

THE RELEVANCE OF PATRIOTIC VALUES IN THE NOVEL *SANG WARTAWATI CILIK* BY GAMAL KOMANDOKO TO NATIONALIST CHARACTER EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Previous studies on patriotic values in literature and the characteristics of nationalism in elementary schools have been conducted separately. This study aims to describe the values of patriotism represented in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" by Gamal Komandoko, the characteristics of nationalism in elementary schools, and the relationship between the two within the context of basic education. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, a library research type with a content analysis design. Primary data sources from novels, secondary sources from sociological literature and character education. Data were collected through document study, text analysis, and supporting literature review. Data analysis was conducted using a dialectical approach, while data validity was ensured through source and theory triangulation. The findings reveal that the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" by Gamal Komandoko contains patriotic values such as love for the homeland, responsibility, empathy, cooperation, courage, willingness to sacrifice, and perseverance, as reflected through the characters' actions and the storyline. Nationalism character in elementary schools is developed through habituation and school culture encompassing values of patriotism, responsibility, tolerance, social care, cooperation, politeness, and respect for rights and obligations. The value of patriotism in the novel is relevant to strengthening the character of nationalism in elementary schools, so that children's literature can be used as a means of forming students' character. To ensure these values are internalized optimally, all stakeholders need to collaborate through children's literary literacy and the habituation of positive attitudes.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Character education in elementary schools plays a fundamental role in shaping students' attitudes, values,

and personalities from an early age (Japar et al., 2018; Fatmawati et al., 2021; Widayati et al., 2023). Elementary school students are not only expected to develop academic competence but are also guided to build moral values and a sense of national identity that serve as the foundation for living within society and the nation (Wiyani, 2017; Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2017; Kemdikbud, 2018; Nursamsi & Jumardi, 2022). One of the characters that should be cultivated from an early age is nationalism, which is rooted in the values of patriotism (Ni 'mah, 2017; Aristin, 2018). Strengthening patriotic values is considered important because it contributes not only to the development of intellectually capable students but also to the formation of integrity, social awareness, and nationalism as responsible citizens (Luthfillah & Rachman, 2022; Pardede et al., 2024). Patriotism and nationalism need to be continuously fostered as part of character development in elementary schools, despite the challenges brought about by social change and the advancement of modern society.

In reality, strengthening patriotism and nationalism values in elementary schools still faces various challenges in their implementation. Learning practices tend to emphasize cognitive achievement, resulting in less optimal internalization of values and character development (Sugiyatmi et al., 2026). In addition, digitalization has increasingly influenced students' exposure to content that does not always promote nationalistic values (Yudha et al., 2023; Keban et al., 2025). The use of literature in classroom learning also remains largely focused on language-related aspects, even though literature has strong potential as a medium for character education (Panglipur & Listiyaningsih, 2017; Sudarmi et al., 2026). Not all children's literature explicitly presents patriotic values; however, it still has the potential to instill character through characters and events that are closely connected to students' everyday experiences (Putri, 2017; Luthfillah & Rachman, 2022; Fatmawati et al., 2021). This condition indicates the need for more effective and contextual learning strategies to optimize the role of children's literature in strengthening character education in elementary schools.

A relevant approach for examining values represented in children's literature is the sociology of literature, which views literary works as reflections of social realities, values, and community life (Saddhono et al., 2017; Fals et al., 2023). Through the sociology of literature approach, character values such as patriotism can be identified through characters, conflicts, and settings that portray social life realistically (Syamimie et al., 2023; Cahyono et al., 2024; Emilia & Pamungkas, 2025). Literature is not merely understood as an imaginative work but also as a medium containing educational values that can support character development, including nationalism among elementary school students (Nugrahani et al., 2020; Romadhan, 2021). The sociology of literature can serve as a bridge to connect patriotic values embedded in literary works with the development of national character among elementary school students.

