

A Comparative Study of Children's Character Education Methods According to the Thinking of Zakiah Darajat and Thomas Lickona

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this study is to compare the views of Zakiah Darajat and Thomas Lickona on the concepts of Islamic and Western character education. This research uses library research methods, which involve analysis of literature and previous research. The research results show that even though they come from different traditions, they both have similar goals, namely developing a generation that has good character and responsibility. Zakiah Darajat emphasized the importance of human relationships with God and a spiritual approach to character formation. The focus involves understanding religion, developing sincerity, and awareness of responsibility towards God. On the other hand, Thomas Lickona emphasizes cultural and universal values in character education. He is vocal about defending universally recognized values, such as honesty, fairness, and respect, in everyday life. His thinking focuses on implementing character values in real action and creating individual awareness of their responsibilities towards themselves, others, and society.

Keywords: Character Education, Zakiah Darajat, Thomas Lickona.



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INTRODUCTION

The current current of globalization is having a significant impact on various aspects of life, including in the realm of character education. Globalization has brought people from various cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds closer together. Character education now needs to emphasize respect for the diversity of different cultures, values, and norms. This can help build inclusive character and respect for differences (Fatimah, 2017; Handayani Tyas & Naibaho, 2020). (Rodliyah, 2015).

Globalization brings changes in culture, values, and norms that can influence the process of individual character formation. Although the influence of globalization on character is not always negative or weakening, in a positive way, globalization can broaden an individual's understanding and insight into various cultures, religions, and values. Critics of globalization point out that these changes can give rise to several problems that disrupt the existing social order. Globalization brings global values such as human rights, social justice, and sustainability into the limelight. Character education needs to emphasize these values to form individuals who care about global issues and become

responsible world citizens (Mil, 2017; Saputro & Murdiono, 2020; Syarifa & Casmana, 2020). (Samho, 2015)

One of the negative impacts is the weakness of individual character. To overcome character weaknesses that arise due to the impact of globalization, strengthening is needed through various steps, including integrated character education, positive role models, a supportive learning environment, active learning, the development of social and emotional skills, parental involvement, and community empowerment. With globalization, individuals are often faced with complex moral challenges. Character education must teach ethical problem-solving and moral decision-making amidst the complexity of the global situation. (Purwanti, 2017).

By strengthening character development through education, role models, a supportive environment, and parental and community involvement, individuals can form a solid foundation to face the impacts of globalization and maintain moral integrity amidst the challenges of the modern era. The formation of character and moral values in society has been a concern since ancient times. Various world figures have made observations and trials and developed their views regarding the formation of good character. Through observation, treatment, experimentation, and habituation, new theories have emerged and become science that can be applied in everyday life (Abrams & Berkman, 2023; Amerman Goerd et al., 2019; Kozikowski et al., 2023).

The concept of Islamic character education is rooted in the teachings of the Islamic religion, which emphasize spiritual, ethical, and moral values in the formation of individual character. Character education in an Islamic context bases its values on the teachings of the Islamic religion. Some of the main principles that form the basis of the conception of Islamic character education involve spiritual, ethical, and moral values. Islamic character education emphasizes understanding and appreciating the concept of tawhid, namely belief in the oneness of Allah. Spiritual values, such as obedience, piety, and awareness of God's presence, are the basis for forming individual character. (Utami, 2021).

On the other hand, the Western conception of character education focuses more on developing morals, social attitudes, and ethics that apply universally, regardless of religious or cultural background. Therefore, this research was conducted by considering the thoughts of two influential figures in the field of character education in Indonesia and the West, namely Zakiah Daradjat and Thomas Lickona. The selection of these two figures was based on the consideration that they both have equal positions in the world of education and psychology, consistency in conveying ideas regarding character education methods, as well as differences in their cultural backgrounds and beliefs, which can provide valuable contributions in the context of children's character education. (Puspytasari, 2022).

Through a comparative study of the thoughts of Zakiah Daradjat and Thomas Lickona, this research aims to explore methods of character education for children. Both are known as figures who played a major role in contributing their thoughts and monumental contributions to the field of character education. Islamic character education encourages the concept of ihsan, namely doing everything with perfection and sincerity. This involves striving to do good not only out of duty but also out of love and a sense of responsibility to Allah.

A comparative study of character education methods is an effort to compare the effectiveness of various approaches in developing character values in individuals. Character education is an effort made to form and develop positive moral, ethical, and personality values in students. Provides direct experience to understand character values, increasing practical understanding. (Royes et al., 2019)

Character education is an educational process that aims to improve a person's self-quality through internalizing character values so that they become a character that is inherent in the person and is manifested in everyday behavior. Character education is important because it can help form individuals with integrity, noble character, and other noble values. Holistic Islamic character education includes spiritual, moral, and ethical aspects of forming individuals who have integrity and make positive contributions to society. Through the teachings of Islam, it is hoped that individuals can develop strong character that is beneficial for themselves and their environment. (Azizah & Fauzi, 2022)

The exemplary method is the most effective method in character education. Through this method, students can learn from examples of good behavior from other people, such as parents, teachers, or community leaders. The habituation method is a method that is carried out repeatedly so that a behavior becomes accustomed to it. This method can be applied to various aspects of life, such as discipline, responsibility, and courtesy (Jacobs et al., 2016; Khechine & Lakhal, 2018).

