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Panca Waluya as Narrative Pedagogy: A Hermeneutic Reconstruction of Character Education Values in the Pandawa-Kurawa Tradition of Wayang Bratayuda

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ABSTRACT

Background. Contemporary character education faces growing challenges in addressing moral complexity, social fragmentation, and declining ethical awareness among young people. Approaches relying on value transmission offer limited space for reflective engagement with moral dilemmas, whereas cultural narratives offer a meaningful pedagogical space for cultivating moral imagination, ethical reasoning, empathy, and responsible action.

Purpose. This study aims to reconstruct Panca Waluya as a culturally grounded framework of narrative pedagogy through a hermeneutic interpretation of the Pandawa-Kurawa narrative in Bratayuda, examining its theoretical and pedagogical relevance for contemporary character education.

Method. Employing a qualitative approach within an interpretive paradigm, the study used cultural hermeneutics informed by Ricoeur and Gadamer, with Bratayuda by R. Ng. Kartapraja as primary source. Five focal narrative units containing moral conflicts and reflective judgment were purposively selected and analyzed through contextual reading, hermeneutic interpretation, Panca Waluya categorization, and theoretical synthesis, with credibility strengthened through reflexivity and peer debriefing.

Results. The analysis reconstructed five interconnected character dimensions Cageur (self-regulation), Bageur (empathy), Bener (integrity and justice), Pinter (ethical reasoning), and Singer (practical wisdom) that mutually reinforce one another rather than forming a fixed hierarchy, showing conceptual affinities with contemporary perspectives on moral functioning and narrative pedagogy.

Conclusion. The Pandawa-Kurawa narrative functions as narrative pedagogy in which moral dilemmas are interpreted reflectively rather than transmitted as prescriptions, offering a conceptual and hermeneutic foundation for culturally responsive character education.

KEYWORDS

Character Education, Cultural Hermeneutics, Culturally Responsive Education, Narrative Pedagogy, Panca Waluya

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INTRODUCTION

The shifting social landscape, marked by rapid developments in digital technology and the dynamics of globalization, presents increasingly complex challenges for education and the character formation of young people. Issues such as intolerance, verbal violence, declining social ethics, loss of empathy, and weakening social

responsibility indicate that educational processes cannot focus solely on the mastery of cognitive competencies.

Education must also cultivate ethical awareness, moral judgment, and social responsibility that enable learners to respond appropriately to the complexities of contemporary life. Accordingly, character education has become an important educational approach for developing not only knowledge of moral values but also the capacity to interpret ethical situations and act responsibly. From this perspective, character education should not be understood merely as the transmission of normative values, but as a formative process involving moral awareness, reflection, judgment, and action (Arthur, 2024; Kristjánsson et al., 2025; Lickona, 1991; Nucci & Narvaez, 2014). Recent empirical scholarship further indicates that contemporary character education increasingly emphasizes moral agency, ethical reflection, and socially responsible action rather than the mere transmission of prescribed moral norms (Oldham & McLoughlin, 2026).

Despite its growing importance in educational discourse and policy, the implementation of character education continues to face significant limitations. In many educational contexts, character education remains formalistic, relying on the memorization of prescribed values, moral slogans, and the one-way transmission of normative expectations. Such approaches tend to position learners as passive recipients of predetermined values and provide limited opportunities to engage with actual moral conflicts, competing responsibilities, and ethical dilemmas. Yet moral problems in contemporary social life rarely appear as simple dichotomies between right and wrong. Instead, individuals frequently encounter situations involving conflicting values, competing obligations, and contextual considerations that require empathy, moral reasoning, reflective judgment, and responsible decision-making (Nussbaum, 1992; Ricoeur, 1991). Character education therefore requires pedagogical approaches that allow learners to encounter, interpret, and reflect upon moral complexity rather than merely memorize normative principles. This orientation is consistent with contemporary approaches that position ethical criticism and reflective engagement as important dimensions of character education, particularly when learners are required to examine moral issues beyond passive adaptation to established norms (Choo & Chua, 2025). Recent scholarship further suggests that character formation is strengthened when learners are provided with opportunities for reflective judgment, ethical deliberation, and active engagement with morally complex situations (Arthur, 2024; Baehr, 2021).

Within this context, narrative pedagogy offers a meaningful educational approach because stories enable learners to encounter moral experience through characters, conflicts, choices, consequences, and relationships. Narratives do more than communicate moral messages; they create interpretive spaces in which learners can explore why individuals make particular choices, understand different perspectives, consider the consequences of actions, and reflect on their own moral positioning. Such engagement can connect cognitive, emotional, and reflective dimensions of character formation while fostering moral imagination and ethical awareness (Bruner, 1991; Meretoja, 2018). Recent scholarship further highlights the educational potential of narrative engagement, moral exemplars, and ethically complex stories for cultivating moral reflection, perspective-taking, and character formation (Brooks et al., 2024; Gulliford et al., 2023; Hart & Liddle, 2024; Meibauer & Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2024). Through encounters with exemplary characters as well as morally ambiguous situations, learners may engage imaginatively with human experiences, consider the perspectives and motivations of characters, and reflect on moral consequences that cannot always be reduced to abstract moral rules. Such imaginative engagement and role-taking have also been associated with the pedagogical cultivation of empathy and moral formation (Phelps & Brown, 2023).

Cultural narratives are particularly significant in this process because they situate moral learning within historically and socially meaningful systems of values. Rather than functioning merely as repositories of traditional knowledge, cultural narratives can provide pedagogical spaces in which inherited wisdom is interpreted in relation to contemporary moral experiences. Within the Indonesian cultural context, Wayang represents a culturally significant narrative tradition through which questions of leadership, responsibility, loyalty, justice, power, sacrifice, and moral conflict

can be explored. Its characters and narrative conflicts provide opportunities to examine how moral decisions emerge through relationships, social responsibilities, and competing ethical considerations. Consequently, Wayang has the potential to function as a culturally grounded form of narrative pedagogy through which learners may engage reflectively with moral complexity rather than receive values merely as predetermined prescriptions. This pedagogical positioning is consistent with recent scholarship highlighting the potential of narrative engagement and culturally grounded educational resources for character formation (Hart & Liddle, 2024; Sakti et al., 2024).

One of the central moral narratives within the Wayang tradition is the conflict between the Pandawa and Kurawa in *Bratayuda*. Although the conflict is frequently represented as a struggle between the virtuous Pandawa and the morally problematic Kurawa, the narrative presents an ethical landscape that extends beyond a simple opposition between good and evil. Such moral complexity is pedagogically significant because engagement with morally imperfect or ambiguous characters can invite readers to move beyond simplistic moral categorization and reflect more critically on character, motivation, and ethical judgment (Milbank, 2023). It raises questions of justice, political authority, loyalty, family relationships, responsibility, sacrifice, and the moral consequences of war. Characters such as Yudhistira, Arjuna, and Krishna encounter situations in which ethical action involves tensions among personal emotions, social obligations, moral principles, and broader responsibilities. Such moral complexity resonates with the relational and context-sensitive orientation of Javanese ethical thought, in which moral action is understood in relation to social responsibility, harmony, and situated judgment (Magnis-Suseno, 1984). This narrative complexity makes *Bratayuda* particularly relevant to character education because it enables moral values to be examined through ethical tensions and dilemmas rather than through decontextualized moral statements.

