

# Children's Book of Art "Hima" Teaches of The Benefits and How to Raise Cats

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**ABSTRACT:** *Children's Book of Art "Hima" is an illustrated story book that contains the benefits and how to care cats. This book tells about himalayan cat named Hima's daily life with her friend, Caca who is being cared for by a boy. The stories presented will bring children to get information about the benefits of raising cats and how to raise cats properly. One of the goals of research and design of this book is to reduce the number of cat abandonment in Indonesia. The picture book "Hima" is specifically for children because it is easier for children to receive information and make changes for the better future. The drawing style used in this storybook is semi-realistic cartoon and uses a mix of warm and cheerful colors that can attract children to read it. Research in designing this book was taken from several sources, such as literature studies and interviews with relevant parties, namely veterinarians and school principals.*

**KEYWORDS** - Arts, Book, Children's, Hima, Cat

## I. INTRODUCTION

Pets have been human companions since ancient times especially is cat. Animal ownership offers its owners social support, which offers external support, while friendship places more emphasis on pleasure in interacting with animals and relaxation (McNicholas, et all, 2005). One of the animals that humans like to keep as pets is the cat. Cats have many advantages such as soft fur, adorable body shape, or their spoiled nature and always want to play which keeps their owners entertained. Cats come from the wild which then underwent a domestication process until now they have become pets that are very close to humans (Ahmad A. Suwed and Rodame M. Napitupulu, 2011)

The cat population in Indonesia increased from 2017 to 2021 by 129%, and dogs increased to 117% (Yuji, 2021). Communities and foundations engaged in raising animals in Indonesia, such as a national scale cat club named Cat Fancy Indonesia (CFI) which was established in 1997. This organization is recognized and approved by the government. CFI aims to preserve the existence of cats, especially purebred cats in Indonesia (Susetyo, 2009). Apart from that, there is also the Indonesian Cat Association (ICA) and the Indonesian Reptile and Amphibian Lovers Association (IPRAI) which are at the national level to local communities such as the Malang Cat Lover (MCL) in Malang and the Cat Lover Community (KPK) in Surabaya. Pet-themed cafes are also on the rise, for example, Paw Paw Café, located in Surakarta, Central Java.

One of the animals that has benefits for humans is the cat. In addition to its presence that can reduce human feelings of loneliness, purring from cats can reduce stress in humans. Purring in cats can lower blood pressure and reduce depression. As a result, cats that are calm and friendly are used as very effective therapy animals in homes and nursing homes. When the individual interacts by hugging, stroking and listening to the cat's purr, at that time the individual can stretch the nerves to create relaxation. In addition, research at the University of Missouri discussing cats, shows that cats can help psychological healing of autism patients if these sufferers interact with cats (Sufyan M, 2016).

Raising a cat is not easy. Cats are not like dolls that can be played with only when they want to. Some people end up leaving their pets on the streets because they are no longer cute and have certain diseases. This happened because the community initially adopted animals due to mere interest and not based on sincere awareness to care for these animals (Eviana, 2019). A total of 135 cats were abandoned by their owners in Dukuh Pakis District, Surabaya City on May 24, 2022. The rental period for the shop for the cat owner and the owner are suspected of deliberately leaving their pets. The most recent case was in October 2022, a woman named Yenny opened a donation for a stray cat but abandoned the rescued cat to dry to death. Animal protection is regulated in the KUHP number 302 so that the perpetrator is threatened with a maximum of three months in prison for deliberately not feeding his pet.

Based on the theory and cases above, it can be concluded that pets have an effect on human life. Having a cat can reduce loneliness, thereby reducing stress, curing illness, and also relaxing yourself. However, raising a cat is not easy and must be done responsibly. Therefore, the authors created a picture story book about the benefits and guidelines of raising cats for children aged 7-11 years with the hope that children will know the benefits of having a cat and also do the right way to take care of it. So this book is expected to reduce the number of animal abandonment that occurs in Indonesia.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research approach. This research requires the writer to explore or photograph social situations which will be thoroughly, broadly and deeply examined. The definition of qualitative research is also explained by Moleong in his book entitled *Qualitative Research Methods*, that qualitative research is research that intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects, for example behavior, perceptions, motivations, also actions holistically and by way of description in words and language in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods (2012).

