# Children Also Care

by Wieke Pandanwangi

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## CHILDREN ALSO CARE: A FORM OF SOCIAL CARE IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AT A PANDEMIC TIME

#### 3 Ummi Nurjamil Baiti Lapiana\*

Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia e-mail: ummi.nurjamil@unsoed.ac.id

#### Wiekandini Dyah Pandanwangi

Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia e-mail: wiekandini.pandanwangi@unsoed.ac.id

#### Aldi Aditya

Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia e-mail: aldi.aditya@unsoed.ac.id

\*Correspondence: e-mail: ummi.nurjamil@unsoed.ac.id

#### Abstracts

The covid 19 pandemic is an international phenomenon that has made significant changes in people's social activities, even the children's. The kind-hearted children try to show their social concern to other human being. It is the implementation of human consciousness as social being who cannot live alone and need other. The study aims at analyzing the forms of social concern appearing in the short story collection entitled "Sejuta Cerita Anak Banyumas", a work of the winners of the short story writing competition held by Forum Anak Banyumas. The method used is descriptive qualitative. Data is sorted and analyzed purposefully. From twenty stories in this short story collection, there are thirteen stories that contain forms of social concern. The result defines that there are three forms of social concern, namely love, responsibility, and life harmony.

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#### Introduction

Character education values are good values that will affect a person's personality if applied to daily behavior (Savitri: 2021). Today character education is the concentration of children's education in Indonesia. Savitri (2021) adds that a person's personality can be formed from within and the environment around him. The good qualities of a child can be formed from how he adapts to the environment. Character is not formed in a short time but develops through stages of development where humans have the right to develop themselves through education. To be able to form character in humans, it needs to be instilled through value education from an early age (Admizal: 2018). One of the good characters that need to be instilled from an early age is social awareness.

Social care is a feeling of responsibility for the difficulties faced by others in which a person is compelled to do something good in order to help him. Today the value of social care among the community is starting to decline. According to Muhamadi (2019), this is due to many factors, including social inequality or social status, the selfish attitude of each individual, lack of understanding or cultivation of social care values, lack of tolerance, sympathy and empathy. Especially the pandemic conditions that limit everyone's interaction. Excessive fear of contracting this virus makes many people think more about their respective fates. It's not just adults who feel the effects of this condition. Children who can usually be in direct contact easily

with their friends are also affected due to restrictions on various fronts. Therefore, the values of social care that are decreasing need to be continuously instilled and accustomed to from an early age.

Due to the limitations of effective communication during the pandemic, literary works appear to be one of the bridges capable of conveying moral messages through stories that are easy to understand. The function of *dulce et utile* works shows that the existence of literary works is able to provide pleasure as well as benefits for its enjoyment. Especially for children's literature readers. The language of children's literature is simple but full of meaning, capable of delivering valuable lessons easily for its readers. So that the value of social care that is being complained about is decreasing, it can be brought back and instilled through stories in children's literature.

So far, social care is synonymous with the movement of mutual assistance between adults. Various forms of action and donations are carried out by adults. However, if we examine more deeply, many children's social care actions can be taken. Simple things such as helping mothers clean the house, being sad about the condition of friends who are having difficulties as well as other forms of social care. In this study, we will discuss the forms of social care carried out by children during the pandemic which are contained in the collection of stories from a million stories of children from Banyumas (hereinafter abbreviated as SCAB).



**Figure 1.** Cover of a collection of stories from a million children's stories from Banyumas

This book is the work of the winner of a short story writing competition held by the Banyumas Children's Forum. The book with 20 short stories in it is a work written by children in the middle to high school age range. So that honesty and sincerity regarding the values contained in it purely come from the fruit of children's thoughts. This 160-page book contains stories of Banyumas children who lived in the pandemic era and tried to survive in the midst of uncertain conditions. This book contains the character values of social care in various forms and applications.

The current young generation, who are mostly apathetic and indifferent to the social conditions of society, are expected to open their eyes and sensitivity more. The pandemic period, which usually takes up young people's time with their concentration in front of the device, should be replaced with social actions that show concern for others. The focus of this research is to show the forms of children's social care that exist in the collection of *SCAB*.

#### Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection is done by looking for sentences that contain forms of social care contained in the collection of children's stories, *One Million Children's Stories Banyumas*. The data is then classified and analyzed to find out what forms of social care appear in the collection of children's stories entitled *Sejuta Anak Banyumas Stories*. The data source in this study was a collection of children's stories entitled *A* 

Million Stories of Banyumas Children by Qanita Rafa Santoso et al. From a total of twenty titles contained in this collection of stories, there are thirteen stories that contain forms of social care. The stories are that the ghost is called Rapid and Swab, My father is a fighter, Hope, 17 Years, Mrs. Procrastinating, Positive-Type Positive, Small is Troublesome, Me and My Hope During a Pandemic, Pandemic and a Million Stories, Troublesome or Fun, The Hill of Ideals, The Story of the Beginning of My White and Blue, and Tragedy in the Pandemic Period. The thirteen stories have various forms of concern. Starting from loves (affection), responsibility (responsibility), and life harmony (harmony of life).