Interpreting these moral experiences requires a cultural framework capable of connecting narrative meaning with indigenous conceptions of character. Panca Waluya provides such a framework within Sundanese cultural thought. It encompasses five interconnected values *cageur*, *bageur*, *bener*, *pinter*, and *singer* which represent dimensions of personal well-being and self-regulation, social care, moral integrity, reflective wisdom, and responsible action. From this perspective, character is understood not as a collection of isolated moral traits but as an interconnected configuration of personal, interpersonal, moral, intellectual, and practical dimensions. This culturally grounded orientation is consistent with recent research in Indonesia demonstrating that local wisdom can serve as a meaningful resource for contextualizing character education within learners' sociocultural environments, including the transformation of Sundanese cultural values into educational practices for character formation (Sakti et al., 2024; Yani et al., 2025). In this study, Panca Waluya is therefore not treated merely as a collection of cultural virtues to be transmitted to learners. Rather, it functions as an interpretive framework through which the dialogues, actions, moral conflicts, and ethical choices represented in the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative can be understood. This positioning allows Panca Waluya to be examined as a conceptual resource for reflective character education and, more specifically, as a culturally grounded framework for narrative pedagogy.

Despite the growing scholarship on character education, narrative pedagogy, and culturally grounded learning, an important research gap remains. Previous studies of Wayang have predominantly focused on identifying moral values embedded in narratives or emphasizing Wayang as a medium for cultural transmission. Such approaches are valuable for documenting cultural values but often remain descriptive and tend to position characters within relatively dichotomous categories of good and evil. Consequently, less attention has been given to the moral tensions, ethical negotiations, and processes of judgment embedded within Wayang narratives. Moreover, research that systematically reconstructs indigenous wisdom through hermeneutic interpretation into a coherent framework for character education remains limited. Existing scholarship has also rarely brought indigenous frameworks such as Panca Waluya into systematic dialogue with contemporary perspectives on moral development, virtue ethics, character education, and narrative pedagogy.

This study addresses this gap by moving beyond the descriptive cataloguing of moral values in Wayang. It hermeneutically reconstructs how the five dimensions of Panca Waluya operate within the moral conflicts, actions, and ethical choices represented in the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative and examines their conceptual relationships with contemporary character education theories. The novelty of the study therefore lies not merely in identifying *cageur*, *bageur*, *bener*, *pinter*, and *singer* within *Bratayuda*, but in reconstructing their relational structure as a culturally grounded framework of character formation. Through this reconstruction, Panca Waluya is positioned as narrative pedagogy in which cultural narratives provide interpretive spaces for self-regulation, empathy, moral integrity, ethical reasoning, and responsible action. In this way, indigenous wisdom is approached not simply as cultural content to be preserved or transmitted, but as a conceptual and pedagogical resource capable of entering into dialogue with contemporary character education discourse.

Accordingly, this study aims to reconstruct Panca Waluya through a cultural-hermeneutic interpretation of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative in *Bratayuda* and to examine its theoretical and pedagogical relevance for contemporary character education. Specifically, the study investigates how moral conflicts, dialogues, actions, and ethical choices within the narrative can be interpreted through the five dimensions of Panca Waluya and how the reconstructed framework relates to contemporary perspectives on moral development, virtue ethics, and narrative pedagogy. By doing so, this study seeks to contribute a culturally grounded yet theoretically connected framework that bridges Sundanese local wisdom, narrative interpretation, and contemporary character education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Interpretive Approach

This study employed a qualitative approach within an interpretive paradigm using cultural hermeneutics. This approach was selected because the study sought to interpret moral meanings, ethical conflicts, and character values represented in the dialogues, actions, and narrative dynamics of the Pandawa-Kurawa tradition rather than to measure predetermined variables. Within this perspective, *Bratayuda* was treated as a cultural text through which moral experience, ethical tension, and culturally embedded conceptions of character could be interpreted.

The interpretive framework drew primarily on Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics, particularly his view that a text generates meanings that extend beyond the author's immediate intention and become open to interpretation through the interaction among textual structure, symbolism, cultural context, and human experience (Ricoeur, 1991). Gadamer's concept of the *fusion of horizons* also informed the analytical process by emphasizing that understanding emerges through dialogue between the historical-cultural horizon of the text and the interpretive horizon of the reader (Gadamer, 2004). Contemporary narrative hermeneutics further provided a basis for understanding cultural narratives as interpretive spaces through which ethical meanings can be reconstructed and related to contemporary educational concerns.

Data Sources

The primary data source was *Bratayuda* by R. Ng. Kartapraja, transliterated and translated into Indonesian by Sudibyo Z.H. and published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 1980. The text was selected because it contains sustained representations of moral conflicts involving justice, leadership, family relationships, loyalty, responsibility, war, sacrifice, and ethical decision-making among the Pandawa and Kurawa characters.

Secondary sources consisted of scholarly books and journal articles concerning character education, moral development, virtue ethics, narrative pedagogy, hermeneutics, Wayang, and Panca Waluya. These sources were used to support theoretical interpretation and conceptual dialogue rather than as primary narrative data.

Narrative Sampling and Unit of Analysis

Purposive narrative sampling was employed to select narrative segments that explicitly contained moral conflict, ethical negotiation, competing responsibilities, reflective judgment, or responsible action relevant to the five dimensions of Panca Waluya. Rather than selecting passages merely because they contained explicit moral statements, the sampling process prioritized episodes in which characters encountered tensions among values, obligations, emotions, and possible courses of action.

For operational purposes, a narrative unit was defined as a bounded segment of the text consisting of a dialogue, action, or conflict episode containing an identifiable moral tension, ethical choice, reflective judgment, or consequence relevant to one or more dimensions of Panca Waluya. This operational definition distinguished a narrative unit from an isolated quotation: a single narrative unit could contain several statements or actions as long as they belonged to the same moral episode.

Based on these criteria, five focal narrative units were selected for intensive hermeneutic analysis: (1) Yudhistira's claim to the rightful half of Astina and his deliberation with Sri Kresna (pp. 7–8); (2) Sri Kresna's deliberation concerning the appropriate course of action before entering Astina (p. 9); (3) Sri Kresna's attempt to reconcile the Pandawa and Kurawa families and Dewi Gandari's appeal for familial harmony (p. 14); (4) Arjuna's emotional response to the death of Abimanyu and Sri Kresna's counsel regarding anger and self-restraint (p. 39); and (5) Arjuna's hesitation before the Bratayuda War and Sri Kresna's response concerning duty and responsible action (p. 24).

