

Representation of Educational and Religious Values as Didactic Literature in the Novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* by Asma Nadia

Lutfi Dilia¹, Desliani Zega², Lia Erma Lestari³, Nadia Amelia⁴, Sri Kurnia Hastuti Sebayang⁵

Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, STKIP Budidaya Binjai, Indonesia
E-mail: lupidilia02@gmail.com, deslianizega03@gmail.com, liaerma553@gmail.com, nadiaameliap869@gmail.com, hastutisrikurnia@gmail.com

Literature not only functions as a medium of entertainment, but also plays an important role as a means of value education through the delivery of reflective moral and spiritual messages. The novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* by Asma Nadia is one of the Islamic literary works that contains strong educational and religious values so it is relevant to be studied as didactic literature. This study aims to analyze the representation of educational and religious values as didactic literature in the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah*. The study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive analytical method. The main data source of the research is the text of the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah*, while secondary data are obtained from various books and relevant scientific articles. The data collection technique is carried out through literature studies by reading, recording, and classifying quotations containing educational and religious values. Data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that the educational values in this novel are represented through the life learning process of the characters that shape character, such as responsibility, honesty, and patience. Meanwhile, religious values are reflected in the practice of worship, prayer, an attitude of trust, sincerity, and the application of morals in social life. These values are presented narratively and reflectively, avoiding a preachy tone and allowing readers to easily internalize them. Thus, the novel "Love at the End of the Prayer Mat" can be categorized as a didactic work of literature that is effective in building character and strengthening spiritual values.

Keywords: didactic literature, educational values, religious values, Islamic novels.

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Corresponding Author:

Lutfi Dilia
Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, STKIP Budidaya Binjai, Indonesia
lupidilia02@gmail.com,

1. Introduction

Literature plays a vital role in human life, serving not only as a medium of entertainment but also as a means of conveying life's values and messages. Through literary works, authors are able to represent social realities, inner struggles, and human experiences in the form of meaningful stories. Literature often serves as a mirror of life, depicting the moral, social, and spiritual issues faced by society. Therefore, literary works have great potential to shape readers' thinking and attitudes, especially when the values conveyed are packaged narratively and emotionally. (Di et al., nd).

In the context of education, literature has a didactic function that cannot be ignored. Didactic literature serves as a learning medium that conveys educational values through storylines, characters, and conflicts that are close to the reader's life. These values encompass character, moral, and spiritual education, aimed at guiding readers toward better behavior. The indirect delivery of messages through literature makes it easier for readers to accept and internalize these values without feeling patronized, making didactic literature an effective and relevant educational tool. (Gusti & Septia, 2023).



Figure 1. Trends in the Development of Interest in Religious Literature in Indonesia

Source: Researcher-processed results based on reports from national book publishers and surveys of interest in reading religious literature in Indonesia (2014–2024).

The development of religious-themed literature in Indonesia in recent years has shown a strengthening and measurable trend. Based on annual reports from several national publishers and literacy communities, the Islamic novel genre has experienced a fairly consistent increase in reading interest from around 2014 to 2024, with readership growth estimated to be in the range of 30–40 percent. Book distribution data shows that popular Islamic novels are reprinted more than 5–10 times on average, with the number of copies in circulation reaching 100,000 to 300,000 copies for a given title. Furthermore, a reading interest survey conducted by a literacy institute shows that more than 45 percent of fiction readers in Indonesia express interest in literary works containing religious and educational values. This fact indicates that religious literature is not only sought after as entertainment but is also positioned as a medium for moral and spiritual reflection that plays a vital role in shaping the educational awareness of society. (Above, nd).

Islamic literature, as a form of didactic literature, is characterized by its delivery of educational and religious values. These values are conveyed through the life stories of characters confronted with various real-life challenges, such as family conflict, love, sacrifice, and tests of faith. This approach invites readers to reflect on the meaning of life and to understand religious teachings contextually. Islamic literature serves not only as an aesthetic medium but also as a means of cultural da'wah (Islamic outreach) that can reach a wide audience.

One author who consistently presents Islamic literature with a didactic nuance is Asma Nadia. Her works are widely recognized for their themes of women's lives, family, and the steadfastness of faith in facing modern realities. Asma Nadia is able to combine Islamic values with simple language and touching storylines, so that the moral and religious messages conveyed feel close to readers. This success makes her works not only popular but also possess strong educational value. (West, 2018).

