

Scrutinising Moral Values in Indonesian Children's Storybooks

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ABSTRACT

Scholars have analysed moral values in textbooks and children's storybooks, but little research has examined how these values are portrayed in storybooks written by young Indonesian authors. This research examines how young Indonesian authors incorporate moral values into their narratives to bridge this gap. The study is focused on the *Kecil-Kecil Punya Karya* (KKPK) series, which is commonly written by children across Indonesia. Using Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) and a mixed-methods approach, the study aims to understand the moral perspectives expressed in these texts written by young people. The findings indicate that young authors intentionally choose vocabulary, expressions, and narrative events to introduce and reinforce moral principles. Their stories highlight prosocial values such as helping others, showing respect and politeness, and demonstrating empathy and care toward peers, family members, and the wider community. These values align closely

with ethical principles embedded in Indonesia's national ideology, Pancasila, particularly those emphasising cooperation, social harmony, and respect for others. Children's storybooks are not only entertaining but also educational tools that subtly instill and transmit societal moral values. The study emphasises the importance of young authors in shaping moral awareness and supporting cultural development among young readers.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 18 November 2025

Accepted: 07 July 2026

Published: 18 August 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.34.4.18>

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Keywords: children's storybook, civic education, community awareness, *Kecil-Kecil Punya Karya*, moral foundation theory, moral values, young Indonesian authors, peer education

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a heterogeneous society in terms of religion, language, and culture. However, Indonesian people can still live together in peace. To realise this condition, since childhood, the Indonesian people have been taught how to behave in accordance with the moral values upheld by society. One of the media used to teach moral values to children is storybooks, since they often include moral values such as honesty, responsibility, care, and respect in every story they present. Through storybooks, children as readers are guided to understand and apply moral values in their daily lives. As Jirásek et al. (2023) confirmed, children's literature could motivate physical activities in the real world.

Numerous studies have been conducted on these moral values. Khurshid & Snell (2021) did their research on moral foundations Niemi et al. (2023) discovered the intrinsic moral value individuals Graham et al. (2011, 2013) introduced five moral foundations, and Graham et al. (2009) discussed the pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. However, research on the moral values in Indonesian children's storybooks has received little attention from a linguistic perspective. Previous research has focused more on the moral values included in textbooks and their relationship to pedagogy. Imelwaty et al. (2022) and Puspitasari et al. (2021) stated that the textbooks for language subjects in elementary schools in Indonesia convey moral values. Studies on moral values were also conducted by Tan et al. (2017) on the concerned moral values and

good citizens, Mu'ammam et al. (2020) on the description of how traditional literary works could shape children's moral values, Ahaka et al. (2021) on the data set of moral values, Amil and Narawi (2023) on moral values in literary works, and Shofiani et al. (2022) on moral values in three ethnographic novels. Meanwhile, research conducted by Azzahra (2022) found that the implementation of moral values in "Testing an Honesty", an early children's storybook, was effective. "Testing an Honesty" is an early children's storybook written by Lara Fridani, a lecturer and author of early children's storybooks.

Based on these previous studies, no research has comprehensively examined the moral values incorporated by young authors in their storybooks. Young authors are defined as those who write children's storybooks for ages 7 to 14 years. One of the popular works of these young authors among Indonesian children is a children's book series entitled *Kecil-Kecil Punya Karya* (KKPK). The corpus method was applied in this study to handle a total of 38 storybooks as data sources. The researchers used the Sketch Engine corpus tool to manage the collected data. This research aims to fill this gap by examining how young Indonesian authors convey moral values in their storybooks, drawing on the five moral foundations as initiated by Graham et al. (2009, 2011, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

Young learners could learn something from their storybooks. Richert and Schlesinger (2022) reported that children can learn

from their fantasies and transfer learning from storybooks. Farkas et al. (2020) observed that young children may find children's storybooks helpful in learning about different mental states (emotions, desires, cognitions). Not only fantasy and mental states, but also moral values could be gained from storybooks. Azzahra (2022) noted that children can learn moral values through their storybooks. This argument aligns with the aims of this research, which is to investigate the moral values that Indonesian young authors incorporate into their storybooks.

As a multicultural nation-state, Indonesian society was shaped by The Five Principles of Pancasila, which guide its moral values. The Five Principles are: firstly, “*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*” (Belief in one God); secondly, “*Kemanusiaan yang Adil dan Beradab*” (civilised humanity); thirdly, “*Persatuan Indonesia*” (The unity of Indonesia); fourthly, “*Kerakyatan yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan/Perwakilan*” (Democracy Led by the Wisdom of Deliberation/Representation); and fifthly, “*Keadilan Sosial bagi Seluruh Rakyat Indonesia*” (Social Justice for All Indonesian People) (Latif, 2018; Madung & Stefanus, 2021; Muqsih et al., 2022). It is important to understand moral values, since textbooks also should feature moral values or character virtues (Widodo et al., 2018). Several studies related to moral values have been conducted. Natoli (2024) found that individuals possess an inherent moral value, while Niemi et al. (2023) observed the relational context