The selection of these focal units did not imply that each Panca Waluya value appeared exclusively in one episode. Rather, the units were selected because they provided particularly explicit representations of moral experiences relevant to Cageur, Bageur, Bener, Pinter, and Singer while allowing relationships among the five dimensions to be interpreted within the broader narrative context. The episode following Abimanyu's death, for example, explicitly depicts Sri Kresna cautioning Arjuna against allowing grief and anger to overwhelm his judgment, followed by Arjuna's acknowledgment of the counsel. This episode provides a particularly clear textual basis for interpreting Cageur as emotional awareness and self-regulation.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through close and repeated reading of the *Bratayuda* text. The initial reading focused on understanding the overall narrative structure and relationships among major characters, events, and conflicts. Subsequent readings focused more specifically on passages containing moral dilemmas, ethical negotiations, expressions of responsibility, emotional tensions, value conflicts, and reflective decision making.

Relevant dialogues, actions, and conflict episodes were identified and recorded together with their narrative contexts. Particular attention was given to passages that could not be reduced to simple good-evil classifications but instead represented tensions among competing moral values, obligations, emotions, or consequences.

For example, the opening deliberation between Yudhistira and Sri Kresna represents not simply a demand to reclaim territory but a negotiation involving legitimate entitlement, familial relations, and the avoidance of destructive conflict. Likewise, Sri Kresna's reconciliation attempt explicitly emphasizes restoring harmony among relatives, providing a textual basis for interpreting relational care within Bageur.

Hermeneutic Analysis Matrix

The primary analytical instrument was a hermeneutic analysis matrix designed to maintain consistency and transparency throughout the interpretive process. The matrix organized each focal narrative unit according to its textual location, moral conflict, hermeneutic focus, and primary Panca Waluya dimension.

Each unit was first examined within its immediate textual and narrative context before being interpreted through the Panca Waluya framework. Consequently, Cageur, Bageur, Bener, Pinter, and Singer were not assigned solely on the basis of isolated words, character traits, or individual actions. Categorization considered the moral problem represented in the episode, the character's response, the ethical reasoning underlying the response, the consequences of the action, and its relationship with the broader narrative.

Table 1. Hermeneutic Analysis Matrix of the Five Focal Narrative Units

Narrative unit	Page(s)	Moral conflict	Hermeneutic focus	Primary Panca Waluya dimension
Yudhistira's claim to the rightful half of Astina and deliberation with Sri Kresna	7–8	Legitimate rights versus preservation of familial relations and avoidance of destructive conflict	Consistency between legitimate moral claims, justice, and responsible conduct	Bener
Sri Kresna's deliberation concerning the appropriate course of action before entering Astina	9	Determining appropriate action amid competing considerations	Reflective judgment, deliberation, and consideration of consequences	Pinter
Sri Kresna's reconciliation attempt and Dewi Gandari's appeal for familial harmony	14	Continuing conflict versus restoration of family relationships	Empathy, care, reconciliation, and relational responsibility	Bageur
Arjuna's emotional response to Abimanyu's death and Sri Kresna's counsel regarding anger	39	Grief and anger versus emotional restraint and moral judgment	Emotional awareness, self-correction, and self-regulation	Cageur
Arjuna's hesitation before the Bratayuda War and Sri Kresna's response	24	Personal reluctance versus perceived moral and social responsibility	Translating ethical judgment into responsible action	Singer

Note. The Panca Waluya dimension shown in the final column represents the primary analytical emphasis of each focal unit rather than an exclusive classification. Individual episodes may simultaneously contain meanings relevant to more than one Panca Waluya dimension.

The five dimensions were operationally interpreted as follows: *Cageur* referred primarily to self-awareness, emotional balance, and self-regulation; *Bageur* to empathy, compassion, social care, and relational responsibility; *Bener* to moral integrity, justice, and consistency between principles and actions; *Pinter* to reflective judgment, ethical reasoning, and consideration of consequences; and *Singer* to practical wisdom, responsible action, courage, and the translation of moral judgment into ethical conduct.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis proceeded through several interconnected stages consistent with the hermeneutic circle. First, the selected narrative units were read contextually to identify the characters involved, circumstances, conflicts, motivations, and consequences represented in each episode. Second, the underlying moral tensions and ethical dilemmas were identified. Third, the meanings of the episodes were interpreted through repeated movement between individual textual passages and the broader narrative context.

Fourth, the interpreted meanings were compared with the conceptual characteristics of Cageur, Bageur, Bener, Pinter, and Singer. Fifth, the resulting categorizations were examined relationally to identify how the five values interacted rather than treating them as independent character traits. Sixth, the reconstructed meanings were brought into theoretical dialogue with contemporary perspectives on character education, moral development, virtue ethics, and narrative pedagogy. Finally, pedagogical implications were formulated from the reconstructed relationships among narrative meaning, Panca Waluya, and contemporary character education.

The overall analytical procedure is summarized in Figure 1. Although presented sequentially for analytical clarity, the process was iterative rather than strictly linear, allowing the researchers to return to the original narrative context and reconsider earlier interpretations or categorizations when necessary.

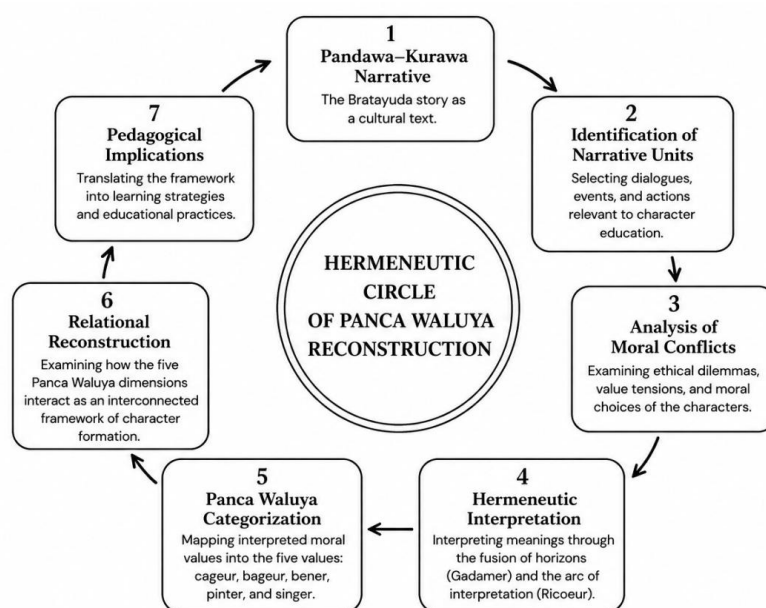


Figure 1. Hermeneutic Circle of Panca Waluya Reconstruction from the Pandawa-Kurawa Narrative

Hermeneutic Reflexivity

Hermeneutic reflexivity was incorporated throughout the analytical process to reduce the risk of treating the researchers' initial cultural assumptions as fixed interpretations. Preliminary interpretations were repeatedly compared with the original narrative context, and initial categorizations were reconsidered when a passage could plausibly represent more than one Panca Waluya dimension.

The researchers therefore moved iteratively among the selected textual passages, the broader narrative sequence, and the conceptual meanings of the five Panca Waluya categories. Interpretations were revised when the textual context did not provide sufficient support for an initial categorization. Rather than seeking a single mechanically determined meaning, reflexivity was employed to make the interpretive reasoning more transparent and to distinguish interpretations grounded in the text from assumptions brought to the analysis by the researchers.