The novel "Love at the Edge of the Prayer Mat" is one of Asma Nadia's works that clearly represents didactic literature. This novel tells the life journey of its characters as they face inner conflict, love issues, and family dynamics, all steeped in the values of faith. Through this story, readers are invited to understand the importance of patience, sincerity, and human dependence on God in facing every test of life. The realistic storyline makes these messages feel natural and easy to understand.

The educational value of the novel "Love at the End of the Prayer Mat" is evident through the attitudes and actions of the characters, who provide positive examples for readers. The characters in this novel are depicted as having a life-learning process that teaches the meaning of responsibility, honesty, and self-

control. The character education delivered is not preachy, but rather through the characters' reflective experiences. This makes the novel an effective medium for learning values for readers from various backgrounds. (Miraza et al., 2025).

In addition to educational value, religious values are a dominant element that strengthens the didactic literary character in this novel. These religious values are reflected through the depiction of worship, prayer, trust in God, and acceptance of the destiny of Allah SWT. Religion is positioned as a guide to life that provides peace and solutions to the various problems faced by the characters. The presentation of religious values integrated with the story's conflict makes it easier for readers to appreciate the spiritual message conveyed. Amidst modern life that tends towards materialism and individualism, the presence of novels with religious nuances is important as a means of reflection and strengthening spiritual values. Novels like *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* (Love at the End of the Prayer Mat) are able to provide alternative reading that balances the needs of entertainment and spiritual needs. Through a touching story, readers are invited to reflect on the meaning of life, their relationship with God, and moral responsibility in social life. (Kusnita et al., 2022).

A study of didactic literature in Islamic novels is necessary to understand how educational and religious values are represented in popular literary works. Such an analysis not only contributes to the development of Indonesian literary studies but also provides a new perspective on literature's function as an educational medium. Novels with didactic content can be utilized as literary learning materials oriented toward character building and strengthening spiritual values. Although the novel "Love at the End of the Prayer Mat" is widely known, academic studies specifically addressing the representation of educational and religious values as didactic literature are still relatively limited. Most previous studies tend to focus on general themes or moral values, without examining their didactic function in depth. This situation indicates a research gap that needs to be filled to enrich the treasury of Islamic literary studies in Indonesia.

Based on the above description, this research focuses on analyzing the representation of educational and religious values as didactic literature in Asma Nadia's novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah*. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of literary studies, as well as practical contributions for educators and readers in utilizing literary works as a medium for values education. Thus, the novel is not only understood as an aesthetic work, but also as a means of character formation and spiritual strengthening in community life.

2. Literature Review and Problem Statement

Didactic Literature

Didactic literature is a literary work that contains educational values and aims to provide life lessons to readers through the presentation of stories, characters, and conflicts experienced by the actors. In didactic literature, moral messages are not delivered directly like lectures, but rather through the experiences of characters that can serve as material for reflection for readers. The presence of didactic literature is very important because it can be an effective medium for character education, especially in instilling moral, social, and spiritual values. Through depictions of life close to the reality of society, didactic literature can help readers understand various life problems and find positive solutions. Therefore, literary works containing didactic elements are often used as a learning tool that not only provides entertainment, but also shapes the mindset and behavior of its readers.

Educational Values in Literary Works

Educational values are all forms of values that provide learning and benefit a person's personality development. In literary works, educational values are usually reflected through the attitudes, actions, and experiences of characters who teach various positive character traits such as honesty, responsibility, hard work, discipline, social awareness, and perseverance. These values are conveyed through engaging storylines so that readers can understand their meaning without feeling patronized. Literary works rich in educational values play a crucial role in character formation because they provide concrete examples of good and bad behavior and their consequences. Thus, readers not only gain an aesthetic experience but also learn lessons that can be applied in everyday life.

Religious Values in Literary Works

Religious values relate to the relationship between humans and God, fellow humans, and the environment, based on the teachings of their religion. In literary works, religious values can be manifested through depictions of worship practices, prayer, gratitude, patience, sincerity, trust in God, and behavior that reflects noble morals. The presence of religious values in a literary work serves to strengthen the reader's spiritual dimension while fostering awareness of the importance of practicing religious teachings in everyday life. Through touching and realistic stories, readers are invited to reflect on the meaning of life, face various trials with full confidence, and understand that every event that occurs is part of God's will. Therefore, literary works containing religious values often serve as an effective medium for preaching and spiritual education.

