

LGBT Elements in Children's Animation: Parents' Views on Lellobee City Farm Content on YouTube Kids

An Rezika Amalia Zulmi^{a,1,*}, Syifa Syarifah Alamiyah^{b,2}

^aUniversitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" Jawa Timur, Indonesia

¹rezikaamaliaz@gmail.com *; ²syifa_syarifah.ilkom@upnjatim.ac.id

INFO ARTIKEL

Riwayat Artikel:

Diterima: Juni 2024

Direvisi: Juli 2024

Disetujui: Agustus 2024

Kata Kunci:

Persepsi

Orang Tua

Film Animasi Anak

Youtube Kids

LGBT

ABSTRAKSI

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pandangan orang tua terhadap film animasi anak Lellobee City Farm yang mengandung unsur LGBT pada platform Youtube Kids. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode kualitatif deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara terhadap 7 informan dari latar belakang yang berbeda dengan rentan usia 20-43 tahun dan memiliki anak usia 2-5 tahun. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa orang tua menganggap unsur LGBT dalam film animasi anak Lellobee City Farm merupakan hal yang tidak pantas karena tayangan tersebut berdampak negatif karena dikhawatirkan dapat berpengaruh pada pola pikir anak. Namun, orang tua dengan latar belakang pendidikan lebih rendah dibanding infoman lain cenderung tidak menyadari akan adanya unsur LGBT dalam tayangan anak tersebut karena tidak mampu mengenali simbol dan tanda yang berkaitan dengan LGBT. Perkembangan teknologi membuat banyak informasi atau konten yang memuat unsur LGBT mudah diakses di media. Adanya unsur LGBT yang lolos tayang di Youtube Kids membuat orang tua semakin waspada dan menurunkan kepercayaan terhadap platform tersebut.

Abstract:

This research aims to determine parents' views on the animated children's film Lellobee City Farm which contains LGBT elements on the YouTube Kids platform. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive method. Data was collected through interviews with 7 informants from different backgrounds aged 20-43 years and who had children aged 2-5 years. The results of this research indicate that parents who believe that LGBT in the animated children's film Lellobee City Farm is inappropriate because the broadcast has a negative impact because broadcasting can affect children's mindset. However, parents with a lower educational background than other informants tend not to be aware of the presence of LGBT elements in their children's broadcasts because they are unable to recognize the symbols and signs related to LGBT. Technological developments make a lot of information or content containing LGBT elements easily accessible in the media. The existence of LGBT elements that have escaped broadcast on YouTube Kids makes parents increasingly wary and reduces users' trust in the platform

Keywords:

Perception

Parent

Animated Film of Kids

Youtube Kids

LGBT

I. Introduction

Film is a means of conveying various messages to society through stories and can also be understood as a means of artistic expression for artists and filmmakers to express their thoughts and ideas (Wibowo in Rizal, 2014). As a means of conveying a message, producers or filmmakers often insert message elements into the story. The message conveyed is in accordance with the message

you want to address to the audience. This study will describe parents' views regarding children's animated films, especially YouTube Kids content.

Along with technological developments, animated children's films that are usually broadcast on television can now be watched via smartphone on a platform called YouTube Kids. On this platform, kids can watch lots of videos safely. However, it is not uncommon for some cartoon films to contain elements that small children should not watch. It cannot be denied that children's animated film products from abroad still dominate. Children's animated films produced abroad have different values from domestic production. This is because cultural backgrounds, behavior, habits and values are different and not all differences can be accepted for granted. Now many imported animated films containing LGBT elements have entered Indonesia.

One of them is an animated children's film entitled Lellobee City Farm. The trailer for the animated film went viral on TikTok because it allegedly contained LGBT elements. As a result, the upload of an account called @rachmatica.brngs sparked controversy among the public, especially parents whose children usually watch cartoons. It is known that the viral episode in Indonesian is entitled "When an Accident Happens". In this episode, a child is playing on a park slide and falls. Not long after, the child was helped by two men who were described as father and papa figures accompanied by the song lyrics which read "...but papa and my father are ready to help". Suddenly this sparked a reaction from the public who asked the government to act and delete the broadcast.

