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An Analysis of Moral Values Reflected through Peter Parker's Character in Movie Spider-Man: No Way Home

Aidha Nur Hanifah
Universitas PGRI Semarang, Indonesia, aidhanhanifah22@gmail.com

Siti Nuraini
Universitas PGRI Semarang, Indonesia, sitinuraini@upgris.ac.id

Siti Musarokah
Universitas PGRI Semarang, Indonesia, sitimusarokah@upgris.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the moral values reflected through Peter Parker's character in the movie *Spider-Man: No Way Home*. The research employs a qualitative method using content analysis to identify and interpret the moral values portrayed by the main character throughout the film. The data were collected from dialogues, actions, and scenes involving Peter Parker and were analyzed based on categories of moral values. The findings reveal that six moral values are represented in Peter Parker's character: bravery, kindness, respect, empathy, honesty, and love. Among these values, bravery is the most dominant, occurring 24 times (29.63%), followed by kindness with 21 occurrences (25.93%). Respect and empathy each appear 13 times (16.05%). Meanwhile, honesty and love are the least dominant moral values, each occurring 5 times (6.17%). These findings indicate that Peter Parker is predominantly portrayed as a courageous and kind individual who consistently prioritizes the well-being of others despite facing difficult challenges and personal sacrifices. Therefore, the movie conveys important moral lessons that can inspire audiences to practice positive values in their daily lives.
Keywords: character analysis, moral values, Peter Parker, qualitative study, Spider-Man: No Way Home

Introduction

Movies can function not only as entertainment but also as a medium through which audiences encounter ideas, attitudes, conflicts, and moral choices. A film presents a

sequence of images, dialogue, actions, and events that construct a story and communicate meanings to viewers. In literary and film studies, characters are particularly important because their behavior and decisions can reveal values that are relevant to social and ethical life. Alfathoni, et. al (2020) explain film as a medium built through moving images and a storyline, allowing audiences to experience events and meanings through audiovisual representation. For this reason, films can be examined as cultural texts that contain lessons beyond their entertainment function.

Superhero films are especially relevant to moral-value analysis because their stories commonly place characters in situations involving responsibility, danger, conflict, sacrifice, and the distinction between right and wrong. Spider-Man: No Way Home is one such film. Directed by Jon Watts and released in 2021, the film follows Peter Parker after his identity as Spider-Man becomes publicly known. His attempt to restore his previous life leads to a multiverse crisis after a spell connected to Doctor Strange goes wrong. Villains from other universes enter Peter's world, and the resulting conflict requires him to make decisions that affect not only himself but also the people around him.

Moral values are principles or standards that help individuals judge conduct and determine how they should behave toward others. The thesis underlying this article describes moral values as standards that guide judgments of good and bad conduct and shape human behavior. Within the selected framework, honesty emphasizes truthful expression, bravery concerns courage in confronting danger or hardship, kindness involves care and helpfulness, respect involves valuing other people, love involves care and attachment, and empathy involves understanding another person's feelings and situation. These concepts provide a basis for interpreting Peter Parker's words, actions, decisions, and interactions throughout the film.

Peter Parker is a particularly appropriate character for examining moral values because his conflicts are not limited to physical battles. He repeatedly faces ethical choices in which the easiest solution is not necessarily the most humane one. Instead of simply returning the multiverse villains to their original worlds, Peter attempts to help and cure them. He also accepts responsibility for the consequences of his decisions and eventually makes a sacrifice that changes his relationships with the people he loves. These situations allow moral values to be observed through both his external actions and his internal commitment to what he considers right.

Previous studies have examined moral values and heroic qualities in superhero films. Adi (2023) analyzed moral values in Spider-Man: No Way Home and reported values including honesty, bravery, peace, confidence, self-discipline, hard work, loyalty, respect, love, caring, fairness, and responsibility. Bahari, Suwarti, and Wahyuni (2023) examined Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse and found values such as responsibility, kindness, courage, cooperation, and respect. Wicaksono (2022) studied Spider-Man: No Way Home from a semiotic perspective and emphasized heroic values including bravery, sacrifice, responsibility, and protecting others. These studies show that superhero films can communicate moral and heroic messages, but they also leave room for a more focused examination of the moral values represented by one protagonist.

The present study differs from the previous studies in its specific focus on Peter Parker's character and in its aim to determine the most dominant moral value reflected through him. Rather than treating all characters and events in the film as one unit of analysis, this study concentrates on Peter Parker's dialogues, actions, scenes, decisions,

and interactions. This focus is important because the same film can contain many values, but their frequency and significance may vary when the analysis is restricted to the protagonist. The study therefore addresses two questions: what moral values are reflected through Peter Parker's character in Spider-Man: No Way Home, and which moral value is the most dominant?

The significance of this study is both literary and educational. From a literary perspective, it demonstrates how character behavior and dialogue can be used to identify moral meaning in a popular film. From an educational perspective, it shows how a familiar superhero narrative can become material for discussing honesty, courage, compassion, respect, love, and empathy. The study is also intended to contribute to research on moral values in films by providing a focused account of Peter Parker's character and the relative frequency of the values represented through him.

Methods

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design. The design was selected because the purpose of the study was to identify, describe, and interpret moral values represented through Peter Parker rather than to test a statistical hypothesis. The analysis focused on non-numerical data in the form of dialogue, action, scene, decision, and interaction. The research object was Spider-Man: No Way Home, directed by Jon Watts and produced by Marvel Studios and Columbia Pictures. The film was released in 2021 and has a duration of approximately two hours and twenty-eight minutes.

The primary data were taken from the film itself, with the movie script and subtitles used to check the accuracy of the dialogues. The unit of analysis was any dialogue, action, scene, decision, or interaction involving Peter Parker that clearly reflected one of the six moral-value categories used in the study: honesty, bravery, kindness, respect, love, and empathy. The analysis was therefore limited to evidence that could be connected directly to these categories.

Data collection was conducted through documentation. First, the researcher watched the film repeatedly to understand the storyline, characters, conflicts, and important events. Second, the researcher consulted the script and subtitles to verify relevant dialogue. Third, scenes and statements involving Peter Parker were identified and selected when they represented a moral value. Fourth, the selected data were classified according to the six categories. Finally, the data were organized in a data sheet to support interpretation and frequency counting.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. During data condensation, irrelevant material was excluded and relevant evidence was selected, simplified, and categorized. During data display, the selected evidence was organized according to the moral-value categories and interpreted in relation to Peter Parker's behavior. During conclusion drawing and verification, the researcher compared the interpretations with the original scenes and dialogues and counted the occurrences in each category. The frequency count was used to identify the dominant moral value, while the qualitative interpretation was used to explain how each value was represented.

Findings and Discussion

The analysis identified six moral values reflected through Peter Parker's character: honesty, bravery, kindness, respect, love, and empathy. In total, 81 occurrences were recorded. Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage of each category. The percentage was calculated by dividing the frequency of each moral value by the total number of occurrences and multiplying the result by 100.

Table 1. Frequency of Moral Values Reflected through Peter Parker's Character

No.	Moral Value	Frequency	Percentage
1	Honesty	5	6.17%
2	Bravery	24	29.63%
3	Kindness	21	25.93%
4	Respect	13	16.05%
5	Love	5	6.17%
6	Empathy	13	16.05%
	Total	**81**	**100%**

Table 1 shows that bravery is the most dominant moral value, with 24 occurrences (29.63%). Kindness is the second most frequent value, with 21 occurrences (25.93%). Respect and empathy each appear 13 times (16.05%). Honesty and love are the least frequent categories, with 5 occurrences each (6.17%). The distribution indicates that Peter Parker's characterization is particularly shaped by courageous responses to danger, difficult choices, and responsibility toward others.

Honesty is represented when Peter acknowledges his mistakes and accepts responsibility for their consequences. One important example occurs when he recognizes that his request for help has contributed to the multiverse crisis. Rather than avoiding responsibility or placing the blame on another character, Peter openly admits his role in the problem. This behavior fits the study's understanding of honesty as truthful expression and accountability. The value is significant because Peter's moral development depends on recognizing that good intentions do not automatically remove the consequences of a decision.

Bravery is represented most frequently and becomes the central moral quality of Peter Parker in the film. His courage is visible when he confronts dangerous situations and continues to protect others despite the possibility of injury or loss. However, the analysis shows that bravery is not restricted to physical fighting. Peter also demonstrates moral courage when he chooses a difficult course of action because he believes it is right. His decision to attempt to cure the villains instead of simply sending them home places him and others at greater risk, but he continues because he believes they deserve another chance. His final willingness to accept a life in which the people closest to him no longer remember him further demonstrates courage through personal sacrifice.

Kindness is represented through Peter's willingness to help the villains even though they are presented as threats. His intention is not simply to defeat them but to repair what has happened to them and give them an opportunity to live differently. This reflects kindness as care, generosity, and concern for another person's welfare. Peter's actions are especially meaningful because the recipients of his kindness are not people who can immediately reward him. His choice therefore demonstrates a willingness to help based on concern rather than personal benefit.

Respect is reflected in Peter's treatment of people and in his willingness to value the advice and perspectives of those around him. His relationship with Aunt May is particularly important. Peter takes her belief in responsibility and second chances seriously, and her words influence his decision to help the villains. Respect in this context is not simply politeness; it is shown through listening, valuing another person's judgment, and allowing that perspective to influence one's own decisions.

Love is reflected in Peter's attachment to Aunt May, MJ, Ned, and the people he seeks to protect. His love is most clearly connected to sacrifice because he repeatedly places the safety and well-being of others above his own happiness. The ending of the film provides the strongest example. Peter accepts the consequence that people he loves will forget him in order to prevent the multiverse from collapsing. The value of love therefore appears not merely as an emotional relationship but as a motivation for self-sacrificing action.

Empathy is demonstrated through Peter's ability to understand that the villains are also experiencing suffering and that their actions are connected to circumstances beyond simple labels of good and evil. Instead of treating them only as enemies, Peter considers what their lives might become if they are cured. His desire to give them a second chance reflects an attempt to understand their situation and respond to their suffering. This value is important because it explains why Peter chooses rehabilitation over revenge.

The findings are consistent with Adi (2023), whose study identified several moral values in Spider-Man: No Way Home, including honesty, bravery, respect, love, and responsibility. The similarity confirms that the film contains substantial moral content. Nevertheless, the present study narrows the focus to Peter Parker and adds a frequency-based identification of the dominant value. The results also correspond with Bahari et al. (2023), who found courage, kindness, responsibility, and respect in Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse. Although the films are different, both studies indicate that Spider-Man narratives can represent positive values through the choices of their protagonists.

The findings also differ in perspective from Wicaksono (2022), who examined heroic values in Spider-Man: No Way Home through Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. Wicaksono's approach emphasizes the meaning of verbal and visual signs, whereas the present study categorizes moral values through Peter Parker's behavior, dialogue, decisions, and interactions. The two studies nevertheless converge on the importance of bravery and sacrifice. This convergence suggests that Peter Parker's courage is a significant feature of his characterization regardless of the analytical perspective applied.

From a moral perspective, the dominance of bravery can be understood through the repeated situations in which Peter must act despite uncertainty and risk. The film does not present courage simply as the ability to win fights. Instead, Peter's courage is repeatedly connected to responsibility and sacrifice. He faces physical danger, accepts the consequences of his choices, and eventually gives up the possibility of maintaining his previous relationships. Thus, the frequency of bravery is supported by the narrative structure of the film: Peter is repeatedly placed in situations that require him to choose between personal comfort and the welfare of others.

Taken together, the six values create a coherent picture of Peter Parker as a character whose morality is expressed through action. Honesty helps him accept responsibility; bravery enables him to face danger and difficult consequences; kindness motivates him to help others; respect shapes how he responds to other people; love gives meaning to his

sacrifices; and empathy allows him to see the humanity of those he might otherwise treat only as enemies. The findings therefore support the view that the film can be used as a meaningful source for discussing moral education and character development.

Conclusion

This study examined the moral values reflected through Peter Parker's character in Spider-Man: No Way Home using a descriptive qualitative approach. The analysis of dialogues, actions, scenes, decisions, and interactions identified six moral values: honesty, bravery, kindness, respect, love, and empathy. Across the data, 81 occurrences were recorded. Bravery appeared most frequently with 24 occurrences (29.63%), followed by kindness with 21 (25.93%), respect with 13 (16.05%), empathy with 13 (16.05%), honesty with 5 (6.17%), and love with 5 (6.17%).

The dominant position of bravery shows that Peter Parker is characterized not only by physical courage but also by moral courage. He is willing to confront danger, accept responsibility, protect others, attempt to give the villains a second chance, and sacrifice his own happiness for the greater good. The other values strengthen this characterization by showing that his courage is connected to honesty, compassion, respect, love, and empathy.

The study has implications for literary and language education because films can provide accessible material for discussing character, dialogue, ethical choices, and social values. Spider-Man: No Way Home may be used as an alternative text for classroom discussion of moral values and character development, provided that the selected scenes are discussed critically rather than treated as simple examples of right and wrong. Future researchers may examine other characters or superhero films, compare moral values across films, or apply different perspectives such as semiotics, virtue ethics, discourse analysis, or psychological approaches.

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