

THE FAMILY VALUES AND NEGATIVE STEREOTYPE EXISTING IN FILM “MY NAME IS KHAN”

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ABSTRAK

Rizwan Khan adalah salah satu tokoh yang dapat menjadi representasi umat Islam yang tinggal di Amerika Serikat. Itu adalah salah satu karakter yang ada di film “My Name is Khan”. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis nilai-nilai kekeluargaan dalam film dan prasangka terhadap umat Islam yang tinggal di Amerika Serikat. Rancangan penelitian dalam penelitian ini adalah analisis isi yang berfokus pada bagaimana nilai-nilai kekeluargaan muncul dalam film dan mengidentifikasi prasangka dalam film tersebut. Tiga nilai kekeluargaan berbeda yang ditemukan, yaitu nilai kekeluargaan Indian, nilai kekeluargaan kulit putih Amerika, dan nilai kekeluargaan kulit hitam Amerika. Setiap keluarga memiliki ciri khas tersendiri dalam membesarkan anak-anaknya. Prasangka terhadap Muslim ditemukan di hampir semua adegan film setelah tragedi 9 September. Prasangka menyebabkan intoleransi, kebencian dan kekerasan. Ini memengaruhi kehidupan ekonomi, kenyamanan dan kehidupan sosial Muslim yang tinggal di Amerika Serikat. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa setiap keluarga memiliki cara berbeda dalam membesarkan anak. Selain itu, tidak semua orang Amerika memiliki toleransi dan menerima perbedaan di lingkungannya.

ABSTRACT

Rizwan Khan is one of the characters which can be the representation of Muslims living in United States. It is one of the characters existing in the film “My Name is Khan”. This study aimed to analyze the family values of the film and the prejudice toward Muslims living in United States. The research design of this study was content analysis which focused on how the family values appeared on the film and identify the prejudice in the film. It was found that there were three different family values, such as Indian family values, American White family values, and American Black family values. Each family has its own characteristic in raising their children. The prejudice toward Muslims was found in almost scenes of the film after the ninth of September tragedy. The prejudice led to the intolerance, hatred and violence. It influenced the economic, comfort and social life of Muslims living in United States. It can be concluded that every family has different ways in raising their children. In addition, not all Americans have tolerance and accept differences in their neighborhoods.

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1. Introduction

Film is not only an imagination of the creator, but it reflects a personal life, such as character, characteristics, and experiences. Axelson (2008) stated that a film creates a transitional space for human mind, which is transporting the real life to fiction and back to real life again. It is also claimed that film is an experience, a state of mind (Axelson, 2008). According to Jowett and Lindon (1980), film that reflects the living society and the living it is important to witness the period and shed light on the future references. It means that film is able to be a powerful art that forms social life and belongs to it. It recognized to be a direct and indirect reflection of society. "My Name is Khan" is a film which represents social life, especially family. Rizwan Khan, portrayed by Shah Rukh Khan, is the main character of "My Name is Khan" film. The film was directed by Karan Johar which has a theme about how Muslims living in United States. The story become sadder since the main character, Rizwan Khan, has Asperger's Syndrome. He has to live different from other students, he got bullied, and could not cry if he wanted to. Ironically, he is also a Muslim which is a minority of the society. Meanwhile, he was very genius and his mother knew about it. His mother was a single parent with two children, Rizwan as the first child and Zakir was her last child. They lived in a small house and lived simply. This film is very unique, since it consists of complicated issues that exists in social life, that is religion issue (minority), poverty, difference, sibling dispute, and disease.

Asperger's Syndrome is a spectrum of complex pervasive developmental disorders, characterized by sedentary worsening of socialization, communication, cognition, sensation, accompanied by repetitive behavior patterns and limited interest (Anurogo & Ikrar, 2015). It means that this syndrome shows the uniqueness of behavior, way of thinking, and communication. Having almost the same characteristics as autism, this syndrome is considered a mild form of autism. Rizwan has these characteristics and the first person who knew about his syndrome was Hasina, Zakir's wife. Although he was not normal, Rizwan was able to adapt quickly in a new environment. It was because of his mother's struggle in raising him.

Another issue appears in the film is the prejudice of Americans toward Muslims living in United States. After the World Trade Center buildings were crashed by radical Muslim terrorist, the society life of Muslims in United States was changed. The bullying, discrimination and violent toward Muslims were spread throughout the countries of United States. Americans judged all Muslims were terrorist and they did not treat Muslims well. Rizwan, a Muslim man and his family also had the impact of the discrimination did by Americans. It also made Rizwan's step son, Sam passed away because of bullied.

