

DIRECTED CONTENT ANALYSIS OF AKHLAK IN ISLAMIC REALITY TELEVISION PROGRAMME 'IMAM MUDA'

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ABSTRACT

Reality television has always been a big influence in shaping the community. Furthermore, the lack of media literacy among the audience affect their understanding of the messages delivered by television. Therefore, media literacy is important to identify Akhlak in the Islamic Reality Television Program 'Imam Muda' (Young Imam) that contributes toward understanding of the depicted Islamic Education messages. A researcher-developed instrument, Ta'dibbil al-Risalah Standard Matrix (TbrSM), was adapted and customized from Zaharah Hussin (1995) and Trunfio (2005). The units for directed content analysis were constructed from 21st century learning skills and the Islamic Education Standard Document. A total of 158 messages were recorded, analyzed and categorized based on the pre-determined coding. The findings show that Akhlak was the most depicted content; this was strengthened by the behavior representation from the participants. Consequently, the Islamic reality television program may assist formal and informal Islamic Education. Moreover, the content can contribute to higher order thinking skills. For future recommendation, Islamic reality television program can be utilized as media-based teaching and learning to develop media literacy among students.

Keywords: Media Education, Reality television, Islamic Education, Content Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

Television has always been one of the main medium to educate the community. This informal medium of education use the commercialized content and language as the foundation of communication (Samaniego & Pascual, 2007). The content broadcasted cover wide range of information containing education, culture, economy, entertainment and news (Yusuf, 1997). The popular culture arising from the television programs influenced the younger generation through a variety of approaches (Lundy, Ruth, & Park, 2008). This is because the audience may perceive the content and popular culture depicted as reality depending on the time spent on watching television (Gerbner, 1998). Thus, Islamic channels and Islamic programs including reality television are created to spread *dakwah* in the twentieth century to the community (Mazni Buyong & Rizalawati Ismail, 2010; Wan Noor Hazlina Wan Jusoh & Kamaruzaman Jusoff, 2009; Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2006).

Islamic television programs provide Islamic knowledge from Al-Quran and hadith, Islamic figures, places and lifestyle, Islamic civilization and *Sirah Nabawiyah* through the medium of entertainment and commercial (Dalia Fahmy, 2003; Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2009). A study done by Muhamad Zaki Mustafa and Mazni Buyong (2011) showed that there are only 13.5% of Islamic programs broadcasted locally from RTM1, RTM2, TV3, TV9 and Al-Hijrah and 0% on the two other channels NTV7 and 8TV. In addition, 67% of Al-Hijrah programs are Islamic and followed by TV9 with 23%. Particularly, the elements defining an Islamic content highlighted the Islamic beliefs, Islamic cultures and lifestyles integrated through Islamic popular culture (Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2009). Therefore, the elements assimilated with varieties of genres in reality programming, include talent search, talk shows, game shows, documentaries, news, and music (Abelman, 2004) to fill the audience's interest. This context of the approach is suitable in terms of utilizing Islamic popular culture from Islamic television programs as an approach to the Muslims from a current and relevant manner (Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2010).

The current sensational entertainment program created by the mass media in Malaysia is reality television program (Juliana Abdul Wahab, 2010; Ramli Mohamed & Sharifah Nadiyah Syed Mukhiar, 2007). Reality television has always been a commercial platform to highlight real people with new talents and capabilities. The concept of reality television program had varied from informative to entertainment as for example news, documentaries and talk show to variety of talent competitions and trending modern lifestyles (Moorti & Ross, 2004; Thompson, 2007). A non-scripted show and feature dramatic scenes, suspense and humor portray real events. Besides, it also features ordinary people instead of a main cast of professional actors (Huff, 2006; Murray & Ouellette, 2009).

