

Didactic and Philosophical Lessons in Two Indonesian Fables: Kancil and the Crocodile, and the Greedy Crocodile

Ni Nyoman Karmini

IKIP Saraswati, Bali, Indonesia
Email: [ninyomankarmini\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:ninyomankarmini@gmail.com)

Abstract: *This study examines the moral and philosophical values embedded in two traditional Indonesian fables: The Mouse Deer and the Crocodile and The Story of the Greedy Crocodile. Using structuralism, semiotics, and moral philosophy as analytical frameworks, the research reveals how these fables embody principles of karma, justice, and rationality. The analysis highlights values such as caution, perseverance, self-control, and ethical reasoning. These stories serve not only as entertaining folklore but also as effective tools for character education. The paper underscores their relevance in shaping ethical awareness, particularly in line with Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational principles.*

Keywords: moral philosophy, character education, Indonesian folklore, fable analysis, didactic values

1. Introduction

Indonesia is very rich in cultural heritage, which includes literary works. Folklore as one of the cultural heritages and is a traditional narrative that lives and develops in a society, is passed down orally from generation to generation, and reflects cultural values and local wisdom. Folklore is a reflection of civilization, a vehicle for transmitting values, and an effective medium for teaching wisdom across generations. Hutomo (1991) stated that folklore is a story that is passed down orally from generation to generation. This story developed because it was passed down collectively. The author is unknown (anonymous), so that fairy tales are considered the common property of the community (Liputan6.com, 2025).

One form of folklore is fairy tales. Fairy tales are oral literature or folk prose that have existed for a long time and have been passed down from generation to generation. Nurgiantoro (2005) states that fairy tales are stories that did not really happen and in many ways often do not make sense. Judging from the plot, the plot of the fairy tale is very simple, allowing it to be read quickly and understood through its main plot points. This simplicity enables quick reading and comprehension of the main plot points, which include character introductions, the core narrative, and a closing that conveys lessons. Fairy tales often begin with phrases such as "Once upon a time," "Once upon a time," or "In a faraway land." The ambiguity of the time and place setting gives the story a universal impression, making it acceptable and adaptable in various cultures and eras (Trianto, 2006). Fairy tales are also not bound by time and place (Danandjaja, 2007).

There are several types of fairy tales, such as fables, legends, myths, and sagas. Fairy tales have an important role in the formation of character and social values of society. Fairy tales are an effective medium for instilling various moral teachings, ethics, and life wisdom in an easy-to-understand and enjoyable way (Karmini, 2025). Fairy tales can be used as a medium to shape children's character because they have moral values that can be learned by children (Habsari, 2017). Fairy tales are also one of the effective informal education methods,

especially for children who are in the process of forming their personalities. In fairy tales, there are magical or supernatural elements, such as magic, curses, or mythical creatures such as fairies, giants, dragons, or even talking animals. These elements add to the appeal and magic of the story and can trigger the imagination of the reader or listener. The main function of fairy tales is to convey a moral message or life lesson. This message is usually conveyed implicitly through the journey and experiences of the main character or sometimes conveyed explicitly at the end of the story.

Fables are part of folklore, especially fairy tales. Fables are a type of fairy tale or short story that is characterized by the use of animals as the main characters (Tarigan, 2011; Sitoresmi, 2025). Animals in fables are depicted as having human-like characteristics and behaviors, such as being able to talk, think, feel emotions, and carry out moral actions (Nurgiantoro, 2005; Sitoresmi, 2025). Through the behavior and interactions of these animals, readers or listeners are invited to reflect on virtues (such as honesty, diligence, and wisdom) and vices (such as greed, lies, and laziness). Through animal characters, as a reflection of human behavior, fables represent cleverness that confronts physical strength, and greed clearly presents the fatal consequences of uncontrolled lust. Through animal characters, these fables cleverly reflect the complexity of basic human nature, from ambition and greed to intelligence and justice.