One of the children's literary works that can be examined through the sociology of literature is the novel *Sang Wartawati Cilik* by Gamal Komandoko. This novel portrays children's lives through rich social interactions, responsibility, social awareness, and a spirit of contributing to their surrounding environment (Komandoko (2016). As a literary work for children, the novel contains moral and social values closely related to everyday life, making it a potential medium for character development and fostering students' understanding of nationalism (Sarumpaet, 2017; Nurgiyantoro, 2019). This is in line with literacy and character education policies that encourage the use of literary texts as a medium for developing nationalism and character in elementary schools (Kemdikbudristek, 2022; Mukaromah et al., 2025; Widayati & Nurnaningsih, 2026). Therefore, *Sang Wartawati Cilik* has academic relevance because it presents representations of moral and social values that can be analysed through the perspective of the sociology of literature as part of strengthening character education.

In line with the use of literary works as a medium for character development, several previous studies have examined patriotism and nationalism values in various literary works and their integration into educational contexts. Nurhuda et al. (2017) emphasised that the sociology of literature approach can be used to identify character values in novels and examine their relevance to learning. Quraisyin et al. (2023) also found that novels can function as a medium for fostering love for the homeland, willingness to sacrifice, fighting spirit, and nationalism through national values embedded in stories. In the elementary school context. In the elementary school context, ptiyani & Yusuf (2022) highlighted that nationalism can be cultivated through text-based learning media, while Puspitasari et al. (2023) dan Pujianingsih et al. (2025) demonstrated that habituation through activities grounded in national values

can strengthen students' nationalistic character within the school environment.

Previous studies have shown that literary works can serve as a medium for character development; however, several limitations remain. Most studies have focused on adult literature, secondary education contexts, or the implementation of nationalism education without deeply examining the source of values embedded in children's literature. In addition, patriotism and nationalism have generally been discussed separately, resulting in limited research that systematically connects patriotic values as a foundational basis with the implementation of nationalistic character. The novelty of this study lies in its systematic examination of patriotic values in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*," by Gamal Komandoko using the indicators proposed by Kalalo (2019), namely love for the homeland, responsibility, empathy, mutual cooperation, courage, willingness to sacrifice, and perseverance. These values are then linked to nationalism character in elementary schools based on the frameworks of Septyani & Yusuf (2022) serta Agustin & Adela (2024) as well as Agustin and Adela (2024) to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relevance of patriotism in children's literature to the development of students' nationalistic character.

This study aims to describe the patriotic values represented in the novel *Sang Wartawati Cilik* by Gamal Komandoko, the nationalism character in elementary school education, and the relevance of patriotic values to the nationalism character in elementary schools. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically by enriching the discourse on character education through children's literature and, practically, to serve as a reference for teachers and schools in utilising literary works as contextual learning media to cultivate nationalism values among elementary school students.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, a library research type with a content analysis design for literary texts, namely the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" by Gamal Komandoko. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is considered capable of exploring the meaning, values and moral messages contained in literary texts in depth and holistically (Moleong, 2017). The study was conducted as library research, with data consisting of patriotic values represented in the novel, including characters' behaviors, dialogues, conflicts, plot development, and other narrative elements that reflect such values. The collected data were then used to describe patriotic values in the novel, nationalism as a character in elementary schools, and the relationship between both within the context of basic education.

The primary data source was the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*," while supporting data were obtained from character education policy documents, academic books, scientific journal articles, and literature related to the sociology of literature and character education. Data were collected through document analysis and textual analysis of the novel. Data selection was conducted using purposive sampling by identifying textual segments that specifically represented indicators of patriotic values, love for the homeland, responsibility, empathy, mutual cooperation, courage, willingness to sacrifice, and perseverance. In addition, data collection was supported by a literature review involving academic books, scientific journal articles, and policy documents relevant to the focus of the study.

Data analysis techniques in this study are used to describe the values of patriotism in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" using a sociological literary approach proposed by Ben-Ari & Enosh (2019) through a dialectical technique that emphasises the identification of contradictions, the interrelation of narrative elements, and the construction of meaning from the interaction of characters, events, and conflicts in the story. This approach allows patriotic values to be understood both textually and contextually. The analysis is conducted through close reading to deeply and repeatedly understand the text, followed by coding that assigns labels to quotations based on indicators of patriotism such as responsibility, courage, honesty, love for the homeland, social care, discipline, and perseverance, so that the data becomes more structured.

