

EXPLORING CHARACTER EDUCATION THROUGH LIU CHUNCE'S JOURNEY IN "BIG WORLD (2024)" MOVIE

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter yang ditampilkan dalam film Big World (2024), dengan fokus pada perjalanan hidup Liu Chunce, seorang remaja penyandang cerebral palsy yang menghadapi berbagai tantangan fisik dan sosial. Topik ini menjadi penting karena media film berpotensi menjadi sarana efektif untuk menyampaikan pesan moral dan membentuk karakter, khususnya bagi generasi muda. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan analisis isi berdasarkan teori Mayring dan Fenzl. Analisis diarahkan pada 26 nilai karakter yang ditetapkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia. Data diperoleh melalui dokumentasi dan dianalisis dengan mengidentifikasi dialog, tindakan, serta pengalaman Liu Chunce yang merepresentasikan nilai-nilai moral. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 13 nilai karakter, seperti disiplin, ketekunan, kesabaran, kemandirian, kepedulian sosial, dan kepemimpinan, secara dominan tercermin dalam perilaku tokoh utama. Nilai-nilai ini ditunjukkan melalui ketekunan, empati, kejujuran, dan optimisme Chunce meskipun memiliki keterbatasan fisik. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa Big World bukan hanya karya sinematik, tetapi juga media edukatif yang dapat dimanfaatkan dalam pembelajaran karakter, khususnya pada konteks pendidikan inklusif dan berbasis nilai. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi bagi pendidik, peneliti, dan praktisi pendidikan dalam mengintegrasikan media film ke dalam strategi pembelajaran yang menumbuhkan karakter positif.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Karakter, Analisis Isi, Nilai Moral.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the character education values portrayed in the film Big World (2024), focusing on the life journey of Liu Chunce, a teenager with cerebral palsy who faces various physical and social challenges. This topic is particularly significant as film media has the potential to serve as an effective tool for conveying moral messages and shaping character, especially among younger generations. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a content analysis approach based on the framework of Mayring and Fenzl. The analysis focuses on 26 character values identified by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Data were collected through documentation and analyzed by identifying dialogues, actions, and experiences of Liu Chunce that represent moral values. The findings reveal that 13 character values, such as discipline, perseverance, patience, independence, social care, and leadership, are prominently reflected in the protagonist's behavior. These values are demonstrated through Chunce's perseverance, empathy, honesty, and optimism despite his physical limitations. The results suggest that Big World is not only a cinematic work but also an educational medium that can be utilized in character education, particularly within the context of inclusive and values-based learning. This research is expected to contribute to educators, researchers, and education practitioners in integrating film media into instructional strategies that foster positive character development.

Keywords: Character Education, Content Analysis, Moral Values.

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INTRODUCTION

Character education is a crucial aspect of holistic learning that aims to shape students into individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also morally responsible. However, recent trends in education show a declining focus on moral development as academic excellence and technological advancement become the main priorities (Lickona, 2019). This shift has raised concerns regarding the erosion of moral values among students, particularly in Indonesia, where character education remains a core objective of the national curriculum (Kemendikbud, 2017).

To address these concerns, the Indonesian government introduced the Merdeka Curriculum in 2022, which promotes character formation through project-based learning and emphasizes the Profil Pelajar Pancasila. This curriculum seeks to cultivate qualities such as independence, collaboration, empathy, and resilience (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). In line with this, the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017) established 26 core character values, such as honesty, responsibility, perseverance, discipline, and social awareness, to guide educators in integrating character development into the learning process. These values are essential for shaping students to become responsible citizens and reflective learners.

Literature and media are effective instruments for transmitting character values. Literature is not only a means of self-expression and imagination but also a tool for instilling moral values (Wahyudi, 2021). Prasetyo (2021) states that literary works help readers explore moral dilemmas and life values through storylines and character experiences. In particular, film, an extension of literature in visual form has a significant impact on character development due to its ability to depict real-life challenges in an emotionally engaging way. As noted by Putri and Sari (2023), films can foster critical thinking and ethical reflection by presenting values such as empathy, perseverance, and compassion in authentic contexts.

Several studies have explored the integration of character education through films. Arbi, (2021) analyzed *Avengers: Endgame* and found the presence of moral messages such as bravery and sacrifice. Lolang et al. (2023) identified values like responsibility and respect in *The Lion King*. Similarly, Esianita and Widyawati (2020) examined *Aquaman* and found that films could become media to introduce values such as honesty and justice. However, these studies tend to focus on popular Western or animated films and overlook culturally diverse or inclusive narratives.