Zakiah Daradajat divides character education methods into two, namely, character education methods before birth. This method is carried out by preparing an environment that is conducive to the development of the child's character. This can be done by providing good nutritional intake, maintaining the health of pregnant women and fetuses, and providing religious and moral education from an early age. Character education methods after birth. This method is carried out by providing moral and character education directly to children. This can be done through various means, such as examples, habituation, discussion, project-based learning, and games. (Kurnia & Sulfia, 2018)

Meanwhile, Thomas Lickona divides character education methods into three, namely, character education methods in the family. This method is the most important in character education. The family is the first and main environment for the development of a child's character. Therefore, parents have a very important role in children's character education. Character education methods in schools. This method is carried out through various subjects and extracurricular activities. Schools have an important role in character education because they can provide character education in a systematic and planned manner. Character education methods in society. This method is carried out through various social and cultural activities. The community has an important role in character education because it can provide examples of good behavior to children. (Damariswara et al., 2021)

Children will learn better if character values are applied in everyday life. Therefore, parents, teachers, and society must apply character values in everyday life. By implementing effective character education methods, it is hoped that we can form a generation with noble character and values.

METHOD

This research includes library research, which is a type of research that limits its activities to library collection materials alone without the need to conduct field research. By using a descriptive analysis approach, namely searching for facts, results, and ideas of someone's thoughts through searching, analyzing, making interpretations, and generalizing the results of research conducted (Sugiyono, 2018).

Library research, or literature review, is a systematic process for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant literature related to a particular research topic. This is the first step in the research process that helps researchers understand the development of previous research, identify knowledge gaps, and formulate a conceptual basis for the research to be conducted. Bibliographic research provides a solid foundation for designing effective research and ensuring that the research you conduct does not repeat previously existing findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Early Childhood Character Education Methods According to Zakiah Darajat and Thomas Lickona

Zakiah Darajat

One of the distinctive characteristics of early childhood character education methods, according to Zakiah Darajat, lies within the school sphere. Zakiah Darajat said that building the character of early childhood in school can be done through the examples given by their teachers. This is caused by the limited ability of children aged 0–6 years to think abstractly or meaningfully. (Rahma, 2019)

In this age range, according to Zakiah, children are only able to think sensorily, learn through what they see, hear, feel, and so on. Therefore, Zakiah Darajat believes that the exemplary or example- giving method is a very effective method that can be understood by young children.

In the method of character education for children in the school environment, Zakiah Darajat focuses more on the personality that a teacher must have before teaching character to his students. However, in this case, Zakiah did not specifically describe practical methods that could be applied by teachers or school officials. Furthermore, according to Zakiah Darajat, the character education method in the community involves many parties, as can be seen from his presentation. Zakiah not only discusses methods that can be used by community and government figures but also involves the mass media.. (Djafar, 2017)

Thomas Lickona

Thomas Lickona conveyed an approach that can be implemented by schools in collaborating with families or parents of students. For him, cooperation between the family and school environment is very important to achieving success in character education. Thomas Lickona emphasized that

parental involvement is the main indicator of a school's success in realizing character education. To help parents fulfill their main role as moral teachers, he proposed several methods, such as organizing parenting programs, forming special forums for parents, and other steps.(Assidiqi, 2021)

Apart from the characteristics above, Thomas Lickona's approach to early childhood character education methods also tends to be based on cultural values and does not include religious elements. Furthermore, the character education method proposed by Thomas Lickona focuses a lot on the implementation of character education for early childhood in the family and school environment.(Hikmasari et al., 2021)

Similarities and Differences in Early Childhood Character Education Methods According to Zakiah Darajat and Thomas Lickona

Based on the explanation outlined previously, it can be understood that the similarities in children's character education methods, according to Zakiah Darajat and Thomas Lickona, lie in their similar goals, namely preparing future generations to have good character. These two figures also involve all parties in efforts to implement character education methods so that each individual can play a role in forming children's character. Both of them also proposed methods for character education for children that can be applied in various contexts, including family, school, and community environments. Through the various methods explained, it can be seen that both of them agree on emphasizing effective methods, such as providing examples.

The difference in children's education methods, in the thoughts of Zakiah Darajat and Thomas Lickona, lies in the basis used as a character education method. Zakiah Darajat put forward a method of character education for children that originates from the teachings of the Islamic religion, emphasizing the importance of following methods in accordance with Islamic teachings not only in worship but also in speaking and behaving. On the other hand, Thomas Lickona has a perspective that is more based on society's moral values or cultural values, without including religious elements in his methods.

The next difference lies in the scope of children's character education methods. Zakiah Darajat is comprehensive by adding methods of character education for children before birth, namely through partner selection and character education for children while in the womb. Thomas Lickona does not discuss this aspect because his thoughts are more general and not based on specific religious teachings.

In the context of character education methods in schools, Zakiah Darajat only suggests three main methods, namely character education through examples, habituation and games, all of which must have an Islamic spirit. Meanwhile, Thomas Lickona presents various methods with steps that can be applied by all parties in the school environment. He also highlighted the importance of collaborating with parents, involving the entire community at school, and giving teachers a big role in the learning process.

Lastly, differences can be seen in the methods of character education in the community. Zakiah

Darajat involves the community at large, including community leaders, the government, and the mass media. Meanwhile, Thomas Lickona focuses more on certain communities in society and government. This difference can be explained by the different conditions and situations of society, as well as the solutions provided by both to overcome character education problems in society.

CONCLUSION

The approach to children's character education in Zakiah Darajat's thinking includes several methods, including character formation before birth involving partner selection and the process of character formation while the child is still in the womb. He also presents methods of character education after birth that cover the family, school, and community. In Thomas Lickona's view, children's character education methods emphasize a practical approach with steps that can be immediately implemented by educators in character education. He presents various practical methods that can be applied, especially in the context of character education in the school environment. A comparison of character education methods between Zakiah Darajat and Thomas Lickona shows differences in their views but does not produce any gaps. Instead, these differences can be integrated to form a new understanding of holistic character education methods.

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