment that is changing in daily life. According to the natural selection theory, the terms “change” or “progress” play
a great role in the process of evolution. Dewey's progressivism takes natural selection as its foundation in its emphasis on change or progress.

The concept of change is very important for this research. It is a fundamental and metaphysical issue, which has led to the controversy of Dewey's progressivism and traditionalism.

In conclusion, we may say that the Darwinian theory of evolution is one of the most important factors that influenced the development of the philosophical and the educational views of Dewey. From this evolutionary theory, Dewey derived his concept of the elemental nature of the life process. For him, man has evolved in a world that is marked by conditions of his surroundings. Granville Stanley Hall, philosopher and educator, is in favor of the theory of natural selection in education. Hall believes that the fundamental processes of human development are based on the principles of Darwin's biological evolution and also believes that the theory of evolution rightly interpreted would revolutionize education. For Hall, the theory of natural selection is right. He asserts that education should be based upon nature and need of the child (Pratte, 1971, pp. 81-83). Dewey attempts to develop his progressivism in education, which unites both the Darwin's evolutionary conception of life as adjustment and experimentalism as the method of experimental science.

2.3 Dewey and the Concept of Experience

Our concern in this section would be: What is Dewey's concept of experimentalism and concept of experience? How do we determine Dewey's experimentalism and pragmatism\(^\text{11}\) as educational theory and practice?

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\(^{11}\) Charles S. Peirce, the acknowledged founder of pragmatism, disavowed the term *pragmatism* and adopted the term *pragmaticism*. William James thought of himself as an empiricist, according to his own carefully defined radical empiricism... John Dewey seemed to favor *instrumentalism*. Dewey preferred for his philosophy the name of "Instrumentalism" and later "Experimentalism" instead of the
With lengthy introductory remarks above on the concept of natural selection we shall be ready to enter into further investigation of Dewey’s school of progressive education, which is known as experimentalism.

The main thesis of experimentalism is its belief that the power of reflective thought is its ability to predict events. The experimentalist takes thought at its most adaptive and constructive and applies it to all areas of life, which man must control (Roseman, 1963, p.30). It implies that it provides children with a behavior model for successful adaptation to the environment. In the context of experimentalism, self-realization can be seen as the integration of the self through social activity. It seems that experimentalism views the child as a scientist, constantly experimenting and discovering.

Experimentalism is the doctrine that is concerned with hypotheses, theories, suggestions, discoveries and consequences that come out of tests or proofs. The experimental method as scientific method is opposed to all other methods that which claim to be a priori sure. Experimentalism is a thought pattern rooted in Naturalism. It opposes the traditionalism in education. Experimentalism emphasizes the scientific method, social institution, and the perspective of Darwin’s theory of evolution, that is, the involvement of the school and the social change. Experimentalism is Dewey’s educational position, a doctrine that advocates experimental methods, as one of the categories in progressivism that centers on experience. For the experimentalist like Dewey, experience is ultimate (Williams, 1953, p.208).

Now let us consider Dewey’s conception of experience and the implication of his education and experience.

"Experience, in short, is not a combination of mind and world, subject and object, method and subject matter, but is a single continuous interaction of a great diversity of energies. For the purpose of controlling the course or direction which the moving unity of experience takes we draw a mental distinction between the how and the what" (Dewey’s DE: MW 9, 1916 p.174).

Dewey divides the term ‘experience’ into two kinds: primary experience and secondary experience. As Pungkaew Limpisuree puts it:

The experience, according to Dewey, covers the various meanings more extensively than that of empiricism, according to which the experience is the object of knowledge. The knowledge is derived from empirical sensations. The mind cannot perceive the external object. Such a belief leads to the duality of subject and object. Dewey tries to solve this problem by the way of empirical method, according to which he splits experience into two kinds: primary and secondary ones. The former is the experience in the object that occurs before thinking, whereas the latter is the experience of knowing, using both intellect and thought (Limpisuree, 1978, p.vi).

The primary experience is non-cognitive experience or non-reflective experience. It is only the process of experience or action. It will become the secondary experience when it is in the process of reflective thought and becomes the reflective experience or cognitive experience (Angurarohita, 2000, p. 93).

Although we accept that education can be attained from experience, it does not mean that every experience can be used or applied to education, because some experiences cannot be represented as educational ideas. For example, some experiences in itself are interesting and can be accepted but they are not related to the other life experiences. Some experiences are enjoyable but they may lead our life to
meaninglessness and promote a careless attitude. If children accept these kinds of experiences in their lives, it may become the habit of those children and may result in lack of self-control. As Dewey puts it:

An experience may be immediately enjoyable and yet promote the formation of slack and careless attitude; this attitude then operates to modify the quality of subsequent experiences so as to prevent a person from getting out of them what they have to give. Again, experience may be so disconnected from one another that, while is agreeable or even exciting in itself, they are not linked cumulatively to one another... Each experience may be lively, vivid, and “interesting,” and yet their disconnectedness may artificially generate dispersive, disintegrated, centrifugal habits. The consequence of formation of such habits is inability to control future experiences (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.26).

Therefore, Dewey proposes two criteria of experience: continuity of experience, and interaction.

Dewey believes that there must be the principle of continuity of experience which may be termed experiential continuum. Each experience should be related to the next or further experience. Every experience does not exist for itself nor has it an end in itself but it is an instrument for other experiences. “Every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality, reconstruction of experience” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.47). This means that knowledge from experience, which we receive in a particular situation, would be an instrument to help us understand another particular situation that will happen in the future. “What he has learned in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and of dealing effectively with the situations
which follow. The process goes on as long as life and learning continue” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.44). Dewey also puts it:

To learn from experience is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions, doing becomes trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like; the undergoing becomes instruction-discovery of the connection of things” (Dewey’s DE:MW9, 1916, pp.152-153).

Dewey asserts that education as growth “Growth, or growing as developing, not only physically but intellectually and morally, is one exemplification of the principle of continuity”(Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.36). There must be continuity of experience in education. For this point, Dewey considers that traditional education does not lack knowledge from experience but its implication is not sufficient for connecting or relating past experience with the present and future.

Dewey also believes that experience must have an interaction between the human organism and environment. For this, Dewey attacks the traditional education as not emphasizing the individual child’s needs and interests. This means that for Dewey, experience can be attained from the interaction which consists of individual child’s needs and interests, and the environment that he/she faces in the school.

We can say that these two principles in selecting the quality of experience cannot be separated. “The two principles of continuity and interaction are not separated from each other. They intercept and unite” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.44). ‘The continuity of experience’ and ‘the interaction between the human organism and environment’ are the reconstruction in experience, which means that there is interaction between the old and the new experiences from this particular situation to
another particular situation. We can conclude Dewey's concept of experience, as Sathaye puts it:

Dewey's concept of experience: (1) In the first place 'experience' is not an extraneous, transcendental faculty of a self, which exists miraculously and independently of natural events. Nor is it just a subjective modification of consciousness. It is the outcome of interaction between an organism and its environment. Hence, it is as much the property of the environment as it is of the organism. This is why Dewey says that 'experience' is a double-barreled term, which includes experiencing as well as the experienced. Things interacting in certain ways are experience and they are what are experienced. Dewey thus construes experience in terms of interactions. In his opinion experience is a natural event: no one knows how it originates but when it does occur, it provides the means of exploring nature (2) Dewey does not limit experience to customs or empirical way which is acted in experiences or practical activities. In his opinion, experience also includes 'reasoning' (3) In Dewey's methodology we find the immediacy of experience in two ways. Firstly there is immediate experience, the incompatibilities involved in which suggest a problem and secondly, an immediate experience where the problem implicit in the first immediate experience is solved. Immediate experiences of the first kind offer the practical problems of reality, and the immediate experiences of the latter type enable us to resolve them in terms of practical convenience (Sathaye, 1972, pp.17-18).

Dewey's educational philosophy is in line with the theory of evolution and pragmatism (Frankenna, 1965, p.137). It assumed that all progressive education is pragmatism in education. In Doctrines of the Great Educators, Rusk wrote about
Dewey's progressivism, which is based on pragmatism and known as experimentalism. Rusk confirmed Dewey's thought on experimentalism by summarizing Dewey's writings that:

In *Democracy and Education*, dealing with the development of the experimental method, Dewey says: 'It means that we have no right to call anything knowledge except where our activity has actually produced certain physical changes in things, which agree with and confirm the conception entertained.' In *Human Nature and Conduct*, Dewey maintains that the act comes before the thought and that a motive does not exist prior to an act and produces it. In the *Quest for Certainty*, Dewey declares that the experimental procedure is one that installs doing at the heart of knowing, that the validity of the object of thought depends upon the consequences of the operation which define the object of thought; and he repeats that the test of ideas, of thinking generally, is found in the consequences of the acts to which the ideas lead. (Rusk, 1969, pp.314-315)

In summary, it is seen that Dewey's own outstanding mental ability is also one of the factors that makes him build his own educational philosophy. Undoubtedly, the frame of Dewey’s philosophy of education is pragmatism, which is regarded as a general theory of the nature of truth, knowledge, and value, and experimentalism is identified as the application of general theory to the practice of education. This means that experimentalism is treated as the implication of Dewey’s pragmatic theory in education that is to experience. Therefore, all knowledge is a result of experimentation. Dewey promotes his experimentalism with the student or child-centrist approach, which is focused on child’s needs and interests. To understand
Dewey's progressivism with his experimental view in education, we need to explore Dewey's child-centrist approach in the next section.

2.4 Dewey and the Concept of Child-Centrist

We know that pragmatism is the foundation of one important aspect of Dewey's progressive education. To examine Dewey's educational views is to see how pragmatism was applied to educational theory and practice, which is called experimentalism in particular by Dewey. His concept of education as growth emphasizes child-centrist education. Dewey has a long interesting discussion on this topic. This section discusses issues such as what do we mean by child-centrist? How do we determine Dewey's thought about the child? And what are the main characteristics of child-centrist education?

Dewey's thoughts about children are obviously shaped by the writings of Rousseau (Goodman, 1990, p.114). His constructive idea was that the study of a child should precede any choice of subject matter in education, and nothing should be presented to the child for learning except that which answers the felt demands of the child's own self. In other words, the child and his development come first, not the course of study (Kilpatrick, 1952, p.221).

For Dewey, child-centrist education means the educational method of teaching that stresses the children's needs and interests. In My Pedagogic Creed (1897), Dewey says that "Interests are signs and symptoms of growing power... showing the state of development which the child has reached...they prophesy the stage upon which he is about to enter" (Dewey's PC, 1897). Dewey also states that the educational process has two sides: one is psychological and the other, sociological, but neither can be subordinated to the other. In The Child and the Curriculum (1902),
on educational process, Dewey says that "The fundamental factors in the educative process are an immature, undeveloped being, and certain social aims, meaning values incarnated in the natural experience of the adult. So the educative process is the due interaction of these forces" (Dewey's CC, p.76).

Dewey sums up the meaning of education in My Pedagogic Creed that "Education is the fundamental method of social process and reform". This means that education serves the community by helping the growing child to become an effective member of his society. "Every individual has grown up, and always must grow up in a social medium. His responses grow intelligent, or gain meaning, simply because he lives and acts in a medium of accepted meaning and values. Through social intercourse, through sharing in the activities embodying beliefs, he gradually acquires a mind of his own" (Dewey's DE, MW 9, 1916, p. 304).

Dewey asserts that it is the job of educators and teachers to encourage individuals to develop their full potential as human beings. The role of teacher is as coordinator or mentor or counselor; For Dewey, knowledge is required as practical knowledge. "Dewey's starting point casts on his concern with manual training in which traditionalists complain against Dewey, is his emphasis on learning by doing" (Ryan, 1995, p.137).

As for Dewey's teaching-learning style of progressivism, this emphasizes experience. For Dewey, children are active and he views them in terms of biology and the evolutionary theory of Darwinism. Dewey believes that the child's nature and its activity is adaptable to the environment.

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12Pratte says about Dewey on the concept of man that man, in Dewey's concept of the term, is subject to his own nature and to his environment. His nature is manifested in the habits he has developed, habits that result for better or worse from the degree to which intelligence has controlled and directed the impulses of emotion. To the extent that man betters his habits he can contribute to the improvement of the environment and society. Thus, man has the potential for almost unlimited development" See. Richard Pratte. (Contemporary Theories of Education. 1971), p.118.
Further on Dewey’s experimentalism of child-centrist education focuses on learning by doing rather than learning by dogmatic instruction. In this way students would not just gain knowledge but would also develop skills, habits and attitudes, which is necessary for them to solve a variety of problems. This is the reason he asserts that children should learn by experience.

Dewey believes that active learning would help people develop the ability and motivation to think critically about the world around them. Therefore, progressive education is as an important part of a successful democracy as it is necessary for people to be able to think for themselves. Progressive education emphasizes on how to think rather than what to think. The researcher will particularly focus the discussion on Dewey’s progressive or child-centrist education in chapters III and IV. First, however, let us examine the concept of democracy and freedom in Dewey’s child-centrist progressivism.

2.5 Dewey and the Concept of Democracy and Freedom

For Dewey, democracy is an important factor that contributed to society and education. In Dewey’s view, democracy is more than a form of government; it is in the form in which people live together and exchange experiences. Teaching, learning and schooling in general as democratic processes are at the heart of progressive or child-centrist education. It is reasonable and acceptable that the ways of democracy seen in society should also be seen in schools. Here is Dewey’s concept of democracy in education.

Since education is a social process, and there are many kinds of societies, a criterion for educational criticism and construction implies a particular social
ideal. There are two elements in our criterion that both point to democracy. The first signifies not only more numerous and more varied points of shared common interest, but greater reliance upon the recognition of mutual interests as a factor in social control. The second means not only freer interaction between social groups (once isolated insofar as intention could keep up a separation) but change in social habit— it is continuous readjustment through meeting new situations produced by varied intercourse. And these two traits are precisely what characterize the democratically constituted society (Dewey’s DE, 1916, pp.86-87, 99).

Dewey’s concept of democracy in education can be summarized as being that the democratic level of a given society can be measured by two criteria; firstly the amount of shared interests and secondly the amount and intensity of discussion about them. As John L. Childs puts it:

In Dewey’s view, the heart of the democratic faith is the conviction that ordinary human beings by the evaluation of the consequence of their activities can develop from within their own shared experiences all regulative principles, laws and standards. In the view of Dewey, a man can become responsibly moral only as he is aware of the consequences of his acts, and seeks to maintain the conditions that make a decent and humane life possible. To develop the habits and attitudes that are the foundation of this kind of socialized intelligence, Dewey sought to organize his school in the forms of a community in which the pupils would share with their teachers and parents responsibility for the determination and maintenance of the conditions under which their activities were to be carried on. For Dewey, democracy was not only a means of getting a good form of government, it was also a process in
Dewey's Progressivism

and through which human beings were developed through progressively learning to act in a responsible manner. Just as experimental science is a self-correcting method of developing, testing and revising ideas, so Dewey believed that democracy should be accepted as a self-directing and self-correcting social process of developing institutions and moral standards (Childs, 1954, pp.185-186).

This is Dewey's concept of participatory democracy that differs from common views of democracy that stress formal political representation. In relation to his conception of democracy, the school has specific functions that become the motor of society's progress; therefore the school must present to children the best that is available. For Dewey, the ideal model of the school as a democratic society stresses on the search for shared interests and goals, communal activities and communication. Participation and inquiry are the characteristics most representative of Dewey's ideal school. Dewey proposes this ideal as an alternative to traditional education in which transmission and passivity are central characteristics.

For Dewey, the concept of the democratic school relates to all participating in the school such as students, parents, and teachers, and above all at the heart of Dewey's educational philosophy is the importance of preparing students as democratic citizens. Dewey points out the role of teacher is to teach not "ready-made knowledge" but to ensure students have experience with a mode of associated living characteristic of democracy. On this point, the school should be a community of full participation and a place for joining communicated experience, in which moral reasoning would develop.

As we have learned in chapter I that for Dewey's progressivism in education, the idea of freedom is connected with the individual. This means that its concept of
education that stresses individual freedom and the capacity of individual freedom are directed to social aim progressively.

In summary, we have examined the historical background of Dewey’s philosophy of education and learned that Dewey is one of the best-known philosophers and educators in the history of American philosophy and education. Dewey’s philosophy of education is called progressivism, in which it grouped the pragmatism of Charles Peirce and William James. The product of such a combination is called progressive education that emphasizes student-centeredness. Apparently, there are three basic things united in Dewey’s philosophy of education. First, Darwin’s theory of evolution, as the principle of the continuity of man and nature; second, experimentalism as the method of experimental science; and third, democracy as the cooperative principle of group living in the context of child-centrist education.
CHAPTER III
DEWEY'S CHILD-CENTRIST PROGRESSIVISM
AND ITS AIM

Today, many schools have implemented elements of pragmatist ideas. In fact, pragmatism has greatly influenced all levels of education in America and the rest of the world as well. In *Experience and Education* (1938), Dewey wrote that progressive education is an education that emphasizes Child-centeredness. Since 1920s, child-centrist or progressive education has been a focus of discussions and studies, primarily in the United Kingdom and the United States. Different names are used to describe the child-centeredness in education, among others; they are child-centrist, child-centered, student-centered, learner-centered, and the like. This research opted to the use of the name child-centrist for discussion. It is the purpose of this chapter to present Dewey's aim of child-centrist education and to compare the child-centrist education in progressivism and teacher-centrist education in traditionalism. The researcher divides this chapter into four parts: first, general notion of child-centrist education; second, general aims in philosophy of education; third, Dewey's child-centrist progressivism and its aim in education; and fourth, a comparison of the aims of teacher-centrist traditionalism and child-centrist progressivism in education.

3.1 General Notion of Child-Centrist Education

Child-centrist education traces its origins to the works of Pestalozzi, Rousseau, Froebel, Dewey and William Kilpatrick, among others. In fact, the child-centrist educational theory is not a new theory. Its earliest fully developed form was developed by Rousseau of France and then by Dewey in the United States. Dewey's proposed child-centrist education has been the subjected of long discussion since its
inception. It is said that many people have failed to study Dewey’s writings and have misinterpreted and misapplied his ideas. What do we mean by child-centrist education? How do we determine Dewey’s thoughts about the child? What are the main characteristics of child-centeredness in education? Why was it widely accepted in the educational world? These are the concerns addressed in this chapter of the research.

What is child-centrist education? We may get numerous different answers, none of which is inherently right or wrong. In fact, the responses may range from descriptions of teaching activities to collections of skills, even to the stressing of individual and social growth in classroom settings. It is generally held that child-centrist education requires that all aspects of the educational program must focus on the abilities, interests and intellectual involvement of the child. It also requires that all aspects of education must be designed, developed and delivered in such a manner that it is attainable by children in real classrooms or real situations. It requires that all aspects of a child’s education not only prepare the child for future life but also present students with the realities of life. Child-centrist education emerges as a philosophy of education that emphasizes learning-by-doing and responds to the child’s natural needs and interests. As Goodman puts it,

For Dewey, “child-centered education,” means the educational method of teaching that stresses the children’s needs and interests; the role of teacher as coordinator, mentor or counselor; Knowledge is required as practical knowledge that is ‘learning-by-doing’; that children are active. It is the teaching style of progressivism, which is emphasized upon experience (Goodman, 1990, p. 114).
Child-centrist education grows as a protest against traditional education. In *Experience and Education*¹, Dewey explored both characteristics of traditional and progressive education. As Hall-Quest wrote in an editorial foreword to the book:

*Experience and Education* is a lucid analysis of both traditional and progressive education. When the traditional school relied upon subjects or the cultural heritage for its content, the "new" school has exalted the learner's impulse and interest and the current problems of a changing society. Neither of these sets of values is sufficient unto itself. Both are essential. Sound educational experience involves, above all, continuity and interaction between the learner and what is learned. The traditional curriculum undoubtedly entailed rigid regimentation and a discipline that ignored the capacities and interests of the child's nature... Dewey insists that neither the old nor the new education is adequate. Each is miseducative because neither of them applies the principles of a carefully developed philosophy of experience (Hall-Quest, 1963, pp.9-10).

In *Experience and Education*, Dewey proposes that whereas traditional education is called old education, progressive education may be called new education. He tries to point out the strengths and weaknesses of each. As we know there is a variety of progressive schools, therefore it is seen that the term new education or new school here does not refer to Dewey's progressive education or school, but it refers to progressive education generally or the general philosophy of the new education which strongly attacks traditional education. "The rise of what is called new education and

¹ *Experience and Education* is a major contribution to educational philosophy. It appeared in the midst of widespread confusion, which regrettably has scattered the forces of American education and exalted labels of conflicting loyalties. It is an analysis of both traditional and progressive education. It provides a firm foundation upon which they may unitedly promote an American educational system, which respects all sources of experience and rests upon a positive- not a negative- philosophy of experience and education. See Alfred L. Hall-Quest. 1963, pp.9,.11. *Experiences and Education*. London: Collier Books.
progressive schools are of themselves a product of discontent with traditional education. In effect it is a criticism of the latter” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, 18). For Dewey, it is too extreme to hold any type of education. Dewey sees that one of the weaknesses of traditional education is that “The subject-matter of education consists of bodies of information and of skills that have been worked out in the past; therefore, the chief business of the school is to transmit them to the new generation” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.17). Dewey also considers that one of the weaknesses of new education is that it is too abstract and it requires practical formulation. “All principles by themselves are abstract. They become concrete only in the consequences that result from their application. Just because the principles set forth are so fundamental and far reaching, everything depends upon the interpretation given them as they are put into practice in the school and the home” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.20). Dewey also views the concept of new education as being risky and dangerous because it rejects the educational aims and educational practice of traditional education. As Dewey puts it, “There is always the danger in a new movement that in rejecting the aims and methods of that which it would supplant, it may develop its principles negatively rather than positively and constructively” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.20).

Dewey says that man likes to think in terms of extreme ways or “Either-Ors”. Each of them may be correct in theory, but when it comes to practical matters circumstances compel us to compromise. The opposition between the traditional (old) and progressive (new) education is no exception. Generally speaking, Dewey thinks that “the general principles of new education do not solve any problem of the actual or practical conduct and management of progressive schools. Rather, they set new problems which have to be worked out on the basis of a new philosophy of experience” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.21). We will not discuss this point in more detail,
except to point out the main problems of traditional (old) and progressive (new) education as Dewey sees it. This leads him to recognize the need for a theory of experience in his progressivism in education. Dewey fully described the position of the one who attempts to formulate the philosophy of education implicit in the practices of the new education that:

To imposition from above is to oppose expression and cultivation of individuality; to external discipline is to oppose free activity; to learning from texts and teachers is to oppose learning through experience; to acquisition of isolated skills and techniques by drill is to oppose acquisition of them as means of attaining ends which make direct vital appeal; to preparation for a more or less remote future is to oppose to the making the most of the opportunities of present life; and to static aims and materials is to oppose acquaintance with a changing world (Dewey's EE, 1963, pp.19-20).

Dewey as a progressive educator gives new light to the understanding of the child and the process of education. It is known that through the Progressive Education Association\(^2\) (PEA), progressive educators promote child-centrist education, in which the notion is opposed to traditional education. Traditional education centers on the view of (intellectual) knowledge, whereas child-centrist or progressive education emphasizes the individual child's needs and interests. For progressivism, the notion of child-centrist is eminent and impressive, though there are other critiques of the approach, especially from those who agree with the teacher-centrist approach. As Darling puts it:

Child-centered (or 'progressive') educational theory has to be understood as stemming from radical dissatisfaction with traditional practice. A necessary

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\(^2\) The Progressive Education Association, founded in 1919, was the best organized and most ambitious attempt at its time to support a truly alternative system of education. Its journal Progressive Education was an important forum for 'the new education.'
preliminary, therefore, to producing an intelligible outline of child-centered education is to bring to mind the nature of the traditional, subject-centered, teacher-directed approach to education - or at least to the nature of this approach as it is portrayed, fairly or otherwise, by progressives themselves" (Darling, 1994, p.2).

There are many questions commonly asked by educators and philosophers for which progressivism has to re-examine child-centrist education and its philosophical roots. As child-centrist education emphasizes the child’s learning needs and interests, does it ignore or does it hold knowledge in low regard? When child-centrist education is implemented, does it teach children to be without discipline? Can child-centrist education lead to the capability and authority of the child being over-valued? Does too much freedom in education lead the child to have an unhealthy egocentric view of experience? Is child-centrist education useful or harmful for a child’s life? Is child-centrist education after all success or failure? Those who agree with child-centrist education may say that these questions are based on a misinterpretation or misunderstanding of child-centrist education.

The researcher would discuss child-centrist education by referring especially to two books: John Darling’s *Child-Centered Education and Its Critics* (1994), and Harold Entwistle’s *Child-Centered Education* (1970). Darling points out “three ideas referring to a child-centered, that is, the nature of a child, the nature of knowledge and the nature of life itself” (Darling, 1994, p.5); whereas Entwistle also proposes three main concepts: concept of a child, of learning, and of the teacher’s role. To answer the above questions, the researcher proposes that it would be better to examine and clarify particularly the concept of child and the concept of learning. These are the
main themes of child-centrist education that lead us to a further discussion on the roles of teachers, students, and schools.

