Islamic Education Movie: Character Learning Through Nussa-Rara Movie

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the Islamic cartoon film Nussa and Rara. The author used Nussa and Rara as a window to see the emergence of Islamic cartoon films. Its strengths are in conveying educational values to children and as a learning medium to build character education for children aged 12 years and under. To explain this phenomenon, the author employed the content analysis method and combined it with relevant data; those were strengthened by many research results and literature studies. Through this method, the author showed that Nussa and Rara movie shares Islamic value in each segment, such as the value of honesty, asking for prayers on time, respecting neighbors, and so on. The author tried to see how every figure, especially Umma as Nussa and Rara’s mother, explains and exemplifies how to be a good Muslim. Through this article, it could be concluded that films are not always judged to have a negative impact on the audience. Even films can contribute as a medium for education and dissemination of Islamic da’wah. Besides, through films, it can also contribute to building good character for children under 12 years of age. Some learning methods that can be used are the many steps or methods that can be planted in children, such as the habituation and storytelling methods. These methods can be used to apply the values of faith, moral values, and worship values. Thus, this article greatly contributes to enriching academic discourse related to character learning for children under 12 years of age. This article concluded that the Nussa and Rara cartoon film really strives to spread Islamic da’wah and build children’s character from an early age with daily customs and begin to familiarize children to apply the values of Islamic teachings perfectly.

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INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, technology has become the primary concern of people globally in all parts of the world. Technology was created as the latest breakthrough tool to help and facilitate every human job. Technology also increasingly gives a vast space to be developed and updated regularly. For example, radio communication tools are slowly evolving in the form of applications that can be accessed easily via smartphones. This form of development also involves a number of types of devices, even in renewable forms.

Questioning the development of technology is not only related to communication tools. Technology is also developing in new forms and facilities, such as audio-visual type content creation (Li & Lau, 2020). This type can be found in the form of short videos, video blogs (vlog), films, and so on. In the manufacturing stages and processing techniques, more recent developments are needed. It is done with the aim that the results can be enjoyed as well as possible.

The results of making a suitable film or video will greatly affect the target of delivering information (Hanifawati et al., 2019). For example, someone will laugh if the video content presents humor. Meanwhile, someone will feel sad if the video content presents elements of sadness by the players. It shows the efforts and strategies made through the film so that the message in the film can be accepted and enjoyed by the audience.

A number of academics have studied the discourse regarding the strategy of making films and their impact on the audience. Films are produced and packaged to include specific messages to the audience. Films also impact each viewer, be it psychological, social, or other impacts (Oktavianus, 2015). Film or video has an influence on fulfilling the rights of each audience. Apart from being a means of entertainment, films or videos can also increase solidarity among community groups (Ginanjar & Saleh, 2020). Besides, films have a strong influence on a person's behavior, one of which is among children (Desti, 2005).

Based on some of the previous research results, it can be seen that films have a considerable influence in attracting the audience's attention depending on what message they want to convey. Not only conveying the story’s contents from the film but also trying to arouse feelings and attract the audience's sympathy to empathize with each story presented (Goodwin et al., 2021). However, the presentation of each video content also needs to be filtered so that the content aimed at each segment is well-targeted for each age category.

Seeing the sophistication of current technological developments, the author argues that technology, especially films, can also convey less friendly information to children. For example, without parental supervision, it is feared that children will be free to access video content on television or smartphones. This phenomenon has been found in many information sources. Thus, children need to be given special attention to access video/film content according to their age.
Moreover, the development of information dissemination in the form of videos is reasonably fast; until now, YouTube is still the first rank of social media most accessed by people in Indonesia. Every second, YouTube is successfully watched by millions of people from all over the world. The content displayed is also very diverse, starting from daily life, cooking content, education, etc. The massive number of YouTube account users has made YouTube one of the most popular and actively accessed social media by the whole world (Riyanto, 2020).

