
From Insecurity to Confidence: Exploring Moral Values in “Tall Girl” Movie by Nzingha Stewart

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Abstract

This study examines the moral values presented in the "Tall Girl" film directed by Nzingha Stewart. Utilizing a descriptive-qualitative approach, the research identifies and analyzes the moral messages conveyed through the film's narrative and characters. The primary moral values identified include honesty, courage, self-reliance and potential, loyalty and dependability, and love. The analysis reveals that the movie emphasizes themes of self-acceptance, confidence, and overcoming insecurity, particularly relevant to teenagers transitioning to adulthood. By exploring these moral values, the film encourages viewers to embrace their uniqueness, build healthy relationships, and reject societal standards of perfection. The findings highlight the movie's role in promoting positive attitudes and emotional intelligence, demonstrating its potential to impart significant moral lessons to its audience.

Keywords: Moral Values, Tall Girl, Film

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INTRODUCTION

Literary works are expressions of personal feelings desired by humans and in the form of ideas, experiences, enthusiasm, feelings, and beliefs that are believed to evoke fascination with language and the delivery of writing (Lafamane, 2020). Literary works can be in prose, poetry, drama, or other forms containing aesthetic value and can convey meaning through creative and unusual language (Sebayang, 2018). The use of language and the meaning of literary works allows them to draw readers into the fantasy world created by the author (Wicaksono, 2017). Literary works have many genres, each containing a different language, subject matter, and structure (Al-Ma'ruf and Nugrahani, 2017).

Literary work is one way to fill the void in the lonely human space to get pleasure. Likewise, with movies, people enjoy their favourite movies to fill their free time. Movies and literature are two things that are related. Movies are also formed to create a sense of satisfaction in humans internally (Wahyudi, 2017). Movie can be defined as a visual medium that presents a story or message to its audience through moving images and sound. The movie consists of various elements such as script, sound, editing, camera and music, which blend harmoniously to create a visual and emotional experience for the audience (McQuail, 2011). A movie contains much information that the audience can

take; the movie also provides implicit messages in life, personally and for many people. One of the messages that can be conveyed in a movie is a moral message (Bordwell and Thompson, 2016; Septiani, 2018).

Moral values have an important role in directing people's behavior in social situations. Moral values are usually related to surrounding conditions and have grown into an essential requirement for humanity. Standards of ethics can be utilized by an individual or group of humans as a point of reference to assess the morality of their behaviors and attitudes. Erfayliana, (2017) believes that moral principles are related to an individual's activity as a human being. These ideas are fundamental to social, religious, cultural, and philosophical traditions and have a profound impact on people's attitudes, choices, and actions. Moral values can give an example of positive vibes as a person and cultures in society. First, good relationships with others in their society, and second, they can increase a person's sensitivity to sensory values and make them more emotionally intelligent.

Moral values can be learned from various sources, one of which is films. An example is the film "Tall Girl", one of the films that contains many moral values about the importance of accepting and loving yourself as you are. According to Sukiya, (2020) there are two types of moral values, namely the value of being and the value of giving. Each type has several specific moral values, of being (1) honesty, (2) courage, (3) peaceability, (4) self-reliance and potential, (5) self-discipline and moderation, and (6) faithfulness and chastity. While the morals of giving are (1) loyalty and dependability, (2) respect, (3) love, (4) unselfishness and sensitivity, (5) kindness and friendliness, and (6) justice and mercy, but when taking this data, the author only took several specifications from one type, namely the moral of being, including: (1) honesty; (2) courage; (3) self-reliance and potential; (4) loyalty and dependability; and (5) love. The value of being is a value that cannot be separated from human actions and treatment of others. In accordance with the content of the film which tells the story of a girl named Jodi who struggles against insecurity and social pressure, but eventually learns to accept her height and appreciate her uniqueness. This film teaches us to accept differences and appreciate the uniqueness of each individual. Everyone has their own unique characteristics, and these characteristics should be respected and celebrated, not used as an excuse to belittle others. This is because some of the characters in this film initially judge Jodi only based on her height, but then they learn to see her true values and personality. This teaches us to look deeper and appreciate the character and traits of others.