and moral values. The term moral values in this paper refers to moral foundation theory (MFT), they are care/harm, fairness/reciprocity, loyalty/subversion, authority/respect, and purity/degradation (Graham et al., 2009, 2011, 2013; Haidt et al., 2009; Haidt & Joseph, 2007). The moral values were recognised as the five classifications of MFT; they were established based on the two integrations of reductionists, who are concerned with the evolution of human behaviour, and constructivists, who consider human behaviour in cultural terms. Based on their research, Graham et al. argue that infants and young children exhibit surprisingly advanced social cognitive skills, frequently including emotional responses to external transgressors (Graham et al., 2013). Based on earlier argumentation, this research applied MFT, as McNeace and Sinn (2018) argued that the logic behind this is that moralising or translating other values into the MFT language will result in them being treated as moral values, which was suitable for analysing Indonesian children's storybooks. Building on earlier argumentation, this paper applied MFT, as moral value evaluation is well-suited to analysing Indonesian children's 38 storybooks using a corpus design.

The five MFTs are, first, care/harm, which reflects the ethos of autonomy. Empathy and compassion are among the virtues associated with harm/care. Care/harm violations include inflicting physical or emotional suffering on others (Graham et al., 2009, 2011, 2013; Haidt et al., 2009; Haidt & Joseph, 2007; Steiger & Reyna, 2017).

Secondly, according to Haidt et al. (2009) and Steiger and Reyna (2017), equal treatment, such as social justice and human rights, is what fairness values are about. The concepts of fairness/reciprocity value involve people receiving rewards and punishments in proportion to their actions. Haidt et al. (2009) and Steiger and Reyna (2017) argued that cheating and freeriding are examples of fairness/reciprocity violations. Thirdly, the loyalty/subversion foundation is equivalent to the "community" ethic. The virtues of loyalty and subversion encompass loyalty, group service (such as family, community, or country), and patriotism/nationalism. The act of betrayal and the undermining of group solidarity or social harmony are considered forms of loyalty/subversion violation (Haidt et al., 2009; Haidt & Joseph, 2007; Steiger & Reyna, 2017). Fourthly, Haidt et al. (2009) and Steiger and Reyna (2017) claimed that the authority/respect foundation also corresponds with the "community" ethics. Authority virtues include obedience, respect, fulfilling one's obligations in social roles, and protecting subordinates. Furthermore, they explained that violations of authority are defined as disregarding social conventions, traditions, the law, and/or culturally esteemed individuals.

Lastly, the foundation for purity reflects the 'divinity' ethic. The virtues of purity encompass being wholesome, clean, spiritual, and physically pure, as well as the control of basic desires. Purity violations involve drug use, blasphemy, and sexual taboos/promiscuity (Haidt et al., 2009;

Haidt & Joseph, 2007; Horberg et al., 2009; Steiger & Reyna, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

Material

KKPK is a children's book series that was first published in 2003 and continues to be published today. The books (38 books) were written in Bahasa Indonesia by young authors aged 7-14 years old and were published in 2008 - 2017 by DAR! Mizan. The researchers chose a publication decade for the storybooks, ranging from 5 to 10 years after first publication, to describe the long-term trend across the 38 storybooks. Table 1 lists the information on the year, the book title, and the names of the authors' storybooks.

Methods

This is a mixed-methods study that employs both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a reliable description of the data. The quantitative approach was applied to identify large-scale trends and frequencies of the data. The researchers employed a qualitative approach to describe and analyse the use of MFT in the collected data. As Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Merriam (2009) mentioned, the quantitative approach involved establishing a database, coding, focus coding, organising emerging themes, and presenting the results. To manage the tokens in this study, a corpus design was applied. According to McEnery and Hardie (2012), corpus linguistics is seen as a set of methods and procedures to explore language.

Table 1

Year, title, and author of KKP

No.	Year	Title	Author
1	2008	<i>4ever Friends</i>	Alya
2	2008	<i>Ibuku Chayank Muach</i>	Izzati
3	2008	<i>Chocolate Milk</i>	Aini
4	2009	<i>Senyum Monalisa</i>	Alya
5	2009	<i>Two Beautiful Princesses</i>	Kirana
6	2010	<i>Pink Cupcake</i>	Ramya
7	2010	<i>Reporter Cilik</i>	Shara
8	2011	<i>Mom is My Angel</i>	Mita
9	2011	<i>Arti Sahabat</i>	Fatiyyah
10	2011	<i>Sahabat Sejati</i>	Arin
11	2011	<i>Sassy & Surat Misterius</i>	Dina
12	2011	<i>Never Give Up</i>	Tira
13	2011	<i>My First Make Up</i>	Shara
14	2011	<i>Hari-hari Rainnesthood</i>	Izzati
15	2011	<i>2 of Me</i>	Izzati
16	2012	<i>My Fav Sister</i>	Naura
17	2012	<i>Little Ballerina: Ketika Si Tomboi Belajar Balet</i>	Thia
18	2012	<i>Happy Camp</i>	Shara
19	2012	<i>London I'm Coming</i>	Nala
20	2012	<i>Rumah Berhantu</i>	Nayla
21	2013	<i>The Ghost in My School</i>	Berliana
22	2013	<i>The Five Smart Girls</i>	Najma
23	2013	<i>Notes From Singapore</i>	Hani
24	2013	<i>Annabelle New School</i>	Tania
25	2013	<i>Let's Sing with Me</i>	Thia
26	2014	<i>Annabelle School Holiday</i>	Tania
27	2014	<i>Suster Misterius</i>	Alyssa
28	2014	<i>Ilmuan Cilik Matematika</i>	Raihany
29	2015	<i>The Days with My Sister</i>	Shiha
30	2015	<i>Ice Skating Girl</i>	Fayanna
31	2016	<i>Jejak Rahasia Sahabat</i>	Fayanna
32	2016	<i>Tivia: Manusia yang Tidak Bisa Menangis</i>	Fafa
33	2016	<i>Rahasia Mama</i>	Zella
34	2016	<i>Paris Girl</i>	Mita
35	2016	<i>Lili & Lyliu: Petualangan Seru di Desa</i>	Queen
36	2016	<i>My Dear Sister</i>	Tania
37	2017	<i>Permintaan Terakhir Mama</i>	Alisha
38	2017	<i>Rahasia Mama</i>	Zella