The content mainly found on the YouTube platform is entertainment content. Meanwhile, most of the content that contains educational value is still inadequate in the form of visuals, so it seems stiff. It is one factor that entertainment content is still favored by the public, especially in Indonesia. It then raises concerns for everyone, especially children. Specifically, since the COVID-19 pandemic, smartphones have become one of the favorite things for children (Maria & Novianti, 2020). Children can freely use the smartphone owned by their parents or their families. In fact, some of them may already have their smartphones. Concerns raised are related to the type of information and content that children freely access. Hence, it is a big task for every parent and family environment to control the viewing and information accessed by children.

Videos or films are one type of information widely accessed by every society, including children (Franco, 2020). However, not all types of informational content presented contain educational value and are child-friendly. There are still many videos that allude to negative elements. It will be very easily absorbed by children in a short time, and it is feared that it will be easily imitated by children. Although not all videos contain negative values, many parties pay special attention to trying to produce quality shows that contain educational value for children.

Some examples of educational films for children can be found in the cartoon Zootopia, How to Train Your Dragon, Kung Fu Panda, Coco, etc. Zootopia, a cartoon that tells the story of a rabbit who dreams of becoming a police officer (Septiana, 2020). The cartoon film How To Train Your Dragon tells the story of a boy who manages to catch a rare dragon (Putri, 2019). The educational value conveyed from these two cartoon films is about an unyielding attitude to realize dreams and aspirations.

The example of the cartoon film above, in general, shows concern for educating children. However, several other examples of cartoons show another additional focus: the inclusion of spiritual values in them, such as Syamil and Dodo, Upin and Ipin, Adit and Sopo Jarwo, Nussa and Rara, and so on. The example of this Islamic cartoon film generally tells about the application of Islamic teachings in everyday life (Aulia, 2019).

Unlike some examples of Islamic cartoon films above, the author found the novelty of other Islamic cartoon film production, such as Nussa and Rara, Riko The Series, and Omar and Hana. These three Islamic cartoons are packaged in different ways and ideas. Nussa and Rara film is the videos produced by Little
Giant. This video is packaged in the form of a short video about five minutes long and is broadcast every Friday on the YouTube platform. The novelty offered is to design the appearance of a character as someone who has disabilities (Sariyanti, 2020; Zamakhsari et al., 2020). Meanwhile, Riko and The Series tell about a boy with his robot that always finds out the uniqueness of the universe and relates it with Islamic knowledge (Aisyah, 2020). Besides, Omar and Hana talk about two small children singing while accompanied by their parents (Dermawan, 2020). Each episode produced contains values of kindness, such as helping fellow humans, cherishing animals, and being obedient to both parents.

Of the three Islamic cartoons above, the writer was interested in studying the cartoon films Nussa and Rara. This film shows a unique side that is different from other Islamic cartoon films. Nussa and Rara's movie shows how a boy accepts reality as a disability (“Biography,” n.d.; Demillah, 2019; Sariyanti, 2020). His mother is called Umma, and his young sister's name is Rara; both always support his mobility every day. Besides, Nussa showed as a unique figure. Through this figure, the situation can build curiosity and a feeling that there is another condition out there.

Through Nussa and Rara's videos, the author argues that the presence of this video is in line with Islam’s development in Indonesia. It also goes along with the technology and information developments. It is related to the research results of several researchers. The technological developments also strongly support Islam’s development in Indonesia (Rustandi, 2019; Zaini, 2015). Besides, technology is essential as a factor for Islam’s development in Indonesia and as a medium for Islamic learning (Cahyono & Hassani, 2019). The development of this technology is used as a medium for spreading Islamic da’wah values to all spheres of society in Indonesia, including the children. Apart from being a form of effort to spread Islamic preaching, it is also an effort to show identity as a Muslim.

Based on the explanation, the author used Nussa and Rara’s videos as a window to examine some discourses in this paper, namely, to see how Islamic cartoon videos emerged in Indonesia, how Islamic cartoon videos pack Islamic educational and teaching values, and how Islamic cartoon videos can be used as educational media for children. Therefore, this paper is divided into several sub-chapters according to the questions above.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method. The author employed the content analysis technique to analyze the film content of the Rara and Nussa video. The author utilized this approach as one of the best ways to minimize physical contact during the COVID-19 pandemic. The author observed every Nussa and Rara video content uploaded on the Nussa Official YouTube platform. The author also observed the content uploaded on Instagram @Nussaofficial social media. Then, the author categorized the data according to
the explanation section. The online data collection steps consisted of collecting references related to this paper’s theme. Besides, researchers also collected data from Nussa and Rara’s videos and articles containing information regarding Nussa and Rara. The author also strengthened any data with academic studies of several research results.

