

THE IMAGE OF WOMEN IN *THE FAIRY TALE OF THE KING AND PRINCESS OF THE FRAGRANT FLOWER LAKE* BY AHMAD IJAZI H

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the image of women in the fairy tale of *Lake Raja and Putri Bunga Harum* by Ahmad Ijazi H. This study is motivated by the importance of understanding the representation of women in children's literature and folklore as a medium that helps shape people's views on women. The research uses a qualitative approach with a content analysis method. The source of research data is in the form of the fairy tale text of *Danau Raja and Putri Bunga Harum* by Ahmad Ijazi H., while the research data is in the form of narratives and dialogues that contain images of women. Data analysis was carried out through intensive reading, identifying data, classifying data based on women's image categories, interpreting the meaning of data, and drawing conclusions. This research uses Sugihastuti's theory of women's image which divides women's image into self-image and social image. The validity of the data is carried out through theoretical triangulation by comparing the findings of the research with the concepts of feminist literary criticism and relevant previous research. The results of the study showed that there were 31 data that represented the image of women. The data consisted of 21 self-image data and 10 social image data. Self-image includes physical image and psychic image. The physical image is displayed through the depiction of beauty, elegance, body health, and the specialties of the figure of Princess Bunga Harum who is depicted as having the fragrant scent of flowers. Psychic image is shown through intelligence, politeness, gentleness, compassion, loyalty, courage, and having determination in fighting for his desires. The social image of women is represented through the role of women in the family and society, such as maternal roles, social concern, respect for women, and the position of women as an important part of the kingdom's social structure. The findings of the study show that psychic imagery is the most dominant image so that women in fairy tales are not only represented through physical aspects, but also through personality qualities and social roles that they have.

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INTRODUCTION

Folk literature is part of a cultural heritage that lives and develops in society and is passed down from generation to generation through oral traditions. The presence of folk literature not only functions as a means of entertainment, but also as a medium for inheriting values, norms, and views of life embraced by a society. One form of folk literature that has this function is fairy tales. According to Danandjaja (2007), fairy tales are imaginative folktales, not considered to have actually happened, but contain educational, social, and cultural values that are important for the supporting community. Through the characters and storylines that are built, fairy tales become a means of conveying moral messages as well as a reflection of the social life of the community. Therefore, fairy tales can not only be understood as a work of entertainment, but also as a cultural representation that contains various societal views on life, including views on women.

Women are one of the elements that often receive attention in literary works, including in folk literature. The presence of female characters in folklore does not only function as a complement to the story, but also as a representation of cultural values that develop in society. Sugihastuti (2000) explained that the image of women is a description of women that includes physical, psychological, and social aspects represented through language in literary works. Meanwhile, Endraswara (2008) stated that women in literary works are often described as tender, loyal, patient, affectionate, and willing to sacrifice. This representation shows that the image of women in literature is inseparable from the social and cultural constructions that shape society's perspective on women. Thus, the study of women's image is important to understand the relationship between literary texts and the socio-cultural reality behind them.

In literary studies, women's representation can be analyzed through a feminist literary criticism approach. Feminist literary criticism seeks to reveal how women are positioned, represented, and treated in literary works (Djajanegara, 2002). This approach not only examines the portrayal of female characters, but also examines the gender relations contained in literary texts. One of the concepts that is widely used in feminist literary criticism is the *image of women* put forward by Sugihastuti (2000). The concept divides women's image into two main aspects, namely women's self-image which includes physical and psychological aspects and women's social image related to their role and position in the family and society. Through this concept, female figures can be understood more comprehensively as individuals as well as part of a certain socio-cultural structure.

One of the interesting folktales to be studied through this perspective is the *Fairy Tale of the King Lake and the Prince of Beautiful Flowers*. This fairy tale that originated from Riau is part of the oral tradition of the Malay people which is still known and inherited from generation to generation. The character of Putri Bunga Harum is the center of the story and is described as a female figure who has beauty, tenderness, loyalty, and various moral values that are upheld in Malay culture. The presence of these characters not only serves as a driver of the storyline, but also as a symbol of the idealization of women in society. Through the depiction of Putri Bunga Harum, this fairy tale represents Malay cultural values related to women, both in physical, psychological, and social aspects. Therefore, the figure of Putri Bunga Harum has great potential to be studied as a representation of the image of women in Malay oral literature. This view is in line with the research of Erni (2016) who explained that the Malay oral tradition is a medium of inheriting cultural values and character of the community through various forms of stories and oral expressions. These values are inherited from generation to generation as a guideline in the social life of the Malay community. In addition, Erni, Supriyadi, and Jusliyani (2014) emphasized that the Malay oral tradition also contains moral values related to conscience, sincerity, respect, and social relations between humans which are reflected in the traditional marriage rhymes of the Malay community.