Peer Debriefing and Interpretive Credibility

The credibility of the interpretation was further strengthened through peer debriefing involving two co-authors who also served in academic supervisory roles. The debriefing focused specifically on the categorization of narrative units into Cageur, Bageur, Bener, Pinter, and Singer and on comparing alternative interpretations of selected narrative episodes.

When differences in interpretation emerged, the researchers returned to the textual context and discussed whether the proposed Panca Waluya category was sufficiently supported by the moral conflict, dialogue, character action, and narrative consequence represented in the episode. Where a narrative unit could reasonably represent more than one dimension, discussion focused on identifying the primary analytical emphasis while acknowledging overlapping meanings.

The purpose of this procedure was not to establish statistical inter-rater reliability, which would be inconsistent with the interpretive-hermeneutic orientation of the study, but to strengthen interpretive transparency, challenge individual assumptions, and reduce the possibility that the findings represented only the interpretation of a single researcher.

Theoretical triangulation was also employed by bringing the reconstructed Panca Waluya meanings into dialogue with multiple theoretical perspectives, particularly character education, moral development, virtue ethics, and narrative pedagogy. This comparison was intended to identify conceptual convergence and divergence rather than to force indigenous values into predetermined theoretical categories. Taken together, repeated textual reading, hermeneutic reflexivity, peer debriefing, and theoretical triangulation were employed to strengthen the credibility, coherence, and transparency of the interpretation.

Methodological Limitations

Several methodological limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study was based primarily on a single textual source, *Bratayuda*, and therefore does not represent the full diversity of Wayang traditions, oral performances, regional adaptations, or other textual versions of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative.

Second, the interpretation was culturally situated. Panca Waluya originates from Sundanese cultural wisdom, whereas *Bratayuda* is situated within the broader Javanese Wayang literary tradition. The hermeneutic encounter between these cultural horizons constitutes an important analytical feature of the study, but it also requires interpretive caution. The reconstructed meanings should therefore not be regarded as universally fixed interpretations of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative. Readers and researchers working from different cultural, philosophical, or religious horizons may construct alternative interpretations of the same episodes.

Third, the researchers themselves worked within particular cultural and academic horizons that may influence the selection and interpretation of narrative meanings. Hermeneutic reflexivity and peer debriefing were employed to make these interpretive influences more transparent, but they cannot completely eliminate the situated nature of interpretation.

Finally, this study focused on textual interpretation and conceptual reconstruction. It did not empirically test the implementation or effectiveness of Panca Waluya as narrative pedagogy in classroom settings. Consequently, the pedagogical implications developed from the analysis should be understood as a theoretically grounded framework rather than as evidence of instructional effectiveness. Future research should therefore examine the reconstructed framework through classroom implementation, comparative cultural analysis, and empirical investigation involving educators and learners.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The hermeneutic analysis of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative in *Bratayuda* revealed five interconnected dimensions of character that can be reconstructed through the Sundanese philosophy of Panca Waluya: Cageur (Self-Regulation and Well-Being), Bageur (Empathy and Social Care), Bener (Moral Integrity and Justice), Pinter (Ethical Reasoning and Reflective Wisdom), and Singer (Practical Wisdom and Responsible Action). These values are embedded in narrative episodes

involving emotional tension, interpersonal conflict, moral responsibility, ethical deliberation, and difficult decision-making. Table 2 summarizes the reconstructed meanings of the five Panca Waluya values identified through the hermeneutic analysis.

Table 2. Reconstruction of Panca Waluya Values in the Pandawa-Kurawa Narrative

Panca Waluya Value	Analytical Meaning	Narrative Representation	Character Competency
Cageur	Self-Regulation and Well-Being	Arjuna's regulation of grief and anger following Sri Kresna's counsel	Self-regulation
Bageur	Empathy and Social Care	Reconciliation and concern for others	Empathy
Bener	Moral Integrity and Justice	Defending legitimate rights and justice	Integrity
Pinter	Ethical Reasoning and Reflective Wisdom	Deliberation and moral reflection	Moral reasoning
Singer	Practical Wisdom and Responsible Action	Responsible decision-making in moral dilemmas	Ethical action

The first finding concerns Cageur (Self-Regulation and Well-Being). Within the reconstructed Panca Waluya framework, Cageur refers to the capacity to maintain emotional balance, regulate disruptive impulses, and restore reflective judgment when confronted with emotionally challenging circumstances. Rather than implying the absence of negative emotions, Cageur emphasizes the ability to recognize and regulate emotional responses so that grief, anger, or distress do not completely determine subsequent judgment and action.

A particularly significant representation of Cageur appears following the death of Abimanyu. Upon learning that his son had been killed, Dananjaya (Arjuna) was overwhelmed by grief and anger. Sri Kresna responded by reminding him that uncontrolled emotion could undermine the dignity and moral conduct expected of a *satria*:

“Jika seorang satria menjadi khilaf dan marah karena anaknya tewas, martabatnya akan berkurang, dan mendapat laknat dewata yang maha mulia” (Kartapraja, 1980, p. 39).

(“If a warrior loses self-control and becomes angry because of the death of his son, his dignity will diminish, and he will incur the condemnation of the most exalted deities.”)

Following Sri Kresna's counsel, Dananjaya does not persist in his uncontrolled emotional response; instead, he acknowledges the counsel, pays respect, and asks for forgiveness. The narrative therefore depicts a movement from emotional disturbance toward recognition, restraint, and self-correction.

From a hermeneutic perspective, this episode suggests that Cageur does not signify emotional suppression. Dananjaya's grief over Abimanyu's death is neither denied nor portrayed as inherently inappropriate. The moral tension emerges when grief develops into *khilaf* and anger, potentially disrupting judgment and responsible conduct. Sri Kresna's intervention creates a reflective moment in which Dananjaya is invited to reconsider the relationship between emotion, dignity, and ethical responsibility. His subsequent acknowledgment signifies the restoration of self-regulation.

In this sense, Cageur represents an internal dimension of character through which individuals learn to regulate emotional vulnerability without losing their capacity for ethical judgment. This interpretation resonates with Lickona's (1991) conception of self-control as an important component of moral character and shows conceptual affinity with the Aristotelian notion of temperance, which emphasizes the appropriate regulation of emotions and desires rather than their elimination (Aristotle, 2009). From a contemporary perspective, character education similarly emphasizes the cultivation of capacities that enable individuals to exercise reflective judgment and responsible moral agency in context-sensitive situations (Arthur, 2024; Oldham & McLoughlin, 2026).

The second finding concerns *Bageur* (Empathy and Social Care). This value is represented through Sri Kresna's efforts to reconcile the Pandawa and Kurawa families before war became inevitable. During the royal assembly, he stated:

"Paman Destarata, kedatangan saya ke mari ini hanya untuk merukunkan sesama saudara, agar jangan sampai ada yang berselisih, lebih baik jika semua rukun" (Kartapraja, 1980, p. 14).