Animated children's films that are intended as entertainment and education for children are actually filled with messages that are inappropriate for children to watch. The role of parents in children's growth and development is very dominant, so parents must be responsible for educating children about independence, rationality, as well as designing, selecting and determining appropriate environments and experiences from birth (Debora, 2021). Parental supervision in accompanying and protecting children from watching animated films is very necessary, so that children are not easily influenced by the content of shows presented on television, YouTube or other media which can disrupt children's development and imitate children's behavior in a negative direction (Wulandari and Kholiç , 2023).

LGBT, which is one of the keywords in this research, stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender. Lesbian is the term for women who like the same sex, gay is the term for men who like the same sex, bisexual is the term for someone who likes both women and men, transgender is the term for people who change their original gender. According to Arsandy (2015:438), homosexuals are considered a group that violates norms and their existence creates resistance in a society that upholds the principles of heterosexual norms.

Previous research was conducted by Lia Pediati, Andi M. Faisal Bakti, and Nur Atikah Nabila Binti Suhaimi in 2024 with the title "LGBT Representation in Johnny Johnny Yes Papa Lellobee City Farm Animation: A Narrative Analysis of Branston and Stafford's Perspective". to analyze the animated film from a narrative perspective. A descriptive qualitative approach and constructivist paradigm, using Branston and Stafford's general narrative model, were used to analyze the data which shows the role of father and mother of the father and papa characters; the cultural code, namely the father and papa characters wear wedding rings according to the culture, a sign of bonding love is wearing a ring, a graceful gesture and rosy cheeks on a papa character; the symbolic code is the same ring on the ring finger of the father and papa characters which shows that the two of them are a couple bound by a sacred bond; The semic code appears in the background and setting of the story in a house which shows that this animation tells the story of a family, as well as the characterization and characters of the three characters which show the characters and roles of father, mother and children in a family.

Even though there has been a lot of research on films or shows that contain LGBT elements, there is still no research that specifically examines parents' perceptions of LGBT elements in children's animated films. There are significant differences with previous studies which focused more on aspects of discourse and representation in animated films. Therefore, this research aims to

fill this gap by analyzing parents' perceptions of the animated children's film entitled Lellobee City Farm which contains LGBT elements on YouTube Kids.

II. Research Methods

This research uses qualitative research with qualitative descriptive methods. This qualitative descriptive method is used to analyze public perceptions. Qualitative descriptive research is research that collects data in the form of words, documentation, and not numbers (Moleong, 2003: 6). In this research, researchers focused on parents' perceptions of LGBT elements on YouTube Kids in the animated children's film entitled Lellobee City Farm.

The subjects in this research were 7 people. They are parents aged 20-43 years who have children aged 2-5 years who watch animated children's films on YouTube Kids. The seven informants had different backgrounds in terms of education and work. There are three informants who are housewives and spend more time with their children. There are informants who work as journalists and are undergraduate graduates with extensive literacy as it relates to their daily work. There were three informants with a lower level of education than the other informants who tended to be unaware of the LGBT elements in the show. There are also informants from rural areas who see that most people in villages tend not to know about the existence of LGBT elements due to a lack of knowledge regarding this matter. Meanwhile, the object of research in this research is a children's animated film entitled Lellobee City Farm on YouTube Kids which contains LGBT elements.

The location of this research is Indonesia. Indonesia was chosen as the research location because the animated children's film Lellobee City Farm can be accessed on YouTube Kids throughout Indonesia. Apart from that, Indonesia is a densely populated country with different backgrounds. This allows researchers to get many references.

Data collection techniques in this research were carried out using interviews and documentation. An interview is an event or process of interaction between the interviewer and the source of information, or the person being interviewed through direct communication or direct questions regarding the research subject (Yusuf, 2014: 372). Meanwhile, documentation is a method used to obtain data and information in the form of books, archives, documents, written numbers and images in the form of reports and information that can support research (Sugiyono, 2018: 476).