Source: Authors' own work

As mentioned earlier by Biber et al. (1998), a corpus design is essential for representing a language or some part of it. Corpus-based research relies on real-world language data, provides empirical evidence to researchers, and makes the research more convincing (Luo, 2018). This corpus design is purposively used to analyse the data in linguistics research on children's literature; in this case, KKPK is the source of the research data.

The first step was to establish a database of data sources. The researchers collected data from 38 books written by 31 young authors over a ten-year period (2008-2017).

The second step was to scan the books and save them as PDFs. Using 38 documents as data sources, the researchers classified moral values in the data into five categories, as shown in Table 2.

The next step was data processing. The PDF files of the 38 storybooks were coded as KKPK and stored in the Sketch Engine corpus tool. The researchers used the Sketch Engine corpus tool to count frequencies, as described in Figure 1. Then the researchers categorised sentences containing the moral-value keywords, while sentences that did not contain them were omitted.

Graham et al. (2009) introduced the Moral Foundations Dictionary (MFD) to aid researchers in classifying moral values using the corpus tool. The MFD provides a basic framework for MFT classification, which was applied in this research. The frequency of moral value keywords was observed and accumulated, then presented and discussed in the Results and Discussion section. Based

on the keywords adapted from the MFD, which were written in English and translated into Bahasa Indonesia, the data classification (moral values classification) is described in Table 2 as the fourth step. The sentences that do not contain the moral value keywords were omitted.

Table 2 portrays the five types of moral values found in the data. There were 241 data points related to five classifications of moral values. Based on 241 data points, the moral values of care/harm (91) are the highest, and loyalty/subversion (14) are the lowest.

The fifth and final step was to conclude after presenting the analysed data. From the collected data, the researchers classified them as portrayed in Table 2; the total is 241 data points. The 241 data points displayed contain moral values. From the 241 collected data points, the researchers decided on 18 excerpts to represent each of the five moral value classifications. The 18 excerpts were collected from 4 excerpts described as care/harm; 4 excerpts described as fairness/reciprocity; 3 excerpts described as loyalty/subversion; 3 excerpts described as authority/respect; and 4 excerpts described as purity/degradation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research examined the moral values portrayed by young Indonesian authors in the children's book series entitled KKPK. The researchers identified vocabulary with moral values by applying the MFT. These identified vocabularies were interpreted and

Table 2
Moral values classification

Care/Harm	Fairness/Reciprocity	Loyalty/Subversion	Authority/Respect	Purity/Degradation
91	30	14	49	57
Total: 241				

Source: Authors’ own work

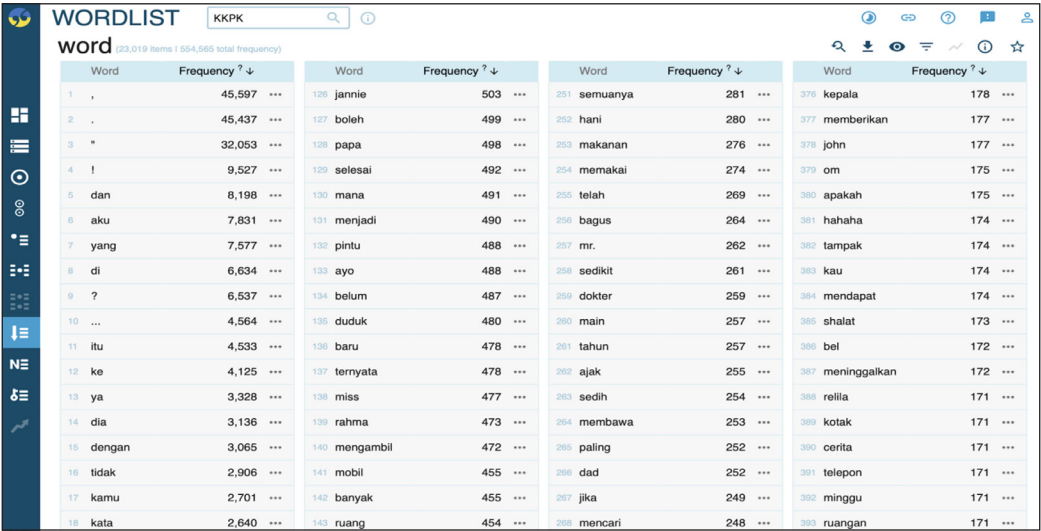


Figure 1. Wordlist of KKPK
Source: Sketch Engine corpus tool

related to the moral values upheld by the Indonesian children. The research findings generally showed the characters' attitudes towards moral values, specifically care versus harm, fairness versus reciprocity, loyalty versus subversion, authority versus respect, and purity versus degradation.