#### Results and Discussion

After reading the entire contents of the collection of stories from *One Million Children's Stories from Banyumas*, the next activity is to classify the data in the form of sentences according to the research needs. Of the 160 pages in the collection of children's stories entitled *A Million Stories of Banyumas Children*, there are 79 sentences that indicate the existence of various forms of social care. This can be seen from the following table 1.

**Table 1.** Number of Forms of Social Care in the Collection of Stories *Million Children's Stories Banyumas* 

No.	Form of Social Care	Number of Sentences
1.	Love	38
2.	Responsibility	27
3.	Life Harmony	14
	Total	79

Source: A Million Children's Stories Book Banyumas

Of the 79 sentences, there are 38 sentences (48.10%) containing a form of social care in the form of *love*, 27 sentences (34.17%) in the form *responsibility*, and 14 sentences (17.72%) containing form of social concern for *life harmony* (harmony of life). The form of social care in the form of *love* can be identified by the presence of devotion, kinship, mutual assistance and loyalty. The form of social *responsibility* (responsibility) can be seen by the value of belonging, empathy, and discipline in it. While the form of social concern for *life harmony* (harmony of life) can be shown by the existence of tolerance, cooperation and justice. These indicators are the reference for classifying sentences based on their form of social concern.

#### Forms of Social Care in a Collection of Stories Million Children's Stories Banyumas

#### 1. Love Affection

is the need of every human being. Affection can be shown by paying attention to both self and others. The attitude of affection is usually based on sincerity which is a form of approach and social care. Here are some examples of forms of affection that appear in the *SCAB collection of stories*.

**Table 2.** Forms of Social Care in the Form of Love in the Collection of Stories *Million Children's Stories Banyumas* 

No.	Sentence	Title Story (page)	Forms of Love
1.	But humanity will live on, because humans will always help and work hand in hand with each other.	Positive-Type Positive (53)	Please help
2.	And of course young people who are persistent and full of responsibility, the diamond of the future of the country, must be ready to start, not alone and also continue to be alone but able to move the spirit, determination, and other hearts.	Positive-Type Positive (54)	Devotion
3.	Actually, I didn't have the heart to ask my mother, but how can I do that, I need the money to take the test.	Me and My Hope During a Pandemic (74)	Family

The form of social care in the form of affection is the most tangible and easiest form to find in children's stories. Please help is something that has been instilled by parents from a young age to get a child to be sensitive and care about their social environment. A person is said to be good if he has a role in society, one of which is often helping others (Faizah: 2021). In the *Posit-Type Positive* story, a child named Zaenab tries to fill her time during the pandemic with positive activities. Zaenab is saddened by new habits during the pandemic that make children lazy to move and tend to waste time playing games and lingering in front of *gadgets*. So Zaenab came up with an idea to continue to be useful in these limited conditions. Zaenab and her friends initiated an *online*.

Through massive publications using social media, finally Zaenab and her friends were able to raise 100 million rupiah in one month. It was a great achievement for the group of students who initially only wanted to fill their spare time with useful activities. The collected funds are then channeled to buy medical equipment needed by medical personnel. They also received assistance in the form of 500 masks and 100 PPE from a village organization.

When viewed from the storyline, Ngindana Aghits Zulfa's writing entitled *Posit-Type Positive* shows the great hope that exists in a child named Zaenab. The author invites the readers to love each other more by helping each other to those around them who are in need. The author invites readers to be more concerned about the conditions that are currently being experienced by Indonesia and the world. Good deeds can not only be done by adults. Even school children can contribute to the surrounding community by opening *online*.

In the *Positive-Type Positive* there is another form of social concern in the form of devotion. Zaenab's figure invites young people to serve the country by giving enthusiasm, determination and effort to move positive activities so that more young people are aware and care about the surrounding social environment. With small movements starting from young people, this positive message will quickly spread and be followed by other young people. When love and compassion for the environment has become a trend that many people follow, then there will be no more people experiencing difficulties because there are many people who care about others.