3.1.1 Concept of "Child"

Rousseau, Piaget, Dewey and some like thinkers are representatives and promoters of child-centrist education through their writings. Among them, Dewey's writings presented the notion and the concept of child-centrist education most clearly. In fact, today's child-centrist education is shown to be the fruition of ideas developed by philosophers, namely Rousseau and Dewey. Their progressive view asserts that education should be designed to reflect the nature of the child. Thus, to examine child-centrist or progressive education, the knowledge of the child is essential and needs to be clarified first. In this respect, the concept of child-centrist education is based on the notion that the child ought to be considered as a child (Entwistle, 1970, p.18). In Child-Centered Education, Entwistle gives the definitions of the child as provided by those who support child-centrist education. The definition of child can be classified into the concepts of "the individual child", "the child and society", "the free child", and "the educated child". It is determined that to consider the concept of child in child-centrist education is to emphasize the nature of the child. As Darling puts it "Progressives emphasize that it is in the nature of the child to be active. The progressive view is that education should be designed to reflect the nature of the child". (Darling, 1994, p.3). The researcher will analyze the problem briefly by using this classification as a ground.

The development of the child as an individual is adopted in child-centrist education. As a starting point, progressives see themselves as having taught us an appreciation of children as individuals.... Children's development is seen as a gradual
and natural progression, which is best, aided by adults who have an appreciation of and a respect for the ways of children (cf. Darling, 1994, pp.2-3). Dewey observes that adults should learn to grow into childlikeness (Dewey's DE, 1916, p.50). To stress the individual child is to believe that each child is unique in its complex ability, aptitude, interest, and experience and cultural background which he brings into school (Entwistle, 1970, p.23). The concept of "individual child" stresses the moral obligation of educators to minister to the "individual differences" (Entwistle, 1970, p.23). Darling also adds that Child-centrist education is not just a respecter of childhood, but also a respecter of individual children and their differences (Darling, 1994, p. 3). According to the Plowden Report, children should be allowed to be themselves' (CACE, 1967, p.187). It is said that this view of the individual child is the strongest pillar of child-centrist or progressive education and one which traditional education cannot attack easily.

Concerning the individual child, Rousseau declares in Emile that "Nature provides for the child's growth in her own fashion, and this should never be thwarted" (Rousseau, 1762, p. 50). Emile is an account of the development of a fictitious eponymous pupil who is in the care of a tutor, effectively Rousseau himself. The guiding principle throughout Rousseau's Emile is that what is to be learned should be determined by an understanding of the child's nature at each stage of his development. Emile was instrumental in advancing a new view of children, which has, for good or ill, lasted down to the present day. Children are seen as very different from adults: they are innocent, vulnerable; slow to mature, and entitled to freedom and happiness.

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3 The Plowden Report (1967) which appeared in the 1960s in England is the best approach to primary education. The publication of this report gave stature to the new pedagogy in a way that college teachers could never have done on their own. It was a landmark in the development of child-centered education in Britain. The Plowden Report (Children and their Primary Schools) was the work of the Central Advisory Council for Education, a group that included an educational psychologist, a professor of child health and growth, and the Principal of the Froebel Institute College of Education. See John Darling. Child-Centered Education. (London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd, 1994), p. 41.
Dewey also considers that the child is a native egoist. For him, children’s alleged native egoism is simply an egoism that runs counter to an adult’s egoism. To a grown-up person who is too absorbed in his own affairs to take an interest in children’s affairs, children are undoubtedly unreasonable. In the *Child and the Curriculum*, on the nature of the child, Dewey states that:

The child lives in a somewhat narrow world of personal contacts. Things hardly come within his experience unless they touch, intimately and obviously, his own well-being, or that of his family and friends. His world is a world of persons with their personal interests, rather than a realm of facts and laws (Dewey’s CC, 1902, p. 5).

Child-centrist education further emphasizes the importance of social education or social relationships. This means that Dewey’s child-centrist or progressive education is presented in relation to the outlook of child, school and society. In *The Collected Works of John Dewey: Early Works*, Dewey states that the child is a member of society who lives intellectually, socially, morally, and physically.

The child is one, and he must either live his life as an integral unified being or suffer loss and create friction... The child is an organic whole, intellectually, socially, and morally, as well as physically. The ethical aim, which determines the work of the school, must accordingly be interpreted in the most comprehensive and organic spirit. We must take the child as a member of society in the broadest sense and demand whatever is necessary to enable the child to recognize all his social relations and to carry them out (Dewey’s EW. 5, p. 58).

On this score, Dewey believes in a particular type of individuality to be a means of achieving a particular kind of society (Entwistle, 1970, p. 32). Dewey’s view
is in concurrence with Piaget who also underlines the importance of learning in a social dimension with reference to the skills that are practiced individually (Entwistle, 1970, p.33). Dewey further emphasizes the social character of morality by formulating the relationship between the social and the moral. This means that he emphasizes the social obligation and social experience of individuals. Dewey always stresses the social basis of human personality. For Dewey, it is self-evident, for good or ill, man is a product of his social experience (Entwistle, 1970, p.37). For Dewey, democracy is an important factor and influential to social education. On this he states, "Education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform. By means of it the society can formulate its own purposes, can organize its own means and resources" (Dewey's DE, 1916, p. 57).

Those who locate the child at the centre of the educational situation usually assert the importance of freedom in schools (Entwistle, 1970, p.48). The concept of the free child is needed in child-centrist education. For Dewey, the essence of freedom is "freedom of intelligence, freedom of observation and of judgment exercised on behalf of purposes that are intrinsically worthwhile" (Dewey's LI, 1938, p.61). This means freedom to choose, and freedom and authority in education as well. This is a positive sense of freedom. With child-centrist education, children would learn self-discipline in school, which grows in love and knowledge.

As to the concept of the educated child in which teachers ought to concentrate their attention on the child as child, not as adult, what do we think when people say that adulthood is "fixed standards" in development of the child? Rousseau views the child as a different kind of person from the adult. Rousseau advises us that "childhood has its own way of thinking, seeing, feeling, and every age, every station in life has perfection, a ripeness of its own" (Rousseau, 1911, p.54). In Rousseau's
view, there is maturity for every age of each child and also its limitations when it is viewed from an adult perspective. This makes it possible to think of an educated child. For Dewey, he thinks that educators and teachers should respect every stage of development of the child as a full life, not a preparation for another stage. This means that each stage in education is completely satisfactory to a child in itself and the adult should be concerned with the child’s capacity for life as a child.

3.1.2 Concept of Learning

In *Experience and Education*, Dewey clarifies the position of the child and curriculum. On this he states that teacher should select from the total of available experiences those which he believes will help the child to incorporate in his growth an increasing richness of potentiality for future growth (Dewey’s EE, 1939, p. 246). For Dewey, learning should be a social process in which the child could learn best through socialized learning or group processes. Children’s learning occurs in cooperative activity between teachers and pupils, or among pupils themselves.

In *Child and the Curriculum, and The School and Society*, Dewey points out the usefulness and the importance of learning through social life in school particularly. For this he says:

When the school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service, and providing him with the instruments of effective self-direction, we shall have the deepest and best guaranty of a larger society which is worthy, lovely, and harmonious (Dewey’s CC & SC, 1956, p. 29)

This leads us to the conviction that child-centrist education is learning based on the child’s life-experiences, i.e based on real life situations. As Entwistle puts it,
"At the level of social understanding, we teach children to approach social problems from a number of different angles in order for them to see experience from as many relevant facets as possible, so that they may resist prejudiced conclusions or simple solutions" (Entwistle, 1970, p. 110).

In *Child-Centered Education*, Entwistle explores several particular points as proposed in the concept of learning in child-centrist education. The book centers on the discussion about the relationship of the child and curriculum, experience and education, education for life, and the child as an agent of his own education.

Entwistle states two main points regarding the concept of learning, and further examines the implication of two child-centrist axioms: that 'we teach children, not subjects' and that the schooling ought to be related to life or education for life (Entwistle, 1970, p. 96). It is noted that those who support child-centrist education are supporters of the slogan 'we teach children, not subjects'. This seems to be the strength of child-centrist education and it is that which traditional education inevitably seriously opposes. What do we mean by teaching children, not subjects? As traditional education focuses on subjects and then on children, progressive education focuses on children and then subjects. There has been much criticism on this issue and some critics have attempted to develop a new approach by pointing out that both subjects and children figure prominently in the teacher's teaching.

Child-centrist education stresses the goal or slogan 'education for life'. This was attacked by traditional education with the goal or slogan "education is preparation for life'. The slogan 'education for life' also has an obvious persuasiveness that is difficult to resist. It means that schooling ought to be related to life or at least, education should have relevance to life as the student sees it (Entwistle, 1970, p.121). In fact, it is Dewey who proposes the 'education for life” in terms of ‘educational
activity for the learner’s sake’, ‘education and culturally valuable activities’ and ‘education for lifelong life’.

The concept “educational activity for the learner’s sake” is the concept in which what we choose to do is chosen from the student’s personal interest. As well as encouraging the interest of the learner, personal knowing confers upon him a sense of power. By this the student knows how to do something with what he learns. As such, his learning embraces skills, concepts and principle, which he can apply and use in appropriate situations.

It is apparent that the concept of ‘activity for the learner’s sake’ is necessary but insufficient for curriculum building. Hence, the curriculum must consist of activities, which are culturally valuable. It means that schools should provide opportunity for engagement in those activities, which have disciplinary value in promoting growth of intellectual capacity, aesthetic and moral sensibility.

Education for lifelong life is not merely for young people living at a particular place and time to carry away from school a description of current social problems and their proposed solutions, but rather to ensure that they are conversant with principles which will assist in an understanding of social and personal problems throughout life (Entwistle, 1970, pp. 128-137).

Child-centrist education believes that a child’s self-activity is the key to learning: the child becomes the agent of his own education. Undoubtedly, this notion is against the didactic teaching methods of traditional education that expresses itself in teacher-centeredness in the sense of the phrase ‘chalk and talk’ (Entwistle, 1970, pp.142-143).

Child-centrist education is learning as a problem-solving activity, learning through project work, and learning by doing. Dewey’s concept of the problem-
Dewey’s Child-Centrist Progressivism and its aim

initiated learning situation is encountered by the learner in the conduct of his own interests rather than those of teacher’s creating situations and presenting problems. With Dewey’s concept of experience, this would enable the child to serve as his own agent of learning, continuously reconstructing his experience, to have the possibilities of expanding new learning, because all learning is self-learning and no one can really teach anyone else (Entwistle, 1970, p. 152).

We have noted the concept of learning in child-centrist education according to Entwistle. Now let us examine Darling’s proposal on the concept of learning, which is similar to that of Entwistle.

Darling declares his position in support of Dewey’s child–centrist education, based on the needs and interests of the child in the *Primary Memorandum*. Here Darling observes “the growing acceptance by teachers of the principles underlying an education based on the needs and interests of the child and the nature of the world in which he is growing up. Therefore, through a wide range of experiences, the pupil is given opportunities to participate actively in his learning” (SED, 1965, p. vii).

Here are the implications for learning and teaching as proposed in the *Primary Memorandum*. According to Darling, there are three points to be considered. First, a class consists of individual children, who are not all the same. For him, it is vital that individual differences should be recognized and catered for in all spheres of the child’s activities in school. Further, the teacher’s methods and organization should be sufficiently flexible to allow each child to progress at an appropriate pace, and to achieve satisfaction and success at his own level (SED, 1965, p. 4). In practice, Darling

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stresses the advantages of a group-based class organization for learning and teaching. Grouping can be either ability-based or interest-based.

The benefits that derive from group methods entirely justify the effort. Many teachers have proved that in the permissive yet controlled atmosphere of the classroom, where there is a flexible organization and group methods skillfully employed, the able pupils can realize their potential, and all can achieve success at appropriate levels. In addition, self-reliance and initiative are developed, and the pupils have opportunities of pursuing individual enthusiasms and of learning to share in co-operative enterprises (SED, 1965, p. 68).

Second, the importance of basic skills and knowledge is desirable for children's learning, but the factual knowledge in itself is less important than the urge to ask questions, as well as the will and the ability of the student to find answers (SED, 1965, p. 18).

Third, the Memorandum stresses an approach to learning, which involves activity, experience and discovery. Learning occurs most effectively when the learner is personally involved in purposeful activity, which captures his interest or arises from it. Consequently, the emphasis in primary education is now more on learning by the pupil than on instruction by the teacher (SED, 1965, p. 60).

Darling asserts that knowledge is best acquired by activity and experience. Besides, it is important to foster good attitudes to learning. Here are statements from the Plowden Report which Darling uses to support his own view.

...activity and experience, both physical and mental, are often the best means of gaining knowledge and acquiring facts. This is more generally recognized today, but still needs to be said. We certainly would not wish to undervalue knowledge and facts, but facts are best retained when they are used and
understood, when right attitudes to learning are created, when children learn to learn. Instruction in many primary schools continues to bewilder children because it outruns their experience (CACE, 1967, p. 195).

The Primary Memorandum and the Plowden Report represent very powerful statements on the central ideas of child-centrist education. In order to have a clearer understanding about child-centrist education, the researcher would like to give an example briefly. Each classroom is set up into learning centers for various activities. In the language room there are computers, pictures, journals, newspapers and essay topics. The students are given the list of their assignments at the beginning of each project and a lot of time is scheduled for independent work in which students could complete these assignments. The teacher acts mainly as a mentor or guide. Her instruction demonstrates how to perform the activities necessary to complete the assignments, then the students work independently or in small groups, and finally the teacher asks the students to show their understanding of their work.

We can conclude that Dewey was a particularly influential educational philosopher. His books *The School and Society* and *the Child and Curriculum* were important arguments in favor of reform. Dewey asserted that children have a natural curiosity that should be encouraged and guided by the educational process. This is the reason Dewey emphasizes the importance of experience, including activities, learning by doing and self-guided learning. Dewey believed that school served as a large community. The social and citizenship skills that children learn in school are integral aspects of developing a democratic nation. Before we further examine both Dewey’s progressive view on the aim of child-centrist education and the traditional view of teacher-centrist education, it is necessary that we examine the aim of the philosophy
Dewey’s Child-Centrist Progressivism and its aim

of education in general and the reason why the aim of philosophy of education is essential and important.

3.2 General View on the Aims of Philosophy of Education

On the importance of the philosophy of education, Edward Craig states in Routledge Encyclopedia:

The philosophy of education is primarily concerned with the nature, aims and means of education, and also with the character and structure of educational theory. The contributions and arguments in which philosophers of education have approached educational aims may be divided into two dimensions: the former is the normative dimension which is worked on the nature and aims of education including the methods and its concept concerning with epistemology, logic, aesthetics, ethics, and other educational theories. The latter is the substantive dimension concerning theories of ethics, moral, social and political issues of educational aims (Craig, 1998, p.231). 

Philosophers and educators have concerned themselves with what the aims of education should be, and further explore what forms of instruction it entails. The philosophy of education has its questions arising directly from the dimensions of educational practice and the role of education in the promotion of individual and social well-being.

On this score there are conflicting ideas about the aims of education. The disagreements have existed since early times, relative to one’s philosophical standpoint and the historical period. Questions such as: should the aims of education be individual development or social efficiency? Which of the aims is the most important? And why? have dominated the field of discussion. All of these questions
have provided philosophers and educators a quest for the realization of the "good life" and the "good society".

It is here that, the need for discussion on the aims of education is as pronounced and vital in the present times as it was in earlier times. The researcher has attempted to provide an ample discussion on the two different views of the aims of progressive and traditional education throughout this study and the major philosophical viewpoints and their implications for education.

We have discovered that different philosophical positions lead to variations in educational emphasis and practice. It involves the belief in the nature of reality, the essence of truth and the basis of value or virtue as well. The concept of reality, truth, and virtue are the philosophical concepts in the foundation of educational practice. It is the nature of the relationship between philosophical belief and educational practice. Later we shall engage in a full discussion on the general aspects of philosophy of education, which is focused on the nature, the meaning and its aims, the purpose, the curriculum, the method of teaching, the role of teacher, student and school. All of these shall lead us to the understanding that educational goals or aims have a relationship to metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology in the context of one's philosophical belief.

We are now ready to enter into a particular investigation on Dewey's view on the aim of child-centrist education.

3.3 Dewey's Progressivism on the Aim of Child-Centrist

Before we examine the aim of Dewey's child-centrist education, let us first consider what Dewey means by education. Dewey sees that education is necessary for an individual's life. Education is a social function and is basically a social necessity.
It is through education that an individual is socialized and society is renewed. Education is necessary for the stability and continuity of all societies, and is particularly pronounced in a democratic society. Dewey has pointed out in *Democracy and Education* that "A government resting upon popular suffrage cannot be successful unless those who elect and obey their governors are educated." Natural tendencies of an individual do not conform to the life-customs of the group. Education is direction of these natural tendencies to make them conform likewise. The result of direction is growth. Growth is a characteristic of life.

For Dewey, the word education etymologically means just a process of leading or bringing up. In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey expounds on his meaning of education in four aspects: education as a necessity of life, education as a social function, education as direction, and education as growth.

First, *education as a necessity of life*. Dewey's view is that the nature of life is to strive to continue in being. The continuity of life means continual re-adaptation of the environment to the needs of living organisms. Life covers customs, institutions, beliefs, victories and defeats, recreations and occupations. Life is a self-renewing process through action upon the environment. As education is social life, education must consist primarily of transmission through communication.

Communication is a process of sharing experiences. Not only is social life identical with communication, but also all communication is educative. To be a recipient of a communication is to have an enlarged and changed experience, therefore we will find our own attitude toward our experience changing (Dewey's DE, 1916, pp.1-9).

Second, *education as a social function*. Dewey asserts that the development within the young of the attitudes and dispositions necessary to the continuous and
progressive life of a society cannot take place by direct conveyance of beliefs, emotions, and knowledge. It takes place through the intermediary of the environment. The environment consists of the conditions, which are concerned, with the activity characteristics of a living being. As a being whose activities are associated with others and has a social environment, the social environment consists of all the activities of fellow beings that are bound up in the carrying on of the activities of any one of its members. Therefore education is a social function (Dewey’s DE, 1916, p.22).

Third, education as direction. Dewey states that the natural or native impulses of the young do not agree with life-customs of the group into which they are born. Consequently, they have to be directed or guided (Dewey’s DE, 1916, p.39). For Dewey, the direction has two steps: control and guidance. Control denotes the process by which a student is brought to subordinate his natural impulses to public or group interest. The control is not physical but intellectual. As Dewey points out that “Because the activities of children today are controlled by those selected and charged stimuli, children are able to traverse in a short life-time what the race has needed slow, tortured ages to attain (Dewey’s DE,1916, p.37). Guidance is an act of carrying children towards predetermined goals after their natural impulses are controlled.

Fourth, education as growth. Dewey postulates that since growth is the characteristic of life, education is all one with growing; it has no end beyond itself. Dewey holds that growth is a cumulative movement of directed action. It is an all round physical, intellectual, social and moral development of the potentialities of an individual. Growth is possible when the primary condition of growth is immaturity. Immaturity does not imply the absence of power to grow but means the ability to develop, the power to grow and the possibility for growth. It is a positive quality in the child. There are two characteristics for immaturity: dependence and plasticity.
Dewey says that power to grow depends upon the need for others and plasticity. The former (power to grow) furnishes the background of growth, whereas the latter (power to learn) constitutes growing (Dewey’s DE, 1916, pp.52-53).

Dewey’s definition of education may be explained with the help of the following diagram.

Seetharamu concludes that experience is the result of mutual interaction between the organism and the environment. Though all experience results in learning, still all learning is a product of experience. Development is effected by learning. The entire process of growth and development, which is caused by learning from experience, is called ‘Education’. To apply to the school situation, the child brings his own experience to the school. Education is the reconstruction of these experiences (Seetharamu, 1978, p.17).
As for the diagram, we can see how the two criteria of experience, namely, the continuity of experience and interaction work continually and inseparately in terms of “education as the reconstruction of experiences”.

There is a need to know about the aim of education. To have an aim of education is to act with the meanings of education. In Dewey’s experimentalism, the aim of education is growth of the individual, in which he uses his mind as an instrument to solve the problems presented by his environment and which is called the problem-solving method. We should note that the term “growth” Dewey used for the aim of education is in the context of the Darwinian foundation in the sense of biological growth. Dewey considers that pragmatism is the Darwinian method transferred over into his philosophy. Therefore, Dewey sees his own experimentalism in terms of one that assumes that the aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education (Dewey’s DE, 1916, p.100).

Dewey’s concept of education as growth is a social function, which Dewey explores in Democracy and Education:

We have been occupied with the conditions of growth...when it is said that education is development, everything depends upon how development is conceived. Our net conclusion is that life is development, and that development, growing, is life. Translated into its educational equivalents, this means (i) that the educational process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end; and that (ii) the educational process is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, transforming... Since growth is characteristic of life, education is all one with growth; it has no end beyond itself. The criterion of the value of school education is the extent in which it creates a desire for continued growth
and supplies the means for making the desire effective in fact (Dewey’s DE, 1916, pp.49-50, 53).

To establish the aims of education, educators try to realize them in terms of what is meaningful and purposeful. How are educational aims determined? And what are the criteria of a good educational aim? For Dewey, there are three characteristics which are considered as good educational aims: 1) An educational aim must be founded upon the intrinsic activities and needs of the given individual to be educated 2) An aim must be capable of translation into a method of cooperation with the activities of those undergoing instruction, and 3) Educators have to be on their guard against ends that are alleged to be general and ultimate (Dewey’s DE, 1916, pp.107-109)

We now consider the purpose, curriculum and method, role of the teacher, role of students, and role of the school of progressive education is as follows:

The purpose of progressive education is to give the individual the necessary skills and tools with which to interact with his or her environment (an environment which is in a constant process of change). These tools should include problem-solving skills, which the individual can use to define, analyze, and solve problems of both a personal and a social nature. The learning process should focus upon cooperative behavior and self-discipline, which are necessary for a democratic society. Consequently, we can say that the purpose of progressive education is “education for social advancement.”

The progressive curriculum is generally built around the personal and social experiences of the students, and focuses on the social sciences as the core of the subject matter to be utilized in the students’ problem-solving experiences and projects. “Dewey explains that courses of study organized around procedures help
students learn the manner in which to approach and solve the problems of life. Courses with socially oriented content enable students to get a feeling for the flux and flow of human experience” (Peterson, 1986, p.56). Books are presented as tools in the learning process, because the problems that students confront in daily life involve scientific inquiry and communication skills.

Under progressivism, the teacher has a very different role to play. Since students are viewed as learners who are capable of thinking and exploring their own ideas, needs and interests, the role of the teacher is to provide guidance and coordination for the students. "Dewey suggests that the teacher should try to arouse students’ sense of curiosity and according to this ‘child-centered’ approach, the teacher should cater to the interests of the students” (Peterson, 1986, pp.56-57). To be a progressive educator/teacher is not easy because he is required to be patient, flexible, creative, intelligent and interdisciplinary in order to help students solve the problems. The teacher is not an authoritative classroom director…but is concerned for progress, committed to society and democratic ideals, and sensitive to the growth of students. Thus, the teacher is a fellow learner, traveler, and guide who facilitates the group learning process (Pazmino, 1988, pp.108-109).

In progressive education, students should be autonomously thinking and socially responsible individuals who are called to work democratically and cooperatively with others and their social environment. Students are to be actively engaged in their own learning and that of others.

The progressive school is generally viewed as a large society; therefore, students face and study the problems in the community and society as a whole.

Dewey’s progressive education as pragmatism, experimentalism, or instrumentalism emphasizes the common human experience, which is the only basis
for philosophy. As Peterson puts it, for Dewey, whatever lies beyond the world of ordinary experience is unknowable. Knowledge is an instrumental for solving problems and managing the ever-changing world. The ultimate reality for the experimentalist is social experience (Peterson, 1986, pp. 53-54). We shall have a critical analysis of Dewey’s experimentalism on child-centrist education in terms of knowledge as doing in chapter IV.

As the principal tradition of American education is traditionalism, we shall take a closer look at the traditional approach. Traditionalists believe that the aim of education is intellectual discipline, which is intellectual training for the individual through the application of the mind to subject matter. Therefore, the traditionalist believes that the goal of education is a preparation for life.

As a progressivist, Dewey does not agree with traditionalists that education should be concerned with the training of the mind, that is, with man’s rational powers. Dewey’s argument against the traditionalists is that education should be for a child’s life and not preparation for life. He believes that education or knowledge should focus on the growth of the human being. As was discussed previously, growth is Dewey’s general concept for continuity of experience. He believes that learning by responding to environmental situations through experience is the progressive development and maturation of the nature of the child. Dewey asserts that education is a continuing process of the reconstruction of experience, that is, an aspect of growth itself. As he puts it, since growth is the characteristic of life, education is all one with growing; it has no end beyond itself. The criterion of the value of school education is the extent in which it creates a desire for continued growth and supplies means for making the desire effective in fact (Dewey’s DE, 1916, p. 62). From this, we may conclude that
Dewey’s progressivism in education is to generate the new ideas that are required for the growth of individuals and communities.

According to traditionalism in education, the school is an institution whose purpose is the preservation and transmission of the knowledge. The educational curriculum must be morals - to educate and help an individual become an intellectual and moral man. Consequently, the traditionalist holds that the highest things in man’s life are the intellectual and moral achievements. The basic conception of the curriculum is focused on subject matter; therefore, the method of teaching emphasizes subject matter which is essential and is designed to be transmitted to those who attend the school from the beginning.5 The role of the school is to assist the individual to gain the value in his life. For the school and teacher, the traditionalist holds that the school is one of the most important institutions in modern society to give intellectual training to the young. The school has no role in changing or reforming the social order. Its role is to preserve it. Isaac L. Kandel points out the role of school in society in his article “Can the School Build a New Social Order?”