Moral Values Found in Indonesian Children's Storybooks

According to the data analysis, the most frequent moral values in children's

storybooks are care/harm, followed by purity/degradation, authority/respect, fairness/reciprocity, and loyalty/subversion, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2 illustrates the prevalence of themes in Indonesian children's storybooks, including care/harm (38%), purity/degradation (24%), authority/respect (20%), fairness/reciprocity (12%), and loyalty/subversion (6%). The following is a comprehensive explanation of how young Indonesian authors incorporated these moral values in their works.

Care/Harm

Many young Indonesian authors presented stories about caring for each other and the surrounding environment. In KKPK, 38% of the data concerns caring and harming, as reflected in helping family, neighbors, friends, and strangers. From the 91 data points, the researchers took 4 excerpts to describe care/harm in the data. For example, Excerpt 1, labelled care/harm, was taken from the book titled *Permintaan Terakhir Mama* (The Last Wish of Mama), in which a character named Rania expresses her gratitude to Bu Laksmi.

Excerpt 1

Bu Laksmi memberikan buah-buahan untuk Mama. Buah-buahan itu dikemas dalam sebuah bungkusan. Biasanya, buah-buahan yang dikemas seperti itu harus dicuci terlebih dahulu. Rania dan mama berterima kasih atas kepedulian Bu Laksmi dengan bantuan material dan non materialnya. [Bu Laksmi gave

fruit to Mama. The fruits were packed in a parcel, and they usually must be washed first. Rania and Mama are grateful for Bu Laksmi's concern about material and non-material assistance.]

Bu Laksmi's caring attitude towards Rania and her mother was expressed through the phrase "*kepedulian Bu Laksmi*" (Mrs. Laksmi's concern), encompassing both material and non-material support. It reflected a caring attitude towards others in need. This attitude shows that, in Indonesian society, caring for others reflects the second principle of Pancasila (The Five Principles), namely *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (civilised humanity).

The caring attitude towards one another is also demonstrated by another character, Bu Yati, in the book entitled "Happy Camp" (Excerpt 2). Bu Yati shows care through the word *mengamankan* (secured), in which Bu Yati stored the children's goods in the warehouse to avoid unfortunate incidents.



Figure 2. The percentage of moral values in Indonesian children's storybooks
Source: Authors' own work

Excerpt 2

"Tenang, tadi Bu Yati dibantu dengan ibu-ibu yang lain sudah mengamankan barang kalian ke dalam gedung" ujar Bu Yati yang tiba-tiba datang sambil tersenyum. [Relax, the other ladies and I have secured your belongings into the building," said Bu Yati, who suddenly arrived with a smile.]

An act of helping others by giving material (in the form of fruits) or non-material support, such as helping to secure goods, is an example of care for one another. An attitude of caring for others is a highly important moral value in Indonesian society, reflected in the second principle of Pancasila (The Five Principles), namely *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (civilised humanity). In Indonesian society, it is widely believed that everyone must treat others well by helping when needed. A passage in the storybook "Happy Camp" taught readers how to behave in society. This opinion aligns with Smetana's (2006) opinion, which suggests that storybooks can help teach individuals how to behave in a 'normal' manner within a society (Smetana, 2006).

In addition to attitudes that show care for one another, a story by young Indonesian authors addresses environmental concerns. This environmental concern is also evident in Excerpt 3 from a book entitled *Arti Sahabat* (The Meaning of a Best Friend).

Excerpt 3

Ternyata, kalau kita tidak menghemat air dan membuang sampah di sungai,

akan ada seribu bencana yang akan menimpa kita semua. Tinggal mengubah sedikit saja perilaku kita yang buruk, kita harus lebih peduli dengan alam sekitar. Contohnya air. Jangan sampai, deh, air di muka bumi ini habis cuma gara-gara hal yang tidak diperlukan. [If we do not save water and throw garbage in the river, there will be a thousand disasters that will befall us all. All we must do is change a small quantity of our bad behaviour, and we should be more aware of our natural surroundings. Take water, for example. Do not let the water on this earth run out just because of unnecessary things.]

Through the phrase "*lebih peduli*" (more aware), the author of the book "*Arti Sahabat*" intended to establish a strategy for developing children's moral awareness of their surrounding environment. Awareness is a form of responsibility that enables us to control our behaviour and avoid contributing to natural disasters. This attitude can influence how children behave in a broader community. This attitude aligns with the opinion of Smetana et al. (2014), who suggest that children learn from the social interactions occurring around them. Therefore, children can study examples presented in the storybook.

The children's book series KKPK features passages that highlight the importance of caring for others and the environment, as well as examples of moral values that harm both people and the environment. For example, Excerpt 3 from a

book titled *Arti Sahabat* reflects a behaviour that can harm the environment, as seen in the clause "*kalau kita tidak menghemat air dan membuang sampah di sungai*" (if we do not conserve water and throw garbage into the river). The passage teaches that excessive water usage and improper waste disposal in rivers can lead to environmental degradation, ultimately contributing to natural disasters.

