

SOCIAL VALUES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD REFLECTED IN THE STORYBOOK “WURI BERANI MENEGUR”

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Abstract. The children's storybook Wuri Berani Menegur by Fajriatun Nurhidayati is an effective literacy medium for introducing essential social values to early childhood. Through a simple storyline and characters that are familiar to children, this book teaches them to have the courage to reproach their friends in a polite and empathetic manner. This value is very important because at an early age, children are in the process of character formation, where the ability to express feelings and understand their own limits and those of others begins to develop. The character Wuri serves as a positive role model who shows that reprimanding is not a negative action, but rather a form of concern for inappropriate behavior. Children are encouraged to understand that courage can be demonstrated without hurting other people's feelings. Moreover, this story also instills awareness of the importance of protecting oneself from inappropriate touching and recognizing personal boundaries as part of self-protection. Thus, Wuri Berani Menegur is not just a moral story, but also an educational medium that supports the development of empathy, social courage, and politeness in children from an early age.

Keywords: childhood, social values, courage, manners, self-protection.

INTRODUCTION

Young children learn to understand the world through the things they see, feel, and experience every day. At this stage of development, the formation of social values, such as empathy, compassion, and the courage to do the right thing, plays a very important role. Through stories, children are introduced to various social situations that help them distinguish between good and bad behavior, and learn how to treat others with respect and wisdom. Reading picture books is key to fostering empathy; as children immerse themselves in the story and its characters, they naturally begin to understand other people's perspectives. (Sinamo et al., 2024)

The book Wuri Berani Menegur by Fajriatun Nurhidayati is a concrete example of literacy media that conveys moral and social messages to children. This story depicts a child who bravely reminds a friend of their mistake in a polite and empathetic manner. From this story, children learn that reproaching others does not have to be done harshly, it can be expressed gently as a form of love and social responsibility.

The purpose of this article is to explore the social values presented in Wuri Berani Menegur and analyze how messages about courage, politeness, and self-awareness are conveyed to children through simple narratives. This study also aims to highlight the relevance of children's storybooks as a means of shaping social character and fostering self-awareness from an early age.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a literature review as a methodological approach to understand the role of picture books in fostering social values in early childhood. This process was carried out by searching for and reviewing various relevant scientific sources, including journals, books, and previous studies discussing the influence of children's literacy on their social and emotional development. This literature review serves to map previous findings, identify research gaps, and position the book Wuri Berani Menegur (Wuri Berani Menegur) in the context of Indonesian children's literacy studies..

This research is qualitative in nature, applying content analysis to the story texts in the book *Wuri Berani Menegur* by Fajriatun Nurhidayati. The analysis focuses on the depiction of the main character's behavior, the social context in the story, and the educational values contained therein. This approach allows researchers to interpret the implied meaning in the narrative and illustrations and relate them to theories of early childhood social development and the concept of literacy-based character education.

The main data was obtained from the text and images in the book, then analyzed descriptively to identify the forms of empathy, courage, politeness, and self-awareness displayed by the main character. The results of the analysis were compared with relevant theories such as child moral development (Kohlberg, 1981), early socialization theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and literacy-based learning approaches (Wasik & Bond, 2020). Thus, this study not only describes the social values that emerge in the story, but also interprets how children's books can serve as a means of shaping social character from an early age.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The results of qualitative content analysis show that children's storybooks such as this can make a significant contribution to the character education of early childhood, particularly in the development of moral reasoning, empathy, and prosocial behavior. These findings are in line with Hoffman's (2000) view that empathy is the basis for the formation of prosocial behavior, as well as with Vygotsky's (1978) theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction and language in children's moral development.

In addition, the story *Wuri Berani Menegur* also shows the great potential of story-based learning as a means of shaping values. The communicative narrative and illustrations make it easy for children to understand the message being conveyed, while the character of Wuri provides a real-life model of behavior that can be emulated. Thus, storytelling is not only a reading activity, but also an effective pedagogical strategy for teachers and parents to instill social awareness, emotional intelligence, and reflective skills from an early age (Nikolajeva, 2014; Wasik & Bond, 2020).

Wuri Berani Menegur's analysis reveals several important social values embedded in the story that are in line with the developmental needs of early childhood. These findings are presented through three main aspects: (1) character behavior and moral development, (2) social interaction and empathy, and (3) moral communication through narrative simplicity

1.1 Character Behavior and Moral Development

The main character, Wuri, represents a model of moral courage and self-control. She chooses to correct her friend's mistakes not through anger or judgment, but with kindness and empathy. This action reflects the moral thinking of a child who is developing an understanding of social norms and ethical behavior. Emotional and social development focuses on encouraging independence, enabling children to manage their emotions effectively and interact successfully with peers and adults. (Maesaroh et al., 2025)(Rahiem et al., 2020).

