

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

In recent decades, the world including Indonesia has faced many complex problems related to character issues. According to research findings by Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), 42% of teenagers in Indonesia at the ages of 15 have experienced bullying (Abbas et al., 2025). Indonesia is the country with the highest rate of school violence, namely 84% (Borualogo & Casas, 2021) and 97% of junior high school students have accessed pornography and even 5.6% of students in Indonesia have had premarital sex (Fibrila et al., 2020). Moreover, according to Benu (2025) today's teenagers also face the fading of noble values that form the foundation of national and social life. Furthermore, there is also the phenomenon of the decline in student character towards teachers through reduced respect, manners, discipline, and responsibility of students in interacting with teachers at school (Widya et al., 2025). One of the reasons for these problems is globalization, which is strongly driven by the massive development of technology and media. This, in line with Budiarto (2020) who said that the development of technology today affects the erosion of children's behavior. This caused by the circulation of information from social media which has a negative charge every time is always consumed by children who are not in accordance with the spectacle at a basic age. In addition, the effects will affect the tendency of modern behavior (westernized culture) and reduce the uniqueness of local culture (Putra, 2019). Thus, these problems need serious attention as Dwiputra & Sundawa (2023) suggest that without control and evaluation, character problems will have negative

implications for the quality of human resources. This argument is supported by Lickona (1991), who states that character is related to aspects of one's knowledge, feelings, and action.

Therefore, it can be argued that character education is crucial today as a solution to the current character issues and as an essential long-term foundation for preparing young generations to face global challenges. According to Lickona (1991), Character education is a deliberate effort to help students understand, care about and act on core ethical values. In addition, character education and morality in the field of education are the main foundation for the progress of a nation (Ahmadi et al., 2020). Moreover, character education is also essential since it helps students learn, feel, and want to do good things (Sakban & Sundawa, 2023). Therefore, building good character should be carried out from an early age. Sukarno (2020) emphasized that the formation of a child's character or personality is not only done in a formal environment but also implemented in an informal environment, so that it can motivate the development of each individual's character. In line with that, Utami et al. (2023) said, families as an informal environment provides the moral foundation, and schools as a formal environment strengthens it through integrated learning, role models and extracurriculars.

Various perspectives and frameworks of character education have been developed to guide the formation of individuals' moral values and behaviors. Lickona (1991), one well-known framework in character education highlights three essential components including knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good. This means that character is not only about understanding what is right or wrong but also about feeling it emotionally and acting upon it in daily life. In line

with this, The Ministry of National Education (2010) identifies several values to be developed, such as being religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hardworking, creative, independent, democratic, curious, nationalist, patriotic, appreciative of achievements, friendly, peace-loving, fond of reading, caring for the environment, social care, and responsible. Furthermore, The Ministry of National Education and Culture (2017) emphasizes five core values, namely religiosity, nationalism, mutual cooperation, independence, and integrity. Similarly, The Ministry of National Education and Culture (2020) introduced Profil Pelajar Pancasila (Profile of Pancasila Students) which defines six main dimensions of character, including faith and devotion to God almighty and possessing noble character, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity. However, this framework has recently been updated and expanded in 2025 into the Graduate Profile consisting of eight dimensions to better address the competencies and character needed in the 21st century. The eight dimensions are, faith and devotion to God almighty, citizenship, critical reasoning, creativity, collaboration, independence, health and communication. Altogether, these perspectives show that character education in Indonesia aims to build individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also morally and socially responsible.

The most important thing to consider is that character education values are universal, which means they can be found and implemented everywhere, including local wisdom. Parhan & Dwiputra (2023) stated that when local wisdom is applied in character education, it shapes individuals to develop characters aligned with their local community. In other words, when local wisdom is used as part of character education, it will make the individual have a character that is following the local

society. Furthermore, Dwiputra & Sundawa (2023) reveals that integrating local wisdom into learning not only preserves its existence but also supports the internalization of positive values. Therefore, connecting character education with local wisdom is one of the best strategies to solve today's character problems.

