THE CONCEPT OF INDEPENDENT LEARNING IS VIEWED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THOMAS LICKONA'S CHARACTER EDUCATION

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Abstract

This research wants to describe the perspective of character education from the thinking of Thomas Lickona which is linked to the free learning program pioneered by the Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesian (Kemendikbud) namely Nadiem Makarim, as a form of efforts to make the policy of independent learning plan has a concept in educating and improving the quality of personality of learners who are expected to have good traits, honest, devoted to parents, and responsible. The purpose of Thomas Lickona's education is to make the character of the child noble and smart using the method

of shaping the child's personality in order to become a society, as well as a good citizen. This research has a qualitative approach and uses descriptive methods by collecting data and analyzing related programs of independent learning and character education of Thomas Lickona. The results of this study are expected to instil good habits so that students understand, can feel and want to do good.

Keywords: *Independent Learning, Character Education, Thomas Lickona*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini ingin mendeskripsikan perspektif pendidikan karakter dari pemikiran Thomas Lickona yang terkait dengan program pembelajaran gratis yang dirintis oleh Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia (Kemendikbud) yaitu Nadiem Makarim, sebagai bentuk upaya pembuatan kebijakan tersebut. Rencana pembelajaran mandiri mempunyai konsep dalam mendidik dan meningkatkan kualitas kepribadian peserta didik yang diharapkan memiliki sifat yang baik, jujur, berbakti kepada orang tua, dan bertanggung jawab. Tujuan pendidikan Thomas Lickona adalah menjadikan karakter anak yang berakhlak mulia dan cerdas dengan metode pembentukan kepribadian anak agar menjadi masyarakat, sekaligus warga negara yang baik. Penelitian ini memiliki pendekatan kualitatif dan menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan mengumpulkan data dan menganalisis program-program terkait pembelajaran mandiri dan pendidikan

karakter Thomas Lickona. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan dapat menanamkan kebiasaan yang baik agar siswa mengerti, dapat merasakan dan ingin berbuat baik.

Kata Kunci: *Pembelajaran Mandiri, Pendidikan Karakter, Thomas Lickona*

Introduction

Indonesia is one of the countries with a beautiful geographical state, this country has a variety of languages, tribes, and culture (Cahyo, 2017). But it seems that ethical education that concerns one's character in Indonesia is still arguably weak. There have been many people who have launched a way to fix per problem (Sutiyono, 2013). In fact, there are still many problems in this nation, such as fights between students, bullying, the number of corruptors, deprivation, narcotics, free association, rape, sexual crimes, murder even until some are mutilated and various other problems that can change the beauty of the Indonesian nation to disappear (Cahyo, 2017).

Such problems can not be denied, because in life there must be a problem that we face. However, the situation that is being experienced by this country should be addressed immediately, because the problem suggests that the moral crisis faced by this country is very worrying (Cahyo, 2017). Education is one of the media that is believed to be a powerful solution in making people achieve their welfare (Magfiroh, 2020; Bali & Holilah, 2021).

Therefore, the learning is intensely formed and raised in order to create a generation that can be expected. Related to this study, self-government has been paying attention since the time of the old order until now. The government continues to improve the education sector by changing strategies that are believed to be less effective in fixing moral problems in humans (Rahman et al., 2019). This is done no other because it wants to reduce the burden of ethical problems in this nation. Proven by some policies that have been established by the government in the education sector. Starting from a compulsory learning program, providing educational assistance to the poor, as

well as various other programs in making the nation's education become increasing (Magfiroh, 2020).

One of the policy breakthroughs in the education sector that are being conducted by the ministry of education is the "freedom of learning" program. Nadiem Makarim as the Minister of education and culture (*Kemendikbud*) is currently creating a freedom of learning program that aims to create happiness in the educational process for students and educators (Bay, 2019). Nadiem Makarim as the ministry of education issued the policy, namely the free learning program with the reason because there are still many problems related to education, especially those aimed at human empowerment and the perpetrators (Baro'ah, 2020).

Overall, the freedom of learning program designed by the Ministry of Education, Nadiem Makarim, has four important points, namely the replacement of the national exam format (UN) which is changed with a minimum competency assessment system as well as character surveys, restoring USBN (National StandardIzed School Exam) rights to schools, changing the method of work on

RPP (Learning Implementation Plan) only 1 sheet and increasing quotas on the achievement path in the acceptance of new students to 30% which was only 15% (Baro'ah, 2020).