The research data consists of primary data and secondary data which allows a clear picture of the situation. The choice of descriptive method is because this research seeks to clearly describe various things related to cats, how to care for them properly, and the surrounding environment. The primary data obtained was in the form of interviews with competent veterinarians, interviews with school principals regarding the importance of educational media that makes children care about cats, as well as questionnaire data filled out by Ngoresan Elementary School children. While the secondary data is in the form of literacy results through the web, books, and journals.

## **III. DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 The Benefits of Having a Cat**

Cats are fun animals. Apart from making humans not lonely, by raising cats humans can get various benefits. The following are the benefits of keeping cats for humans:

- Having activities with pets helps stimulate socialization by providing topics for conversation and providing reasons for life. When individuals already have an emotional attachment to their pets, pets can provide comfort and a source of support for them, which is one of the fulfillment of psychological needs (Mano, S.Z., Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, 2012).
- Caring for a cat can release stress, because cats are fun animals. Maybe people who are still early in raising cats don't feel it because they don't have a close relationship with cats. According to drh. Charisma (a veterinarian at KHJ Solo) when he was still in college, when he came home from studying at lectures he would feel more relaxed when playing with cats. Feeling relaxed will make your mental, physical, and even immune health better. Maybe some people feel the same way. Relaxing yourself is one of the goals of someone raising a pet.

- Cat owners have lower blood pressure than those who do not own any animals (Circulation, 2013). Having a cat can also increase parasympathetic nervous activity so that it makes the body more calm and the heart rate is no longer beating fast. This can reduce the risk of developing heart disease.
- Cats are animals that can play a role in healing bones and muscles. Cats purring not only indicates that they are feeling happy, but also promotes therapeutic healing in human bones and muscles. The frequency of snoring vibrations is generally between 20-140 HZ. While a cat's purr is in the range of 18-35 HZ which has a positive effect on joint mobility after injury. According to the opinion of Leslie A. Lyons assistant professor at the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of California, the link between the frequency of cat purrs and better healing of bones and muscles may provide relief for some humans.
- Cats can help children with autism. Researchers from the University of Missouri, USA, found that the social interaction of autistic children increases greatly when they are around pets. In the study, half of the research subjects were families who kept cats. Parents of children with autism report a strong attachment forming between them and their children. According to Gretchen Carisle, a researcher at the Center for Human-Animal Interaction Research, these kinds of social skills are usually difficult for children with autism.

### **3.2 Take Care of Cats**

Cats that are not cared for properly will be susceptible to disease. The cat's poor health condition will have a negative impact on the owner because humans can contract the disease from cats. In addition, cat disease will easily spread to fellow cats and humans, so it must be treated as soon as possible. Caretakers must immediately take a sick cat to the vet so that the cat's condition does not get worse. Therefore, cat owners must always pay attention to the factors that affect the cat's health. According to Dr. Charisma who is a KHJ Solo veterinarian, factors that affect the health of cats include:

- **Internal Factor**  
Internal factors are internal factors which mean the cat's physical condition (DNA). DNA that can affect cat health. For example, if the mother cat has diabetes, then it is very likely that her kittens will suffer from the same disease.
- **External Factor**  
The first external factors or external factors are environmental and hygiene factors. It affects the health of cats. Cats can catch diseases from other cats. Second, the factor of the cat owner's treatment of cats also greatly affects cats. If the cat is not comfortable with the owner's treatment, such as being caged too often or limited in activity, it will definitely make the cat feel stressed. When cats are stressed, cats will be more susceptible to disease. In addition, the content of the food provided also affects the health of the cat.

