



The Education Value of Religious Characters in Assalamualaikum Beijing Novel by Asma Nadia

Tysa Mekar Afrila; Suyitno; Budhi Setiawan

Master of Indonesian Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sebelas Maret University,
Surakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the education value of religious character in Assalamualaikum Beijing novel by Asma Nadia. The method which is used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. The data source in this research is Assalamualaikum Beijing novel by Asma Nadia. The data in this study is the education value of religious character in Assalamualaikum Beijing novel by Asma Nadia. The data collection techniques in this study used documentation study techniques. The validity of the data in this study used theoretical triangulation technique. The data analysis technique in this study used interactive data analysis techniques. The results of the study found that the education value of religious character in Assalamualaikum Beijing novel by Asma Nadia is a form of religious relationship between humans and God, including piety, prayer, repentance, and tauhid. The form of the religious value of human relations includes affection and kindness. The results of this research can be used as a media to strengthen the religious character of students through literary learning.

Keywords: *Education Value; Novel; Religious Character*

Introduction

In this era in Indonesia the humanity crisis is out of control. Various types of problems and humanity problems afflicting the world of education include anxiety and worry about the rampant dehumanization of humans which will shake the character of the nation's generation. In many cases have spread everywhere colouring the blurry face of education in Indonesia. Various humanity problems are so far from having a "character" afflicting the younger generation, causing the world of education to be in a state of dire straits or very worrying. Because as we have seen so far, education in this country is still not successful in managing the character of students into noble characters. It can be said that our education has failed. An assessment like this is based on the opinion of Muhaimin (2011: 10) who states that there is a huge spread of school graduates and even scholars who are intellectually good, but in matters of being mentally tough and having good character is not in accordance with the noble goals of education, because basically according to Jalil (2012:178) education is something that has done consciously and planned to realize the teaching and learning process so that students have the potential to have spiritual strengths

such as religion, self-control, good personality, intelligence, good character, and skill which are useful for oneself, environment, and country.

In Indonesia, the government has included character education in the education curriculum, namely the 2013 curriculum with hoping that will create the generation of nations who have good character, strong, have morals, and are able to bring the nation to a better future. In accordance with Kamaruddin's opinion (2012:225) that "Character building of students in each educational environment means the efforts made by the institution in the context of the formation of the character of student" it means that the character building in education is one form of government effort in creating character formation. Based on this, education in Indonesia which is able to create a good character for its students is a necessity that is expected by many people. Because the moral condition of this nation is already on the verge of collapse, this indicates that the weakness of education in this country in instilling character values to the students. The phenomena that we often encounter today are juvenile delinquency in the form of brawls, free sex drugs, and others, which judged the image of education itself. This is influenced by the surrounding environment, including peers, family environment, society, and the mass media. Therefore, education must be managed optimally, especially in terms of instilling character in students, because according to Wuryandani (2016:208) students in schools should not only develop their academic aspects but also pay attention to their moral aspects.

Character crises do occur in all countries, so that the efforts to overcome character crises are the responsibility of citizens in that country, namely countries that are in the era of globalization (Dwiningrum,2013:145). The focus of education should make students become individuals with character. Therefore, an educator must influence in order to shape students into human characters (Rodrigues, Hillary dan Harding, 2009:6). The inculcation of these character values is not only carried out and obtained in a formal context but can be done through mass media or printed media, for example, literary works in the form of novels.

Authors as creative in literature try to convey a sense and value to the readers or connoisseurs through the different creativity of each author. The language used by the author can guide the reader to good values for the work which is presented (Brooke, 1970:5). The main thing is the character values contained in the novel that are able to influence the development of a person's positive attitude because a novel has many character studies (Odeh, 2011:35). Literature is also expected to be able to give a satisfying impression to its connoisseurs because the main purpose of this literature is to provide satisfaction, aesthetic impressions, and values in a novel that can provide positive values for the audience. Then according to Solihati (2017: 52) in her research entitled "Aspects of Character Education in Hamka's Poetry" stated that the existence of literary works both written and oral is one of the strategies that can support the cultivation and development of character education values.