Lately, public discussions are often about program freedom of learning which is issued because of the large number of complaint in the education system. For example, students who are required to have certain values, even educators are required to achieve their destination goals (Baro'ah, 2020; Bali & Musrifah, 2020). It can make students and teachers feel the burden of obtaining grades or targeted goals by the learning system. Such is established in the government's policy in 2007 on graduation limits achieved, where the provision requires students who explore national tests must have an average score of 5.25 for all subjects if they want to be declared graduated (Efendi, 2020).

The situation can also influence the mentality of students who are certainly not graduating so weakened, out of spirit in learning, it could also be that students choose to quit their education (Rozi et al., 2020). Therefore,

freedom of learning program is issued so that learning no longer makes students difficult with the standard of grades that seem to perforate and ease the burden of educators in pursuing targets that must be achieved (Efendi, 2020).

As research conducted by Siti Baro'ah in her journal entitled freedom of learning policy as a strategy to improve the quality of education. He said that quality in the world of learning is something that distinguishes between good and the opposite. So it is clear that quality is the main problem that wants to guarantee a learning institution in achieving status in the midst of competition in the world of learning. Learning is an empowerment process that is expected to empower learners to be smart human beings, knowledgeable and knowledgeable human beings, and educated people (Baro'ah, 2020).

Therefore quality learning is a necessity that must be improved by all educational institutions. The government also plays a meaningful role in improving the quality of education, not only so that the authorities channel funds, but the government is also authorized to

ensure policies related to quality improvement. As well as an independent learning program that is expected to contribute more to the development of quality human energy sources, so that the heritage and ability of the nation can fill development in all fields (Baro'ah, 2020).

The concept of Merdeka Belajar explains to us that one way to advance the nation is by improving its education. Therefore, an educator in the *Merdeka Belajar* program plays an important role in schools to improve the ability of students. The role of educators is also not just to be a person who only delivers his lessons (transfer of knowledge), but in this program, educators are also required to deliver lessons along with the values contained in the lesson (Efendi, 2020).

The growth of education also concerns the development of educators abilities, because it is impossible for educators to make changes, implement educational innovations and form students to be more critical if learning still does not have the skills to make changes that exist in them (Oktavia et al., 2019). Not only that, academic expertise must be raised by educators in

becoming *suri tauladan* (*uswatun hasanah*). Hopefully from all levels of learning has the expertise to give birth to the successor of the life of a nation that has intellectually critical thinking and is able to have skills or good personalities (Efendi, 2020).

But we must underline about the case of personalized learning is not only the responsibility of educators but the shared responsibility in achieving its goals. A kind of character education pioneered by Thomas Lickona. He said that inefficient character education there is a cooperation between family and school. The family is believed to be the source of the initial kindness. A family is a place where we learn about compassion, commitment and sacrifice (Lickona & Zien, 2013).

Character education is lifelong learning as a form of growth towards human *kaafah*. Therefore, character education requires thoroughness and touch from an early age until age. A very sensitive period as well as ensuring in education lies in family learning because it is the responsibility of parents. Parenting patterns or ways of educating children become one of the aspects that

significantly contribute to shaping the personality of the child (Bali & Ruzifah, 2021). Learning in the family is the main and early learning for children, which cannot be replaced by any learning institution. Therefore learning in the family, to build a community of leaner about children's learning, in need of a learning policy in an effort to build the personality of the nation on a prolonged basis (Lickona, 2012).

Lickona is one of the many character education figures who have the ability to harmonize theory and practice in the moral issues faced by educators. According to him, character education has the main goal which is to make students not only feel independence when doing the learning process but can produce a person who has good character strength and smart. One such example is having respect and responsibility to have a relationship in a positive personal life in society (Lickona & Zien, 2013). Hal is in line with the purpose of the freedom of learning program initiated by the Ministry of Education today, which is to form a learning atmosphere for students and happy educators (Efendi, 2020).

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Based on the explanation above, it can be known that the main point behind this problem is the lack of character education in Indonesia that results in a deterioration in performance and even morality owned by the learner. But in this study also explained the character education of Thomas Lickona as a form of a solution in making the character of the child better.

From a variety of intentions, purposes, and theories. This research focuses on the perspective of Lickona's character education as a form of ideas to advance independent learning programs at the elementary and secondary school level. So that the ideal learning process is created both in terms of achievement and morality.