The school is the instrument for maintaining existing social orders and for helping to build new social orders when the public has decided on them; but it does not create them. In the same sense that society is prior to the individual and the social order is prior to the school. As a profession, we may have ambitions to do more than this - to criticize the existing order, to help build a better future, but the fact is inescapable that the school is the servant of society (Kandel, 1933, pp.147-152).

For a concise understanding, a comparison of traditionalism and progressivism in their general approaches and practical concerns is presented in the following chart.

3.4 A Comparison of the Educational Concepts of Traditionalism and Progressivism

(General Views)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditionalism</th>
<th>Progressivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional / Conservative approach</td>
<td>Progressive / Liberal approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-centrist, Teacher-centered</td>
<td>Child-centrist, Child-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject-centered, Curriculum-centered</td>
<td>Student-centered, Learner-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective of an adult</td>
<td>Perspective of a child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach subject (intellectual discipline)</td>
<td>Teach children (needs and interests)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellect, standard, lesson, examination, structure, work and discipline, teaching, obedience, subject content, memory work, order, control</td>
<td>Emotion, activity, utility, understanding concepts, critical thinking, process, freedom, experience, growth, creativity, problem-centered, open-education, self-education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea of authority</td>
<td>Idea of freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education is a preparation for life</td>
<td>Education is life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Education is all one with life</td>
<td>Life is growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Therefore, education is growth</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A Comparison of the Educational Concepts of Traditionalism and Progressivism

(Practical concerns)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional Approach</th>
<th>Progressive Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aim</td>
<td>Intellectual (Wisdom)</td>
<td>Individual (Growth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s role</td>
<td>Academic instructor, source of knowledge and authority person</td>
<td>Coordinator, facilitator, Mentor and counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Direct instruction by teacher in homogeneous group</td>
<td>Self-directed learning, discovery learning and cooperative work in heterogeneous group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s role</td>
<td>Learn what the teacher teaches</td>
<td>Discover what they learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on intellectual subject matter, factual learning</td>
<td>Focus on learning by doing, feelings and opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Focus on academic areas with facts, ideas, skills methods</td>
<td>Balance academic and social concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum based on subject-matter</td>
<td>Curriculum based on experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Emphasis on academic skills in traditional core areas/ measured objectivity</td>
<td>Emphasis on the “whole child” that blends psychological, social and cultural well-being of the child / measured subjectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prior focus on subject, then on children</td>
<td>Prior focus on children, then on subject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In summary, Dewey contrasts his progressivism in education against traditionalism through his instrumentalism or experimentalism using three points. First, he criticizes the concept of education as being the training of the individual’s mind or mental discipline. Second, he criticizes the idea that education is a preparation for the future of a child’s life. Third, he emphasizes the concept of education as growth.
CHAPTER IV

A REVIEW OF THE CRITICISMS OF DEWEY' S PROGRESSIVISM ON THE AIM OF EDUCATION

Possibly no philosopher has written so extensively on education as Dewey. He was considered one of the greatest American philosophers in education. On this score we can also say that Dewey is the one philosopher in whom philosophy and educational theory are indistinguishable. Dewey wrote 40 books and over 700 articles on education, which are closely associated with the rise of the so-called progressivism in education. This is one of the reasons why many people say that his writings lead to confusions and problems in his educational philosophy.

Dissatisfied with traditional philosophy, Dewey initiates the philosophical movement known as pragmatism that emphasizes action and the scientific, or the experimental method. For all these he was branded as anti-intellectualism. In fact, the concepts on which Dewey based his educational philosophy are the nature of experience that attributed to Darwin's theory of evolution through the means of natural selection. For Dewey, Darwinian view of experience yields the assertion that philosophy must bring itself in line with sciences. During his life, Dewey was subjected to much criticism mostly from the conservatives. He had been accused of promoting detrimental child-centrist education encouraging rebellion, criticisms of his progressivism came from both the secular education and religious educational camps. These are the main concerns of this chapter.

In the article John Dewey and Progressive Education Today, Berger attempts to show the reasons why Dewey became a controversial philosopher of education and remains today at the center of a conflict in American education. As he puts it:
Criticisms of Dewey’s Progressivism on the Aim of Education

There are several reasons why Dewey became and has remained a controversial figure in education. First, the obscurity of some of his writing led many to misunderstand him. Second, there were many, who sincerely believing they were following the ideas of Dewey, brought forth new conceptions that contradicted or went far away from Dewey’s own belief. (In part, Dewey is to blame for this development, since he left many questions unanswered. Indeed, his educational writings left the explicit consequences of his ideas for others to devise). Nevertheless, these ideas, although they often did not agree with the philosopher’s notions, were identified with his conception of education. Finally, there are many who have attacked Dewey but never have troubled themselves to read and examine his meanings (Archambault, 1966, p.185).

We shall proceed with a closer consideration on how much Dewey had been praised by some great philosophers and thinkers. William James once wrote in The Chicago School, reprinted in his Essays in Philosophy that “Professor John Dewey, and at least ten of his disciples, have collectively put into the world a statement...of a view of the world...which is so simple, massive, and positive, that... deserves the title of a new system of philosophy” (James, 1978, p.102). Sidney Hook, the former student and close friend of Dewey also wrote in Some Memories of John Dewey, reprinted in his Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life that in fact Dewey leaves behind him no monument in stone, no empire, fortune or foundation, but an immense and imponderable bequest. Dewey’s life makes the experience of millions of American children richer and happier. And to every adult mind he has offered a reasoned and reasonable faith by which to live (Hook, 1974, p.101). Much has been
written about John Dewey’s philosophy of education and numerous works on Dewey have been produced\(^1\).

Not everyone shares the support for Dewey’s philosophy. There are some critics who saw in Dewey’s philosophy a dangerous fascination with science and technology and a radical vision of extreme democracy. According to one critic: “Dewey’s philosophy...constitutes an attempt to destroy all philosophy. Dewey has made America lose its perspective and has thus greatly weakened the intellectual potential of America at home and abroad” (Crosser, 1955, p.ix).

The aim of this research is neither to defend nor refute Dewey’s child-centrist progressivism in education, but to attempt to analyze and raise critical questions on whether Dewey’s child-centrist approach is a good educational aim. Therefore, this chapter presents an analysis and criticism of Dewey’s aim of child-centrist or progressive education. Pertinent questions immediately follow, among others: Does Dewey’s progressivism in education show a good aim? What are the most essential aspects of Dewey’s philosophy of education?

The researcher presents critical analyses and solid argumentative discussion to compare progressivism and traditionalism in education. The argument thus presented is divided into three sections, namely, on the concept of natural selection, on the concept of the child-centrist approach, and arguments on the concept of knowledge as doing.

\(^1\) Among others, they are Steven Rockefeller’s *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (1991); Robert Westbrook’s *John Dewey and American Democracy* (1991); James Campbell’s *Understanding John Dewey* (1995); Alan Ryan’s *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (1995), just to mention a few. All of them offer helpful insights into Dewey’s philosophy of education. It is not the intent of the researcher to discuss these works in detail other than to only focus on the influence of Dewey’s philosophy of education on most of educational thinkers.
4.1 Arguments on the Concept of Natural Selection

The influence of Dewey's work comes along with the pragmatic thought that sought to apply evolutionary theory to the study of the impact and influence of ideas. As we have discovered, most of Dewey's thought, including his philosophy of education, is deeply influenced by his interest in the implications and application of Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection. Accordingly, Dewey is particularly impressed with the continuity and implication of Darwin's theory. Dewey states in his *Middle Work* "The philosophic significance of the doctrine of evolution lies precisely in its emphasis upon continuity of simpler and more complex organic forms until we reach man" (Dewey's MW, 1916, 9:347).

We have learned that there are two patterns of thought in Dewey's progressivism, that is, Naturalism and Experimentalism. After considering the concept of natural selection metaphysically and critically, the researcher attempts to explore one of the main themes in Dewey's philosophy, the rejection of Plato's dualistic and absolutistic tradition. The concept of natural selection aids us in determining the criteria for a curriculum based on the objective of adapting the student to the contemporary world, rather than to focus on the student's development in terms of the ideal.

To focus on the analysis and discussion of the argument as related to the intent of the researcher, she takes the liberty to limit the discussion in this section by focusing only on Dewey's position on Darwinian concept of natural selection as a concept of change and natural selection as concept of *chance*.

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4.1.1 Argument for the Concept of Natural Selection

In natural selection, man must live in accordance with nature or the natural law. To live well man must adapt and survive in a universe under constant change. For Dewey, holding the theory of natural selection to be true, his progressivism in education, being the application of Darwin's theory of natural selection, is meaningful and valuable for the individual child to develop good nature in society. The concept of natural selection as change is the core of Dewey's philosophical thought that has had so much influence on his progressivism in education.

The impact of evolutionary thought is very important in the writings of Dewey; this conclusion was strongly supported by many thinkers in contemporary education. As Dewey explores a broad acceptance of Darwinism in his extensive writing *The Influence of Darwinism Philosophy* (1910), he attempts to show that the scientific revolution has been very influential on the development of the modern Darwinian view of evolution. It begins with a revolution in the physical sciences that focused on change. On this he writes that:

Darwin was not, of course, the first to question the classic philosophy of nature and knowledge. The beginnings of the revolution are in the physical science of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. When Galileo said: 'It is my opinion that the earth is very noble and admirable by reason of so many and so different alterations and generations which are incessantly made therein...' Descartes said 'The nature of physical things is much more easily conceived when they are beheld coming gradually into existence, than when they are only considered as produced at once in a finished and perfect state,' the modern world became self-conscious of the logic...the logic of which
Darwin's Origin of Species is the latest scientific achievement (Dewey's ID, 1910, p.8)

Dewey utilizes Darwin's natural selection to explain the development and progress in education that lies in his concept of change and progress. The controversy over natural selection in fact focuses on the understanding of the terms 'change', and 'progress'. Some say that these two terms are synonyms but others would argue that they are different. Brauner and Burns point out the difference between progress and change that:

Progress implies movement and movement involves change. Further, movement is always changing in some direction. To affirm that one can progress without at the same time changing seems contradictory... Most would assume that while some changes are progressive others are regressive. Some changes, then constitute progress while others do not... for purpose of analysis, it seems quite clear that the concept of progress inevitably involves the ideas of change and direction; and from this we can identify the most elementary definition of progress possible: is change in a desirable direction (Brauner & Burns, 1965, p.62)

John S. Brubacher, a philosopher of education supports Brauner and Burn's perspective that "Progress is naturalistic; it implies change..." (Brubacher, 1969, p. 330).

Dewey, a progressive philosopher; regards progress as synonymous with change. This doctrine states that nothing is fixed, everything changes, and the only unchanging thing in life is change itself. (Pratte, 1971, p.109).

Dewey, being a pragmatist and progressive, believes that the reality or the world is in constant flux. The world is in a state of continuous change. It is a process
of changing and becoming. It is just like the ever-changing water of an ongoing stream. To the researcher, Dewey’s philosophy appears to be in line with the process philosophy of Heraclitus, who taught that there is a continuous cycle of becoming to be and a passing away of the reality. Nothing in the world is permanent or eternal. Everything is but a flux in motion. There are changes in physical, social, political, economic world, and institutional organizations and environments of man. The concept of natural selection as change can be seen in the following form of a syllogism:

1. The world contains a state of continuous change.
2. Man lives in the world.
3. Therefore, man contains a state of continuous change.

As the world is subject to change and as change means unpredictability and probabilities of risk, there shall be no complete security. Dewey refers to this aspect in *Experience and Nature* by saying that one cannot be conclusive of almost anything, good or evil of the world. He further assumes that through human effort we can improve our situation.

Conclusion can be made that Dewey does not deny the existence of a world independent of the presence of human beings, other than that he denies that anything in the world is settled or finished. The world for him is unfinished and still growing. Dewey believes in Darwin’s theory of evolution that man is actually a part of the changing world and continues to adapt to the environment. This undoubtedly leads to the conclusion that there is no eternal truth and no fixed moral rule. Dewey asserts that it is wrong to believe in something that cannot change.

In the context of such an understanding, the aim of education in Progressivism is to fit into a set way of life in order to enable the child to adjust himself to the
demands of changing life. Therefore, Dewey's progressivism tends to attack Plato's dualism of unchanging beings. Dewey insists that dualism of mind and body is an untenable theory. As such, Dewey denies the distinctions between mind and body, or nature; science and religion, experience and reason.

Now it is time to consider as to how the concept of natural selection, according to the process of changing and becoming, aids us in providing the criteria for a curriculum based on the objective of adapting the student to the contemporary world through experience. Archambault states in *The Philosophical Bases of the Experience Curriculum* that:

> Since experience itself is a process of adjustment to a changing environment, knowledge is defined in terms of the interaction of the individual with a problematic situation, which is bordered on the one hand by uncertainty...(Archambault, 1966, p.161).

As Dewey views children in terms of the new biology in Darwin's theory of evolution as the concept of change, he continues to believe the nature of the child is adaptation to the environment. According to the theory of natural selection, Dewey's experimentalist view on adaptation to the environment is broader than Spencer and Hall's views. For Dewey, man has the potential for almost unlimited development, going further than Spencer and Hall’s position that man is able to adapt to the environment only within limits. Dewey essentially stresses a complete evolutionary outlook in which he views human being, as an evolved creature, which has been slowly improving physically as well as mentally without end.

For this reason, the researcher believes that Darwin's *The Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection* is the key to Dewey's experimentalism, a full acceptance that the world is in constant change. Within such assumption, the environment and
situations are always in the state of change. All the species have to adjust themselves to these challenges in order to survive. Every life is in the process of a struggle for survival. Those who are strong and able to adjust will survive but those who are weak shall perish. This then implies that knowledge goes with the development of science and technology in the world of constant change. Consequently, the school should provide a curriculum that is practical for real-life situations for the child to use his intelligence to solve the problems that arise in the daily environment. Education is to prepare the child; therefore he can use his intelligence to respond to his essential needs as to create and to innovate a better life.

Dewey rejects the suggestion of the traditional approach to the curriculum in which knowledge is separated from experience and fragmented. For him, such a position means that facts are separated from experience and may not be helpful for the real life. Apparently, this view promotes fragmentation between facts and experience; the result of fragmentation leads us to know that the traditional approach to curriculum focuses on subject matter rather than on child's individual experience. For Dewey, a child does not learn fixed and ready-made knowledge but needs to pay more attention to his interests.

Herbert Spencer, the founder of English sociology who integrates the principles of evolution and education, believes that knowledge, which the teacher provides for students, is based on science, particularly biological science. For Spencer, according to natural selection, the criteria of curriculum would be one designed to adapt the student to the contemporary world rather than to promote his development in terms of an ideal. The aim of Spencer’s curriculum is to prepare the student for complete living in accordance with evolutionary processes, and science
alone (Pratte, 1971, pp.79-80). Like Spencer, Dewey encounters scientific method based on Darwin’s theory. Both of them do not appeal to metaphysical ends.

Nevertheless, unlike Spencer, Dewey does not draw conclusion solely on social Darwinism. Spencer as a Natural Selectionist exaggerated the term ‘competition’ in evolutilional progress, yet Dewey holds on the term ‘cooperation’ instead. Dewey puts the argument for cooperative effort:

To say that all past historical social progress has been the result of cooperation and of conflict would...be an exaggeration. But exaggeration against exaggeration, it is the more reasonable of the two. And it is no exaggeration to say that the measure of civilization is the degree in which the method of cooperative intelligence replaces the method of brute conflict (Dewey’s EE, 1939, p.445).

Dewey’s experimentalist view of evolution, based upon the principle of experimental psychology, goes beyond philosophical and religious consideration. This means that curriculum and teaching methods utilized in the schools must be rooted in psychological data rather than in anything resembling philosophical logic...The place of psychology in experimentalism centers on the research done on learning...by controlling a stimulus or by rewarding an action...Education can use such a program to produce desired responses from students in subject content and in attitude. ...The process of education is a step-by-step movement that goes from the simple to the complex. Learning must begin at the simple level, progress uniformly according to small, sequential steps...it is the key to such experimentalist approaches to growth (Strain, 1971, p. 66).

Dewey confirms the finding of social psychology that there is no fixed human nature, but a behavior molded instead by social environment, which is in the process
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of experimentalism or instrumentalism. As he puts it: “Human experience is in flux, and hence the instrumentalities of sense perception and of inference based upon observation…” (Dewey’s ID, 1910, p.6).

Dewey believes that experimental theory of natural selection shared by psychology could be the guideline for learning and life adjustment, which is associated with a society based on progress. The educational program of Dewey’s experimentalism bears the notion both psychological and social behavior in which the development of the whole life of the child is the aims of his education.

Strain proposes four characteristics of Dewey’s experimentalism based on the theory of natural selection in his Modern Philosophies of Education as follows:

First, man is a product of his environment. Whatever man attains is a result of learning. Man learns to walk, talk, and eat; he learns to manipulate with words and numbers; he learns how to be a mature adult, a male or female, and a member of society. Second, man is a social being. He requires the assistance of his fellowmen in all his endeavors. The struggle for survival is a group struggle. The problems of man are group problems requiring group solutions. The experimentalists utilize this idea to emphasize the social character of education. Third, the relativity of culture: Since learning depends on the environment, and the environment is different from place to place, different cultures must manifest different customs, languages, and social routines. Experimentalists ask people of the world to appreciate and respect one another, to recognize that differences merely reflect environmental circumstances. It is the idea of technology in social development. Man is a tool-using creature. As he advances in the development and use of tools, he makes progress in his living standards. Experimentalists make much of modern technology and emphasize its importance to education and contemporary life. Technology means progress and
social advance. It should become the goal of education to encourage greater technological development. Fourth, this point is so important to experimentalist philosophers of education that may be termed democratic philosophy of education. The goal of man is not only to survive but also to live a good life; this means living in harmony with fellow beings and having enough material means to ensure health and comfort. Material abundance and economic welfare for all members of the human species is a fundamental tenet of experimentalism. It is on this ground that the experimentalists become involved with the philosophy of democracy. It is the democracy of social cooperation, centralization of functions, and majority rule. It is the democracy in which the experimentalists find hope for solving social problems and providing for universal health and welfare (Strain, 1971, pp. 66-67).

In applying the concept of natural selection as change to education, we may conclude that for Dewey, since the world is in constant change and man is also changing, the basis for progressive education is unstable and impermanent. Thus, the curriculum should be based on experience or learning by doing that reflects an instability and impermanence. His view is in sharp contrast to traditionalists like Plato, who assumes that the world (of idea) does not change and man also does not change, the basis for traditional education is stable and permanent. Hence, the curriculum should be based on the subject matter that reflects stability and permanence.

In defending Dewey's progressivism in education under the influence of Darwin's theory of evolution, we may conclude that his proposal of accepting and supporting evolutionary ideas has taken over American education. As Huxley once said, it is essential for evolution to become the central core of any educational system, because it is evolution, in a broad sense, which links organic nature with life, the stars
with the earth, and matter with the mind, and animals with man. Human history is a continuation of biological evolution in a different form (Huxley, 1960, p.65). William James wrote "A real science of man is now being built up out of the theory of evolution and the facts of archaeology, the nervous system and the senses. It has already a vast material extent; the papers and magazines are full of essays and articles having more or less to do with it..." (Perry, 1935, p.11). In fact, James rejected the idea of absolute truth and instead judged the idea by the practical impact knowledge has on the human world. It is obvious that the philosophy of James and Dewey is based on pragmatism. James taught psychology and asserted that the theory of evolution through natural selection is the fundamental concept of his psychology.

In Dewey’s time of progressive education, there were writings warning the students who were religious thinkers and creationists that if they opposed the theory of natural selection, they would not be accepted to study in the schools. These writings have appeared in The Humanist, published by the American Humanist Association and American Ethical Union, January and February 1977. The writings urge the reader to “Reject the concept of natural selection, currently being put forth by certain religious and creationist pressure groups, that alleges that evolution is itself a tenet of a religion of ‘secular humanism,’ and as such as is unsuitable for inclusion in the public school science curriculum”. John W. Patterson adds his viewpoint on religious students in the Letter to Kevin Worth (1984) that supposing a student gives correct scientific answers in his or her science course and supposing he/she also knows and gives correct scientific arguments and reasons for the follow-up questions, he may still insist on rejecting all this for reasons of incompatibility with his/her religious belief. In this case, I would prefer to pass the student strictly according to
the usual scoring criteria but in the context of his religious reasons, I will make a remark about it on his transcript of grades.

Henry Morris supports Dewey's progressive education that leads the individuals to be trained and considered as members in society appropriately by rejecting God's creation that "The underlying assumption of progressive education was that the child is simply an evolved animal and must be trained as such- not as an individual created in God's image with tremendous potential as an individual. A child was considered but one member in a group and therefore must be trained collectively to fit into his or her appropriate place in society. Dewey studied Russia's educational system extensively and was a socialist himself, as well as a materialistic pantheist" (Morris, 1989, p.48).

Dennett is one of the most challenging thinkers who focuses his logical mind on the theory of natural selection. He shows how the great idea of natural selection transforms and illuminates our traditional view of humanity. It seems to the researcher that he admires its theory but not all its points. The researcher attempts to point out that while Dennett views that Darwin's idea is a great scientific revolution, he also believes that it is a dangerous idea. As he puts it:

If I were to give an award for the single best idea anyone has ever had. I'd give it to Darwin, ahead of Newton and Einstein and everyone else. In a single stroke, the idea of evolution by natural selection unifies the realm of life, meaning, mechanism and physical law. But it is not just a wonderful scientific idea. It is a dangerous idea. My admiration for Darwin's magnificent idea is unbounded, but I, too, cherish many of the ideas and ideals that it seems to challenge and want to protect them (Dennett, 1995,p. 21).
4.1.2 Argument Against the Concept of Natural Selection

Dewey's dissatisfaction with traditional philosophy leads him to attempt to reconstruct the traditional philosophy as a progressive one based upon Darwin's theory of evolution by the means of natural selection. As Dewey saw that the traditional philosophy could not solve the problems in the modern world, the concept of natural selection supports Dewey's thought in his progressive idea that his philosophy of education is involved with the concept of change.

Dewey holds the view that the world is constantly changing, impermanent and unfinished as opposed to Plato's assertion that the world (of idea) is permanent and eternal. Plato does not accept any change and assume that everything is stable and certain. Founding his progressivism in education, which is based on Darwin's theory of natural selection, Dewey committed to the concept of change and progress. Consequently, the traditional approach strongly opposed Dewey's progressive education blaming that he overstresses the individual child's progress, growth and development with so-called scientific explanations.

As the pragmatists are critical of the traditional ways of philosophizing, Dewey, a typical pragmatist, proposes an argument why and how traditional approach to philosophical problems ought to be abandoned and the problems ought to be newly addressed. As he puts it:

Whereas traditional beliefs had previously relied upon the force of habit and custom for justification, now there was needed a more permanent foundation. As such a foundation could not be found within the natural world which science was mastering, the foundation needed to be supernatural, metaphysical and therefore beyond the reach of scientific investigation...However this kind of response could not succeed for long. The time came when scientific
knowledge grew ... In the light of the success of the scientific approach in confronting the world's perils, traditional beliefs could no longer claim authority in the world of everyday experience. Hence there was a need to develop a method of rational investigation (Talisse, 2000, p.25).

Undoubtedly, Dewey's attribution to Darwin's influence is reflected in his disagreement in Plato's belief on dualistic conception. In Platonic Dualism, the mind's relationship to the body is seen in the "Theory of Forms". Plato believes that since the matter/body is mortal, changing, and made up of different parts, the mind is not composed of many parts, therefore must be immortal and unchanging.

Besides, Plato also insists on absolutistic view of reality. On this score, Dewey has strong disagreement with Plato's assertion of the existence of an Absolute Truth. Dewey does not deny the existence of Plato's intelligible world, but he does deny that things in the world are settled or finished. Dewey emphasizes the mind's capacity to impose order on an open, unlimited world, and there is no antecedent order in the world.

Since Platonic ideology believes in an idealistic concept of order and purpose, they would reject Dewey's pragmatic concept of disorder and purposelessness that focuses on scientific method and shares a more materialistic outlook. In other words, Plato's idealism provides support for traditional religious and moral views in opposition to the progressivism and pragmatism of Dewey. There is a fundamental disagreement between the two, represented in the conflict between religion and science, as expressed in the controversy on teleological argument on natural design. As Dewey puts it:

The design argument thus operated into two directions. Purposefulness accounted for the intelligibility of nature and the possibility of science, while
the absolute or cosmic character of this purposefulness gave sanction and
worth to the moral and religious endeavors of man. Science was underpinned
and morals authorized by one and the same principle, and their mutual
agreement was eternally guaranteed (Dewey’s ID, 1910, p.10).

Dewey’s Darwinian concept of natural selection is apparently against the
notion of traditional philosophy’s design in nature. Dewey does not believe in
absolutistic philosophy of Plato and opted to support the theory of natural selection
that places chance as the cause of the universe, rather than an intelligent designer.