The interactive analysis model by Miles, Huberman & Saldaña (2018) is used to examine the relevance of patriotic values to the development of national character in elementary school, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction is carried out by selecting and focusing data

according to nationalism indicators. Data display is conducted by organising findings in descriptive form. Conclusion drawing is used to formulate the relationship between patriotic values in the novel and the strengthening of students' nationalist character in elementary school, ensuring that the analysis is structured, systematic, and contextual in line with the research objectives.

Data validity in this study is ensured through theory triangulation and source triangulation to guarantee that the analytical results are well-founded and scientifically accountable. Theory triangulation is conducted by comparing findings on patriotic values in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" with relevant theoretical concepts such as character education theory and sociological literary theory, as well as concepts of patriotism and nationalism. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing textual analysis results with various supporting sources, such as academic books, scientific journal articles, and relevant previous studies, so that the interpretation is not subjective or singular but consistent and aligned with multiple credible academic references.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings of this study are presented systematically in accordance with the research objectives. The discussion begins with an analysis of patriotic values in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*," by Gamal Komandoko, followed by an examination of nationalism character within the context of elementary education, and concludes with an explanation of the relevance between patriotic values in children's literature and the development of students' nationalism character.

1. Patriotic Values in the Novel *Sang Wartawati Cilik* by Gamal Komandoko

The novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*," by Gamal Komandoko was analyzed to identify patriotic values represented in the text and to examine their relevance to the development of nationalism character in elementary schools. The findings indicate that patriotic values are reflected through the characters' dialogues, actions, and life experiences presented throughout the storyline. These values were classified based on the patriotism indicators proposed by Kalalo (2019), namely love for the homeland, responsibility, empathy, mutual cooperation, courage, willingness to sacrifice, and perseverance. This classification provides a more structured understanding of the meanings conveyed in the novel. The findings are presented as follows.

Love for the Homeland

The value of love for the homeland in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" is reflected through appreciation of Indonesian culture and respect for the nation's historical struggle. Patriotism is portrayed through experiences that are closely connected to children's everyday lives, making the values more concrete and easier to understand.

Pride in national culture is illustrated when the child characters learn traditional dance under the guidance of Mbak Retno. The novel states: "*Di bawah bimbingan Mbak Retno, seluruh anak didik tarinya semakin mencintai kebudayaan negerinya sendiri, Indonesia. Ternyata tari tradisional itu mempunyai kebudayaan yang tinggi mutunya serta tinggi pula falsafah yang dikandungnya! Mbak Retno telah mengajarkan bahwa kebudayaan Indonesia itu luhur dan juga sarat dengan pesan-pesan kemanusiaan yang mengagumkan*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 27). This scene not only teaches artistic skills but also fosters appreciation and pride in Indonesian culture as a valuable heritage and national identity.

The value of love for the homeland is also reflected through respect for national historical figures. This is shown when Pak Suwito says: "*Bapak ingat kota Blitar. Disana ada makam tokoh proklamator kita, Bung Karno. Jadi bapak putuskan untuk melewati rute Selatan menuju kota Blitar karena bapak sekalian ingin nyekar ke makam Bung Karno itu*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 55). The intention to visit Bung Karno's grave demonstrates that honoring national heroes is one form of expressing love for the nation and appreciation for its historical struggle.

The appreciation of national culture and respect for historical figures in "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" demonstrate that love for the homeland is developed through appreciation of cultural heritage and recognition of national history. Patriotism is not merely expressed through feelings of national pride but also through efforts to preserve culture and respect the sacrifices of national heroes.

Responsibility

The value of responsibility is portrayed through the characters' attitudes in carrying out their obligations sincerely, both towards God, themselves, and others. This sense of responsibility appears not only in major duties but also in everyday habits that reflect moral maturity.

One example of responsibility is shown when Niken and her friend immediately perform the *Dhuhr* prayer after hearing the call to prayer. The text states: "*Suara azan Duhur yang berkumandang dari kejauhan menyadarkan kedua gadis cilik itu untuk segera menunaikan kewajibannya selaku muslimah di manapun mereka berada*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 33). This attitude reflects the awareness that responsibility begins with personal discipline in fulfilling spiritual obligations.