Method

This research can be grouped as a type of literature study research (library research*)* by conducting the process of study about various existing documents as well as some additional data that still have implications with the object of study (Hasan, 2008). This research is included

in qualitative approach using a descriptive method that focuses its efforts on the analysis of information that is considered valid about certain phenomena and topics, at a certain time in order to produce a product of a process, which is then done objectively based on empirical data on the phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2013).

The source of this research is obtained from literature excavated from various sources related to the policy plan of freedom of learning and character education. Other data sources are taken from secondary data in the form of significant literature and helped this research, both in the form of books, journals, newspapers, magazines (Musfiqon, 2012).

The source data obtained will be collected and then analyzed and interpret the data by describing the meaning of the data obtained so that it is more understandable. After that author conducts a data wetness check with triangulation techniques, it is done to avoid data errors. Where researchers will confirm and look again at related sources, theories and methods that relate to the title of the article.

Results and Discussion

The Concept of Freedom of Learning in Primary and Secondary Education

Starting from Latin, the concept word is spoken as "*Consipere*" which has the meaning of covering, taking, and capturing. The word "*Consipere*" is formed a word "*Conceptual*" in its meaning called catch or catch. While from the scientific dictionary of The Indonesian language the concept of possessing definition becomes a general concept, thought, understanding and basic design (Hilmansyah, 2015).

From the book entitled *The Classical Theory of Concepts,* Aristotle revealed that concept is the main point or basic distiller in the creation of new science, and scientific knowledge. While Soedja revealed that the concept is an idea that has an abstract nature. Where the idea can used to do grouping a common thing stated by a term or series of words (Syamri, 2015).

In the era of President Jokowi's second term, appear an education strategy that has recently been discussed in public space, the program is freedom of learning which

was pioneered by the current Minister of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) Nadiem Makarim. He said that freedom of learning is freedom of thought for students and educators. Especially the nature of freedom of thought for it must be owned by educators because if it does not apply to automated educators it can not be felt by the students (Mua'malah, 2020).

Merdeka Belajar program pioneered by the Ministry of Education today, just like the among method used by Ki Hadjar Dewantara in the learning process. Among this has a meaning that is, accompanying and directing students to maintain their inner survival. That is, teachers can not only let their students develop by themselves, but also participate in maintaining and establishing the character of students and the character of the local cultural environment so that students can master themselves (Mujito, 2014).

The among method run by Ki Hadjar Dewantara uses teaching that emphasizes awareness among individuals towards their students. In the system, this among method has two basics namely. *First,* there is the

freedom that is a condition in moving and injecting energy both physically and mentally, so that people can live freely. And the second is the power of God to be qualified in reviving and achieving optimal progress (Mujito, 2014).

Nadiem Makarim as The Minister of Education and Culture makes this program is not without basis, because education in Indonesia according to researchers *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) in 2019 showed the evaluation results in students in Indonesia ranked in the bottom 6. In literacy and mathematics, Indonesia ranks 74th out of 76 countries. From the results of the research was made a policy by applying the concept of *Merdeka Belajar* (Bali, 2020).

Overall there are four points means that want to be done at the beginning of the application of the concept of independent learning. *First*, there are modifications to the format of the Nasional (UN) exam. *Second,* the return of the national standardized school exam (UASBN) in their respective schools. *Third,* the change in the format of RPP (Learning Implementation Plan) is enough 1 sheet. *Fourth,* the increase of the achievement path in the acceptance of

new students (PPDB) to 30% which was previously only 15%. Of the four points means, the Merdeka Belajar program wants to make ease and flexibility in students and teachers related to education that focuses not only on values but also on character learning. This, basically this program is done because it wants to make educators and students happy in the learning process (Mujito, 2014).

As stem education in this independent learning program is to be designed in such a way that the personality of students created, and not focused on the ranking system that is troubling for teachers but also children and parents it is evidenced from various research. Not only that but with the rankings will also arise discrimination where there is a predicate between the smart and the less smart. This problem must be a very error when applied in the world of learning because, in essence, the child has intelligence each in him or who is often spoken with multiple intelligent (Baro'ah, 2020).

