

ARTICLE

Moral Values in Interstellar Movie: A Father-Daughter Relationship

Salwa Sabita Rahmah

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Lhokseumawe, Aceh, Indonesia

ABSTRACT ENGLISH:

This study investigates the moral values embedded in Christopher Nolan's film Interstellar, with the goal of identifying and analysing the ethical lessons conveyed by its narrative. The research employs a qualitative methodology, with an in-depth examination of key scenes that depict moral values. The study identifies eight key moral values in the film: honesty, bravery, protection, discipline, love and affection, kindness and friendliness, loyalty, and the complex father-daughter relationship. Each value is critically evaluated within the context of the storyline, emphasizing its impact on the characters' decisions and the film's overall message. To uncover and interpret the moral values embedded in specific scenes of Interstellar, the researcher used Linda and Eyre's (1993) theoretical framework from "Teaching Your Children Values". The findings show that Interstellar goes beyond its role as a source of entertainment to serve as a powerful medium for imparting moral lessons. By addressing universal themes such as human connection, responsibility, and ethical quandaries, the film establishes itself as a valuable moral education resource, providing insights that will resonate deeply with a wide range of audiences.

ABSTRACT INDONESIAN:

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan dan menganalisis pelajaran moral yang disampaikan oleh tokoh-tokoh dalam film Interstellar oleh Christopher Nolan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi kualitatif, melakukan pemeriksaan mendalam terhadap bagian penting dari nilai moral. Menurut penelitian ini, ada delapan prinsip moral utama yang terkandung dalam film: kejujuran, keberanian, perlindungan, disiplin, cinta dan kasih sayang, kebaikan dan keramahan, kesetiaan, dan hubungan ayah-anak yang kompleks. Nilai-nilai diperiksa secara menyeluruh sesuai dengan alur cerita, dengan penekanan pada pengaruh mereka terhadap keputusan yang dibuat oleh karakter dan pesan film secara keseluruhan. Peneliti menggunakan kerangka teori Linda dan Eyre (1993) dari "Teaching Your Children Values" untuk mengungkap dan menginterpretasikan nilai moral yang terkandung dalam adegan tertentu dalam film Interstellar. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Interstellar tidak hanya sebagai berperan sebagai media hiburan, namun menjadi medium yang efektif untuk memberikan nilai-nilai moral. Film ini berperan sebagai sumber pendidikan moral yang berharga dengan mengangkat tema-tema seperti pelajaran etika, hubungan antar manusia, dan tanggung jawab. Selain itu, film ini juga memberikan wawasan yang akan beresonansi secara mendalam bagi penonton.

Introduction

Film is a form of visual storytelling that incorporates moving images and sound, which has rendered it a popular medium of entertainment that stimulates the release of dopamine (Sulistiawan, 2024). In general, movies are more beneficial than reading books for enhancing our comprehension, as films utilize animation that facilitates understanding with minimal effort compared to reading. Consequently, grasping moral values is more effortless through movies than through literature. However, many individuals in the modern era primarily watch films to boost their dopamine levels, seeking mere entertainment (Painter, & Wilkins, 2021; Yuzar et al., 2023). Wiranti et al. (2021) advocate that many individuals prefer watching moving images to reading books. Motion pictures are more engaging as they require our sole attention to the visual content. It is not as complex as reading a book; however, most individuals, regardless of age, often watch moving pictures solely for entertainment, neglecting the moral lessons embedded within them.

Nasir et al. (2019) and Erlidawati & Rahmah (2022) stated that moving images can serve as a medium for entertainment, critique, propaganda, advertising, and educational purposes. It can serve as educational tools if we learn to instill moral values, as moral values are the most crucial aspect of a motion picture (Stadler, 2020).

This paper analysed and identified moral values in the film *Interstellar*. The film was directed by Christopher Nolan and produced by Emma Thomas in 2014. Scripted by Jonathan Nolan and Christopher Nolan, it narrates the journey of several astronauts through a wormhole, necessitated by Earth's inability to sustain human life. Consequently, NASA astronauts embark on a mission to locate a planet capable of supporting human existence via the wormhole. This narrative not only recounts the journey and its objectives but also includes scenes depicting familial relationships that may evoke emotional responses. This film is notable for being the only one that closely aligns with scientific truth, with numerous scholars contributing to its production.

