

Elaborating Islamic Educational Values in the Nussa and Rara Series for Early Childhood: The Episode "Makan Jangan Asal Makan"

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Abstract

Instilling religious values from an early age is essential in shaping children's moral and spiritual character. The Nussa and Rara animated series serves as an engaging educational medium for young audiences. This study aims to explore the Islamic educational values presented in the episode "Don't Eat Carelessly" and examine its implications for early childhood education. A descriptive qualitative method with content analysis was employed. The results reveal the presence of aqidah values (faith in Allah as the provider), ibadah values (reciting basmalah, eating with the right hand, drinking in three sips), and akhlaq values (maintaining health, etiquette, and cleanliness). These values are delivered through songs and visuals that are appealing and easily understood by young children. The findings suggest that religious-themed animations like Nussa and Rara can serve as effective alternative media for Islamic character education. They also support their use by educators and parents as supplementary learning tools in early childhood education settings.

Keywords: Islamic Educational Values, Nussa And Rara, Early Childhood, Religious Animation, Character Education

Abstrak

Penanaman nilai agama sejak usia dini penting untuk membentuk karakter religius anak. Serial animasi Nussa dan Rara berperan sebagai media edukatif yang menarik bagi anak-anak. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengelaborasi nilai-nilai pendidikan Islam dalam episode "Makan Jangan Asal Makan" serta implikasinya terhadap pendidikan anak usia dini. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik analisis isi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa episode tersebut mengandung nilai akidah (iman kepada Allah sebagai pemberi rezeki), nilai ibadah (membaca basmalah, makan dengan tangan kanan, minum tiga tegukan), dan nilai akhlak (menjaga kesehatan, sopan santun, kebersihan). Nilai-nilai tersebut disampaikan melalui lagu dan adegan visual yang komunikatif dan mudah dipahami oleh anak. Kesimpulannya, serial ini efektif sebagai media pembelajaran karakter berbasis nilai Islam dan dapat dimanfaatkan oleh orang tua maupun guru dalam pendidikan anak usia dini.

Kata Kunci: Nilai Pendidikan Islam, Nussa Dan Rara, Anak Usia Dini, Animasi Religius, Pendidikan Karakter

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is often referred to as the golden age, a period that occurs only once in life and cannot be repeated (Warmansyah et al., 2025; Wulandari et al., 2025; Yulia et al., 2025). This golden period is crucial because the child's brain develops rapidly, beginning from the prenatal stage up to the age of six (Algazira et al., 2025; Hasnawati, 2019; Isnariyati et al., 2025). Early childhood education is the initial developmental phase that accommodates all aspects of a child's growth and potential (Hatta, 2018; Khodarasih et al., 2025; Rusady et al., 2025; Sarasati & Cahyati, 2021; Syaharra et al., 2025; Yulia et al., 2025). During this early phase, which spans from the end of infancy (around 5 or 6 years) until the preschool period, children experience significant growth and development (Rosdiani & Warmansyah, 2021; Yuliani & Khan, 2016). This period is commonly referred to as the preschool years, where all aspects of development, including religious and moral values, motor skills, cognition, language, and socio-emotional abilities, evolve with appropriate educational stimulation to prepare the child for formal schooling (Meriem et al., 2020).

The National Association for the Education of Children (NAEYC) in Dian Pertiwi et al. defines early childhood as a group of individuals aged 0 to 8 years (Pratiwi et al., 2023). National character is an essential component of human resource quality. Therefore, a good personality must be formed and nurtured from an early age (Hatta, 2018). Sugiarto (2021) identified six stages of early childhood development: young infants (0–6 months), older infants (7–12 months), young toddlers (1 year), older toddlers (2 years), preschoolers (3–5 years), and lower-grade school-aged children (6–8 years). Early childhood is thus a critical period following infancy and preceding middle childhood (Fay-Stammbach et al., 2014; Maromi & Hasibuan, 2025; Watini, 2020). Experts categorize human development chronologically into prenatal, early childhood, middle and late childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood.

Nussa and Rara is an animation introduced during the Hijrah Fest event in 2018 and first released on the official YouTube channel Nussa Official on November 8, 2018. It was created by The Little Giantz, founded by Mario Irwansyah, and launched its premiere episode on November 20, 2018, coinciding with the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. The show airs weekly at 4:30 AM. As a moral and educational film rooted in Islamic educational values, this Islamic-themed cartoon is considered a refreshing contribution to Indonesian animation by both entertaining and educating children about religion (Muthmainnah et al., 2023). Nussa and Rara are ideal role models for children, as their characters embody a playful yet informative nature, along with exemplary behavior worth emulating. Each episode of the Nussa and Rara animation series contains moral lessons (Pinem et al., 2023).