Among the many fable stories, the most famous and widely known fables are the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile and the Story of the Greedy Crocodile. These two fables are used as objects in this study because they are very interesting to analyze. Therefore, a problem arises, namely, what values are contained in the fables of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile and the Story of the Greedy Crocodile? The purpose of this study is to describe the values contained in the fables of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile and the Story of the Greedy Crocodile. The values found in the fables 'The Mouse Deer and the Crocodile' and 'The Greedy Crocodile, reflect cultural values and local wisdom. The elements of the story are interconnected to form a system of meaning.

Volume 14 Issue 7, July 2025

Fully Refereed | Open Access | Double Blind Peer Reviewed Journal

www.ijsr.net

This fable is full of binary oppositions that form the structure of the story. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and how meaning is created and interpreted (Eco, 1976; Karmini, 2011: 111). In fables, every character, action, and object can be seen as a sign that carries a certain meaning. Moral philosophy in fable analysis aims to explore ethical values, moral teachings, and life lessons that are intended to be conveyed to readers, especially children. This study is significant in highlighting how traditional folklore can function as a meaningful medium for moral education and philosophical reflection, particularly in developing character education frameworks rooted in cultural narratives.

2. Method

The data source for this study is the fable of Kancil and Buaya; The Story of the Greedy Crocodile. The analysis was carried out on the text content (content analysis) of both fables. The focus of this study is on the interpretation of the didactic and philosophical values contained in both fables. The didactic and philosophical values of the object are a study of cultural results (Ratna, 2019). Specific situations in the story experienced by certain people or social groups are also used as objects related to the research objectives (Alsa, 2004). Because of that, this study is a type of qualitative research. Data was collected by reading both fables carefully and in depth to obtain an overview of the theme, character traits, story plot, setting, and others, including signs, such as indexes and symbols, as well as didactic and philosophical values, and then recording them in detail. The data collected was reduced, displayed into appropriate patterns, categories, focuses, or themes, so that in the end it could be concluded (Faisal, 2003:256). Furthermore, the data were analyzed using structuralism, semiotics, and moral philosophy approaches as well as hermeneutics and verstehen approaches. Hermeneutics, or interpretive methods, are a way of understanding by interpreting life between the essence of fiction and reality (Moleong, 1996:14). Betti stated that interpretation is needed to understand the forms, to reveal the messages conveyed, while verstehen is used to understand in depth (Bleicher, 2003:35). This interpretation method focuses on understanding the didactic and philosophical values behind the fable text. The results of the study are presented descriptively with inductive-deductive techniques.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Synopsis of Mouse Deer and Crocodile

Once, Mouse Deer was sitting relaxing under a tree, enjoying the gentle breeze. Then Mouse Deer felt hungry and wanted to eat a cucumber that was across the river. It turned out that the river was inhabited by crocodiles. The clever Mouse Deer immediately got an idea and headed straight towards the river to approach Crocodile. The mouse deer, who was starting to get hungry, dared to approach Crocodile and stated that he had a lot of fresh meat. Crocodile woke up from his sleep and was initially angry because he felt disturbed. After hearing about the fresh meat that Mouse Deer had, Crocodile stated that all his friends had not eaten either. At first Crocodile doubted Mouse Deer's words, but Mouse Deer assured him that he was a good friend, so Crocodile believed him. Crocodile called all his friends. The crocodiles were ordered to line up, and the

mouse deer began to jump onto the crocodile's body while counting. On the count of 9, the mouse deer jumped to the edge of the river. The crocodile asked for a share of fresh meat, but the mouse deer said he didn't have any fresh meat and mocked the stupid crocodile for being easily fooled. The mouse deer said, "It's delicious. How can you eat without any effort?" One annoyed crocodile said, "I will repay you for all your actions." The mouse deer laughed and left the crocodile to look for cucumbers.