For cat food and drink according to drh. Charisma as a veterinarian from the KHJ Solo Clinic, the frequency of feeding a cat depends on the cat's age. The frequency of baby cats (kittens) suckling on their mother is approximately every 3 hours. When the cat enters one month old, the cat will start learning to eat 4x a day with the appropriate portion. While cats that have entered the age of more than 6 months, cats have enough to eat 2x a day. The younger the cat, the more iron, nutrients, and protein it will need, so it must be fed more frequently. While adult cats don't really need it because in the end it will just become dirt.

Based on the explanation from drh. Charisma, cats with short hair should be bathed at least once a month, cats with medium hair should be bathed at least twice a month, while cats with long hair should be bathed more often, about once a week. Before bathing, it is best if the cat's fur is combed first to avoid tangled hair and dreadlocks. It's even better if before that cut the cat's nails first to avoid scratches while bathing. Apart from the cat's body, other parts such as the eyes, nose and ears of the cat also need attention to clean. These organs need to be treated regularly so that their health is maintained. Brushing a cat's teeth when the cat is bathed is very necessary to maintain the health of the cat's mouth. When cleaning a cat's teeth, special cat toothpaste is needed which can be purchased at a pet shop.

Cats must be vaccinated when they are 3 months old. Vaccines are mandatory for cats because they can minimize cats from getting sick. Based on the explanation from drh. Charisma, the vaccine required in each country is different because the disease cases in each country are different depending on the environment. In Indonesia, there are mandatory vaccines such as FPV, Felocel, and Calicivirus. Meanwhile, the Rabies vaccine is mandatory in certain areas where rabies is still rife, such as Bali, Lenggang and Bogor. Pets that will be brought to the place are also required to vaccinate first.

### 3.3 Interview Results and Research Respondent

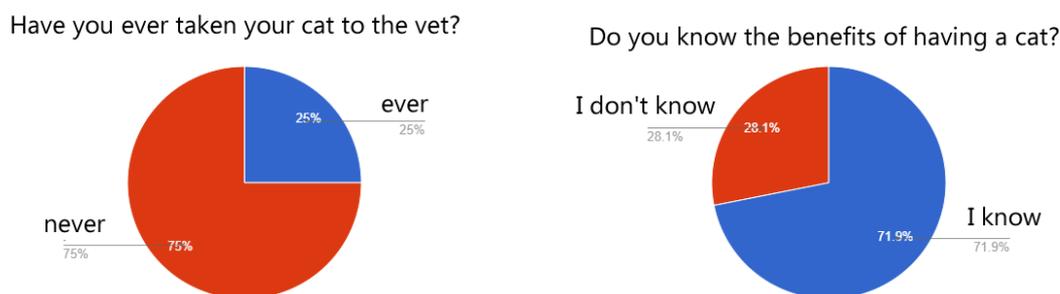
The target market for this picture story book is children. Therefore, to obtain accurate data about these children, the authors conducted interviews with the principal of Ngoresan Elementary School. Based on the results of interviews with the school principal and observations at Ngoresan Elementary School Solo on October 3, 2022, it was explained that children had received general knowledge about cat pets but had no understanding about the benefits and also how to raise cats. Some of the children have cats and love them. The following is an explanation from Mrs. DyahSaptaRiyani as principal of Ngoresan Elementary School:

“Children have read books about cats, but not in the form of picture books, but infographics. Even then, it is also not complete and comprehensive or only general information such as cats, land animals, cats, mammals, and carnivores. These educational books are in the reading corner of each class. Regarding designing a picture book about the benefits and ways of raising cats for children 7-11 years old, children should learn how to love the living things around them. The moral values obtained in childhood greatly determine the future of the child as well as the environment in the future. Children must be given an understanding that animals will not disturb humans if humans do not disturb them to increase affection for animals so that in the future there will be no more cases of violence against animals” (Dyah, personal interview, 3 October 2022).