Early childhood education plays a vital role in developing moral values and personal character. At this stage, children begin to gain a fundamental understanding of norms, principles, and behaviors that will influence their future lives. The integration of

religious values in early childhood Islamic education is crucial for shaping personalities aligned with Islamic teachings. Values such as honesty, patience, compassion, and responsibility are expected to be instilled from a young age (Saleha et al., 2022).

Moral, religious, and character values are essential because they reflect the norms, principles, and behaviors that impact one's future. In Islam, morality is referred to as *al-akhlaq al-karimah*, which denotes noble behavior as a manifestation of one's understanding of good and bad, appropriate and inappropriate, as reflected in external conduct (Khoirunnisa, 2022). In modern times, individuals and society face increasingly complex moral and ethical challenges. The implementation of Islamic moral values can be an effective tool in cultivating character education, helping learners navigate these challenges by promoting wise use of technology and grounding character development in religious teachings.

One practical solution for parents concerned about their children's screen time is to introduce them to quality educational content. As the first educational institution for children, parents must be selective in choosing digital content that embeds Islamic values. One recommended option is animated films, particularly the Nussa and Rara series (Rehny & Sari, 2023). This animation provides positive influences on viewers, particularly in teaching Islamic values such as monotheism (*tauhid*), honesty, and adherence to Islamic practices. These teachings are effectively delivered through engaging visuals, songs, costumes, and voice acting, making the messages accessible and enjoyable for children. Therefore, Nussa and Rara promote Islamic values through various methods of *da'wah*, including through actions (*bil hal*), speech (*bil lisan*), and exemplary behavior (*bil qudwah*).

Parents need to be more attentive to their children's development, supported by educators who can monitor and guide children's behavior and activities. This joint effort ensures that children grow with good moral character and avoid negative influences. The advancement of technology has made it easier to introduce Islamic values to children through appropriate language and media aligned with their socio-emotional and intellectual development (Nisa et al., 2023). One episode of the Nussa and Rara series that strongly conveys Islamic educational values is entitled "Makan Jangan Asal Makan" (Don't Just Eat Anything). This episode teaches Islamic dining etiquette, such as reciting prayers before eating, using the right hand, and avoiding excess. Presented in a way that resonates with children's world, these messages are easier for young viewers to understand and apply in daily life (Hermawan et al., 2024).

Despite the growing use of educational media like Nussa and Rara, further research is needed to examine its effectiveness in instilling religious values in early childhood. This study aims to elaborate on the Islamic educational values presented in the episode "Makan Jangan Asal Makan" and analyze how these values contribute to the formation of religious character in early childhood. It also seeks to describe how these values are communicated through child-friendly media using engaging visual and narrative approaches. The scholarly contribution of this research lies in enriching the

discourse on Islamic early childhood education, particularly in the context of film-based media.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research approach using content analysis to explore Islamic educational values within the Nussa and Rara animation series, focusing specifically on the episode entitled "Makan Jangan Asal Makan." The primary data used in this study is the video of the selected episode, while the secondary data includes various sources such as academic articles, books, and previous studies related to early childhood Islamic education, Islamic media analysis, and religious values conveyed through the Nussa and Rara series.

Data Collection

The data collection technique applied is documentation. Data were obtained through a variety of media, including books, journals, visual-audio recordings, television, and internet sources. The researcher selected the video episode "Makan Jangan Asal Makan" from the Nussa and Rara series as the core material for analysis.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the visual and narrative components of the episode, the researcher repeatedly viewed the animation to analyze visuals, dialogues, character expressions, and storyline contexts. This was followed by the transcription of the episode converting all spoken and visual content into written text. The transcript included all dialogues, narration, scenes, and descriptive visuals to facilitate systematic coding and analysis.

Data Analysis

The core analytical technique used is content analysis, which involves several structured stages: 1) Coding the episode content to identify meaningful segments; 2) Classifying data according to Islamic educational values such as aqidah (faith), ibadah (worship), and akhlak (morals); 2) Interpreting symbolic meanings and messages conveyed by the characters within the animation.

In addition, this study integrates elements of semiotic analysis following the Saussure model (Sugiyono, 2013). The semiotic approach is used to understand the signs and meanings embedded in the visual and verbal elements of the episode. This includes examining how Islamic values are symbolically represented and communicated through animation.