For Plato, the universe cannot be understood on its own material terms alone.
Its changes demand the postulation of something capable of initiating change, not
merely of transmitting it. There must be the beginning of change when the self-
moved change others. Aristotle also agrees with Plato’s idea but asserts clearly that
God is the Prime Mover and created the universe with His purposes. Plato asserts
that mind is the only known self-moving principle for the change. Based on the design
argument, Plato established the fact that the natural world is ultimately dependent on
the absolute mind.

Newton, one of the greatest scientists insists on the same conclusion as Plato.
Newton also believes that there is an intelligent and powerful being who created the
system in this universe. He then goes further to support the design argument and
argues that such control over limitless space and endless duration must be admitted
for the One Being, given the Newtonian system of the world and the law of
gravitation. This apparently requires that this Cosmic Intelligence also be recognized
as Lord God. In *Principia*, “General Scholium” (1973), Newton states that “He (God)
is eternal and infinite, omnipotent and omniscient; that is, his duration reaches from
eternity to eternity; his presence from infinity to infinity; he governs all things, and
knows all things that are or can be done”. It is true that most scientists are convinced by the concept of natural selection that species descend from other species, but many like Newton are not convinced by the mechanism of natural selection at all. As Pratte states: “The Newtonian science did not attack stability in nature. Indeed it supported stability and gave rise to a mechanical philosophy in which nature was conceived as a law-bound system proceeding from previous states by mathematical rule” (Pratte, 1971, p.71-72).

The following is a quote on Newton’s statement in which he was convinced that nature could be discovered mathematically and could be revealed theologically by God who created the universe.

It seems probable to me that God in the beginning formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles, of such sizes and figures, and which such other properties, and in such proportion to space, as most conduced to the end for which he formed them; and that these primitive particles, being solids, are incomparably harder than any porous bodies compounded of them; even so very hard as never to wear or break in pieces: no ordinary power being able to divide what God himself made one in the first creation (Newton, 1718, p.375).

According to this point, we can see that traditionalists would conclude to say that it is impossible to understand evolution by natural selection. Moreover, it seems that many scientists and physicists like Newton could not understand its theory as well.

We may conclude that Dewey rejects traditional dualism and the Absolute replacing it with the concept that the ‘forms’ or ‘species’ of nature are changing. This
is a denial that there are absolutely unchanging forms in nature, unaccounted for the fact that some species become extinct and others survive in our present time.

In fact, the basic assumption of an Absolute of something as the foundation of what is going on, or of an invisible background controlling hand, has been the main theme of all Western philosophy since Plato. Dewey as a reformer in education denied the validity of the assumption of any such an Absolute. For the traditionalists or idealists like Plato, the Absolute is an essence, a substance, an idea, a concept, a thing itself, a pure reason or logic, dialectic, but for the progressive or experimentalist like Dewey, what is, is matter, instinct, natural law or evolution.

It is in this place that Dewey rejects the religious belief of theistic and idealistic views as depicted in the syllogism below:

2. God is Absolute Reality.
3. Thus, Dewey’s Darwinian theory of natural selection rejects God.

Since the theory of natural selection is the idea of constant change that reinforces the idea of rejection of the Absolute or God, consequently Dewey does not believe in God.

We shall continue by presenting the traditional religious criticism of Dewey’s Darwinian theory of natural selection.

Generally speaking, Darwinism as the concept of natural selection is a scientific theory, which is explained by scientific methodology. Biological evolution concerns changes in living things during the history of life on earth. It explains how living things share common ancestors and how over time evolutionary change gives rise to new species.
Contrary to this view is the belief of creationists. For them, the idea of creation is derived from the belief in the story of Adam and Eve that God created the universe including humans and all living things. Creationists, like Augustine, believe that God created the earth and all creatures. For evolutionists, this is not science because creation by God or another divinity does not give any concrete scientific explanation of life's origin. Rather, it is only an explanation consistent with the belief that an intelligent creator, God, exists and created the universe.

Thomas Aquinas, should he be alive today, would argue against the theory of natural selection that places chance as the cause of the universe without purpose. For Aquinas, “Since God is the Primary Cause, He must be infinite and must contain in Himself in an infinite degree all the qualities and perfections He has caused. Among these is intellect and will. God therefore is infinitely wise and powerful. In Thomistic thought, man was created by God for a purpose” (Pratte, 1971, p. 172).

Some traditionalists, especially the Neo-Thomists, like Maritain, would agree with Aquinas as well because they follow Aquinas’s doctrine which is based on the Aristotelian position. Nevertheless, Maritain would include revelation, the dimension of faith, as the all-important means of knowing. Maritain argues that man is created by God, not by chance. “Every child born into this world is regarded as the child of Adam. Therefore, each child comes into this world with a deprived nature, that is, he shares in Adam’s fall” (Pratte, 1971, p.188).

The implication of the Neo-Thomist’s position is a priori knowledge, reason, and absolute truth, which connects philosophy to theology. Obviously, this is in disagreement with Dewey’s progressivism that based its theory on natural selection as a foundation of educational philosophy.

A syllogism of God’s creation of the universe may be formulated as follows:
1. If God created the universe, then there must be purposefulness.

2. But God created the universe.

3. Therefore, there must be purposefulness.

It was said that there is no book other than the Bible that has had a greater effect on Western society than Charles Darwin’s Origin of Species. Darwin’s theory of evolution postulated that the natural processes cause the evolution of the species (individuals) and proposed the theory of natural selection to explain the mechanism of evolution. It is the idea that evolution worked by natural selection.

Natural selection theory states that the evolution of change comes through the abundant production of genetic variation in every generation. A well-developed individual will survive and give rise to the next generation. It can be said that the natural selection process argues against any form of the divine plan known as moral divinity, which states that God controls everything and that by accepting God into our life, we will live a long life in the path of the Lord. Therefore, our morality and faith in God shapes our life. But natural selection says that man can determine his success or failure in life, and that it does not depend on God.

This case is not always true for everyone. The researcher takes the position in the faith in God and moral divinity. When one has faith in a supernatural power, one will try to achieve one’s goals in life and live the best way one can. For those who agree that man was considered to have evolved from his own biological organism, they shall conclude that there could have been no fall of man from the perfection of Adam. With no fall of man, there would be no need for salvation. Hence, evolution by the means of natural selection is diametrically opposed to the fundamental tenet of Christianity which believes in the original sin.
4.1.3 A Critical Analysis

The arguments on the concept of natural selection are discussed from the philosophical and theological views. Dewey’s Darwinian theory of natural selection indicates his dissatisfaction with the dualistic tradition. The researcher believes that if Darwin’s theory of natural selection is true – the one important factor of Dewey’s thought, being based on scientific biology namely that man in his totality was finally brought within the natural order – then the dualistic conception of man can no longer hold.

It is apparent that the concept of natural selection proposes a scientific rather than a religious explanation of reality in contrast to the traditional approach’s dualism. Plato’s dualistic view ignores scientific methods and opted for religious views and moral view instead. Therefore, Dewey attacks Plato’s dualistic view on the strength that it does not deal effectively with the problems of modern age. Dewey denies the distinctions between matter and mind, science and religion/morals, and experience and reason. For Dewey, human ideas and ideals must be examined from the biological and social points of view and treated as instruments for making sense of experience. Any idea or ideal must be judged in terms of its context. Its value depends on its problem-solving capacity. This is the heart of Dewey’s philosophy in the scientific method of experimentalism or instrumentalism.

Dewey may be called the “prime mover” of modern education, displaying a broad acceptance of Darwinism in his writings. Darwin’s explanation of the origin of species is an important part of the intellectual and cultural background of Dewey’s pragmatist philosophy. According to Dewey, the environment in which it occurs, especially in the school is the most important. Because Dewey stresses an evolutionary outlook, and since several generations of educators have followed
Dewey's thinking and ideas based upon Darwin's theory of natural selection, Dewey's evolutionary outlook has become a strong viewpoint and has been a major influence in the development of educational principles and policies in schools. Since then, children as human beings have been treated as intelligent developing animals, as a consequence of their interaction with the environment, as "survivors".

Critics consider Dewey's progressive education being based upon the implication of natural selection theory, as being dangerous because it creates a competitive environment and atmosphere in the schools. Such critics are unwarranted; we may argue that although Dewey's philosophy is based upon the theory of natural selection, he did not draw the conclusion from Darwinism as those Social Darwinists who believe that human life is essentially competitive and not cooperative. We need to take note that Dewey also expressed his idea and position clearly that his progressive education emphasizes cooperation among students in schools. As Wingo states "Dewey strongly emphasizes participation of pupils in planning activities and procedures in their schools. Children were encouraged to participate in planning activities and in evaluating the results. It is well to emphasize that the idea was participation by pupils in planning, not turning over to pupils the responsibility for curriculum making" (Wingo, 1975, p.150).

Though Dewey states that his philosophy is rooted in Darwin's theory of natural selection as naturalism but he declares that his position is neither a natural selection nor a social Darwinist, instead he is an experimentalist and a pragmatist. The researcher thinks that it is his ideas on progressive education that provides the grounds for the confusion between the natural selectionists and experimentalists in education.
In fact, Dewey’s progressivism in education has two aspects: naturalism (natural selectionist) and experimentalism. Experimentalism has its roots in naturalism as well.

In Dewey’s writings, especially "The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy," the confusion and doubt arise, one will surely ask, What exactly are the implications of Dewey’s ideas concerning Darwin? Daniel C. Dennett presents a cogent persuasion in Darwin’s Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the Meanings of Life arguing that evolution by natural selection is vital to the future of philosophy. He also approves fully of Charles Darwin, but does not agree with all of the Darwinian ideas. As he puts it:

The Darwinian Theory is a scientific theory, and a great one, but that is not all it is. The creationists who oppose it so bitterly are right about one thing: Darwin’s dangerous idea cuts much deeper into the fabric of our most fundamental beliefs than many of its sophisticated apologists have yet admitted (Dennett, 1995, p. 18).

Dennett also criticizes Darwin’s theory which was abused and misrepresented by many people. On which he says, “It has been misappropriated to lend scientific respectability to appalling political and social doctrines” (Dennett, 1995, p.18). This leads us to think that Dennett may be a philosopher who really understands what Darwinism is all about. It appears that he would argue against Dewey’s idea when he attempts to apply Darwin’s natural selection to the social doctrine by means of scientific method.

The researcher believes that not all scientists and philosophers are atheists though most adhere to Darwinian Theory. Many scientists and philosophers who believe in God declare that the idea of God can help them live peacefully in
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coexistence with their scientific and philosophical ideas, including the Darwinian ideas. Why do we take our position only on the side of “science” against “religion”? In fact, science and religion are compatible and could be the means for us to discover the meaning of life.

For Dewey, the primary fact about nature and reality is a dynamic change, for which he asserts that there are no unchanging realities. Dewey realizes that traditional Christian theology has absorbed Platonic views, where God is described as an eternal immaterial Mind that contains eternal Ideas. This is much the same as in Plato’s Ideas. It can be said that much of theology and the philosophy of religion is devoted to trying to resolve doubts or puzzles created by the concept of God as an eternal knower or an intelligent designer. For many people, to abandon the philosophical commitment to eternal objects like God or moral divinity is to abandon institutionalized religion. If one abandons institutionalized religion, how can the child-centrist education, like that of Dewey, be taught in schools and what will happen to children’s morals and their spiritual life.

We could say that the controversy of Dewey’s Darwinian theory of natural selection and traditional Platonic dualistic/absolutistic views is respectively based on the conflict between the belief in science and religion. Whereas the concept of natural selection is explained by scientific methodology, the concept of dualism/absolutism is explained by a religious approach. These different views are still being discussed among philosophers and thinkers. Which view is true? It becomes the most critical problem of all.

All this brings us to understand the nature and goal of each educational philosophy. According to the traditional dualistic and absolutistic tradition, the world (of Forms) is permanent and eternal that focused on the notion of design. As such, the
goal of education has direction and purpose, and the curriculum should be fixed and external to the students, meaning the curriculum should be designed around the authority of the teacher. Contrary to this position is Dewey’s progressive approach to the theory of natural selection as making chance as a cause of the universe. He believes that the world is constantly changing and unfinished. Consequently, Dewey’s goal of progressive education has no direction and purpose, and the curriculum is unfixed and something internal to the students, meaning the curriculum should be designed according to student’s needs and interests.

4.2 Arguments on the Concept of Child-Centrist Approach

The concept of individual child and the society are discussed among philosophers of education, educators, and all thinkers. Whereas the traditional approach believes that a good educational aim should promote good society, the progressive approach focuses on the good life of an individual child. On this point, traditionalists consider Dewey’s child-centrist or progressive education as not meaningful or purposeful for society at large. However, Dewey argues that his child-centrist education is a social function and social advancement with meaningfulness and purposefulness.

Should the aim of philosophy of education be individual development or social efficiency? Which aim is the most important? Would the doctrine of the ‘child’s needs and interests’ lead a student to disregard the knowledge of subject matter? Would the freedom of the individual child’s needs and interests lead the child to learn without discipline? Which is more important in education, ‘interest’, or ‘discipline’? On these questions, Progressivism focuses on the promotion and development of the individual child’s interest and freedom, taking the position that
they are the appropriate means of learning. On the other hand, focusing on the good society, Traditionalism believes that it is the ‘intellectual discipline’ and ‘teacher’s authority’ that are the means to reach the ends of education. The followings shall be dedicated to the discussion and analysis of these problems. This research will emphasize the concept of child-centrist approach, and focus only on the issues of “interest vs. discipline”, and “freedom vs. authority” as depicted in the following diagram:

4.2.1 Argument for the Concept of Child-Centrist Approach

The concept of the child-centrist or progressive education is that the child ought to be considered as an individual child. As we have discussed in chapter III,
among educational thinkers, Dewey presents the notion and the concept of child-centrist education as being clearly centered on the development and growth of the individual child through experiences. As Dewey puts it:

The child is expected to “develop” this or that fact or truth out of his own mind. He is told to think things out, or work things out for himself, without being supplied any of the environmental conditions which are a requisite to starting and guiding thought...It is certainly as futile to expect a child to evolve a universe out of his own mere mind as it is for a philosopher to attempt that task. Development does not mean just getting something out of the mind. It is a development of experience and into experience that is really wanted (Dewey's CC, 1956, p.15).

Here is Dewey’s argument for the child-centrist approach.

1. The child-centrist approach promotes the development of the individual child’s needs and interests through experience.

2. Progressivism in education is a child-centrist approach.

3. Therefore, progressivism in education promotes the development of the individual child’s needs and interests through experience.

Although there are many thinkers of child-centrist education, the researcher chooses to focus only on the discussion of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel and Dewey as they are key figures in the line of child-centrist education. Each thinker may play his role effectively in developing the child-centrist ideas in education and centers their thought on the nature of the child, still there are many disagreements in their ideas and practices of education. We shall begin with a discussion on the common

3 According to Dearden’s analysis, “needs” in education are: 1) the need for security, 2) the need for guidance, 3) the need for freedom, 4) the need to understand, and 5) the need for the real and the concrete. See. John Darling. Child-Centered Education and Its Critics. (London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd, 1994), p.73.
threads in terms of "the development of individual child's interest". William James as a psychologist and philosopher will be under the discussion as well.

"Interest" is a word that has long been associated in the popular use with the name of Dewey. For him, things or objects are something outside and has to be made interesting. The genuine principle of interest is the principle of recognizing the identity of the fact to be learned or the action proposed with the growth and development (Moore, 1930, pp.40-41). In a paper entitled "Interest in Relation to Training of the Will," published in 1896, Dewey writes that when things "have to be made interesting it is because interest itself is wanting." When interest is not developed or satisfied, the child follows his or her own interest internally, while outwardly manifesting compliance with the schools externally imposed dictates. This kind of interest is passive in which we can get the pleasure from external stimulation and pleasure. This type of pleasure, Dewey asserts, arises when objects are "made interesting". In fact, self-expression is the ground of Dewey's injunctions concerning interest. One becomes himself by following his own interests.

Later Dewey emphasizes "interest" as active. For him, one can obtain this sort of pleasure with the active enjoyment of interest. When one has interest, one gets pleasure. Interest is active because when we take interest, the mere feeling regarding subject may be static or inert but interest is dynamic. The dynamism of interest means that when we take interest we take action too. Interest is both subjective and objective. It is objective when we have interests to care for or look after. It is subjective because it signifies an internal realization, or feeling. Interests are the signs and symptoms of growing power in a child's development (Goodman, 1990, pp.100-102). Hamm shows child's interest, which is related to the motivation that "If children are interested in what is in their interest, then there is no motivational
problem. But if there is no interest in doing, then appeal to their present interest will not help” (Hamm, 1989, p.81).

Whereas Dewey’s child-centrist approach promotes the individual child’s needs and interests, traditionalism’s teacher-centrist approach emphasizes intellectual discipline. How could progressives argue for a child-centrist approach? Rousseau would argue that learning is most effective when it follows the child’s needs and interests. In *Emile*, Rousseau states about the importance of the individual child in child-centrist education that education needs to be individualized. For him, to become successful, we must study pupils, observing their expressions (Rousseau, 1762, pp.187-188) and watching them at play (Rousseau 1762, p.58). Like Dewey, Rousseau stresses the child’s needs and natural interests; development of the individual child; and the child’s freedom to move around, to play and to explore. Dewey follows Rousseau’s lead in seeing the importance of nature in education, but he disagrees with Rousseau in some ways, on which Ozmon and Craver state, “While Rousseau thought a child should be removed and educated ‘naturally’ in the formative years. Dewey maintained that the child should not be removed from a social environment conducive to proper education. Thus, Dewey held that nature does not include just physical entities but social relationships as well” (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p. 133).

Pestalozzi asserts that education should be more than book learning. It should embrace the whole of the child’s emotions, intellect and body. Education should take place in an environment of emotional love and security. It should also begin in the child’s immediate environment and involve the operating of the sense on the objects found in the environment (Gutek, 1997, p.294). He also shows his agreement with the importance of individual child by arguing that traditionalism’s teacher-centrist

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4 Pestalozzi’s thought on education is influenced by Rousseau’s writings. Pestalozzi was sixteen when Rousseau’s *Emile* was published, and like many others, he was intoxicated by *Emile*. 
teaching produces only an outward show of learning. The method of teaching that prefers the order of teachers' words or instruction is not natural. He argues that, instead of dealing with words, the child should be free pursuing his own interest and drawing his own conclusions. The child should learn through activity and real things. The child should not be made anxious or put under stress, and his development should not be forced. As Green puts it "This is what happens when teachers hurry children into lessons that are concerned chiefly with words, before they have passed through the discipline of actual encounter with real things. Yet it is out of such experience that wisdom and truth develop. The teacher's course lays the foundations of intellectual growth and power in empty words instead of in the solid truths that come from contact with realities (Green, 1912, p.19).

Comparing Pestalozzi and Dewey, it is obvious that Pestalozzi's ideas on individual child focusing on "need and interest" are somewhat in the same vein with Dewey, yet there is still some differences between the two in which Pestalozzi attempts to harmonize both traditionalism and progressivism. For Pestalozzi, the need for subject matter in child-centrist education and the capacity of the learner's need and interest in teacher-centrist education should be coordinated and matched; for Dewey, he does not have the intention to harmonize both of them. Instead he considers traditional education as old education and attempts to replace it with progressive education. As Pestalozzi states in Address to My House (1818):

Instruction in every branch of knowledge must be considered in relation to the fundamental faculties of human nature, and we must find out whether the devices and exercises in that particular study are in harmony with the natural development of those powers. We must also ascertain, in regard to every subject, what parts of it can be properly acquired by children - firstly through
simple sensory activity, secondly through memory, and thirdly through imagination - and how such constituent parts can themselves be utilized, on the one hand as a means of developing and exercising the fundamental natural faculties, and on the other hand, simply as materials for acquiring knowledge of the subject, such as may be used later on when age and capacity permit (Green, 1912 p. 208).

Pestalozzi emphasizes three aspects in knowledge acquisition, namely, sensory activity, memory and imagination. In contrast, Dewey emphasizes only on experience through activity.

Like others, Froebel supports the conception of education as development of the individual child. He focuses on play as the main activity in the concept of developing the individual child and believes that play should reflect the free activity of the whole life of the pupil's mind. As he puts it:

Play...must not be left to chance. Just because he learns through play a child learns willingly and learns much. So play, like learning and activity, has its own definite period of time and it must not be left out of the elementary curriculum. The educator must not only guide the play, since it is so very important, but he must also often teach this sort of play in the first instance (Froebel, 1840, p.167).

It is clear that Froebel’s thought is in support of Dewey’s idea of the individual child’s needs and interests though there remains some distinctions in Froebel’s idea. While Dewey attempts to base education on his conception of Darwin’s theory of natural selection, Froebel’s thinking on education is based on theism or God. As theism is not the main concern of this research, we shall leave the subject matter here.
Criticisms of Dewey’s Progressivism on the Aim of Education

As we have noted that traditional education focuses on a subject-based curriculum, many children in classrooms do not show their eagerness to learn, nor do they respond positively to the opportunities that teachers provide for them. In traditionalism, teachers have a major role and the authority in dominating classes. Consequently, this causes children to become reluctant in learning as their experience of schooling lacks correspondence with reality that accounts for children's low motivation. Progressives assume that children have a natural intellectual curiosity, but apparently children under their care are often having minimal motivation. The reason for such phenomena is because children come to school with expectations, that they will receive instruction and find out that they are not doing things that they should do. Children come to school with the information that parents tell them this and that and when they are in school, the whole image of school in our culture is not conducive to transmit this message.

In fact, progressives also view and focus on the feeling that children are passive since they see education as something that other people do to them. It is in this place that the progressives argue against traditionalists accusing the traditionalism’s philosophy of education of causing children to lose their ability to take any initiative or responsibility for their own learning that should be active rather than passive. There is no doubt that the traditionalism in education takes a somewhat didactic and authoritative approach, whereas progressivism in education takes pragmatic and liberal approach.

Dewey thinks that it is time for traditional education to eliminate some subjects which do not motivate children’s learning. The subjects that should be eliminated are what teachers think children ought to learn but not what children want to learn. To solve the problem of educational traditionalism analyzed above, Dewey
proposes that child-centrist should emphasize the individual child's needs and interests. Wingo quotes Dewey's words saying:

The child comes to the traditional school with a healthy body and more or less unwilling mind, though, in fact, he does not bring both his body and mind with him; he has to leave his mind behind, because there is no way to use it in the school. If he had a purely abstract mind, he could bring it to school with him, but his is a concrete one, interested in concrete things, and unless these things get over into school life he cannot take his mind with him (Wingo, 1975, p.167).

On this score, the progressivism in education owes much to Dewey's thought on education as Dewey pioneers the liberal protest against the traditional education.

William James as a psychologist and philosopher plays an important role in the fight against traditional education. James, like Dewey, opposes the formalism of traditional education. For James, schools should not begin with a series of subject matters that is already organized and synthesized by teachers, nor should they impose those subjects on children or learners. Instead, the school should emphasize the child's native powers, needs and interests. James presents his educational thought on the teaching-learning process in the light of experimental psychology that based on experience. James states that:

The school begins with the line of the child's native interest, and offers him objects that have some immediate connection with these. Next, step by step, connect with these first objects and experiences the later objects and ideas which you wish to instill. Associate the new with the old in some natural and telling way, so that the interest being shed along from point to point, finally suffuses the entire system of objects of thought (James, 1906, pp.95-96).
In Dewey’s early philosophy, we discovered that Wordsworth and Emerson are those who supported Dewey’s idea on the development of the individual child’s interest. Wordsworth portrayed the child as the best philosopher, whereas Emerson spoke of the autonomy, wisdom, and freedom of children. Like Wordsworth, Dewey’s goal for a child is to recover, or preserve, the child’s interest in the world (Goodman, 1990, p. 100).

The doctrine of interest is one of the major aspects of Dewey’s progressivism. The great step is being taken towards making the child a center instead of subordinating the child to subject matter. For a long time, education has no problem in the curriculum to speak of until the doctrine of interest comes along. Suddenly, the emphasis shifted to focus on the need of selecting subject matter that would appeal to the child. Under such a premise, the curriculum cannot be something external to the learner (Newlon, 1929, p. 42).

Generally speaking, it is true that if we are really interested in what we are doing, no matter how difficult, we will neither be bored nor lose interest. It is interest that keeps the work from being unpleasant. In *Educational Theory: Progressivist Theory Versus Soft Pedagogy*, Walton states, “Dewey defines interest as the depth of the grip that the goal has on the learner. If that grip is strong enough, the learner is able to overcome the difficulties in the way toward achievement; the greatest of the hardship are always boredom, a sense of futility, and an imaginative approach to the task. However, if intelligence and imagination are employed, the work becomes interesting and exciting, because we foresee the desired results; we are excited because the end contains an element of uncertainty... Real interest leads to more significant results, to genuine accomplishment” (Walton, 1952, pp. 281-282).
Dewey maintains that genuine interest in education is the accompaniment of the identification of the self with some object or idea through action. This is due to the fact that there is a necessity of the object or idea for maintenance of self-expression. Therefore, for Dewey, interest is the make of the total destruction of the distance between subject and object; it is the instrument that affects their natural union (Goodman, 1990, p.101).

