

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter displays the explanation about the background of the study, problem identification, limitations of the study, statement of the research question, purpose of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of The Study

Character education addresses the emotional, social, and moral elements of education and fosters the ability of students to be responsible and caring members of society (Almerico, 2014). Globalization combined with the modern rapid growth of technology causes children to be exposed to different influences to shape feelings and behavioral responses. Children receive counter messages to the ethical and moral standards of society, some of which can be interpreted as educational while others can be interpreted as harmful. The rapid flow of information, in the absence of critical analysis, can shape children's behavior and attitudes.

Consequently, deteriorating morals among the younger generations may be seen as low levels of environmental awareness, low empathy, and social conflicts (Paramita & Wulandari, 2022; Arimbawa et al., 2018). Under these circumstances, character education becomes imperative. *Tri Hita Karana* (THK) is one of the cultural concepts from Bali. THK is understood and conceived based on real experiences so that character education may be applied through the media of

creative literature. This may help the children build morals in the midst of a complex digital world.

Character education greatly impacts the identity formation and worldview of children. Children learn to understand right from wrong and develop a sense of obligation through character education. Children learn through the many values they acquire from their families, schools, and the media. Character education is reliant on the social and emotional development of the children and the development of their thinking. Based on the social development of children, they learn to internalize values through personal experiences and interactions, and they learn through behavior they are exposed to. For character education, important examples and narratives, as well as formal teaching, are necessary. Lickona (1991) argues that character education involves teaching moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. When children learn morals, and all three components of character education are present, a strong sense of identity is created, and the child has a clear moral compass that guides their behavior. A strong identity protects the child from negative influences, but when a moral compass is not present, children are vulnerable to negative influences. Effective character education involves real-life and context-related moral values, so that children have the opportunity to learn and engage with moral values.

Character education is often delivered in a fragmented or unclear manner, making it difficult for students to internalize the values being taught. One of the main issues in implementing character education lies in the use of limited learning resources and frameworks that effectively integrate moral values into their daily experiences (Almerico, 2014). To address this issue, the integration of local wisdom

into character education is increasingly emphasized as a way to provide culturally relevant and meaningful learning experiences. Character education that incorporates local wisdom is increasingly emphasized as a way to provide culturally relevant and meaningful learning experiences. According to research, the application of local values can help students understand and internalise moral principles more contextually because they are related to their daily lives (Sari, 2020; Rahmawati et al., 2023). Therefore, character education combined with local wisdom helps students gain a better moral understanding. This also helps them build a sustainable cultural identity and character.

The philosophy of *Tri Hita Karana* in Bali emphasises three main relationships: the relationship between humans and God (*Parahyangan*), the relationship between humans and humans (*Pawongan*), and the relationship between humans and nature (Atmadja, 2019; Sukarma, 2016). *Tri Hita Karana* teaches ethical behavior alongside the integration of spiritual, social, and environmental awareness. Thus, *Tri Hita Karana* principles are excellent for the contemporary issues of social discord, neglect of the environment, and loss of spiritual values. Environmental issues have become some of the greatest issues that the world faces today. Deforestation, pollution, and climate change show the neglect of the balance of the environment. This dissonance shows the neglect of balance between mankind and the environment. Value-based education is the most appropriate way to address this dissonance. The *Palemahan* component of *Tri Hita Karana* teaches the harmony of mankind and the environment. The dissonance *Palemahan Karana* can be taught to children through environmental principles using literature and environmental stories that teach the relationship of mankind

being responsible to the environment. This will also promote sustainable behavior. *Tri Hita Karana* is not applicable solely to religion and culture, but also to every aspect of life, including education. Character education is a balanced way of integrating *Tri Hita Karana* to all three domains of education: the cognitive, the affective, and the psychomotor. It also includes and improves the moral value and social responsibility of the students.

One of the key purposes of literature, and of children's literature specifically, is the promotion and distribution of ethical and moral values. Readers have the opportunity to experience and to understand abstract values through the narrative, characters, and conflicts of the literature. Many values and morals can be understood and accepted through the experiences literature provides (Kristiyani et al., 2021). Literature can help readers understand the remorse and the repercussions of different actions, teach readers to walk in another's shoes, and help teach and develop empathy. Literature's experiential qualities make it an excellent tool for illustrative teaching of character. Multiple definitions of children's literature include the idea of literature that was specifically written for a young audience and was therefore written at an age and developmentally appropriate level (Nurgiantoro, 2018; Mahpudoh et al., 2024). Children's literature is written simply and in an engaging manner. It has themes of children's experiences and/or children's moral development, and it has conflicts and resolutions. Other values and morals can be learned from children's literature, such as social and cultural values. It also teaches children social and cultural values, critical thinking, and moral awareness through imagination and the characters of the literature. Children's literature is a valuable way to develop the cognitive and ethical thinking of young readers.