When local television produced reality television programs such as Malaysian Idol, Gang Starz, Akademi Fantasia, Audition and others, questions were raised about the adaptation of the western genres and the development of their own 'popular culture' (Nuryani Tri Rahayu, 2010; Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2010). In order to minimize the western cultural adaptation, popular culture of Islam has emerged through the efforts of Muslims (Mazni Buyong & Rizalawati Ismail, 2010). Thus, our local television channels; RTM1, TV3, TV9, Astro Oasis and Al-Hijrah have taken steps in producing Akademi Al-Quran, Akademi Nasyid, Imam Muda, Famili Sarjana, Ustazah Pilihan, Solehah, Adik-Adikku, Qari Junior, Daie Millenia and Pencetus Ummah (Saodah Wok, Rizalawati Ismail, Zakirah Azman, & Siti Sakinah Latif, 2012). The development of Islamic entertainment is an alternative to the entertainment that has caused a major problem to the Muslim community (Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2009). Hence, the Islamic popular culture has become an alternative entertainment in Muslim countries to compete with the corrupted pleasures (Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2006).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Our community is exposed to social illnesses due to uncontrolled or unlimited exposure to media. Serious social problems in the development of youth arose from the existence of negative materials from entertainment magazines (local or international), the entertainment newspapers, VCDs, TV, radio and the internet (Ab Halim Tamuri & Zarin Ismail, 2004). Abdullah Sulong and Mawaddah Abdullah (2010) detailed the factors from media electronics provide large input of immorality to students, which are mostly on the content displayed, besides inappropriate television personality appearance and lack of supervision from parents. However, as stated by Ahmad Munawar Ismail and Mohd Nor Shahizan Ali (2011) in their findings; the media influence on teens is at a moderate level which depend on the usage of the media. Therefore, the need of broadcasting educational contents is essential because the audience's behaviour or *Akhlak* depends on the influence from the programs and time spent watching television.

A study done by Saodah Wok et al. (2012) concluded that the Malay community sustained the development of Islamic reality television programs especially Imam Muda and Akademi Al-Quran. The audience have positive perception and are satisfied with the contents of programs and they claim that Islamic programs have a positive impact on both male and female viewers. On the other hand, the study of Ainurliza Mat Rahim, Mohd Azmir Mohd Nizah, Norazirawati Ahmad, and Nur Kareelawati Abd Karim (2012) resulted that the non-verbal communication portraying 'Imam Muda' as a role model of an influential leader could lead to transformation of mind and behavior of the younger generation. However, these studies had only focused on the effects of messages on the audience and a non-verbal communication in portraying Islam. It would be interesting to conduct in-depth study on the television Islamic contents and audience reception studies (Muhamad Zaki Mustafa & Mazni Buyong, 2011). Thus, the need to analyse the verbal content conveyed through the Imam Muda Islamic reality television program is essential to ensure the content delivered followed the Islamic Education philosophy. Furthermore, reality television programs in this country must also portray the values of Islam and Malay culture as knowledge content in Islamic Education.

OBJECTIVE

Therefore, this study aims to distinguish 'Imam Muda' Islamic reality television program as media teaching aid for Islamic Education through identifying the content of *Akhlak* in 'Imam Muda' Islamic reality television program to address *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Standard Matrix.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several types of education exist, including formal education involving formal institutions such as preschools, childcare, elementary schools, and universities where the variety of knowledge transfer by professional trained educators. In contrast, informal education includes places like *madrasah*, *surau* and *pondok*, where instruction was usually conducted by Sheikhs. In addition, informal education also involves media and the application of current technology as medium for knowledge transfer (Ab Halim Tamuri, Muhammad Faiz Ismail, & Kamarul Azmi Jasmi, 2012; Mohamad Johdi Salleh, 2009). Media such as television and radio provide information and news and are equally important means to educate both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences. Individuals involved with *dakwah* work will find media a useful form of communication for promoting Islamic understanding especially in the young (Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2012).

In terms of curriculum change, this constructivism learning approach leads to the establishment of the main objective of KSSR or KSSM itself. The focus on 21st century skills, which emphasize several aspects including communication skills, spiritual, behavior and values. Communication skills would definitely require the student to master the language verbally and non-verbally during interaction in the daily lives as preparation towards career development. While an appreciation of religious practices, attitudes and values in life is to increase devotion to God in daily life later result in the formation of human character, integrity and accountability. Therefore, this research is a value added to content standard and performance standard in KSSM implementation.