The stories presented by young Indonesian authors not only include examples of actions that can harm nature but also discuss actions that can harm people, as shown in Excerpt 4 from a book entitled *Annabelle School Holiday*.

Excerpt 4

"Adik-Adik, ini lukisan dari Herman Willem Daendels. Dia adalah Gubernur Jendral saat penjajahan Belanda yang memerintahkan pembuatan jalan dari Anyer hingga Panarukan. Jalan tersebut diperuntukkan untuk transportasi dari pasukan Belanda. Daendels ini orang yang sangat kejam. Banyak rakyat Indonesia yang menderita akibat kerja paksa yang diperintahkan nya," jelas Kak Belia. ["Kids, this is a painting by Herman Willem Daendels. He was the Governor General during the Dutch colonisation who ordered the construction of a road from Anyer to Panarukan. The road was intended to transport Dutch troops. Daendels was a fierce man. Many Indonesian people suffered from forced labour as he ordered," explained Kak Belia.]

The book titled "*Annabelle School Holiday*" tells the story of the activities of four characters—Annabelle, Claura, Fellycia, and Flora—when they visit Museum Fatahillah in Jakarta. The book *Annabelle School Holiday* presents the excitement of visiting the museum with friends, as well as the history of the Indonesian nation during the Dutch colonisation period. The forced labour ordered by the Dutch government was truly harmful to the Indonesian people. This discourse examines the characteristics of Governor General Daendels as inhumane. This attitude does not reflect the values taught in the second pillar of Pancasila (The Five Principles), namely *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (civilised humanity).

Fairness/Reciprocity

Young Indonesian authors also introduced the notion of moral values, such as teaching justice, rights, and impartiality, in their works. According to the overall data, 12% pertains to fairness/reciprocity. From the 30 data points, the researchers took 4 excerpts to describe fairness/reciprocity in the data. For example, Excerpt 5, in the book titled *Notes from Singapore*, features a passage about Mr. Nelson's equal treatment when sharing the birthday cake with teachers and students.

Excerpt 5

Aku dan murid-murid, serta guru-guru lainnya, menyanyikan lagu Happy Birthday untuk sekolahku yang berulang tahun ke-11. Mr Nelson

membagikan kue itu kepada semua murid dan guru-guru secara adil dan rata. Setelah acara pemotongan kue selesai, acara dinner bersama dilaksanakan. [The students, the other teachers, and I sang a Happy Birthday song for my school's 11th anniversary. Mr Nelson distributed the cake to all the students and teachers fairly and equally. After the cake-cutting ceremony was over, dinner was held.]

The phrase *secara adil dan rata* (fairly and equally) shows that in social interaction, every person has the same right to a share of the cake for the school anniversary. Although teachers have a higher social status in schools, they receive the same treatment as their students. In this case, teachers and students are part of citizens with the same rights. It provides an example of how to behave in society, particularly in a smaller context, such as school. This attitude also reflects the values taught in the fifth pillar of Pancasila, namely *Keadilan Sosial bagi Seluruh Rakyat Indonesia* (Social Justice for All Indonesian People).

The researchers also found a notion of justice in Excerpt 6 from the book entitled *4ever Friends*. Through a speech titled *"Aku Hanya Ingin Keadilan"* (I Just Want Justice), a character named Julia sought an explanation for the issues she faced with Kattie.

Excerpt 6

"Apa? Siapa yang memfitnahmu? Aku hanya ingin keadilan. Dan, kamu

berbuat salah. Sifatmu memang tak pernah berubah. Kamu tetap Kattie yang menjengkelkan! Sungguh!" tutur Julia tak tahan lagi. ["What? Who slandered you? I just want justice. You did wrong. Your nature never changes. You are still that annoying, Kattie! Really!" said Julia, unable to take it anymore.]

Friendship during the adolescence period often includes quarrels. Emotional outbursts are typically experienced during adolescence. In the story, Julia asked for an explanation about the problem between her and Kattie. Julia assumed that she was entitled to get justice. As shown in Excerpts 5 and 6, every person has the strength to seek the same justice in social interaction. The concept of justice in Indonesian society is of great importance. It is reflected in the fifth principle of Pancasila (The Five Principles), namely *Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia* (Social Justice for All Indonesian People).

However, discourse on violations of the principles of justice and impartiality was found in Excerpt 7 of a book titled *Lili and Lyliu*. The character, Grandpa, was angry with Mang Ujang because he failed to carry out his order to search for the children. Lyliu assumed that she needed to explain the real issue to Grandpa. The reason is that Lyliu perceived that grandpa's anger towards Mang Ujang was unreasonable and unfair.

Excerpt 7

Kakek marah kepada Mang Ujang. Lyliu merasa itu tidak adil. "Kek,

Mang Ujang enggak salah, kok. Aku yang salah. Tadi, Lyliu enggak minta izin untuk pergi memancing ke sungai bersama mereka. Lagi pula, Mang Ujang bukan ikutan mandi, kok. Dia bermaksud menolong Lyliu yang pura-pura tenggelam," jelas Lyliu kepada kakek. [Grandfather was angry with Mang Ujang. Lyliu felt it was unfair. "Grandpa, Mang Ujang is not wrong. I'm to blame. A moment ago, Lyliu didn't ask permission to go fishing in the river with them. Besides, Mang Ujang didn't bathe. He meant to help Lyliu, who pretended to be drowning," Lyliu explained to her grandfather.]