Research that examines the moral values of a literary work or movie has been carried out several times before. First, research was conducted by Fandika, (2020) with the title "The Moral Values Analysis of the Main Character in the Secret Life of Walter Mitty Movie". The results obtained in this study indicate that the moral values of the main character's characterized in the film The Secret Life of Walker Mitty are confident, friendly, and wise. Second, research was conducted by Amanda, (2020) with the research title "An Analysis of Moral Value in the Karate Kid Movie". The results obtained in this study indicate that the more contained in the Karate Kid Movie is a moral value contains a variety of moral values, including truthfulness, courage, peacekeeping skill, personality

and possibility, consciousness and rationality, dedication, appreciation, adoration, caring and sociability, fairness, and forgiveness. Finally, research conducted by Umi, (2021) with the research title “An Analysis of Moral Value on The Martin Movie”. The results used the theory of Hymes (Speaking Model) to analyze the moral values. The previous research above has similarities and differences with the research that researchers did. The similarity of the research lies in the research objective, which is to reveal the moral message in a movie. At the same time, the difference lies in the object of research. None of the previous research above analyzed the moral message in the Nzingha Stewart Tall Girl movie. Therefore, in this study, the researcher will analyze the moral message of the Tall girl movie. The movie as a whole tells the story with the theme of self-acceptance, confidence, and overcoming insecurity, especially faced by teenagers on the way to adulthood. This movie contains many moral messages that can be beneficial to the audience.

The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on the film "Tall Girl" as a medium for conveying moral values related to self-acceptance, confidence, and overcoming insecurity during adolescence. While previous studies have examined various films and their moral messages, there has been a lack of in-depth analysis centered on "Tall Girl" and its portrayal of teenage struggles. This study not only aims to fill this gap but also highlights the unique characteristics of the film that resonate with contemporary societal issues surrounding body image and self-esteem among young individuals. By analyzing the film's narrative and character development, this research will contribute new insights into how such media representations can serve as a tool for moral education in today's youth.

The findings of this research have significant global implications, particularly in the context of promoting positive moral values among young audiences. As issues related to body image and self-acceptance are universal, the moral messages embedded in "Tall Girl" can resonate across diverse cultures and communities. By encouraging discussions around self-acceptance and resilience, this study can inform educators, parents, and filmmakers about the importance of incorporating moral lessons in visual media. Furthermore, the research can aid in the development of educational programs and initiatives aimed at fostering emotional intelligence and empathy among youth, ultimately contributing to healthier self-perceptions and improved social interactions. In a world increasingly influenced by media, understanding the moral messages conveyed through films like "Tall Girl" can be pivotal in shaping a more inclusive and compassionate society.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive-qualitative approach. The data source for this research is the “Tall Girl” Film. The “Tall Girl” film is an American teen romantic comedy released in 2019. This movie was directed by Nzingha Stewart and written by Sam Wolfson. Starring Ava Michelle (Jodi Kreyman), Griffin Gluck (Jack Dunkleman), Sabrina Carpenter (Harper Kreyman), Paris Berelc (Liz), Luke Eisner (Stig Mohlin), Clara Wilsey (Kimmy Sticher), Anjelika Washington (Fareeda), Rico Paris (Schnipper),

Angela Kinsey (Helaine Kreyman), and Steve Zahn (Richi Kreyman) as the main characters, this movie raises the theme of self-acceptance, confidence, and overcoming insecurity, especially faced by teenagers on the way to adulthood. This movie contains many moral messages that can be beneficial to the audience. The "Tall Girl" movie depicts the struggle of a teenager to embrace her flaws and seek true happiness and love. Through an emotional narrative, this film conveys a message about the importance of self-acceptance and self-love. The "Tall Girl" movie received a positive response from the audience and was a commercial success. This movie managed to touch the hearts of many people by raising the theme of self-acceptance, confidence, and overcoming insecurity. The film's message teaches us to accept ourselves with all our strengths and weaknesses and to appreciate the true beauty that comes from within ourselves.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to describe the moral value in the "Tall Girl" movie by Nzingha Stewart. The moral values consist of (a) honesty, (b) courage, (c) self-reliance and potential, (d) loyalty and dependability, (e) love. Moral value data in the "Tall Girl" movie can be seen in the table below.