Moral values are criteria that dictate what is considered positive or negative by an individual or collective. It also impacts human character, assisting individuals in discerning right from wrong. Moral values constitute the behavioural framework, aspirations, and practices endorsed by society and discourse throughout our lives (Azmy et al., 2024; Yassinta et al., 2022). Firdayanti et al. (2023) also support the notion that moral values constitute a framework guiding individuals in determining right from wrong. Moral values contribute to the formation of an individual's identity. Linda and Eyre (1993) stated that moral values are divided into two categories.

First, the value of being pertains to the intrinsic worth of an individual as it relates to behaviour and interpersonal treatment. The values of being include: honesty, bravery, peaceability, confidence, protection, discipline, sincerity, awareness of boundaries, and suitability (Linda and Eyre, 1993). Secondly, the value of giving encompasses principles that must be practiced to be recognized as genuine giving. These principles include loyalty, trustworthiness, respect, love and affection, sensitivity, altruism, kindness, and friendliness (Linda and Eyre, 1993).

Utilizing the aforementioned theories, the researcher employed select moral values to analyse the moral dimensions in the film *Interstellar*, specifically from the value of being: bravery, protection, honesty, and discipline, and from the value of giving: love and affection, kindness and friendliness, and loyalty. This paper identifies the moral value of the father-daughter relationship as depicted in the movie. The father-daughter relationship in the film *Interstellar* captured the researcher's interest due to the poignant scenes depicting this dynamic, particularly between Cooper and Murph, as well as the relationship between Dr. Brand and his daughter. Indeed, this is not the sole reason the researcher wishes to discuss it; psychologists also contribute to this matter.

Method

This study employed a qualitative methodology to identify moral values in the film *Interstellar*. Hignett et al. (2019) assert that qualitative research is concerned with the interpretation of meaning. Qualitative research examines how individuals perceive their surroundings and how they interpret and experience various events. The data source for this study is the film *Interstellar*. The film was directed by Christopher Nolan, produced by Emma Thomas, Christopher Nolan, and Linda Obst, and written by Jonathan Nolan and Christopher Nolan. The film featured a cast that included Matthew McConaughey, Jessica Chastain, Anne Hathaway, Timothée Chalamet, Mackenzie Foy, Matt Damon, Michael Caine, John Lithgow, Casey Affleck, Ellen Burstyn, Wes Bentley, and David Gyasi.

The researcher employed theories from Linda and Eyre (1993) in their book "Teaching Your Children Value" to comprehend, analyse, and uncover the moral values within certain scenes. The *Interstellar* movie and the book emphasize the significance of instilling morals from an early age to cultivate character and assist children in differentiating between right and wrong. To gather the data, the researcher viewed the film multiple times to achieve a deeper understanding and identified various moral values. While viewing the film, the researcher was required to identify the scenes that contained moral values and subsequently document them. On the first day, the researcher selected a movie, downloaded it, and viewed it to comprehend its content. On the second day, the researcher re-watched the film to identify its moral values, capturing screenshots of the relevant scenes.

Result and Discussion

Linda and Eyre (1993) identified seven moral values from a total of seventeen, which include Honesty, Bravery, Protection, Discipline, Love and Affection, Kindness and Friendliness, and Loyalty, with the addition of the father-daughter relationship as a moral value. The researcher identified seventeen instances of these moral values.

Honesty

This moral value is evident between the 35.34- and 35.41-minute mark, commencing with Dr. Brand's promise to resolve the issue of gravity, persuading Cooper to embark on a mission to preserve life on Earth.



Figure 1. Scene 01:32:37

In the scene at 01:32:37, Dr. Brand, in the hospital, confesses to Murph that he deceived her. He had consistently urged Murph to believe that her father, Cooper, would return, but he acknowledges that this will not occur, stating, “I lied, Murph.” I deceived you. His return was unnecessary. Assistance is unattainable. Upon hearing this, Murph was greatly astonished and disheartened, and she remarked, “all this.” All these individuals. Furthermore, the equation. Was my father aware? Did he abandon me? This indicates that he has resolved the issues of gravity and equivalence; however, it does not provide any assistance for life on Earth. Furthermore, he has deceived not only Murph but also Cooper, Amelia, Romilly, and Doyle.