("Uncle Destarata, my coming here is solely to reconcile brothers, so that no conflict may arise among them; it is far better if all remain united and harmonious.")

Similarly, Dewi Gandari reminded Duryudana:

"Apa lagi yang kaukehendaki, yang melebihi kebaikan kerukunan bersaudara?" (Kartapraja, 1980, p. 14).

("What greater good could you possibly desire beyond the harmony of brotherhood?")

These passages indicate that maintaining relationships and protecting social cohesion emerge as important moral concerns alongside political interests. Through a hermeneutic interpretation, *Bageur* reflects the capacity to recognize the humanity of others and to respond with empathy, care, and social concern. This interpretation resonates with Narvaez's (2014) account of empathy as an important dimension of moral functioning, particularly in enabling individuals to recognize and respond to the needs and experiences of others. From a narrative-hermeneutic perspective, Ricoeur (1991) further suggests that engagement with narratives can expand moral imagination by opening readers to perspectives beyond their own immediate experience. Consequently, the reconciliation efforts depicted in *Bratayuda* can be interpreted as narrative encounters that invite reflection on empathy, social awareness, and moral sensitivity. Recent empirical research further supports the relationship between empathy and moral sensitivity, indicating that the capacity to understand others' perspectives and emotional experiences contributes to morally responsive judgment (Du et al., 2024). Recent work on empathy education further emphasizes the educational importance of cultivating empathy through care, perspective-taking, relational awareness, and morally responsive engagement (Jia et al., 2026).

The third finding concerns *Bener* (Moral Integrity and Justice). This value is embodied in Yudhistira's commitment to pursuing justice without exceeding moral boundaries.

"Saya hendak minta milik saya sendiri, ialah negeri Astina yang separoh" (Kartapraja, 1980, p. 7).

("I only ask for what rightfully belongs to me, namely half of the Kingdom of Astina.")

Hermeneutically, *Bener* represents consistency between moral conviction, speech, and action. The ethical contrast between Yudhistira and Duryudana symbolizes a broader struggle between justice and the misuse of power. Whereas Duryudana pursued authority through obstinacy and self-interest, Yudhistira sought resolution within the boundaries of moral legitimacy.

This interpretation resonates with Kohlberg's (1984) theory of moral development, particularly the post-conventional level, in which moral reasoning is oriented toward principles of justice that can transcend immediate personal interests and conventional expectations. Likewise, Lickona (1991) emphasizes integrity as an important dimension of moral character, reflected in the consistency between moral judgment, commitment, and action. From this perspective, the narrative suggests that moral character requires not only an understanding of right and wrong but also a commitment to uphold moral principles when confronted with competing interests and external pressures. Contemporary character education similarly emphasizes moral agency, ethical commitment, reflective judgment, and responsible action as important dimensions of character formation (Arthur, 2024; Kristjánsson et al., 2025).

The fourth finding concerns *Pinter*, which refers to reflective wisdom and ethical reasoning. Unlike conventional understandings of intelligence that emphasize cognitive achievement, *Pinter* in *Panca Waluya* emphasizes the capacity to deliberate, evaluate consequences, and make thoughtful moral judgments.

Before entering Astina, Sri Kresna and the gods engaged in extensive deliberation:

“Adapun yang dipercakapkan ialah, apa yang seyogyanya dilakukan, dan bagaimana agar perkara itu berakhir dengan baik” (Kartapraja, 1980, p. 9).

(“Their discussion concerned what ought to be done and how the matter might reach a good and proper resolution.”)

This dialogue demonstrates that ethical action emerges from reflection rather than impulse. Decisions are preceded by consideration of alternatives, consequences, and moral responsibilities. In this regard, *Pinter* represents reflective judgment grounded in ethical awareness.

This finding resonates with Bruner’s (1991) account of narrative as a mode of meaning-making through which individuals can explore alternative possibilities, consider consequences, and construct understanding through reflection. Similarly, Nussbaum (1992) highlights the ethical significance of narrative engagement in exposing readers to complex human situations that cannot be reduced to simplistic moral formulas. Contemporary character education scholarship likewise emphasizes reflective judgment and practical reasoning as important capacities for deliberating about morally complex situations rather than merely applying predetermined rules (Arthur, 2024; Kristjánsson et al., 2025). Consequently, the narrative can be interpreted as a reflective space in which readers are invited to engage in moral reasoning through encounters with ethical dilemmas.

The final finding concerns *Singer*, which represents practical wisdom and responsible action. Within the interconnected Panca Waluya framework, *Singer* reflects the action-oriented dimension through which moral understanding is expressed in concrete and context-sensitive decisions.

The narrative illustrates this value through Arjuna’s hesitation before the Bratayuda War:

“Sri Baginda, kalau boleh, hendaknya Anda urungkan saja perang Baratayuda ini. Saya tidak tahan melihat musuh sesama saudara serta guru” (Kartapraja, 1980, p. 24).

(“Your Majesty, if possible, please call off the Bratayuda War. I cannot bear to see my own relatives and teachers as enemies.”)

Sri Kresna responded:

“Kehendak dewa Perang Baratayuda tidak boleh urung” (Kartapraja, 1980, p. 24).

(“The will of destiny concerning the Bratayuda War cannot be revoked.”)

This exchange demonstrates that moral wisdom does not always involve avoiding conflict. Instead, ethical responsibility sometimes requires difficult decisions after all peaceful alternatives have been exhausted. Hermeneutically, *Singer* signifies practical wisdom (*phronesis*), namely the ability to integrate competing moral considerations into responsible action.

This interpretation shows conceptual affinity with Aristotle’s notion of *phronesis*, which emphasizes practical wisdom and appropriate judgment in concrete situations (Aristotle, 2009; Kristjánsson, 2024). It also resonates with Rest’s Four Component Model, in which moral action depends on the interaction of moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, and the capacities required to translate moral intention into action (Rest & Barnett, 1986). Within the *Bratayuda* narrative, *Singer* represents the action-oriented dimension of character through which moral understanding is expressed in responsible action within complex ethical circumstances. Rather than constituting a fixed or universal “highest stage” of character development, *Singer* can therefore be interpreted as a practical dimension through which self-regulation, empathy, integrity, and reflective judgment are expressed in ethically responsible conduct. Contemporary character education similarly emphasizes practical wisdom, context-sensitive judgment, moral agency, and responsible action as important dimensions connecting ethical understanding with conduct (Arthur, 2024; Kristjánsson et al., 2025).

A significant finding of this study is that the five values of Panca Waluya do not operate as isolated virtues but form an interconnected moral configuration of character formation. Within this configuration, *Cageur* emphasizes self-regulation, *Bageur* empathy and social concern, *Bener* commitment to integrity and justice, *Pinter* reflective ethical reasoning, and *Singer* practical wisdom expressed through responsible action. These relationships should not be interpreted as a fixed empirical developmental sequence; rather, they represent a hermeneutically reconstructed configuration in which emotional regulation, relational sensitivity, moral commitment, reflective judgment, and ethical action interact dynamically and mutually reinforce one another.