Character education is closely related to literary works, especially novels. Good literature teaching is one that is able to insert character education in it. The value of character education here means moral strength, which makes someone have character and has positive moral qualities. So, one way to increase the values of character understanding for students is by teaching literature effectively, namely in learning literature in schools. Learning literature in schools teaches students to appreciate the content of literary works, one of which is novels.

One of the novels considered which is capable of presenting character education is the novel *Cinta dalam 99 Nama-Mu* and *Assalamualaikum Beijing* by Asma Nadia. The main problem with the writer taking the two novels is for several reasons. First, Asma Nadia packs the language in these two novels into an attractive language that is easily understood by the reader. Second, because its full of character values in it based on the life journey between the characters. These two novels contain a lot of positive values that can be taken and are able to motivate the reader's personal.

The character education value contained in the novel described according to the Ministry of National Education in this research study is based on 18 characters education values including religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, loving country, appreciates achievement, friendly, loves peace, likes reading, cares about the environment, cares about society, and responsibility (Wibowo, 2012:41-45). One of the character values contained in the novel is the value of religious characters. The value of a religious character is very important to be taught in addition to helping to form human awareness as well as helping to help noble human characters. Thus, human consciousness and God consciousness will run in a balanced manner. In addition, the formation of a religious character in each individual will create humanist behaviour based on religious awareness.

Research Methods

The method which is used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. The qualitative descriptive method is a method that describes the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences to data in the form of numbers (Miles & Huberman, 1992:20). The data in the study were the values of religious characters. The data source in this study is the novel *Assalamualaikum Beijing* by Asma Nadia. The data collection techniques in this study used documentation study techniques. According to (Creswell, 2009:261), a documentation study is an activity of recording documents related to research objectives. The data validity technique in this study used theoretical triangulation. The data analysis techniques in this research used interactive data analysis techniques.

Results and Discussion

The novel *Assalamualaikum Beijing* tells the story of life a Muslim woman and her love story to a young man who is different religion and country. Her name is Asmara, who at first was betrayed by her future husband just before their wedding day. Asma struggled to face this reality, so she decided to go to Beijing. There, she met a young man named Zhong Wen. They then fell in love. However, Asma then contracted a disease that threatened blood viscosity Syndrome which was at risk of miscarriage, paralysis, and blindness. However, this did not undermine Zhong Wen's intention to propose to Asma until they got married. This novel also presents many character values. It is evident from the life stories between characters where each character has its meaning, especially characters that are conveyed subtly in understanding the meaning of life and love. In this novel, many tell a story about the actions of the characters containing the religious characters that the author wrote from each story.

Religious is an attitude and behaviour that is obedient in upholding the teachings of the religion they adhere to. A religious attitude should indeed be attached to every human being because humans are God's creatures who must obey and uphold the creator and the religion he adheres to. In the novel, *Assalamualaikum Beijing* found religious character values in the form of religious values of human relations with God and a form of religious values of human relations with humans.

A. The Form of the Religious Value of Human Relationship with God

The value of the religious character describes the relationship between human and God (*Habluminnallah*). The religious character is shown through the character Asma who is reluctant to look at the face of the opposite sex, namely Zhongwen, as evidenced by the following quote:

Asma quickly bowed down her face when their eyes met. Feeling guilty about being presumptuous to enjoy a foreign face by his side (Nadia, 2014: 1).

The quote reflects the value of the religious character of the human relationship with God, which is shown through the character Asma. The religious character is indicated by short sentence, *Asma quickly bowed down her face*. This part of the sentence has the meaning of being afraid to do things that are prohibited by religion, namely staring at the opposite sex who is not yet a mahram, namely Zhongwen. Then, she looked down and felt embarrassed. This proves that the character Asma is very obedient to the religion he adheres to. The religious character is further depicted by the character Sekar who always asked Asma to pray when she carries out an activity,

"Pray, *Bismillah*. Who knows the journey of assignment will get bonus the future husband. Aamiin. " (Nadia, 2014: 2).

