

## **THE MORAL VALUES IN NIKI CARO'S LIVE-ACTION MOVIE "MULAN"**

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### **Abstract**

In this study, researchers analysed the moral value in the Mulan movie directed by Niki Caro and produced by Walt Disney Pictures. The researcher using the content analysis description technique and referring to the moral theory of James Rachels (2004) to answer the research questions: (1) What kind of moral values are presented in Mulan live-action movie? (2) How are the moral values in the "Mulan" movie presented in social-humanity? Based on the findings, there are four moral values loaded in the Mulan movie. First, the moral value of courage when she won the battle and saved the emperor. Second, the moral value of generosity when Mulan respects family, village and country. Third, the moral value of honesty when Mulan tried to admit her true identity to Commander Tong. Fourth, the moral value of loyalty in which Mulan fights for the emperor and protects her from those who seek to overthrow the emperor.

**Keywords:** Mulan, Niki Caro, Moral Value.

### **INTRODUCTION**

A literary work is an image of human ideology cast upon an intermediary. Those he falls into two categories. Information literature and fantasy literature. Information literature is about facts, histories, interpretations, and great life figures, while fantasy literature is about the tacit language and artful aesthetic art of the imagination. Literature consists of the experiential outcome of the writing process in the form of language to create images or creative ideas that engage the reader's imagination purposefully and creatively (Goodman in Nasir, 2019). Literature as ideas written by an author has aesthetic value and is considered aesthetic art. As such, literary works are beneficial to human life because they can entertain, enhance knowledge and enrich the reader's insight.

In other, literature is an art that develops through writing while movies brings these works to life through sounds, music, images and actors. Literature has all sorts of hidden meanings in itself for the development of a movie. Although the two are somehow related, both must be studied to fully understand a film based on a literary work. The purpose of the film should not be a mere literary copy, but it must have its own characteristics and effects enough to motivate the audience to enjoy. Although in terms of literary form, many might say it resembles a screenplay from a movie, it may not be fair to view a literary play this way.

Movies are still one of the most active forms of entertainment today. Elements that appear very broadly in a film or film include moral issues and character issues. You've never heard of the word "morality" because it already has a common meaning that is known to many. Morals are almost identical to precepts. Morality is just a good message conveyed through character, character, and behavior. When we want to understand the lessons of the film, we will of course also see the characters of each player in the film. In particular, the characters in the movie are expected to be helpful in character education for everyone. The character is the player's character. With this character, the player will convey both a good message and a bad message.

The target of the characters written by the author to carry out the story the author wrote. A character is someone who plays a role in a literary work, such as a movie. Characters are people who play roles in the story. The characters depicted in the story or the players in the fictional story can be people, animals, trees, or other creatures (Nurgiyantoro in Bulu, 2018).

Characters, in a few terms, are frequently utilized in feedback about life. One ought to have the function of an amazing character, and the opposite ought to have the function of a terrible character. The audience, mainly the more youthful generation, the shipping of the characters inside the movies performed through the actors in the whole lot for them due to the fact they consider that actors will offer morale or motivation for every function they perform. And they're required to hold excessive morals, combat for noble morals, and be capable of constructing morals that may be worthy of admiration to be able to display actual morals to grow to be right examples that may be implemented in ordinary life

This movie is one of the most popular literary works. Relationship between Literature and Film In contrast to other literary works like novels, short tales, and poetry, films are one of the literary forms that can describe the story extremely simply. You can see that there are overwhelmingly more people watching than reading. Although the film is certainly included in the literary category of drama. A movie is a tie of videos with sound that tell a story and are featured in a film or movie. The term "film" or "cinema" refers to both individual films and the field of cinema as an artistic endeavor as well as the film business.. The story of this movie is just a few examples. The reality or the big picture that is actually happening in society is the reality of life. The movie may be used as entertainment, critique, propaganda, political and advertising tool, educational tool. The educational message can be used as a vehicle to convey moral values. In general, the most important factor in a film is moral values. One of the elements that make up a movie is the theme, plot, characters, characterization, setting, and perspective.