3.2 Synopsis of the Story of the Greedy Crocodile

On the edge of the river there was a crocodile who was hungry because he had not eaten for three days. The crocodile immediately went into the river because he did not want to die of hunger. While swimming looking for prey, he saw a duck who was also swimming looking for prey. The duck knew he was being watched by the crocodile; he immediately moved to the shore. Seeing that his prey was about to escape, the crocodile immediately chased after him, and finally the duck was caught. The duck kept begging the crocodile not to eat him because there was little meat and suggested that the crocodile prey on goats in the forest. The crocodile agreed, and by showing his fangs, he forced the duck to take him into the forest to where the goats were. After seeing many goats eating grass, the duck was told to leave. The duck was happy and ran as fast as he could. After lurking for a while, the crocodile finally found a baby goat that he was ready to eat. The baby goat begged the crocodile not to eat it on the grounds that it was still small and there was not much meat and suggested that the crocodile eat the elephant instead, and he was ready to take the crocodile to the elephant's place on the edge of the lake. The crocodile immediately chased and bit the baby elephant's leg. The crocodile tried to injure and drop the baby elephant but failed. The elephant asked for help from its mother, so many elephants came to help the baby elephant. The crocodile was trampled by the elephant. The crocodile was weak because it had not eaten and finally died.

3.3 Structuralism, Semiotics, Moral Philosophy Study

Fables play an important role in the formation of character and social values of society. Through the stories presented, fables are able to instill various moral, ethical, and life wisdom teachings in an easy-to-understand and enjoyable way. This makes fables one of the most effective informal education methods, especially for children who are in the process of forming their personalities. However, it should be emphasized here that the didactic and philosophical values contained in the two fables are universal and cross-generational. Thus, adults should also adhere to the didactic and philosophical values contained in the fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile and The Story of the Greedy Crocodile.

Essentially, these two fables beautifully illustrate the law of karma. The law of karma is a moral principle of cause and effect. It is not about predetermined destiny but rather about personal responsibility for one's intentions and actions. Every intention and action will bring about its corresponding consequences. The clever and unintentional mouse deer reaps salvation, while the greedy and predatory crocodile suffers the consequences of his own actions and desires. This is a reminder that the law of karma is not only about "punishment"

but also about the "natural consequences" of every choice made. The law of karma is not only believed in by those who are Hindu. The law of karma is a much broader concept and crosses the boundaries of certain religions.

The crocodile figure in the fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile is obviously subject to the law of karma, whereas the mouse deer truly benefits from his deeds. In fact, the crocodile character in this fable is easily tricked since his acts (karma) and intents are selfish and foolish. The Crocodile abuses his position of authority to hurt other people. Thus, in addition to being tricked and humiliated by the Mouse Deer, it affects the Crocodile's inability to obtain food (due to his greed and foolishness). His stomach is left empty, and he may feel embarrassed or frustrated as a result. Failure and loss are the karma of malice and ignorance. In addition, he karmically, ironically "helped" Kancil cross the river. From his deeds (karma) and objectives, Kancil's character in this fable is to protect himself (survival). Kancil defeats dangers without resorting to violence by using his bravery and inventiveness (intellect). Thus, Kancil was able to overcome the crocodile's threat and accomplish his objective of crossing the river. He benefited from his knowledge and fast thinking in trying circumstances. Safety and success are the karma of intelligence and good intentions.

In the fable The Story of the Greedy Crocodile, the law of karma is the core of the entire story. The law of karma applies completely to the Crocodile character. The Crocodile's actions and intentions are indeed excessively greedy and grasping. He wants to prey on everything in front of him without thinking about the consequences or the limits of his abilities. His intention is to fulfill his uncontrolled lust. The karmic impact of his greedy actions and intentions causes Crocodile to starve, and finally Crocodile dies because he is trampled by an elephant.

3.4 Didactic Values of the Fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile

The Value of Wisdom (Ingenuity)

The value of wisdom (ingenuity) is very prominent in this fable. The mouse deer is depicted as a small and weak animal compared to the big and strong crocodile. The mouse deer's ingenuity is able to help him escape the threat of the crocodile. The mouse deer's intelligence helps him find a strategy to deceive the crocodile. This underscores an essential lesson: intelligence and wisdom often triumph over brute force. This description is contained in the fable of the Crocodile and the Mouse Deer. The following is an example of a quote.

"The clever mouse deer immediately got an idea and headed straight to the river to approach the crocodile. "Hello, Crocodile, have you had lunch?" asked the mouse deer.

.....
"Well, coincidentally, you don't need to worry because you have a good friend like me," said the mouse deer while showing his row of sharp teeth.