Dr. Mann confirmed that Dr. Brand addressed the issues of equivalence and gravity prior to Dr. Mann's departure for the Lazarus mission at 01:42:21.



Figure 2. Scene 01:42:21

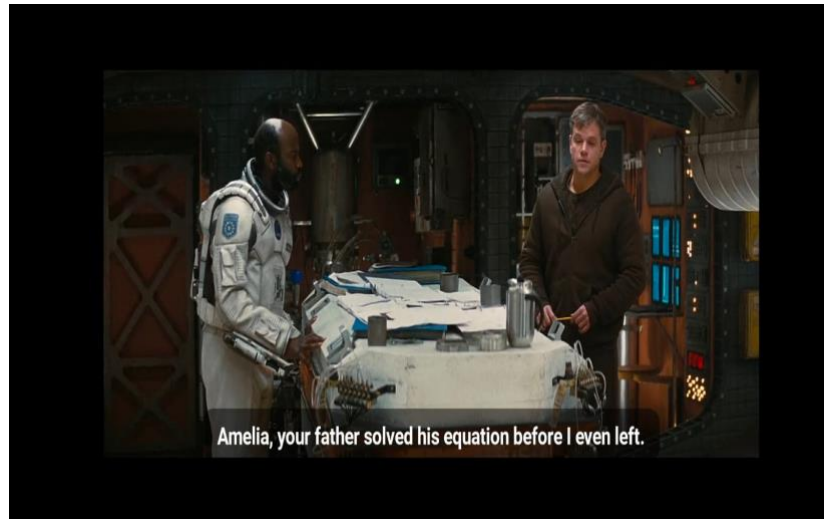


Figure 3

Bravery

The scene in which Cooper and his team deliberate on selecting the initial planet to gather essential data from prior astronauts. Doyle stated that the planet Miller consistently emits positive signals, a claim corroborated by Romilly, who noted that Miller's proximity to Gargantua results in one hour on Miller's planet equating to seven years on Earth. Understanding this fact prompted Cooper to contemplate his decision to go there, as it would result in an extended separation from her family. This situation incites disputes between Cooper and Doyle, as Doyle believes that Cooper is preoccupied with returning to Earth and contemplating his family.



Figure 4. Scene 01:04:33

At 01:04:33, Cooper makes a courageous decision to travel to Miller's planet in an attempt to devise a solution to mitigate the effects of time dilation, a consequence of relativity. Voigt and Dew (2024) define bravery as a physical response that is spontaneous, instinctive,

and unique. It frequently involves hazardous actions aimed at rescuing individuals in dangerous circumstances. The term bravery is often used synonymously with courage, both regarded as fundamental elements of heroism. Nasir et al. (2019) assert that bravery is the ability to confront challenges and make decisions for the sake of kindness.

Protection

The researcher identified this type of moral values at the 01:58:38 mark when Murph endeavored to safeguard her family, comprising her nephew and sister-in-law, from residing on the farm due to the perilous dust, encountering resistance from her brother, Tom. With resolve, Murph endeavored to incinerate her brother's cornfield to distract him, facilitating her escape with her sister-in-law and nephew from the farm. Protection denotes measures implemented to avert hazards or threats that may adversely impact living or non-living entities.