In addition, the emotional and social development of early childhood does not only focus on the ability to understand other people's feelings, but also on efforts to build emotional independence and the ability to manage emotions adaptively. Stories such as *Wuri Berani Menegur* help children recognize how to channel their emotions appropriately when faced with moral situations, such as seeing a friend doing something wrong. In this context, Rahiem et al. (2020) emphasize that children's literacy media can strengthen children's ability to understand the difference between acceptable and inappropriate behavior, as well as foster self-awareness as part of the process of social character formation.

From a developmental perspective, this is consistent with Kohlberg's pre-conventional moral stage, in which children begin to internalize values through modeled behavior. Wuri's actions serve as an example of a moral agent who teaches children that doing the right thing can be expressed through compassion, not confrontation

1.2 Social Interaction and Empathy

This narrative also emphasizes the importance of empathy and maintaining positive social relationships. Wuri's gentle approach when reminding her friend shows emotional intelligence and respect for others. Most moral education programs in childhood are delivered through habituation programs. (Rahiem et al., 2020)

This behavior fosters the understanding that empathy is the foundation for harmony in social interactions. For early childhood education, this kind of depiction helps children visualize abstract social values through concrete actions. This story reflects Vygotsky's theory of social development, in which moral learning and understanding occur through interaction and communication in a social context.

1.3 Moral Communication Through Narrative Simplicity

To achieve the goal of character education in early childhood, it is important for educators and parents to train children to effectively manage their social roles and positions in various contexts of life. This ability includes the skills of understanding oneself, recognizing the feelings of others, and adjusting behavior in accordance with prevailing social norms. Character education cannot be taught solely through verbal or theoretical means; rather, it must be integrated into children's real-life experiences in school, family, and community settings. In this way, the internalization of values such as empathy, politeness, and social courage can occur naturally through daily interactions.

This is in line with the views of Astuti & Sari (2024), who emphasize that effective character education must be implemented holistically and contextually, not only through formal learning but also through role modeling, habituation, and direct social experiences in the child's environment. Integrating character values into children's lives from an early age will help them understand how to behave according to their social roles, as friends, family members, and members of society. In this context, storybooks such as Wuri Berani Menegur serve as a bridge between the moral values taught and the social realities children face in their daily lives.

The language and storyline in this book are deliberately kept simple, making it easy to understand and relevant for young readers. Through everyday situations, this book conveys complex moral messages, such as courage, politeness, and caring for others, in a way that is easy for children to understand. This narrative simplicity is a powerful pedagogical tool in early literacy development. Not only does it build comprehension skills, but it also strengthens character education by connecting moral lessons to familiar experiences. The story structure of problem, action, and resolution helps children process cause-and-effect relationships in moral decisions.

The findings of this study highlight how children's storybooks can serve as effective tools for shaping moral and social understanding in childhood. The story of Wuri Berani Menegur shows that moral education does not need to be taught through abstract lectures, but can be naturally integrated into simple narratives that reflect children's everyday experiences.

In line with constructivist learning theory, children build moral knowledge through active engagement with stories and characters. When they observe Wuri's actions, how she gently but firmly reprimands her friend, they learn about appropriate social behavior through imitation and reflection. This supports the idea that literature functions as a social mirror, allowing children to internalize values through identification and emotional connection.

This story also reinforces the concept of empathy-based discipline, which encourages children to resolve social conflicts through understanding rather than punishment. These messages are in line with contemporary approaches to social-emotional learning (SEL), which emphasize self-awareness, empathy, and responsible decision-making as key competencies for early learners.

In addition, research shows that storytelling in early education not only provides cognitive stimulation but also moral support, where children's social understanding develops as they interpret the actions and consequences of characters. This supports educators' efforts to integrate literacy-based character education, linking reading comprehension with moral reflection.

Therefore, Wuri Berani Menegur is not just a children's book, it is a pedagogical tool that connects literacy, social learning, and value formation in a way that is in tune with the emotional world of children.

CONCLUSION

Based on analysis, Wuri Berani Menegur effectively conveys core social values such as courage, politeness, empathy, and responsibility through simple yet meaningful narratives. This story illustrates how moral courage can coexist with kindness, teaching children to defend what is right without being harsh or judgmental.

Qualitative content analysis confirms that stories like this can contribute significantly to character education in childhood by developing moral reasoning, empathy, and pro-social behavior. Findings also show that storytelling can be a relevant and engaging approach for teachers and parents to instill social awareness and emotional intelligence from an early age

Through this analysis, it can be concluded that Wuri Berani Menegur is not merely a children's literary work, but also a character education tool that is relevant and contextual to the social development needs of early childhood in the modern era. This story equips children with the ability to politely correct mistakes, understand other people's feelings, and take care of themselves and their environment responsibly.

The story of Wuri Berani Menegur is an example of how children's literature can serve as a reflection of social values and a tool for fostering moral understanding. Integrating books like this into early childhood education helps create a learning environment where children grow not only intellectually but also emotionally and socially, preparing them to become compassionate and responsible individuals.

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