Scenes show how Muslims were not treated well. Some scenes also show how families raised their children in different ways. The present study identified the scenes which show the different family values among Indian family, American White family, and American Black family. In addition, the present study also investigated the prejudice done by Americans toward the Muslims living in United States. The objectives of this study were to know the differences values among Indian family, American White family, and American Black family. The second objective was to find out how the Americans have negative stereotypes toward Muslims which led to discrimination.

Family is defined as a group of individuals living together in a certain place and create biological or social relationship (Chadda & Deb, 2013). According to Levine (1982), family refers to two or more persons who share goals and values, in which have long-term commitments to one another. The term of family is derived from Latin word, that is "familia" denoting a household establishment. Completely, a family consists of grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, children, and etc. A family also can be included at least a father, mother with or without a child. Every family has its' own way to teach their children. Furthermore, family serves as the primary agent for transferring a certain culture value to the family's members. Parents have significant role in helping their children to learn, internalize, and develop their children's culture understanding. So, it means that the characteristics or the personality of the children depend on how the way their parents raise them.

Society in India is collectivistic in promoting interdependence and cooperation in a family. The Indian families are more involved in caring of their families' members. They are more intimate with the members, especially the younger member, that is their children (Chadda & Deb, 2013). It is also stated that Indian families are considered to be strong, stable, close and endure with focus on integrity, loyalty,

and unity of family at expense of individuality, freedom of choice, privacy and personal space. In addition, family members have the rule or decision in other member's aspects of life, such as career choice, mate selection, and marriage. The family's members also have responsibility to take care of other members who have illness (Chadda & Deb, 2013). It is different to the social life in U.S, which the family is divided into two type, that is nuclear family and extended family (Levine, 1982).

Erndl (2016), did a study to find out the religious and National identity of the film "My Name is Khan". It was found that the movie is reflected to the reality, it showed how the Muslims images, practice, and beliefs. It was also found that Muslims did not get their right after the ninth of September tragedy. It developed new stereotypes toward Muslims. Chadda & Deb (2013), analyzed the Indian family system, collectivistic society, and psychotherapy. The study evaluated the scope and the effectiveness of family focused on psychotherapy for mental disorder in India. The study also revealed the characteristics of Indian families which have similarities with the Asian family. Balraj (2011) did a study with objective of the study was to get the evidences from the film "My Name is Khan" as a film which has reflected how the struggle of Muslims living in United States. There are several scenes mentioned in the study to reveal the get the objective of the study. The study focused on Muslims' life, and how Americans prejudiced the Muslims as the terrorist. The last one is Ciftci (2012), did a study to investigate the Islamophobia in the West. The study focused on the realistic and symbolic threat toward Muslims living in the West. Mostly, the Westerners believe that all Muslims support *al Qaeda*, in which it is a radical Muslim group that crashed the World Trade Center and there were many victims because of the terrorism.

The subject of these studies is the film itself and several related studies that analyzed the film. The topic of these studies is talked about the negative stereotype of Muslims and how every family has its' own characteristics. The different among those studies and the present study is the present study investigated both the family values existing in the film and the negative stereotype towards Muslims living in United States. The significance of this study is to show the how the film "My Name is Khan" reflects to some issues existed in social life, especially family. Also, this study shows the existence of negative stereorotype in the film. This study is able to contribute the other study that do the similar research about this film or other films that have similar genre.

2. Method

This study used content analysis research design, in which the data were analyzed qualitatively. According to Ary et al (2010), content analysis or it can be called as document analysis is a research method which can be applied to written or visual materials in order to identify the specified characteristics of the materials, such as analyzing textbook, newspapers, speeches, or other types of document. It is also stated that content analysis is widely used in education, in which some of its' purposes in educational researches are to identify bias or prejudice, to analyze the errors and, to discovers certain topics in particular documents, (Ary et al, 2010). As a research method, content analysis has qualitative and quantitative methodology, (Neuendorf, 2002; Krippendorff, 2004; Ary et al, 2010). The qualitative method used in collecting non-numerical data. Meanwhile, the quantitative method used to collect the numerical data.

The data were collected by doing observation in every scene of the film "My Name is Khan". Then, the data were classified into two parts, which scenes show the negative stereotype and scenes that show the family values. The data also were gained from the related theories and empirical reviews that can support the present study. The film itself and the related theories were the subjects of the present study. The objects of the present study were the family values existing in the film and the negative stereotype of Americans toward Muslims living in United States. In analyzing the data, this study used content analysis method. There are 5 steps that had been passed. The first one was collecting the data, that is the scences related to this study and some theories and empirical reviews. The second step was determining categories, which scenes belong to negative stereotype and which scenes show the family values. The third one was coding the content by assigning labels to the scenes. The next step was checking validity and reliability. The last step was analyzing and presenting the results.