In the context of Indonesia, especially in Bali, one local wisdom that strongly supports character education is *Tri Hita Karana*. *Tri Hita Karana* means “three causes of harmony,” which are harmony between humans and God (*Parahyangan*), harmony between humans and other humans (*Pawongan*), and harmony between humans and nature (*Palemahan*) (Atmadja, 2019). This local wisdom teaches balance in life, which is not only important for Balinese society but also has universal value. In today's modern world where the loss of spirituality, social conflict, and environmental damages have become major issues, *Tri Hita Karana* can offer a relevant solution. In line with that, Puspayanti et al. (2023) found that *Tri Hita Karana* can serve as a foundation for building harmony through character education, since the teachings of *Tri Hita Karana* contain the fundamental principles needed to achieve aspects of strengthening character education (Parmajaya, 2020). Besides, Sedana et al. (2022) revealed that the ideals of *Tri Hita Karana* might be used effectively to teach about character as *Tri Hita Karana* offers students various noble values, including harmony with God, others, and the environment, to support the creation of a peaceful world. Therefore, integrating *Tri Hita Karana* into education can support both local wisdom and strengthen the nation's character in today's globalized world.

Furthermore, literature can be used as a medium to teach character education because it is also important to note that, in developing children's

character, we need to ensure that the process is stress-free (Utami et al., 2020). This is also supported by previous study from Hasanah et al. (2021) who suggests that literary works have more to offer than entertainment, as they can also provide education and information for readers. Moreover, according to Abrams & Harpham (2013), literature and value cannot be separated, as each literary work must have a value that can influence its readers to behave well. Additionally, Annuri et al. (2024) said that reading literature will directly help children to build attitudes towards the environment and themselves. In addition, Subhash et al. (2022) mentioned that teaching language through literature also increases student critical thinking by practicing arguments, form conclusions, evaluate, and make judgments that are all intimately tied to critical thinking. Moreover, he also mentioned that literature offers language students the language of real-life situations, which enhances cultural knowledge and helps them understand how communication takes place in their environment. In line with that Fatma & Ajam (2020) also said that learning language through literature also helps the learners to know other cultures very closely, because literature of different languages provides with the platform of various cultural values, rules and regulations, and prepare the mind of readers to accept the differences between cultures and respect the values of others.

Among the various forms of literature, novels are often used as a medium to reflect moral values and to support character education in a classroom (Cahyo et al., 2023). Kennedy & Gioia (1995) define a novel as a long fictional narrative, usually more extensive than a short story, which provides detailed exploration of characters, plot, themes, and settings. Through stories, readers can see how characters deal with moral choices and experience the results of their actions. There

are numerous researchers who have found that novels are beneficial for teaching character education including (Sasalia & Sari, 2020; Suoth et al., 2023; Swandari & Markhamah, 2023). Sasalia & Sari (2020), said that novels are considered efficient and effective media if they can convey educational messages to the readers, with attractive packaging that has a special appeal to the readers. Another perspective comes from Swandari & Markhamah (2023) who stated that novels are one way in which character values can be taught to someone. Similar to that, Suoth et al. (2023) emphasized that the novel also brings lessons in life that could help learners to grow in person, by learning from mistakes, dilemmas, experiences in the story. Therefore, stories in literature can be an effective medium for teaching character education and as a meaningful way to introduce and foster the understanding of local wisdom such as *Tri Hita Karana*. Through stories, students can directly explore values that reflect the beauty of living in harmony in a creative and natural way.

One of the famous children's literatures in the form of novels that contains moral values which can be taught and internalized in life is *The Chronicles of Narnia* series by C.S. Lewis. *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis is one of the high fantasy fiction novels for children and one of the most popular in the world. From its seven novels, *The Last Battle* functions as the conclusion of the entire story, which is full of theological and moral reflections through its characters and allegorical events. Since it was first published in 1956, this series has received much attention because of its richness of imagination and the depth of its symbolism. This book received the Carnegie Medal, the most prestigious children's literature award in the UK as the best children's book of 1956 (Heck, 2019). The title *The Last Battle*

in very general terms symbolised the finality, the ultimatum of something that does not end in a peaceful and pleasant manner and moment that is full of chaos and conflict (Gladys & Santhanalakshmi, 2021). However, towards the end of the narrative, the story presents a movement from chaos and conflict toward a sense of peace and happiness through the characters' actions.