Responsibility is also reflected in the field of journalism that Niken is learning about. Pak Haji's advice, "*Kalau kelak kau jadi wartawati, jadilah wartawati yang baik, yang jujur mengungkap kebenaran, serta bertanggung jawab penuh terhadap tulisan kalian itu nantinya!*" Komandoko (2016, p. 36) emphasises that writing is not merely about producing news but also about conveying truth with honesty. Through this message, the profession of journalism is portrayed as a trust that requires integrity and moral commitment.

Niken's honesty when she says, "*Terus-terang saja, Pak. Kami ini bukan wartawati cilik! Kami hanya senang untuk menulis*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 42), demonstrating responsibility towards her own identity. She refuses to gain recognition through dishonesty. This attitude shows that responsibility also means having the courage to present oneself truthfully.

In addition, the value of responsibility is strengthened through the rejection of plagiarism. Pak Bram's advice, "*Para plagiator itu adalah pengecut-engecut yang tidak bermoral!... Kamu harus menjauhi sifat menjiplak serta banggalah dengan karyamu sendiri*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 98), emphasises the importance of respecting personal effort and originality.

These events in the novel illustrate responsibility as a form of moral awareness in fulfilling obligations sincerely, acting honestly, and appreciating one's own efforts. This value highlights its role in developing mature attitudes while maintaining personal integrity in real life.

Empathy or Social Awareness

Empathy in the novel is reflected through the characters' ability to understand the conditions of others and their willingness to help. This value develops through social awareness that emerges from concern for the surrounding environment.

This is illustrated when Pak Bram recognizes his daughter's social sensitivity: "*Pak Bram bersyukur karena jiwa sosial putrinya, ternyata peka pula dengan kondisi lingkungannya*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 105). The main character is portrayed as someone who does not live solely for herself but also pays attention to the difficulties experienced by others. Such sensitivity becomes the foundation for social action.

This sense of concern is then translated into concrete action, as shown in the sentence: "*Perasaan Niken seakan melambung dipenuhi rasa haru. Ia telah berbuat sekuat tenaga untuk turut meringankan beban penderitaan sesama manusia*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 105). Niken does not stop at feeling sympathy but strives to take meaningful action that benefits others.

Through Niken's experiences, empathy is portrayed as an important humanitarian value in shaping patriotism. Concern for others demonstrates that love for one's nation can also be expressed through attention, care, and contributions to the surrounding community.

Mutual Cooperation

The novel also portrays mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) as a social strength that characterises Indonesian society. This spirit of togetherness is reflected in situations where individual problems are not treated as personal burdens but are addressed collectively.

Pak Bram expresses this belief by saying, "*Bapak merasa optimis, mengingat sifat gotong-royong itu merupakan ciri dari budaya Bangsa kita. Dengan gotong-royong untuk menyatukan dana yang terkumpul, bapak optimis anak itu dapat dioperasi*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 110). This statement shows that mutual cooperation is viewed as a practical solution for overcoming social challenges.

The strength of community solidarity becomes even more visible as support continues to arrive. The novel states, "*Kepedulian sosial di masyarakat luas masih juga tinggi... telah terisi dengan banyaknya sumbangan yang mengalir*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 118). This situation illustrates that collective action can bring meaningful change when people support one another.

Through these events, mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) is portrayed as a cultural value that remains deeply rooted in society while also serving as a concrete expression of social awareness. The willingness to help one another demonstrates that collective solidarity can strengthen social unity and provide solutions to challenges faced together.

Courage

The value of courage in the novel is reflected through the characters' readiness to face challenges, try new experiences, and admit their mistakes. This value develops along with the characters' learning process in dealing with new situations.

Niken faces a major challenge when she is assigned to interview Pak Suwito: "*Inilah tantangan yang menguras segenap keberanian serta kemampuannya....*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 22). This situation shows that courage is needed to overcome fear and attempt something unfamiliar.

The character does not choose to withdraw when facing obstacles. Instead, "*Ia pun merasa semakin tertantang untuk bisa secepatnya menanggulangi segala hambatan itu*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 29). This attitude indicates that challenges become a driving force for personal growth.

Courage is also shown when Niken admits her mistake: "*Maafrican Niken, Pak. Niken lupa mengambil foto Pak Suwito itu!*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 81). This confession reflects moral courage. Meanwhile, her willingness to ask Pak Bram about her shortcomings (Komandoko, 2016, p. 96) demonstrates the courage to learn and improve herself.