Table 1 Moral Values Occurrence in the Film "Tall Girl"

No.	Types of Moral Values.	Total Number.	Percentage.
1.	Honesty	2	16,67%
2.	Courage	1	8,33%
3.	Self-Reliance & Potential	2	16,67%
4.	Loyalty & Dependability	3	25%
5.	Love	4	33,33%
Total		12	100%

The data above is the moral values data contained in the Tall Girl movie. The table shows that the audience can obtain five main moral values in the Tall Girl movie. The moral values that have the highest frequency in Tall Girl are love, which is 4 times (33,33%). The moral values with the second highest frequency are loyalty and dependability, which are carried out three times (25%). Third, the moral values about self-reliance and potential, honesty quality, each only 2 parts (16,67%). Meanwhile, the moral value of courage is 1 (8,33%). Overall, the moral value in the "Tall Girl" movie emphasizes the importance of accepting yourself, fighting body shaming, appreciating healthy relationships and communication, and realizing that perfection is a relative perception. This film also teaches us to appreciate the goodness in mistakes and reject the excellent standards set by society.

Honesty

Honesty is regarded as a value because its advantages benefit both experts and those subjected to it, requiring sincerity, trustworthiness, and integrity in dealings with people, institutions, society, and ourselves (Tawiah, 2021).

Table 2 Moral Value of Honesty in the Film “Tall Girl”

Data.	Dialogue.	Duration.
Data 1.	“Jodi, the dudes from Sweden, it’s an entire country filled with giants. To him, you’re just another girl.”	00:11:03 - 01:42:43
Data 2.	“Are you serious? Being tall is great.”	00:46:06 – 01:42:43

Data 1: “Jodi, the dude’s from Sweden. It’s an entire country filled with giants. To him, you’re just another girl”

Analysis:

Liz said to Jodi that “you’re just another girl.” She reassured her friend, told the truth about what she knew, and made Jodi believe in herself more.

Data 2: “Are you serious? Being tall is great”

Analysis:

Stig said to Jodi that “being tall is great”. Stig honestly told Jodi what he saw in her. Because in his country, being tall is a good thing that he should be proud of. Jodi felt she didn’t trust herself because she saw girls with normal body sizes who were much more attractive than her.

Result:

We can see that the “Tall Girl” movie teaches that honesty is something that very few people have, and honesty can make people more confident. The characters in the movie find that honesty is the key to a person’s trust. They learn to always say what is indeed there and deserves to be mentioned. The results obtained in this study are in line with John, (2018), which state that requiring sincerity, trustworthiness, and integrity in dealings with people, society, and ourselves.

Courage

It’s difficult to be courageous because, when making a decision or taking a step, one must conquer uncertainty and fear in order to be courageous. When people take this step and try, they deserve bountiful praise, even if it’s just a try (Muslimin, Kom and Maswan, 2021).

Table 3 Courage Moral Value Found in the Film “Tall Girl”

Data.	Dialogue.	Duration.
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Data 1.	“Because if you don’t, then I’m just going to get my hopes up about happy endings that only happen in movies with actresses that are under six feet.”	00:58:06 – 01:42:43
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Data 1: “Because if you don’t, then I’m just going to get my hopes up about happy endings that only happen in movies with actresses that are under six feet.”

Analysis:

Jodi said to Stig “because if you don’t, then I’m just going to get my hopes up about happy endings that only happen in movies”. Jodi felt guilty for kissing her friend's boyfriend and felt that Stig had distanced himself after that night's incident. Even though Stig was the first guy she liked on campus and eventually became her friend's boyfriend, Jodi did not justify her actions and admitted that she was wrong. Jodi dared to take the risk and was willing to apologize for her mistake so that their friendship would continue.

Result:

We can see that the moral value of the "Tall Girl" movie emphasizes the importance of taking risks for what we have done and daring to take responsibility for it. Even though it is not the same as what we want, it makes our situation even more painful. Characters in movies learn not to always impose their own will and to always have the courage to make decisions for their own sake. The results obtained in this study are in line with (Entertainment, 2024), which state that they deserve bounteous praise, even if it's just a try.

Self-Reliance & Potential

A person who is self-sufficient, capable of taking responsibility, and capable of doing their best. Another benefit of self-reliance and potential is that it can be disciplined (Ogar and Atanda, 2019).