Nussa and Rara movie is one Islamic video cartoon that the author used as a window to see discourse on the emergence of Islamic cartoon videos in Indonesia, the power of audio-visual as an educational medium and teaching practices, and the inculcation of Islamic educational values for children. These three discourses are the researcher’s focus in this paper.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. The Power of Film as Educational Media

The development of technology and information media offers changes in every line of people's lives. These changes also have a good and bad impact on the development of social life (Suud, 2017). For example, technology offers developments in agriculture, namely in the form of rice cutting machines. This machine replaces the field plowing process, which initially used the services of buffalo. Technological developments also offer convenience in the field of education, for example, the offer of convenience to continue the learning and teaching process online. This phase has been experienced by the whole world community starting in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Li & Lalani, 2020).

Not only that, but the offer of technological developments also extends to learning in children, for example, by bringing up a number of the latest learning media, such as the use of smartphones as 3D image detectors to view cartoon images (Hayyunuski, 2019). Besides, technology also offers learning to children through films that are specifically designed as child-friendly shows.

Furthermore, not all films bring negative influences; even many films today have been packaged as well as possible and presented according to the flow of goodness. Several scholars have discussed this in their research, as presented by Dody Ginanjar and Amirudin Saleh, and Nisa Khairuni. It was explained that there are still many films for the children's category; it is necessary to pay attention to the educational values (Ginanjar & Saleh, 2020). Both said that the production of films with educational values could minimize the negative impacts on the community. Besides, Faidah explained that the negative impact of video or film content containing negative values greatly affected the community's behavior, including children (Khairuni, 2016).

From some research results above, it can be seen that films could also have a positive influence on each viewer, depending on the storyline being told. This positive influence is felt not only by certain circles such as parents but also among children. Hence, it needs special attention to children, which then poses challenges for filmmakers. Filmmaking according to the children's category places great importance on educational values. Educational values are essential
to be packaged as well as possible and played by a character who fits the category of children (Ngatman & Fatimah, 2018).

Regarding teaching children through educational films, learning through films offers many benefits for children’s knowledge, including cognitive benefits, psychomotor benefits, and affective benefits (Rikarno, 2015). Besides, the film is one of the best learning techniques used to teach science to children (Hasanah, 2018). The technique of watching films is included in the steps for implementing active story repetition in children. This technique can be done by choosing educational films, providing assistance while watching, provoking children to ask many questions, and asking again about the contents of the educational films being watched. Besides, asking in this storytelling activity can provide various benefits, such as developing children’s imagination, enriching experiences, sharpening concentration power, enriching vocabulary, sharpening comprehension, practicing recognizing goodness values, and honing listening skills (Hasanah, 2018).

Further, character learning needs some steps or methods to build children’s intuition, such as exemplary method, habituation method (Rouzi et al., 2020), field trip method, and storytelling method (Hadisi, 2015). Through watching a movie, character learning can also be applied to children. Watching a movie is included in the section on the storytelling method. Besides, character learning through watching movies also can be applied in the habituation method. Both methods can be used as a way to plant or build good character in children (Khaidir & Suud, 2020). Besides, character learning can use additional steps, such as building a safe learning environment without threats, involving knowing and loving the good, exemplifying kind action, and others (Hadisi, 2015). These ways can support children’s activeness to accept and stimulate thoughts and feelings.

It shows that children can absorb knowledge through educational films, one of which is like cartoons. Cartoons are designed with various types of characters that are close to children's characters. Many cartoon films containing education are Upin and Ipin, Adit and Sopo Jarwo, 7 Cars, Coco, and other cartoons. Some of these films have succeeded in attracting children and families’ attention. This type of cartoon is found in some television broadcasts. However, parents and families have a huge role in filtering the types of educational cartoon films appropriate for children to watch since it also impacts the children’s development and character building.

b. The Emergence of Islamic Cartoon Film

In recent years, Islamic cartoon films have appeared on various mass media and social media. Islamic cartoon films appear in various forms and characters, such as Riko The Series, Nussa and Rara, Upin and Ipin, Omar and Hana, etc. Each of these shows has a purpose and packs a different message. Although the aim is the same, namely being child-friendly, each type of spectacle carries a different storyline. For example, Nussa and Rara physically show concern for people with
disabilities. It can be seen from the figure of Nussa, who is designed as a boy using prosthetic limbs to walk and run.