III. Data Analysis and Result

A. *The rise of LGBT in Indonesia and Media Development*

Along with technological developments, access to global information is becoming easier, allowing the entry of foreign cultures and ideologies, including LGBT, into Indonesia. As a country that upholds religion and customs, Indonesia opposes this (Pratiwi et al, 2022). However, LGBT elements are now often found in various media such as social media, films and television. This has given rise to various perceptions from people in Indonesia. As the results of interviews with the following informants:

"In my opinion, it's very worrying, especially since LGBT people are increasingly coming here and don't hesitate to show that they are LGBT, especially now that even children's content is being inserted like that, it's already very worrying"

From the results of the interview, it can be seen that the informant expressed concern about *increasing* the openness of LGBT identity in society. She highlighted that LGBT individuals are now increasingly brave enough to openly show their sexual orientation. Apart from that, she also criticized content for children which was deemed to have included LGBT-related elements, which she said was a very worrying development. Poor quality broadcasts can encourage individuals to behave negatively. In fact, most of the bad behavior carried out by someone is often the result of the learning they receive from the media from an early age (Helena and Novi in Hakim, 2016).

"Regarding LGBT in Indonesia, I have known that many LGBT people are dating the same sex. I know that I myself have friends who are LGBT like that, we are really close friends, I just know them"

Apart from the media, LGBT developments in Indonesia can be known from the surrounding environment. As in the interview results above, an informant stated that there was an increase in the number of individuals in same-sex relationships. The informant also revealed that she personally knows of friends who are part of the LGBT community. This information was obtained based on the informant's personal observations and experiences.

B. LGBT in YouTube Kids and Parents' Views YouTube

Kids is a filtered version of YouTube designed specifically for children. This platform not only functions as an entertainment medium for children, but also as an educational medium. Even though it was created as a safe platform for children, there is still content on YouTube Kids that is not suitable for young children to watch. Unfortunately, despite YouTube's efforts to curb videos that are inappropriate for young children, these videos still appear, even on YouTube Kids (Weston, 2018). This is a challenge for parents and the government.

"How come you can say that YouTube Kids is the safest, but content like that can get in and out of it? But yes again, we have to see, who owns this YouTube, right? It has an interest, LGBT is supported by which countries, right? So I'm not surprised either, so I think there's no more security. There is nothing sterile for children, now technology has made all of this break boundaries, so we ourselves have to work, this is our challenge as parents, yes, this is the challenge indeed."

In the interview, the informant expressed his concern about YouTube Kids's security claims which apparently can still include content that is inappropriate for children. Informants noted that the platform is owned by entities with certain interests, including support for LGBT issues from certain countries. She is not surprised by this situation and believes that currently there is no longer a guarantee of completely sterile safety for children. Modern technology, she said, has surpassed traditional boundaries, so that the full responsibility now lies with parents to supervise and protect their children. This is considered a major challenge for parents in today's digital era.

The challenge in building moral behavior in the era of globalization is the rapid development of technology (Fahrudin, Astini, Suwarta, & Shavina, 2022). In this regard, parents are obliged to choose and supervise shows that are suitable for watching and educational for their children. Parents must be a source of information for children who watch the animated film so that they can control the extent of the child's understanding and avoid misunderstandings in capturing information and imitating scenes that are not appropriate for children in the film (Wulandari and Kholi, 2023).

"Perhaps, in my opinion, the media should limit content that cannot be shown by children and the government should also be more strict."

Apart from parents, the government must act to deal with this matter, as the informant above suggests that the media must limit content that is inappropriate for children. In addition, she emphasized the need for firm action from the government in monitoring and regulating content that can be accessed by children. According to the informant, these steps are important to protect children from exposure to content that is not appropriate for the child's age. Until now, the negative influence of film viewing on children and teenagers is still difficult to control (Hakim, 2016).

Censorship is basically needed to protect society from the negative influences of films, such as encouragement to commit violence, gambling, abuse of narcotics, psychotropic substances and other addictive substances. Apart from that, censorship also aims to prevent pornographic displays, blasphemy, harassment, and/or desecration of religious values, as well as negative influences from foreign cultures (Hakim, 2016).

