

WATTPAD APPS TO INCREASE INDONESIAN YOUTH'S INTEREST IN READING AND WRITING

Puji Ayu Lestari¹, Cahyo Hasanudin²

^{1,2} Faculty of Language and Arts Education, Indonesian Language and Literature Education, IKIP PGRI
Bojonegoro, Indonesia

ayupuji88975@gmail.com, cahyo.hasanudin@ikipgribojonegoro.ac.id

Abstract

The younger generation is a generation that has a responsibility to carry on the nation's ideals, always wants to try new things, and has a variety of hobbies for the future. In preparing for the future, we can start by increasing interest in reading and writing. This study aims to determine the role of the Wattpad application in increasing interest in reading and writing interest in the younger generation of Indonesia. This research is a literature study, researchers need to find and use data sources or previous research in the form of scientific journals, articles, and books related to the research topic. Researchers use the theory of Mary W. George. In data validation, researchers used data triangulation techniques. Wattpad is an application or site that facilitates users in doing writing and reading activities. Before using the Wattpad application, we need to create a Wattpad account first. You can create a Wattpad account using your email address or Facebook account. After creating an account, we can read various stories on Wattpad and can publish literary works.

Keywords: Wattpad application, Indonesian young generation, reading interest, writing interest.

1. Introduction

Rohayati (2013) states that the younger generation is a group of young people. Handitya (2019) explains that the younger generation is the generation of hope for the nation. Muzakkir (2015) adds that the younger generation is a group of people who expect an award, a role in society, and clarity about their future. The younger generation is a generation that has a responsibility to carry on the nation's ideals, always wants to try new things, and has a variety of hobbies for the future.

Passion is a term that we often use when we like something. Following the current developments, teenagers' hobbies today are shopping for trending items in online shops (Fatmawati, 2020), gathering in the cafeteria, playing games, watching Korean dramas (Angelicha, 2020). This hobby is usually done to relieve boredom, fill spare time, increase enthusiasm, or just follow what is viral. Hobbies can be done but we also must not neglect our role in the life of the nation and state.

The young generation has an important role in the life of the nation and state. In this increasingly advanced era, the younger generation is required to be able to respond to all challenges, as well as developments that occur in the world (Januarharyono, 2019). Irianto and Febrianti (2017) explained that the younger generation needs to equip themselves with various knowledge and information through mastery of literacy to face all the challenges of the times. Sofiah, Styaningsih, and Sundawan (2019) stated that the easiest way to master literacy is to instill reading habits.

Reading is included in the four language skills that students need to master. Reading is a basic skill other than writing and arithmetic (Zulamri, 2013). Reading is a communication tool that is needed in social life, by reading we can gain knowledge in written form (Wulanjani and Anggraeni, 2019). Rozzin in Ma'rufah and Hasanah (2012) states that reading is a routine positive activity, it is recommended to train the brain to absorb all the information it has read at a certain time.

As mentioned above, reading is a positive activity that has an important role in life. Reading has many purposes, including: recognizing difficult terms, knowing the main idea of a book with a limited time (Nurhadi

in Sofyan and A, 2016), understanding the meaning of a reading, obtaining information in reading (Tarigan in Hasanudin, 2016). Information can be obtained through the process of meaning from the form of reading that is displayed (Sugiarti, 2012). We can also obtain reading information if we read carefully and repeatedly until we find the important information.

To realize the purpose of reading above, we need to increase people's interest in reading. Compared to other countries, currently Indonesia is still in the lowest rank in reading interest. Based on the results of periodic surveys from 40 countries, Indonesia is ranked second lowest in reading (Nurfalah, Johan, and Silvana, 2017). In 2012, the Central Statistics Agency stated that 17.66 percent of Indonesian children had an interest in reading and another 91.67 percent had an interest in watching (Nugraha, MS, and Bintoro, 2018). This is reinforced by the results of a UNESCO survey of countries ASEAN, reading culture or interest in reading Indonesian people are in the lowest rank with a value of 0.001 (Ruslan and Wibayanti, 2019). If a comparison is made, there are a thousand Indonesian citizens, but only one has a high reading interest.