This interconnected moral configuration shows important affinities with contemporary theories of character education. The relationships among empathy, ethical judgment, moral commitment, and responsible action resonate with Narvaez's perspective on moral functioning and Rest's Four Component Model. From this perspective, Bageur reflects relational and moral sensitivity, Pinter emphasizes reflective ethical judgment, Bener represents commitment to moral principles, and Singer expresses the translation of moral understanding into responsible action. At the same time, the integration of reflective judgment and practical action shows conceptual affinity with Aristotelian virtue ethics, particularly the notion of phronesis as practical wisdom exercised within concrete ethical situations. These parallels should not be understood as indicating that Panca Waluya reproduces Western developmental models; rather, they demonstrate points of conceptual dialogue through which the culturally grounded meanings reconstructed from the *Bratayuda* narrative can be situated within broader character education discourse.

From the perspective of Gadamer (2004), understanding emerges through a fusion of horizons between readers and cultural texts. The moral significance of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative therefore does not reside exclusively within the text itself but is continuously reconstructed through interpretation. Similarly, Ricoeur's (1991) narrative hermeneutics emphasizes how texts open a "world in front of the text," through which readers can imagine alternative possibilities and reinterpret their own experiences. From this perspective, *Bratayuda* can be understood not merely as a cultural artifact but as a potential form of narrative pedagogy that provides an interpretive space for moral reflection, ethical reasoning, and engagement with questions of character.

Taken together, these findings indicate that Panca Waluya constitutes a culturally grounded yet theoretically relevant framework for character education. The values reconstructed from the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative demonstrate important conceptual affinities with contemporary perspectives on moral functioning, virtue ethics, character education, and narrative pedagogy while simultaneously preserving the distinctive cultural meanings embedded in Sundanese wisdom. These affinities should be understood as points of theoretical dialogue rather than as evidence that Panca Waluya reproduces existing developmental models. Accordingly, Panca Waluya may provide a culturally grounded foundation for narrative-based character education that brings local cultural heritage into dialogue with broader perspectives on moral and character formation. More importantly, the present study extends previous research on Wayang by moving beyond the descriptive identification of moral values toward the hermeneutic reconstruction of a culturally grounded character education framework. Its contribution lies in demonstrating how ethical dilemmas embedded in the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative can be systematically interpreted through Panca Waluya and brought into dialogue with contemporary character education theories. This reconstruction positions Wayang not merely as cultural heritage but as an interpretive and pedagogical resource for character education in multicultural and contemporary educational contexts.

Table 3. Theoretical Synthesis of Panca Waluya within Contemporary Character Education Frameworks

Panca Waluya Value	Character Meaning	Lickona (1991)	Narvaez (2014)	Rest & Barnett (1986)	Aristotle	Narrative Pedagogy
<i>Cageur</i>	Self-regulation and emotional balance	Self-control	Self-regulation	Moral Character	Temperance	Reflection on emotional consequences
<i>Bageur</i>	Empathy and social care	Caring	Moral Sensitivity	Moral Sensitivity	Benevolence	Perspective-taking through narrative identification

<i>Bener</i>	Integrity and justice	Moral Integrity	Ethical Commitment	Moral Motivation	Justice	n Recognition of ethical responsibility
<i>Pinter</i>	Ethical reasoning and reflective wisdom	Moral Reasoning	Ethical Judgment	Moral Judgment	Intellectual Virtue	Reflective interpretation of moral dilemmas
<i>Singer</i>	Practical wisdom and responsible action	Responsible Action	Moral Action	Moral Character	Phronesis	Transformation of reflection into action

Note. The relationships presented in this table indicate conceptual affinities rather than direct theoretical equivalence. Panca Waluya is interpreted as a culturally grounded framework whose dimensions enter into dialogue with, rather than reproduce, contemporary character education theories.

The theoretical synthesis demonstrates that Panca Waluya shows important conceptual affinities with contemporary perspectives on character education while retaining its culturally distinctive orientation. Cageur emphasizes self-regulation and emotional balance as dimensions supporting ethical awareness; Bageur foregrounds empathy, care, and relational sensitivity; Bener emphasizes integrity and commitment to moral principles; Pinter highlights reflective judgment and ethical reasoning; and Singer represents the action-oriented dimension through which ethical understanding is expressed in context-sensitive and responsible conduct. Rather than constituting a fixed developmental hierarchy, these five values form an interconnected moral configuration in which personal regulation, relational concern, moral commitment, reflective judgment, and ethical action mutually reinforce one another. Such a contextual understanding is also compatible with contemporary approaches to character education that emphasize the interaction between individual moral capacities and the social and cultural contexts in which character is formed and expressed (Walker, 2024). This relational orientation also resonates with contemporary discussions that connect individual ethical character with broader social and civic dimensions of moral development (Lu, 2025). This interpretation is consistent with contemporary character education scholarship that emphasizes the interrelationship among moral agency, reflective judgment, virtue, and responsible action (Arthur, 2024; Kristjánsson et al., 2025; Oldham & McLoughlin, 2026).

A comparable conceptual relationship can be observed in Narvaez’s Integrative Ethical Education framework. Bageur shows affinity with moral sensitivity through its emphasis on empathy and responsiveness to the needs and perspectives of others, while Pinter reflects the role of ethical judgment and reflective reasoning. Bener contributes the dimension of moral commitment and integrity, whereas Singer represents the action-oriented dimension through which moral understanding is expressed in responsible conduct. These relationships should not be interpreted as sequential developmental stages; rather, they illustrate how the interconnected dimensions of Panca Waluya can enter into conceptual dialogue with contemporary perspectives on moral functioning. In this sense, Panca Waluya can be understood as a culturally grounded configuration in which empathy, moral commitment, reflective judgment, and responsible action interact and mutually contribute to ethical conduct (Arthur, 2024; Narvaez, 2014).

The findings also show conceptual affinities with Rest’s Four Component Model of moral behavior. Bageur resonates with moral sensitivity, Pinter with moral judgment, Bener with moral motivation, and Singer with the capacities involved in translating moral understanding into action. These parallels should be understood as points of conceptual dialogue rather than as direct equivalences between Panca Waluya and Rest’s framework. Recent cross-cultural character education scholarship similarly suggests that dialogue between culturally specific moral traditions

and contemporary virtue-based approaches can be productive when conceptual differences are acknowledged rather than erased (Huo et al., 2026).

From the perspective of Aristotelian virtue ethics, Singer shows a particularly strong conceptual affinity with *phronesis*, or practical wisdom. Aristotle emphasizes that ethical excellence involves not merely possessing virtues but exercising wise judgment in concrete and context-sensitive situations. Within the reconstructed Panca Waluya framework, Singer similarly represents the action-oriented dimension through which self-regulation, empathy, integrity, and reflective judgment can be expressed in responsible conduct. Its significance therefore lies not in functioning as the highest stage of a developmental hierarchy, but in illustrating how interconnected character capacities may be enacted through ethically responsible decisions and actions.