C. *Parents' interpretation of the children's animated film Lellobee City Farm Contains LGBT elements on Youtube Kids*

Children's animated films are popular because of their cute and adorable visuals, and function as educational media. One example is the animated film Lellobee City Farm which attracts children's attention with songs that are easy to imitate. However, this film became controversial on TikTok Indonesia after the account @rachmatica.brngs revealed the presence of LGBT elements. This controversy sparked concern among Indonesian people about children's shows. As expressed by the following informant

"In my opinion, it's unethical or not suitable for children to watch, especially since children are still growing, so they still have a lot of want to know, ask questions like what, want to know that, want to know this, of course they ask their mother like that, right? "ma, what is this, what is that?" their curiosity is more like that, so in my opinion no, it's not suitable if there are LGBT elements in it. Then in my opinion it's also dangerous for children's growth and development, I'm afraid they'll be imitated."

Interview results showed that informants stated that content containing LGBT elements was unethical or unsuitable for children to watch, especially because they were growing up and had high curiosity. She is also concerned that such content could harm children's development, because there is a possibility that children will imitate the behavior they see. Even when watching films, children imitate their favorite characters in films. About what to do, what to eat, how to talk, etc. (Khoirunnisa, 2023). Most children often watch television that is not appropriate for their age, and this can have a negative impact on children's thinking patterns. Antagonistic scenes in shows tend to be liked and imitated by children without understanding the negative consequences. This is caused by the age and mindset of children who are still vulnerable (Telussa, 2022).

"Well, globally, maybe yes, maybe for ordinary people, okay, I live in a rural area, not many people understand about LGBT itself, but for us people who are educated, at least we know... but for the lay people themselves, coincidentally if I'm in the village, maybe it's important for their children not to be exposed to shows like that, they can't, the long-term effects are very dangerous for our future generations."

In this interview, the informant expressed her views regarding the community's understanding of LGBT issues in rural areas. Interviewees stated that, in general, ordinary people in rural areas have limited understanding of LGBT. This is different from more educated people, who have at least basic knowledge about the issue. The informant emphasized that in the village where she lives, the community prioritizes their children not being fussy when watching certain shows, without realizing the potential long-term effects that could harm future generations. Low parental awareness of the type of content and applications accessed may occur due to a lack of parental awareness of the potential dangers that could arise from internet exposure (Alamiyah, Kusuma, Juwito, Tranggono, 2021). Parents who are aware of the positive and negative potential of digital media tend to implement stricter controls. On the other hand, parents who believe that digital media has positive benefits without considering the negative potential other than endangering health, tend to provide looser supervision (Alamiyah, Kusuma, Juwito, Tranggono, 2021).

"In my opinion, actually the films are good, they just contain elements. This LGBT is not good, they help each other, right, but because there are LGBT people, it's not good"

Meanwhile, another informant stated that she still saw positive values contained in this children's animated film, namely the message of helping each other. However, the presence of LGBT elements which she thought were not good made the informant reduce his appreciation for the animated film. Currently, the perpetrators a film business produces film works that do not include the main elements of film activities. These films often show scenes of violence, behavior that leads to pornography, as well as acts that insult, harass and/or defame religious values (Hakim, 2016).

D. The depiction of parents in the children's animated film Lellobee City Farm and the meaning of parents.

In the children's animated film "Lellobee City Farm", there is a scene showing a boy who falls and is in pain while playing on a slide in the park. In this scene, two men appear to help the child, accompanied by the lyrics "papa and my father". The depiction of parents as male partners in this film sparked controversy, because it was considered to be contrary to generally accepted social and religious norms. However, not all viewers can immediately realize this just by watching it once.



Footage of LGBT Couple Scenes in Children's Animation Films
(source: youtube.com/ @LellobeeIndonesia)

"At first I thought that, maybe, the child's life was divorced and his parents had a father and a mother, so there were two fathers but only one mother, but after looking at it again it was like LGBT, so it's not worth watching for children."

In this interview, the informant initially thought that the depiction of two men as parents in the film depicted a divorce situation, where the child had two fathers, biological father and step father, and one mother. However, after further inspection, the interviewee realized that the scene reflected LGBT elements. The interviewee considered that this depiction was not suitable for children to watch.