Hearing Crocodile's negative comments about Mouse Deer's cunning, he had to be patient. Below is an example of the quote. "They said that you are cunning and like to take advantage of your friends," replied Crocodile without

hesitation. Hearing that, Mouse Deer was actually a bit annoyed. But he was patient in order to be able to cross the river. "I can't be that evil. Let it be. They just don't know me yet, because so far I have been too indifferent and don't care about nonsense like that. Now, call your friends," said Mouse Deer.

Value of Caution and Alertness

The fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile shows the value of caution by always being alert to the dangers around him. Although he managed to trick the crocodile, the Mouse Deer was always in a position to face other threats. This teaches the importance of not underestimating the situation and always being careful in every action. Below, the quote is listed as an example to show that the value is in the fable.

Then 8 crocodiles appeared. The mouse deer immediately said, "Come on, line up so I can count how much fresh meat you need." Hearing this, all the crocodiles immediately lined up neatly in the river. Without hesitation, the mouse deer immediately jumped past the 9 crocodiles while counting until he finally reached the other side of the river.

"Come on, line up so I can count..." said Kancil. Actually, it was a reflection of Kancil's caution and alertness.

Values of Independence and Initiative

In this fable, the values of independence and initiative are reflected. When facing danger (wanting to cross the river but it turned out the river was full of crocodiles), Mouse Deer had his own idea/initiative to face the problem. Mouse Deer did not wait for help from others. He took the initiative to find his own solution. This shows the value of independence in solving problems and not relying on others. To prove that Mouse Deer is independent and does not need help from others, here is a quote as an example. The clever Mouse Deer immediately got an idea and headed straight towards the river to approach Crocodile. "Hello, Crocodile, have you had lunch?" asked Mouse Deer.

Values of Optimism and Perseverance

The values of optimism and perseverance are reflected in the fable of Mouse Deer and Crocodile. Mouse Deer faced a life-threatening situation. Mouse Deer did not give up and did not despair. In order to get food (cucumber) across the river because he was very hungry, Mouse Deer always tried. He remained optimistic and looked for a way out. An optimistic and steadfast attitude is reflected in the quotes listed above. This teaches about the importance of perseverance and a positive attitude when facing difficulties.

The Value of Honesty (In the Context of Lessons That Can Be Learned)

In the context of learning, there is something that can be taken from this fable, namely, don't completely trust other people so easily, especially until that person says that they are a good friend. The crocodile, who trusted Kancil too much, was finally fooled. This is a lesson for readers not to be easily deceived and to always be critical. Below is an excerpt.

"I told you, I have a lot of fresh meat. But I'm too lazy to eat it. You know that I don't like meat, right? That's why I want to give you the fresh meat," the mouse deer

answered innocently. "Is that true? Actually, my friends and I haven't eaten at all," the crocodile replied. "Well, coincidentally, you don't need to worry because you have a good friend like me," said the mouse deer while showing his rows of sharp teeth.

Value of Justice (implicit)

Implicitly, this fable illustrates the value of honesty. This fable is often interpreted as the victory of the weak over the strong, who tend to be greedy. The crocodile who wanted to prey on the mouse deer ended up getting nothing. This indirectly shows a kind of karmic justice where bad intentions can turn against the perpetrator. The quote below proves that the crocodile got nothing.

"Hey, mouse deer, where is the fresh meat you promised us?" Mouse Deer burst out laughing and said, "How stupid are you? Didn't I bring a single piece of fresh meat in my hand? That means I don't have any fresh meat for your lunch ration."

From the description above, overall, the fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile is a story full of meaning. This fable teaches readers to prioritize reason and intelligence. Do not prioritize physical strength alone, and it is very important to be vigilant in life.

3.5 Philosophical Values in the Fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile

Superiority of Reason (Rationality) over Physical Strength

In the Fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile, the superiority of reason (rationality) over physical strength is reflected. Philosophically, the mouse deer symbolizes reason, rationality, and intelligence, while the crocodile represents physical strength, primitive instincts, and dominance. The Mouse Deer's victory is a philosophical affirmation that reason (rationality) and strategy can ultimately overcome physical strength or superiority. This is in line with the thoughts of many philosophers who place reason as the main differentiator of humans from other creatures and as an essential tool for survival and development. This teaches that intelligent solutions are more effective than brute force.