Howard Gardner is an expert in modern psychology at Harvard University who brought up multiple intelligent theory, in his theory he interpreted

intelligence as the capacity to dismantle problems and produce products in conducive and natural areas. The ability owned by the child although not large must be appreciated, not a few children who have obstacles or difficulties in learning, but if his intelligence is appreciated and continue to be raised until the child wants to be the superior child in his field. So that later can be created a competent individual, and have a personality that is ingrained in him (Baro'ah, 2020).

In Islam, learning has several terms and associations such as tarbiyah, ta'lim and ta'dib. The three elements are integrated into the unity of the learning method, including the purpose of evaluation that should be carried out. Tarbiyah can be interpreted as the transfer of *knowledge of* educators to their students. While taklim is an individual knowledge of students that spreads on the influence of learning methods as well emphasis on student cognition. And ta'dib is a positive learning method that makes students have a polite nature santu (Alaika M. et al., 2020).

The policy of free learning program tried by minister Nadiem Makarim shares something meaning that has a message, if students are given freedom in ensuring their future, the subject is in line with the competence that students have instead of being sourced on pressures that make students become pressured of the mind and run out of confidence in themselves as they have been entwined in various problems related to learning caused by the application of national tests.

The principle in essence God created man as a being who was given the freedom to do any activity desired by his servant, but each option will certainly have a consequence received by man as a form of what has been done (Alaika M. et al., 2020). As stated in surah Al-Zalzalah verses 1-8 and other verses in the Qur'an that proves the freedom in terms of playing a role in the world even though there is a reply matches the options exercised in the world. The verse teaches that freedom is related to carrying out actions and being responsible for all our actions, because the smallest of his actions will surely get a reward from God (Alaika M. et al., 2020).

From the explanation, freedom of learning program has the purpose of making students have freedom and feel the konvenience in the learning process and safe when dialogue with educators. Because education is not only carried out in the classroom, but can be carried out by auting the class by not only noticing the explanation of the educator but can form the personality of students who are brave, clever in making friends, civilized, polite while competent in the learning process and not only relying on the ranking evaluation system that is even troubling the family. Because the student actually has a different ability than the other students (Mua'malah, 2020).

Thomas Lickona Character Education Concept

Lately instilling personality values is needed, because a lot of behaviour and attitudes of students are negative. Not only the fading of the values of honesty that are entwined in students, but the fight between students is also still an uproarious phenomenon for students, the subject proves that the fading of the practice of Pancasila values in the second syllabus means that Indonesians are

expected to be civilized people in accordance with the principles and noble values of Pancasila (Marzuki & Haq, 2018).

Of course, it is not easy to solve the problem to be solved quickly, and more certainly requires a strategy in dealing with it. As Thomas Lickona said. He said that in achieving the character educators use a strategy that is to make teachers as caregivers (compassion, examples and mentors), creating educators as a group of moral people in the class and moral discipline in the classroom. In addition, educators are the creators of a democratic classroom environment through the form of classroom meetings, curriculum to teach values, cooperative learning, conscience awareness and in moral education encourage reflection and students are taught to solve problems (Fitriah, 2020).

In terms of terms, the word character has the meaning of mental intelligence that can be relied on to answer various atmospheres by moral methods. And he also said that the personality contained has 3

interconnected parts, namely knowledge, feelings and moral attitudes (Lickona, 2012).

Thomas Lickona thinks that the noble character consists of an understanding of goodness, after which it gives rise to a commitment to good that can be done seriously. It means that a person's personality is nailed to knowledge, behaviour, motivation, and attitude and skills (Dalmeri, 2014).

For Yusuf Qaradhawi, he said that Islamic education is the learning of a whole human being either mind or heart; spiritual and temporal; morals and expertise. Because Islamic education prepares people for life, both in war and preparing to face citizens with all goodness and well-being, bitterness and sweetness (Farida, 2016).

Therefore character education is a conscious effort planned in sharing moral values to students, which has several factors such as determination, knowledge and understanding of people and have the desire and action to carry out good values to the creator of the universe is *Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala*. As well as his creations such as

humans and the environment and carry out positive values in the country, so as to create a perfect human being (Fitriah, 2020).

This is in line with the thinking of Thomas Lickona who said that in character education it has 3 important components among them knowing, loving and doing good. Routine instilled in character education is a good habit so that the child can understand, master and do good. Thomas Lickona in the implementation of personality learning said that a collaboration between the school and the family is a matter of meaning that must be observed. Because the indicator of school success can be seen when correcting the morale of the child, there is cooperation tried by the school and the family in achieving the goal of character learning (Fitriah, 2020).