The development of Islamic cartoons is in line with the development of Islam in Indonesia. The development of Islam in Indonesia can be seen from the development of Islam in Indonesia since the collapse of the New Order regime (Azra, 2004). During the New Order era, Islamic attributes were prohibited from appearing in the public space. On the contrary, when this regime collapsed, the Muslim community received a lot of support and freedom to use Islamic attributes when in public spaces. For example, other freedom has also been evident in the large number of Muslim women wearing headscarves to cover their heads. Another interesting thing is that many young people have been spreading Islamic da’wah through various media, such as writing. This practice was carried out by Asma Nadia and her team with one of the famous bulletins at the time, Annida (Kailani, 2012). The development of Islam in other fields can also be seen from the number of public figures such as Muslim female artists wearing headscarves when acting in soap operas or films.

Islamic da’wah messages packaged and presented through the media have been researched and studied by a number of researchers, such as Eko Sumadi and Fadly Usman. Eko Sumaidi explained that social media had a positive power to spread Islamic da’wah content (Sumadi, 2016). However, in conveying Islamic da’wah through the media, it is necessary to see and pay attention to ethics and norms in using social media. Besides, Fadly Usman also said that currently, online media is one of the best alternative media to convey the da’wah of Islam (Usman, 2016).

Recently, films have become one of the competent media for spreading Islamic da’wah. Not a few film production houses package Islamic da’wah messages in the films they produce. Each character's role is supported by wearing clothes to cover their *aurat* (body parts *required by Islam* to be covered). Apart from that, the film also features snippets of verses from the Al-Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'Alayhi wassalam. For example, the film *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*, *Ayat-ayat Cinta*, *Iqra’* and so on, these films were produced aimed explicitly at Muslims and Muslim women.

The film *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* depicts the story of a sister (Muslim woman) who takes care of herself and is obedient to Islamic teachings (Sawita, 2021). This Muslim woman has been continuing her education at the master’s level. Then, she married a man with a bachelor's degree in Egypt. Besides, the film *Ayat-ayat Cinta* (Muhyiddin, 2020) tells the story of a Muslim woman who is willing and allows her husband to practice polygamy with a woman who has converted to Islam.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the Islamic films above generally show daily life as a Muslim. However, the target segment is adults. It is good for everyone to watch but seems inappropriate for children to watch. It is one of the writer's arguments with the theme of child-friendly Islamic films.
Islamic films given priority to children aged 12 years and under are still rarely found in various media types. So far, the author has only found a number of Islamic films in cartoon categories for children, such as Upin and Ipin, Omar and Hana, Riko The Series, and Nussa and Rara, as well as other Islamic cartoons. Each of these films is designed in the form of cartoon visuals, and the character selection is also close to the ages of children 12 years and under. Each type of Islamic cartoon film is unique.

From the three examples of Islamic cartoon films above, the author took the example of Nussa and Rara. The Islamic cartoon film Nussa and Rara was designed to show the physicality of a boy named Nussa who is walking assisted with the use of prosthetic legs. He was told that he was born as a child with a physical disability.

Based on the picture above, it is known that the design of the Nussa and Rara films is played by two main characters, namely Nussa and Rara. Nussa is physically shown as a boy wearing a green robe and wearing a white cap.
Meanwhile, Rara was designed to wear a yellow robe and a red headscarf. Physically, Nussa and Rara show character as Muslim children. It is also strengthened by the support for the inclusion of pieces of the Quran and hadith verses.