Figure 5. Scene 01:58:38

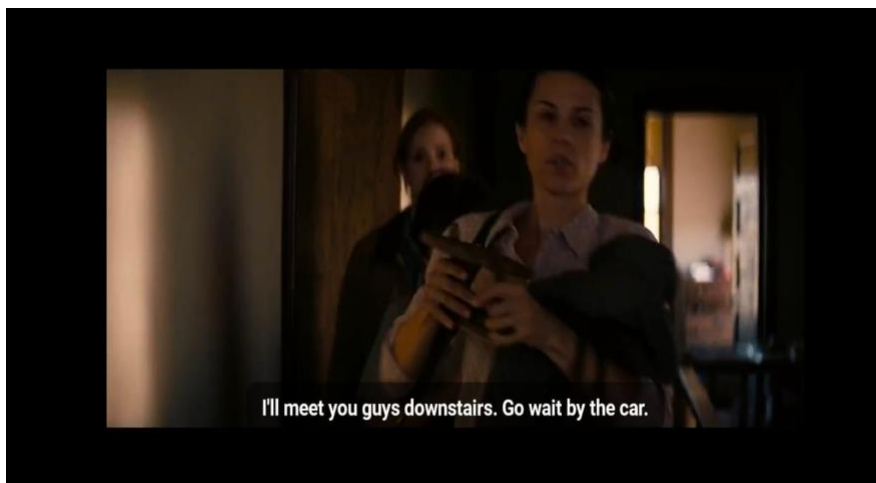


Figure 6

Discipline

On Miller's planet, strict discipline was necessary to avoid time wastage, as one hour there equates to seven years on Earth. At 01:08:30, Cooper advises his colleague to optimize their time; however, an incident arises regarding the unknown circumstances of Miller's planet. Miller's planet is predominantly aquatic, experiencing significant waves at intervals that pose a threat to them. This was revealed when Amelia was searching for data near the mountain, but Cooper discerned that it was not a mountain; it was a large wave. Cooper promptly instructed his colleagues to cease their search for the data. Amelia disregards Cooper's warnings and continues to search for the data despite the impending destruction from the waves.

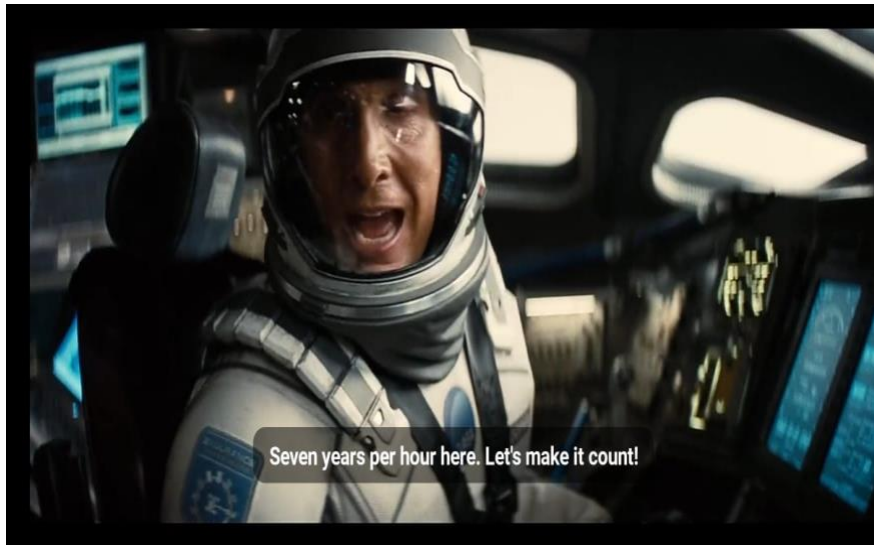


Figure 7. Scene 01:08:30



Figure 8

They lost a colleague, Doyle, who was struck by the waves, and upon returning to Romilly, they experienced a significant delay of twenty-three years, four months, and eight days (see Figure 9 and Figure 10).