The analysis process includes reviewing the content, grouping segments based on the research focus, interpreting the data, and verifying the meaning to ensure both academic and social-scientific relevance. The validity of data is tested through credibility measures, primarily by increasing the persistence and accuracy of the researcher in reviewing and interpreting key content points within the analyzed episode.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background of the Nussa and Rara Animated Series

The Nussa and Rara animated series is a locally produced Islamic animation from Indonesia, created by The Little Giantz animation studio in collaboration with 4Stripe Production, initiated by Mario Irwansyah, and directed by Bonny Wirasmono. The series emerged in response to the moral decline observed among children, aiming to provide positive, value-based content.

First launched on YouTube on October 25, 2018, Nussa quickly gained popularity, reaching over 426,000 subscribers within the first 24 hours and growing to more than 8.67 million subscribers to date. The debut episode, "Nussa: Sleeping Alone, Not Afraid!", was released on November 20, 2018, coinciding with Universal Children's Day, and received overwhelming support from audiences worldwide. The series is broadcast every Friday at 04:30 AM WIB and premiered on Indonesia's NET TV in October 2019, as well as Malaysia's Astro Ceria in the same year. The main characters siblings Nussa and Rara, along with their cat Anta reflect daily life scenarios designed to teach Islamic values, gratitude, and positive behavior. The name "Nussa" was derived from Nusantara (the Indonesian archipelago), with the double "S" intended to reinforce its identity as a locally rooted animation. The series aims to inspire global audiences through the creative strength of Indonesian children's animation.

Production Team of the Nussa and Rara Series

The Nussa educational children's animated series, which premiered on YouTube on November 20, 2018, was produced by The Little Giantz animation studio in collaboration with 4Stripe Productions:

Table 2.1. Production Team of the Nussa and Rara Series

Director: Bonny Wirasmono	CEO: Aditya Triantoro	Creative Director: Yuda Wirafianto
Executive Producer: Aditya Triantoro	Executive Producer: Yuda Wirafianto	Producer: Ricky MZC Manoppo
Head of Production: Iman MSC Manoppo	Script Writer: Johanna DK	Character Design: Aditya Triantoro
Technical Director: Gamilang Rahmandhika	IT: Aditya Nugroho	IT: Yogie Mu'affa
Operation Manager: Yuwandry Fajar	Project Manager: Chrisnawan Martantio	Production Coordinator: Nida Manzilah
Concept Artist: Saphira Maharani	Assets Creation: Dimas Wyasa	Assets Creation: Dawai Fathul Wally
Storyboard Artist: Muhammad Rafif	Head of Animation: Aditya Sarwi Aji	Animation Supervisor: Bilal Abu Askar
Animation Lead: Muhammad Risnadi	Animator: Muchammad Ikhwan	Animator: Abdurrahman Gais
Animator: M. Nur Faizin	Animator: Alan Surya	Animator: M. Reyhan Hilman

Animator: Rizqy C. Zulfikar	Animator: Bintang R. Utama	Head of Editor: Iman MSC Manoppo
Look Dev: Garry J. Liwang	Look Dev: Denny Siswanto	Lighting Supervisor: Garry J. Liwang
Lighting Team: Anggia K. Dewi	VFX: Mochamad Teguh I	Associate Producer: Lizaditama
Audio Post: Dimas Adista	Audio Post: Muhammad Ilham	Motion Graphic: Farhan Adli
Motion Graphic: S. Djunaedi	Motion Graphic: Luthffii Aryansjah	Voice Director: Sumardi
Voice Director: Chrisnawan Martantio	Social Media: Airlangga Tahir	Production Asst.: Aditya Fadel M.
Videographer: Arip Pirosa	Voice (Nussa): Muzakki Ramdhani	Voice (Rarra): Aysha Razaana
Voice (Umma): Jessy Milianty		

**Table 2.2. Synopsis and Character Description of Nussa and Rara Series
(Episode: "Don't Eat Carelessly")**

Section	Description	Image
Synopsis	The episode opens with a cheerful song while a delicious meal is served on the table. As Rarra reaches for the food, Nussa blows a whistle and begins singing a song that teaches the Sunnah of eating: wash your hands, say Bismillah, eat with your right hand, don't stand, don't blow hot food fan it instead, and drink in three sips.	
Nussa	A 9-year-old boy wearing a green shirt, brown pants, and a peci. Despite having a prosthetic left leg, he is intelligent, cheerful, and devout. He memorizes Hadith and Surahs and often teaches Islamic values to Rara. Nussa always stays positive, asks questions, and loves his family deeply.	
Rara	A cheerful and curious young girl who wears a yellow dress and a red hijab. She often reminds Nussa of good Islamic manners, such as saying Basmallah. She is sweet, innocent, and affectionate toward Nussa, Umma, and their cat Anta.	