The value of courage in the novel is not limited to a single character but is reflected in the interactions among characters who encourage one another to grow. This value plays an important role in shaping a personality that is resilient, honest, and responsible in facing various life situations.

Willingness to Sacrifice

The attitude of willingness to sacrifice is portrayed through the characters' readiness to prioritise the needs of others. This value is evident when Niken does not use the results of her efforts solely for personal benefit. Niken's intention to help is shown when she says, "*Niken akan memberikan setengah uang honor itu untuk Pak Suwito serta setengahnya lagi untuk Seto!*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 104). This decision reflects care expressed through tangible sacrifice.

Her sincerity becomes even clearer when she politely refuses money from Pak Suwito: "*Niken menolak dengan halus...*" and emphasises, "*Biarlah uang ini digunakan oleh Seto yang tentu lebih membutuhkan dibandingkan Niken*" (Komandoko, 2016, hlm. 114-115). This attitude shows that sacrifice arises from awareness of prioritising others' needs as a genuine form of social concern.

The value of willingness to sacrifice in the novel is reflected in the characters' readiness to prioritise others over themselves. This value demonstrates sincere social care and sensitivity towards people in need of assistance.

Perseverance

Perseverance emerges as one of the strongest values reflected in the characters' journey throughout the novel. This fighting spirit appears from the beginning when Niken shows strong determination in learning: "*Wajahnya terlihat letih. Maklum, sejak tadi pagi ia berjuang keras menyerap ilmu...*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 5). Despite exhaustion, she continues her efforts to develop herself and pursue learning.

The novel also emphasizes that success requires strong determination. The statement, "*Yang terpenting adalah kemauan...*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 19), conveys the idea that determination and commitment are more essential than talent alone.

The spirit of perseverance in facing difficulties is clearly illustrated in the sentence, "*Masak kita harus menyerah, sementara kita telah sampai dan berjuang keras di sini*" (Komandoko, 2016, p. 33). This expression reflects firmness and persistence in overcoming obstacles. A similar determination is shown when Niken promises to help Seto (Komandoko, 2016, p. 81). Based on the characters' experiences, perseverance is not merely related to achieving personal goals but is also reflected in their determination to continue striving despite various challenges.

This value represents resilience, persistence, and a strong fighting spirit demonstrated by the characters throughout their life experiences.

Overall, the findings indicate that the patriotic values portrayed in the novel are interconnected in shaping the characters' development. The prominence of each value is reflected through its direct involvement in the storyline, the strength of the characters' actions, and the social impact generated, providing a clear representation of character formation based on national values within children's literature.

2. Character Values of Nationalism in the Context of Elementary School Education

The study of nationalism character in elementary schools is not only theoretical but is also reflected in its practical implementation through classroom learning, school habituation, and students' social interactions. Nationalism is understood as the operational form of patriotic values that are instilled through daily learning experiences. Therefore, analysing its implementation is important to examine how these values are concretely applied in basic education.

The first study, namely a conceptual synthesis of Septyani & Yusuf (2022), shows that nationalism character in elementary school can be mapped into six main indicators: love for the homeland and nation, responsibility as citizens, tolerance toward diversity, mutual cooperation, willingness to sacrifice for the common good, and politeness. Love for the homeland is demonstrated through respect for national symbols, proper use of the Indonesian language, and participation in national activities. Responsibility is reflected in the completion of school tasks and adherence to school rules. Tolerance is shown through attitudes of respecting differences in religion, ethnicity, and social background. Mutual cooperation and willingness to sacrifice are visible in collaborative activities and concern for collective interests, while politeness is reflected in daily interactions with teachers and peers. The implementation of these values is carried out through flag ceremonies, literacy activities, social communication, religious habituation, cultural arts activities, and students' collaborative tasks.

Furthermore, a conceptual synthesis of Agustin & Adela (2024) research reveals that the character of nationalism in elementary schools is mapped into six indicators: love for the homeland and nation, responsibility, tolerance, mutual cooperation, respect for the rights and obligations of others, and courtesy. The indicator of love for the homeland is manifested through the introduction of national culture and identity in learning activities. Responsibility is demonstrated through awareness of carrying out duties and obligations as students. Tolerance and mutual cooperation are evident in social interactions that respect diversity and cooperation between students. The indicator of respect for the rights and obligations of others is manifested through an attitude of respecting the rights of friends, obeying shared rules, and carrying out obligations according to each role. Meanwhile, courtesy is reflected in behaviour that respects teachers, friends, and the school community. The implementation of these values is carried out through school culture, learning activities, social habits, and character education programmes that are integrated into school activities.