This study selected television as the medium to transfer Islamic knowledge to the community. The emergence of Islamic reality television program as an alternative of Islamic entertainment to spread Islam has taken many commentaries world wide. Moreover, the programs are known to provide positive impact to the community. This is because Islamic reality television shows highlight the pious men and women to be role models. The development of this genre brings new perspective toward representing Islam in a fresh manner (Saodah Wok et al., 2012; Zulkiple Abd Ghani, 2009).

Imam Muda, Ustazah Pilihan, Solehah, Daie Millenia, Pencetus Ummah shares the objective to find a good leader in the Muslim world. The participants in these programs are trained to be leaders, equipped with good communication skills and pious personality throughout the programs. Weekly tasks and challenges are assigned to encourage proactive and creative solutions from the participants during task completion. The competition among participants bring out the x-factor in order to excel in the program since the participants will become role models to the community (Meenal Vamburkar, 2010; Young, 2010). Therefore, this study focused on 'Imam Muda' because majority of respondents preferred to watch Imam Muda and Akademi al-Quran and these were highly accepted by Malays. Furthermore, the audience acknowledged that the content of the Islamic reality television program is educational and informative (Saodah Wok et al., 2012).

Imam Muda is a reality program broadcasted by Astro Oasis and it is already in its third season. The Islamic reality program was favored among the young audience and affected them in a positive way. The program aimed at producing a competent young man with integrity and credibility to take responsibility not only as an Imam but as a leader in the community (Meenal Vamburkar, 2010; Young, 2010). Audition conducted all the young man over the region in order to find the qualified participants, as they will be the role model to the community. On weekly Medan Imam Muda, the participants were tested on their religious knowledge and their performance in completing tasks with different themes. Beginning in 2010 'Imam Muda' had entered its third season in 2012. However, 'Imam Muda' season one is selected because it was the pioneer season of the Islamic reality television program.

METHOD

Directed content analysis was utilized to measure manifest content and validate extended theoretical framework or theory using an existing theory to define the framework (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The process is deductively focusing on the expectation of the variable and the relations between them (Mayring, 2000). Therefore, a researcher-developed instrument *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Standard Matrix (TbrSM) adapted and customized from Zaharah Hussin (1995) and Trunfio (2005) was used in the study. The units for directed content analysis constructed from 21st century learning skills and Islamic Education Standard Document. The instrument

was pilot-tested for validity and reliability using Holsti (1969). Researcher utilized interrater-reliability to check the credibility and validity of the comparable findings in quantitative and qualitative methods (Denzin, 1978; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The study selected purposive sampling on the first season of 'Imam Muda' because it was the pioneer season. Ten episodes of the main program 'Imam Muda' from the first season were considered for analysis. Table 1 summarizes the theme for each episode of Imam Muda season 1.

Table 1

Summary of assignments 'Imam Muda' during the 10 weeks/episodes

Episodes	Themes
1	Management of unclaimed bodies/corpses
2	Recognizing signs of birth of a child out of wedlock and unwanted babies
3	Reaching out to orphans
4	Handling unbeneficial activities among teenagers, particularly the "Mat Rempit" (illegal bike racing) problem
5	Prevention of immoral activities
6	Sources of halal food from the slaughter house
7	Educating children who lost their father early in life
8	Handling divorce cases
9	Concern for the ostracized elderly
10	Demonstrate ability, specialty and skills of a competent imam to lead society

Adapted and customized from Ainurliza Mat Rahim, Mohd Azmir Mohd Nizah, Norazirawati Ahmad, & Nur Kareelawati Abd Karim (2012).

While, the participants of this study are the host, Mursyids and Imam Muda season one. Since this study used purposive sampling, the results of this study should not be generalized to a wider perspective. As for the research procedure, the coding was completed immediately after viewing the current episode. The codes are predetermined from *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Content Descriptors (TbrCD) and *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Performance Taxonomy (TbrPT). Empirical data measured by instrument are the manifest content identified under sub-categories for the next level of analysis. While, for anecdotal data identified from supplementary observation and commentary from the coders that are the latent content to be categorised in newly emerged themes. The findings of the study reported by sections that are *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Content Descriptors (TbrCD) and *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Performance Taxonomy (TbrPT) with supporting and non-supporting evidence. The evidence presentation supported with figure, quotes and example.