Contrary to Dewey’s position, traditionalists claim that Dewey’s doctrine of child’s needs and interest leads children to disregard the importance of the subject matter of knowledge. For this, Dewey would argue, is not his intention. What he means is that “the child’s desires are simply to be indulged”; and he also warns progressive educators about this in his later writings. He mentions that the end is not just pleasure or satisfaction, but growth in which children will be good on reflection” (Frankena, 1965, p. 173).

As we have discovered, Dewey’s progressivism on child-centrist education stresses individual freedom, which is called democratic education. The idea of Dewey’s democratic education that focuses on individual is in contrast to the idea of freedom in the authoritarianism of traditionalism. Whereas the idea of freedom in Dewey’s progressivism is individual freedom, Plato’s traditionalism is the state’s authority. Plato would consider that progressive education is quite capable of placing too much emphasis on freedom and also views that unruly democratic freedom in progressive education would lead children’s lives to become undisciplined because progressivism emphasizes teaching and learning based on child’s needs and interests, it does not focus on the teacher’s authority. Dewey argues in his writing in Experience and Education that “It is not too much to say that an educational philosophy which professes to be based on the idea of freedom may become as
dogmatic as ever as the traditional education which it reacted against... Let us say that the new education emphasizes the freedom of the learner.” (Dewey’s EE, 1963, p.22)

As for the discipline of a child, progressives argue on Dewey’s idea of child’s interest. Dewey intends to use the term “interest” intellectually and initiatively with the help and guidance of the teachers. As Goodman puts it, “Dewey clearly warns against humoring interest. Interest encourages ‘intellectual curiosity and alertness’ and ‘initiative’. To humor the interest is to fail to penetrate below the surface, and its sure result is to substitute caprice and whim for genuine interest...next to deadness and dullness, formalism and routine, our education is threatened with no greater evil than sentimentalism” (Goodman, 1990, p.102).

As for the discipline in school, Dewey believes that it should proceed from the life of the school as a whole, not directly from the teacher (McDermott, 1981, p. 447). Dewey also argues that his child-centrist approach never ignores children’s discipline. As Frankena states that for Dewey, “the child must learn self-control and discipline, but he can and should do so within the framework of interest which he already has or develops as he goes along under guidance. Present interests are the starting point, and though a necessary one, they must be interpreted, guided, and developed into interests in other people and in enduring objects in which all can share” (Frankena, 1965, p. 173). Dewey firmly believes that even if the school is making a place where the child should really live, it can at the same time give him ‘the necessary discipline’, ‘culture and information’ more effectively, more usefully, and with a more liberalizing effect than the older kind of school could (Frankena, 1965, p.182). Besides, Dewey also argues that the child’s interests and activities have their own directions; therefore, it is the teacher’s task to determine and observe his classroom. He has to see it day by day,
to know whether or not his students’ own interests and activities move in the direction of the knowledge and dispositions desired.

Plato believes that education is not only for the good of the individual but also for the safety of the State. For Plato, to be a good man is to be governed by the authority and rationality of the State. This means that to be a good child or student is to be disciplined by the teacher’s authority and rationality.

Plato asserts that good education has a cumulative force and affects the breed. As he puts it: “The state if once started well, moves with accumulating force like a wheel. For good nurture and education implant good constitution and these good constitutions taking root in a good education improve more and more, and this improvement affects the breed in man” (Plato’s *The Republic*, 1991,p.137).

Dewey would argue that the idea of progressive education is the capacity of individual freedom on a progressive growth directed to social aims. It seems to the researcher that Dewey would like to let us know that his progressive education focuses not only on the individual but also on society. Dewey states one of the meanings of education in *Democracy and Education* that education is a social function and a part of the social life. Education must consist primarily of transmission through communication that is the process of sharing experiences. He further asserts that, unlike the view of traditionalism, the development of the individual child needs to be continued along with the progressive life of society; it cannot take place through the historical and cultural heritage of belief and knowledge. Dewey believes that life has self-renewing process through action upon the environment. Thus, the development of the individual child takes place through the intermediary of the social environment where his activity is associated with others.
Dewey regards the school as a social institution, is “inherently a part of the total social process.” The school is a community whose processes are social processes, not different from the social activities that go on outside the school. Here is Dewey’s idea on the “school and society” that set forth the relationship between the school and life in society at large. He asserts that this would ensure the child to live in a community and society worthily, lovely, and harmoniously.

...an embryonic community life, active with types of occupations that reflect the life of the larger society and permeated throughout with the spirit of art, history, and science. When the school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service, and providing him with the instruments of effective self-direction, we shall have the deepest and best guaranty of a larger society which is worthy, lovely, and harmonious (Dewey’s CC & SS, 1956, p. 29).

Dewey views school as an educational reality and a social process. Education is a process of living. The school is a form of community life that will be most effective in bringing the children to share their experiences, and use their own interests and powers for social ends. He believes that the social life of the child is concentrated and correlated with his own social activities. It cannot be attained from history, nor literature, as traditionalism believes and focuses on. For Dewey, education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform.

As stated, Dewey believes that the purpose of his progressive education is social advancement. He thinks that education is necessary for the stability and continuity of all societies – it gives the individual child the necessary skills and tools to interact with the environment of daily life. Children or students could use their problem-solving skills as a tool to analyze and solve both their own problems and
those of society. Dewey also believes that the learning process whereby students focus on cooperative behaviors and self-discipline will greatly help them throughout their life. For Dewey, individuality and sociability are interdependent and interrelated.

We shall end this argument with Kilpatrick's ideas in which he emphasizes the child's interest and motivation. In his well-known paper 'The Project Method', he writes of the expectation from progressive education that "The children should derive 1) a high degree of skill and understanding, 2) knowledge that will be permanent, 3) pleasure in his school work, 4) enthusiasm for further projects, and 5) more favorable attitudes to social agencies generally" (Kilpatrick, 1918, pp.326-327). He hopes that the result of his favored approach to schooling would produce better citizens, alert, able to think and act intelligently too... ready to adapt to the new social conditions that impend (Kilpatrick, 1918, p.334).

4.2.2 Argument against the Concept of Child-Centrist Approach

Traditionalism in education asserts that education is concerned with subjects which involve the learning of basic skills, arts, and sciences that have been useful in the past and that are likely to remain useful in the future. Traditionalism's aim of education is intellectual discipline, which is intellectual training for the individual through application of mind to subject matter. Traditional education emphasizes

5 Dewey tried to show that the distinctions of subjectivity (individuality) and objectivity (the social and physical environment) come out of experience. The one is not necessarily more real than the other because Dewey viewed subject and object or individual and society in a precarious balance, a transactional relationship... Individuality is important because it is the source of novelty and change in human affairs. Dewey defined individuality as the interplay of personal choice and freedom with objective conditions... Sociality refers to a medium conducive to individual development. In Dewey's mind, there could be no genuine individuality without humane, democratic, and educative social conditions... Therefore, individuality and sociality cannot be divorced in Dewey's system. They are interdependent and interrelated. See Howard Ozmon & Samuel Craver. Philosophical Foundations of Education. (New Jersey: Prentice –Hall, Inc,1995 ),p. 135.

6 Dewey's thinking was continued through the work of his disciple William Kilpatrick, who was a professor at Teachers College, Columbia, for twenty years.
teacher/ subject–centrist approach. Traditional education is opposed to Dewey’s progressivism on child-centrist approach, which emphasizes the individual child’s needs and interests through experiential learning. The appropriate means of child-centrist learning is interest and freedom, whereas that of traditional education is intellectual discipline and the teacher’s authority. We may put the argument into a syllogism as follows:

1. Traditionalism’s aim of education is intellectual discipline through subject matter.
2. The teacher-centrist approach is traditionalism’s aim of education.
3. Consequently, the teacher-centrist approach is intellectual discipline through subject matter.

Dewey presents the notion and the concept of child-centrist education that is centered on the development and growth of individual child through experience. This leads to the disagreement of traditionalism and progressivism in education. This section shall center on two main points where the traditionalists attack Dewey’s concept of child-centrist approach. First, the traditionalists argue that the concept of the individual child’s needs and interests based upon freedom would lead him to learn without discipline both in educational life and personal life. Second, the traditionalists also argue that Dewey’s child-centrist education promotes the development of good life of the individual child, and not of a good society.

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There are various kinds of rules are considered to be disciplined. First, there are rules which are related to the subject matter itself, such as rules of grammar, rules for properly conducting scientific experiments, and rules of mathematical reasoning, and so on. There are, secondly, rules related to the manner of learning something, such as rules about concentration, about practice and reviews, about note taking, and so on. Thirdly, certain rules established for the efficient operation of schools, such as rules about attendance, movement through the school, emergency measures, and so on. There are also rules overlapping with those that are of a moral nature and apply outside of school as well as inside. Such rules as taking turns, telling the truth, and so on. In any one of the above ways one can be disciplined. And if one is to obtain an education it is easy to see that one must necessarily become disciplined. See Cornel M. Hamm. 1989. *Philosophical Issues in Education: An Introduction*. NY: The Falmer Press. p.109.
Let us discuss the first argument. Dewey claims that the concept of the child-centrist approach is the notion that the child ought to be considered as an individual child, while the teacher-centrist approach is not to consider the child as an individual, but intellectual subject discipline instead. Traditionalists like Giovanni Gentile argue that the traditional approach to students is in itself important. It is not to observe his existence of external self but also look beyond each student into his internal self. As he states “The teacher must not stop at the classification of the pupil or at the external observation of his face or behavior; he must enter into the very mind of the child where his life is gathered and centered” (Butler, 1968, p.191). In fact, traditionalists emphasize the individual child as well but differently from Dewey. Dewey centers on the individual child’s ‘need and interest’ which is in the sense of ‘nature of the child’ or ‘its psychological dimension’, the traditionalists focus on ‘mind’ which is a deeper and more real individual, that is, in the sense of the ‘spiritual dimension’.

Dewey’s child-centrist approach based on the child’s needs and interests is to educate students in terms of the nature of the child. Rousseau considers the child as good by nature, while traditionalism’s teacher-centrist approach focuses on intellectual discipline and educating students in terms of the nurture of the child. Its approach is based on the idea that the child has the potential to be good or bad, which depends on his actualization upon the environment and education. “You were brought into the world and nurtured and educated by us” (Plato’s Dialogue: Cerrito: 50, 1970, p.96). Hence, for traditional education, the purpose of the school curriculum is to nurture intellectual discipline, which consists of subject matters, intellectual skills, and values/virtues.

Nevertheless, traditionalists point out that their teacher-centrist approach emphasizes intellectual discipline through subject matter and do realize the child’s
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educational needs. But for them, the way to approach students is different from progressivism’s child-centrist approach which focuses only on the individual standpoint. Traditionalists educate the child based on two main standpoints, namely individual’s standpoint and society’s standpoint. Butler states in *Four Philosophies and Their Practice in Education and Religion* the reason why there are two objectives of traditionalism in education. As he puts it:

Since idealism as a philosophy of education stems from the belief in the reality of the self, it might at first seem to follow that its educational objectives should be purely individualistic... Although some opponents of idealism find it too individualistic and while an inadequate social concern on the part of idealism may have been one factor contributing to the rise of the pragmatic educational philosophy, idealism fully practiced in education necessitates a courageous shouldering of social responsibilities. For the objectives for which idealism would strive have, of their own necessity, a social as well as an individual frame. We shall adopt, therefore, in this treatment of objectives, two main vantage points: first the individual, then the social (Butler, 1968, p. 196).

Whereas the purpose of education of the individual’s standpoint is intellectual and moral discipline that helps the individual child to seek the truth or good, the purpose of education of society’s standpoint is to reflect the good of the individual to the good of society. This means that traditional education emphasizes the virtue rather than the physical and biological science of progressive education. Here is an argument for the purpose of individual standpoint “to help students to live rich and significant lives, to build harmonious and colorful personalities, to enjoy to the utmost
the glory of being happy, to face suffering when it comes with dignity and profit, and finally to help other people to live this superior life” (Butler, 1968,p. 197).

Dewey also claims that the child-centrist approach must be based on the child’s needs and interests, not intellectual discipline. Traditionalists would argue that the teacher-centrist approach focuses on the child’s interest as well as child-centrist, but they pay more attention to ‘discipline’. As Butler puts it, “Should the teacher lean heavily upon interest, he is likely to be labeled as ‘soft’, if discipline is his weapon, and he is ‘hard’

...By interest we refer to such a totally positive attraction of the student to the job at hand that he needs exercise, no conscious or voluntary action, much less require urging from the teacher...By discipline we mean some extraneous action by the teacher to carry the pupil through to the completion of the task in hand” (Butler, 1968,p.208).

We can say that for a traditionalist, discipline is necessary for systematic learning in school, which emphasizes the primary importance of the human mind as an instrument. The school has the specific function of transmitting to the students certain generative skills and certain general intellectual disciplines. This means that the function of school is to provide the academic knowledge base to students. The researcher thinks that in this point, the school should provide a stable academic environment for students by incorporating cultural and historical continuity and stability.

Traditionalists consider that child-centrist approach to students’ needs and interests through experience are not effective or efficient to provide a differentiated educational experience to students in order to prepare them for their future life. But the most effective and efficient way must be subject matter, which provides each
subject or intellectual discipline, organized separately from the other subjects. Consequently, according to traditionalism, education without discipline is impossible. Here is an argument that traditionalists use to argue against Dewey’s child-centrist approach in terms of ‘discipline’.

1. Dewey’s child-centrist education is an education without discipline.
2. The education without discipline is not an effective and efficient way of preparation for children’s life.
3. Therefore, Dewey’s child-centrist education is not an effective and efficient way of preparation for children’s life.

Dewey claims that his child-centrist approach emphasizes the child’s needs and interests through activity or action by means of the individual child’s freedom, while the traditionalist’s teacher-centrist approach focuses on intellectual discipline through subject matter by means of the teacher’s authority. Traditionalists would argue that regarding traditional education, “student learns something and gain some new insight toward his self-activity as well, which is not different from pragmatist doctrine that the learning is in the response of the learner” (Butler, 1968, p.210).

Traditionalists reject the experimentalist or progressive approach, which promotes the child’s needs and interests and attempts to break down subject matter. Traditionalist would condemn the pragmatist and progressive approaches to learning as contributing to an academic confusion that weakens intellectual authority and social organization. The teacher with a sense of authority is in the content of subject matter and is skilled in organizing it for instructional purpose (Gutek, 1997, p.275). Plato would argue against Dewey’s concept of the individual child, for he (Plato) believes that to focus on the child’s needs and interests could lead to unruly democratic freedom and undisciplined life. This argument seems to be convincing
because the concept of the individual child's needs and interests may be called practical freedom. It implies that the students would have too much freedom in the practical dimension, not the academic dimension. Traditionalists emphasize the academic dimension, which may be called mental activities, but progressives focus on the practical dimension, that is self-activities. Thus, traditionalists center on the mental development of the students.

Bagley argues against progressive education for overemphasizing the child's freedom, interest, and play, and for abandoning disciplines, effort and work. Bagley and other traditionalists assert that basic education, as intellectual discipline, is a good systematic training in such subjects as reading, writing, arithmetic, history, and language. It stresses discipline and obedience that prepare children for adult responsibility (Gutek, 1997, p. 266). Like Bagley, Arthur Bestor argues that the curriculum should be based on intellectual discipline with basic education. It should not be anti-intellectualism like that of the progressives. Bestor considers that "Academic standards in the US public schools had declined because of an anti-intellectual educational philosophy that had separated the school from the scientific scholarly discipline" (Gutek, 1997,p.267). Furthermore, Bestor expresses a definite traditionalism in education in The Restoration of Learning, that traditionalism in education provides sound training in the fundamental ways of thinking represented by history, science, mathematics, literature, language, art and other disciplines evolved in the course of mankind's long quest for usable knowledge, cultural understanding, and intellectual power (Bestor, 1956,p.7).

Now we arrive at the second argument of the discussion on traditionalists' opposition to Dewey's child-centrist education that promotes the development of a good life for the individual, not the good of society. Traditionalists believe that the
school's primary mission is academic. It is not an institution to promote a social function like in Dewey's idea. For a traditionalist, the school should provide a stable academic environment for students by providing basic cultural elements and he would oppose using schools as experimental laboratories.

We know that Dewey considers education as a social function and for social advancement. The development of a child or student depends upon the environment through his activity, which is associated with others in the school. The school is a social environment and social life through which the process of sharing experience specifically communication is provided. Traditionalists argue that the development of the student life in a society cannot be developed through the intermediary or mediator of the environment; it can take place only by the transmission of beliefs and knowledge in terms of cultural heritage. Why?

Dewey's conception of education as a social function and social process encourages students to share their experiences through their own needs, interests and powers, leading to social ends. Traditionalists consider that without the intellectual knowledge of history, literature, and others, children cannot be effective and efficient. It implies that Dewey's child-centrist education, which focuses on the social life of the students through experiential learning with the correlation in their own social activities, is not for the good of individual students, nor for society at large. Plato reaffirms in the Laws that "Education is for the good of the individual and for the safety of the State. If you ask what is the good of education in general, the answer is easy: that education makes good men, and that good men act nobly, and conquer their enemies in battle because they are good. Education certainly gives victory" (Rusk,

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1 Education in the Laws is to be universal, not restricted as in the Republic to the guardian class. Whereas in the Republic education's to be in the immediate charge of the guardians of the state. In the Laws it is to be delegated to a Director of Education. The ends of education are the same. The main subjects in the curriculum proposed in the Laws are the same as those given in the Republic. The Republic and the Laws are both political and educational issues.
1969, p. 36). In the *Laws*, the citizens can become virtuous if only their desires and passions are disciplined in such a way that they obey the law as a matter of habit" (Stalley, 1983, p.9). A central doctrine of the *Laws* is that it is in each individual’s own interests to be virtuous (Stalley, 1983, p.59).

Warayuth Sriewarakul agrees with Plato’s concept of education and states that “Plato is probably the first western philosopher who presents education as an instrument to form or educate people into three classes, which are governed by the vision of the state” (Sriewarakul, 1998, p. 62). Nevertheless, traditionalists still can accept that Dewey’s conception of education, as social function is to develop only the good life of the individual, and not the good society.

Wit Wisathaves agrees with Plato’s traditional approach and views education as an ideological, not technical or practical instrument. “The educational system in which educators expect to formulate is composed of two main elements: the status of the educational system in the social structure and the ideal knowledge”(Wisathaves, 1983,p.3). Furthermore, Sakda Prangpratanporn adds, “Good educational aim of education has to form people responsible to society with qualified basic knowledge”(Prangpratanporn, 1970,p.76).

For Dewey, the society of the child begins at school “school and society”, and will bring his life to live in the community and society worthily. Plato would disagree with him and argue that society is perfect, based upon and ruled by an intellectual one, which he calls “philosopher-king.” In *The Republic*, Book IX: 590c2-d6, Plato states the reason for philosopher-kings or philosopher rulers:

Why do you suppose mechanical and manual art bring reproach? Or shall we say that this is because of anything else than when the form of the best is by nature so weak in a man that he isn’t capable of ruling the beasts in himself,
but only of serving them, and is capable of learning only the things that flatter them? ... In order that such a man also be ruled by something similar to what rules the best man (the philosopher-king), don’t we say that he must be the slave of that best man who has the divine rule in himself? If not that we suppose the slave must be ruled to his own detriment, as Thrasymachus supposed about the ruled; but that it’s better for all to be ruled by what is divine and prudent, especially when one has it as his own within himself, but if not, set over one from outside, so that insofar as possible all will be alike and friends, piloted by the same thing (Plato’s The Republic, 1968, p.273).

Plato’s educational theory rests on the assumption that only intellectual people can rule society. The school and institution play a great role in determining the role and functions that individuals exercise in the community and society. Plato and other traditionalists would also argue that schools, as part of a society, would be effective if they center on the primary academic function and the knowledge would help the teachers do their academic works more effectively and efficiently.

Dewey holds that schools are the form of community life that will be most effective in bringing the child to use his own power for social ends, whereas Plato considers that school is an institution to give intellectual training to the young. Dewey asserts that in progressive education, students are socially responsible individuals and also work democratically, cooperatively with others. Dewey views schools as a large society. Therefore, students have to study the problems of the community and society as a whole and the teacher has a role in examining and solving the problems. Plato would disagree with this view and would argue that the school has no purpose to change the social order or to solve social problems, because the function of the school is to examine issues academically, not to solve social problems. “Although educators
need to understand social problems and how they impact education, teachers do not have it in their power to cure society’s ills. However, they do have it in their power to teach reading, writing, history, and science. For traditionalists, the examination of social, political, and economic issues is part of the exploration of the academic knowledge base” (Gutek, 1997, p. 273).

It seems to the researcher that traditionalists view the role of schooling in a strictly academic way, which is defined as foundational skills, and intellectual subject matter, while Dewey and other progressives focus on the educational process in non-academic ways. The researcher thinks that Dewey’s progressive education begins with a socialized individual in school for the renewal of the society, but Plato’s traditional education begins with the intellectual ones who rule the State and will create the possibility of the good city. The intellectual rulers or philosopher-kings will contribute their vision and determine the educated person to be responsible for the State. Plato believes that if an individual is virtuous, there will be virtue in the State. As he puts it in the Republic “The virtue of an individual is the virtue of a state” (Plato’s The Republic, 1991, p.59). This is the way Socrates argues that the good city might come to exist:

1. The good city is possible, if and only if the virtuous and expert rule by its leaders is possible.
2. Virtuous and expert rule is possible, if and only if, the rulers are philosophers.
3. Rule by philosophers is possible.
4. Therefore, the good city is possible (Pappas, 2000, p.111).

This argumentative discussion is convincing when we read the passage from those who attack Dewey’s child-centrist approach.
There is a present tendency in so-called advanced schools of educational thought...to say, in effect, let us surround pupils with certain materials, tools, appliances, etc., and then let pupils do these things according to their own desires. Above all let us not suggest...to them what they shall do, for that is an unwarranted trespass upon their sacred intellectual individuality, since the essence of such individuality is to set up ends and aims. Now such a method is really stupid. For it attempts the impossible, which is always stupid; and it misconceives the conditions of independent thinking (Journal of the Barnes Foundation, 1926, p.4)

4.2.3 A Critical Analysis

Generally speaking, the central idea in progressivism's child-centrist education starts with the child and its curriculum proceeds from the perspective of the child. In traditionalism's teacher-centrist education, all children have to start from the subject, which means that the curriculum shall base on the perspective of the adult interest in providing valuable knowledge for children. The child-centrists take the opposite approach. For Dewey, education is necessary for an individual's life that emphasizes the "child's needs and interests". In his view, education without interest is not education at all. This is a total contrast to traditionalism's teacher-centrist approach which insists that education without discipline is impossible. Brumbaugh and Lawrence put it this way:

Dewey's interest in progressive education...Insofar as progressive education is impatient with the static conception of what is worth learning, insofar as it is concerned with the continuity of the growth process, insofar at it stresses the interrelation of manual discipline and intellectual discipline, and insofar as it
knows that education accepted without interest is not education at all (Brumbaugh & Lawrence, 1963, p.126).

Dewey argues that although progressive education focuses on the “child’s needs and interests”, the child still has self-discipline and this self-discipline is based upon his individual freedom in democratic fashion. For Dewey, only democracy could encourage free ideas and personalities of the individual child that is a necessary condition for true growth. Dewey believes that education is a social function and is basically a social necessity. He believes that through education, an individual child is socialized and in turn society will be renewed.

Contrary to Dewey, Plato and his followers believe that intellectual and moral achievements are the highest aims in man’s life. In this context, the most important aspect in education is ‘intellect’. The aim of education is then to assist students to gain the meaning and value of their life, whereas curriculum of education is to focus on the specific subjects with the purpose of leading students to become intellectual and moral men. Therefore, traditional education which focuses on intellectual training for individuals through the application of the mind to the subject matter based upon the foundation of metaphysics is meaningful and good educational aim for the individual child’s life and society.

We have discussed “discipline” in previous section and conclude that both Dewey’s progressive approach and traditional approach have paid much attention to discipline, yet with different emphases. In short, in Dewey’s view, a child must learn self-discipline; in traditionalism, a child must learn intellectual discipline. Both provide and prepare students for their good future life.

Traditional defenders of intellectual discipline, such as Bagley and Arthur Bestor, argue that traditionalism takes the position that basic education is the best
guarantee for preserving both academic freedom in the school and society. Bestor insists that “to achieve educational ideals through an essential subject-matter curriculum, the five intellectual disciplines are essential: history, mathematics, sciences, foreign languages, and English. He continues to insist that during the first four, five, or six years of schooling, reading, writing, and arithmetic are the necessary generative tool skills. Elementary school students should also be introduced to the structures and methods of the natural sciences, geography, and history” (Bestor, 1956, pp.50-51).

The researcher believes that both the traditional and progressive approaches attempt to convince people that their respective educational aims are meaningful and valuable in developing the whole life of children. To assert that either one or the other is true, is to disintegrate into an assertion of either/or position that is too extreme in the researcher’s standpoint. In fact, each side is correct in its own right in terms of their theories. Nevertheless, these two approaches evoke much criticism for their individual weaknesses. The followings depict some of those criticisms.