One of the unique strengths of literature is its narrative structure, which allows for the conveyance of moral principles in a subtle yet effective manner. Narration differs from direct instruction because it allows readers to interact emotionally with characters and situations. As a result, the learning experience becomes more significant. By using conflict, resolution, and character development, readers can see the consequences of their actions and reflect on their moral choices without feeling lectured. This narrative engagement encourages better understanding and internalization of values because readers actively comprehend and relate the story to their own experiences. Therefore, studying literature through its narrative elements offers important insights into how cultural and moral values are constructed and conveyed in stories.

Because literature reflects social realities, standards, and beliefs, it is frequently taken as a representation of human life (Hamzah, 2019; Diwa & Septiana, 2025). Social relationships, interactions with nature, and even moral dilemmas are captured through characters, conflicts, and settings in literary works. This reflective nature of literature allows readers to analyze other people's way of life and their value systems. Literature does not only provide entertainment, but also a way of moral thinking and analyzing human behavior. Hence, this kind of analysis using specific cultural contexts such as *Tri Hita Karana*, helps in the understanding of how values are constructed, represented, and communicated in literary works.

Previous studies have shown that literary works, including novels, can teach character values such as responsibility, courage, honesty, and empathy (Hasanah et al., 2020; Handayana et al., 2021). Children's literature is also considered useful for fostering imagination, emotional development, and moral understanding

(Nurgiantoro, 2024; Ummah & Saputra, 2025; Julianto & Setiani, 2026). By participating in stories, children can learn about complex moral situations in a safe and imaginative environment. This helps them develop personally and become more aware of ethics.

Literary works are increasingly spreading across the world, crossing cultural and geographical boundaries, allowing readers from different backgrounds to engage with stories written in diverse contexts. This happens during the era of globalization. Because these works are globally accessible, readers have a greater chance of viewing them through a relevant cultural framework. Universal themes often appear in global literary works; however, deeper interpretations can be obtained from the perspective of local philosophy. In this case, incorporating local wisdom such as *Tri Hita Karana* into the analysis of global children's literature helps build a bridge between local cultural values and international narratives. This method strengthens cultural identity and demonstrates that local philosophy is still relevant for understanding the universal human experience represented in literary works. In literary works, characters are very important for representing and conveying cultural and moral principles. Characters serve as models for a certain value system in the story through their actions, decisions, and interactions. Often, readers interpret and understand values through the way characters handle problems and difficulties rather than receiving direct explanations. Thus, character analysis becomes an important method for uncovering significant values in a story. To gain a better understanding of the narrative value system, you can examine many characters rather than just focusing on the protagonist. Therefore, analyzing the behavior and interactions of all characters in a literary work is crucial to uncover

how values like those in *Tri Hita Karana* are represented and developed throughout the story.

This narrative illustrates the ways the characters deal with obstacles, develop relationships, and respond to their surroundings. The text thus lends itself to the examination of ethical and social frameworks. These aspects indicate that the novel reflects the values of *Tri Hita Karana*, especially regarding the constitutive relationships between human beings, nature and the spiritual realm. Little Billy and the Minpins engage positively with both nature and society. Conversely, the character's moral decisions may be interpreted as more fundamental ethical and spiritual principles in action.

Limited past research studies have addressed character education and moral values found in Billy and the Minpins and other related literature. Much of the research centers on main characters and generally focuses on overarching moral lessons without cultural context. In addition, the existing literary research on *Tri Hita Karana* focuses mostly on children's storybooks and not novels (Tantri et al., 2020; Rukmana et al., 2023). Children's storybooks and programs have frequently been the focus of research on local cultural philosophy. In addition, current research very rarely examines how each character in a story exemplifies or portrays moral values. Most studies focus on main characters and neglect the roles played by secondary characters in the story. These deficiencies indicate the need for an extensive study that encompasses the role of all characters in the story and their relation to the representation of the values of *Tri Hita Karana*.