FINDINGS

Ten episodes of 'Imam Muda' season one were analyzed with 158 Islamic Education messages recorded based on the pre-determined coding. The data collected were categorized into empirical data and anecdotal data. The empirical data are the data collected using an established instrument and later the occurrences of messages coded summed. Out of six *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Content Descriptors (TbrCD), most Islamic Education messages depicted were related to *Adab* and *Akhlak* (58.22%) followed by *Ibadah* (31.64%), *Al-Quran* (4.43%), *Akidah* (3.16%), *Sirah Nabawiyah* (2.53 %) and *Hadith* (0 %).

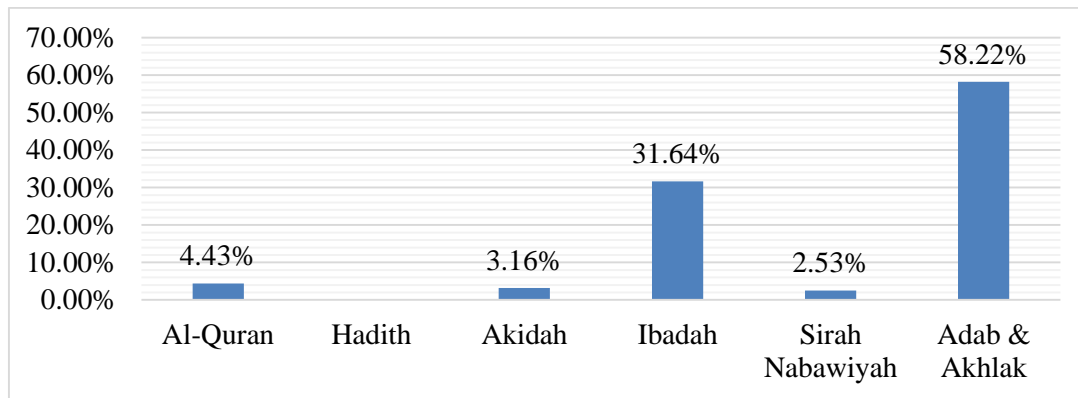


Figure 1: Percentage of Islamic Education messages by TbrCD

As shown in Figure 1, most *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Content Descriptors (TbrCD) depicted is *Adab and Akhlak* because 'Imam Muda' Islamic reality television program represents the concept Islamic lifestyle and teachings from the themes for each episodes, participants, interviews and comments. The content knowledge of Islam are visualized by the participants' sayings and behavior throughout the program to assist the understanding of Islam in reality.

While the least *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Content Descriptors is Hadith because the hadith in the 'Imam Muda' Islamic reality television program does not apply the hadith directly to teach about the understanding of hadith as per taught in school, but the hadith mostly applied as *dalil* or justification to support situation or statement within a specific theme.

Table 1

Frequency of *Ta'dib bil al-Risalah* Performance Taxonomy by Content Descriptors

Content Descriptors	Performance Taxonomy					
	Learning And Innovation Skills			Life And Career Skills		
	Know	Know & Understand	Know & Understand & Able to perform	Know, Understand & Able to perform with <i>Adab</i>	Know, Understand & Able to perform with Excellent <i>Adab</i>	Know, Understand & Able to perform with <i>Mithali Adab</i>
Al- Quran		4	2			1
Hadith						
<i>Akidah</i>					5	
<i>Ibadah</i>	1	2	14	6	9	18
<i>Sirah Nabawiyah</i>	1	2				1
<i>Adab & Akhlak</i>		8	4	9	26	45
Total	2	16	20	15	40	65

Adab and Akhlak is most portrayed in 'Imam Muda' Islamic reality television program because it involves the participants' ways of communication while giving advice and examples. From the following Table 2, the manifest content are depicted in episode 1 (3/13: 23.07%), episode 2 (19/25: 76%), episode 3 (7/11: 63.63%), episode 4 (7/13: 53.84%), episode 5 (17/19: 89.47%), episode 7 (15/20: 75%), episode 8 (8/17: 47.06%), episode 9 (8/9: 88.89%) and episode 10 (8/11: 72.72%).

Table 2

Percentage of Islamic Education messages by TbrCD: Adab & Akhlak

Episode	Amount of message	Percentage
1	3/13	23.07%
2	19/25	76%
3	7/11	63.63%
4	7/13	53.84%
5	17/19	89.47%
7	15/20	75%
8	8/17	47.06%
9	8/9	88.89%
10	8/11	72.72%

From Table 2, the least content portrayed is in episode 1, because the main theme for the episode is about managing the unclaimed corpse, which refers to *Ibadah*. The most messages depicting *Adab & Akhlak* is in episode 5, because the main weekly task for this episode is about preventing immoral activities in the community. Banter between M3 and P2 detailed the message portraying the content descriptor:

M3 asked an open question to all of Imam Muda,

"Pada hari ini banyak gejala sosial, khalwat, maksiat, buang bayi. Tolong komen untuk mengatasi isu negatif ini."

Then P2 responded, *"Gejala negatif ini memang tidak bertepatan dengan syariat Islam."*

P2 explained that, *"Kita dan seluruh umat Islam sepatutnya membanteras maksiat ini. Kerana Redha kepada maksiat seolah kita melakukan maksiat dan redha kepada kekufuran seolah kita melakukan kekufuran"*

(Ep5, Seg 2, P2)

The statement conveyed about social problems, for example *khalwat*, *Zina*, committing adultery that caused the birth of a child out of wedlock and unwanted babies. This indicated the participant indirectly teach the audience to assess good practices and bad practices in life in order to practice the teachings of Islam.

Furthermore, the manifest content of *Adab* and *Akhlak* mostly related to Know, Understand & Able to perform with *Mithali Adab*, which require students to be able to express creative and innovative ideas, have the ability to decide to adapt to the demands and challenges of everyday life. Additionally, assessing good practices and bad practices in daily life is to measure how much a student has learnt from an event. The next excerpt of banter between H1 and P6 shows a good example of assessing the lesson learnt.

H1 asked P6:

"Kes buang anak ini apabila kita lihat, haiwan pun sayang anak. Bila kita tengok binatang buas, harimau pun sayang anak dia. Tapi bila sebut pasal kes buang anak, masyarakat menyatakan bahawa manusia seperti binatang. Kenapa guna perkataan binatang itu?"

P6 responded to the issue, *"Sebenarnya perumpamaan binatang itu sendiri telah digunakan oleh Allah sendiri dalam firman-Nya: 'Mereka itu yang tidak menggunakan akal mereka seperti binatang ternakan bahkan mereka itu lebih teruk dari binatang itu.'"*

P6 detailed his explanation, *"Maksudnya manusia itu diberikan akal sedangkan binatang itu tidak diberikan akal, manusia melakukan perbuatan yang sedangkan binatang sendiri tidak melakukan."*

(Ep2, Seg 3, P6)

These statements revealed that Allah equated human with animal when humans do not use their *akal* as gifted by Allah and still commit immoral acts. Therefore, this indicates the participant depicted the message suitable to be addressed by the performance taxonomy. Moreover, students need to be able to reflect on the good practices in daily life. For example:

H1 asked P1, *"Anak adalah anugerah Allah pimpinlah tangan mereka, sanggupkah kita melihat tidur tidak bertempat. Menjadi hukum kepada semua umat Islam wajib menjaga makan, pakaian dan tempat tinggal. Sebagai imam, bagaimana anda nak melindungi mereka?"*

P1 justified his answer by giving example on how Rasulullah treats children, *'Imam mesti tegas dalam Bab agama. Tapi kalau kita tengok Rasulullah S.A.W, di medan perang baginda sangat tegas. Tapi paling lembut dengan budak-budak. Sebagai contoh Saidina Hassan dan Hussin. Di mana ketika Rasul tengah solat Saidina Hassan dan Hussin naik atas badan Rasul, kalau kita tengok Rasul tak marah pun. Itu yang patut kita contohi.'*

(Ep 3, Seg 3, P1)

The statements by P1 shows that Imam need to be firm in issues regarding religion, but need to be caring and kind to children which in this context the abandoned children or orphans. This indicates the participant demonstrated ways to emulate from *Sirah Nabawiyah* and reflect in daily life. Finally, the main purpose of this performance standard is, the students are able to practice the teachings of Islam in daily life. For instance:

H1 questioned P9: *"Jika dilihat masyarakat hari ini tidak mengambil kisah bab halal dan haram. Terutama bab makanan, terutama jika pergi ke luar negara, ayam ayam juga tetapi tidak kisah mengenai penyembelihan. Jadi apa komen"*

P9 answered, *"Pada saya, saya sarankan kepada mereka yang ingin ke luar negara supaya bertanya kepada mereka yang berpengalaman. Pergi ke sana bagaimana mereka makan. Itu yang pertama, dan yang kedua, sekarang kita sudah moden, sudah ada internet. Kita boleh "check" dari internet itu, kita tengok logo halal yang mana mereka pakai."*

P9 justified the search of halal food with the statement, *"Sebab makanan yang halal cukup penting dalam Islam seperti mana sabda Nabi 'Tiap-tiap daging yang tumbuh dari yang haram, maka neraka yang lebih utama untuk dia.'"*

(Ep 6, Seg 3, P9)

These statements show the urge to find halal food in any situation or any place. The participants justified it with the saying of the prophet. This indicated the participant inculcated the importance of practising the teachings of Islam to become a good Muslim.

Islamic Education educators should teach students media literacy as recommended in one of the 21st century learning skills that is information, media and technology skills. This is because television has influential views and endorsing behaviors. As the study shows, the most presence manifest content and latent content established in 'Imam Muda' is under the category of Life and Career Skills. The 'Imam Muda' Islamic reality program provides Islamic Education messages about *Adab* and *Akhlak* endorsed with the visual on the practice of *mahmudah* characteristics. Students equipped with media literacy will be able to understand, grasp the message and respond to the appointed issues.

CONCLUSION

Islamic television programming is one of the alternatives to deliver Islamic Education informally. Media such as television and radio provide information and news and are equally important means to educate both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences. The community is looking towards television for information and it is the suitable time for Islamic Education educators to adapt and use it in their favor by enhancing it as an educational tool to support thoughts and ideas in the classroom. Using 'Imam Muda' as a media-based teaching aid is essential to teach Islamic Education in class especially about *Adab* and *Akhlak* in a comprehensive context. This is because from the manifest content portrayed, the most addressed Ta'dib bil al-Risalah Content Descriptors is

Adab & Akhlak with (58.22%) and most addressed Ta'dib bil al-Risalah Performance Taxonomy is Know, Understand & Able to perform with Mithali Adab with 43.13% under the category of Life and Career Skills. Thus, Imam Muda can expand the perspective about Islamic Education and practice the teaching of Islam in daily life and as a result strengthen the community (Latifah Abdul Majid et al., 2012). This research is a value added to content standard and performance standard in KSSM implementation. Furthermore, this study will aid understanding of Islamic Education in reality and in the classroom.

As for informal education method, Islamic reality television program is suitable for home-schooled children. The parents can utilize the TV program to teach Adab and Akhlak in a broader setting to their children. Moreover, the content depicted can contribute to higher order thinking skills. Islamic reality television program can be utilized as media-based teaching and learning to develop media literacy among students. The professors and educators need to realize the influence of Islamic popular culture in creating religious learning environments that is more interesting and relevant to the personal lives of students. Therefore, the Islamic popular culture from Islamic television programmes as an interesting and relevant approach to the Muslims. This is because, it contains teachable principles, so as the educators are able to teach the challenging topics with visual and auditory techniques and make learning more enjoyable.

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