One of the most serious criticisms of Dewey’s child-centrist approach is in the concept of the individual child’s needs and interests. The criticism is based upon the sense of the important freedom, and as such, schools are no longer considered as teaching children to respect authority. Consequently, young people have apparently become undisciplined in their studies. This would finally lead them to learn and live without discipline both in their educational life and personal life. This is why the ideas about discipline and authority are very important and essential for the teacher-centrist approach. The researcher agrees with Wit Wisathaves when he says, “Although the child-centrist approach emphasizes the child’s needs and interest, discipline is essential for the child’s self control. If education is without discipline, it
is not a good educational aim” (Wisathaves, 1997, p.15). There have been many criticisms about teacher-centrist approach, that it is not sufficient to enable and develop children’s real life or life experience to adapt to and confront the problems in the present world.

4.3 **Argument on the Concept of Knowledge as Doing**

One of the criticisms of progressivism in education today focuses on pedagogy or teaching. Traditional educators and philosophers consider that the progressive theory having soft pedagogy as its theory may produce irresponsible learners or citizens. Dewey responded that there is nothing in progressivism that implies irresponsible learners and indulgent behavior.

The researcher proposes to analyze one of the central ideas in Dewey’s philosophy of education to determine whether such criticism is just or convincing. The focus will be on the idea of knowledge as doing where the curriculum should be based on student’s experiences.

"We teach children, not subjects" is one of the main points in the concept of learning, which we have examined in chapter III. Whereas Dewey emphasizes teaching individual child’s needs and interests, traditional education focuses teaching on subjects. Dewey emphasizes using the schools as experimental laboratories to test curricular or instructional innovation through activities, but traditionalists emphasize the primary importance of the human mind as an instrument best cultivated by intellectual discipline through the subject matter of curriculum.

Dewey claims that knowledge as doing can only be attained after experience has become primary in education. For Plato, knowledge is more than doing and it must be more concerned with recollecting, reading, writing, listening, and so on. Plato
asserts that knowledge as intellect can be attained before experiencing. Which one is true? To narrow the argumentative discussion, the researcher focuses the discussion on two aspects: “knowledge as doing” and “knowledge as growth”. The researcher shall have the discussion on “knowledge as growth” in this section since the student’s growth is the outcome of learning by doing through experience. Moreover, the concept of education or knowledge as growth has much criticism to examine whether the aim of Dewey’s progressivism on child-centrist approach is meaningful and valuable or not.

4.3.1 Argument for the Concept of Knowledge as Doing

As pragmatists, Peirce and James contribute to the formulation of pragmatism, and Dewey becomes the leading proponent of pragmatism in education. Different pragmatists have different models of experimentation. "Dewey’s pragmatic theory of learning may be called knowing or learning by doing. Knowledge or knowing is based on experimental sciences, which are operative and experimental. Knowing is doing intelligently. Therefore, there is no longer contemplation for knowing, but it becomes a true practical" (Sriewarakul, 2000, p.67).

By learning through experience, the process of growth emerges. Is the child-centrist educational curriculum, based on the theory that knowledge as doing through experience, meaningful? To answer this question, we have to consider the concept of knowledge as doing clearly. What does it mean? And how does Dewey utilize its concept in his progressive child-centrist approach? We can put Dewey’s claim into an argument as follows:

1. Knowledge is experience.
2. Experience is doing.
3. Therefore, knowledge is doing.

The child is the starting point, the center, and the end. His development and his growth are the ideal. To the growth of the child, all studies are passive: they are instruments valued as they serve the needs of growth. Personality and character are more than subject matter. What matters is not knowledge or information, but self-realization (McDermott, 1981, p.471). The self-realization of the individual child is involved with the progress, growth and learning habits through actions, which leads to a better life. As Dewey puts it, “Actions must be learned. In learning habits it is possible for man to learn the habit of learning. Then betterment becomes a conscious principle of life” (Dewey’s HC, 1922, p.105).

We begin with the discussion of the first premise: “knowledge is experience”. For Dewey, man is wholly a biological organism. Dewey asserts that knowledge can be attained from the interaction of the human organism with the environment that is changing from day to day. This means that to learn or to know comes only from our experience, not through our mind, which is the traditional belief. Dewey believes that the mind does not learn or know. For Dewey, the mind is real but only as a function of behavior, that it is only an instrument of biological survival. We develop this function when we learn about the things around us. For Dewey, thinking is coming to understand the connection between action and consequence.

We know that the process of growth in the individual child is caused by the child’s learning experience. For Dewey, experience is pedagogical. “Dewey’s involvement in education was both philosophical and program-oriented. Dewey’s philosophy of experience was a pedagogy and his pedagogy was a philosophy of experience” (McDermott, 1981, p.421). For Dewey, education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience, which means that the process and the goal of
education are one and the same thing. Learning is a process. Dewey calls the continuing reconstruction of experience the "experiential continuum."

Dewey believes that education or knowledge can be attained primarily through experience by experimental science and method, whereas Plato holds that it can be attained through intellectual knowledge or subject matter by rationality. On this score, Dewey argues that the scientific method is the best model of intelligent behavior. As he puts it:

Scientific method is the only authentic means at our command for getting at the significance of our everyday experiences of the world in which we live. It means that scientific method provides a working pattern of the way in which the conditions under which experiences are used to lead ever onward and outward. Adaptation of the method to individuals of various degrees of maturity is a problem for the educator, and the constant factors in the problem are the formation of ideas, acting upon ideas, observation of the conditions which result, and organization of facts and ideas for future use (Dewey’s EE, 1938, p.88).

Dewey makes a major contribution to thinking about empiricism and he attempts to develop a new experimental and imaginatively reconstructive philosophy. In Dewey’s position, if he considers that things need to be reconstructed, they are not in order. This means that Dewey views traditional education as not meaningful for the whole life of the child in relation to modern education and the modern world. In Democracy and Education, he criticizes Plato’s idea of experience whereby Plato pays respect to trial and error knowledge by using theoretical sciences like mathematics and geometry, which consist of necessary and universal truths. Dewey sees that Plato’s idea of experience plays its role by reason or Greek rationalism that
is intellectual knowledge comes first and experience later. "To Plato, experience means enslavement to the past, to custom. Experience was almost equivalent to established customs formed not by reason or under intelligent control but by repetition" (Dewey's RP, 1948, p.92). In this point, Dewey may think that Plato devalued experience. Dewey also sees the development of the idea of experience in Locke's empiricism.

Dewey also attacks Lockean empiricism, because the picture of Locke's experience is passive and he also attacks it for its separation of the mind from the rest of nature, which means that man is isolated from the world. Dewey views Locke's empiricism as sensationalistic empiricism. Dewey attempts to have his own new idea of experience, which is not isolation from the world but a more intimate connection with it (Goodman, 1990, p.107). Dewey's concept of experience is in the process of development that takes a biological approach according to Darwin's theory of natural selection. Dewey considers the older empiricism as the testing of ideas by tracing them back to sensations which deal with psychology, but his new empiricism looks forward to results and deals with science in terms of imagination. In The Quest for Certainty, Dewey calls for a genuinely experimental empiricism that will treat ideas as operations to be performed. It seems to the researcher that Dewey's attempt to have his own new idea of experience is due to dissatisfaction with the unimaginative conception of experience in Plato and Locke. Dewey thinks that the older idea of experience or traditional empiricism in which Plato and Locke deal with the nature of things are fixed or transcendent principle explaining nature in terms of spiritualized and imaginative experience. What is Dewey's conception of experience? How can Dewey's concept of experience be used as a method of progressive education?
According to Dewey, we experience the world through “seeing, hearing, loving, imagining,” which all are “intrinsically connected with the subject-matter of the world... Experience... is not a combination of mind and world, subject and object... but is a single continuous interaction of a great diversity of energies... Experience itself reveals an objective world, not just the world of impressions and ideas... Experiencing means living and that living goes on in and because of an environing medium... Dewey stresses the continuous, creative transitions that experience is capable of providing (Goodman, 1990, pp. 108, 112).

To make clearer understanding of Dewey’s conception of experience, the researcher would like to give an example of a child reaching out to the world; he sees, touches, hears, and interacts with the nature of things around him such as water, stones, animals, toys, parents, teachers and other children. We can say that this interaction becomes knowledge. Knowledge as such is derived from interaction and transformation, not from the process of an individual subjective mind in which we have contact with the world, but rather when we encounter the world. In Rousseau’s view, he wants children to be children before being adults. The child has its own way of seeing, thinking, and feeling. For Rousseau, early education should avoid books and abstract thought and reasoning in favor of direct contact with the physical world. The child’s needs emphasize doing and discovery. Pestalozzi agrees with Rousseau but, unlike Rousseau, Pestalozzi focuses on the importance of individual differences between children and also on the role of child-initiated activity. With Rousseau it is an individualistic child-centrist approach. Pestalozzi believes in the child’s interaction with the environment. The child should be educated more than subject to book
learning. Froebel has a similar idea as Rousseau and Pestalozzi, but he stresses children at play as being the first initiation into purposeful activity.

Dewey states that in philosophy we use ‘experience’ not in the sense of ‘subject-matter’ but of ‘method’. The fact that experience may mean anything implies that we are free to start anywhere, that we have no need for dogma. To use experience as method means to approach any subject matter in a scientific way. Consequently, for Dewey, experience is not only habit and immediate apprehension but also reasoning⁹ (Sathaye, 1972, p19).

We may conclude that Dewey uses the term experience in two ways. Sometimes experience is interpreted as something a person has. Consequently, experience is viewed from the stance of the developing individual. “Experience is primarily a process of undergoing: a process of standing something; of suffering and passion, of affection, in the literal sense of these words. The organism has to endure, to undergo, the consequences of its own actions” (Dewey’s CI, 1917,p. 10). In other aspect, experience is reconstructed through social participation; we have the recognition of something external to the individual making impact upon and taking effect in the growth and development of the person (Mason, 1966, p. 116). As Dewey states in Experience and Nature “ When we say that experience is one point of approach to an account of the world in which we live, we mean then by experience something at least as wide and deep and full as all history on this earth...(Dewey’s EN, 1925,p.8)

Kilpatrick supports Dewey’s concept of learning based on experience in the real life situation. “Kilpatrick’s fundamental principal of pedagogy is that we learn

⁹ Things may be experienced in a habitual way, in a rational way and in a naively realistic way. The habitual and naively realistic ways of experiencing things may be unreliable and may not reveal the things as they are. Implicitly, therefore, Dewey is arguing in favor of that kind of experience that uses reason to reveal the nature of reality in a practical way.
what we live and live what we learn. The way to understand students so as to direct their learning effectively is to understand the culture which has built their lives” (Mason, 1966, p. 117). Kilpatrick asserts that children must learn the essentials of the culture. The culture thus sets the first great task of education. But we must say in immediate connection that if the culture sets the aim of education, it is psychology that fixes the method (Kilpatrick, 1942, p.62).

As for the survey of empiricisms on experience, it reveals to us the meaningfulness of Dewey’s concept of experience which he uses as a basis of curriculum. According to the curriculum based on experience or life-activity curriculum, Dewey asserts that the curriculum of the school should be based on and consist of the true experience of the students. We know that the word experience is the core of progressivism theory. According to Dewey, experience includes everything that is of any consequence to us; it is the only ultimate thing we can know. Experience reveals itself in two aspects. One aspect is made up of activity and effort; the second aspect consists of an achievement, a solution to a problem, an insight, or a transformation of the materials and circumstances of the environment.

A curriculum based on this concept of experience must provide for the success of the student’s life and the student will achieve something. Effort and achievement are not separable in life. The completion of one task is the signal for beginning another. Each new experience is the starting point for new effort. Therefore, the students or learners will achieve learning skill, acquisition of a new insight, transformation of some of the materials of our environment into an object of use. In Educational Theory entitled Progressivist Theory versus Soft Pedagogy, Dewey says, “If curriculum is essential and meaningful, it must repeat the pattern of
experience. Under the guidance of experienced teachers, students should enjoy the deep satisfaction that comes with the accomplishment (Walton, 1952, p.281).

Dewey also asserts that his concept of experience as the “experiential continuum” makes a meaningful contribution to the child and society. As Brumbaugh and Lawrence point out in *Philosophers on Education: Six Essays on the Foundations of Western Thought* that “The experiential continuum has two aspects that are significant for education: the continuity between individual and society, and the continuity between mind and matter or between thought and things. For Dewey, there is no knowledge of mind that works independently of matter and all matter is apprehended through activity. What do these aspects of the experiential continuum have to do with education?

The experiential continuum deals with individuals and society that emphasize individual freedom. “Freedom or individuality….is not an original possession or gift. It is something to be achieved, to be wrought out. It is the task of education to provide the conditions under which an individual emerges toward his freedom, not merely to assume individuality or freedom for what is only a person in the making” (Brumbaugh & Lawrence, 1963, p.133). The experiential continuum is concerned with the distinction between mind and matter. From this point, the researcher thinks that if we interpolate this meaning into education and life, we would have an idea. For instance, if mind and matter are utterly distinct, then the corresponding types of education have nothing to do with each other. They are separate aspects of a divided life. If life is divided, how can the student be a unity, a whole self? In the realities of experience, we never find that mind and matter are disconnected. They cannot be separated for practical purposes. This shows us clearly why Dewey attacks Plato’s dualistic view.
Charles Peirce is acknowledged as the founder of American Pragmatism; his thoughts are of interest to students of education. Like Dewey, his concept of learning is that education should provide for the student’s learning by experiencing the actual external world of objects and events. "Peirce rejects all methods of inquiry, which are not conducted in the spirit of scientific investigation. The only motive stimulating inquiry should be an intense desire for learning the Truth" (Maccia, 1954, p.208). Peirce believes that the importance of experience learning is strengthened through the aim of education, that is: education should stimulate self-interest in discovering Truth; education should provide the experience necessary for active learning; education should develop imagination which is rooted in experience; education should develop the ability to recall past experience (Maccia, 1954, p.212). There is the distinction between Dewey’s and Peirce’s concepts of learning. The researcher chooses not to discuss this in depth other than to show the common concept of learning based on experience, as it is not our focus.

Now we shall consider the second premise “experience is doing”. As for Dewey’s experimentalism, the concept of experiential learning through experimental method, Dewey asserts that children should learn through doing and inquiring. He realizes that the existing classroom would have to be transformed if it were to provide the kind of natural, life-like environment that he wants for the students. For Dewey, the experimental method is the method of developing and testing meaning, and is the method of all reflective thought.

Dewey’s concept of learning emphasizes activity that is learning by doing. As Childs puts it: for Dewey, activity is not a substitute for thought, nor does he want an activity school simply because he believes that children should have pleasant, agreeable experiences. He wants a definite kind of activity in his school - a program
of activity that would provide the young with the opportunity to learn how to think more adequately and more responsibly. Dewey asserts that children should be taught to think in terms of action and in terms of those acts, whose consequences will expand, to revise and test their ideas and theories. It is clear that activity is basic in the educational philosophy of Dewey. He wants an activity curriculum, not because he is indifferent to the cultivation of the intellectual powers of the young, but rather because he believes that it is only in and through activity that these distinctive intellectual powers could develop (Childs, 1954, p.185).

In Dewey's pedagogic expression, "learning by doing," his intention is to present "learning by problem-solving". Dewey's theory of learning is child-centrist, activity-based and also problem-oriented. The problem identified by the student's interest must be actively approached. Students must get involved with whatever topic or problem they select and must learn its characteristics as well as the general skills of problem-solving. That is "we learn by doing", which is in contrast to the traditional education that prefers a curriculum of subject matter. According to Dewey, a child always wants to do something, and all arithmetical or geographical problems or those of reading and writing should be brought into the instrumental method that is the principle of learning by doing. Dewey believes that those problems should not be solved purely by a theoretical method.

Dewey develops a problem-solving method for analyzing experience based on scientific method. The method consists of five steps:

i) Perplexity, confusion, doubt, due to the fact that one is implicated in an incomplete situation whose full character is not yet determined.

ii) A conjectural anticipation - an interpretation of the given elements, attributing to them a tendency to effect certain consequences;
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iii) A careful survey (examination, inspection, exploration, analysis) of all attainable considerations which will define and clarify the problem at hand;

iv) A consequent elaboration of the tentative hypothesis to make it more precise and more consistent, squaring with a wider range of facts;

v) Taking one stand upon the projected hypothesis as a plan of action that is applied to the existing state of affairs; doing something overtly to bring about the anticipated result, and thereby testing the hypothesis (Dewey's DE, 1916, pp.150-151).

It would be helpful if we have a better and clearer understanding of the five steps of Dewey's problem-solving method. The first step is "Become aware of problem". It indicates that the individual or human being confronts the problem. The second step is "Define the problem". Children examine the elements of the problem and the possible consequences associated with these elements in this particular situation. The third step is "Propose hypotheses to solve it". Children attempt to clear up confusion they encounter by defining the problem. Then children formulate the problem so that it can be solved without excessive trial and error. The fourth step is "Test the consequence of hypothesis from one's past experience". Children begin to try out in their minds possible solutions to the problem, and then a tentative hypothesis is developed. The last step is "Test the most likely solution". The hypothesis is tested against experience. If the problem is not solved, then a new hypothesis is developed.

Sathaye states that: like Dewey, Rousseau sees the importance of learning by doing that is natural development. Rousseau insists that learning is a matter of necessity and it is a part of the process of self-preservation and growth. Dewey holds
that the method and subject of teaching must suit the present needs of the child. (Sathaye, 1972, p.78).

To see Dewey’s principle of learning by doing through instrumental or experimental method, the researcher thinks that it may be helpful to give an example of schools which have already put Dewey’s educational theory into practice with success. This example is shown in Dewey’s *Schools of Tomorrow*.

As Sathaye states that the first year of learning is devoted to physical activities in which young children are immediately interested; the child is not confronted with hard mental or physical activity, but he is led to realize how, in his immediate interests the problems of reading, writing and arithmetic arise; and he is impressed with the need to solve them. Hence, the actual learning to read is not an imposition. “Doing forced tasks, assignments of lessons to study, and ordinary examinations have no share in the curriculum. Dewey agrees with the tenets of this system of teaching because they fall in with his instrumental method and also because he is impressed by their psychological and ethical consequences. It is obvious that methods used in schools of this type are not devised to make the work of the teacher easier, but to develop the capacity of the child to solve his own problems. They instill not useless information but practical knowledge. Moreover they create a sense of co-operation between the teacher and his pupils; there is then no reason for undue fear and awe for the teacher and children are spared many repressions. The method of examination in such educational theory eliminates some of the causes of unhealthy competition among the pupils themselves and encourages them to work together. The interesting point in the educational systems based on the instrumental method such as Dewey’s is that they have shown that schools are not buildings where information is given to pupils and they have to remember unusual things, but that they are institutions where
children are taught to become good citizens. A child cannot possibly be a good citizen unless he finds himself one with his fellows, that is, unless he knows what his function in society is. Dewey’s point is a child can be made to learn his responsibility to society even when he is in school. Dewey conceives that the proper way of teaching children is to train them in the democratic way of life. His motto is “democracy in education” (Sathaye, 1972, pp.79-80).

Consequently, for Dewey, knowledge as doing is best acquired through activity and experience therefore he stresses the importance of fostering good attitudes to learning.

We have discussed the arguments on the concept of knowledge as doing or learning by doing in a curriculum based on experience. Here is further discussion on experience and educational goals in terms of the concept of knowledge as growth, which is related to the concept of development or growth in the individual child through experiential learning. In chapter III, we have learned that one of the main points in learning by doing or experiential learning is “The schooling ought to be related to life or education for life”. This leads us to a discussion on Dewey’s concept of education as growth, which has its goal “education for life or education is life itself”, not preparation for life.

The concept of growth has a significant influence on educational thought, connected as it is with the so-called ‘progressive’ movement in education. Perhaps the chief value growing out of the heightened controversy over public education is the fundamental question, namely, what are the long-term aims or objectives of education? This fundamental question is concerned with the concept of education for growth. Progressivism’s child-centrist education stresses the goal “education for life or education is life itself”, while traditionalism’s teacher-centrist education defines the
goal as being “education is preparation for life.” Traditionalists argue against Dewey’s education as growth, that it is not meaningful and purposeful; therefore, it is not a good educational aim to enable individuals to continue their education and lives as he claims. Plato would argue that the concept of education must be intellect, not growth. Traditionalist may ask: Growth towards what? Where and when does it end? Is the concept of knowledge as growth in student’s learning meaningful and a good educational aim?

The concept of growth or the growth metaphor has as its notion ‘fulfilling the potentials of each child’, individualized instruction appropriate to the uniqueness of each child’, ‘education to meet the needs of each child’, ‘children should be self-directed’, ‘education as self-realization, self-fulfillment, self-actualization’ (Hamm, 1989, p.20). This argumentative discussion is one of Dewey’s most controversial and misunderstood statements. In Democracy and Education, Dewey declares that:

Our net conclusion is the life development, and that developing, growing is life. Translated into its educational equivalent, this means (1) that the educational process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end; and that (2) the educational process is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, transforming. Since in reality there is nothing to which growth is relative except more growth, there is nothing to which education is subordinate save more education. (Dewey’s DC, 1916, pp.49-50).

It seems to the researcher that this statement is extremely ambivalent; it makes education an end in its own right as well as a means. Toward what aims is our teaching directed? How could Dewey answer it?

For Dewey, education is growth, which is his definition of education. Dewey states that education means the enterprise of supplying the conditions, which ensure
Criticisms of Dewey’s Progressivism on the Aim of Education

growth... The criterion of the value of school education is the extent it creates a desire for continued growth and supplies the means for making the desire effective (Dewey’s DE, 1916, pp. 51, 53). McDermott supports Dewey’s conception of growth and declares Dewey’s above statements in *The Philosophy of John Dewey: The structure of Experience and The Lived Experience* that the commonplace interpretation of this remark is that Dewey, in his desire to reject absolute and fixed goals, advocates an aimless wandering and playing as characteristic of education. Dewey, of course, has something quite different in mind. Growth is not a linear notion but rather signifies the interaction with nature as problematic and the ability to resolve, to overcome, and to recover from loss. Growth is an “on the way” fruit of experiencing and it not solely dependent on habitual responses or on reaching preconceived goals. He writes “the inclination to learn from life itself and to make the conditions of life such that all will learn the process of living is the finest product of schooling” (McDermott, 1981, p. 484).

For Dewey, education must be thought of in terms of the continuous reconstruction of experience and social good. As Ellis states, education for Dewey is the reconstruction of experience; not the rebuilding of experience in terms of brutal, human goals, but rather in terms of the social good, that is to say in accordance with the aims of an ideal society. The quest for the ideal society, the search for the social good must go beyond the empirical facts (Ellis, 1955, p. 14).

Dewey argues that his concept of education as growth is a social function, when we say that life is development, that growing development is life. Education is a continuing process of the reconstruction of experience. This process involves the total experience of the individual and only a part of it takes place in the school. The continuing process of reconstruction of experience is an aspect of growth itself.
Dewey implies that the process of education has no end beyond itself. It is its own end. The process of education is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, and transforming. Thus, the criterion of a good educational aim of school is for continued growth and this growth would enable the individual child to continue his education effectively. As Dewey puts it:

Since growth is the characteristic of life, education is all one with growing; it has no end beyond itself. The criterion of the value of school education is the extent in which it creates a desire for continued growth and supplies means for making the desire effective in fact (Dewey’s DE, 1916, p.62).

Dewey’s characterization of growth as being an end, rather than having an end, means that in the process of growing there is no end external to the process (Chambliss, 1990, p.100). In My pedagogic Creed, Dewey states that to set up any end outside of education, as furnishing its goal and standard, is to deprive the educative effort of much of its meaning, and tends to make us rely upon false and external stimuli in dealing with children.

The attack of traditionalists on Dewey’s progressive concept of growth is a very important issue against which Dewey’s followers need to be defended. There are two main points where traditionalists criticize its concept: first, growth means to increase more learners’ experience; second, growth could result in an increased in evil and falsehood. Here is the defense of the concept of growth.

First, growth means transformation, emergence, and development. Traditionalists consider that Dewey’s conception of education for growth is to increase more learners’ experience, which emphasizes the quantity of experience, not quality of experience. It also means to increase only individual experience. Dewey
would argue that growth means to develop both the individual and social life of the
learner through qualitative experiential learning.

Dewey uses the concept of growth to represent education. Education as growth
is ongoing and continuous. This is different from any other work, because when we
do some work like a carpenter or painter, we can stop working when the work is
finished. But in education, the process of learning still continues to the end of life and
without ceasing. Dewey would say that "there is no point at which one can say, 'I am
now fully educated', anymore than one can say that a tree has reached maturity and
stops growing, unless it is dead" (Hamm, 1989, p.21).

It is said that a being can develop only at the points where he is undeveloped,
which means that a child has a possibility of growth and ability to develop because he
is immature. "Where there is life, there are already eager and exciting activities"
(McDermott,1981,p.484). This shows us that the primary condition of growth is
immaturity. The child, as an immature being, has the power to grow and the power to
learn. McDermott states that the power to grow depends upon the need for others and
plasticity. Both of these conditions are needed in childhood and youth. The power to
learn (plasticity) is to learn from experience, which means the formation of habits.
Habits give control over the environment, power to utilize it for human purposes.

For Dewey, education as growth is the conception of development. When it is
said that education is development, everything depends upon how development is
conceived. It is development in terms of the formation of habits involving skill,
definiteness of interest, specific objects of observation and thought. Like Dewey,
Pestalozzi and Froebel believe in the concepts of growth and development in the
child-centrist approach. Whereas Dewey believes that growth has no ends beyond
itself, that is there is no external force for its growth, Pestalozzi and Froebel think that teachers can be only the monitors of the child’s growth, but the one who helps forward the development of the child is God.

Growth is regarded as having an end, instead of being an end, meaning that the idea of growth or development is not a movement toward a fixed goal/aim. It implies that Dewey’s progressive approach in education has its own end, which is not related to any external end. On the other hand, “since the end of growth is outside of and beyond the process of growing, external agents have to be resorted to in order to induce movement towards it. Whenever a method of education is stigmatized as mechanical, we may be sure that external pressure is brought to bear to reach an external end” (McDermott, 1981, p.492).

Growth involves the emergence of behavior, of communication. The development of a child’s life may be viewed as a growth of meanings, a growth of perception of the interconnection found in experience and nature. At any stage of a child’s growth, the meanings it has acquired are integral to its understanding of life and the value placed upon objects. Dewey pays attention to the importance of living in the present, but living in the present involves meanings, which extend the present into a reconstruction of the past and into an imaginative projection of the future. Dewey says: “To live in the present is compatible with condensations of far-reaching meanings in the present. Such enrichment of the present for its own sake is the just heritage of childhood.” Therefore, the important thing is this growth of meaning in individual and social life that Dewey makes the most important heritage we can pass on to posterity or to the next generation. The growth of meanings encompasses all of human cognitive experience meanings and are the fundamentals of both science and human values (Eames, 1977, pp.206-207).
Second, growth is towards the physical, intellectual, social, and moral ideal of life. This argumentative discussion is based upon Dewey's problematic statement “Since in reality there is nothing to which growth is relative save more growth, there is nothing to which education is subordinate save more education”. This statement prompts traditionalists to attack the idea of education for growth on the basis that since educational process is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, and transforming; the education for growth is towards what? Traditionalists argue that if Dewey's educational process has its own end and life is development or growth, how can be we sure that the power of growth would not lead the child’s life in the wrong way? Thus, Traditionalists believe that growth could increase both evil and falsehood.

Growth is a process and a progress moves towards some goal. Dewey's answers to the question “Growth toward what?” is that “It is continued growth”. Dewey would argue that education should not cease when one leaves school and the purpose of school education is to insure the continuance of education by organizing the powers that insure growth. Children, as the finest product of schooling, will learn from life itself and will learn in the process of living. Dewey asserts that it is growth towards the physical, intellectual, social, and moral ideals of life. When growth is towards all these ideals of life, how could it increase evil and falsehood? It could only give an individual quality of life. As Eames puts it “The growth in these dimensions of experience and the blending of them into one continuous individual life gives human life quality and excellence, the only reason for human existence” (Eames, 1977, p.207). To see clearly about the direction of growth, Hadow Report on Primary Education states that children between the ages of seven and eleven need care and support for their healthy growth in physical, intellectual, social, and moral.
Its primary aim must be to aid children to be healthy and insofar as possible, to be happy children, vigorous in body and lively in mind.

Dewey considers that the ideals and aims of education, as with the ideals and aims of all life... the best, the richest and the fullest experience possible, is good enough for man. The attainment of such as experience is not to be conceived as the specific problem of men but as their common purpose. Consequently, “growth is formed into meaningful habits through their expression in the social environment”. (Wingo, 1975, p. 170).

If we are to establish an ultimate criterion of teacher effectiveness, it is apparent that we must do so on the basis of the aims of education. As for Dewey, the aim of education is “Growth”; therefore, it is agreed that effective teachers are primarily those who contribute to the growth of students. But there is a universal agreement as to what aspects of growth are considered desirable. We can say that the difficulty in dealing with the concept of progressive growth is to realize the existence of instruments to measure all aspects of student growth.

As was discussed previously, growth is Dewey’s general concept for continuity of experience. He believes that learning by responding to environmental situations through experience is the progressive development and maturation of the nature of the child. From this we may conclude that Dewey’s progressivism in education is to generate the new ideas that are required for the growth of the individual and communities, intellectually and morally.

For Dewey, the aim of education is growth in personal judgment and social intelligence with morals. As Ozmon & Craver state, for growth in social intelligence to occur, the school must be organized and arranged so that the education it provides relates to the personal experience of the students, enters into their personal life, and
helps shape their judgment. All education, which develops power to share effectively in social life, is moral. As Dewey asserts in *Moral Principles in Education*, apart from participation in social life, the school has no moral end. The idea must affect how an individual relates ethically with others. As Dewey puts it, ultimate moral motives and forces are nothing more or less than social intelligence. (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p. 138).

As for Dewey’s conception of education for growth, it leads to the idea or goal that education is life itself. Dewey does not agree with traditionalists that education should be concerned with the training of the mind, that is, with man’s rational powers. Dewey’s argument against traditionalism is that education should be for the child’s life, not a preparation for life. He believes that education or knowledge should focus on the growth of the human being. Dewey takes offence against the older traditions of schooling as he disagrees with the basic idea of traditionalism that education is preparation for some relatively distant future in the life of the child. Today’s traditionalism puts the idea of education as preparation at the center of its educational philosophy and makes everything else subordinate. As Wingo states that:

> The purpose of the elementary school is preparation for the secondary school; the secondary school is preparatory for the college; and the college for the graduate school. The whole process is preparatory for adult life. When a child enters school at the age of five or six, he is embarking on a process of preparation for something that lies in a distant future (Wingo, 1975, p. 171).

Dewey argues that traditionalism in education with its educational program based on preparation always makes students lose their energy and motivation. Dewey attacks the idea of education as preparation for life by saying that “Children live in the present, and a distant future of which they can have little or no awareness provides
scant motivation for school tasks. This in turn leads to procrastination and idleness in the classroom. As the child sees it, if the future is so far off, there must be plenty of time to prepare for it, and there are so many things to do in the meantime. Thus, much time spent in school is aimless and barren of desired results” (Wingo, 1975, p.171).

On the contrary, Dewey asserts that education as growth progressively realizes present possibilities, and makes individuals better fitted to cope with later requirements. Growth or growing is not something which is complete in that moment, but it is a continuous leading into the future. If the internal and external environment of the school supplies conditions, which utilize adequately the present capacities of the child, who is immature, the future, which grows out of the present, is surely taken care of.

4.3.2 Argument against the Concept of Knowledge as Doing

For Dewey’s child-centrist approach, the concept of knowledge as doing or learning by doing is true knowledge or true learning. Experience and activity are the means of its learning. It produces skills, which are transferable, socially useful and highly sharable. We can say that the value of an activity in any form of social life can be judged by how far it is shared by all members of the group or community in which it takes place, and by how far the group shares its interests with other groups. For traditionalism’s teacher-centrist approach, true knowledge is absolutely more than doing: recollecting, reading, writing, listening, doing and so on can attain it. Dewey claims that traditional education substitutes a bookish approach that is focused on book learning, which makes intellectual discipline and also intellectual spirit. Children may secure, when they learn, specialized technical abilities in mathematics, language, literature and so on, but they do not have the kind of intelligence, which
directs ability to useful ends. How could traditionalists argue against Dewey’s concept of knowledge as doing? Here is the traditionalists’ argument.

1. Intellectual subject matter is attained by recollecting, reading, writing, listening, doing, and so on.

2. Knowledge is an intellectual subject matter.

3. Consequently, knowledge is attained by recollecting, reading, writing, listening, doing, and so on.

As we have discussed on Dewey’s concept of knowing as doing, we can conclude that Dewey’s child-centrist education emphasizes the individual child’s own experience through experimental / scientific method. It may be called learning by doing. Traditionalists would argue against Dewey’s concept of knowing as doing on two main aspects: First, learning through intellectual subject-matter leads students to reach true knowledge; and second, learning through the dialectic or Socratic Method is an appropriate learning for students to be intellectual and moral persons.

First, learning through intellectual subject matter leads students to reach true knowledge. For traditional education, it is true to say that the good curriculum is the curriculum that has a good learning method which emphasizes intellectual knowledge of philosophical or educational speculation that deal with reason through subject-matter. True knowledge or true learning should consist of a common core of subject matter, intellectual skills, and accepted values. This knowledge should properly involve the learning of basic skills, arts, and sciences that have been useful in the past and are likely to remain useful in the future. The basic education and basic skills are reading, writing, arithmetic, and also social behavior.

Briefly speaking, traditional education’s basic concept of the curriculum focuses on intellectual disciplines through subject matter. These intellectual
disciplines should be fundamental in the school curriculum, for they are basic in modern life. In the elementary school, reading, writing, and arithmetic provide indispensable generative skills. The essentials of the secondary school curriculum are science, mathematics, history, English, and foreign languages. These intellectual disciplines, the core of a liberal education, are humankind's most reliable tools in solving personal, social, political, and economic problems (Gutek, 1997, p. 268). It can be said that the subject matter is essential and designed to be transmitted to those who attend the school from the beginning.

Traditionalists would disagree with Dewey's pedagogy, which is called a philosophy of experience. Thus, traditionalists assert that the good curriculum must be based on subject matter, not experience. How do we determine traditional education's conception of subject—matter by rationality?

Plato believes that there are two worlds: the Intelligible World and the Sensible World. According to Plato, the sensible world or the world that we encounter in ordinary experience is a world of change, of becoming something new. Therefore, it is impossible to have knowledge of what it is or true knowledge. "Knowledge depended on what is" (Plato's The Republic, 1968, 157). For Plato, true knowledge could be gained only through the 'World of Ideas' or 'Intelligible World' which is eternal, ideal, unchanging, and perfect. By reason we can get true knowledge through the 'World of Ideas'. Grube states about the World or the Theory of Ideas that: The theory of 'ideas' is the belief in eternal, unchanging, universal absolutes, independent of the world of phenomena; in for example, absolute beauty, absolute justice, absolute goodness, from which whatever we call beautiful, just or good derives any reality it

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may have (Grube, 1970, p. 1). Ideas are quite independent of particulars: men may
come and men may die, they may even all die, but the idea of man, like that of beauty,
goodness and all the rest, would still exist” (Grube, 1970,p. 49).

Plato believes that people do not create knowledge, but discover it. According
to this view, each thing that exists on earth has a corresponding “Form” or perfect
idea that exists independently. For Plato, “Form is what is real and the reality of the
Forms follows from their being the objects of knowledge. If a man knows there must
be something that he knows and that ‘something’ must be real” (Cross & Woozley,
1964, p.180). As Plato states in The Republic, Book V: 476e-477a that:

If he does know something, it’s not begrudged him, but that we would be
delighted to see he knows something - but tell us this: Does the man who
knows, knows something or nothing? You answer me on his behalf.
I’ll answer,” he said, “That he knows something”.
Is it something that is or is not?
That is... (Plato’s The Republic, 1968, p.187)

Augustine accepts “Plato’s ideas of two worlds but he refers to the two worlds
as the World of God and the World of Man. The World of God is the world of Spirit
and the Good. The World of Man is the material world of darkness, sin, ignorance,
and suffering” (Ozmon& Craver, 1995,p. 6). Like Plato, Augustine asserts that people
do not create knowledge, but Augustine further believes that we get the true
knowledge through trying to find God.

Dewey claims that we know only our experiences. For Dewey, mind is real
but is just a function of behavior, which means that knowledge can be obtained from
the interaction of human beings with the environment around us, but mind does not
learn or know or obtain knowledge. Plato would argue against this view that behind
each individual human experience is a perfect Form or Idea. This Form or Idea is
what makes the individual human understandable to the human mind. Individual
humans come and go, but the Forms are immortal and indestructible. "The theory of
Forms maintains that there is a world of permanent, unchanging, and perfect entities
which are unaffected by variations in circumstances or conditions and which
comprises reality" (Cross & Woozley, 1964,p.184).

For Plato, there is the world of opinion (sensible world), consisting of all sense
objects. Then there is the knowable world (intelligible world), the world of Form or
Idea. The world of opinion is one of illusion and impermanence, but the knowable
world is real and permanent. "What is entirely, is entirely knowable; and what in no
way is, is in every way unknowable...Opinion is dependent on one thing and
knowledge on another, each according to its own power" (Plato's The Republic,

On this score, Plato would argue that mind is not only an instrument of human
behavior. Man needs to use the mind to compose so many great things and to ask
philosophical questions, and also to contemplate. Therefore, these activities do not
seem necessary for human behavior in scientific explanation but reason instead. Plato
would say that the mind obtains knowledge through recollection of the Forms.
Because of this view, one of Plato’s arguments for dualism focuses on the process of
obtaining knowledge through acquaintance with the Forms. For Plato, knowing is
"Remembering" or "Recollection". As Cross and Woozley put it:

As we indicated, the best place to see this aspect of the Forms is in Phaedo. It
is connected there with the doctrine that learning is recollection, that we had
knowledge of the Forms before we were born into this world, but lost it at
birth, and then are reminded of it again by our experience of the sensible
world so that we are enabled to judge the latter against the standard of the perfect Forms (Cross & Woozley, 1964, p.181).

In *Phaedo* 73-75, there was a conversation between Socrates and his friends: Our learning is simply recollection, if true also necessarily implies a previous time in which we have learned that which we now recollect. But this would be impossible unless our soul had been somewhere before existing in this form of man. ..What a man is to recollect he must have known at some previous time...All such knowledge is given us at the very moment of birth; for this is the only time which remain (Plato's *Dialogue: Phaedo*: 73-75, 1970).

We can see that this argument is based on the idea that all knowledge is simply a form of recollection. It can be concluded that for Plato, ultimate reality is idea and our mind as bridges. Man can contact the idea by means of the mind.

According to Plato, mind is evidenced having doubts; doubting is thinking; thinking gives evidence of the presence of intellect or of mind. In the idealist's perspective, the real world of mind and ideas is eternal, permanent, regular, and orderly but the world of appearance or of opinion is characterized by change, imperfection, irregularity, and disorder. In terms of the real and apparent, the educational task is to direct students from sensation and opinion to the reality of Ideas (Gutek, 1997, p.19).

Along with Plato, traditionalists believe that the highest aim of education should be directed toward the search for true Ideas or wisdom and that all people should strive for it. This means that Ideas or wisdom is the only true reality. Knowledge of the ultimate reality is impossible to attain through scientific method such as the method of observation or experimentation. Plato holds that truth cannot be found in the world of matter, because it is impermanent and ever changing.
“Students are encouraged to reach out towards the conceptual World of Ideas, rather than the perceptual world of sense data. The material world is not a real world, but it is analogous to the shadows and illusion with which the prisoners in the cave contend. Plato believes that one must break away from the chains of ignorance, greed and so on. Such a person would then be on the road to enlightenment and might become a philosopher” (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p. 15).

To have an intellectual discipline is to educate the child through subject matter. Plato thinks that all these subjects like culture, art, morality, history, philosophy and literature could develop students’ moral and spiritual effectively and efficiently. “The study of literature is found at the center of the curricular system because the subjects help students most in their search for ideal humanity and ideal society. Pure mathematics is also an appropriate discipline, since it is based upon universal a priori principles and it provides methods for dealing with abstractions”(Knight, 1998, p.45).

Plato points out that all these subjects are the preparation for dialectic and also for the training of dialecticians. This preliminary study will never force children to learn. “The study of calculation and geometry and all the other elements of institution, which are a preparation for dialectic, should be presented to the mind in childhood; not, however, under any notion of forcing our system of education” (Plato’s The Republic, 1991, p.284). This implies that all these subjects are preparatory education required for dialectic and they must be put before them as children. The institution must not be given the aspect of a compulsion to learn, because children as free men should not learn anything unintentionally.

This lets us know that traditionalists respect human behavior in terms of internal rather than external control. Plato emphasizes subject matter because he
believes that truth is Ideas and the curriculum must be set around those subjects that lead students to relate to Ideas. For the curriculum, Desmond Lee states in the introduction of Plato’s *The Republic* that:

According to Plato’s views of education, as far as its curriculum is concerned, after the primary stage, in which reading and writing are the important elements, the main subjects studied in school are literary and humanistic…and the other poets…literature and history of his country, and the equivalent of our Bible. And in the course of that study he would expect to learn something of the culture, history, and traditions of his own and of neighboring people, as well as the accepted moral and religious beliefs. At the university stage…their attention to mathematics, science, and philosophy…and dialectics, which simply means philosophy…So much for intellectual content. But Plato was as concerned to train the character as the mind, and throughout the account of the secondary stage of education he is insistent that its object is moral training as much as intellectual; the section on physical education ends with the emphatic assertion that physical and intellectual education are not concerned to deal one with the mind and one with the body but are jointly directed to the training of character…The curriculum must also be controlled and defined by the state (See Plato’s *The Republic*, 1975, pp.37-38).

According to Plato, genuine knowledge is immaterial, intellectual, and eternal - the perfect Forms on which it is based (Gutek, 1997, p.16). Plato believes that the highest aim of education for which all people should strive is wisdom or the conception of true Ideas. Plato maintains that education in such areas as art and science could lead students to the more speculative and abstract subjects of mathematics and philosophy. Plato gives less stress to the study of physical and
concrete areas than to the nonphysical and the abstract. For Plato and other traditionalists, the important thing is to arrive at the truth, which is eternal and perfect. Plato asserts that since truth is eternal and perfect, the truth cannot be found in the sensible world, the world of matter, because the sensible world is always changing and imperfect.

It is evident that mathematics is the subject that can possibly demonstrate eternal truth. Plato thinks that there should be other subject areas that could demonstrate the eternal or universal truth like mathematics. These subjects should be in the areas of politics, religion, and education. In The Republic, Plato clarifies the separation of the World of Ideas from the world of matter and asserts that the source of true knowledge is only from the World of Ideas. “The World of Ideas or Forms has the Good as its highest point, the source of all true knowledge. The world of matter, the ever changing world of sensory data, is not to be trusted” (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p.2).

According to The Republic Book II, Plato’s education has two main divisions of art, namely, music and gymnastics. Plato states “education is divided into gymnastics for the body and music for the soul. Music includes literature” (Plato’s The Republic, 1991, p. 72). On this point, “Whitehead recognizes that Platonic ideal is encouraged by art without interest in the origin of science” (Rusk, 1969, p.37). For Plato, education cannot begin too early and he thinks that the young should be trained both in mental (music) and physical (gymnastics) education, which is the best suited to the child’s mind. The main subjects in the curriculum proposed in The Republic for early education are music and gymnastics, and for the higher education all subjects should be prepared for the highest study of all which is dialectics.
Neither of the two arts of music and gymnastics are really designed, as is often supposed, for the training of the soul, and for the training of the body respectively. Music and gymnastics are equally designed for the improvement of the mind (Plato’s *The Republic*, 1991, p. 118). Further, Plato points out that music is in the form of amusement. How does music help gain the habit of good order in the child’s life? It seems that Plato focuses on the preparation for the child’s future life, that is, why ‘discipline’ is his concern. In the *Republic* Book IV, the discussion between Socrates and Adeimantus states that:

Our youth should be trained from the first in a stricter system, for if amusements become lawless, and the youths themselves become lawless, they can never grow up into well-conducted and virtuous citizen.

Very true, he said.

And when they have made a good beginning in play, and the help of music have habit of order, in a good manner how unlike the lawless play of the others! Will accompany them in all their actions and be a principle of growth to them… (Plato’s *The Republic*, 1991, p.135).

To sum up Plato’s scheme of higher education is to study through mathematics to metaphysics: “number is the first subject, geometry is the second, astronomy is the next of the instrumental subjects of the higher training, and the last of the studies preparatory to dialectics is music” (Rusk, 1969,p.24). For Plato, musical training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into inward places of the soul…that the result of a musical education should be the production of harmony and grace in the individual is repeated in the introduction to Plato’s treatment of higher education or education of the philosopher…Gymnastics as
well as music should begin in early years; the training in it should be careful and should continue through life (Rusk, 1969, pp. 17-18).

We have come to the second argument. Traditionalists would argue that learning through dialectics or Socratic Method is appropriate for students learning to be intellectual and moral persons. Whereas Dewey's child-centrist education emphasizes experimental method/problem-solving method, Plato focuses on dialectics or Socratic Method. Plato believes that the best method of teaching is dialectics, that is, from Socrates' ideas, which are transmitted orally through a dialectic question-and-answer approach. The idea begins with a thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis respectively. "Then you will make a law that they shall have such an education as will enable them to attain the greatest skill in asking and answering questions. Dialectics is the cornerstone of the sciences and is set over them. No other science can be placed higher" (Plato's The Republic, 1991, p. 282).

Ozmon & Craver state that Plato believes people are not mature enough for training in dialectics until they are thirty. "When they have arrived at the age of thirty, they will be placed in the select class and elevated to higher honor" (Plato's The Republic, 1991, p. 286). Plato views dialectics as a bridge for assisting people in moving from a concern with the material world to a concern with the World of Ideas. Supposedly, the dialectics crosses the dividing line between matter and Ideas. The process begins in the world of matter with the use of the brain, the tongue, gesture, and so forth; but it ends in the World of Ideas with the discovery of truth. In the Allegory of the Cave, Plato depicted prisoners chained in the world of darkness, seeing only shadows on a far cave wall that they took for a reality. Imagine one of these prisoners freed from his chains, advancing up a steep slope and into the sunlight, and eventually able to see the sun, realizing it as the true source of heat and light. He
would be happy in his true knowledge and would wish to contemplate it even more. Yet, when he remembers his friends in the cave and returns to tell them of the real world outside, they will not listen to someone who cannot now compete with them in their knowledge of shadows. The meaning of the allegory is this: we ourselves are living in a cave of shadows and illusions, chained by our ignorance and apathy. When we begin to loosen ourselves from our chains, it is the beginning of our education; the steep ascent represents the dialectics that will carry us from the world of matter to the World of Ideas – even to a contemplation of the Good represented by the sun. Plato’s admonition means that the man, now the philosopher, has advanced into the realm of true knowledge must return to the cave to bring enlightenment to the others. This points to Plato’s strong belief that philosophizing should be not only an intellectual affair but that the philosopher also has a duty to share his learning with others. (Ozmon& Craver, 1995, p. 3).

In Plato’s Republic, he divides people into three basic classes. According to educational system, the one who has been determined as having an intellectual potentiality will be selected to receive the education appropriate to his ability.

Conclusion can be made that though dialectics is a critical method of thinking, students can learn effectively and efficiently, but it requires a critical attitude, a background in mathematics, and extended study. It seems to the researcher that our schools today do not often use this method. The reason for this may be attributed to the restriction of the age of studying that is the learner should be mature.

Nevertheless, traditionalists believe that study of books is essential for reading and learning, because it emphasizes the comprehension of ideas rather than the mere

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memorization and classification of information. Above all are those books that emphasize the valuable/virtuous ideas that lead us not only to be intellectual but also moral persons. Strain argues for traditionalism in education, as he believes that "The basic education is a perfect synopsis of idealism philosophy of education; that is education should focus on heritage and culture, reading and writing, intelligence and morality. The thought pattern also encourages progress, strong institution, self-control, discipline, and importance of education" (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p. 128).

As for the traditional argument against Dewey’s knowledge as doing, we can say that traditional approach attempts to assert that the concept of its education and its knowledge is more meaningful and valuable than Dewey’s concept of learning by doing, which emphasizes scientific method. In traditionalists’ view, an education with a strong connection with scientific approach is the attempt of educators to emulate the methods of social sciences in acquiring information and to instill it in children; the attitude of this approach is neither meaningful nor and convincing, since it seems to have no purpose and no certain direction/goal for studying.

For Plato the dialectical method is set over the sciences. According to the method, it could produce quality citizens as dialecticians. Plato believes that those who study dialectical method should also possess natural gifts, which will facilitate their education.

Socrates, who discusses with Glaucon the importance of education of philosophical rulers in the city, states in the Republic Book VII that understanding, a good memory, and strength of character are required as natural gifts. As they put it:

Such gifts as keenness and ready powers of acquisition; for the mind more often faints from the severity of study than from entirely the mind’s own, and is not shared with the body.
Very true, he replied.

Further, he of whom we are in search should have a good memory, and be an unwearied solid man who is a lover of labor in any line; or he will never be able to endure the great amount of bodily exercise and to go through all the intellectual discipline and study which we require of him.

Certainly, he said; he must have natural gifts (Plato’s *The Republic*, 1991, p.282).

Now we consider Dewey’s concept of knowledge as growth, which is derived from the process of learning. How could traditionalists argue against it? Dewey writes in *Democracy and Education* that our net conclusion is that life is development, and that development, growing is life. This means that the educational process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end; and that the educational process is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, and transforming. Since growth is characteristic of life, education is all one with growth; it has no end beyond itself.

When Dewey’s progressivism concerning the aims of education is discussed, traditionalists always ask: Growth toward what? It can be concluded that traditionalists criticize the concept of growth on two bases: first, growth means to increase more learner’s experience, and second, growth could increase evil and falsehood.

Traditionalists argue that interpretation of these statements reach a point of absurdity. They would say that growth is purely quantitative, meaning increase in the size or more experiences. They thinks that Dewey’s statements on the concept of growth sometimes have been taken to mean that growth could increase evil and falsehood, because the concept of growth is regarded as *having* an end, instead of *being* an end which means that the concept of growth or development is not a
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Dewey’s progressive approach in education has its own end, which is not related to any external end. Traditionalism claims that its educational aim as intellect toward intellectual ideal of life is a fixed aim, whereas progressives’ aim of education as growth is not a fixed aim or aimless. How do we know that the concept of education for growth is a good educational aim?