Through the analysis of the values of *Tri Hita Karana* presented in the novel *Billy and the Minpins*, the reader gains a better understanding of the concepts of

Hindu culture and philosophy, particularly the underlying values in the human relationship with God, nature, and fellow human beings. With this study, readers look at Roald Dahl's work from a different perspective, through the lens of the *Tri Hita Karana* values. This opens up new insights into the moral or philosophical messages delivered by Dahl through his work. By analyzing novels based on Hindu values by non-Hindu writers, such as Roald Dahl, this research triggers a better dialogue and understanding between Western and Hindu cultures, as well as an appreciation of diversity in literary interpretation and cultural values.

This study focuses on the values of *Tri Hita Karana* presented in the novel *Billy and the Minpins*. The novel is chosen because it is relevant to the study's objectives based on initial observations. Observation means that *Billy and the Minpins* has been read several times and then analyzed. In the initial observation, the researcher reads the background of the novel and finds that it contains values such as courage and curiosity related to *Tri Hita Karana*. The application of THK enriches character education methods in Indonesia by introducing local cultural concepts, making character education more meaningful and relevant for the younger generation in Indonesia. The values of THK also reflect universal concepts such as compassion, tolerance, and environmental care, making them relevant on a global scale and applicable for understanding literary works from various cultures. Therefore, the researcher is curious to discover more values through analysis. This curiosity is supported by previous studies that find literature, such as short stories, also contains character education values that can be used as references for students (Aghni *et al.*, 2020; Miftahurrisqi *et al.*, 2021; Rahmawati & Liliana, 2019; Zain *et al.*, 2020). Khanadi *et al.* (2022) state that textbooks contain representations of

character education values, and character education values are also found in media such as films, which are useful for educating children (Suwastini, Swandana & Payani, 2017; Utami, Suwastini, *et al.*, 2019).

Rukmana, Putrayasa, and Sanjaya (2023) concluded that bilingual children's storybooks contained *Tri Hita Karana* values. Additionally, Tantri, Bayu, and Dewantara (2020) found that novels contained the values of *Parahyangan*, *Pawongan*, and *Palemahan*. Research findings from several researchers, including Arianti (2020), Bonita (2023), and Oktavirani (2023), indicated that Roald Dahl's novels embodied values based on the five core character education values from the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017). Roald Dahl's novels contained the values of *Tri Hita Karana* (Praba, 2023; Putri, 2024). Oktavirani (2023) stated that *Billy and the Minpins* contained moral values related to character development and empathy towards living beings, focusing on the characterization of Little Billy.

Aguilar (2022), in his research on rereading Roald Dahl's novels from an ecological perspective, claimed that *Billy and the Minpins* addressed detachment and hierarchy by placing the child on the same level as the creatures, plants, and animals in the forest, as Little Billy adapted to their way of life to devise a plan to defeat the Gruncher.

Previous researchers have discussed *Billy and the Minpins* by examining the characteristics and moral values demonstrated by the main character. The new aspect of the current investigation is a detailed study of all the characters in the novel to obtain more in-depth data. The values analyzed will cover all the *Tri Hita Karana* values, including *Parahyangan*, *Pawongan*, and *Palemahan*. The character

values embodied in the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*, as a universal philosophy, are highly relevant when applied across various activities (Emalasari & Wulandari, 2022). Thus, *Tri Hita Karana* is suitable for teaching character education. Additionally, Lickona (2009) supports this by stating that character education consists of three interrelated parts: moral knowledge, feelings, and behavior. He also affirms that good character involves knowing good, wishing good, and doing good, which come from the mind, heart, and habit of action.

1.2 Problems Identification

Rising concerns regarding the character crisis among the youth point to a decline in a variety of issues such as erosion of morals and loss of empathy. Education is just one of many perspectives tackling these issues. Currently, insufficient relevant cultural values inhabit the curriculum. As a result, character education becomes less meaningful and disconnected from the students' lived experiences. Using the provided research background, we can determine a number of research gaps. First, there is a lack of research on the analysis of children's literature that integrates local cultural principles, particularly the *Tri Hita Karana*. Second, an analysis of the book *Billy and the Minpins* by Roald Dahl is often centered on the morals and principles or the main character, and not a detailed character analysis, using any philosophical framework. Third, the analysis of literary works should be expanded. This will help describe the realms of morals and principles that exist in literary works. In addition to this, in most of the existing research, a description of a value system that is expressed in a story is not provided. This is because the description of the relationships, interactions, and the roles that

the characters play in the story, is not provided. This reinforces the importance of analyzing relationships and interactions in addition to individual characters, to derive the meaning of the literary text. The existing research gaps are indicative of a lack of integration of local wisdom and literary analysis, particularly of the integration of the *Tri Hita Karana* principles in children's literature. For this reason, other researchers are urged to provide a cultural analysis of literature that is grounded in character education.

1.3 Limitation of The Study

The limitation of this research is that it specifically deals with Roald Dahl's novel *Billy and the Minpins*. The analysis of *Tri Hita Karana* values uses only text analysis methods based on novel representations. The focus of the study is on the characters but is also supported by other elements, such as plot, theme, setting, and point of view.

1.4 Statement of Research Questions

Based on the research background, the researchers intend to focus on the *Tri Hita Karana* values found in the behavior of the characters in Roald Dahl's story *Billy and the Minpins*. More specifically, the study will focus on answering the following research questions:

1. What *Parahyangan* values are reflected in the behavior of the characters in *Billy and the Minpins* Roald Dahl?
2. What *Pawongan* values are reflected in the behavior of the characters in *Billy and the Minpins* Roald Dahl?

3. What *Palemahan* values are reflected in the behavior of the characters in *Billy and the Minpins* Roald Dahl?

1.5 Purpose of The Study

Based on the problem statement, the purpose of this study is to discuss the values of *Tri Hita Karana* found in the behavior of characters in Roald Dahl's story *Billy and the Minpins*. More specifically, the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Elaborate on *Parahyangan's* values reflected in the behavior of the characters in Roald Dahl's *Billy and the Minpins*.
2. Investigate *Pawongan's* values reflected in the behavior of the characters in Roald Dahl's *Billy and the Minpins*.
3. Explain *Palemahan's* values reflected in the behavior of the characters in Roald Dahl's *Billy and the Minpins*.

1.6 Significance of The Study

The current study is expected to be useful both theoretically and practically. The importance of this research is because it shows how this study can be beneficial and contribute to several areas.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

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

4.1.1.1 Literary Analysis

This study is expected to contribute to the development of knowledge in literary and cultural studies. This research enriches literary analysis by applying the concept of *Tri Hita Karana* as an analytical framework in studying children's novels. This research offers an alternative perspective in interpreting literary works thru the lens of local cultural philosophy.

4.1.1.2 English Language Teaching

This study contributes to the discourse on the intersection between literature and culture by demonstrating how universal literary texts can be analyzed using local value systems. This approach broadens the scope of literary criticism, particularly in integrating local wisdom into global literary analysis.

4.1.1.3 Relevance of Cultural Values in Children's Literature

This research provides theoretical insights into the representation of moral and ethical values in children's literature. By analyzing how the values of *Tri Hita Karana* are reflected in the behavior of characters and narrative events in Roald Dahl's *Billy and the Minpins*, this study deepens the understanding of how cultural values are embedded and communicated thru literary narratives.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

The present study is expected to be helpful for several fields, as follows:

1.6.2.1 For Students

Students gain an understanding of *Tri Hita Karana* values, which teach harmony with oneself, others, and nature. Through the story *Billy and the Minpins*, students not only learn about ethics and morals but also about relevant and practical life values. This helps them develop compassion, environmental awareness, and respect for others, which benefit their social interactions and emotional balance.

1.6.2.2 For Teachers

Teachers use the analysis of *Tri Hita Karana* values in *Billy and the Minpins* as a tool to teach character education with an intercultural approach. This analysis enables teachers to present material that incorporates local cultural values in a global context, making learning richer and more meaningful. Teachers also integrate concepts of harmony and togetherness into classroom activities to encourage tolerance and mutual respect among students.

1.6.2.3 For Parents

Parents use this story as a medium to instill cultural values in their children's daily lives. By understanding the moral messages conveyed through *Tri Hita Karana*, parents discuss with their children the importance of harmony with the environment, kindness toward others, and gratitude. This helps build positive values within the family that align with the child's character development.

1.6.2.4 For Future Research

This study opens opportunities to explore other local cultural values in the context of children's literature and literature from various cultures. Additionally, future research examines the concrete effects of exposure to cultural values like *Tri Hita Karana* in literature on children's character development. It also serves as a basis for comparative studies between Balinese cultural values and those of other cultures applied to global children's literature.