The explanation above reveals that the emergence of Islamic cartoon films, especially in Indonesia, is a form of democracy in Indonesian society to appreciate works. Apart from that, the writer argues that this Islamic cartoon film appeared to show identity as Muslim. Thus, every Muslim audience, especially children, can directly find the harmony of their identity as a Muslim by watching this Islamic cartoon. On the other hand, the emergence of Islamic cartoons is also an effort to minimize the viewing that is not suitable for children to access.

c. Children's Character-Building based on Islamic Concept through Nussa and Rara Film

Efforts to build and shape children's character require several strategies. Each strategy has different techniques and advantages from one another. Several researchers have studied strategies in building and shaping character in early childhood. Building character in children needs several strategic designs, such as recognizing the parents’ needs and desires, developing a vision, mission, and goals, establishing character values, compiling quality assurance in children (Nuha et al., 2021), planning cultural activities in children, launching character activity program, and proclaiming assessment (Wiyani, 2017). Wiyani explained that some of these strategies could be applied well in school, such as in Kindergartens (TK). Furthermore, Muhammad Khairul Basyar explained that immersion and character-building strategy in children is very dependent on educators, such as musyrif (mentors) (Basyar, 2020). Basyar explained that a musyrif could plan several strategies to shape children’s character, namely internal and external strategies. The internal strategy includes planning, introduction, implementation, supervision, reward or punishment, and evaluation (Basyar, 2020). Meanwhile, the external strategy includes introducing, monitoring, and evaluating jointly carried out with parents and families.

It does not stop there; instilling character values in children also needs to involve the spiritual side of religion. Hakim explained the importance of imparting Islamic character values in children (Hakim, 2017). According to him, Muslims are vital to pay attention to the developing cultural developments at this time. This attention is done to filter the values’ levels related to Islamic teachings and is essential to children. He also explained that the family is the most important educational institution in building and shaping Islamic character values in children.

Based on some of the research results above, it can be seen that each party, both within the educational institution and in the family, has a big role to play in teaching and instilling character values in children. The strategies of each party differ from one another, but with the same goal of paying special attention to
children to become generations of character. The author argues that children really need various acceptable strategies to shape character values for themselves. These types of strategies are certainly not rigidly designed; adjustments need to be made so that every child feels happy and can receive all kinds of education properly.

Therefore, referring to some studies above, the author sees that it seems that character learning in children can also be seen and carried out with strategies through watching cartoon films. Cartoons are generally designed to attract various groups' attention, especially children. However, not all children's cartoons can convey moral values and character learning in them since, in fact, some cartoon films are not suitable for children to watch. Cartoon films are also designed using characters that are very close to children (Niata, 2020). For example, the characters used have children's voices and body measurements. The language style and speech-language are also adapted to the children's speaking style. It is one of the tricks to attract children's attention.

Behind the many cartoon productions, especially in Indonesia, there are also many types of cartoons that teach religious-spiritual values, one of which is teaching Islamic values (Winarto et al., 2020). One of the Islamic cartoon films produced by the younger generation in Indonesia is the Nussa and Rara films. This film is part of a short video with an average duration of about five minutes. Every week, these cartoon files will be uploaded on YouTube social media on the Nussa Official account.

The Nussa and Rara films have been established and produced since 2018. This film is produced with the concept of fun-education, namely the production of films based on education, and is still packaged with a funny concept according to children ("Biography," n.d.). This film was produced by The Little Giant Animation Studio. The main character highlighted through this film is a boy named Nussa. Physically, he looks perfect, but he is assisted by an artificial leg on his left leg to help him walk. He is described as a child who was born with a disability. The concept of disability displayed in Nussa's figure provides experience and learning that God has created every human being perfect, of course, with their respective strengths and weaknesses (Munir & Rokhmah, 2020). Through this description, moral values are implemented. Moral values are related to attitude, character, and behavior (Azizah & Setiana, 2016). Besides, the value to be conveyed is also about tolerance. This tolerance is built by inviting children to understand to stay good with others who seem to have inequalities with themselves.

Moreover, the character Rara is depicted as a little girl wearing a yellow robe and a red headscarf. She plays the character of Nussa's younger sister, who has a hobby of watching, playing, and raising a cat named Antta (“Biography,” n.d.). The character is described as cheerful but often makes carelessness, such as using her mother's make-up equipment. Besides, the characters Nussa and Rara are depicted as being closely related to children's characters. However, both are also...
accompanied by Umma as their biological mother and friends named Syifa and Abdul.