"Yes, at first I didn't realize it, then I watch it again and then why was it papa and dad, I looked again and it turned out LGBT was like that... because one guy was fat and the other one was skinny, I thought that the fat one was his mother. It turns out when I looked again, it's papa and dad."

Another informant also revealed that at first she was not aware of the LGBT elements in the film. The source explained that after watching it again and paying closer attention, she saw that the characters shown were "papa and dad". The interviewee initially thought that one of them was the mother due to physical differences, with one character being fatter and the other is thinner. However, after watch the clip again, the source realized that the two characters were men, depicting a same-sex couple.

Apart from LGBT elements in the depiction of two men as parents, one of the informants saw other LGBT elements inserted in the animated children's film Lellobee City Farm. The informant stated that she personally did not like cartoons. However, she realized that the cartoon contained certain elements, including the rainbow symbol, which is often associated with the LGBT community. The informant highlighted that the existence of these symbols was one of the reasons for her dislike of the cartoon.



Raibow Coolor In The Background
(source: youtube.com/ @LellobeeIndonesia)

The results of this research show that a person's perception process is influenced by various factors both from outside and from within. Informants were of the opinion that the development of LGBT in Indonesia was in line with the development of LGBT content or broadcasts in the media, including in the news. Perceptions are influenced by cultural background, past experiences, espoused values, and developing news (Kasali, 2006).

The perception of the animated film Lellobee City Farm which contains LGBT elements shows that parents are concerned about the negative impact on the development of children who are still growing. Parents consider that these shows are unethical, inappropriate and not good for young children to watch because they are not educational. However, not all parents are aware of this. It needs to be watched repeatedly and requires selective attention so that parents understand or are aware of the LGBT message from the show. This is in line with the factors that influence perception proposed by Mahmud (1990), namely selective attention, intensity of stimulation, value needs, and previous experience.

In response to LGBT content on YouTube Kids, parents advised other parents to more strictly monitor their children's viewing and the government to increase censorship of content. Parents highlight the importance of security in filtering and censoring content on Youtube Kids because Youtube Kids is used not only as an entertainment medium but also as a media children's learning. Especially for children who are homeschooled and rely on YouTube Kids as a medium for receiving learning.

This research also found that work background, education and place of residence influence parents' perceptions. Parents with a low level of education tend not to be aware of the LGBT elements contained in the animated children's film Lellobee City Farm compared to parents with a higher level of education. Parents with a higher level of education immediately realized that the depiction of parents as a same-sex couple was LGBT after just one viewing. Other parents who live in rural areas believe that rural people with lower levels of education tend not to be aware of LGBT elements in children's shows. This is due to the lack of literacy for people in rural areas so they have limited knowledge regarding this matter.

Apart from parents' educational background, work and available time also influence parents' views on LGBT elements in children's shows Lellobee City Farm. For example, parents who work as journalists whose work is related to visuals immediately realized that there were distorted visuals in the show, namely the depiction of the parents as a male same-sex couple. Parents or mothers as housewives tend to be more selective in what their children watch because they have more time to supervise their children compared to parents who work and entrust their children to their grandmothers.

Based on the things above, the role of parents is very influential on children because parents are also teachers for their children. According to Valeza (2017), factors that influence the role of parents in the family include parents' educational background, parents' economic level, parents' type of work, available time, and number of family members.

Parents in this study perceived the depiction of parents as a male same-sex couple in the animated children's film *Lellobee City Farm* differently. This is based on a frame of reference or based on knowledge and education and a frame of experience based on the experience they have. Parents with divorce experience see that the two men are the biological father and stepfather of the child's character. Apart from that, news about the rise of divorce in Indonesia also influences this view.

The visuals in the children's animated film *Lellobee City Farm* also influence parents' meaning. Like the rainbow visual in the show, it can be seen from one of the toys in the park. The rainbow is now known as a symbol of LGBT people which was inserted in the animated film. This shows that conveying a message can also be conveyed through symbols, signs and colors.