Based on the conceptual synthesis of the two studies, there are core similarities in the form of five main indicators of nationalism, namely love of the homeland, responsibility, tolerance, mutual cooperation, and politeness. This similarity shows that nationalism is essentially built through a continuous and integrated process in various educational activities. However, there are differences in emphasis between the two studies that enrich the understanding of the character of nationalism. Septyani & Yusuf (2022) added the dimension of willingness to sacrifice as a form of strengthening national attitudes in the context of togetherness, while Agustin & Adela (2024) emphasized the importance of awareness of respect for rights and obligations as part of national life in the school environment. This difference shows that nationalism is not only understood as a feeling of love for the country, but also includes broader social dimensions such as concern, responsibility, and the ability to live side by side in harmony.

These findings show that nationalism character in elementary schools such as love for the homeland, responsibility, mutual cooperation, tolerance, politeness, willingness to sacrifice, and respect for rights and obligations is built through the integration of national, social, and moral values that complement one another. Its implementation is carried out continuously through learning activities, school culture, daily habituation, social activities, literacy programs, extracurricular activities, and collaborative practices that actively involve students in

school life. Therefore, the formation of nationalistic character does not stop at the level of conceptual understanding but must be realised through the habituation of real behaviour in students' daily lives at school.

3. Relevance of Patriotic Values in the Novel *Sang Wartawati Cilik* by Gamal Komandoko to Nationalism Character Education in Elementary Schools

The patriotic values contained in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" by Gamal Komandoko are closely related to the nationalism values implemented in elementary school education. This relationship demonstrates a shared direction in character development, although originating from two different contexts, namely literary works and school-based educational practice.

In terms of love for the homeland, the novel portrays national pride through appreciation of Indonesian culture and respect for national figures and history. This value aligns with elementary school practices that emphasize the introduction of national symbols, cultural preservation, and learning national history. Both contribute to the formation of students' national identity through understanding and appreciation of Indonesia's cultural and historical heritage.

The value of responsibility in the novel is reflected in attitudes of discipline, commitment to tasks, integrity in work, and respect for others. This corresponds to students' responsibilities in elementary schools, which are manifested in disciplined learning, fulfillment of obligations, and compliance with school rules. In addition, aspects of tolerance, politeness, and respect for rights and obligations can also be understood as part of social responsibility, as they are related to maintaining harmonious interactions and practicing fairness in social life.

The value of empathy or social care is shown through the characters' sensitivity to the surrounding environment, which is then expressed in direct helping actions. This aligns with character education in elementary schools, which not only emphasizes empathy as an emotional response but also encourages concrete actions such as helping peers or engaging in social activities. Thus, care does not remain at the emotional level but develops into meaningful actions that benefit others.

The value of mutual cooperation is often demonstrated through cooperative activities such as collecting aid and other collective activities. This aligns with elementary school practices, which emphasise group work, classroom activities, and various social activities based on togetherness. Both contexts emphasise that cooperation is a crucial foundation for building strong and productive social relationships.

The value of courage emerges through the attitude of facing challenges, the courage to admit mistakes, and the ability to conduct self-evaluation. In elementary education, this value is related to strengthening self-confidence, the courage to express opinions, and active involvement in the learning process. This demonstrates that courage is not only evident in external actions but also in the ability to reflect on self-improvement.

The value of self-sacrifice is reflected in the tendency to prioritise the interests of others over personal interests. This aligns with nationalism education in elementary schools, which emphasises social awareness and prioritising the common good. These values strengthen the formation of character oriented towards social interests.

The value of perseverance is reflected through diligence, enthusiasm for learning, and consistency in facing difficulties. This condition aligns with learning practices in elementary schools that emphasise hard work, discipline, and persistence in completing tasks. Therefore, perseverance becomes one of the essential foundations for developing resilient student character.