There are several previous studies according to C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle* including (Gladys & Santhanalakshmi, 2021; Marpaung, 2024; Mochel-Caballero, 2022; Servín, 2021). Gladys & Santhanalakshmi (2021) focused on Christian symbolism in the novel and found that its characters, events, and storyline reflect biblical symbols, especially those in the Book of Revelation about the end of Narnia and the beginning of a new world. Marpaung (2024) analysed the figurative language in the novel and found that sound devices, especially repetition and onomatopoeia, are the most common and help to create an imaginative and emotional tone. Mochel-Caballero (2022) examined Lewis's portrayal of Heaven, or Aslan's Country, as a rewriting of the Book of Revelation 21–22, and found that Lewis changed the biblical images into a more naturel and attractive picture also described for children. Servín (2021) explored the novel from a dispensational perspective, focusing on the dispensation of the Kingdom, and found strong similarities with biblical prophecy about spiritual deception, the final battle, judgment, and the creation of new things. Although these studies provide valuable insights, these studies have mostly focused on western religious analysis such as symbolism, Christianity, dispensational perspective analysis and figurative language analysis. There has been no study connecting *The*

Last Battle to local wisdom like *Tri Hita Karana* especially in analysing the characterization of King Tirian.

Therefore, King Tirian is selected as the main character for analysis of this study. Throughout the story, Tirian faces betrayal, injustice, moral dilemma, leadership challenges, and a crisis of faith in chaotic conditions where deception, injustice and confusion spread among his people. However, he consistently shows his faith by continuing to pray and trust Aslan as the divine representation of God in Narnia in the middle of the struggles he faces (which reflects the harmonious relationship between humans and God). He also demonstrates his responsibility as a leader and his willingness to sacrifice for his people (reflects harmonious relationship with fellow humans). In addition, his respect for Narnia as a land with its own beauty and his care for all Narnian creatures (reflects the harmonious relationship with nature). By studying King Tirian's characterization through the lens of *Tri Hita Karana*, this study not only offers a deeper understanding of how *Tri Hita Karana* values are reflected in the novel but also highlights how literature can be used as a medium to strengthen character education based on the local wisdom of *Tri Hita Karana* that highlights the beauty and the importance of harmony in spirituality, humanity and nature. Moreover, this study not only contributes to literary analysis, but also shows that local wisdom frameworks such as *Tri Hita Karana* can be used as a meaningful perspective for interpreting Western literature.

1.2 Problem Identification

The current situation shows that the young generations are facing character issues including bullying, violence, exposure to pornography, and the excessive

influence of westernized culture which leads to the fading of noble values that form the foundation of the nation. These issues indicate a decline in moral awareness and the erosion of local cultural values. In this context, character education becomes crucial for guiding today's generations in facing global challenges. One effective way to strengthen it is by integrating local wisdom. *Tri Hita Karana*, as one of Balinese local wisdoms, emphasizes harmony among humans with God (*Parahyangan*), with others (*Pawongan*), and with nature (*Palemahan*). However, these values are not always well internalized or practiced by today's generation. Literature can serve as a meaningful medium to convey moral and cultural values. Novels, in particular, present stories and human experiences that illustrate moral values and consequences, making them valuable resources for teaching character education. C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle* provides a rich example through King Tirian, whose struggles and reflect universal moral values that align with *Tri Hita Karana*. Connecting Western literature with local wisdom provides a cross-cultural understanding that enriches literary interpretation and supports character education based on Indonesian culture, especially Balinese culture. Previous studies have mostly focused on symbolism or Christian themes, but little attention has been given to exploring *Tri Hita Karana* values in this novel. This gap is the basis for the present study, which aims to analyse then elaborate how *Tri Hita Karana* values are reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in *The Last Battle*.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

The limitation of this study is the research specifically discusses one of C.S. Lewis's novels entitled *The Last Battle* as the main data source. The analysis

only focuses on local wisdom *Tri Hita Karana* framework and the focus of the study only on one character which is King Tirian's characterization. However, the interpretation will be supported by other elements, including plot, setting and point of view.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, the researcher intends to focus on the *Tri Hita Karana* values reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in C.S Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. More specifically, the present study focused on answering the following research questions:

1. How are *Parahyangan* values reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in *The Last Battle* by C.S. Lewis?
2. How are *Pawongan* values reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in *The Last Battle* by C.S. Lewis?
3. How are *Palemahan* values reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in *The Last Battle* by C.S. Lewis?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the statement of the problem, it can be stated that the objectives of this study are to analyse the *Tri Hita Karana* values reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in C.S Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. More specifically, the present study is aimed to achieve the following Objectives:

1. To elaborate *Parahyangan* values reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in *The Last Battle* by C.S. Lewis.