Accurate data is also needed in research for the production of this book. Data about cats was sought by the author by conducting observation visits and interviews at the KHJ Solo veterinary clinic on Thursday, October 13, 2022. The following is an explanation from drh. Charisma as a veterinarian at the KHJ Solo Clinic:

"Adopting a cat means that the cat has become part of the family which must be given love that is commensurate with the family too. Feeding, cleaning and taking him to the doctor when he is sick are also obligations or responsibilities in caring for cats. Just like other animals, cats must also get the Five Freedoms. Regarding the design of the picture story book 'Si Hima, So Active!', I really support it because education about the benefits and how to care for cats is very necessary for children. The earlier the children know how to properly care for a cat, the more they will get used to it later."

The questionnaire data that has been obtained shows that quite a number of children know the benefits of raising cats. On the other hand, most children have never taken their cat to the vet for vaccinations. This shows that the child's lack of knowledge about how to properly care for cats. Therefore the design of a picture story book about the benefits and ways of caring for cats for children will be more focused on a guide to caring for cats and is suitable for increasing the reader's knowledge.



picture 3. 1. Elementary school children's questionnaire results

### 3.4. Illustrated Story Book as Education Media

The definition of media is all forms of intermediaries used by humans to convey or spread ideas, ideas or opinions, so that the ideas, ideas or opinions expressed reach the intended recipient (Arsyad, 2002: 4). Learning media is any person, material, tool, or event that can create conditions that allow students to receive knowledge, skills and attitudes (Sri Anita, 2008: 2). Meanwhile, a picture story book is a book that displays pictures and text and both are enough to express the story more impressively, and both need each other to fill and complement each other. Picture books have a lot to share. First, the pictures introduce things in the world to children comprehensively before they can even read. This allows children to get used to new words so they can build up their vocabulary through the verbal and visual references provided by books. Although the general public generally believes differently, the vocabulary of picture books is usually evocative and engaging. Sometimes the quality of the words is far greater than the language used in the chapter book because the average length allows about five to eight hundred words.

### 3.5. Illustration Concept

Illustration can be interpreted as an expectation of the impossibility that is not much different from wishful thinking. Illustrations have virtual and virtual properties. Illustrations are present in various verifications, either through writing, images, or sounds (Fariz, 2009: 14). Illustration in Dutch *illustratie* is defined as a decoration with a picture or making something clear. Illustration is one of the most important elements because it is an attraction in book design. Illustrations will help readers to imagine when reading a book. The illustration concept that will be used in making a picture story book is as follows:

#### Color Palette

Color selection is very important in making illustrations. Color can affect the atmosphere in the story as well as the feelings that will be conveyed to the reader. The colors used in the picture story book “Hima!” adapted to the storyline. The author dominates the illustration with warm greenish and yellow tones.



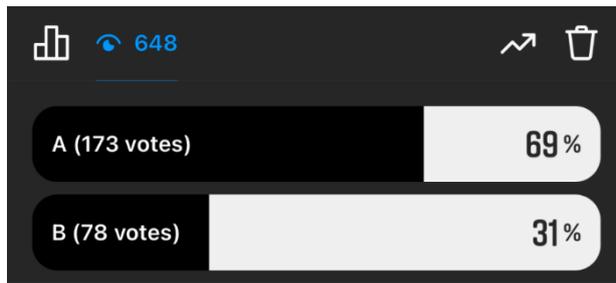
picture 3. 2. color Pallette

#### Illustration Style

The illustration style used in this picture story book is a semi-realistic drawing style that is made more minimalistic and feels like a cartoon. This illustration style was chosen based on voting results from Instagram where most people chose this image style because it was considered more appropriate to the theme and target market. The choice of colors in the illustrations, which are mostly warm, makes the stories in this book more alive.



picture 3. 3. Style A and style B



picture 3. 4. Results of the illustration style selection questionnaire

### Typography

The font chosen for the headline or title is the 'Apasih' font which is quite decorative but still legible. Meanwhile for the body text, the font used is 'Stanberry'. The reason for choosing the 'Stanberry' font as the headline is because this font is easy to read and looks suitable with the illustration style. Previously, the author used this font as body text to win a children's story book competition held by the Republic of Indonesia's Spices Trail, the Ministry of Education and Culture, so this font has been tested by a jury which certainly considers the type of font for a story book. All fonts used in this book are fonts with free commercial licenses.



picture 3. 5. "apasih" and "stanberry" font

### Characters

Characters are the role holders in the story. The picture story book "Hima" has three main characters. First, there is Hima which is a Himalayan cat. Caca, a domestic cat who lives in the same house as Hima. Lastly, a boy named Eyza who is the owner of the two cats.