Overall, the values of patriotism in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*," have a strong relevance to national character education in elementary schools because both are oriented towards the formation of national character through love of the homeland, responsibility, empathy, mutual cooperation, courage, willingness to sacrifice, and perseverance. Patriotism in literary works functions as a foundation of values and emotional role models, while nationalism in elementary schools becomes a form of real application through learning, school culture, and social habits. This relationship shows that children's literature can be a strategic medium in supporting character education so that students not only understand national values conceptually but are also able to apply them in everyday attitudes and behaviors.

Discussion

This discussion focuses on three main integrated findings: the identification of patriotic values in Gamal Komandoko's novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*," an analysis of nationalistic character in the context of elementary school education, and the relevance of both in shaping the national character of elementary school students. These three aspects are interrelated and demonstrate that children's literature can function not only as a medium for entertainment or literacy but also as a means of character education that supports the implementation of nationalism in elementary schools.

1. Patriotic Values in the Novel *Sang Wartawati Cilik* by Gamal Komandoko

Gamal Komandoko's novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" contains patriotic values such as love for the homeland, responsibility, empathy, mutual cooperation, courage, willingness to sacrifice, and perseverance. This finding is relevant to the research of Kalalo et al. (2019) who examined the value of patriotism in the novel *Keluarga Gerilya* and found that literary works can be a medium for instilling patriotism through the representation of struggle, sacrifice, and love for the nation. The relevance lies in the similarity that both studies position the novel as a source of national character education through the analysis of characters, actions, and moral messages. However, there are fundamental differences in the form of patriotism displayed. Previous research revealed patriotism through narratives of national struggle that are heroic and oriented towards the interests of the state, while this study found patriotism in children's daily experiences that are closer to the reality of everyday life so that its contribution is more applicable to elementary school education. The novelty of this research lies in expanding the concept of patriotism from narratives of great struggles to the formation of children's patriotic character through simple experiences, making its contribution more applicable to elementary school education.

Judging from the focus of its study, Rosid (2021) research does not specifically discuss the value of patriotism in novels but rather examines children's literature as a means of character development. Nevertheless, these findings remain relevant to this study because they emphasise that children's literature plays a crucial role in character formation through the presentation of moral values appropriate to children's development. The difference is that previous research discussed the general function of children's literature as a medium for character development, while this study specifically identifies the values of patriotism in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" through the daily experiences of child characters, making them more relatable to students' lives.

Based on these findings, the value of patriotism in children's literature can be understood as part of the character formation process that occurs through reading experiences and interpreting stories. From a character education perspective, the value of patriotism is not only understood as knowledge but is also internalised through the daily experiences of the characters and events in the story, making it closer to the lives of students and easier to apply in elementary school learning (Kamandoko, 2016). In line with the sociological perspective of literature, literary works represent social realities that contain life values, thus being able to become a learning medium that brings students closer to the experience of nationality in a contextual manner (Anshari & Juanda, 2024). Thus, the novel *Sang Wartawati Cilik* not only presents an entertaining story but also becomes an effective means to foster patriotism through the daily experiences of characters that are relevant to the lives of elementary school students.

2. Character Values of Nationalism in the Context of Elementary School Education

Nationalism in elementary schools is manifested through love of the homeland, responsibility, tolerance, mutual cooperation, willingness to sacrifice, politeness, and respect for rights and obligations through real-life practices in school life. This aligns with research by Septyani & Yusuf (2022), which asserts that students' nationalism is built through familiarisation with school culture, discipline, social activities, and national learning. Its relevance is evident in the emphasis that nationalism is not formed instantly, but rather through a continuous process of habituation. However, previous research focused more on educational practices within the school environment, while this study reveals that the formation of nationalism stems not only from school culture but can also be strengthened by other learning resources, including children's literature.

These findings are also relevant to research by Agustin & Adela (2024), which places school culture as a primary factor in developing nationalistic character. However, this study presents a broader perspective. Nationalism

is not only influenced by the school environment as a social space but is also supported by literacy experiences that enable students to understand national values through reflection. In other words, school culture serves as a vehicle for habituation, while children's literature serves as a medium for internalising values. This distinction demonstrates that the formation of nationalism will be more effective when supported by a complementary combination of real-life experiences and literary experiences.