Traditionalists view that Dewey’s concept of growth is a process and a process has to move toward some goal. But when Dewey says that ‘growth’ moves toward some goal that is ‘continued growth’, this never seems to satisfy his critics because the answer is ambiguous. Although Dewey asserts that it is growth toward the physical, intellectual, social, and moral ideals of life, if this growth is toward all these ideals of life, how could it increase evil and falsehood? Traditionalists would say that the most important thing is how can we know when growth is in the right direction as Dewey’s claims? Traditionalists consider that the process of growth as development could lead to evil goals and destruction, but Dewey argues that it is impossible and it could not be developed in a negative way. As he puts it “Education, as a continuing process of growth, free impulse, keeps habit flexible and adaptable to changed circumstances, and thus provides for future development of experience” (Wingo, 1975, p.170).

As for his conception of education Dewey defines growth as the characteristic of life and he further adds that growth as educational process has no end beyond itself and it is its own end. For Dewey, education is life. Traditionalists argue against his concept, because his statement means that life has no end beyond itself. This means that Dewey really wants to say that life itself moves toward nothing, and therefore life has no purpose. If life has no purpose, what is the meaning and value of human life? On this score, it seems to the researcher that traditionalists want to attack Dewey’s
conception of growth in terms of “meaning and value of life”, that is Dewey’s position is not totally clear, and his concept is aimless and meaningless. Traditionalists consider that Dewey attempts to reject the notion of value or virtue “sumnum bonum”, through which human beings strive to find the meaning of life.

Kohlberg is a traditionalist who criticizes Dewey’s aims of knowledge as growth as having no fixed end or ultimate end. He thinks that “Dewey’s philosophy of education as growth is open-ended, in the sense that proper growth in one context may lead to further growth in other contexts” (Ozmon & Craver, 1995, p. 138). Although Dewey asserts his perspective on growth in terms of the students and social context, that it is growth in personal judgment and social intelligence, it means that students participate in social life by the arrangement of the school. Schools provide and organize activities, which relate to the students’ personal experience and enter into their personal lives, which help them shape their judgment. Against this point, Kohlberg argues that it is only the experience of the individual in social contexts. He believes that to have the aim of education for the social context, Dewey’s conception of education should have purposefully developed with proper organization of curriculum, methods and social life. Therefore, Dewey has no fixed end for education nor for life.

Dewey’s view of education as growth has as its idea or slogan that education is life itself. Traditionalists are against this view for they hold that, it is a preparation for life. Wingo gives comparison between these two ideas that “education is life” is the theory of development of growth emphasizing the nature of the child and experience. This means that education involves both the inner nature of the child and the external environment in which the native powers of the child find meaningful expression. For “education is preparation for life” is the preparation theory; it
ignores the nature of the child and experience but focuses on teacher’s instruction and authority. It is something like ‘the teacher thinks the child should learn’ (Wingo, 1975, p.172).

In view of this argumentative discussion, good educational aims are not conceived around the child’s needs and interests, child’s native powers and experience, but are attained by giving guidance to the development of a suitable method, which is based upon intellectual discipline. Dewey’s conception of knowledge as growth is weak in the traditionalist’s view, because traditionalists are convinced that, according to Dewey’s theory, development or growth is aimless and meaningless. Thus, the idea of “education is life itself” is not convincing. The most convincing is “education is preparation for life”.

This argumentative discussion ends with Peters’ criticism of Dewey’s child-centrist approach that “Many philosophers who have been brought up in the revolution...are...rather aghast when they encounter what is often called ‘philosophy of education’ with its rather wooly chatter about growth...experience, creativeness, needs, interest, and freedom” (Peters, 1964, pp.141-142).

4.3.3 A Critical Analysis

Dewey’s involvement in education is both philosophical and program oriented. Dewey’s philosophy of experience is pedagogy and his pedagogy is a philosophy of experience. Dewey believes that knowledge is derived from experience through activities, which may be called experiential learning or learning by doing, but Plato asserts that “knowledge is knowledge of what is” (Pappas, 2000, p.128) which is permanent and can be attained through rationality or it may be called a priori knowledge. “In reason we have a faculty by which we can grasp universals (Plato’s
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Forms)" (Cross& Woozley, 1964, p.190). Dewey equates knowledge to knowing and knowing to doing, but for traditionalists, knowledge is more than doing, it is remembering or recollecting and also “listening to a lecture by the teacher, reading a portion of a book and learning the contents, engaging in drill as in arithmetic or spelling, or writing some kind of assigned composition” (Wingo, 1975, p.160).

For Plato, the existence of knowledge requires that there should be Forms, since they alone provide the appropriate object of knowledge (Cross& Woozley, 1964, p.188). Plato asserts that knowledge is remembering or recollection and the mind obtains knowledge through recollection of the Forms. Above all, it can be said that Plato’s idea of education on subject matter obviously leads children to be moral. “In the Republic, Plato himself advocates the use of literature for the exemplification of moral ideas, but these moral ideas have to be independently established” (Scolnicov, p.1988, p.25).

Following Darwin’s evolutionary theory of natural selection, Dewey came to believe that a productive and naturalistic approach to the theory of knowledge must begin with a consideration of the development of knowledge as an adaptive human response to environmental conditions. Dewey asserts that his theory of knowledge is unlike the traditional approach to the theory of knowledge in which the thought is seen as subjective, out of which knowledge was composed. In Dewey’s view, thought is the product of the interaction between organism and environment, and knowledge is having practical instrumentality in the guidance and control of that interaction.

Dewey claims that knowledge is experience; experience is doing; thus knowledge is doing. “Dewey’s theory of knowledge is introduced for illustration, not discussion” (Schilpp & Hahn, 1989,p.58). Dewey’s own position is that a genuine interaction of interest and effort is generated when the person or children confront
experience in problematic terms. Children need to resolve problems in both intellectual and practical ways. Dewey's child-centrist approach violates the child's nature in which he/she has been developed by reading, writing, memorizing, arithmetic, geometry, and so on, because he believes that true knowledge must bring experiential learning with scientific method, not intellectual subject matter. Therefore, he asserts that the true correlation on the school subjects is not science, nor literature, nor history, nor geography, but the child's own social activities. Critics say that Dewey's approach seems idealistic and many schools, educators and teachers are against its implementation.

Dewey also claims that education is life and he argues against traditional approach to education saying that if education is life and all life has a scientific aspect, an art and cultural aspect, a social aspect, a communicative aspect etc., it cannot be true to say that the proper studies for children is only to emphasize the three Rs, - reading, writing, and arithmetic. Therefore, development of new attitudes and new interests toward experience should be introduced and considered. Herman Harrell Horne argues "all the various subjects are only to be used as means to the end of living completely through understanding life. Information will become knowledge, books will become tools, and the best ideas will become ideals" (Butler, 1968, p.214). The researcher agrees with Horne and thinks that to approach study by attending to books is not bad in itself but that the child has to realize that the intention is not only for himself but is also for the social needs, which means that practical study or activity is needed more. The researcher also thinks that learning and reading great or famous books will result not only in the transmission of knowledge, but also the transmission of values because great ideas and writings of the past may provide insights. As Bloom puts it in *The Closing of the American Mind*, referring to Plato's
Republic, "(it) is for me the book on education, because it really explains to me what experience as a man and a teacher, and I almost always used it to point out what we should hope for, a teaching moderation and resignation". (Bloom, 1987, p. 381)

On the other hand, the researcher also wonders if children learn too much from books that deal solely with the past, can they attain new knowledge in this contemporary world, which is constantly changing with the developments in science and technology? The conclusion may be drawn that schools should provide a curriculum, which deals with the present and future that is practical for real life situations.

As for the concept of education as growth, it can be said that if Dewey’s idea of education is life itself and the method of learning focuses on the scientific and problem-solving method, Dewey would not pay attention solely to the present but would also look towards the future in order to develop the whole life of the child. According to the reconstruction of experience, we could say that students could accumulate knowledge through the process of experience. Past and present experiences are mixed and molded into one and it will be used as a basis for the future.

4.3.4 Summary and Conclusion: The Researcher’s Viewpoint

This research presents the emphasis of Dewey’s progressive education in “learning by doing” or “practical study” and traditional education that focuses on “the lesson/subject matter” or “intellectual study”. Both are assumed to be inappropriate educational aim according to its theory and practice and further it may not be the best systems of education for the purpose of developing the whole life of the child.
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The researcher concludes that Dewey’s aim of education as growth, in which teachers focus their teaching on experience of the individual child’s needs and interests in real-life or problematic situations, is necessary and sufficient for the development of children’s skills, activities, and thinking. This is meaningful foundation of practical study, but that it is not sufficient for developing the whole life of the child, because it lacks the academic standard which can be attained from intellectual subject matter or textbooks. The researcher also concludes that the aim of traditional education as wisdom, in which teachers stress knowledge or intellectual subject-matter, is also necessary and sufficient for an academic-based grounding and for academic standards, is a valuable foundation of intellectual study’s life of the child. Nevertheless it is not sufficient for the development of the child’s skills, practical activities, and creative thinking.

The researcher believes that the appropriate aim and form of education should not be based exclusively on just the progressive or on just the traditional approach, nor the child-centrist versus the teacher/subject-centrist approaches, nor on experience versus knowledge, nor on practical versus intellectual studies, nor on the individual child’s needs and interests versus the teacher’s discipline and authority and so on. There should be a possibility to strike a balance on this matter, not relying excessively on a single aspect. The researcher agrees with Whitehead when he asserts that the appropriate aim of education must be both, without both approaches, it would be useless. For this, Whitehead refers to both of them in terms of “inductive logic” and “deductive logic” that refers to “experience” and “subject-matter” respectively.

The main purpose of this research is to ascertain and answer the question “How do we strike a balance between practical study/experience and intellectual study/subject-matter?” “How do we make a balance between the individual child’s
needs and interests by the means of individual freedom, and intellectual discipline by the means of the teacher’s authority and subject matter?"

For the reconciliation of the two positions, the researcher has discovered that there is an alternative view on the philosophy of education that may bring the position of this research to a meaningful and acceptable (to both sides) conclusion. The researcher takes the liberty of making her own contribution.

The researcher accepts Dewey’s progressivism in education, however, she does not go a long to affirm Dewey’s progressivism on child-centrist approach as being the starting point of the position of her contribution. The starting point of the researcher’s position is on the traditionalism’s intellectual subject matter or intellectual education. The followings shall provide her argument:

Theologically and spiritually speaking, the researcher pays much attention to the goal of education, especially its final goal of education and asserts that it is the Absolute Truth. Dewey disagrees with the goal of the traditional approach’s idealism, which believes that the goal is static and perfect, that goal cannot be changed according to changing situations. For Dewey, his progressive educational goal is not static as nothing is perfect. For him, the goal could be flexible according to changing situations, such as practical or experimental study. Therefore, the good educational goal should be the ends in view of change and should be adaptable to situations and not fixed or final. Dewey further asserts that the ends and the means cannot be separated. For him, if there is no imposition of the ends, there is no action or means; and if the end is separated from the means, the action is meaningless. We may conclude that for Dewey, a good educational aim should be the ends in view or ends in particular situations, which can be changed according to the environment. On the
contrary, for the traditional approach, the ends is separated from the means. Thus, the ends cannot be justified by the means nor related to the means or action.

All this brings us to conclude that each of the educational philosophies has its own approach to reaching the truth. It seems to the researcher that teacher/subject-centrist traditionalism views intellectual subject matter as the means to enabling children to achieve the final goal of life, worldly and religiously. It is a guide to develop children's life effectively and harmoniously. Under such an assertion, Dewey's position in child-centrist progressivism – which assumes the individual child's experience and practical activities, its scientific and problem-solving methods as the venues - would never bring children to attain authentic life or the final goal of life as the possible consequence of its method is so uncertain and undefined.

In fact, Dewey's progressivism in education could be good in theory and an effective practical study for developing the children in their world as its educational theory and practice considers details from only the physical world and ends up at the same level. Nevertheless we may conclude that such a position is not effective in both theory and practice for the development of children religiously or spiritually since it stresses more on the worldly. Progressivism based its perspective upon the foundation of Darwin's theory of evolution by the means of natural selection, followed by pragmatism that denies the Absolute Truth. These practices can never lead the children to attain the absolute happiness of living as it denies the existence of God, which is undeniable when one inescapably encounters his own religiosity.

The researcher thinks and believes that if the school curriculum could be designed with an emphasis on the foundation of education based upon traditional approach's intellectual education with the subject-matters including the three Rs of basic education - reading writing, and arithmetic - then children would not only have
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a strong intellectual or knowledge base, but will also have a good and solid moral base. In addition, the curriculum could also be designed and based on progressive approach's concept of experience or practical and life activities, which consists of the true experience of students. By doing this, the traditional form of knowledge according to Plato's Theory of Forms is instilled and incorporated in the curriculum together with the metaphysical position, which is unverifiable and indescribable. Besides, Dewey's progressivism, which stresses experience through learning by doing and the problem-solving method are also incorporated in the school curriculum.

Whereas Dewey's aim of education is "growth" and the goal of education is "life", the traditional approach takes the position that the aim of education is "wisdom or intellect" and the goal of education is "preparation for life." The suggested position of the researcher in terms of the aim of education would be "individual and intellectual growth", and its goal would be "education is life and preparation for life." It has been stated that different thoughts of education have different aims and goals, therefore, generally speaking, the aim and goal of all educational philosophies seems to be the same, that is, to educate and develop children to be good citizens; they are different only in their use of the means to reach the ends. Integrating both ideas, the physical and intellectual aspects of both, the prosperity to the life of the student and blessing to the society should not be far away to reach. How great it is when one can live with the others in the community socially, morally, and spiritually.

In fact, the researcher's position may be set out in a format following Hegel's dialectics as follows:

1. An appropriate aim of education should have a curriculum based on subject matter. (Thesis)
2. An appropriate aim of education should have a curriculum based on experience. (Antithesis)

3. An appropriate aim of education should have a curriculum based on both subject matter and experience. (Synthesis)

The synthesis that stands at the conclusion of this argument is the researcher’s position.

In conclusion, the aim of education, in the researcher’s position, should be that education is the development of the child’s whole life, it is a bridge between child-centrist progressivism and teacher/subject-centrist traditionalism. The researcher realizes that a perfect educational thought pattern is close to impossible; nevertheless, as long as we desire and strive for a new betterment for our educational world, an integrated and thoughtful educational aim should not be far beyond reach. The integrated aim and model so proposed is the ideal of the philosophy of education the researcher has dreamed of.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Progressivism and traditionalism give only partial accounts of education emphasizing exclusively either education as the transmission of the social heritage or education as individual development. The two opposing views - Dewey's child-centrist progressivism and teacher-centrist traditionalism - give a clue to the strength and weakness of these two educational theories. While Dewey's progressive aim of education is 'growth,' that of traditional is 'wisdom.' In traditional approach, education can be attained from knowledge, and knowledge is the knowledge of 'what is' through intellectual subject matter which maybe called 'learning by remembering' or 'recollecting,' as for Dewey's progressive approach, education is attained from experience, called 'learning by doing'. We have thoroughly discussed and criticized these two views in chapter IV.

This research attempts to present Dewey's progressivism on the aim of child-centrist education in order to see its merit and demerit. The purpose of this research is not to defend nor refute any aspect of the views but to propose a new contribution to the philosophy of education by reconciling the two opposing views.

The researcher began with an investigation of the philosophical orientation in Dewey's progressivism, in which we learned that Dewey, as a leading proponent of pragmatism in education, has shaped the philosophy of education throughout the twentieth century. The foundation of Dewey's pragmatism or progressivism is based on Darwinian theory of evolution by the means of natural selection. According to its theory, there is no unchanging or absolute truth. Man is relative to the condition of the environment and circumstances provided by nature. We have discovered that the idea
of evolution affected not only the concept of nature, but also theories of knowledge and of value. According to Dewey’s idea of evolution, the changing of species in nature obviously implies changing knowledge. Therefore, for Dewey, knowledge is impermanent and always subject to change. Traditionalists like Plato, apparently take the other position. For them, knowledge is permanent and unchanging because the objects upon which knowledge is built are regarded as permanent and unchanging. From this point we have considered the argumentative discussion on Dewey’s Darwinian theory of natural selection both metaphysically and critically according to the concept of change and chance. Dewey’s rejection of Plato’s dualistic and absolutistic tradition was the main point of the discussion. Dewey’s implication of natural selection can be characterized as a scientific explanation, but Plato’s dualism is characterized as a religious explanation: Science or Religion? Chance or Design? “It means that Plato’s interest in cosmology was a moral interest rather than a scientific one in the modern sense” (Chambliss, 1990, p. 16). The implication of Dewey’s approach leads to a concept of curriculum based on children’s development through experience rather than focusing on student’s development in terms of the ideal based on the subject matter instead of experiences.

In education, Dewey founded the so-called progressive education movement, in which he interprets the world in terms of change. He sees schools as the primary vehicles for this transformation to come about. From Darwinian theory of natural selection, Dewey borrows the idea that progressive change is natural. In this context, the schools begin to develop around the idea that the purpose of education is to socialize children and to enable them to fit into a changing society.

We have seen how Dewey utilizes Darwin’s theory of natural selection to explain his notion of development in education. Experimentalism or instrumentalism
becomes Dewey's educational foundation, which he called the 'child-centrist education'. Dewey believes that the basic assumption of pragmatism or experimentalism as scientific method can resolve most problems in education, especially social problems. In pragmatic principles, the universe is in process and everything is in constant change, therefore, education must also be a learning process. Dewey believes that experimental science is the best method for learning and acting upon experience. The scientific method can also be applied to social problems and social experiences. Through these principles, values arise from particular contexts and consequences. Furthermore, we have learned that in the context of child-centrist approach, democracy is the principle of cooperation and participation among students, and teachers in schools.

This dissertation has explored the distinction between progressivism's child-centrist and traditionalism's teacher-centrist education. Dewey's progressivism or child-centrist education can be summarized into six aspects as follows:

First, education should be life itself, not a preparation for living; second, learning should be directly related to the interests of the child; third, learning through problem-solving should take precedence over the inculcating of subject matter; fourth, the teacher's role is not to direct but to advise; fifth, the school should encourage cooperation rather than competition; and sixth, only democracy permits, and indeed, encourages the free interplay of ideas and personalities that is a necessary condition of true growth (Arthur & Cogan, 1981, p.87).

Traditionalism in education can be summarized into four main aspects according to purpose, curriculum, role of teacher, and role of school.
First, from the standpoint of the individual, the purpose of education is intellectual discipline and moral discipline and these two are intimately related. From the standpoint of society, the purpose is to transmit the essential portion of the total heritage to all who come to school. Second, the curriculum of the school is an ordered series of subject matters, intellectual skills, and essential values that are to be transmitted to all who come to school. Third, teaching is, in essence, transmitting. The art of teaching is the art of transmitting effectively and efficiently. The teacher is the active agent in the transmitting process. Fourth, the role of the school in society is preserving and transmitting essential core of culture. As an institution, the school has no call for reforming or altering the historic character of society, except that it is the function of the school to contribute incidentally to the ordered evolutionary process of change (Wingo, 1975, pp.62-63).

We have discussed Dewey's claim's concerning the concept of child-centrist education. Dewey asserts that this concept is centered on the development and growth of the individual child's needs and interests through experience. This brings the researcher to see Dewey's disagreement with traditionalism. The researcher has earlier shown the argumentative discussion in traditionalist's attack on Dewey's concept of the child-centrist approach. First, traditionalists argue that the concept of individual child's needs and interests based upon freedom would lead him to learn without discipline in educational life and personal life. Second, traditionalists also argue that Dewey's child-centrist education promotes the development of good life of individual child, not good society. The controversy over these two views is both convincing and acceptable in their theories but the researcher thinks that they still
have weaknesses when either one of these two theories alone is translated into educational practices.

Furthermore, we have looked into Dewey’s concept of knowledge as ‘doing’. The discussion concerning the concept of natural selection emphasizes Dewey’s rejection of dualistic tradition and the Absolute.

For traditionalists, knowledge can be obtained through intuition and reason, unlike Dewey’s knowledge of the physical world which is dependent on experiences. Plato believes that knowledge of the ultimate reality is not possible through the methods of observation, experimentation, etc. “For Plato, we can find the truth by having an experience of a certain kind or unknown” (Chambliss, 1990, p.44).

For Dewey, knowledge is by its very nature, dynamic. It changes and progresses continuously. This is why Dewey sees knowledge as knowing, with its importance lies in that it knows something, and knowing the way to find it out.

Undoubtedly, Dewey also critically discussed the concept of education or knowledge as growth, in the issue of “Growth towards what?” But for traditionalists, the concept of growth is aimless. They asked, “How could child-centrist education be a good educational aim? If child-centrist education has no good educational aim, how could it enable and develop children’s whole life? Under such challenge, Dewey’s aim of child-centrist education appears to be weak and unconvincing.

So far we have arrived at the end of critical review. We have already discussed all the three argumentations on the concept of natural selection, the concept of child-centrist approach, and the concept of knowledge as doing. In addition, the concept of knowledge as growth is also discussed in chapter IV. We have taken them into consideration that both Dewey’s progressivism on child-centrist approach and traditionalism on teacher-centrist approach are right in their theories but may not be
all effective in their practices. The researcher concludes that the two theories are vital and crucial for today's education, but either one alone is not sufficient to be considered as being good and meaningful aim of education in enabling and developing children's whole life. The researcher, therefore, would like to propose that these theories be adopted along the following line.

To have a good and meaningful educational aim, the researcher believes that it would be better to reconcile the two theories in order to complete their position effectively and efficiently. A good teacher with competence and good practices should adopt elements of both positions carefully and effectively. To illustrate how inter-dependent the two approaches are, they have to consider the integration of the slogans of traditional education's "We teach subject", and of the progressive education's "We teach children". They are all true in their beliefs and viewpoints. The important thing is that they require each other. This means that for subject matters, we cannot teach subjects without children; and for children, we cannot teach them without subjects. This brings us to a better understanding that it is impossible to have knowledge without skills, to have intellectual subject matter without experience, or to have skills without knowledge. The researcher believes that the two opposing approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive but definitely reconcilable. A good curriculum that leads to a good educational aim should be based on intellectual subject matter, students' needs, and interests through experience. This is definitely necessary for the full development of the whole person.

Humbly speaking, it seems that those who take too extreme a position without leaving room for others' opinion is an attempt to destroy the development of the whole life of the child unintentionally. In contemporary education, the researcher personally takes the position that teachers should not limit themselves to commit to
only one aspect of philosophy of education. Teachers should master different views of philosophies.

**Suggestion and Recommendations**, as for the reconciliation of the two opposing thoughts at the end of chapter IV, it is the hope of the researcher that there should be an integration of the two opposing views, namely, a balance of curriculum between traditional education's subject matter and progressive education's experience. There is no guarantee, nor certainty that the researcher could assert her contribution to satisfy all practitioners, philosophers of education, educators, teachers, and students. Nevertheless, in theory, the result of this study is a worthwhile effort to establish an appropriate aim for modern educational practices. In practice, it still allows both the progressives, who prefer promoting and enjoying only individual freedom of the child's needs and interests, and the traditionalists, who still want to emphasize only intellectual subject matter to go their ways without committing to endless and meaningless fighting.

In reflection, the researcher suggests that the argument on the justification of John Dewey's aim of education be improved and recommended for further studies on this issue. The researcher observes that there are many philosophers of education and educators who see the problems of the two opposing thoughts and have proposed new alternatives of educational thought pattern as appropriate or better ways for teaching and learning in the contemporary world of education, among others, those of Paul Hirst¹ and Whitehead². Their views should be taken into consideration for further studies as they aim to reconcile these two contradictory views.

¹ Hirst is one of philosophers of education who attempts to bridge between child-centrist progressivism and teacher/subject-centrist traditionalism and his starting point to design the curriculum of the schools is Plato's traditional education. Hirst presents an approach to intellectual education, which views "forms of knowledge", as a distinct way to Plato's traditional education. Hirst does not take Plato's metaphysical position in the Theory of Forms. Hirst presents his forms of knowledge in *Logic of Education*, which underlies the reconciliation between these two approaches to education. As Allen
It is the hope of the researcher that further studies shall continue to commit to the effort of conciliation of all philosophies of education in order to produce the most appropriate aim of philosophy of education for generations to come.

Brent states, like Plato, Hirst considers that there are forms of knowledge on which our claims to knowledge and our corresponding claim about curriculum are founded, but unlike Plato, Hirst's forms do not exist in some metaphysical realm that is unverifiable and indescribable. (Brent, 1978) Hirst's forms of knowledge may be called "modes of experience", or "forms of rationality." These forms do not represent disciplines or courses or subjects. They are logical types of knowledge and rationality out of which subjects are built" (Hamm, 1989). See. Allen Brent. *Philosophical Foundation for the Curriculum.* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978,) p.94. and also see Cornel M. Hamm. *Philosophical Issues in Education: An Introduction.* (NY: The Palmer Press, 1989), p. 62.

2 Whitehead was especially interested in Plato's philosophy. He attempted to reconcile the difference between science and human experience. He proposed a metaphysical system in semi-mathematical form. His objective was to create a pattern of ideas in which everything we can know can be interpreted as a particular instance of a general scheme. His writings highlight important themes in education: 'There is only one subject-matter for education, and that is Life in all its manifestation.' See. Joy A. Palmer. (ed.). *Fifty Major Thinkers on Education: From Confucius to Dewey.* (London: Routledge, 2001) p.201.
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