This research attempts to fill that gap by analyzing *Big World* (2024), a contemporary Asian film that centers on Liu Chunce, a teenager with cerebral palsy. The film portrays Liu's persistence in overcoming both physical and societal barriers in his pursuit of education and self-reliance. His journey embodies many of the 26 character values emphasized in the national curriculum, such as hard work, empathy, independence, and optimism. Unlike previous studies that focus on fantastical heroes or animated characters, *Big World* provides a realistic and inclusive perspective that aligns with the goals of character-based education, particularly in inclusive settings.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on a contemporary Asian film featuring a character with disabilities—an area rarely examined in the context of character education. It contributes to expanding the range of educational media that teachers can use to foster empathy and resilience while promoting inclusive values in the classroom. Therefore, this research seeks to answer the following question: What character education values are reflected in the film *Big World* (2024)?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method with a content analysis approach, focusing on identifying and interpreting character education values in the film *Big World* (2024). The theory used in the analysis was based on the content analysis framework by Mayring and Fenzl (2014), which enables researchers to systematically categorize and interpret verbal and non-verbal content within media texts.

The data consisted of dialogue, narrative elements, and actions performed by the main character, Liu Chunce. These were documented by transcribing scenes and classifying them according to character values. The researcher used the 26 core values from the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017), supplemented by values such as perseverance, self-confidence, and leadership, often cited in related research (Utami, 2022).

The research procedure included the following steps: (1) watching and re-watching the film to gain comprehensive understanding, (2) selecting and transcribing scenes relevant to character development, (3) coding character actions and dialogue that reflect educational values, and (4) interpreting the findings in the context of moral learning. Thematic analysis was applied to group findings into specific character values. The analysis was supported by references from recent literature to ensure scientific validity and relevance to educational discourse.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a comprehensive analysis of the types of character education values found in the film *Big World* (2024). Using content analysis, the study examines how these values are embedded in the behavior, speech, and social interactions of the protagonist, Liu Chunce. The findings are presented in two sub-sections: (1) the identified values and the scenes in which they appear, and (2) a discussion of the educational implications and theoretical alignment of each value.

Findings Types of Character Education Value

This study aims to examine the character education values portrayed in the film *Big World* (2024), focusing on the main character, Liu Chunce. Using content analysis, the research identifies how various character values are conveyed through Chunce's actions, dialogue, and social interactions. The findings reveal that films can be effective tools for promoting moral values and shaping positive character traits in real-life contexts. Character education refers to efforts in education to develop ethical, responsible, and caring individuals by instilling core moral values (Pala, 2011). According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017), there are 26 core character values recommended for integration into education, including honesty, discipline, perseverance, and solidarity.

From the analysis of *Big World*, 13 character values were found to be prominently reflected in Liu Chunce's journey. These include:

Discipline

The first character education value identified in the film *Big World* is discipline. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017), discipline refers to an individual's ability to regulate behavior, comply with rules, and maintain consistent routines. This value is clearly demonstrated in the scene at 12:30–12:47, where Chunce's mother reminds her to practice handwriting and adhere to the exam schedule. This scene underscores the importance of discipline in personal development and academic success.



Figure.1 Reflected when Chunce's mother reminds her to practice handwriting and follow the exam schedule.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Love of Knowledge

The second value is the love of knowledge, defined as a genuine passion for learning, discovery, and intellectual development. In the scene at 13:44–16:43, Chunce enthusiastically introduces herself and reads poetry aloud. Her actions reflect a deep appreciation for literature and highlight a sustained commitment to education as a lifelong pursuit.



Figure 2. Demonstrated in Chunce's enthusiasm as she introduces herself and reads poetry confidently.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Patience

Patience, defined as the ability to remain calm and composed in challenging situations, is depicted in the scene at 22:18–22:33. Despite being insulted on the bus, Chunce quietly holds her grandmother's hand without reacting negatively. This scene illustrates her emotional maturity and capacity for self-control, essential components in developing a respectful and empathetic character.



Figure 3. Evident when Chunce calmly holds her grandmother's hand after being insulted on the bus.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Perseverance

Perseverance entails continuous effort and determination in overcoming adversity. This value is portrayed in the scene at 30:47–31:15, where Chunce practices drumming in the street alongside her grandmother. Despite difficult conditions, she persists in honing her skills, embodying resilience and strong personal motivation.



Figure 4. Shown through Chunce's continuous effort to practice playing the drum in public spaces despite limitations.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Curiosity

Curiosity is characterized by a desire to explore new ideas and gain knowledge. In the scene at 33:47–34:12, Chunce inquires about attending her dream university despite her mother's objections. Her willingness to seek information and question expectations demonstrates an active and independent pursuit of learning.