Research on the image of women in folk literature has been conducted by several researchers previously. Qur'ani (2021) found that female characters in East Javanese folklore have self-image that includes physical and psychological aspects as well as social images that show women as beautiful, kind, loyal, and brave decision-makers. Islahuddin, Tawandorloh, and Ha (2021) show that female figures in *Putri Kemang's* folklore are represented as independent women, have the freedom to make life choices, and are able to lead. Furthermore, Fitriarti and Trisari (2022) revealed that fairy tales are often a medium of reproduction of patriarchal culture that places women in subordinate positions and tends to construct women as passive figures. Meanwhile, Oftavia et al. (2023) found that

the character of Putri Kandita in the fairy tale *Nyi Roro Kidul* has a physical image in the form of beauty, a psychic image in the form of courage and assertiveness, and a social image that shows her influence in the family and society.

A more recent study was conducted by Qur'ani, Putra, and Hiasa (2025) which examined the image of women in the fairy tale *of the Fisherman and His Daughter*. The results of the study show that the physical, psychological, and social image of female characters can be a means of forming positive values, such as confidence, responsibility, and respect for women. These various studies show that the study of the image of women in folklore has received quite wide attention. However, most of the research still focuses on folklore from the Java, South Sumatra, and popular folklore of the archipelago. Studies that specifically discuss the image of women in Riau Malay oral literature are still relatively limited, especially on fairy tales that live and develop in the local Malay community.

The limitations of the research show that there is a *research gap* that needs attention. Based on a search of previous research, no studies have been found that specifically analyze the image of women in *the Fairy Tale of the King Lake and Princess of the Flower Harum* using an image of women-based feminist literary criticism approach. Previous research has generally focused on the identification of female characters or on aspects of feminism in general, while studies that describe women's self-image (physical and psychological) and women's social image in the context of Riau Malay culture have not been widely done. In fact, Malay culture has a distinctive value system and outlook on life that affects the way women are represented in oral literature. Thus, the study of the figure of Putri Bunga Harum has the potential to provide a deeper understanding of the construction of women's image in Malay cultural traditions.

In addition to filling the gap in academic studies, this research also has urgency in the context of local cultural preservation. Riau Malay oral literature is part of the intangible cultural heritage that needs to be documented and studied scientifically in order to remain relevant in the midst of the times. Analysis of female characters in fairy tales can be one of the efforts to understand the cultural values inherited by the Malay community to the next generation. In addition, this study can provide a more critical perspective on the position of women in traditional cultural narratives so that folk literature is not only understood as an entertainment story, but also as a cultural document that records people's views on gender and social life.

The novelty of this research lies in the objects and approaches used. This study is a study that specifically analyzes the image of women in *the Fairy Tale of Lake King and Princess Bunga Harum*, one of the oral literature of Riau Malay that has not been widely researched in the perspective of feminist literary criticism. In addition, this study uses the concept *of image of women* proposed by Sugihastuti (2000) to examine women's self-image which includes physical and psychological aspects as well as women's social image comprehensively in the context of Malay culture. Thus, this research is expected to enrich the treasure of the study of Nusantara oral literature as well as expand the study of feminism in regional literature.

Based on this description, this study aims to: (1) describe the self-image of women which includes the physical and psychological aspects of the characters of Princess Bunga Harum in *the fairy tale of Lake Raja and Princess Bunga Harum*; and (2) describe the social image of the character of Princess Bunga Harum based on the feminist literary criticism approach based on *the image of women*. The results of the research are expected to contribute to the development of oral literature studies, feminist studies, and the preservation of Riau Malay culture.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research aims to understand and describe the representation of female images contained in *the Fairy Tale of the King Lake and Princess of Bunga Harum* in depth based on the cultural context behind it. According to Sugiyono (2019), qualitative research is used to research objects in natural conditions with researchers as the main instrument. Meanwhile, descriptive research aims to describe phenomena systematically, factually, and accurately according to the data found (Emzir, 2019). In this study, this approach is used to reveal the image of women through the perspective of feminist literary criticism.