3. Finding and Discussion

The film “My Name is Khan” is about multitude of perspective of various opinions and facts that comes with some social issues. The family values and the negative stereotypes were found in the film. The family values can be seen on the diagram below:

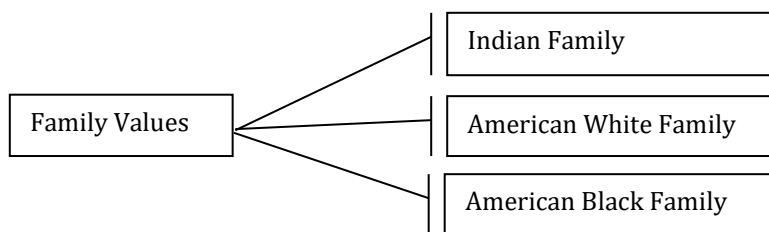


Diagram 1. The family values existing in the film “My Name is Khan”

The family values existing in the film “My Name is Khan” are Indian family, American White family, and American Black family. Those families have their own characteristics which are very different. The film “My Name is Khan” mostly show how the parents treat their children based on their family values.

The scenes which show how the Indian parents treated their children can be seen when Rizwan’s mother treats him. It can be seen that Rizwan’s mother treats Rizwan very well. She treats him better than Zakir, Rizwan’s younger brother. Since Rizwan is different from other children in his environment, Rizwan’s mother has her own way to teach her son. She finds out a professor for him. When Zakir asks her to stay with him in United States, she refuses him. She wants to stay in India with Rizwan. She does not want let Rizwan stay alone in India. Because of her mother’s treatment, Rizwan grows with special personalities and he can manage his thinking and acts. Rizwan also can use his geniuses to repair all things. Rizwan’s mother is very happy. In addition, there are also scenes of Indian family values, that is the scenes between Mandira and Sam. Mandira is Rizwan’s wife. She was a single parent before she married to Rizwan. Mandira loves Sam very much. She accompanies and picks Sam up every day at school. She also always asks Sam to hug her. It is related to the research found by Chadda and Deb in 2013. It is stated that Indian families are more involved in caring of their families’ members. They are more intimate with the members, especially the younger member that is their children. In addition, related to Rizwan’s illness, Indian family members have responsibility to take care of other members who have illness (Chadda & Deb, 2013).

There are two types of family in United States, such as nuclear family and extended family (Levine, 1982). The typical model of family in U.S. is nuclear family, which consists of two parents and their children. After they got married, adult couples are expected to form their own household separate from the other families. It is also stated that the nuclear family is cultural ideal. It has long been considered by society to be the ideal family for raising their children. It means that nuclear family raise their children to be independent children and they are able to survive in the society by experiencing it directly. Although nuclear family is an ideal family, but it is not always be reached by people. Generally, the nuclear family is the characteristic of American White family.

American White family is the major of family that stay in United States. Based on the film, the scenes that show how the American White family can be seen in Reese’s family. Reese’s family is Rizwan’s family’s neighbor. Reese lives with his parents only. They treat their neighbor friendly and have tolerance toward other religious. There is a scene when Reese and Sam’s family are having dinner together when there is an issue about Muslim. Rizwan said that Reese’s family is his family without blood. The other scene also shows when Reese is arrested for Sam’s death, her mother, Sarah does not ask Mandira to forgive Reese. Sarah lets Reese to get his punishment. It is related to the theories, in which American White family teaches their children to be independent persons. American White family associates to the nuclear family. According to Levine (1982), nuclear family has long been considered by society to be the

ideal family for raising their children. Nuclear family raises their children to be independent children and they are able to survive in the society by experiencing it directly. Nuclear family is represented in how Sarah educates Reese.

From the film “My Name is Khan”, American Black family is considered to Mama Jenny and Joel. After Rizwan arrived in Wilhemina, Georgia, Rizwan helps a kid named Joel. Rizwan accompanies Joel to Joel’s house and he meets Mama Jenny, that is Joel’s mother. Rizwan stays for a while in the house. Between Rizwan and Mama Jenny talk about their experiences and their lost of person they really love. Rizwan talks about Sam, his step son, and Mama Jenny talks about his husband who was passed away in Iraq. It is related to the statement stated by Levine (1982), in which American Black family refers to the extended family, in which the man or father is absent in the home since the man of the family works for his family. Mama Jenny knows that Rizwan is a Muslim, but she is not afraid or angry to Rizwan, since Rizwan is a nice man. It is also a characteristic that show the American Black family does not differentiate others. The immigrant families have been reported to rely on extended family networks for getting support. Extended family structure consists of two of more adults who have relationship, either by blood or marriage, in which they live in similar home (Levine, 1982). Many extended families include cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents living together. It is similar to the African-American families, in which adult men are often absent, extended kin ties are very important for women to support them in raising their children. It means that the extended families refer to the American Black families.