Furthermore, the synthesis highlights the pedagogical significance of narrative interpretation. Bruner (1991) conceptualizes narrative as a distinctive mode of thought through which individuals construct meaning and explore possible ways of understanding human experience, while Ricoeur (1991) emphasizes the interpretive possibilities opened by narrative beyond immediate experience. Contemporary scholarship on literature and character education similarly suggests that engagement with literary narratives can provide opportunities for readers to encounter questions of character, moral experience, and self-understanding through interpretation (Moulin, 2023). Through engagement with the ethical dilemmas represented in *Bratayuda*, learners may be invited to reflect on different perspectives, deliberate on moral tensions, and consider alternative courses of action. Consequently, the educational potential of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative lies not merely in transmitting predetermined moral lessons but in providing an interpretive space in which learners can actively construct ethical understanding. Recent scholarship further supports the educational potential of narrative engagement, moral exemplars, and ethically complex stories for promoting moral reflection, perspective-taking, and character formation (Brooks et al., 2024; Hart & Liddle, 2024; Meibauer & Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2024). In this sense, *Bratayuda* may function as a form of narrative pedagogy by inviting learners to interpret moral tensions, consider the perspectives and responsibilities of characters, evaluate the consequences of ethical choices, and relate these interpretations to their own moral experiences.

Based on the hermeneutic interpretation of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative and the theoretical synthesis presented above, the reconstructed Panca Waluya framework can be understood as an interconnected configuration of character dimensions rather than as a fixed developmental sequence. Cageur, Bageur, Bener, Pinter, and Singer represent mutually related dimensions of character involving self-regulation, relational sensitivity, moral commitment, reflective judgment, and responsible action. Although these dimensions can be analytically distinguished, their educational significance lies in their dynamic interaction: emotional regulation can support empathetic engagement, empathy can inform moral commitment, integrity can orient reflective judgment, and practical wisdom can translate these interconnected capacities into context-sensitive ethical action. The relationships among the five values are therefore recursive and mutually reinforcing rather than strictly linear or hierarchical.

Figure 2 illustrates this reconstructed relationship by positioning the five Panca Waluya values as interconnected dimensions contributing to reflective moral praxis and character formation. The framework should therefore be interpreted as a conceptual synthesis derived from hermeneutic reconstruction rather than as an empirically validated sequence of character development.

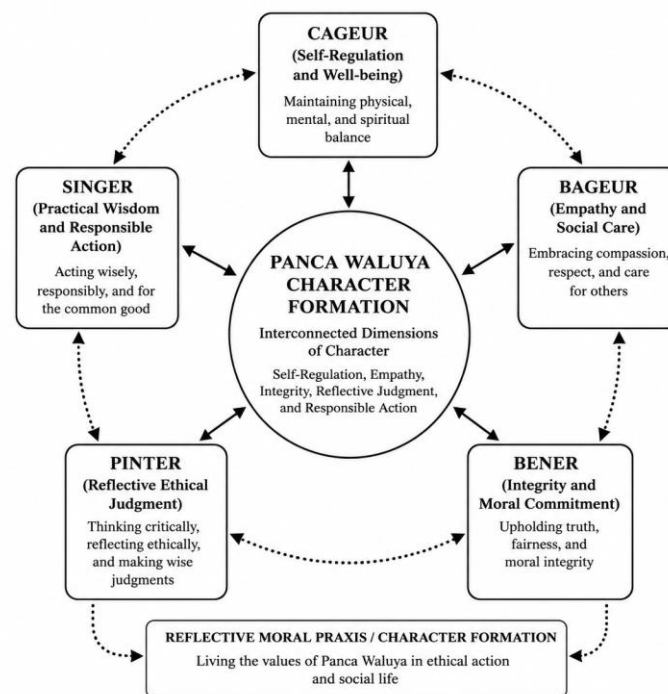


Figure 2. Interconnected Panca Waluya Framework for Character Formation

As illustrated in Figure 2, the five dimensions of Panca Waluya operate reciprocally within character formation, linking self-regulation, empathy, moral integrity, reflective judgment, and responsible action. The figure therefore represents a conceptual-hermeneutic synthesis of their relationships rather than a fixed linear or hierarchical developmental model.

The findings of this study provide important implications for character education in contemporary educational settings. The reconstruction of Panca Waluya through the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative suggests that character formation may be approached not only through direct moral instruction but also through reflective engagement with cultural narratives. From this perspective, character education can move beyond the transmission of predetermined values toward pedagogical practices that create opportunities for moral reasoning, empathy, ethical reflection, and responsible action (Nucci & Narvaez, 2014).

This perspective is further supported by contemporary scholarship emphasizing culturally grounded and context-sensitive approaches to character education, as well as the pedagogical potential of local cultural resources in character formation (Arthur, 2024; Sakti et al., 2024).

Table 4. Pedagogical Translation of Panca Waluya Values

Panca Waluya Value	Educational Meaning	Learning Strategy	Expected Character Outcome
<i>Cageur</i>	Self-regulation and emotional balance	Reflective journaling, self-assessment	Self-regulation
<i>Bageur</i>	Empathy and social care	Perspective-taking discussion, collaborative learning	Empathy
<i>Bener</i>	Integrity and justice	Ethical dilemma analysis, value clarification	Integrity
<i>Pinter</i>	Ethical reasoning and reflection	Narrative interpretation, critical dialogue	Moral reasoning
<i>Singer</i>	Practical wisdom and responsible action	Case-based learning, decision-making exercises	Ethical action

Table 4 illustrates how the values of Panca Waluya may be translated into potential educational strategies. Each value can inform learning activities intended to create opportunities for engaging with corresponding dimensions of character, including self-regulation, empathy, integrity, moral reasoning, and responsible action. Accordingly, Panca Waluya may be considered not only as a philosophical framework but also as a conceptual foundation for developing culturally grounded character education practices.

First, the findings suggest the importance of adopting a narrative-based approach to character education. The moral significance of the *Bratayuda* narrative emerges through ethical dilemmas, conflicting responsibilities, and reflective decision-making rather than through explicit moral prescriptions. Such narratives can provide opportunities for learners to examine complex human situations, consider multiple perspectives, and reflect on the consequences of moral choices. In this regard, Wayang narratives may serve as pedagogical resources for engaging learners with moral imagination, perspective-taking, ethical reflection, and questions of character. The pedagogical use of cultural and literary materials is also consistent with recent character education research demonstrating the potential of literary forms to create reflective spaces for engagement with questions of character and moral experience (Guttesen, 2024). Consistent with Bruner's (1991) account of narrative as a mode of meaning-making, stories can create interpretive spaces in which learners construct moral understanding through reflection rather than through the passive reception of moral rules. Recent scholarship similarly highlights the educational potential of narrative engagement, moral exemplars, and ethically complex stories for promoting moral reflection, perspective-taking, and character formation (Brooks et al., 2024; Hart & Liddle, 2024; Meibauer & Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2024).