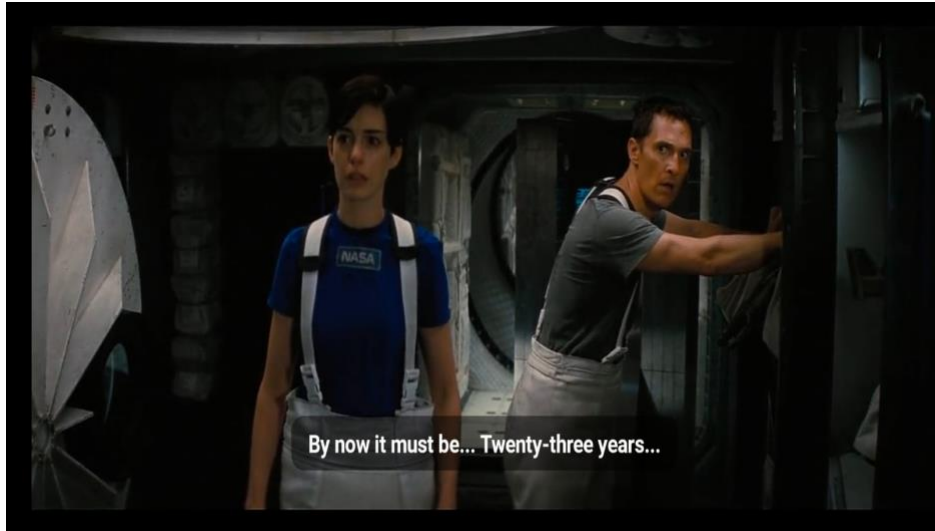


Figure 9



Figure 10

Love and Affection

It was started when they must decide between visiting Edmunds or Mann Planet, as they lack sufficient fuel to reach either destination. However, there exists a divergence of opinion between Cooper and Amelia; Cooper wishes to visit Mann's planet, whereas Amelia prefers to explore Edmunds' planet, necessitating a vote. This moral value was evident on

January 21, 2007, when prior to the vote, Cooper sought to inform Romilly of the fact that Amelia was in love with Wolf Edmunds, an astronaut who had previously traveled to space.



Figure 11. Scene 01:27:35

This is one of the factors that compelled Amelia to embark on a journey into space. A dispute arose between Cooper and Amelia, as Cooper contends that Amelia possesses an unrealistic scientific viewpoint, especially following her attempt to define love at the 01:27:35 mark.

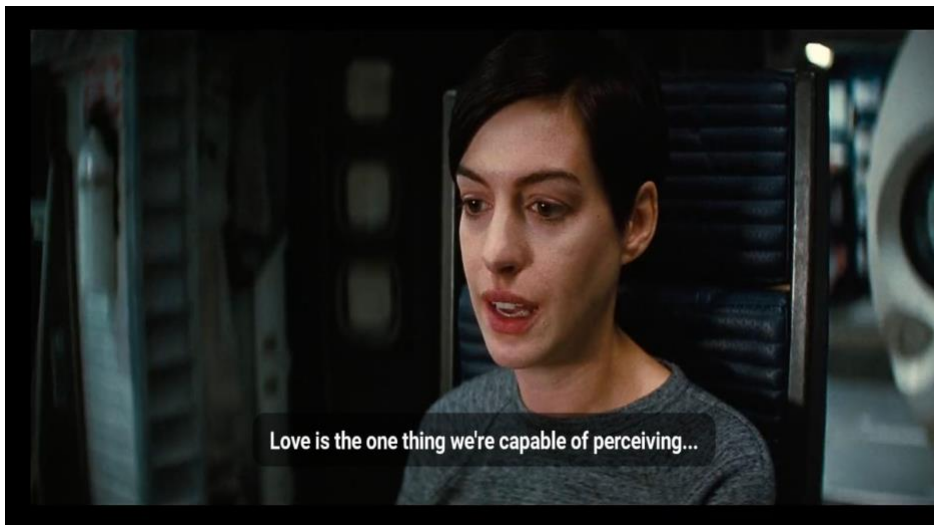


Figure 12

Love is essential in establishing relationships, and its importance can vary significantly among individuals and across diverse social contexts (see Figure 12 and Figure 13). The comprehension of love is frequently shaped by cultural elements that influence individual perceptions of their social milieu (Yeung, 2005).