Problem Statement

Asma Nadia's novel, *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* (Love at the Edge of the Prayer Mat), is known as an Islamic novel that addresses various issues of family life, the search for identity, and the characters' struggles in facing life's trials, all based on religious values. Although this novel is widely enjoyed by readers, studies specifically discussing the representation of educational and religious values as a form of didactic literature are still relatively limited. In fact, these two values are important elements that build the entire story and influence readers' understanding of character education and spirituality. Based on these conditions, this study focuses on identifying and analyzing the forms of representation of educational and religious values contained in the novel, *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah*, and explaining how these values function as educational tools through a didactic literary approach.

3. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method, because the object of study is a literary text that contains meanings, values, and messages that cannot be measured numerically. The qualitative approach was chosen to deeply understand the representation of educational and religious values contained in the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* by Asma Nadia. Through this approach, the researcher attempts to interpret the data contextually by emphasizing understanding the meaning behind the text, so that the results of the study are expected to be able to describe the didactic function of the novel comprehensively. (Sugiyono, 2020).

The primary data source in this study is the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* by Asma Nadia, while secondary data sources include literary theory books, scientific journals, and previous research relevant to the study of didactic literature, educational values, and religious values. The research data consist of text excerpts reflecting educational and religious values, both in the form of dialogue, narrative, and descriptions of characters and events. Data selection was carried out purposively, namely by considering the data's relevance to the research focus.

Data collection techniques were conducted through literature review, which involved carefully and repeatedly reading the novel to understand the overall story. Next, the researcher noted sections of the text containing educational and religious values. This recording process was carried out systematically to ensure the data obtained was relevant and representative. Furthermore, the researcher reviewed supporting references to strengthen the theoretical foundation and data analysis. (Rukminingsih, 2020).

Data analysis in this study was conducted through several stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The collected data were classified based on educational and religious values. Next, the data were analyzed using a didactic literary approach to interpret the meaning and function of these values in the novel. The analysis process was conducted interpretively by linking the data findings to relevant theories, resulting in a deep and systematic understanding.

The validity of the data in this study was maintained through diligent observation and careful text analysis. The researcher ensured consistency of interpretation by rereading the data and comparing the analysis results with theory and previous research. Therefore, the research results are expected to have a high level of credibility and provide an objective picture of the representation of educational and religious values as didactic literature in Asma Nadia's novel "Love at the End of the Sajadah."

4. Results and Discussion

Research result

The results of the study show that Asma Nadia's novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* clearly represents didactic literature through the integration of educational and religious values throughout the story structure. These values do not stand alone, but are integrated with the conflict, character traits, and logically developing plot. Thus, readers not only enjoy the story but also gain moral and spiritual learning simultaneously. This novel proves that literature can function as a medium for value education without losing its aesthetic appeal, thus fulfilling the main characteristics of didactic literature.

The representation of educational values in this novel is evident through the process of character formation of the characters who experience the dynamics of life gradually. The characters in the story are not depicted as perfect from the beginning, but experience mistakes, failures, and inner struggles that then become a means of life lessons. This is reflected in the quote, "Life taught me that wounds are not to be regretted, but to be understood." This quote shows that bitter experiences are used as a medium for character education, so that readers are invited to interpret each event as a lesson that forms maturity of attitude.

The value of responsibility is one of the dominant and consistent educational values in the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah*. Characters are depicted as having to face the consequences of every choice they make, whether in the context of family, social relationships, or personal life. Responsibility is not only interpreted as a formal obligation, but also as a moral awareness of the impact of actions taken. This is reinforced by the quote, "Every decision has a price, and I must be mature enough to pay it." This message emphasizes that the novel educates readers to dare to take responsibility for their choices.

Besides responsibility, the value of patience is a prominent educational value in this novel. Patience is portrayed not as passivity, but as steadfastness in the face of life's difficult trials. The characters in the novel experience various emotional pressures that require self-control and resilience in difficult situations. This is evident in the quote, "Patience is how I survive when everything feels unfair." This representation teaches readers that patience is an essential part of developing a strong and mature character.

The value of honesty is also an important part of the didactic literature represented in this novel. Conflicts arising from lies are depicted as causing inner suffering, while honesty is presented as a path to peace and

problem-solving. Honesty impacts not only social relationships but also the characters' psychological well-being. This is reflected in the quote, "Honesty may hurt, but lies are always more destructive." This quote confirms that the novel provides readers with a powerful moral lesson.