Second, the findings indicate that Panca Waluya may serve as a culturally grounded framework for character education. The five values of Cageur, Bageur, Bener, Pinter, and Singer constitute interconnected and mutually reinforcing dimensions encompassing emotional regulation, empathy, moral integrity, ethical reasoning, and responsible action. Rather than representing a fixed developmental sequence, these dimensions form an integrated moral configuration through which learners may reflect on the relationships among personal regulation, social concern, moral commitment, reflective judgment, and ethical conduct. Educators may therefore draw on Panca Waluya as a conceptual foundation for designing learning activities that encourage both personal reflection and social responsibility. This orientation is consistent with recent ethnopedagogical scholarship emphasizing the integration of local wisdom into character education in ways that connect cultural values with learners' sociocultural experiences (Sakti et al., 2024).

Third, the findings highlight the importance of reflective dialogue in character formation. The moral experiences represented in the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative involve deliberation, consultation, self-examination, and ethical negotiation. Such processes suggest that character education should provide opportunities for learners to discuss moral dilemmas, explore alternative perspectives, question initial assumptions, and justify ethical judgments. Learning activities such as narrative interpretation, reflective dialogue, ethical dilemma discussion, journaling, role-playing, and case-based learning may therefore provide meaningful spaces for connecting moral reflection with culturally situated ethical experience. This pedagogical orientation is supported by recent research indicating that structured moral dilemma discussions can provide opportunities for learners to exercise moral reasoning and develop capacities associated with practical wisdom (Huo et al., 2026). Rather than positioning learners as passive recipients of predetermined values, such activities can create opportunities for active engagement in constructing moral understanding through dialogue and interpretation, an orientation consistent with contemporary approaches emphasizing reflective judgment and moral agency in character education (Arthur, 2024; Kristjánsson et al., 2025).

Based on the findings, a narrative-based pedagogical framework grounded in Panca Waluya may be conceptualized as a cyclical process consisting of six interconnected phases: (1) Narrative Engagement, where learners encounter cultural stories; (2) Moral Conflict Identification, where ethical dilemmas are explored; (3) Reflective Dialogue, where alternative perspectives are

discussed; (4) Panca Waluya Interpretation, where moral meanings are reconstructed through the values of Cageur, Bageur, Bener, Pinter, and Singer; (5) Personal Moral Reflection, where learners relate reconstructed moral meanings to their own experiences; and (6) Ethical Action, where moral understanding is translated into responsible conduct in everyday life.

Finally, the study suggests that integrating local wisdom into character education does not imply a rejection of broader moral principles. Rather, cultural narratives such as Wayang provide culturally meaningful contexts through which values such as empathy, justice, responsibility, and practical wisdom can be interpreted and reflected upon. From this perspective, Panca Waluya-based character education may offer a culturally responsive approach that connects local cultural heritage with broader perspectives on moral and character education. This orientation is consistent with recent research demonstrating the potential of local wisdom and Indigenous knowledge as cultural resources for contextualizing character formation within learners' sociocultural experiences and educational practices (Mambu et al., 2026; Sakti et al., 2024).

These pedagogical implications should be interpreted within the conceptual and hermeneutic scope of the study. Because the reconstructed framework was derived from textual interpretation rather than classroom implementation, its pedagogical relevance remains theoretically grounded rather than empirically validated. Future research should therefore examine how Panca Waluya-based narrative pedagogy is interpreted and enacted by educators and learners across different educational and cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study reconstructed Panca Waluya as a culturally grounded framework for character education through a hermeneutic interpretation of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative in *Bratayuda*. The analysis identified five interconnected character dimensions: Cageur as self-regulation and emotional balance, Bageur as empathy and relational concern, Bener as integrity and commitment to moral principles, Pinter as reflective ethical judgment, and Singer as practical wisdom expressed through responsible action. Rather than functioning as isolated virtues or sequential stages of character development, these values form an interconnected moral configuration in which personal regulation, relational sensitivity, moral commitment, reflective judgment, and ethical action mutually inform and reinforce one another.

The findings demonstrate that the moral significance of the Pandawa–Kurawa narrative lies not merely in the presence of culturally inherited values but in the ethical tensions, dilemmas, and choices through which those values become meaningful. Through the hermeneutic dialogue between the *Bratayuda* narrative and Panca Waluya, Wayang can therefore be understood as more than a repository of traditional moral teachings. It provides an interpretive space in which ethical meaning can be reconstructed through reflection on human relationships, conflicting responsibilities, moral consequences, and context-sensitive decision-making. In this sense, the study positions Panca Waluya as a culturally grounded form of narrative pedagogy through which indigenous wisdom and moral reflection can be brought into dialogue.

The theoretical synthesis further indicates important conceptual affinities between Panca Waluya and broader perspectives in character education, including moral sensitivity, moral judgment, integrity, practical wisdom, narrative meaning-making, and responsible moral action. These affinities should not be interpreted as evidence that Panca Waluya reproduces established Western developmental models. Rather, they provide points of theoretical dialogue through which culturally specific moral meanings can contribute to wider discussions of character formation while retaining their indigenous philosophical orientation. The contribution of this study therefore lies in moving beyond the descriptive identification of moral values in Wayang toward the hermeneutic reconstruction of an interconnected and culturally grounded character education framework.

Pedagogically, the reconstructed framework suggests that *Bratayuda* and other culturally meaningful narratives may be used as resources for reflective character education. Learning experiences can engage students in interpreting moral dilemmas, examining characters' perspectives and responsibilities, discussing competing ethical considerations, reflecting on

consequences, and connecting narrative situations with their own moral experiences. Within such learning processes, Panca Waluya can function as an interpretive lens for exploring the relationships among self-regulation, empathy, integrity, reflective judgment, and responsible action. Its educational potential therefore lies not in transmitting predetermined cultural values, but in facilitating reflective moral engagement through culturally situated narratives.

This study is limited by its text-based hermeneutic design and its focus on a single *Bratayuda* narrative. The reconstructed framework represents a conceptual and interpretive synthesis and should not be regarded as an empirically validated model of character development or pedagogical effectiveness. Future research should therefore examine the framework across different Wayang texts and other Indonesian cultural narratives, explore its interpretation among educators and learners, and investigate its pedagogical application in diverse educational settings. Empirical studies employing classroom-based qualitative inquiry, design-based research, mixed methods, or intervention studies would be particularly valuable for examining how Panca Waluya-based narrative pedagogy operates in practice and how it may contribute to culturally responsive character education.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this work, the authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) to assist with language refinement, grammar checking, academic writing improvement, and manuscript organization. The AI tool was used solely to support the writing process and did not contribute to data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, or the development of the study's conclusions. After using this tool, the authors carefully reviewed, revised, and edited all content as necessary and take full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and originality of the manuscript.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Methodology; Investigation; Data curation; Formal analysis; Visualization; Writing – original draft; Writing – review and editing.

Author 2: Supervision; Conceptualization; Validation; Theoretical framework development; Writing – review and editing.

Author 3: Conceptualization; Validation; Cultural and philosophical framework development; Writing – review and editing.

Author 4: Investigation; Resources; Validation; Writing – review and editing.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no competing interests to declare. The authors have no known financial or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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