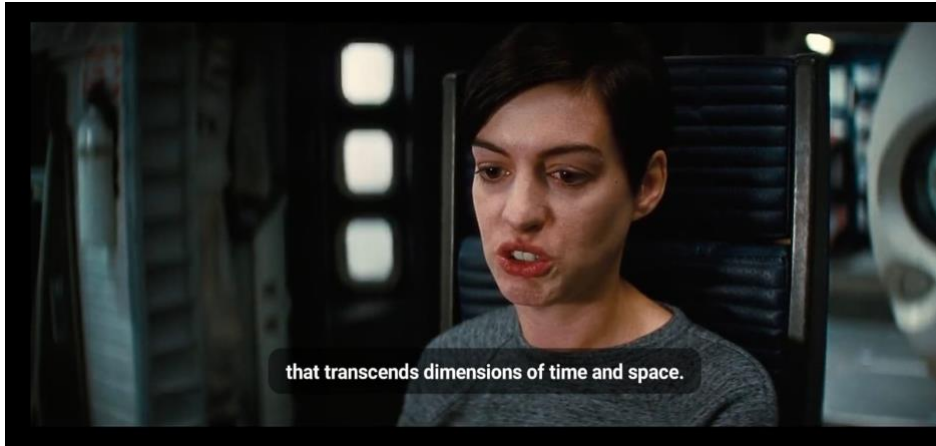


Figure 13

Kindliness and Friendliness

Kindness entails an awareness of both one's own welfare and that of others, incorporating sympathy, compassion, consideration, generosity, gentleness, and warmth, while transcending these qualities (Hannus, 2021). This type of moral values was observed at 50.33 minutes when they were preparing to sleep for an extended period; Doyle was seen assisting Romilly in achieving a deep slumber, while Amelia aided Cooper in checking his blood pressure.



Figure 14. Scene 50:33

This particular moral value is evident not only in one scene but also in the moment when Dr. Mann attempted to harm Cooper. It commences when they recognize that Dr. Brand had been deceitful throughout, having resolved the gravity-related equation. Amelia, feeling remorseful towards Cooper due to her father's dishonesty, volunteered to aid him with any requests. For further insight into this scene, one may refer to the preceding moral value of honesty. Cooper requested Amelia to return him to Earth; however, Dr. Mann, having overheard the request, disagreed and attempted to injure Cooper during their planetary survey. He propelled Cooper into a ravine at 01:52:03.

This was due to Dr. Mann's desire to complete the mission; he also acknowledged that the planet was uninhabitable for humans, stating, "I can't let you leave with that ship." We require it to accomplish the mission; once the others comprehend the true nature of this

place, our survival will be jeopardized. Dr. Mann's admission of guilt reveals that he has been falsifying data, indicating that he is a selfish individual.



Figure 15. Scene 01:52:03



Figure 16

Loyalty

This particular moral value is evident when Cooper returns and encounters an elderly Murph at the hospital, who instructs her father to retrieve Amelia from another galaxy, as observed at the 02:41:45 mark. Cooper, exhibiting loyalty, promptly retrieved Amelia to the other galaxy at 02:42:34.

A Father-Daughter Relationship

The researcher discovered this type of moral values when Cooper was ensnared in five-dimensional space; he recognized that it was not 'they' who had brought him there, but

rather himself, and that 'they' had selected Murph to save the world. He also recognized that this five-dimensional space belonged to a young girl at all times, offering boundless access to space and time, akin to his connection with Murph. This can be observed at the 02:30:07 mark in the Cooper dialogue, "all of this is one little girl's bedroom." Every moment. It is exceedingly intricate. They possess access to limitless time and space, yet they are unrestrained by any constraints! They cannot identify a specific location in time. They are unable to communicate. That is the reason for my presence. I will discover a method to convey this to Murph, just as I have identified this moment. However, Tars, perplexed, inquired, "How, Cooper?" Cooper responded, "love, Tars, love." It aligns precisely with Brand's assertion. My relationship with Murph is measurable; it is essential. From this point, Murph would also be capable of saving the world utilizing the Morse code that Cooper transmitted while he resided in the five-dimensional space.