Moral values occupy a very important place in this life, as they relate to a person's actions in everyday life. That morality can be good or bad as perceived by society and can be inferred in literature. In addition, Morality can act as an image of the author to the audience. Morality also plays a central role in self-definition when it comes to growing, making sense, and creating a life story that is the meaning of life. Since man is a social being, morals are very important to man. Because people are obliged to abide by the rules, customs, norms, and laws set by the state and society. The values and lessons taught by readers and listeners are always good.

In other words, values serve as the standard in our lives for what we hold, trust and respect. In addition to some of the physical or behavioral terms, it's good to show them to the audience. Therefore, the research gaps in this study focus on the elements of the film such as theme, setting, characters, plot, point of view, conflict, etc., and what the moral values are portrayed in this film, what moral values are Analyze how humanity is portrayed in society using James Rachel's theory, This movie "Mulan" contains the moral value of courage, the moral value of generosity, the moral value of honesty and the moral value of loyalty.

Based on the above explanation, researchers want to analyze the moral value of the film. In this case, Nikki Caro's live-action Mulan analyzes using descriptive-qualitative methods, content analysis approaches, and moral value theory. By watching Mulan's movie, researchers can examine how moral values are drawn in social humanity in the movie 'Mulan'. With this in mind, researchers conducted a study called The Moral Values in Niki Caro's Live-Action Movie Mulan.

As can be seen from the background above, we are talking about the moral values of the Mulan Live Action movie. Therefore, this study consists of two research questions, which we intend to discuss in this paper based on the research background. The research questions are:

1. What kind of moral values presented in Mulan live-action movie?
2. The moral values in "Mulan" movie presented in social-humanity

### Moral Value of Courage

Courage is the middle point between cowardice and recklessness. Cowards run away from all dangers, while the reckless put too much risk (Rachels, 2004:312). Courage is needed by all who face danger at any given time. The moral value of courage is loyalty to conscience, expressed in risk-taking in conflict. Moral courage indicates a person's determination to maintain an attitude that was believed to be an obligation that the environment actively resists. The moral of courage is for the weak and against the strong for treating them unfairly. The goal is to be brave in upholding morals to uphold justice and courage does not conform to the existing forces.

### Moral Value of Generosity

Generosity is a willingness to use one's wealth and energy to help others (Rachels, 2004: 314). Generosity does not mean the attitude of people who do not dare or succumb to others in high positions. The moral of generosity teaches that humans are not only aware of the limitations of goodness. Moral generosity is the ability to give limited moral judgments. A generous person will show endurance to provide help. So generosity is desirable because there are people in a situation who need help.

### Moral Value of Honesty

Honest is a person who never lies (Rachels, 2004:316). The virtue of honesty is a character tendency that excludes actions that are not in accordance with the virtue of overcoming difficult problems. In his view, the virtue of honesty, namely the tendency of character to exclude actions that are not in accordance with that virtue. Therefore, honest people will look for solutions to overcome problems in difficult situations.

### Moral Value of Loyalty

Loyalty is an individual feeling that arises from the love of living together with family and friends, the willingness to realize true charity in the form of sacrifice, to protect, protect, help and guard living together. The moral value of loyalty is an attitude given to loved ones. The teachings of the moral value of loyalty are thoroughly instilled in family life and friendship circles. Establish closer family relationships and strengthen relationships with each other in difficult circumstances even when friends will be abandoned (Rachels, 2004:320). According to (Linda & Eyre, 1993) the Moral values can be divided into two types, are 1.) The value of what is being is the value of people involved in their actions and relationships with others. There are several types of existence values:

1. Honesty is the relevance of what is said after what is said or done. Honesty is compatible with the facts in front of you and you feel like you have nothing to hide. (Linda & Eyre, 1993) state that integrity is synonymous with honesty, reliability, and inner strength and self-confidence developed by abandoning integrity.
2. Courage is the capacity to handle challenges and reach moral conclusions. (Linda & Eyre, 1993) Courage is about boldly doing the hard things, saying no boldly rather than following the crowd, thereby influencing others.
3. Peace of Capability is the ability to face problems calmly and patiently. (Linda & Eyre, 1993) describe the capacity for peace as a tendency to conform rather than fight. They also define the peace of ability as tranquility, peace, tranquility.
4. Self-confidence and confidence in your potential indicates confidence in your abilities and talents. (Linda & Eyre, 1993), self-confidence is the development of personality, awareness, and talent and uniqueness. They explain that self-awareness is the same as making decisions and reflecting on our actions.
5. Self-discipline and moderation means controlling and balancing all activities and behaviors to which a person is exposed. This includes, above all, not only self-discipline, but also can be physical, mental and financial self-discipline (Linda & Eyre, 1993).