Figure 5. Displayed when Chunce asks about her dream university, despite her mother's opposition.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Social Awareness

Social awareness refers to the sensitivity to and understanding of the needs and challenges of others. This value is evident in the scene at 35:23–35:59, where Chunce helps an elderly man verify his digital ID. Her actions reflect a sense of empathy and social responsibility, reinforcing the importance of supporting community members



Figure 6. Manifested in Chunce's act of helping an elderly man with his digital ID registration.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Hard Work

Hard work is defined as putting forth consistent effort and dedication to achieve goals. In the scene at 39:27–39:45, Chunce performs with enthusiasm in a drum contest, striving to surpass her competitor. This moment demonstrates her commitment to excellence and determination to succeed.



Figure 7. Demonstrated when Chunce puts in great effort to outperform another drum player.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Friendliness/Communicativeness

Friendliness and communicativeness involve engaging positively with others and fostering harmonious relationships. In the scene at 40:28–41:48, Chunce warmly greets and converses with a new girl. Her behavior illustrates effective social interaction and the importance of kindness in daily encounters.



Figure 8. Reflected in Chunce's polite and warm interaction with a new girl.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Independence

Independence is the capacity to make decisions and take responsibility for one's own life. This is exemplified in the scene at 46:03–46:20, when Chunce decides to apply for a job to save money for her college education. Her initiative signifies autonomy, responsibility, and long-term planning.



Figure 9. Evident when Chunce decides to apply for a job to save money for her college education.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Reading Interest

Reading interest refers to the enjoyment and habit of engaging with written texts. In the scene at 1:02:38–1:02:53, Chunce mentions having read all her books, highlighting her enthusiasm for learning and commitment to intellectual growth through literacy.



Figure 10. Shown when Chunce states that she has read all of her books.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Honesty

Honesty entails truthfulness and transparency in words and actions. This value is illustrated in the scene at 1:09:14–1:09:56, where Chunce confesses to her mother that she did not study and chose to work instead. Her admission, despite possible consequences, reflects moral integrity and courage.



Figure 11. Evident when Chunce openly admits to her mother that she did not study and instead chose to work.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Religiousness

Religiousness refers to the respect and practice of spiritual and religious beliefs. This value is displayed in the scene at 1:39:35–1:39:48, where Chunce and her grandmother visit a Chinese place of worship. It emphasizes reverence for cultural diversity and spiritual identity.



Figure 12. Displayed during Chunce's visit to a Chinese place of worship with her grandmother.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Solidarity and Leadership

Solidarity and leadership are demonstrated in the scene at 2:00:05–2:01:15, when Chunce delivers a speech supporting the elderly community. Her empathy, initiative, and ability to inspire others represent the core principles of inclusive leadership and collective responsibility.



Figure 13. Clearly seen in Chunce's speech advocating for elderly communities, showing empathy and initiative.

Source: the film Big World (2024)

Discussion

This study identified 13 character education values depicted in the film Big World. These values align with the national character education framework and are supported by relevant scholarly literature.

Discipline

Discipline is characterized by self-regulation, adherence to rules, and maintaining consistent routines (Kemendikbud, 2017). This value is evident in the scene (12:30–12:47), where Chunce's mother encourages her to practice handwriting and follow the exam schedule. This aligns with Subekti and Hasruddin (2021), who argue that discipline fosters responsibility and contributes to academic success. The researcher interprets this as highlighting the role of parental involvement in nurturing disciplined behavior in children.

Love of Knowledge

Demonstrated in the scene (13:44–16:43), Chunce enthusiastically introduces herself and recites poetry, reflecting a genuine appreciation for learning. Yulianti et al. (2020) suggest that a love of knowledge enhances students' engagement and motivation. This suggests that fostering passion for learning is essential to student-centered education. Such enthusiasm not only encourages active participation but also inspires peers to value knowledge more deeply. When learners see learning as enjoyable and meaningful, they are more likely to develop lifelong curiosity. Therefore, educators should create environments that celebrate exploration, creativity, and intellectual discovery.

Patience

Chunce's calm reaction to being insulted on the bus (22:18–22:33) exemplifies patience. Sari and Rasyid (2018) emphasize that patience strengthens emotional intelligence and resilience. The researcher views this as an important lesson in emotional control and maturity when facing adversity. This behavior demonstrates that maintaining composure can prevent conflicts from escalating. It also highlights the value of self-regulation in building positive social relationships. Encouraging such responses in students can foster a supportive and respectful learning environment.

Perseverance

Perseverance is shown when Chunce continues drumming practice despite difficult conditions (30:47–31:15). Pratama and Suryani (2020) highlight perseverance as key to building resilience. This moment illustrates determination in the face of hardship, particularly for marginalized individuals striving for self-improvement. Such dedication not only strengthens personal growth but also sets a positive example for others facing similar challenges. It underscores the importance of consistent effort and commitment in achieving long-term goals. By fostering perseverance, educators and mentors can help students develop the skills to overcome obstacles and pursue their ambitions.