IV. Conclusion

The development of LGBT in Indonesia is directly proportional to the development of media and technology. Media, both conventional and new media, is one of the means for disseminating LGBT understanding. There are more and more LGBT observers or sympathizers using the media as a means to promote or include LGBT ideas. Apart from that, many parties are increasingly daring to express LGBT ideas through the media. Parents are of the view that the presence of LGBT elements in watching the children's animated film *Lellobee City Farm* is unethical, inappropriate and will have a negative impact on children because children will think that LGBT is a deviation and will be considered normal. The perceptions expressed by parents cannot be separated from various factors that influence both externally and internally. Parents with a lower level of education tend not to be aware of the LGBT elements in the depiction of parents as a male same-sex couple in the animated children's film *Lellobee City Farm*. Apart from depicting same-sex parents, the animated film also includes LGBT elements in the form of rainbow visuals. This shows that messages can also be conveyed through symbols, signs and colors.

BILBIOGRAPHY

Alamiyah, S. S., Kusuma, A., Juwito, J., & Tranggono, D. (2021). Pergeseran Model Pendampingan Penggunaan Media Digital oleh Orangtua pada Anak di Masa Pandemi COVID-19. *JCommSci-Journal Of Media and Communication Science*, 4(2), 97-110. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jcommsci.v4i2.120>

Arsandy, Laksmi. (2015). Representasi Identitas Gay dalam Film "Cinta Yang Dirahasiakan". *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 4(1). FISIP Universitas Airlangga.

Debora, Ester. (2021). Analisis Tayangan Film Kartun Terhadap Perilaku Meniru Pada Anak Usia 4-5 Tahun Di Desa Blok 15 Kec. Gunung Meriah Kab. Aceh Singkil. Universitas Bina Bangsa Getsempena.

Fahrudin, Astini, B. N., Suwarta, I. N., & Shavina, H. R. (2022). Dampak tayangan film kartun terhadap perilaku anak usia 5-6 tahun. *Indonesian Journal of Elementary and Childhood Education*.

Hakim, Morina Kartika Santoso. (2016). Bentuk Perlindungan Hukum Terhadap Perfilman di Indonesia. *E journal pada Fakultas Hukum Universitas Sam Ratulangi*, 4(8). <https://doi.org/10.35796/les.v4i8.13455>

Kasali, R. (2006). *Manajemen Public Relation dan Aplikasinya di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Grafiti. Khoirunnisa, Asti, dan Dr. Hafidz, M.Pd.I. (2023). *Film Animasi Lightyear 2022 Dan*

Dampaknya Terhadap Perkembangan Karakter Anak. Skripsi thesis, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.

Mahmud, M. Dimiyati. (1990). Psikologi Pendidikan. Jakarta: Depdikbud.

Moleong, Lexy. (2003). Metode Penelitian Kualitatif. Bandung: PT Ghalia Indonesia.

Pratiwi, Bintang, dkk. (2022). LGBT Bertopengkan Ham Yang Menjarah Karakteristik Pemuda Indonesia. Jurnal Multidisiplin Indonesia, Vol. 1 No. 3. <https://doi.org/10.58344/jmi.v1i3.81>

Rizal, M. (2014). Pengaruh Menonton Film 5 Cm Terhadap Motivasi Kunjungan Wisata Ke Gunung Semeru. Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

Sugiyono. (2018). Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D. Bandung: Alfabeta.

Telussa, S. I. (2022). Dampak tayangan televisi (film kartun) terhadap perilaku anak di desa rumah tiga kecamatan teluk ambon. Jurnal Hipotesa.

Valeza, Alsi Rizka. (2017). Peran Orang Tua Dalam Meningkatkan Prestasi Anak. Lampung: UIN Raden Intan Lampung.

Weston, P. (2018). *YouTube Kids App is still Showing Disturbing Videos*. <http://dailym.ai/2s7NG84>

Wulandari H, & Kholi. (2023). Peran Orang Tua Dalam Mengawasi Tontonan Film Pada Anak. Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan, 9 (16), 375-384.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8242517>

Yusuf, A.M. (2014). Metodologi Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif & Penelitian Gabungan. Jakarta: Prenamedia Group