The method used is *content analysis*. Content analysis is a research technique used to identify, classify, and interpret the meanings contained in a text systematically (Budd in Hadi, 2005). This method was chosen because the object of the research was in the form of literary texts that contained representations of female figures. The analysis was carried out by examining linguistic elements in the form of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs that show the image of women in stories. This study uses the feminist literary criticism approach with the concept of *the image of women* proposed by Sugihastuti (2000). The concept divides women's image into two main categories, namely women's self-image which includes physical and psychological aspects and women's social image related to their role and position in the family and society.

The primary data source of this research is *the Fairy Tale of Lake Raja and Putri Bunga Harum* by Ahmad Ijazi H. which was published by the Language Development and Development Agency in 2017. The research data is in the form of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs that contain representations of women's images. The focus of the research is directed at the character of Putri Bunga Harum as the female main character as well as other female characters who have relevance to the formation of the meaning of women's images in stories. The secondary data sources were obtained from various books, scientific articles, and the results of previous research related to oral literature, feminist literary criticism, and women's image.

Data collection was carried out through a literature study technique with a reading and recording method. Researchers read the text of the fairy tale intensively and repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the storyline, characters, and cultural context behind it. Furthermore, data related to women's images are recorded, coded, and grouped based on predetermined analysis categories. This technique is used to ensure that all data relevant to the research focus can be identified systematically.

Data analysis is carried out through several stages. The first stage is to read the text thoroughly to understand the context of the story. The second stage is to identify data that shows the image of women in the form of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs. The third stage is to classify the data into the categories of physical image, psychic image, and social image. The fourth stage is to interpret the data using an image of women-based feminist literary criticism approach to uncover the meaning of women's representation in texts. The last stage is to draw conclusions based on the patterns of findings obtained as an answer to the formulation of the research problem.

To simplify the data grouping process, this study uses classification guidelines as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Classification of Women's Image in Research

Image Aspect	Indicator	Data Form
Physical Image	Description of the body, beauty, and appearance of female characters	Words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs
Psychic Image	Nature, attitudes, feelings, thoughts, and characters of female characters	Words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs
Social Image	The role, position, and social relations of female figures in the family and society	Words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs

The validity of the data is carried out through theoretical triangulation and increased diligence. The triangulation of the theory was carried out by comparing the results of the analysis based on the concept of *the image of women* proposed by Sugihastuti (2000) with the theory of feminist literary criticism proposed by Djajanegara (2002). Meanwhile, increased diligence is done through repeated reading of the text and re-checking the data that has been classified to ensure consistency of interpretation. Through this step, the results of the analysis are expected to have an adequate level of validity and can be accounted for

RESEARCH RESULTS RESULTS

This study examines the image of women in the fairy tale of *Lake Raja and Princess Bunga Harum* by Ahmad Ijazi H. based on the theory of female image Sugihastuti (2000). The research data is in the form of narratives and dialogues that describe the female characters in the story. The identification results showed that there were 31 data that represented women's images which were then classified into two main categories, namely self-image and social image. The female characters found in this fairy tale include Putri Bunga Harum, Permaisuri Fatmasari, Dayang Alun, and Mak Siti. The four characters present diverse representations of women according to their positions and roles in the story. Putri Bunga Harum became the most dominant figure because most of the data centered on her physical, psychological, and social depictions. Meanwhile, Permaisuri Fatmasari represents more of the role of women as mothers, Dayang Alun as a loyal companion, and Mak Siti as a woman who has high social concerns.

Table 1. The Distribution of Female Imagery in the Fairy Tale of the King and Princess of the Fragrant Flower Lake

Category Citra	Amount of Data	Percentage
Physical Image	8	25,8%
Psychic Image	13	41,9%
Family Social Image	3	9,7%
Social Image of the Community	7	22,6%
Total	31	100%

Based on Table 1, the most dominant female image is **psychic image** with a total of 13 data (41.9%). These findings show that the author presents more women through psychological aspects, such as feelings, attitudes, characters, and emotional processes experienced by the characters. Physical image occupies the second position with 8 data (25.8%), while the social image of the community amounts to 7 data (22.6%) and the social image of the family amounts to 3 data (9.7%). The dominance of psychic imagery indicates that women in fairy tales are not only represented through physical beauty, but also through inner qualities that include tenderness, compassion, intelligence, determination, and courage in making decisions. Thus, the construction of women displayed by the author tends to place the psychological aspect as the main identity of female characters.