Figure 1. YouTube/NussaOfficial

Figure 2. Instagram/@nussaofficial

Figure 3. Instagram/@nussaofficial

Umma	The mother of Nussa and Rara, depicted as wearing a blue hijab and a purple dress. She is gentle yet firm, teaching Islamic values to her children in a way they can easily understand.
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Figure 4. Instagram/@nussaofficial

Anta (Cat)	A clever, adorable gray-and-white cat who often senses evil and warns the children in playful ways. Anta contributes to the moral lessons of the story with its unique and funny behavior.
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Figure 5. Instagram/@nussaofficial

Shayṭān	A symbolic antagonist shown as a round, purple creature with wings, fangs, horns, and sharp eyes—designed to be non-terrifying but clearly representational of evil. He always tries to mislead Nussa and Rara but fails in the end.
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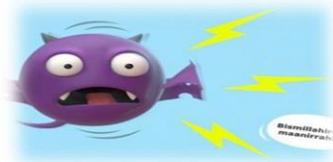


Figure 6. Instagram/@nussaofficial

Scenes from the Nussa and Rara Series Containing Islamic Educational Values (Episode: 'Don't Eat Carelessly')

Table 2.3. Comprehensive Islamic Values in Nussa Scenes

Scene Description	Dialogue Snippet	Islamic Educational Value	Qur'an / Hadith Reference	Image Placeholder
Don't Eat Carelessly	Rara: "Hmmmm..." (reaching for food) Nussa: "Pruitt... Don't eat carelessly!" (blows whistle and sings)	Self-discipline and health (Hifdzun Nafs); Adab towards food; Care for others	Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 2:195; HR. Muslim	

Figure 1

Bloated Belly, Quickly Full	Nussa shows discomfort while singing "Bloated belly, quickly full..."	Self-care and moderation; Gratitude	Q.S. Al-A'raf: 7:31; HR. Tirmidzi	
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Figure 2

Follow the Prophet's Eating Rules	Lyrics: "Eat by the rules the Prophet taught"	Adab toward Rasulullah; following Sunnah	General Hadith on Sunnah Practices	
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Figure 3

Seek Blessings in Every Meal	Lyrics: "Seek blessings in every meal"	Faith in Allah as the Provider (Ar-Razzaq)	Q.S. Hud: 11:6; Tafsir Fakhruddin Ar-Razi
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Figure 4

Wash Your Hands	Lyrics: "Wash your hands clean"	Cleanliness and self-care; Health preservation	HR. Muslim; Concept of Dharuriyat al-Khams
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Figure 5

Say Bismillah	Lyrics: "Say Bismillah..."	Remembrance of Allah; Worship practice	HR. Abu Daud and Tirmidzi
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Figure 6

Use Your Right Hand	Lyrics: "Use your right hand"	Following the Prophet's Sunnah; Respect for food	HR. Muslim; Yusuf Qaradhwai's fatwa
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Figure 7

Sit While Eating	Lyrics: "Make it a habit not to stand" Scene: Rara sits while eating	Etiquette and humility while eating	HR. Muslim; Imam Nawawi's interpretation
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Figure 8

Fan Hot Food	Rara: (Blows on hot food) Nussa: "Don't blow, better to fan it!"	Patience and adab; Avoiding harm	Adab makan dalam Islam; HR. Bukhari (general)
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Figure 9

Drink in Three Sips	Lyrics: "Drink in three sips – One! Two! Three!"	Following Sunnah; Health and manners	HR. Bukhari and Muslim; QS. Ali Imran: 3:159
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Figure 10

Islamic Educational Values in the Nussa and Rara Series: Objectives, Benefits, and Functions in Learning

Based on a content analysis of the Nussa and Rara animated series, various Islamic educational values were identified and categorized into three main areas: aqidah (faith), ibadah (worship), and akhlaq (morality). These values are embedded in the storyline, dialogue, and behavior of the characters, particularly in the episode titled "Don't Eat Carelessly," which was selected for deeper exploration.