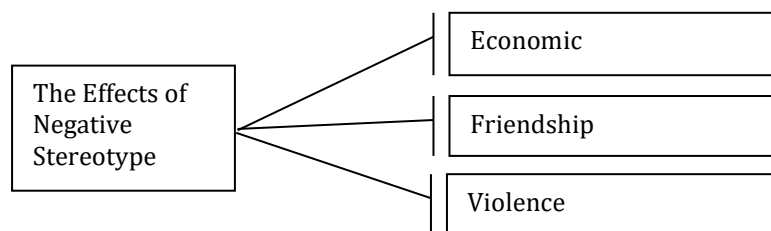


Diagram 2. The effects of negative stereotype toward Muslims

The negative stereotype shown in this film are the discrimination and intolerance towards Muslims, which affect the society, that is in economic, friendship, and violence. The tragedy of 9/11 happens in United States influence the society and creates a prejudice toward Muslims. It is also stated by Bahroni and Muna (2017) that the film “My Name is Khan” shows intolerance and discrimination towards a race of people who completely do not have any relationship with the evils of terrorism. There are several scenes that show how Americans give prejudice, that is generalize the Muslims are the radical group that kill people in the name of God. Stereotypes have possibility in shaping people’s perceptions of each other. Levine (1982), states that stereotypes originate and develop from various sources which can be accessed by people, such as film. The source is able to develop a particular stereotype toward something. Usually, stereotypical beliefs prevent people from seeing others as individuals with different and unique characteristics. Furthermore, if the people have negative stereotypes, it will lead to the prejudice. The kinds of prejudice can be in the form of suspicion, intolerance, hatred of other cultural groups. The prejudice will lead to cultural conflicts. From the film, there are three aspects that show the impact of discrimination and intolerance given to minority.

The economic aspects can be seen when Mandira’s saloon is bankrupt. She loses her guests and suffers a loss. Mandira has to close her saloon and she has to find another place to work. The other scene is the owner of electronic store who must give discount to his product. He also has to be patient when there are people who bullied him every time they pass his store. The other scene is when there is someone who throw a stone to the motel and make the motel pane broken. The owner suffers a loss and he says “Americans cannot differentiate between Muslims and Indian”. It means that most of Americans destructive the business owned by Muslims. There is a lot of damage to business owned by Muslims.

The other aspect is friendship. Before Reese’s father passed away, Reese and Sam are best friend. They are very close. Yet, after his father passed away in Pakistan. Reese is very angry to Sam, who is a

Muslim. He breaks their friendship and asks Sam to keep distance from him. He also shouts about *Jihad* to Sam who does not do anything about it. It makes Sam does not have any friend anymore.

The last aspect is violence. There are many scenes that show how Muslims are treated coarsely. The first scene is when Rizwan is approached by the guard in the airport because he is very weird. The guards look suspicious of him because he brought Muslims book and other things for praying. His bag and his body are checked very roughly. The second scene is when the owner of a motel who is an American Indian person says that "Muslims cannot enter" in his motel. The third scene is an Indian employee in Michigan was shot by his boss. The fourth scene is most of Muslims change their names to avoid racial impressions. The fifth scene is a man pulls Hasina's hijab and it knocks her down. The man said "Get out of my country" to Hasina. The sixth scene when Sam is bullied by some students until he died. The seventh scene is Rizwan is judged as a terrorist and he is processed by the court. He is arrested in a terrible place which he can feel very cold and hot.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, there are three different family values existing in the film "My Name is Khan", such as Indian family, American White family, and American Black family. Beside that, there are the aspects caused by the negative stereotype toward the Muslims. The Americans' stereotypes toward Muslims are changed after the tragedy of ninth September. According to Levine (1982), stereotypes have possibility in shaping people's perceptions of each other. It is also stated that stereotypical beliefs prevent people from seeing others as individuals with different and unique characteristics. Furthermore, if the people have negative stereotypes, it will lead to the prejudice or discrimination. It can be concluded that the negative stereotypes toward a particular culture will lead to prejudice and give impacts to several aspects of life.

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