The religious values in the novel "Love at the Edge of the Prayer Mat" are deeply represented through the characters' spiritual relationships with God. Worship is depicted as a place to return to when the characters are at their most vulnerable. The prayer mat becomes a symbol of human closeness to God, as well as a space for reflection and surrender. This is clearly evident in the quote, "At the edge of the prayer mat, I found strength I couldn't find anywhere else." This representation demonstrates that religious values are the center of the characters' inner strength.

Prayer in this novel is not merely a religious ritual, but is depicted as the deepest form of communication between humans and God. The characters use prayer as a means of expressing their anxieties, hopes, and helplessness. Prayer becomes a way to calm the heart and reorient one's life. This is reinforced by the quote, "I have nothing but the prayers I continue to pray silently." This message demonstrates that the novel imparts religious values emotionally and reflectively.

The attitude of trust (taqwal) is another powerful religious value in this novel. The characters are depicted as striving earnestly, yet remaining aware of human limitations in determining the final outcome. Trust (taqwal) is understood as a form of complete trust in God's will after making every effort. This is reflected in the quote, "My duty is only to try; the rest I leave to Him." This value teaches a balance between human effort and dependence on God.

Sincerity is also represented as the pinnacle of spiritual maturity for the characters in this novel. Sincerity does not emerge instantly, but rather through a long process filled with pain and sacrifice. The characters must learn to accept the realities of life without harboring grudges or excessive regret. This is evident in the quote, "I learned to be sincere, not because I wasn't hurt, but because I trusted in His plan." This representation emphasizes that sincerity is a transformative religious value.

The novel's religious values are also reflected in interpersonal relationships based on manners and morals. Characters are taught to forgive, respect, and maintain good manners in social interactions. Religious values are not only manifested in ritual worship but also in daily behavior. This is evident in the quote, "Faith is not only seen on prayer mats, but also in how we treat others." This message reinforces the novel's didactic function in shaping the reader's morals.

Overall, the research results show that the educational and religious values in the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* complement each other and form a unified, complete didactic message. Educational values guide readers in building character and attitudes to life, while religious values strengthen the spiritual dimension and divine awareness. Both are conveyed narratively and contextually so that they are easily understood and internalized by readers. Thus, the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* by Asma Nadia can be categorized as an effective didactic literary work. This novel not only presents an emotionally touching story, but also contains learning values that are relevant to the reader's life. The strong representation of educational and religious values makes this novel worthy of being an object of literary study, as well as a medium for character and spiritual education in the context of Indonesian Islamic literature.

Discussion

Novel *Love at the Edge of the Prayer Rug* Asma Nadia's work demonstrates that literature serves not only as a medium of entertainment, but also as an effective means of value education. Research findings show that the educational and religious values in this novel are presented through a realistic storyline, conflicts close to everyday life, and characters who experience a life learning process. The presentation of these

values is narrative and reflective, so that readers do not feel lectured, but rather invited to reflect on the meaning of life through the experiences of the characters. Thus, this novel fulfills the characteristics of didactic literature that prioritizes educational functions without eliminating the aesthetic elements of literature.

Further discussion shows that the novel's didactic literary strength lies in the integration of educational and religious values. Educational values serve to shape the characters' and readers' character, while religious values strengthen spiritual and divine awareness. Both complement each other and form a coherent moral message, making this novel relevant as a medium for learning values in the context of modern society. This finding aligns with the view that Islamic literature can serve as a contextual vehicle for character and spiritual education that is easily accessible to readers across generations.

Educational Value

The educational value of the novel "Love at the End of the Sajadah" is reflected through the life learning process experienced by the characters as they face various life conflicts. The characters are not depicted as perfect individuals, but rather as individuals who experience mistakes, failures, and disappointments. These situations become a means of character development, requiring them to learn from their experiences and improve themselves. Through this depiction, readers are encouraged to understand that the learning process in life is not always smooth, but rather is shaped through inner struggles and the trials faced.

The moral education in this novel is not conveyed directly in the form of advice or guidance, but rather through the characters' reflective experiences. Each event they experience carries a meaningful lesson that readers can implicitly grasp. This method of delivery makes the educational value feel more natural and accessible, as readers are encouraged to interpret the story's message for themselves. Thus, the novel encourages readers to interpret every life event as part of a continuous learning process.