Islamic Educational Values in the Episode "*Don't Eat Carelessly*"

Aqidah (Faith)

This value is portrayed in the scene "Seek blessings in every meal," which emphasizes belief in Allah as Ar-Razzaq, the sole provider of sustenance. The children are taught to understand that every bite of food is a blessing from Allah, aligning with Q.S. Hud: 11:6. This theological foundation fosters gratitude and dependence on divine providence (Sari & Zulfiana, 2023).

Ibadah (Worship)

The value of ibadah appears in several scenes: saying "Bismillah" before eating, using the right hand, avoiding haste by fanning hot food, and drinking in three sips. These actions exemplify the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and teach children to connect daily activities with religious devotion (Nurrahman & Althaf, 2023). These practices also encourage mindfulness and adab in simple acts like eating and drinking, which are core to forming pious behavior.

Akhlaq (Morality)

The moral dimension is central to the series. For example, the scene "Don't eat carelessly" teaches hifdzun nafs (self-protection), while "Bloated belly, quickly full" warns against gluttony and promotes moderation as taught in Q.S. Al-A'raf: 7:31. Other values include cleanliness and respect for food, seen in the directive to wash hands and sit while eating reflecting Islamic ethical teachings (Khoirunnisa, 2022; Magta et al., 2024).

Objectives and Benefits of the Series

The Nussa and Rara series aims to instill Islamic values in everyday contexts through engaging narratives. This supports the objectives of Indonesian Film Law No. 33 of 2009, Article 3, which include cultivating morally upright children and contributing to national intelligence and cultural sustainability. As noted by (Dagama et al., (2021), this series offers a positive alternative to mainstream media by embedding religious values in child-friendly formats.

The benefits of the series are manifold: (1) it provides moral entertainment that relieves stress through humor and familiar situations, (2) enhances religious knowledge through repetition of key Islamic teachings, and (3) inspires behavioral change and spiritual awareness (Hatta, 2018; Saleha et al., 2022). Children begin to internalize

religious etiquette from repeated exposure to these teachings, making this medium a strategic educational tool.

Function of the Series in the Learning Process

As a learning medium, Nussa and Rara plays several roles. It acts as a motivational tool that prevents boredom and enriches the learning experience with visuals and music. According to Rozali, (2022), content analysis of children's media confirms that such series can reinforce classroom instruction. Secondly, it serves as a supplemental learning resource, conveying Islamic knowledge in a way that's accessible to young audiences (Sarasati & Cahyati, 2021).

The series also functions as a practical source of moral exemplars, providing models of behavior rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah. This makes it particularly useful for early childhood education settings where character building is foundational (Erwanda & Sutapa, 2023).

Despite its strengths, the episode "Don't Eat Carelessly" has certain limitations. First, the explanation behind some adab practices is minimal. For example, children may not grasp why blowing hot food is discouraged unless contextual reasoning is provided (Nuralifya et al., 2024). Second, the visuals could be enhanced to show practical applications of manners in various real-life contexts, increasing relatability. Moreover, more interactive dialogue between characters could deepen emotional connection and narrative engagement. As Inadjo et al., (2023) note, educational content is more impactful when it emotionally resonates with children. Adding conflict and resolution scenarios could help reinforce the values being taught. Finally, excessive repetition in musical segments may hinder viewer engagement if not balanced with visual variety or storytelling. While repetition aids memorization, overuse can lead to disengagement (Pratiwi et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Nussa and Rara episode "Don't Eat Carelessly" effectively incorporates core Islamic educational values aqidah, ibadah, and akhlaq through engaging and pedagogically sound scenes. The value of aqidah is reflected in the belief that Allah is the sole provider (Ar-Razzaq), as taught in the scene "Seek blessings in every meal." The value of ibadah is conveyed through scenes that emphasize saying bismillah, using the right hand, eating patiently, and following the Sunnah, such as drinking in three sips and showing proper etiquette. The value of akhlaq emerges in lessons on self-care (hifdzun nafs), gratitude, hygiene, respectful eating, and care for others. These findings affirm that the series serves not only as an effective tool for character education but also aligns with the objectives of Indonesian Film Law No. 33/2009 Article 3, which include shaping moral character, enhancing national intelligence, and supporting culturally-rooted media. Therefore, Nussa and Rara is highly appropriate for use in early childhood education settings, both as a

learning medium and as an alternative source of value-based instruction that inspires moral development, reinforces Islamic teachings, and supports holistic child growth.

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