The characters of Nussa and Rara are described as very neutral and talk about their daily lives. For example, in an episode entitled "Nussa: Qodarullah Wamasya’a Fa’ala". In the episode, it talks about the destiny of Allah.

Based on the three pictures above, Umma explains the destiny of Allah, namely through the sentence Qodarullah Wamaasya’a Fa’ala. Umma tries to explain the sentence, namely, "This is the destiny of Allah and what He wants Him to do." Umma tries to give understanding to Nussa and Rara that whatever happens in this world is the strict will of Allah. In this episode, Umma tries to implement aqidah value to Nussa that all that happened in this world is Allah’s destiny (Azizah & Setiana, 2016). Through aqidah’s value, it teaches Nussa that humans have the strength of heart to believe in Allah.

One of the films entitled Qodarullah Wamaasya’a Fa’ala tells the story of Nussa and Rara’s father or better known as Abba, working far away from the residence of Nussa and Rara. The two complain about Abba, who never comes home and only communicates via smartphone. Therefore, in Picture 7, Umma also explains that Abba's work is a form of Allah's destiny. Umma also adds that Abba does a good job according to Allah.

In addition to showing Umma's role in presenting an explanation of Allah's
destiny, the Nussa film entitled *Qodarullah Wamaasya’a Fa’ala* also features supporting sentences as below.

![Picture 8. Additional Sentence of Qodarullah Wamaasya’a Fa’ala Words](image)

Based on the pictures above, it indicates that building and shape children's character requires many strategies. One strategy that can be done is by packaging educational messages through films, primarily through cartoons (Sariyanti, 2020). Through this statement, worship value can be implemented in children. This value teaches that Allah has a will, and humans do not have will like Him (Azizah & Setiana, 2016). Thus, Allah is the only God who deserves to be worshiped. The cartoon film Nussa and Rara can be used as an example of a strategy for forming Islamic characters in children. Children are not only taught about goodness but also need to be taught about Islamic teachings. In this case, parents or families play a major role in introducing the values of Islamic teachings to children. From an early age, children need to be introduced to Islamic principles, such as the importance of knowing the provisions and will of Allah, manners in daily life, filial piety to their parents, and other rules. It will be easily absorbed by the child quickly and precisely.

Another example can be seen from the image below.

![Picture 9. Additional Sentence of Qodarullah Wamaasya’a Fa’ala](image)

The picture above shows the Nussa and Rara film with the words "And Nussa is proud of Abba, even though Nussa and Abba are far away, but Abba is close here." This sentence indicates that the distance between Abba and Nussa does not matter
when Abba is always in Nussa's memory. The lesson that can be conveyed to children is that the closeness of children and parents is crucial to be maintained. Children also need to know what it means to be devoted to their parents. Children need to know the figure of their mother and father and the closeness they build. It can gradually hone the children's minds and build the character of goodness and Islamic values.

CONCLUSION

Islamic cartoon films are a method that can be used as a learning medium for children. Visually, every educational value packaged in the film will be easily accepted by children, especially children under 12 years of age. The Nussa and Rara cartoon film is one of the Islamic cartoon film productions from Indonesia. This film is produced showing identity not only as part of Islam but also as part of a learning medium for children. Nussa and Rara are designed as two children figure whom Umma guides in their daily lives to practice the values of Islamic teachings.

The Islamic cartoon film Nussa and Rara is a role model for parents to teach Islamic values to children. Children will receive the values of goodness and science-based on Islam and cannot be separated from everyday life. Hence, children will easily apply and imitate the behavior displayed by Nussa and Rara. Besides, many steps or methods can be planted in children through this movie, such as the habituation and storytelling methods. Through both methods, every segment or story in the Nussa-Rara movie shares an Islamic story and its value, such as faith values, moral values, and worship values. From the opening, each episode of the Nussa-Rara movie always begins the story of general children’s behavior. Then, Umma always asks Nussa and Rara to do everything under the way of Islam. This condition can be an inspiration to parents to share the story or exemplify the Islamic value. From repeated parents’ behaviors, children can imitate it and get used to it every day.

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