The quote reflects the value of the religious character of the human relationship with God which is shown by the Sekar character who is Asma's friend. This religious character is characterized by the expression *Pray, Bismillah*. This expression contains the meaning of hope through prayer to Allah for the smooth running of all the activities of the journey of her duties with a prospective husband. This proves that he is a religious person because when someone is wanted, she prays first, and when she is going to travel, she also says a prayer first. Then other religious characters are also included in the quotation below:

"Maybe marriage is not a process that is a problem, as long as *Syar'i* and can find a journey together and a happy ending (Nadia, 2014: 5).

The quote reflects the value of the religious character of the relationship between humans and God which is depicted by the character Sekar who tells Asma that in a marriage the most important thing is *syar'i*. The word *syar'i* has a meaning according to the guidance of Islamic religious law. This confirms that Sekar is a religious figure who always follows the sharia or rules that have been established in Islam. Furthermore, other religious characters are contained in the quotation below:

Through long contemplation, she decided to look after herself better. Started wearing the veil, although not as long as Sekar. Asma began to learn to follow the principles of her best friend. Not shaking hands or touching men, except family, and no longer dating. Asma accepts it as a new challenge (Nadia, 2014: 90-91).

The quotation reflects the religious character of the relationship between humans and God which is described by the character Asma trying new things according to her to be closer to the creator. Starting from wearing the veil, not coming into contact with men who are not her mahram, and no longer dating. This aspect is highly recommended in Islam and Asma complies with it. So, it can be emphasized that Asma is obedient to her religious teachings, even though it is just the beginning. Further religious characters are listed in the quotation below:

However, of course, she must choose her God now rather than humans, no matter how close their relationship or how great a human being has a role in her life because everything involves faith (Nadia, 2014: 254).

The quote describes the character Zhongwen prefers his God over his family. He was willing to leave his family because his father did not allow him to convert to Islam. Zhongwen has the confidence that he will still choose his God over humans because everything depends on faith. It is clear that Zhongwen is more obedient to his creator and describes him as a religious person.

B. The Form of Religious Value of the Human's Relationship

Asma responded with a smile, holding her hands in front of her chest. "Asma." (Nadia, 2014: 3).

The quote reflects the religious character of the relationship between humans and humans is indicated by a sentence that *holds the hand in front of the chest*. This fragment sentence has the meaning that the character Asma is someone who is friendly but religious, it is proven that when she introduces herself, she does not touch the opposite sex, because in Islam it is forbidden to touch a hand that is not her mahram. It is proven that Asma is a friendly but religious figure because she sticks to her religious principles. Then other religious characters are also found in the following quote:

"Mr. Ridwan is not a romantic person, I just realized that there is a man as stiff and formal as that on this planet, but he is kind and loyal. No need to worry about him cheating on you. He didn't want to shake hands with other women. Loyal. Keeping himself from touching, and not cheating." (Nadia, 2014: 6).

The quote reflects the religious character of the human relationship which is described by the figure of Sekar's husband named Ridwan. He is a figure who never touches women who are not his mahram because in Islam it is also prohibited to have contact with the opposite sex who is not his mahram. This confirms that the figure of Sekar's husband is a person who is religious towards his wife, has an affectionate character so that he takes care of himself for his own wife.

Conclusion

The education value of religious character in the novel *Assalamualaikum Beijing* by Asma Nadia, it can be seen that the value of a religious character is contained in the entire contents of the novel. The character education values contained in the novel *Assalamualaikum Beijing* describe how humans must behave and act in living life according to the values that we had gotten. From the religious characters found in the novel *Assalamualaikum Beijing* by Asma Nadia, it is divided into religious forms of human relations with God, including piety, prayer, repentance and Tawheed. The form of the religious value of human relations includes affection and kindness.

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