Criticism of Greed and Arrogance

In the Fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile, there is a critique of greed and arrogance. The crocodile in this story is depicted as a greedy creature (wanting to prey on the Mouse Deer) and perhaps also arrogant (feeling superior but easily deceived). Philosophically, this fable is a critique of these negative traits. Greed and arrogance often blind common sense and make individuals vulnerable to manipulation. This is a reflection of the essence of human nature, that lust and arrogance can lead to self-destruction.

The Importance of Adaptability and Creativity in Dealing with Problems

In the Fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile, the ability to cope and creativity are reflected. The ability to cope and creativity are very important and necessary when facing problems. The mouse deer was faced with a life-and-death situation. The mouse deer did not give up and did not fight in vain; he quickly adapted to the existing threat and used his

creativity to create a solution. Philosophically, this highlights the importance of adaptability (flexibility of mind) and innovation (out-of-the-ordinary problem solving) in facing existential challenges. This is a lesson about how individuals must always seek new ways to survive and thrive in an uncertain environment.

Power Relations and Resistance

In the Fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile, the relationship of power and resistance is reflected. This fable can be interpreted as an allegory about the relationship of power between the strong and the weak. The mouse deer represents the oppressed or structurally weaker, while the crocodile symbolizes the oppressive power. The victory of the mouse deer provides hope and philosophical inspiration that resistance (not with physical violence, but with intelligence) against oppression is possible. This reflects the idea of distributive justice, or how the weak can also find a way to get their "justice."

Ethical Dilemma (Truth versus Survival)

In the Fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile, an ethical dilemma is reflected, namely truth versus survival. Philosophically, there is a slight ethical dilemma in the Mouse Deer's actions in lying to save himself. Can lying for survival be justified? This fable tends to justify the Mouse Deer's actions from the perspective of pragmatism and utilitarianism (good end result), namely, the Mouse Deer saves his life. This triggers reflection on the limits of ethics in extreme situations, where survival is often the main priority. However, it also teaches readers to be wary of deception.

Philosophically, the fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile presents a fundamental dualism between intelligence and greed. The mouse deer, with its slick wit, often represents wisdom that is able to overcome obstacles. However, on the other hand, its actions can also trigger reflection on the limits of ethics and morality in the use of intelligence. Meanwhile, the figure of the crocodile openly symbolizes lust and greed that have the potential to bring self-destruction. A deep understanding of the characters and storyline offers insight into the basic nature of humans and the consequences of moral choices made (Magnis-Suseno, 1987; 1993). From the description above, it can be said that the fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile is not only a children's story but also a philosophical reflection on the power of reason, moral weakness, adaptability, and the dynamics of power in life.

3.6 Didactic Values in the Story of the Greedy Crocodile

Moral Values (The Dangers of Greed)

Moral values In this case, the dangers of greed are reflected in the fable The Story of the Greedy Crocodile. This is the main and most prominent value in the fable The Story of the Greedy Crocodile. This story clearly shows that greed can bring destruction. The greedy crocodile wants to prey on more than he needs or more than he can afford, which, in the end, greed turns against him because he becomes a victim of deception due to greed. The essence of the story is that there is no point in hoarding more than is necessary. This teaches about living in moderation and being grateful for what you have. This is depicted in the fable The Story of the Greedy Crocodile;

namely, the crocodile has gotten a duck. Because of the duck's suggestion, the crocodile looks for a goat, and because of the goat's suggestion, the crocodile looks for an elephant so that in the end, the crocodile dies being trampled by the elephants.

Ethical Values (Justice and Consequences of Bad Actions)

Ethical values in this case Justice and the consequences of bad deeds are reflected in the fable The Story of the Greedy Crocodile. Ethically, this story often ends with the Crocodile receiving negative consequences for his greed. This shows the principle of karmic justice, where bad deeds (greed) will receive an appropriate reward. This story teaches that every action has consequences, and those who act based on lust or greed often suffer the consequences themselves. This can also be a lesson about the rights of others and not taking what is not ours.