Moderation, on the other hand, is the grace that someone chooses to create and balance something in their life.

6. Loyalty and Chastity Loyalty is one of the characteristics of a person, indicated by loyalty and constant support for oneself. According to Orwin (2000), loyalty is adherence to a practical treatment established by someone in order to be loyal to one's own quality or condition, and chastity is a virtue that moderates our sexual desires (Halwani, 2013). Chastity protects against abstaining from premarital sexual desires and illicit intercourse

The value of giving is a value given by someone to others. This value includes something which is not visible but valuable. Some types of value of giving are:

1. Loyalty and Reliability is the seriousness with which you implement and do something. Loyalty is not only a matter of behavior, but also of thought and motivation (Keller, 2007). Reliability, on the other hand, is the consistency of performance or behavior (Linda & Eyre, 1993). Reliability is part of the inner human being. It is usually judged by others based on a person's actions, attitudes, and consistency of conduct.
2. Respect is a strong admiration for something or someone stems from their qualities, accomplishments, or talents. (Linda & Eyre, 1993) states that there are several kinds of respect in life: Courtesy and respect for family, neighbors, property, elders, environment, nature, rights and religions of others.
3. Love and affection are deep emotions felt by an individual and have a meaning. It's very hard to put into words, but it shows in compassion and actions. (Linda & Eyre, 1993) said that Love is the deepest interpretation of craving and feeling, and closeness is defined as one of her human instincts. It can be definite as the feeling of loving someone.
4. Unselfishness and Sensitivity is the same as helping those in need (Sinha, 1984). Selflessness is one of the most important virtues a person does to others. Therefore, people care more about others than themselves. Sensitivity is defined as focusing on the extraordinary and being unselfish. (Linda & Eyre, 1993). Sensitivity is trying to find out how people are feeling, and sensitivity and empathy for their problems leads to helping them from the start. This feeling is manifested by a sense of brotherhood that brings empathy and tolerance to others.
5. Kindness and Friendliness is a way of caring for something rather than categorizing it (Salzberg, 2011). Kindness is a human strength that affects happiness, and kindness is what determines kindness (Linda & Eyre, 1993). Kindness refers to an attitude that favors understanding rather than confrontation. It is also associated with a smile and a warm welcome.
6. Justice and Mercy According to (Linda & Eyre, 1993) justice is fairness, observance of the law, play and work. Compassion, on the other hand, is an expression of kindness and compassion that brings relief to those in need. Justice is the key that people in the organization care about.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Design**

The researchers in this study used a qualitative approach using content analysis (content analysis) techniques. Qualitative analysis sets the interpretation of the researcher, so the results are informed by assumptions or the researcher's personal experience. To make the results more useful, researchers or analysts need to decide which data are more important and which are less or less important. Krippendorff (1993:15) states that content analysis is a technique for took context into account and drew reproducible and valid conclusions. Content analysis techniques can revealed hidden meanings in text. The method of qualitative content analysis is a social science method used to investigated and uncovered deeper meanings in a particular literary work or text. Through this analysis, researchers can examine

content descriptions, message characteristics, and content evolution. Content analysis is therefore research, a detailed study of the content of documented information.

### **Source of The Data**

The data in the study are excerpts contained in the movie. According to Arikunto (in Anggraini, 2020: 62) a data source in research means a subject from which data can be obtained. This study focuses on the moral values contained in films. The primary data source in this study is the live-action movie "Mulan" by Niki Caro produced by Disney in 2020. Sources of secondary data in this study are library books and journals that are relevant to the research topic. In this study, the authors obtained data from movies they watched and read the script of the "Mulan" movie. The main feature of qualitative research that distinguishes this study from others is the methods and instruments used to collect and interpret the data.