Curiosity

Inquiring about university admission (33:47–34:12) reflects Chunce's curiosity and critical thinking. Ramadhan and Budiyo (2021) note that curiosity enhances independent learning. This act symbolizes a proactive attitude toward education and future planning. Such initiative demonstrates that asking questions is a crucial step in acquiring knowledge and making informed decisions. It also encourages students to take ownership of their learning journeys. By nurturing curiosity, educators can cultivate lifelong learners who actively seek opportunities for growth.

Social Awareness

Social awareness is portrayed when Chunce helps an elderly man with his digital ID (35:23–35:59). Rahayu and Setiawan (2022) emphasize empathy and concern for others as central to social development. This reflects the value of small, compassionate acts in fostering inclusivity. Such actions demonstrate that social responsibility begins with everyday interactions and attentiveness to the needs of others. They also highlight the role of empathy in building trust and positive relationships within communities. By modeling these behaviors, individuals can inspire a culture of care and mutual support.

Hard Work

Chunce's passionate participation in a drum contest (39:27–39:45) demonstrates hard work. According to Fatimah et al. (2020), consistent effort enhances achievement. This suggests the importance of persistence and dedication over innate ability. Such commitment shows that success is often the result of sustained practice and focus rather than talent alone. It also reinforces the value of setting goals and working diligently to achieve them. Encouraging students to embrace hard work can cultivate resilience and a strong sense of personal accomplishment.

Friendliness and Communicativeness

The scene (40:28–41:48), where Chunce greets a new student, demonstrates effective communication and friendliness. Nugroho et al. (2019) argue that social interaction supports collaboration and emotional development. This illustrates the value of building positive relationships in educational environments. Friendly interactions help create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere, encouraging students to participate actively. They also promote empathy and understanding, which are essential for teamwork and conflict resolution. By fostering these social skills, educators can support both academic success and personal growth.

Independence

Chunce's decision to apply for a job (46:03–46:20) reflects independence and self-responsibility. Wulandari and Purwanto (2020) explain that independent learners possess strong problem-solving skills. This highlights student agency and real-life application of decision-making skills. Taking initiative in such situations fosters confidence and accountability in personal and professional contexts. It also demonstrates the importance of planning, evaluating options, and acting decisively. Encouraging these behaviors can help students develop essential life skills that extend beyond the classroom.

Reading Interest

Chunce's statement about having read all her books (1:02:38–1:02:53) reflects a strong interest in reading. Maulidiyah and Putra (2022) argue that reading habits improve academic performance. This underscores the importance of developing reading culture as a foundation for lifelong learning. Engaging regularly with books enhances critical thinking, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. It also fosters imagination and empathy by exposing readers to diverse perspectives. Promoting a reading culture from an early age can therefore cultivate curious, informed, and reflective individuals.

Honesty

Honesty is depicted when Chunce admits to her mother that she did not study and chose to work (1:09:14–1:09:56). Arifin and Suhartini (2019) highlight honesty as essential for trust in educational settings. The scene demonstrates moral integrity and the courage to speak truthfully despite consequences. Demonstrating honesty in daily actions helps build credibility and strengthens relationships with others. It also encourages self-reflection and accountability, which are critical for personal growth. By modeling honesty, educators and parents can instill ethical values that guide students' decision-making throughout life.

Religiousness

Chunce and her grandmother visit a Chinese temple (1:39:35–1:39:48), portraying spiritual observance. Hasanah and Zahroh (2021) argue that religious values shape moral identity. This illustrates how spiritual traditions can support the internalization of moral values. Participating in spiritual practices encourages reflection on ethical behavior and personal responsibility. It also fosters respect for cultural diversity and shared community values. By engaging with these traditions, individuals can strengthen both their moral compass and social cohesion.

Solidarity and Leadership

In the final scene (2:00:05–2:01:15), Chunce delivers a speech advocating for the elderly. According to Putri and Hartati (2022), leadership rooted in empathy promotes youth engagement in social change. This act signifies transformation from personal growth to collective action. By using her voice to support others, Chunce exemplifies socially responsible leadership. It highlights how individual experiences and values can inspire community-oriented initiatives. Encouraging such empathetic leadership can motivate young people to actively contribute to societal improvement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, it can be concluded that Big World (2024) is an impactful resource for character education. The protagonist Liu Chunce exemplifies 13

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character values relevant to personal growth and societal contribution. The film underscores the importance of inclusivity, resilience, and empathy, making it suitable for educational use.

Educators are encouraged to utilize films like *Big World* to contextualize character values through storytelling. Future research may explore how such media influences students' value internalization and the long-term impact on their character development.

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