Female Physical Image

The results of the study show that the physical image of women in fairy tales is built through the depiction of beauty, elegance, and physical perfection of female characters. This representation is especially seen in the character of the Fragrant Flower Princess.

The first data is shown through the following excerpts.

"Oh, you are such a beautiful baby," Sultan Thahir said with admiration. (Date 1)

The quote includes physical imagery because it displays an assessment of a woman's body through the word *beautiful*. The use of the word shows that a woman's identity began to be built from birth through the aspect of physical appearance. Interestingly, the character of Putri Bunga Harum, who is still a baby, has received an assessment based on her beauty. This shows that beauty is the main attribute attached to women in the story. In addition, Sultan Thahir's response shown through *expressions of admiration* shows that women's beauty has social value. Beauty is not only a personal characteristic, but also brings out the recognition of others. Thus, women are represented as figures who are rewarded through their physical appearance.

The second data is seen in the following quote.

"Physically, he can be said to be perfect. Its yellow skin always emits a fragrant scent of flowers that is increasingly diffuse." (Date: 11)

The data shows a more complex physical image than the previous data. If in the first data beauty is only stated directly through the word *beautiful*, in this data the author presents a more detailed description of the female character's

body. The phrase *can be said to be perfect* showing that the Princess of Fragrant Flowers is portrayed as an ideal woman who has almost no physical flaws.

In addition, the fragrant scent of flowers that comes out of the character's body is a form of idealization that the author deliberately builds. The scent of flowers in this context is not only literal, but also a symbol of beauty, purity, and female glory. In other words, the author does not only depict physical beauty, but also builds a perfect and special image of a woman through aesthetic symbols.

Based on these two data, it can be concluded that the physical image of women in fairy tales is more built through the construction of ideal beauty. Women are represented as beautiful, elegant, and attractive figures who are able to arouse admiration from the surrounding environment.

Women's Social Image

The social image of women was found in 10 data consisting of the image of women in the family environment and the community environment. In contrast to self-image that emphasizes the personal aspect of the character, social image shows how women are placed, valued, and played a role in their social relationships. These findings show that women in the fairy *tale of Lake Raja and Princess Bunga Harum* are not only represented through their characters and personalities, but also through social functions carried out in the family and society.

Social Image of Women in the Family

The social image of women in the family is displayed through the role of women as mothers and children. In this category, women are described as figures who have an important position in the family structure so that their existence gets attention and appreciation from other family members.

This can be seen in the following quote.

"The palace's eight best child-bearing maidens and shamans were deployed to assist in the delivery process."

(Data 6)

The quote shows that Empress Fatmasari as a mother occupies an important position in the royal family. The process of childbirth is not seen as a purely personal matter, but an event that involves many parties. The deployment of the best dayang-dayang and shaman shows the existence of social support for women in carrying out their reproductive functions. These findings show that women are being rewarded for their role as mothers who will give birth to the royal family's successors.

Apart from being a mother, the social image of women in the family is also seen through the relationship between Putri Bunga Harum and her father.

"But, Dad," Putri Bunga Harum was still trying to melt her father's heart. (Fig. 29)

The data shows the position of Putri Bunga Harum as a child who tries to convey her wishes to her father. Despite having different opinions, female figures still use a polite and respectful manner. These findings show that women in the family are represented as figures who maintain a harmonious relationship with their parents while trying to fight for their desires.

Thus, the social image of women in the family shows that women have an important role as mothers and children. Women are not only part of the family, but also contribute to maintaining the sustainability and harmony of family relationships.

Social Image of Women in Society

The social image of women in society was found to be more dominant than the social image of the family. These findings show that women in fairy tales have a fairly important position in social life and gain recognition from the surrounding environment.

One form of social image of the community can be seen through the respect given to Putri Bunga Harum.

"Wan Usman and Mak Siti retreated and lay on the floor while arranging prayers." (Fig. 21)

The quote shows that Princess Fragrant Flowers has a high social status as a royal princess. The act of praying and arranging worship is a form of respect that signifies recognition of the social status of female figures. In this context, women are represented as respected figures and have dignity that is guarded by society.

In addition to gaining respect, women are also described as figures who receive protection from their social environment.

"The soldiers on guard cannot allow strangers to enter the palace without permission, let alone enter the princess's room." (Date: 25)

The data shows that the whereabouts of Putri Bunga Harum are under strict surveillance. This protection shows the high value of honor inherent in female figures. However, on the other hand, the supervision also shows the existence of social control over women, especially those from the nobility. Thus, women are represented as respected figures who are at the same time limited by applicable social norms.