### **Data Collection**

Arikunto says, "The researcher is very important in qualitative research. The primary vehicle for research is the researcher himself." This is because the primary vehicle for this research is to collect and it means being a researcher who analyzes. Researchers then describe it and relate it to the theory applied to base their analysis. Therefore, the outcome of a study is determined by the researcher's point of view in identifying the analysis of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The ways researchers did analysis data are: (1) Read and understood the note that had been wrote before, (2) Attempts to verify collected data, (3) Selected the data and classified the data that dealt with the statement of the problems, (4) Chose a statement related to moral values, and (5) Drew conclusion after the data have been analyzed.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **1. Moral Values in "Mulan" Movie**

Based on the theory of James Rachels (2004), Moral values divided into 4 values, namely moral value of courage, moral value of generosity, moral value of honesty, and moral value of loyalty

#### **Moral Value of Courage**

Doing the right thing even in difficult times is called courage. Courage, also called bravery. Even if you do your best to succeed, success is not guaranteed. Indeed, bravery is regularly observed via means of failure. There are many choices in this life. It takes courage to learn and grow, albeit with some risk. However, the risk must be reasoned.

There are five dialogues stating the moral value of courage. The first dialog performed at 00:10:54 – 00:11:04 as below.

*The Emperor : "We're not afraid of dark magic. We will destroy this Rouran army and their witch. Here's my decree! We will build a mighty army"*

This dialogue reveals the moral value of courage. It showed that the emperor was not afraid of anything. After an unexpected attack started by Bori Khan's troops, the emperor decided to fight them. Without hesitation or fear he fought Bori Khan's army and his magical powers. To fight Bori Khan, the emperor asked to form a strong army. The moral value of courage is also found in 01:18:06 – 01:18:25. It was based on Hongui's opinion of Mulan.

*Honghui : "You would believe Hua Jun. Why do you not believe Hua Mulan? She risked everything by revealing her true identity. She's braver than any man here. And she's the best warrior amongst us"*

After being expelled from the army, Mulan chanced upon Bori Khan's witch Shannian. She persuaded Mulan to go against the royal army, as Mulan was exiled. Xianniang told Bori

Khan's true plan to kill the emperor and capture the city. Upon learning the truth, Mulan returned to the royal army despite knowing that it would not be accepted by Commander Tong. But all the soldiers defended and even acknowledged that Mulan was a brave woman and a great warrior.

### **Moral Value of Generosity**

There are some dialogues in the Mulan movie that demonstrate the value of generosity. For example, like the dialogue shown at 01:18:42 – 01:19:00 below.

*Commander Tung : “Hua Mulan, your actions have brought disgrace and dishonour to this regiment, to this kingdom, and to your own family. But your loyalty and bravery are without question. You will lead us as we ride to the Imperial City”*

Mulan's efforts to win the regiment's consideration have been successful. She rejoined the Imperial Army and earned the honor of leading them to the Imperial City to save the Kingdom and the Emperor. There was also a dialogue that represented the moral value of generosity at 1:35:43 – 01:36:04, this scene shows Mulan being honored by the Emperor.

*The Emperor : “Hua Mulan, the people owe you a debt of thanks. I owe you my life. In gratitude for your service and dedication. I invite you to take your place with our greatest decorated warriors as an officer in the Emperor's Guard”*

This dialogue showed that the emperor generously supported Mulan's all efforts to save the kingdom. Mulan wins the battle after fighting Bori Khan for Emperor and Kingdom. The Emperor thanked Mulan for her efforts, courage and loyalty, and gave her the honor of joining the Emperor's Guard.

In another dialogue, Mulan is also respected by the emperor through Commander Tong, when she had just arrived in the village. The dialog was presented at 01:42:38 – 01:43:14.

*Commander Tung : “Under order of His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor, we present this gift to Hua Mulan. She has saved the dynasty. The entire kingdom is in her debt. She has brought honour to her ancestors, to her family, to her village, and to her country”*

Everything that Mulan has fought for has succeeded in bringing honor to her family, her village, and her country. No one thinks of Mulan as a witch anymore because of her chi powers. Now she is a warrior and defender of the kingdom, everyone is proud of her.