Another form of *love* in social care is kinship. The first affection that usually arises starts from the family. Likewise, the love that is first issued is usually to the family. Family is the

closest element that sincerely understands, helps and is always there when needed. This form of family appears in the story of *Me and My Hope in the Time of the Pandemic*. My character in this story by Arif Maolana is described as a student who comes from a simple family and lives life as it is. The pandemic conditions forced them to save their expenses. Especially with the online learning system that forces them to spend extra funds to buy quotas.

My character is described as understanding his family so well that he feels uncomfortable asking for money to pay for the midterm assessment fee. However, because I was forced to characterize I finally still convey the difficulties he faces. If he has not paid the mid-semester assessment test fee, he cannot take the test. Because of the obligation, responsibility and affection of the mother, she agreed to pay it the next day. That's family. Complement and understand each other. Give each other love and affection. The concern for family conditions described by my character is a character that should be imitated by today's young generation. Through a story full of lessons, the author conveys a message to every child not to force his will when he has a desire. On the other hand, before expressing his wishes to his parents, a child should know in advance the situation his parents are facing.

#### 2. Responsibility

According to the KBBI, responsibility is the state of being obliged to bear everything. In line with this understanding (Rochma: 2016) defines responsibility as human awareness of behavior or actions, both intentional and unintentional. The responsibility is imposed on all humans since they are children. Quoted from a book published by the Ministry of Education and Culture entitled "Parental Education: Developing Responsibility in Children" (2016), an attitude of responsibility will be formed, along with the growth and development of children that comes from within and their own willingness to carry out an obligation. The following are some examples of forms of social care in the form of responsibility contained in a collection of SCAB stories.

**Table 3.** Forms of Social Care in the Form of Responsibility in the Collection of Stories *Million Children's Stories Banyumas* 

No.	Sentence	Title Story (page)	Form of Responsibility
1.	I should have realized, being a doctor, their responsibilities are big. Especially during the current pandemic.	My father is a fighter (18)	Empathy
2.	Maybe I sound selfish, but at least I adhere to all health protocols properly to prevent its spread.	Mrs. Procrastinating (34)	Discipline
3.	Hopefully the situation will improve soon, the pandemic will pass quickly, we will return to the story without covid-19 again.	The Story of My Early White Blue (140)	The Value of Owning

The first form of responsibility is empathy. According to the KBBI, empathy is a condition that makes a person feel or identify himself or herself in the same state of mind and feeling as another person or group. Someone who empathizes with something tends to position himself in the same condition as the character he admires.story *warrior* tells the story of the character Kay who has parents who are doctors. Kay, who was sent home from the Islamic boarding

school due to the pandemic, hopes that her parents will be at home to accompany her days. But something else he got. Kay's parents who work as doctors are increasingly busy with their increasing number of patients during this Covid-19 period. Kay's father and mother try to understand Kay's responsibility for a doctor who must save the lives of others even though their own lives are in danger.

After receiving an explanation from his parents, Kay became aware of the great responsibility of Kay's parents, especially during this pandemic. Kay's character, who was originally described as not caring about the social conditions around him and asking his parents to take time off from work and reunite with his family, turned into empathy for his parents' profession which turned out to be able to save the lives of many people. Even Kay became very proud of her father, who was said to have died from exposure to the corona virus after treating a patient who was positive for COVID-19.

Another form of social concern that emerges is discipline. Discipline is the beginning of order. Discipline makes a child accustomed to good things that are continuously done. Sumarna (2014) argues that discipline teaches children about moral behavior that is acceptable to the group with the main goal of discipline being to inform and instill understanding in children about which behavior is good and which is bad. In the story of *Mrs. Procrastinating*, my character feels happy because of government regulations that close offline teaching and learning activities due to covid-19. My character, who is aware of the speed of transmission of this virus, applies a healthy lifestyle by adhering to all health protocols properly.

Even though for some people the use of masks makes it difficult, my character is still disciplined in getting used to wearing masks when leaving the house. My character is also not lazy to wash his hands as often as possible because he is worried about the spread of the covid-19 virus. In this story the author invites the reader to remain obedient to the correct health protocol even though it is not easy to do. Indirectly, readers who are in the same environmental condition and age will be moved to apply a similar pattern of discipline. This is because child readers tend to idolize the main characters who appear in a story and follow the habits of their idols.

The same thing appears in the quote "I don't forget that I am also diligent in washing my hands with soap" (Santoso, et al., 2021:143). In the story of the story at the beginning of my white blue period. In the story Troublesome or Pleasant by Habibah Nur Azizah also describes the form of discipline during the pandemic as in the following quote:

"Why eat here Dit? Have you washed your hands yet?" Tyo asked a little hastily. Radit immediately took out the hand sanitizer from his pocket. He nodded. (Santoso, et al., 2021:108)

The final form of responsibility is a sense of belonging. The sense of belonging makes the child understand what he must strive for and protect in his life. In the collection of SCAB stories, the sense of belonging can be seen in the title *story at the beginning of my white blue period*. The sense of belonging that arises is a sense of belonging to the country and the world he is living in. The main character hopes that the world situation will improve soon, the pandemic will end soon and everyone can start the story happily without covid-19. His desires for everything to go well are based on a great sense of belonging to the world he lives in. My character is sad when the world is sad and happy when there are no more plagues and viruses that hit.