Table 4 Result of Moral Values of Self-Reliance & Potential in the Film “Tall Girl”

Data.	Dialogue.	Duration.
Data 1.	“I just wanted to say that I’m sorry that I kissed you last night. I mean, you have a girlfriend, and I basically threw myself at you.”	00:57:43 – 01:42:43
Data 2.	“Me not getting the guy was always how this was support to end.”	00:59:14 – 01:42:43

Data 1: “I just wanted to say that I’m sorry that I kissed you last night. I mean, you have a girlfriend, and I basically threw myself at you”

Analysis:
Jodi said to Stig “I just wanted to say that I’m sorry that I kissed you last night. I mean, you have a girlfriend”. Jodi has felt guilty and betrayed her own friend because she kissed her man. Therefore, Jodi is responsible for her fatal mistake and apologizes to Stig for her behaviour.

Data 2: “Me not getting the guy was always how this was support to end”

Analysis:
Jodi said to Liz as she’s best friend “I didn't get the guy, and that was the way it ended.” She felt she had to end her crush on Stig just because he was taller than her. She just wanted to have a lover who was much taller than her, so that she wouldn't be seen as strange in the future. Being abnormally tall had become a misery for her; she just wanted to reduce it all. But as time went by, she felt that what she had now was a uniqueness that she should be proud of. And Jodi felt that there was nothing wrong with accepting a man who had liked her for a long time without looking at Jodi. It was a good decision and a good ending that Jodi took.

Result:
We can see that the "Tall Girl" movie highlights the negative impact of entering a realm that does not deserve to exist for our portion, where we should not be there. The characters in this film teach that whatever mistake we make, we dare to take responsibility for solving it. Whether it's something that makes us happy or sad. The results obtained in this study are in line with (Hendri, Utaminingsih and Anwar, 2023), which state that people are self-sufficient, capable of taking responsibility, and capable of doing their best. Another benefit of self-reliance and potential, which can be discipline.

Loyalty & Dependability

The state of unwavering dedication to helping, supporting, and being relied upon to carry out a task in a family, school, or organization is known as loyalty (Lisnatiawati Saragih *et al.*, 2024).

Table 4 Loyalty & Dependability of Moral Values in the Film “Tall Girl” by scene

Data.	Dialogue.	Duration.
Data 1.	“Trust me, you’re going to have no trouble making friends.”	00:19:15 – 01:42:43
Data 2.	“One day, Jodi, one day when you get picked on and	00:30:23 – 01:42:43

made fun of, you're not going to hide in the bathroom stall. You're going to stand up and say, "This is me. I love all 73 inches of myself, and there's nothing you can do that will change that. "That is my wish for you."

Data 3 "You may find this hard to believe, but I care about you, and I just want to make sure that you don't get hurt."

Data 1: "Trust me, you're going to have no trouble making friends"

Analysis:

Dunkleman said to Stig "you're going to have no trouble making friends" The reason he said that to his friends, now more commonly known as his brothers, because they have been living together, is so that Stig can mingle with his friends on campus. Dunkel gives strong support to Stig in finding other acquaintances. He is sure Stig will not have trouble finding friends on campus; he believes in Stig, and he can rely on his abilities.

Data 2: "One day, Jodi, one day when you get picked on and made fun of, you're not going to hide in the bathroom stall. You're going to stand up and say, "This is me. I love all 73 inches of myself, and there's nothing you can do that will change that." That is my wish for you."

Analysis:

Liz said to Jodi "you're going to stand up and say, "this is me. I love all 73 inches of myself" Liz gives a lot of encouragement and strong support to Jodi as Liz's best friend, saying that she must rise from all this despair. One day, Jodi will love herself more than anything without listening to what people say out there. Liz is sure that Jodi will be able to reach that stage; she is very sure of her best friend that one day Jodi will become a shining woman who is admired by many people.

Data 3: "You may find this hard to believe, but I care about you, and I just want to make sure that you don't get hurt."

Analysis:

Dunkleman said to Jodi "but I care about you, and I just want to make sure that you don't get hurt." Dunkle just wanted to tell Jodi to stop hoping for something that can't be hers yet and most likely can't be. Dunkle just didn't want Jodi, his love, to feel pain because

of a man who didn't even see her; he wanted to give full support to Jodi and put herself first more than anything.