Although not directly addressing nationalistic character in elementary schools, research by Mukaromah et al. (2025), shows that children's story texts in textbooks contain various character values that support the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile. These findings are relevant to this study because both studies position literary works as a medium for instilling character values in learning. The difference is that previous studies focused on character values found in textbooks in general, while this study is a literature review that specifically examines nationalistic character in elementary education from various previous research sources to obtain a more comprehensive conceptual picture.

Based on the above description, the formation of nationalistic character, such as through love of country, responsibility, tolerance, mutual cooperation, willingness to sacrifice, politeness, and respect for rights and obligations, relies not only on school culture as a space for habituating values but is also reinforced by literary-based learning resources that serve as a medium for internalizing values, as well as various learning experiences that enable students to reflect on values in real life. These three aspects interact to shape nationalistic character, which is not only understood conceptually but also reflected in students' daily attitudes and behaviors.

3. Relevance of Patriotic Values in the Novel *Sang Wartawati Cilik* by Gamal Komandoko to Nationalism Character Education in Elementary Schools

The patriotic values in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" are strongly relevant to the character of nationalism implemented in elementary schools. This relevance is evident in the alignment of the patriotic values in the novel with the indicators of nationalism developed through learning and school culture. This finding aligns with research by Sartika & Ndona (2024) which states that Pancasila Education plays a role in instilling national character through a structured learning process. Their relevance lies in the same goal: shaping national character through the internalisation of national values. However, previous research emphasized character formation through formal learning in Pancasila education subjects, while this research shows that children's literature can also be an effective medium in instilling patriotic values that contribute to the formation of nationalistic character in elementary schools.

Although it does not specifically examine the relationship between patriotism in literary works and national character in elementary schools, Anugrah & Rahmat (2024), research still provides a relevant foundation because it emphasizes that character education requires a source of values that can be meaningfully internalized by students. The similarity lies in the view that character development requires media that present tangible experiences of values. However, previous research discussed character education in general, while this study more specifically demonstrates the link between the values of patriotism in the novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" and the formation of nationalistic character. These findings broaden the understanding that children's literature can be an effective learning resource in supporting character education in elementary schools.

More broadly, the results of this study demonstrate that patriotism and nationalism are two interrelated concepts but occupy distinct positions. Patriotism in novels serves as a foundation of values that builds students' emotional, moral, and social awareness, while nationalism in schools serves as a concrete manifestation of the application of these values in everyday life. This relationship suggests that the process of national character formation occurs through two stages: internalisation of values through reading experiences and actualisation of values through social experiences in the school environment.

Overall, the novelty of this research lies in the integration of children's literature studies and nationalistic character education in elementary schools, which have tended to be studied separately. Unlike previous studies that focused more on the study of patriotism in literary works or the implementation of nationalism in schools separately, this study demonstrates a close relationship between the two. The research findings reveal that the patriotic values represented in the novel *Sang Wartawati Cilik* align with the indicators of nationalistic character developed in

elementary schools. This alignment confirms that children's literature can serve as a means of internalizing national values, which are then actualized through various learning activities and habits in schools.

CONCLUSION

The novel "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*," by Gamal Komandoko contains patriotic values such as love of country, responsibility, empathy, mutual cooperation, courage, willingness to sacrifice, and perseverance, which are displayed through the characters' behaviour and storyline. These patriotic values form the basis for the development of national character. In elementary schools, national character is formed through habits and a school culture that instills the values of love of country, responsibility, tolerance, social awareness, cooperation, courtesy, and respect for rights and obligations. The alignment of the values contained in the novel with those developed in schools indicates that "*Sang Wartawati Cilik*" is relevant as a children's literature medium to support the development of students' nationalistic character from an early age.

The implication of this study is that children's literature can be utilized as a learning resource and instructional medium in character education at the elementary school level to instill patriotic and nationalist values in a contextual and meaningful way. Teachers may integrate literary works into classroom learning through reading, discussion, and reflection activities to help students understand and apply patriotic values as part of their nationalist character in everyday life. Schools may strengthen literacy programs and character habituation by incorporating children's literature as a sustainable learning medium within school activities. Future researchers may expand this study by examining other children's literary works or applying experimental approaches to investigate the influence of literature on students' character development more comprehensively.

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