The violation of justice and impartiality in Excerpt 7 illustrates a misunderstanding between Grandpa and Mang Ujang. Lyliu perceived that the misunderstanding needed to be clarified because it was unfair to Mang Ujang. The example in Excerpt 7 does not display the fifth principle of Pancasila (The Five Principles), namely *Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia* (Social Justice for All Indonesian People).

The moral value of fairness is also closely tied to the concept of reciprocity. One passage in Excerpt 8 from the book, entitled "4ever Friends," reflects this. The phrase "*saling percaya, menghargai, dan menyayangi*" (trust, respect, and love) reflects how a character, Kattie, convinced Clara that friendship among the three of them would be everlasting.

Excerpt 8

"Memang tidak enak ditinggal sahabat sendiri. Hati ini terasa pilu. Akan

tetapi, persahabatan itu pasti abadi, kok! Asalkan mereka saling percaya, menghargai, dan menyayangi. Julia pasti tak akan mengecewakanmu atau melupakanmu begitu saja!" sambung Kattie. ["It's not good to be left alone by your best friend. This heart feels sad. However, friendship is forever! If they trust, respect, and love each other. Julia will never let you down or forget you!" Kattie continued.]

Friendship among Clara, Kattie, and Julia will be everlasting if they trust, respect, and love each other. Kattie's attitude in Excerpt 8 also reflects the moral value of care. This excerpt raises the question of the importance of establishing friendships for children's social and emotional development. Preserving friendships can develop social and cognitive skills. Developing cognitive skills is related to cooperative problem-solving and rational thinking about differences between oneself and others. This aligns with the opinion of Danby et al. (2012), who state that through friendship, children can engage in conversation while participating in collaborative activities (Danby et al., 2012).

Loyalty/Subversion

A discourse on loyalty, including faithfulness or service to a community such as family, community, or state, was found to be the least common (6%) in the children's book series entitled KKPK. From the 14 data points, the researchers took 3 excerpts to describe loyalty/subversion in the data.

For example, Excerpt 9, labeled loyalty/subversion from the book "The Ghost in My School."

Excerpt 9

Jauhnya paling sekitar satu kilometer, tetapi yang penting adalah persatuan dan kesatuan warga RT terbina, sesuai dengan tema acaranya: Dengan Memperingati Hari Proklamasi Kemerdekaan RI, Mari Kita Jalin Persatuan dan Kesatuan. [The distance is about one kilometer at most. Still, the important thing is that the theme of the event fosters the unity and integrity of people in this Neighborhood Council: By Commemorating the Proclamation of Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia, let us establish Unity and Integrity.]

In Excerpt 9, the phrase *persatuan dan kesatuan warga RT* (the unity and integrity of the people in this Neighborhood Council) can be associated with faithfulness and solidarity in establishing unity. In a story from the book "The Ghost in My School," the residents of the housing complex have described the moral values, including loyalty among the people, as they celebrate the Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia. This moral value aligns with the third principle of Pancasila (The Five Principles), *Persatuan Indonesia* (The Unity of Indonesia).

The researchers identified a sense of loyalty to the community in Excerpt 10 from the book "My Dear Sister." The phrase *rasa*

kekeluargaan (a sense of kinship) implies intimacy in a relationship, as shown in the story. It follows an opinion by Bukowski et al. (1996) that one of the realisations of friendship is spending time together, such as playing at a friend's house. A story in the book, entitled "My Dear Sister," can provide an interactive aspect of friendship.

Excerpt 10

Rayella pun segera kembali dan makan bersama keluarga Alison. Rasa kekeluargaan dan kasih sayang timbul dalam keluarga Alison dan Rayella. Selesai makan, Rayella diantar pulang oleh keluarga Alison. [Rayella soon returned and ate with Alison's family. A sense of kinship and affection emerged in Alison and Rayella's family. After the meal, Rayella was taken home by Alison's family.]

Young Indonesian authors emphasised moral values related to loyalty to the group, as well as actions considered forms of betrayal and harming social harmony.

Excerpt 11

"Penipunya bilang, dirawatnya di RS Medika Cahyana. Itu rumah sakitnya jauh banget! Mamaku langsung pergi ke sana. Setelah ditanya ke resepsionisnya, mamaku baru sadar, kalau itu penipuan. Mamaku pergi ke sekolah adikku. Ternyata adikku baik-baik saja," lanjut Dodi. ["The scammer said that he was treated at Medika

Cahyana Hospital. That hospital is so far away! My mom went there right away. After asking the receptionist, my mom realised it was a scam. My mom went to my sister's school. It turned out that my sister was fine," Dodi continued.]

Excerpt 11 is an example of data from a storybook titled *Suster Misterius* (The Mysterious Nurse). A short story from the book *Suster Misterius* illustrates a fraud involving a hoax. The action led to the loss of belief in a person, referred to as *penipu* (the scammer) in Excerpt 11. The part of the story presented in this book reflects the experiences of some people in Indonesia and addresses betrayal and the harm to social harmony.