2. To elaborate *Pawongan* values reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in *The Last Battle* by C.S. Lewis.
3. To elaborate *Palemahan* values reflected in the characterization of King Tirian in *The Last Battle* by C.S. Lewis.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of the study indicates how this study can be helpful and contribute to several fields. The current study is expected to be useful both theoretically and practically.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significances

The current study is expected to give contribution for several theories, as follows:

a. Literary Analysis

This study is expected to be helpful in giving contribution to literary analysis, especially in analysing the novel using the character education approach through the *Tri Hita Karana* values reflected in the novel. The analysis is also supported by the theory of literary structure proposed by Kennedy & Gioia (1995), who state that a literary work is composed of interrelated elements such as character, plot, setting, and theme that together create meaning. Therefore, this research supports the structural approach by showing the interrelation among these elements and how they reflect moral and cultural values.

b. English Language Teaching

This study aims to improve our understanding of English language learning, especially through the use of children's literature, which offers many

benefits. The findings are expected to support the idea that students can develop their language skills and teach character education since the use of children's literature in teaching English is really beneficial. Furthermore, Barone (2011) explained that quality children's books can be used to teach comprehension, decoding, vocabulary, and fluency. This shows that children's literature is an effective medium to help students improve their language skills and engage with authentic texts in meaningful ways.

c. Literacy

This current study is expected to be able to contribute to the theories of literacy, especially on how literacy skills are beneficial by reading. As said by Barone (2011), that teaching reading strategies and skills alone is not enough to create lifelong readers, teachers need to provide time for emotional and intellectual connections to literature. It shows that children's literature can build students' reading interest, comprehension, and critical awareness as part of literacy development.

1.6.2 Practical Significances

The present study is expected to provide contributions to several practical aspects, including students, teachers, parents, and future researchers.

a. Students

Practically, this study is expected to improve students' understanding of local wisdom, especially the values of *Tri Hita Karana*. Through the analysis of literary texts, students can learn how harmony between humans and God, between among humans, and between humans and nature is reflected in the story. Moreover,

Fatma & Ajam (2020) stated that learning language through literature also helps the learner to know other cultures very closely, because literature of different languages provides with the platform of various cultural values, rules and regulations, and prepare the mind of readers to accept the differences between cultures and respect the values of others. This understanding not only develops their critical thinking and cultural awareness but also strengthens their sense of identity as part of a society that values balance and respect. Additionally, by connecting literature with these cultural values, students are encouraged to apply them in daily life and foster good character.

b. Teachers

This study is expected to support teachers by showing how literary works can be integrated with the teaching of cultural values, specifically *Tri Hita Karana*. Literature provides an effective medium for teachers to teach moral values and encourage discussions about maintaining harmony in life. As investigated by Çatalbaş (2024) that English teachers have positive perceptions of using literature in language teaching, as it can effectively improve students' language skills, foster creativity, and increase their motivation and teaching moral value. Thus, teachers can use this as a way to strengthen students' awareness of their cultural heritage while fostering positive attitudes toward God, others, and the environment.

c. Parents

For parents, this study is expected to help them in order to encourage their children to engage with literary works that reflect cultural values like *Tri Hita Karana*. As said by Devianti et al. (2020) that education starts at home, especially by parents, which has an important role in shaping a child's character. By

understanding how literature can convey lessons about harmony and balance, parents can support their children's learning both inside and outside the classroom. This involvement allows parents to take part in shaping their children's character, helping them grow as individuals who are respectful toward God, considerate toward others, and responsible for the nature or the environment.

d. Future Researchers

This study may serve as a reference for future researchers who are interested in exploring local wisdom in literature, especially the values of *Tri Hita Karana*. It provides an example of how cultural perspectives can be applied in literary analysis, it shows the connection between texts and the moral or cultural values they present. Future researchers could expand this by analyzing different works, comparing representations of cultural values across genres, or connecting *Tri Hita Karana* with other areas such as education, environmental studies, or intercultural understanding.