Other findings show women as individuals who get attention from society when they are in difficult situations.

"Putri Bunga Harum was rescued by a young man from Lubuk Tangguk Village." (Date 18)

The quote shows that women's safety is a concern of the social environment. Female characters are portrayed as valuable individuals so their existence encourages others to provide help. These findings show that there are social values that place women as figures that need to be protected and maintained.

On the other hand, women's social image also emerges through women's active role in helping others.

"Mak Siti, Wan Usman's mother, came to treat Putri Bunga Hafragrant." (Date: 19)

The quote shows that women are not always in a position where they need help. The character of Mak Siti actually appears as a figure who provides help and care to others. This role shows that women have a social function as caregivers, helpers, and supporters in people's lives.

In addition, the social image of the community is also seen through the environmental reaction to the disappearance of Putri Bunga Harum.

"With a feeling of fear and full of regret, all the ladies and soldiers finally decided to return to the palace." (Fig. 16)

The data shows that the existence of female figures has an influence on the social conditions around them. The disappearance of Putri Bunga Harum caused fear and regret in the ladies and soldiers. This shows that women have an important position in the social environment so that their safety is a shared responsibility.

Overall, the social image of women in society shows that women are represented as figures who are respected, protected, cared for, and have a social contribution to the surrounding environment. These findings show that women in fairy tales not only function as supporting characters in the storyline, but also as figures who have important social values and positions in society.

The results of the study show that the image of women in the fairy tale *of Lake Raja and Putri Bunga Harum* by Ahmad Ijazi H. is represented through three main forms, namely physical image, psychic image, and social image as stated by Sugihastuti (2000). From all the data found, psychic images emerged as the most dominant compared to physical and social images. These findings show that the author not only builds female characters through appearance, but also through the depth of the character's mind, emotions, and ability to respond to various events that occur in the storyline. The dominance of psychic imagery in fairy tales shows that female characters are portrayed as having determination, decision-making skills, and responsibility for themselves and their environment. The depiction shows that women not only function as a complement to the story, but also as characters who bring moral values to the reader. This finding is in line with the research of Restiani and Erni (2025) who explained that female characters in literary works are often a medium for conveying moral values, both related to human relationships with themselves, relationships with others, and relationships with God.

The dominance of psychic imagery can be seen from the many narratives that describe the emotional states and attitudes of female characters, especially Princess Bunga Harum. The character is described as a figure who has feelings of emotion, affection, loyalty, courage, and determination in defending his life choices. According to Sugihastuti (2000), women's psychic image is related to psychological aspects which include women's feelings, attitudes, thoughts, and emotional responses to the surrounding environment. In this fairy tale, this aspect is seen when

Princess Bunga Harum still remembers Wan Usman who once saved her and when she decides to catch up with Wan Usman even though she has to deal with her father's decision. The depiction shows that women are not represented as passive figures, but as individuals who have the will and ability to make decisions based on their own beliefs.

The findings show that there is a relatively progressive representation of women. In many traditional folklore, women are often placed as figures who wait or accept the decision of others. However, Putri Bunga Harum is actually shown to have agency in determining attitudes. Her courage to follow Wan Usman and choose her own actions shows that women have the ability to act independently. Thus, the dominant psychic imagery in this fairy tale indicates that the author emphasizes more on the inner qualities of the female character than simply displaying her physical beauty.

Nonetheless, physical image remains an important part of the formation of the character of Princess Fragrant Flowers. This figure is described as a very beautiful woman, has bright yellow skin, and emits a fragrant scent of flowers from her body. According to Sugihastuti (2000), women's physical image is related to the depiction of the body and appearance attached to female characters in literary works. This depiction shows the idealization of women that is commonly found in traditional literature. Beauty is not only displayed as a physical attribute, but also a symbol of the character's perfection and specialty.

The use of floral fragrance elements that come from the body of Putri Bunga Harum shows the symbolism of the concept of the ideal woman. In the context of Malay culture, fragrance is often associated with purity, tenderness, and glory. Therefore, the beauty of Putri Bunga Harum is not only interpreted as physical beauty, but also as a representation of moral values that are considered ideal for women. In other words, the physical image in this fairy tale serves as a means to strengthen the positive image of female characters.