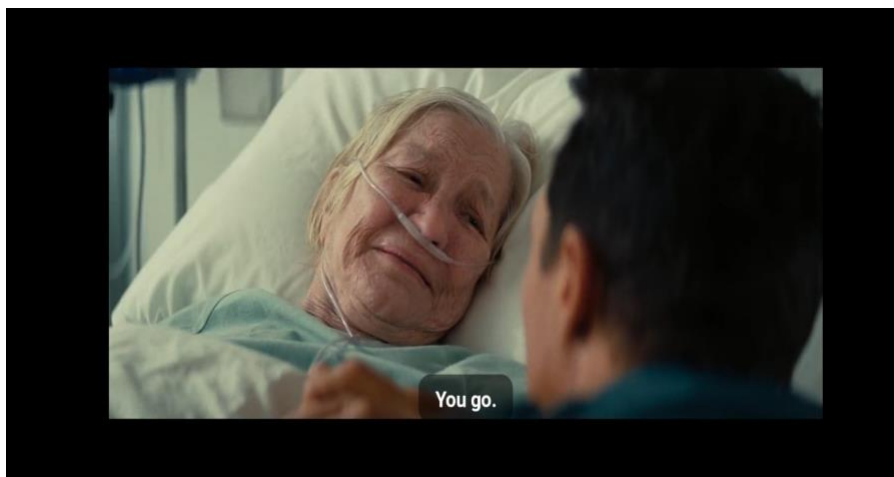


Figure 18. Scene 02:41:45

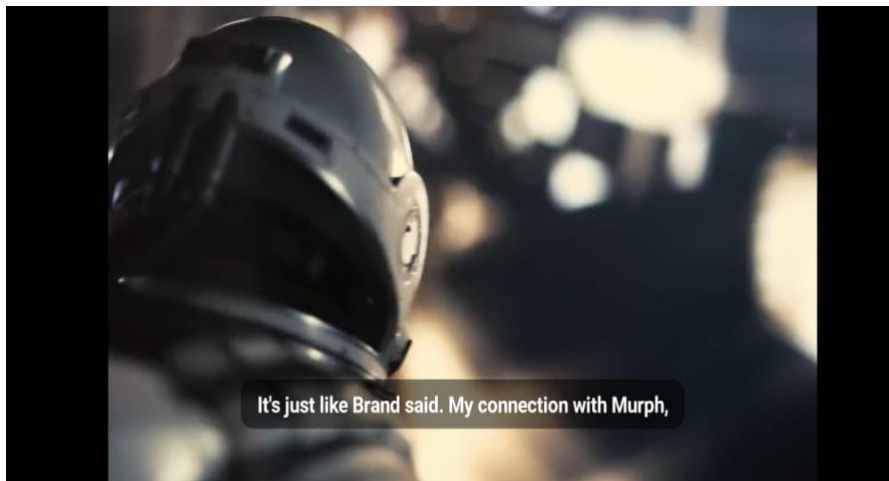


Figure 19. Scene 02:42:34

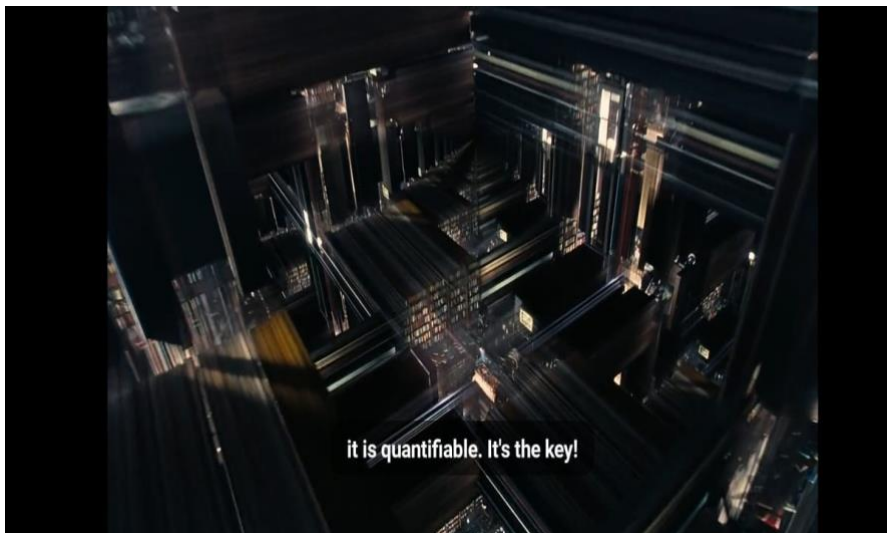


Figure 20. Scene 40:31

This father-daughter relationship encompasses various moral values, including love, affection, and protection. The researcher discovered love and affection between the 40.31 and 40.38-minute mark when Cooper requested Murph's permission to travel to space and vowed to return.

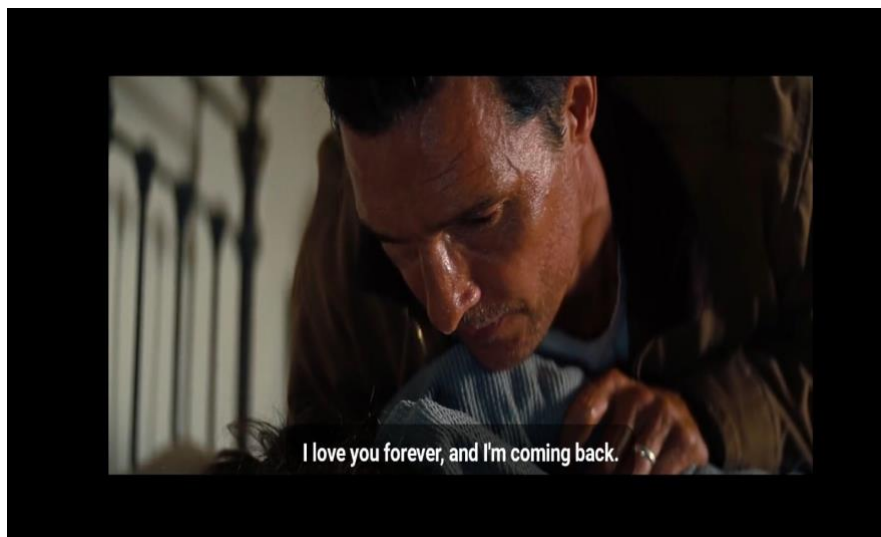


Figure 21. Scene 40:38

The researcher also found moral value of protection in the 19.00 minute when (Cooper, Murph, Tom, and Donald) were returning from watching a baseball game, a sudden dust storm, which was a prevalent problem at that time, forced them to head immediately. Upon arriving, as they go out of the car, Cooper promptly protected Murph from the dust by embracing her.



Figure 22. Scene 19:00

Psychological development requires a continual expansion of our cognitive perspectives by enhancing our comprehension of both the world and ourselves. This expansion improves our capacity to realize external accomplishments and achieve internal fulfillment. The researcher stated that there are psychological aspects related to the father-daughter relationship.

Allgood et al. (2012) identified three constructs: self-esteem, life satisfaction, and psychological distress. They found that expressive father involvement—such as friendship, father-daughter activities, and emotional engagement—is crucial for a daughter's self-esteem, resulting in elevated self-esteem levels. This is evident in the film 'Interstellar,' during the scene in which Murph successfully interprets the data left by her father and Dr. Brand. In this scene, Murph exhibits elevated self-esteem through her resolve and commitment to addressing the enduring gravitational dilemma confronting humanity. This disposition signifies her elevated self-esteem, as she holds herself in high regard and has confidence in her capabilities.

According to Allgood et al. (2012), fathers who nurture their daughters and display expressive behaviors are correlated with their daughters' life satisfaction. This indicates that a father who fosters a close, affectionate bond with his daughters and supports their adolescent development will influence their life satisfaction in domains such as social relationships, economic status, physical and mental well-being, and personal accomplishments (Rutsyamsun & Sakinah, 2023). Zia and Ali (2014) assert that a self-assured woman consistently succeeds in her endeavors and attains her objectives. The influence of fathers, in conjunction with experience, confidence, and robust psychological well-being, profoundly affects women's interpersonal relationships. These relationships are defined by connections among individuals founded on affection, frequent interactions, professional collaborations, or various social obligations.

Conclusion

This study examined the moral values inherent in the film 'Interstellar', utilizing Linda and Eyre's (1993) classification of moral values into two categories: the value of being and the value of giving. The researcher delineated seven moral values based on Linda and Eyre's framework: honesty, bravery, protection, discipline, love and affection, kindness and

friendliness, and loyalty. Furthermore, the researcher presents an additional moral value: the father-daughter relationship. The analysis includes seventeen scenes that illustrate these moral values. The film predominantly highlights courage, especially in decision-making, as exemplified by Cooper's choice to embark on a space mission, leaving his family on Earth in pursuit of a viable habitat for humanity's survival. Additionally, the narrative features scenes in which Cooper and his team contemplate the challenges and risks associated with their decisions in outer space.

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