Authority/Respect

Discourse about authority and respect towards others occupies the third position (20%) of the whole data. From the 49 data points, the researchers took 3 excerpts to describe authority/respect in the data. For example, Excerpt 12, labelled authority/respect that relates to the ethics of how to behave in a community.

Excerpt 12

Setelah Kak Roselle menyerahkan telepon, terjadilah dialog antara ayah dan Rayella. ["Halo, Ayah Please, Yah. Aku janji akan selalu menaati perintah Ayah dan kakak."]

After Roselle handed over the phone, there was a dialogue between her father

and Rayella. "Hello, Dad Please, Dad. I promise I will always obey your orders."

One of the moral values, authority, is illustrated in Excerpt 12 from the book "My Dear Sister." The phrase *menaati perintah* (obey your orders) shows a child named Rayella's adherence to his father. Rayella promised she would always obey her father's orders, as she respected him. The phrase *menaati perintah* (obey your orders) relates to the ethics of how to behave in a social community, in this case, the Indonesian community.

The researchers also found a notion of authority in the discourse in the book entitled "Pink Cupcake". The moral values taught in Excerpt 13 demonstrated the respect of a character named Daniella, who met Lilian for the first time. She politely introduced herself by bowing and extending her hand and asked to shake hands.

Excerpt 13

"Perkenalkan, namaku Daniella. Peri Persahabatan," kata gadis jelita itu sambil membungkuk hormat, menjulurkan tangan, dan mengajak bersalaman. ["Let me introduce myself; my name is Daniella. The Friendship Fairy," said the beautiful girl as she bowed respectfully, reached out, and shook hands.]

Indonesians were taught to shake hands when introducing themselves during their first meeting. However, Excerpt 13 also showed a form of respect beyond shaking

hands: bowing, a gesture seldom performed by Indonesians. It relates to the ethics of how to behave in a social community, in this case, the Indonesian community.

Excerpt 14

"Sementara itu, Julia dengan Mella, Terry, dan Flan! Sebenarnya, Clara agak kecewa siapa lawannya itu. Kattie? Pasti dia merencanakan ide licik yang akan membuat Kattie menang. Tapi, Clara segera membuang prasangka buruk itu. Mungkin tidak selamanya Kattie begitu. Aku tidak boleh berpikir begitu!" Clara membatin. ["Meanwhile, Julia was with Mella, Terry, and Flan! Clara was disappointed about who her opponent was. Kattie? Surely, she was planning a cunning idea that would make Kattie win. However, Clara quickly discarded that prejudice. Maybe Kattie was not always like that. I should not think so!" Clara thought to herself.]

Meanwhile, the normal values regarding respect for others were found in the book titled *4ever Friends*. Excerpt 14 used the phrase "*membuang prasangka buruk*" (discarding prejudice) to describe the main character, Clara, who believed her friends had cheated to win. However, Clara overcame prejudice towards her friends out of respect. Clara believed that her friends would not resort to deception to win the match. This attitude shows respect for others.

Purity/Degradation

Passages about purity and degradation have been frequently found in the children's book series KKKPK. These moral values rank second, accounting for 24% of the overall data. From the 57 data points, the researchers took 4 excerpts to describe purity/degradation. Excerpt 15 is labelled with purity/degradation that reflects divine ethics, namely, a healthy, clean, and pure life, both physically and spiritually.

Excerpt 15

Karena warga Desa Sukma Jaya berhati mulia, akhirnya mereka mengumpulkan dana sebesar Rp 15.000.000. "Wow, hati mereka sungguh mulia, ya?" Lalu, kepala Desa Sukma Jaya menyerahkan dana itu kepada kepala Desa Aiwa Mula. Selain uang, mereka juga memberikan sumbangan makanan pokok kepada para korban banjir. [Because the people of Sukma Jaya Village have noble hearts, they managed to raise funds amounting to IDR 15,000,000. "Wow, their hearts are noble, huh?" Then, the Village Head of Sukma Jaya handed over the funds to the Village Head of Aiwa Mula. Apart from money, they also donated groceries to the flood victims.]

Excerpt 15 used the phrase "*hati mereka sungguh mulia*" (their hearts are noble) to describe the good attitude of the people of Sukma Jaya Village. It was reported that the people in *Desa Sukma Jaya* were

willing to collect money and food and share them with their neighbor, the Village Head of Aiwa Mula, to describe a sense of purity. Besides the moral value of purity, Excerpt 15 demonstrates the importance of caring for one another. The villagers in Aiwa Mula experienced a disaster due to flooding. Because Sukma Jaya Village was unaffected, the villagers cooperated to raise funds to help the people of Aiwa Mula. This moral value aligns with the third principle of Pancasila (The Five Principles), *Persatuan Indonesia* (The Unity of Indonesia).

Excerpt 16

“Adik Anya namanya Mita. Nama panjangnya Almira Mita Syahada. Anaknya lucu sekali. Dia baru berumur 2 tahun, masih minum susu dari botol dan hobinya menyanyi. Mita manis seperti kakaknya. Semoga besarnya nanti salehah, baik, dan ramah. Amin.”
[“Any’s younger sister’s name is Mita. Her full name is Almira Mita Syahada. She’s a very cute child. She is only 2 years old, still drinking milk from a bottle, and her hobby is singing. Mita is sweet like her sister. Hopefully, she will grow up to be pious, kind, and friendly. Amen.”]

A reflection on divine ethics was also found in the book entitled *Jejak Rahasia Sahabat* (The Secret Trail of a Best Friend). A character named Sally was playing at her friend’s house when she met Mita, Anya’s younger sister. She prayed that Mita would be a pious, kind, and friendly child.

This act aligns with the moral values of most Indonesian Muslims, who pray for one another. The word ‘pious’ is defined as the character of a woman who is obedient to God, has good manners, and fulfills her obligations in Islam well. Sally’s prayer reflects a pure heart. It also aligns with the first principle of Pancasila (The Five Principles), *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* (Belief in one God).

Violation of purity (for example, committing sins, underestimating others, and so on) was also found in the children’s book series KKPK. A violation of purity was found in the book titled *My Fav Sister*.

Excerpt 17

Semua teman-teman Jannie bersedih. Yang paling terpukul tentu saja Jassy. Jassy merasa berdosa karena selama ini terlalu egois. Dia baru sadar, sebenarnya dia merasa sepi dan rindu dengan Jannie. Setiap habis salat, Jassy selalu mendoakan Jannie, berdoa sambil menangis. [All of Jannie’s friends were sad. The hardest hit, of course, was Jassy. Jassy felt guilty for being so selfish. She just realised that she felt lonely and missed Jannie. After every prayer, Jassy prayed for Jannie, crying.]

In Excerpt 17, a character named Jassy realised that her actions toward Jannie were selfish, and she felt deeply guilty and sinful. Although Excerpt 17 shows an example of a violation of purity, the author also describes that it was not a good deed.

Besides, the story presented by the author of my favourite sister showed that Jassy felt lonely and missed her friendship with Jannie.

A passage about the violation of purity was also found in Excerpt 18 from a book entitled *My Fav Sister*. The violation of purity was reflected in the phrase *bersikap merendahkan* (humiliating).

Excerpt 18

"Oh, begitu. Kenapa kamu mau bermain dengannya, Jannie? Kamu kan, artis," kata Stevanie. Sekarang dia bersikap merendahkan Michelle. ["Oh, I see. Why would you want to play with him, Jannie? You're an actress," Stevanie said. Now she was humiliating Michelle.]

A character named Stevanie assumed that Michelle was not on par with Jannie, who was now an actress. That was the reason why Stevanie underestimated Michelle. Stevanie's characteristics made Jannie angry because she did not feel any difference after becoming an actress, yet still befriended Michelle. Although the author of the storybook titled *My Fav Sister* described a violation of the purity value, Excerpt 18 shows another character's attitude, indicating that the deed contravenes the moral values upheld by Indonesian people. This attitude does not show the second principle of Pancasila (The Five Principles), *Kemanusiaan yang Adil dan Beradab* (civilised humanity).

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that young authors intentionally choose vocabulary, expressions, and narrative events to introduce and reinforce moral principles in the storybooks. Their stories highlight prosocial values such as helping others, showing respect and politeness, and demonstrating empathy and care toward peers, family members, and the wider community.

The findings of this research indicate that young Indonesian authors incorporate moral values into their works. These moral values include (1) care and concern for each other and the environment; (2) justice and reciprocity in social interaction; (3) faithfulness and subversion in the community; (4) ethics to behave in society; and (5) purity and degradation in society. These moral values are reflected in specific vocabulary in accordance with MFT, particularly in concern for justice, faithfulness, authority, and purity, which align with the way of life of the Indonesian people, as outlined in Pancasila, or 'The Five Principles'. In describing positive moral values, young Indonesian authors also provide examples of negative moral values. However, it is also explained that these negative moral values are harmful and can adversely affect other people or the environment.

The explanation of moral values in the children's book series KKPK is valuable for understanding moral values through the storybooks. The findings of this research provide evidence that storybooks written

by young Indonesian authors uphold many moral values cherished by the Indonesian people. A sense of morality involves understanding how to behave appropriately and interact with others in Indonesian society. In other words, the children's book series KKPK can serve as both entertainment and a means of raising awareness of moral values. It shows that young Indonesian authors could describe moral values through their works.

The findings of the search could serve as a recommendation for educators, publishers, or policymakers; its scope is limited. For educators, these findings can help them shape moral awareness and support cultural development among their young readers. Publishers could help increase the number of books written by young authors that are published. Lastly, for policymakers, the findings could help them inform education policy decisions.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study has a limitation. This study limits the source to KKPK books published by DAR! The books were published from 2008 to 2017. This research applied a corpus-based approach to count frequencies at a large scale. Other decades of the KKPK series, as well as other children’s storybook series, can be included in further research. This research did not include evidence on concordance and collocation as part of Corpus Linguistics, nor did it address readers’ responses; the authors recommend that those be addressed in further research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writers conducted the research under the contract. The researchers would like to thank the Directorate General of Higher Education, Research, and Technology, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, Republic of Indonesia, and the Rector of Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia (Contract No. 3879/UN6.3.1/PT.00/2024), for their support throughout the research process.

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