### **Moral Value of Honesty**

Here the researcher presents the moral value of honesty in the movie Mulan. There are two dialogues or conversations concerning the moral value of honesty. The first interaction that has value is the show at 00:53:03 – 00:53:14, when Hua Jun (Mulan) wants to meet Commander Tong and uncover the truth about his true identity.

*Hua Jun (Mulan) : “Commander Tung, there's something that weighs heavily on my heart. I need to confess it to you. It has to do with the three virtues”*

The above discussion shows the ethical price of honesty. Mulan feels that she has violated the principle of the Royal Army that it must always be honest. She hid the fact that she was a woman and she did not think it was right for her to disguise herself as a man. Hence, Hua Jun attempted to reveal himself to Commander Tong.

Another dialogue that shows the moral value of honesty is also seen at 01:12:29 - 01:12:50.

This scene is described as taking place after the war, when Mulan appears and reveals herself in front of all the soldiers participating in the war.

*Commander Tung* : “*Hua Jun*”  
*Mulan* : “*I'm Hua Mulan. Forgive me*”  
*Cricket* : “*He's a girl?*”  
*Commander Tung* : “*You are an imposter*”

In the end, Hua Mulan reveals her true identity to Commander Tung despite knowing the risks involved. The soldiers were very surprised by Mulan's confession. Mulan was later dishonorably discharged. This dialogue coincides with theory by Linda and Richard Eyre (1993) moral value theory of honesty. One must be honest in difficult times.

### **Moral Value of Loyalty**

There are several dialogues that show the values of loyalty. The first dialogue occurs at 00:20:00 – 00:20:25. The values are presented in the following dialog.

*Hua Zhou*: “*I am Hua Zhou. I served the Imperial Army in the last battle against the Northern Invaders*”  
*Sergeant Qiang* : “*Have you no son old enough to fight?*”  
*Hua Zhou* : “*I am blessed with two daughters. I will fight*”

The dialogue above shows Hua Zhou's loyalty to the kingdom, as well as to his family. As we know, Hua Zhou was once a soldier in the imperial army. He took part in the final battle, wounding his leg and causing it to limp. After the announcement, Hua Zhou hoped to rejoin the imperial army to fight, but it was difficult because he didn't have any other men in his family.

Hua Zhou's other dialogue also shows his values of loyalty. It is explained in the next dialogue that takes place at 00:24:08 -00:24:13.

*Hua Zhou* : “*It is my duty to fight. My honor to sacrifice for the emperor*”

Hua Zhou has strong life principles. He didn't want to embarrass his family, he was determined to join the war with the Imperial Army. He felt that this opportunity was an honor for him to fight for the kingdom as a soldier.

Also, the loyalty value performed with 01:15:57 - 01:16:28 also appears in the dialogue. This value can be described by researchers as below.

*Xianniang* : “*But it happens even now. Join me. We will take our place together*”  
*Hua Mulan* : “*I know my place. And it is my duty to fight for the kingdom and protect the emperor*”

This dialogue shows Mulan and Xianniang's conversation which illustrates the moral values of loyalty. Xianniang tempts Mulan to destroy the kingdom. However, Mulan refuses to join Bori Khan's army. He does not want and will not betray the kingdom. Mulan fought for her kingdom and defended it from anyone who tried to destroy it. Seen at 01:17:09 – 01:17:52 shows the last conversation that describes moral values such as loyalty.

Mulan assures the Imperial forces to listen to what they say about the fact of Bori Khan's military plans.

*Hua Mulan* : “*Please, you have to listen to me*”

*Commander Tung* : “Sergeant, hand me my sword”

*Hua Mulan* : “Kill me if you must. But first, listen. The garrison attacks were just a distraction. Khan has our army focused on the Silk Road, so he can sneak into the Imperial City and kill the emperor. Bōri Khan is already far ahead. The Imperial Army can't stop him now. But perhaps a small, well-trained force could. When employed correctly... four ounces can move 1,000 pounds”

Despite being driven out by Imperial forces, Mulan remains loyal and tells Bori Khan's army's true plans after Xianniang reveals his true identity.

## **2. The Moral Values in “Mulan” Movie Presented in Social-Humanity**

1) Unlimited Affection For Family. The meaning that really stands out in the film is about love for a family that has no boundaries. This is evidenced by the sacrifice Mulan's father went to complete his mandatory military service despite being sick, in order to protect his family. Apart from showing the sacrifice of parents and love, Mulan also plays a role as a character for a child's love for the family. Mulan also tried to disguise herself as a man to replace her father who went to war.

2) The Importance of Having an Attitude to Appreciate Others. Becoming a war soldier actually brought Mulan to meet many people. Not infrequently there are also those who look down on Mulan's abilities and hate her. But this evil attitude was never reciprocated by Mulan. Mulan still respects the people around her and is kind. He did this because he understood the important role of the people around him in his life. Apart from that, Mulan also feels that the existence of other people should be respected.

3) Persistent attitude and unanimous determination to be able to achieve something Mulan had almost given up because she felt overwhelmed and unable to carry out her new routine in the world of military service. It wouldn't be Mulan if you just gave up right away, persistent attitude and strong determination to protect my father, so I decided to continue the struggle. This decision has also brought Mulan to success because she always tries to be better. Finally, Mulan was able to defeat the enemy, and was named one of the best category warriors.

4) Teaching About Gender Equality. The film Mulan teaches that actually everyone has the right to do something as they wish, regardless of gender boundaries. It is time for women to prove they can be tough knights protecting the people around them. This has also been proven by Mulan.

5) There's Nothing Wrong If You Want To Follow Your Heart. Many oppose Mulan's decision to disguise herself as a male soldier. But he still insisted on doing it for the good of the family. This shows that there is nothing wrong with following your heart, while others are not harmed. You also have the right to determine the path.

After explaining the extracts of findings above, researchers can finally interpret the research question. The first question is “What kind of moral values are presented in Mulan live-action movie?”. To answer this research question, The researcher analyzed the movie by connecting the theory of James Rachels (2004). And the second research question, “How are the moral values in “Mulan” movie presented in social humanity?” To answer that, the researcher conducted an in-depth analysis of every behavior and talk of each character in the movie.

In this study, there are four moral values embodied in Mulan films. First, the moral value of Mulan's bravery when he won the battle and saved the emperor. It showed that the emperor feared nothing. After a surprise attack by Bori Khan's army, the emperor finally made the decision to fight them. He had no fear of anything that Bori Khan's army had, be it abilities or magical powers. To fight Bori Khan, the emperor called for a strong defensive line.

Second, the moral value of generosity when Mulan respects family, village and country.



Third, the moral value of Mulan's honesty when trying to reveal her true identity to Commander Tong. Even though she knew the risks she was about to take, her soldiers were amazed by Mulan's revelation. Mulan was then finally exiled and dishonorably discharged. Fourth, the moral value of loyalty in which Mulan fights for the emperor and protects her from those who seek to overthrow the emperor. This cannot be separated from Father Zhou's teachings. Mr. Hua Zhou is a principled person. Not wanting to dishonor his family, he joined the Imperial Army to fight. He also said he was honored to fight for his kingdom as a warrior

#### **CONCLUSION**

Mulan is a 2020 American live-action fantasy film directed by Niki Caro and produced by Walt Disney Pictures. Mulan is a film about honor, family, respect, duty and struggle. The movie is set in China. The movie is set in the Tang Dynasty in the 7th to 9th centuries. The main character of this movie is a woman named Hua Mulan. Mulan was known as a brave, shrewd and skilled character, but she seems to be a real warrior with supernatural powers, not human.

Using content analysis descriptive techniques and referring to James Rachel's Moral Theory (2004), researchers discovered four moral values contained in Mulan films. First, the moral value of courage when she won the battle and saved the emperor. Second, the moral value of generosity when Mulan respects family, village and country. Third, the moral value of honesty when Mulan trying to admit her true identity to Commander Tong. Fourth, the moral value of loyalty in which Mulan fights for the emperor and protects her from those who seek to overthrow the emperor.

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