Result:

The data above shows that the "Tall Girl" movie emphasizes the unity of a friend who always tries to support whatever her best friend does, does his best, and tries to be by his side. The characters in the film learn to build relationships based on mutual understanding, support, and open communication. The results obtained in this study are in line with (Walsh, 2015), which state that helping, supporting, and being relied upon to carry out a task in a family.

Love

Love is about to fall in love romantically with someone of the opposite gender. One can express love to friends, siblings, yourself, and family. Love transcends loyalty and respect and is used as a communications code word for the letters.

Table 5 Categorization of Moral Values Love Presented in the Film “Tall Girl”

Data.	Dialogue.	Duration.
Data 1.	“It’s not all girls. Just a girl. A really smart, fun, unique.... beautiful girl.”	00:46:23 – 01:42:43
Data 2.	“Look at her; she’s so confident and feeling herself, and... she’s like an independent woman with golden locks. She looks kind of hot.”	00:53:28 – 01:42:43
Data 3	“Yeah, well, then I will do my time like a man, because no one stand up my daughter.”	01:12:08 – 01:42:43
Data 4	“Being tall, actually, is what makes me, me and I like me. And you should like you. We’re good enough.”	01:32:01 – 01:42:43

Data 1: “It’s not all girls. Just a girl. A really smart, fun, unique... beautiful girl.”

Analysis:

Stig said to Dunkle that “she's a really smart, fun, unique and beautiful girl” Stig said while admiring how beautiful Jodi was to his roommate's Dunkle. Jodi is full of talent and Stig feels the thrill when he is with Jodi.

Data 2: “Look at her; she's so confident and feeling herself, and... she's like an independent woman with golden locks. She looks kind of hot.”

Analysis:

Jodi's friends are talking a lot about Jodi because of her different and very beautiful appearance “she's so confident and feeling herself, and... she's like an independent woman with golden locks. She looks kind of hot.” Jodi with her different appearance makes everyone amazed and like her appearance. She shows that she can, she can be like others, and here she is.

Data 3: “Yeah, well, then I will do my time like a man, because no one stand up my daughter”

Analysis:

Jodi's father said to Jodi “I will do my time like a man, because no one stand up my daughter”. He couldn't bear it and felt sad because he saw his beloved daughter crying over a man who didn't know himself. Her father felt angry because he never made his daughter cry, so why did the other man behave badly? Jodi's father was willing to do anything, even if he had to be punished severely, just to make the man who hurt his daughter realize it and not hurt his beloved daughter again.

Data 4: “Being tall, actually, is what makes me, me, and I like me. And you should like you. We're good enough”

Analysis:

At the prom night, Jodi said in front of many of her friends what she had felt all this time being one of the women who were looked down upon by her friends because of her height which was far compared to women in general. Jodi said being tall, being different is not something to be afraid of. Maybe there are times when we feel that we are unfair, but we have to realize who we are and what we have, believe in ourselves, and love everything that is in us is a good thing to make ourselves shine much brighter. Jodi wants to tell everyone to love the uniqueness that is in us, because that is loving yourself, and this is not a bad thing to do.

Result:

From the data above, the “Tall Girl” movie teaches us to always love, like, and try to accept whatever is in us. Because whatever we have is a privilege that others don't have. The characters in the film learn from their mistakes and always adjust and consider themselves as they are, which is strange. But that's wrong; self-confidence is not a bad thing. It will actually make us shine much more for the differences we have and make us unique from others. Being unique is also not something to be afraid of or avoided, but it can be a place to show everyone that we can be much better with the differences we have. Loving yourself and liking everything about yourself makes us much more attractive. The

results obtained in this study are in line with the research of Muhammad *et al.*, (2022) which states that self-acceptance is one of the good or positive moral values.

CONCLUSION

The "Tall Girl" movie concludes that true happiness is found when we accept and value ourselves, including our flaws and weaknesses. The importance of accepting yourself, distancing yourself from harmful social expectations, and finding true beauty that does not lie in perfect physical appearance. The film also teaches that each individual has their own journey and struggles, and that perfection is a relative perception. Pursuing the perfect image imposed by society at this point does not bring true happiness and satisfaction. The importance of authentic and mutually supportive human relationships: the characters in the film learn to value kindness over faults, show empathy for others, and build relationships based on mutual understanding, support, and good communication. Accepting individual uniqueness and living according to our values and dreams are the keys to finding true happiness and self-fulfilment.

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