In addition to self-image, this study also found that women's social image is reflected through the relationship of female figures with family and society. Princess Bunga Harum is portrayed as a child who respects her parents, while Empress Fatmasari is shown as a loving mother figure. On the other hand, Mak Siti is represented as a caring and helpful woman. According to Sugihastuti (2000), women's social image is related to the role and position of women in the family and society. Therefore, the female characters in this fairy tale are not only present as individuals, but also as part of a social system that has certain functions and responsibilities. In addition, the social image of women in fairy tales is seen through concern for the social environment and their ability to maintain harmony in life together. Women are described as figures who have responsibility, care, and wisdom in dealing with various problems. The results of this study are supported by Erni and Andriyani (2022) who found that female characters in literary works are able to represent the values of responsibility, care, devotion, and wise attitudes that can be used as examples for readers.

These findings show that the women in the fairy tale of *Lake Raja and Princess Bunga Harum* are still placed within the framework of Malay cultural values that emphasize politeness, respect for family, social care, and devotion to others. Putri Bunga Harum, for example, still tries to convey her wishes to her father in a polite way even though she does not agree with the decision taken. This shows that women's courage in stories does not eliminate the values of politeness that are part of the cultural identity of the Malay community. These findings are in line with the view of Erni (2016) who stated that Malay oral literature functions as a means of inheriting Malay instruction that contains the values of piety, respect for parents, responsibility, politeness, and harmonious social life. These values are inherited through folklore and oral tradition as a guideline for the behavior of the Malay community. In the context of the fairy tale of Lake Raja and Princess Bunga Harum, the image of women displayed through the characters of Putri Bunga Harum, Permaisuri Fatmasari, and Mak Siti shows the internalization of Malay cultural values that place women as well-mannered figures, respect their families, and have concern for their social environment.

The results of this study are in line with the research of Dona Oftavia et al. (2023) who found that the image of women in fairy tales is not only represented through physical aspects, but also through psychological and social aspects. The research shows that female characters have a brave, firm, and influential character in their social environment. This similarity was also found in this study through the character of Putri Bunga Harum who has the courage to fight for her life choices while maintaining harmonious social relations with the surrounding environment.

However, there are quite fundamental differences between the two studies. In the research of Dona Oftavia et al. (2023), female figures are described as having powers related to mythological and supernatural elements. Meanwhile, in the fairy tale of *Danau Raja and Putri Bunga Harum*, the representation of women is closer to Malay cultural values that highlight tenderness, loyalty, patience, and respect for family. This difference shows that the image of women in literary works is greatly influenced by the cultural background that surrounds the creation of the work.

Overall, this study shows that the image of women in the fairy tale of *Lake Raja and Princess Bunga Harum* is built through a balance between physical image, psychic image, and social image. However, the dominance of psychic imagery shows that the author emphasizes the inner qualities of women more than other aspects. Female figures are represented as figures who are not only beautiful and elegant, but also have determination, decision-making skills, and important social roles in family and community life. Thus, this fairy tale not only presents women as the object of the story, but also as subjects who have a significant identity, will, and position in the development of the storyline. The dominance of psychic and social images in this study shows that women are represented through inner qualities, care, responsibility, and the ability to maintain social relationships. This finding is in line with the research of Erni and Piliang (2022) which shows that female characters in literary works can be representations of social and cultural values that function as a medium of character education. Thus, female characters in fairy tales not only represent specific individuals, but also reflect the cultural values that live in the society that supports them.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, the image of women in the fairy tale of *Lake Raja and Princess Bunga Harum* by Ahmad Ijazi H. is represented through three forms, namely physical image, psychological image, and social image. The physical image is seen through the depiction of beauty, elegance, and privilege possessed by female figures, especially Princess Bunga Harum. Psychic imagery is shown through various mental states and character of the character, such as affection, loyalty, gentleness, courage, and determination. The social image is seen through the role of women in the family and society, both as children, mothers, companions, and respected members of society.

The findings of the study show that psychic imagery is the most dominant form of imagery. This indicates that women in fairy tales are not only represented through physical aspects, but also through emotional depth, inner strength, and decision-making ability. The dominance of psychic imagery shows that female characters have a fairly active role in building the storyline. In addition, the social image found shows the influence of Malay cultural values that emphasize politeness, loyalty, respect for family, and concern for others.

This study shows that the representation of women in the fairy tale of *Lake Raja and Princess Bunga Harum* is built through a combination of physical, psychological, and social aspects that complement each other. Therefore, further research is recommended to examine other Malay folklore using the perspective of feminism or gender studies so that it can provide a broader understanding of the construction of women's images in regional literature.

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