Picture 3. 6. Characters design

### Layout

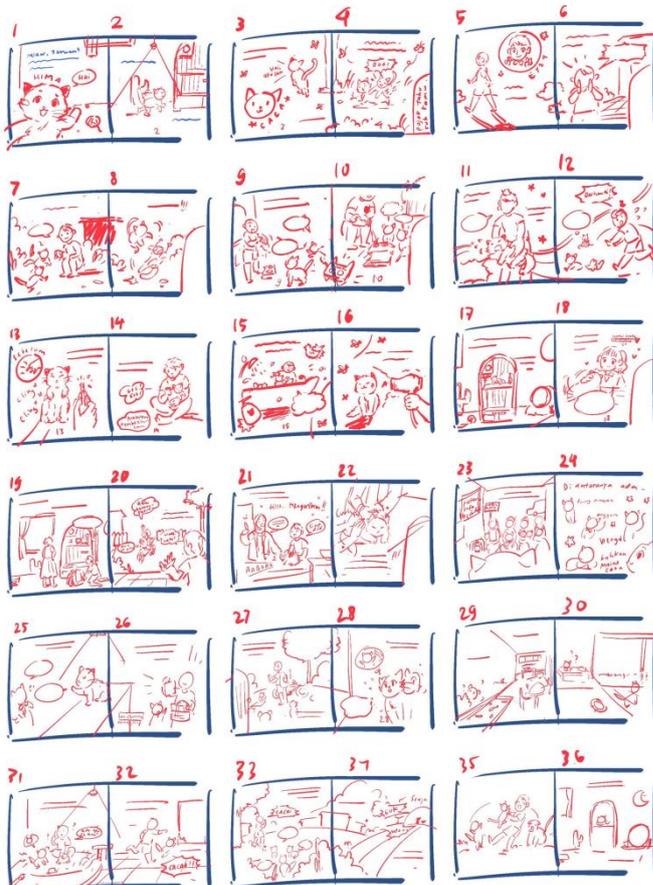
Layout or layout will make the work neater and organized. In the illustrated story book "Hima", the writing will be placed in the empty space on the illustration. That way, the layout of each page will be different and make the layout of the book more varied so that readers don't get bored reading it.



picture 3. 7. Layout reference

### Process

The process of making the book starts with collecting data about cats and the relationship between children and cats. Then proceed with making a story framework to finishing the story. After the story is finished, the writer makes a storyboard which is a rough sketch of each page. The sketches are followed by working on the base color and finishing. When the illustration is finished, it will proceed to the layout process, namely inserting text into the illustration.



picture 3. 8. Storyboard

### Finished Artwork

The finished artwork is full color with a canvas size of 20 x 20 cm. For now, the children's story book "Hima" is in digital form. Later the distribution of this book will be sold to schools because children of primary school age are the target market for this book.



Picture 3. 9.Final artwork

## IV. CONCLUSION

Having a cat is very fun and has many benefits as explained by the interviewees. But caring for a cat is inconceivable. Cats should be given attention and affection like family. Educational media in schools that discuss cats at this time is still lacking because there are only books that contain general infographics. Therefore, this book forbids children about what are the benefits and how to properly care for cats so that mistakes in raising cats are not repeated. Thus, the design of this book is able to reduce the number of abandoned animals in Indonesia. Children can easily receive information and apply it to everyday life, if they read and understand this book they can bring good changes to ecosystems in the future.

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