#### 3. Life Harmony Life harmony is

a state of balancebetween self and social life so as to create a good relationship between the two. Harmony of life can be achieved by mutual agreement to respect each other, work together and understand each other. Harmony of life can be in the form of tolerance, cooperation and justice. The forms of social care in the form of harmony of life that appear in the collection of *SCAB* are as follows.

**Table 3.** Forms of Social Care in the Form of Living Harmony in aCollection of Stories *Million Children's Stories Banyumas* 

No.	Sentence	Title Story (page)	Forms of Harmony of Life
1.	I am lucky because both my parents are teachers, so they always guide, direct and motivate me so that I can excel in everything.	The ghost is called Rapid and Swah (8)	Cooperation
2.	During the pandemic, I don't leave the house except for certain reasons.	Hope 17 Years (30)	Tolerance
3.	This has indeed been outlined by the Kholiq, a recompense for his people who are arrogant, arrogant, selfish and greedy.	Positive-Type Positive (43)	Justice

In the story entitled *The Ghost Named Rapid and Swab*, my character is described as having a harmonious family. My character has very supportive parents. During a pandemic that uses an online learning system, many children find it difficult to use this method. But an advantage that my character gets because he has parents who work as teachers. So that my character can work with his parents in online learning. His parents guide, direct and motivate my character in the learning process, while my character tries hard to achieve.

In the story entitled *Harapan 17 Tahun*, the reader is treated to the hopes of a high school student. During the pandemic, many students feel that their youth has been snatched away by conditions. They cannot play with their peers outside. They cannot gather and joke freely without being blocked by masks. And they cannot go on public transport without being overwhelmed with worry and fear. However, this all-round limited condition does not dampen the sense of tolerance to continue to comply with the health regulations and protocols set by the government. They do it as a form of tolerance for a mutual agreement which is indirectly agreed by the wider community not to go out of the house if it is not really necessary. According to Rahayu (2021) tolerance is a human behavior or attitude that respects every action, opinion, belief made by others.

My character in the story titled *Harapan 17 years* is also told with full awareness of wanting to suppress the desire of children his age to interact with the audience and get to know the outside world. He did this because he hoped that this bad condition would end soon. Through this story the reader is led to look around and try not to impose his will if it is dangerous. Readers are invited to be patient to obey the regulations until the pandemic condition is completely recovered and the world is free from covid-19.

In addition to tolerance and cooperation, harmony in life can also be in the form of justice. With justice this life will feel balanced. Those who are guilty deserve the consequences for their

actions. Vice versa, for those who do good, they will reap the fruits of the seeds of goodness that they sow. In the *SCAB*, a form of justice appears in the title *Positive-Type Positive*. Justice is depicted by the balance between what God's proud and arrogant people have done with food so that they get the punishment they deserve in the form of a pandemic. This refers to the spread of COVID-19 which is predicted to start because of food exposed to the virus in Wuhan, China.

Although the writer is still a teenager, he has a social concern to remind readers that food greed will have bad consequences. The balance of life and the harmony in it will never be achieved if humans are still greedy and do not take something from nature sufficiently. The consequences of all actions will be rewarded according to God.

#### Conclusion

Children's literature is the right place to place the value of character education for its readers. Through stories that are full of meaning, readers can understand various good characters that should be applied and made a habit. One of the character values that need to be honed and familiarized is social care. During the pandemic, social care is needed to make children more sensitive to the surrounding environment. Social care can appear in various forms such as *love* (affection), *responsibility* (responsibility) and *life harmony* (harmony of life). The collection of stories *million stories from Banyumas Children* is a collection of the works of the winners of the short story writing competition held by the Banyumas Children's Forum. This book contains stories that are full of the value of social care. Some forms of social care that appear in this collection of stories are devotion, help, kinship, sense of belonging, empathy, discipline, tolerance, cooperation and justice.

The results of the analysis of this collection of stories show that social care is not only owned by adults. Children can also have social care in the same form as adults, but with different levels. Children also care about environmental conditions. Children care about their future and care about the condition of their families. Children also have a sense of responsibility towards their roles. They can also resist the desires of their youth for the sake of social movements and helping the needy.

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