Furthermore, educational values are also evident through the strengthening of positive character traits such as honesty, patience, and responsibility. The characters in the novel are faced with various situations that demand moral fortitude and self-control. Honesty is portrayed as an attitude that brings inner peace, even though it often requires a painful process. Meanwhile, patience is positioned as a crucial trait in facing life's unavoidable trials.

The value of responsibility complements the educational values presented in the novel "Love at the End of the Sajadah." Characters are depicted as having to bravely accept the consequences of every decision they make, both in their personal lives and in their relationships. Through this presentation, the novel serves as an effective medium for character education, as readers are invited to learn through concrete examples close to the realities of everyday life. These values strengthen the novel's function as a didactic work of literature that educates and builds maturity in readers' attitudes.

Religious Values

Religious values are a dominant element that strengthens the didactic literary function in the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah*. The characters' relationships with God are depicted intensely through consistent worship practices, devout prayers, and deep spiritual reflection. The prayer mat is not only interpreted as a means of worship, but also as a symbol of human closeness to Allah SWT and a space for self-reflection in facing various life problems. Through this symbol, readers are invited to understand that religion is a place to return to when humans are at their most vulnerable and in need of inner peace.

The depiction of worship in this novel is not merely formal or ritualistic, but rather presented as a spiritual need for the characters. Worship is depicted as present during moments of crisis, anxiety, and doubt, thus having a therapeutic function for the characters. This demonstrates that religiosity in the novel is not

positioned merely as an obligation, but as a means of building inner strength and self-confidence in life. This presentation reinforces the didactic message that a relationship with God is the primary foundation for facing life's trials.

Religious values are also reflected in the character's attitude of trust (taqkal) after making maximum effort. Trust (taqkal) is depicted as a form of complete trust in the will of Allah SWT without diminishing human responsibility to strive. This attitude demonstrates a balance between effort and surrender to God. Furthermore, sincerity is understood as the ability to accept fate with an open heart without losing faith. The process of achieving sincerity is depicted as not instantaneous, but rather through a long inner struggle, making this religious value feel realistic and humane.

The novel's religious values are also evident in the interpersonal relationships, which are based on manners, empathy, and forgiveness. The characters are taught to maintain good morals in their interactions, respect the feelings of others, and prioritize compassion and self-control. Religiosity is not only manifested in a vertical relationship with God, but also in horizontal relationships with other human beings. Thus, the novel presents a concept of social religiosity that is applicable and relevant to everyday life.

In closing, it can be emphasized that Asma Nadia's novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* (Love at the End of the Prayer Mat) is a strong representation of didactic literature that harmoniously combines educational and religious values. Through realistic depictions of life's conflicts and dynamic character development, this novel presents contextual moral and spiritual lessons that are easily internalized by readers. Didactic values are conveyed reflectively through the characters' experiences, thus not being patronizing. Thus, this novel not only has literary aesthetic value but also functions as a medium for character education and spiritual strengthening, making it worthy of study and use in the context of Islamic literature education and learning in Indonesia.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* by Asma Nadia is a literary work that strongly represents didactic literature through the integration of educational and religious values in the entire structure of the story. Educational values are reflected through the life learning process of the characters who experience various conflicts, mistakes, and tests that shape maturity of attitude, responsibility, and moral steadfastness. Meanwhile, religious values are represented through the characters' intense relationship with God, the practice of worship, attitudes of trust and sincerity, and the application of moral values in social relationships. The presentation of these values is done narratively and reflectively, so that it is not patronizing, but encourages readers to internalize moral and spiritual messages consciously. Thus, this novel not only has literary aesthetic value, but also functions as a medium for character education and spiritual strengthening that is relevant to the life of modern society.

Based on these conclusions, this study offers several recommendations for consideration. For educators and educational practitioners, the novel *Cinta di Ujung Sajadah* can be used as teaching material in literature learning to instill character values and religiosity in students contextually. For future researchers, it is recommended to develop this study using different approaches, such as literary psychology, literary sociology, or gender studies, to obtain a broader and more in-depth perspective. Furthermore, further research can also compare this novel with other Islamic literary works to examine patterns and differences in didactic literary representation. With this development of the study, it is hoped that the treasure trove of research on Indonesian Islamic literature will become richer and provide a tangible contribution to the academic and educational world.

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