There are many ways to increase interest in reading: getting used to reading what we like, creating a reading corner (Ramadhanti and Julaiha, 2019), building a library, forming reading groups in the community and much more. In addition, we can take advantage of technology such as reading articles through cellphones (Idhamani, 2020), installing reading applications on cellphones (Ali and Patombongi, 2016).

Pardun and Scott (2004) stated that most teenagers prefer to read novels, comics, zodiac predictions, sports, and the entertainment world rather than reading newspapers and magazines. The results of Intan's research (2019) stated that teenagers prefer popular novels because in terms of content they are easier to understand and the themes carried are not too heavy. This is supported by Adhia's research (2017) that novels are more often read by teenagers, with a percentage of 44.8 percent, while readers of knowledge books and articles get 34.5 percent, comics 13.8 percent and the rest are magazine readers around 6, 9 percent. Reading novels can also increase interest in reading for the younger generation. Frequent reading can also lead to a desire to write or produce works in the form of novels, short stories, anthologies, and so on.

Tarigan in Astuti and Mustadi (2014) states that writing is describing, arranging graphic symbols to form a language that can be understood by others. Writing can be said as an expressive language skill, because through writing activities everyone can express thoughts, ideas, and emotions in written form (Ahsin, 2016). Writing can be called a productive activity because writing is a process of forming a linguistic unit in the form of a real work in the form of writing (Sardila, 2015). Writing is an important part of education because by writing we can expand knowledge and increase concentration.

Everything that is done in the world must have a purpose, so does writing. By writing we can develop various potentials possessed by students (Yarmi, 2017) or the younger generation such as thinking creatively in creating a work, giving new experiences to the younger generation, and training the younger generation to be skilled in writing and reading. Dalman in Denastiti, Anggraini, and Saputro (2020) mentions several purposes of writing, consisting of: (1) assignment objectives (writing due to task demands), (2) aesthetic goals (to express ideas beautifully), (3) lighting purposes (to convey information to readers), (4) the purpose of self-statement (as a forum for the author to introduce himself to the readers), (5) consumptive purposes (writing that is done to be marketed to readers), and (6) creative purposes (writing aims to express thoughts, ideas creatively). Tarigan in Ismilasari (2013) adds that writers who do not have experience also need to pay attention to the purpose of writing such as: informing, convincing or pressing, entertaining, fun, expressing emotions and feelings.

Siddik (2018) states that in Indonesian there are four forms of writing or essays, namely, narrative essays, expositions, descriptions, and arguments. Wibowo, Sutani, and Fitrianingrum (2020) explain that narrative essays are essays that describe an event from time to time. In writing this essay, the writer must be able to make the reader feel as if he experienced the event. The second form is an expository essay. Satini (2016) explains that an expository essay is an essay to convey information or knowledge on a topic clearly to the readers without forcing the reader to agree with the author. The third form is descriptive essay. Idris, Tahar, and Juita (2014) explain that a descriptive essay is an essay that tells something in detail and in accordance with the actual situation. By reading a descriptive essay, it is hoped that readers can imagine and feel the emotions and

atmosphere created by the author. The last form of writing skill is argumentative essay. An argumentative essay is an essay that has inferences or conclusions, implications or linkages, and evidence or data (Sobari, 2013). The purpose of the argumentative essay is to convince the readers of the authenticity of the author's opinion or statement (Semi in Guci, R, and Nursaid, 2016).

In writing, we need broad insight. Therefore, the low interest in reading can affect the interest in writing. Research conducted by the IEA Study of Writing Literacy (Elly in Amelia, Sukma, and Asma, 2015) formulated that elementary school students in Indonesia have low writing skills. In 2004 the National Library of Indonesia stated that Indonesia publishes approximately 6000-7000 titles of books per year, this number is considered small compared to the number of books published by Thailand, Japan, Korea, and even Malaysia (Martavia, Thahar, and Asri, 2016). Anggraeni (2017) mentions that there are two factors that cause low interest in writing, including: (1) internal factors that come from each individual, for example: students have difficulty finding ideas, students have difficulty in arranging words into a sentence, students pay less attention to placement punctuation in writing and external, (2) external factors, coming from the surrounding environment such as noisy classroom atmosphere, lack of learning media in stimulating student activity in class.

In this digital era, reading and writing do not always use print media, we can use electronic media in doing these two activities. There are many applications that can be used to increase productivity in reading and writing, one of which is the Wattpad application. Wattpad is a medium that facilitates its users to read, write, and express their opinions in a literary work (Yuniar, Widiati, and Astuti, 2019). Wattpad is the largest reading platform in the world (Falaq, et al., 2021) with more than one hundred million downloads, Wattpad is a popular application in the book and reference category, Wattpad is a place for writers who want to self-publish online easily (Farhanah and Yanti, 2021).

In addition to making, it easier for users to self-publish, the operation of Wattpad is also very easy. By having a personal account on the Wattpad application on Android, iOS, and on the website the author can start to write according to the desired genre of stories. Here is display login and sign in Wattpad account on Android and the website:



Figure 1. Display login and sign in to a Wattpad account on Android (Source: research document, 2022)

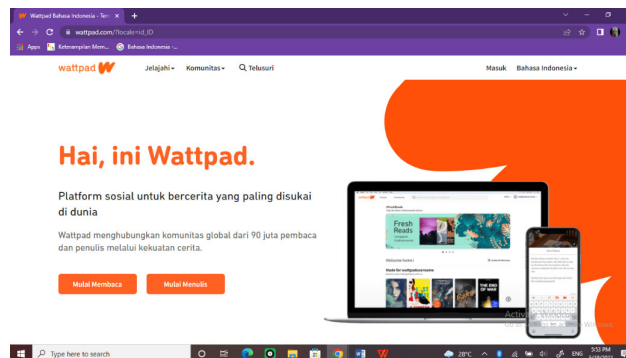


Figure 2. Display of login and sign in Wattpad account on the website (Source: research document, 2022)

As a popular application, Wattpad certainly has several advantages, such as: the Wattpad application classifies a story according to genre so that it can make it easier for readers to find their favorite genre. The features of the Wattpad application are not much different from the features provided by other social media such as: share, upload, like, comment on each paragraph of the story which functions as a medium for interaction between readers and writers, create statuses, notifications, upload photos and videos in a story, and chatting. In addition, we need to be careful in choosing readings on Wattpad, because Wattpad has some stories that are not suitable for reading by a certain age.

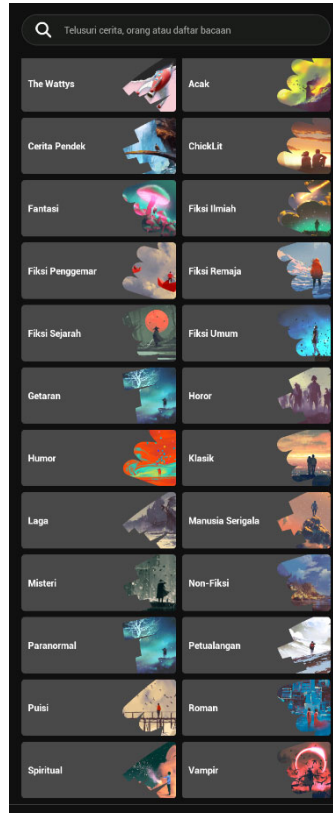


Figure 3. Story genres in Wattpad (Source: research document, 2022)

2. Method

This research uses the method of library research. Where researchers need to find and use sources of data or previous research in the form of scientific journals, articles, and books related to the research topic. Sarwono in Setiawan and Sulistiani (2019) explains that literature study is a research technique to describe the results of previous research in obtaining a theoretical basis or framework on the topic of the problem that will be or is being studied.

This study uses secondary data, where researchers use data from previous studies, sourced from journals, books, and scientific articles according to the topic of discussion, such as: the role of the Wattpad application in increasing reading interest and writing interest of the younger generation, the type of reading that is often read by the younger generation. The younger generation, the genre of writing favored by the younger generation, as well as what features are contained in the Wattpad application.

The researcher uses the theory of Mary W. George where in her book entitled *The Element of Library Research*, she explains that there are several steps in conducting research:

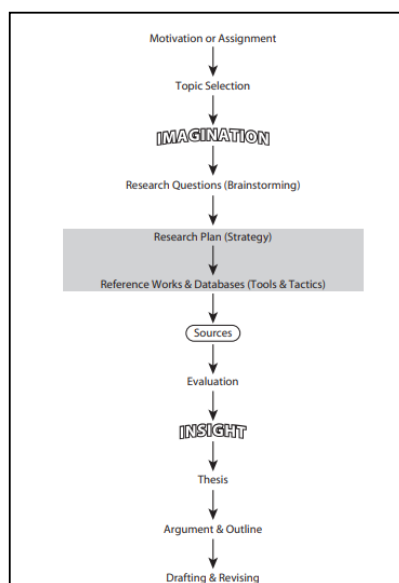


Figure 4. Research steps (George, 2008)

The first step in conducting research based on George (2008)'s opinion is 1) determining the topics to be discussed, the topics discussed in this study are how to increase interest in writing and reading the younger generation through the Wattpad application, 2) imagination, researchers can develop concepts or imaginations so that the younger generation is interested in reading and writing using the Wattpad application, 3) research questions, authors need to prepare various answers to questions regarding the advantages of using the Wattpad application as a medium for writing and reading, 4) the research strategies used are: (a) expressing ideas about the role of the application Wattpad as a medium for writing and reading, (b) using the Wattpad application as a medium for writing and reading based on previous research, 5) researchers can look for references and data sources through books, scientific articles, and journals both nationally and internationally, 6) identify data sources carefully and carefully, 7) after identifying the data, researchers need to evaluate the data obtained by setting aside data that are not in accordance with the research topic (Hasanudin, 2020), 8) using Wattpad as a medium for writing and reading electronically, 9) compiling and concluding the results of writing and reading activities. Read the younger generation of Indonesia using the Wattpad application.

In data validation, the author uses data triangulation techniques. Data source triangulation technique means that researchers need to find information from various sources and then compare it (Bachri, B. S., 2010).

3. Results and Discussion

Wattpad is an application or site that facilitates users in doing writing, reading activities (Syaharani and Mahadian, 2017). Wattpad users can even add comments (Rebora and Pianzola, 2018) and criticism in a work uploaded on the application. Wattpad can also be used as an online-based self-publishing application (Lifiani and Krismayani, 2019). Wattpad also provides various genres of stories according to the preferences of its user.



Figure 5. Wattpad app icon (Researcher documentation, 2022)

For this reason, the Wattpad application is very suitable for use in increasing the reading and writing interest of the younger generation of Indonesia. Using or how to use Wattpad is also very easy. Here are the steps in using the Wattpad application to read stories:

1. Open play store then search using the keyword "Wattpad" then download or you can download the Wattpad application via the following link <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=wp.wattpad&hl=in&gl=US>

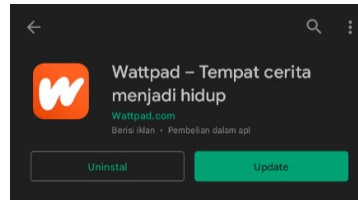


Figure 6. Display of Wattpad on Google Play store (Researcher documentation, 2022)

2. If you don't have an account, you need to register using your e-mail or Facebook account. If you already have an account, all you have to do is enter your username and password. The login display can be seen in Figures 1 and 2.

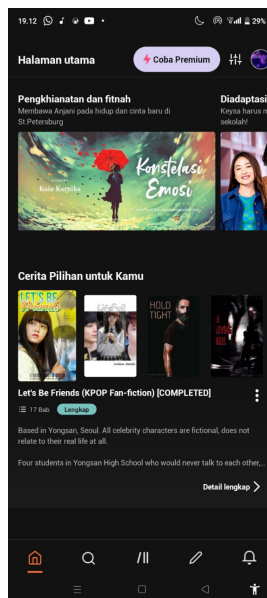


Figure 7. Initial view of Wattpad (Researcher documentation, 2022)

3. To read a short story or story, we only need to press the search button located at the bottom left of the second number, after that we enter the keywords or the title of the story that we are going to read.

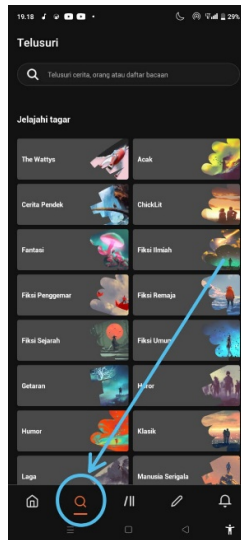


Figure 8. How to search for stories on Wattpad (Researcher documentation, 2022)

4. To save internet packages, stories that have been read can also be stored in the library and we can read them offline

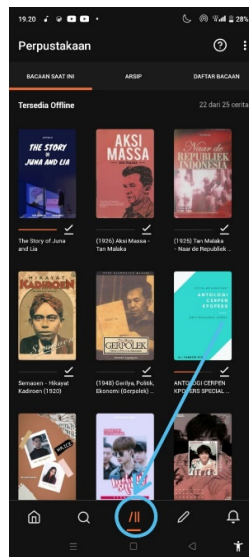


Figure 9. Wattpad Library (Researcher documentation, 2022)

As previously mentioned, the Wattpad application does not only facilitate users to just read. The wattpad application can also be used or mandated as a medium for writing or self-publishing. Here are the steps in writing and publishing a story:

1. Open the Wattpad app
2. Press the pencil icon to start writing the story

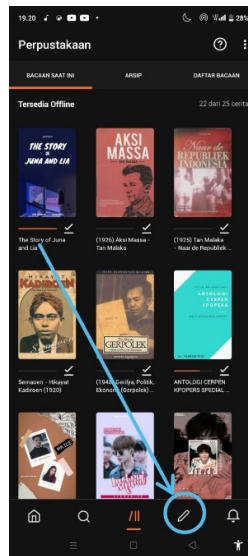


Figure 10. Steps to write a story on Wattpad (Researcher documentation, 2022)

3. Select on the “Create a new story” section

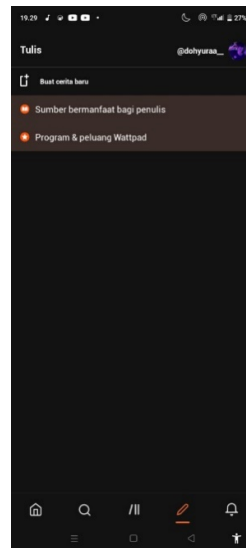


Figure 11. Steps to write a story on Wattpad (Researcher documentation, 2022)

4. Add cover, title, and description or story outline in the sections provided

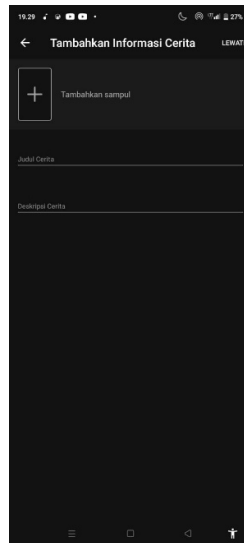


Figure 12. Placement of cover, title, and story outline on Wattpad (Researcher documentation, 2022)

5. Write the story subsection then write the story and publish it, we can also add photos and videos in the story



Figure 13. Writing stories on Wattpad (Researcher documentation, 2022)

6. Share stories to friends or other social media platforms

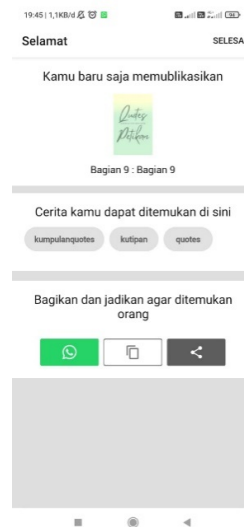


Figure 14. Publication of stories on Wattpad (Researcher documentation, 2022)

Based on previous research, Wattpad is considered to be able to increase interest in writing and reading the younger generation, such as the results of research from Basri and Tamrin (2020) which states that: 1) the Wattpad application can make it easier for users to read a literary work, 2) the Wattpad application makes it easier for students to looking for free novels for school assignments, 3) the Wattpad application makes it easier for users to understand various writing styles, 4) the Wattpad application is more desirable than the printed version of the book, and 5) the Wattpad application makes it easy for writers to create a work.

4. Conclusion

Wattpad is an online writing and reading medium. Wattpad can improve the writing and reading skills of young people in Indonesia. The steps in improving writing skills through the Wattpad application are by: 1) registering or creating an account, 2) reading stories and understanding the features available in the Wattpad application, 3) starting to write stories, 4) publishing stories, and 5) promoting stories to other social media.

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