Character education has become the attention of various countries in order to prepare a quality generation, not only for the benefit of the people of the country but also for citizens in totality (Al, 2020). Character education terminology began to be introduced since the 1900s by Thomas Lickona, it was known when he wrote a novel

titled *The Return of Character Education* and after that followed by his book, *Educating for Character: How Our School Can Teach Respect and Responsibility* (Lickona, 2012). Through the books, he realizes the Western world means a lot about personality learning. Character education for Thomas Lickona has 3 main factors, namely recognizing, loving, and carrying out about goodness (Lickona, 2012).

In character education, children are not only directed about right and wrong, but also taught about instilling good habits, so that students can understand, be able to feel, and want to do good. Thus, character education has the same delegate as moral learning or moral learning (Lickona & Zien, 2013).

In terminology, Thomas Lickona reveals that the meaning of the character is: "*A reliable inner disposition to respond situations in a morally good way.*" Next, he tweeted, "*Character so conceived has three interrelated parts: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behaviour*"(Dalmeri, 2014). Not only that to carry out the good in earnest, but it also takes a noble character related to the understanding of goodness so that the creation of an intention of goodness,

is expressed by Thomas Lickona. In other words, a character refers to a series of knowledge, behaviours, motivation, attitudes and skills. Thomas Lickona also commented that personality is related to concepts, behaviours, and attitudes regarding morals (Dalmeri, 2014).

Based on these three components, it can be stated that a good personality can be supported from knowledge to goodness, willingness and carry out to do good. Related to this subject Lickona also suggests that personality learning is a planned effort to help people master, hear about, and do core ethical values (Dalmeri, 2014). From the book Character Matters, character education is a conscious effort to realize virtue, namely about the quality of humanity that is good objectively, not only good for individuals but also good for citizens as a whole (Lickona & Zien, 2013).

Thus, the process of character education, moral learning and personality of the country should be laid out as a planned conscious effort, not a business that is intertwined by chance. That is, character education is a

serious effort to master, shape, foster ethical values, both for an individual and for the entire citizen community or the country community in totality.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Concept of Freedom of Learning Reviewed from the Perspective of Character Education Thomas Lickona.

Thomas Lickona is one of the characters who reviews related character education, he was born in 1943. Thomas Lickona earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at Siena College in 1964, a Master of Art at Ohio University in 1965, as well as a Doctor of Philosophy degree in psychology at the State University of New York at Albani in 1971. Lickona also served as President of the Association For Mural Education, after which Lickona worked as a board of commissioners in character education partnership as well as an advisory board at the character counts coalition and medical institute for sexual health (Lickona, 2012).

For Thomas Lickona Personality learning is learning as far as life, as a process of growth towards human *kaafah*. Therefore, personality learning requires a

level of transparency and touch from early to adulthood (Lickona, 2012). While freedom of learning is a learning program issued because of the problems contained in the education namely human empowerment actors (Baro'ah, 2020).

The advantages of independent learning programs that are reviewed from the perspective of Thomas Lickona's character education are:

Advantages; make students feel safe while learning and dialogue with teachers, and make the learning process not only implemented in the classroom but can be carried out outside the classroom by not only noticing the explanation of the teacher but can form students who are brave, clever in making friends, civilized, polite while competent in the learning process. Lack; freedom-focused learning can be bad if the lack of supervision of teachers and families.

Conclusion

In Indonesia, there are still many problems in the world of education, as well as the lack of character

education that results in a decline in achievements and even morals owned by the learners. So that the emergence of an independent learning program as a solution to overcome the problem.

The free learning policy issued by Nadiem Makarim is an educational program that provides freedom to choose the good for students in the process of imprisonment. Overall are four points means that to be done at the beginning of the application of the concept of independent learning in order to create ease and flexibility in students and teachers in learning, so as not to focus on grades only, but on character training.

While the education character according to Thomas Lickona is a conscious effort in sharing moral values to students, which has some factors such as determination, knowledge and understanding of people and have the desire and action to carry out good values for the creator of the universe. And his creation like a human being and his environment and carry out good values for the country, so that the creation of a perfect human being.

So that both of these things both from the free learning program and character education Thomas Lickona can make students become more good individuals and advance education in Indonesia both from achievements and morals.

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