The Value of Wisdom (Self-Control)

The value of wisdom, in this case self-control, is reflected implicitly in the fable The Story of the Greedy Crocodile. This fable implicitly teaches wisdom in self-control. The greedy crocodile was unable to control his lust (he already had a duck, wanted a goat, and then changed to wanting an elephant); this is the source of the problem so that he became unfortunate. On the other hand, a wise person will understand the limits of his abilities and not let his lust control him. This is a lesson about moderation and self-discipline, which are important pillars in the wisdom of life. Knowing when to stop or be content with what is there is a very valuable form of wisdom.

Moral Values (The Importance of Thinking Far Ahead)

Moral values In this case, the importance of foresight is not reflected in the fable The Story of the Greedy Crocodile. The greedy crocodile often only thinks about momentary gain without considering the impact in the future. He did not think about the consequences if he ate too pickily. This teaches that actions based on greed often lack foresight. On the other hand, wisdom involves the ability to predict the results of actions and make sustainable decisions, not just for momentary gain. From the description above, the fable The Story of the Greedy Crocodile is an excellent reminder of the dangers of greed and the importance of living with self-control and mature consideration. This fable, although simple, offers a profound reflection on human nature and the consequences of choice.

3.7 Philosophical Values in the Story of the Greedy Crocodile

The Nature of Desire and Self-Limitation

Philosophically, the crocodile in this story symbolizes unlimited lust and desire. It does not just want to eat enough but wants to control everything or get more than what is needed. This fable implicitly asks philosophical questions: what are the limits of desire? And how can uncontrolled desire lead to destruction? This resonates with Eastern philosophical thinking about dukkha (suffering) coming from tanha (desire) and Western philosophy about the importance of moderation and temperance as virtues. The story shows that true happiness does not come from endless accumulation, but from achieving balance and contentment with what is.

Consequences of Natural and Moral Law

This story illustrates a kind of fundamental law of cause and effect. The crocodile's greed inherently brings negative consequences to it, whether it be illness, death, or being the object of deception. It is not just about external punishment, but rather the internal logic of greed itself that naturally leads to self-destruction. Philosophically, this can be connected to the concept of cosmic justice or the principle of nature where imbalances (such as greed) will always find a way to rebalance themselves, often to the detriment of the one who created the imbalance. It teaches that there is a natural or moral order that cannot be violated without consequences.

Criticism of Materialism and Consumerism

In a modern context, The Tale of the Greedy Crocodile can be seen as a philosophical critique of extreme materialism and consumerism. The crocodile is only interested in "having" and "consuming" without limits, ignoring other aspects of existence or sustainability. This raises philosophical questions about the true values in life: is wealth or material possession the ultimate goal that brings happiness? The fable tends to argue that the relentless pursuit of material possessions can alienate an individual from true happiness and even endanger his or her survival.

The Importance of Practical Wisdom (Phronesis)

The Crocodile's wisdom in this story is severely lacking. He fails to apply practical wisdom (phronesis), which is the ability to act appropriately in a concrete situation in order to achieve a good goal. He fails to assess the situation wisely, control his impulses, or see the long-term consequences of his actions. This fable indirectly emphasizes that true wisdom involves not only knowledge but also the ability to act ethically and effectively in the real world, including recognizing one's limits and refraining from destructive desires.

The story of the Greedy Crocodile goes beyond a mere moral tale. It presents a philosophical reflection on the nature of desire, the ethical consequences of choice, a critique of material obsession, and the importance of practical wisdom in living life.

The didactic and philosophical values in the fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile, the Story of the Greedy Crocodile, when associated with the educational principles of Ki Hajar Dewantara, namely *ing ngarsa sung tuladha*, *ing madya mangun karsa*, and *tut wuri handayani*, can be implemented effectively through fable learning to instill character values (Dewantara, 1962).

Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha, which translates to "in front giving an example/role model," indicates that teachers are there to serve as role models or examples for the students. Teachers or parents serve as role models in the context of fable learning, guiding children's comprehension of the morals expressed in the tale. Teachers can use the morals of the Kancil and Crocodile fable to guide conversations on the differences between constructive cleverness and deceit while highlighting Kancil's cunning as an illustration of using creativity to solve challenges. The manner in which Kancil organized his escape serves as another illustration of the need to consider the circumstances before taking action. Teachers can illustrate the

perils of greed as a bad example that should be avoided by using the Greedy Crocodile Story's fable ideals. A greedy mindset can lead one wrong, as demonstrated by the story of the crocodile who was unfortunate due to his discontent and excessive demands. Children are encouraged to comprehend the repercussions of different behaviors through the example and direction of educators in character development. In order for the internalization of noble values like honesty and wisdom to start with an understanding of exemplary behavior, they are instructed to imitate good behavior (like the wisdom of the Mouse Deer in emergency situations) and avoid bad behavior (like the greed of the Crocodile). Ing Madya Mangun Karsa (in the midst of building will/initiative/motivation) underlines the role of educators who are in the midst of students to build their will, initiative, and motivation (Dewantara, 1962). Educators not only convey but also facilitate the active thinking process of students. Application of values in fables through critical discussions. After listening to the fable, children are encouraged to have active discussions. Educators can trigger critical thinking with questions such as, "In your opinion, is there another way for the Mouse Deer to escape without tricking the Crocodile?" or "How should the Crocodile manage his desires so as not to be greedy?" These questions stimulate children to think critically and collaborate in building their own arguments regarding the morality and consequences of actions. This trains problem-solving skills and initiative to find more ethical and constructive solutions. In character building, children are not only passive recipients but also actively participate in interpreting the story. They are motivated to explore values, make moral decisions, and develop a personal understanding of the importance of honesty and wisdom and the dangers of greed. Tut Wuri Handayani (following from behind and giving encouragement/support) means that educators are behind students to provide encouragement, support, and freedom so that they can develop according to their potential (Dewantara, 1962). Educators provide trust and space for students to express themselves. The application of fable values through creative expression, namely, educators give children the freedom to express their understanding of fables in various ways. They can be invited to retell the story in their own style, draw characters and scenes, or even create a short drama.

These activities develop creativity and expressiveness. Educators provide positive reinforcement and praise when children demonstrate good understanding or behavior that reflects noble values such as honesty, wisdom, or awareness of the dangers of greed. In character building, children feel supported and appreciated in their learning process so that they can increase their self-confidence. Through the implementation of these three principles of Ki Hajar Dewantara, the fable of Kancil and Buaya and the story of the greedy crocodile become very effective media for instilling honesty, wisdom, the importance of critical thinking, and the dangers of greed in character education. Learning becomes holistic, where children are not only taught values but also encouraged to understand, feel, and internalize them within themselves.

4. Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from the fable of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile, the Story of the Greedy Crocodile, is

that it illustrates the law of karma. The law of karma is a moral principle of cause and effect, not about predetermined destiny, but about personal responsibility for intentions and actions. Every intention and action will bring appropriate consequences. The didactic values of these two fables are the value of wisdom (cleverness); the value of caution and vigilance; the value of independence and initiative; the value of optimism and fortitude; the value of honesty (in the context of lessons that can be learned); the value of justice (implicit); moral values (the dangers of greed); ethical values (justice and the consequences of bad deeds); the value of wisdom (controlling oneself); and moral values (the importance of thinking far ahead). The philosophical values of both fables are the superiority of reason (rationality) over physical strength; criticism of greed and arrogance; the importance of adaptability and creativity in dealing with problems; power relations and resistance; ethical dilemmas (truth versus survival); the nature of desire and self-limitation; the consequences of natural and moral law; criticism of materialism and consumerism; and the importance of practical wisdom (phronesis). Through the implementation of the three principles of Ki Hajar Dewantara (ing ngarsa sung tuladha, ing madya mangun karsa, and tut wuri handayani), the fables of the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile and the Story of the Greedy Crocodile become very effective media for instilling honesty, wisdom, the importance of critical thinking, and the dangers of greed in character education. Learning becomes holistic, where children are not only taught values but are also encouraged to understand, feel, and internalize them within themselves.

References

- [1] Alsa, Asmadi. (2004). *Pendekatan Kualitatif dan Kuantitatif serta Kombinasinya dalam Penelitian Psikologi: Suatu uraian singkat dan contoh berbagai tipe penelitian*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- [2] Bleicher, J. (2003). *Hermeneutika Kontemporer: Hermeneutika sebagai metode, Filsafat, dan Kritik*. Alih bahasa oleh Ahmad Norma Permata. Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru.
- [3] Danandjaja, James. (2007). *Folklor Indonesia, Ilmu Gosip, Dongeng, dan lain- lain*. Jakarta: Grafiti.
- [4] Dewantara, K. H. (1962). *Bagian Pertama: Pendidikan*. Yogyakarta: Majelis Luhur Persatuan Taman Siswa.
- [5] Eco, U. (1976). *A theory of semiotics*. Indiana University Press.
- [6] Faisal, S. (2003). *Format-format Penelitian Sosial*. Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada.
- [7] Habsari, Zakia (2017). "Dongeng sebagai Pembentuk Karakter Anak." *BIBLIOTIKA Jurnal Kajian Perpustakaan dan Informasi* Vol 1 No 1 -April 2017 (21-29), <https://journal2.um.ac.id/index.php/bibliotika/article/view/703/438>
- [8] Hutomo, Suripan Sadi. (1991). *Mutiara yang Terlupakan: Pengantar Studi Sastra Lisan*. Surabaya: Himpunan Sarjana Kesusastraan Indonesia
- [9] Karmini, Ni Nyoman. (2011). *Teori Pengkajian Prosa Fiksi dan Drama*. Denpasar: Pustaka Larasan bekerja sama dengan Saraswati Institut Press
- [10] Karmini, Ni Nyoman, (2025). "Reading of Symbols and Feminism in Balinese Stories based on Tajen", dimuat

dalam *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, ISSN: 2319-7064, Volume 14 Issue 1, January 2025, Paper ID: SR25109193309, DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.21275/SR25109193309>

- [11] Liputan6.com. (2025), Januari 10). “Mengenal Ciri-Ciri Dongeng, Definisi, Struktur, dan Unsur-Unsurnya.” Diakses dari <https://www.liputan6.com/feeds/read/5866074/mengenal-ciri-ciri-dongeng-definisi-struktur-dan-unsur-unsurnya>
- [12] Magnis-Suseno, F. (1987). *Etika Dasar: Masalah-masalah Pokok Filsafat Moral*. Kanisius
- [13] Magnis-Suseno, F.SJ. (1993). *Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa Falsafi tentang Kebijaksanaan Hidup Jawa*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- [14] Moleong, L. J. (1996). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosda Karya.
- [15] Nurgiantoro, B. (2005). *Teori Pengkajian Fiksi*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- [16] Ratna, N. K. (2019). *Metodologi Penelitian Kajian Budaya dan Ilmu Sosial Humaniora pada Umumnya*. Pustaka Pelajar.
- [17] Tarigan, H. G. (2011). *Prinsip-Prinsip Dasar Sastra*. Bandung: Angkasa.
- [18] Trianto, Agus. (2006). *Bahasa Indonesia : Jilid 1*. Jakarta: Erlangga. (Dikutip dari kumparan.com, 2023)
- [19] Sitoresmi, Ayu Rifka (2025) dalam <https://www.liputan6.com/feeds/read/5909115/fabel-adalah-pengertian-ciri-ciri-dan-struktur-cerita-binatang-yang-mengandung-pesan-moral?page=3> diakses tgl, 18 Juni 2025

Author Profile



Ni Nyoman Karmini was born in Tabanan, Bali, Indonesia on August 23, 1959. Currently, she is registered as a Lecturer at the Higher Education Service Institute (LLDIKTI) Region 8 Denpasar employed at IKIP Saraswati in Tabanan, Bali since 1987. Currently, she is still active as a Lecturer at the Faculty of Language and Arts Education, Saraswati Teacher Training and Education Institute (IKIP) with a doctoral degree. To date, she has produced several ISBN books, several articles published in Sinta-indexed journals, and several articles published in the International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR).