Digital Literacy Tool Wattpad for Promotion of Religious Values through Popular Literary Texts

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Keywords: Wattpad, Literacy Tool, Religious Values, Digital Literacy.

Abstract: Digital literacy is essential today since the world has become more connected than ever in human history. The tools for digital literacy are being created from time to time. One of which is Wattpad, a digital platform focuses on writing and sharing stories. Wattpad is regarded as one of the largest digital platform in the field of literature. Wattpad Indonesia has the reputation in proliferating popular literary texts. This article intended to explain how religious values are being promoted through digital literacy tool Wattpad. The method used in this research is content analysis with data triangulation by expert judgement. The source of data are *Mariposa* (2016) and *Mozachiko* (2018). The results show that Wattpad as digital literacy tool has characteristic in the interactivity between writer and reader. The interactivity made possible for the reader to respond immediately to the event in the narrative. In both novels, the promotion of religious values were indicated in the characters and the resolution of the conflicts. The value being promoted were on the level of belief, the level of religious practice, and the level of behavior / morals. These religious values were immediately responded by their readers with the statement of agreement/praising to the action of the characters through the feature of comment.

1 INTRODUCTION

Digital literacy is a very important competency today. In Indonesia, internet users reached 196.7 million people (73.7%) by mid-2020 (Pratama, 2020), an increase of 8.3% from the previous year. This shows that digital literacy is increasingly needed. Digital literacy needs to be understood as having the knowledge and ability to use many technolog-ical tools for various purposes (Mantiri et al., 2019). A person who is digitally literate means that person is able to use technology strategically to find and examine information, connect and collaborate with others, produce and share content, and use the Internet and other technological tools to achieve personal, professional, and academic goals (Nurhidayah and Setiawan, 2019).

For teenagers who are now known as digital citizens because they have been introduced to digital devices since childhood, one of the most popular digital tools is Wattpad. Wattpad is a storytelling platform brand that carries the jargon of "Where stories live" since 2019. 14 years since this platform was created, Wattpad uses 50 languages as the basis for stories, one of which is Indonesian. Since 2019, the number of Wattpad readers' membership has reached 90 million worldwide. The recorded statistics show that 80% of Wattpad users are women, with adolescence (Nurhidayah and Setiawan, 2019). Thus, Wattpad is one of the platforms that is close to millennial generation youth or generation Z. The data above shows that Wattpad has been used as a digital literacy tool in the field of storytelling through prose and poetry with various genres from mystery to humor, both fiction and non-fiction.

As a digital literacy tool in literature and writing, Wattpad has been examined by various researcher about its advantages and limitations. For the Indonesian scope, in their article "Literary Cyber Landscape: Postmodernism, Popular Literature, and Interactivity", Nurhidayah and Setiawan pointed out two interesting facts (Nurhidayah and Setiawan, 2019). First, that the technical advantage of this genre is that it offers interactivity between readers and writers that is difficult for conventional media to do. Second, that the existence of the comment, like, subscribe, and follow features has broken the

conventional boundaries that have been imprisoning readers and writers. If Nurhidayah and Setiawan's research considers the existence of popular literature that develops through digital literacy media such as Wattpad with a comparative per-spective with conventional printed literary systems, then this study intends to explain the form of this digital literacy platform and see the messages conveyed, especially religious values, through teenage fiction that's in it.

Contrary to the optimism of Nurhidayah and Setiawan, Mawardi sees Wattpad's existence as a digital literacy tool critically (Mawardi, 2018). In his article, Mawardi describes the money-oriented writing atmosphere at Wattpad and encourages reader consumerism to a level of apparent awareness of the writer and their idol characters on Wattpad. Mawardi's highlight on the commodification of Wattpad's stories into print novels reveals the two phenomena that have been mentioned. Mawardi's attitude also shows antipathy to the quality of Wattpad's stories which tend to make sex scenes the core of the story, although he also shows the existence of some Wattpad writers who are not. Compared to Mawardi's research, this study will focus more on teen fiction written by the writers of Wattpad Indonesia.

Apart from the researches above, other research on Wattpad in Indonesia focuses on the use of this digital literacy platform for information distribution. This research conducted by Lifiani & Krismayani describes in detail the self-publishing process carried out by Wattpad writers, from preparing accounts, writing processes and cover layouts, to commodifying Wattpad stories into printed form (Lifiani and Krismayani, 2020). Lifiani and Krismayani's research indirectly shows how Wattpad as a digital literacy tool is used efficiently by its users, both writers and readers. When compared, this research will focus more on messages in the form of religious values conveyed by works published through the Wattpad platform.

Based on the background of the above problems, this article wants to explain how the Wattpad as digital literacy tool is used as a means of conveying religious values through teen fiction texts published through the platform.

2 METHODOLOGY

The method used in this writing is content analysis with descriptive qualitative approach (Neuendorf, 2017). The data collection is by limiting the fiction stories of teenagers in Wattpad Indonesia which are

in the "most read" category. For this reason, the data sources used are the most popular teen fiction stories on Wattpad Indonesia until 2020, namely *Mariposa* (2016) and *Mozachiko* (2018). After the data source is selected, then the data is sorted based on sentences containing discourses about religious values. After that, the sentences were categorized based on theories about religious values (beliefs, rituals / practices, action). At this stage, the data triangulation process is carried out by asking two experts (from religious education and social sciences) to assess the accuracy of the religious values that appear in the sentences. After being triangulated, these sentences are then interpreted based on the theory of religious values by taking into account the reader's response to the sentences containing religious values. This article is part of a broader study of religious expression in popular literature that appears on the Wattpad Indonesia platform.

3 RESULT

3.1 Knowing Wattpad as Digital Literacy Tool for Storytelling

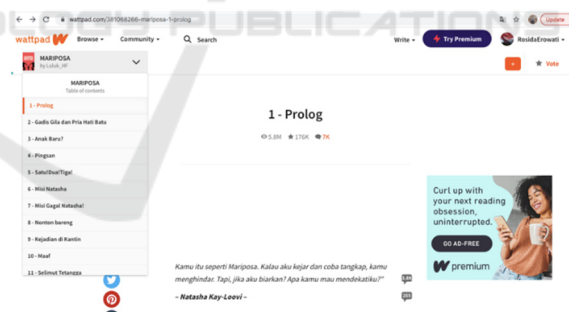The digital literacy tool chosen, Wattpad Indonesia, has a visual appearance for the story as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Visualization of the story in Wattpad.

In order to read stories using Wattpad, there are a few features that need to be recognized:

a. Story title at top left (Mariposa).
b. Chapters under the title of the story (Prologue, Mad Girl and Stone Hearted Man, etc.).
c. Reader's comment next to each sentence in the story.

For more clarity, the visual appearance of readers' comments can be seen in the Figure 2.
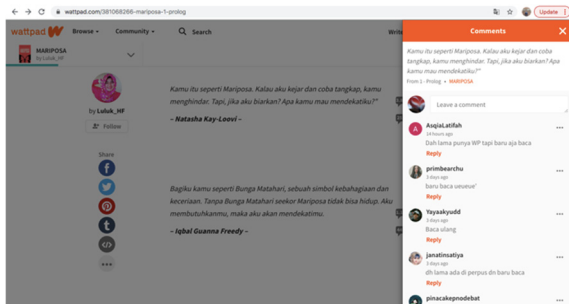
Figure 2: The comment feature in Wattpad.

As a digital literacy tool, Wattpad provides an advantage for readers to immediately comment on every sentence. This shows that the greater the number of comments obtained in one sentence, it means that the discourse contained in the sentence is increasingly appreciated by readers. This shows that the interactivity between writers and readers is one of the foundations for storytelling in Wattpad.

The interactivity of the writer and reader can also be shown through the writer's greeting when starting or ending a part of the story. The following image shows the greeting given by author Mozachicko @poppipertiwi to her readers. Poppi Pertiwi started by commenting on the main character, Chicko Gadangga, then challenged her readers to comment on whether the reader wanted to continue the story or not. This challenge was answered by 128 readers who wanted the story to continue. Poppi Pertiwi's style to challenge her readers is getting more exciting as the story moves. In part 19, this writer's challenge was answered by 1900 readers who wanted the story to be continued, as seen in Figure 3.
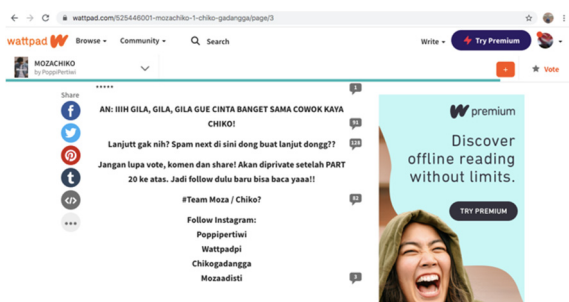

Figure 3: Greetings from the story author in Wattpad.

Based on these observations, it can be said that Wattpad provides a story writing model that does not only depend on the author himself, but also prioritises the interaction of the story with the reader. Because the writer pub-lishes the story by section, sometimes the reader can even offer a story plot.

3.2 Wattpad Indonesia and the Development of Popular Stories

Wattpad globally offers a wide variety of genres on their platform. Wattpad has 21 sub genres currently offered, consisting of adventure, contemporary lit, diverse lit, fan fiction, fantasy, historical fiction, horror, humor, LGBTQ, mystery, new adult, non-fiction, paranormal, poetry, romance, science fiction, short stories, teen fiction, thriller, and werewolf. Although there are various types of stories offered by global Wattpad, for Indonesia, teen fiction has a special place. The two Wattpad stories that have the most readership until 2020 are part of teen fiction. This shows the closeness between Wattpad user statistics and the phenomenon of the growth of teen fiction in Indonesia.

Teen fiction on Wattpad Indonesia has a pattern with a story plot around a teenage romance with a school setting in an urban area. The two stories that are the data sources for this study use the city of Jakarta as the background, even though the writers of these stories are in Malang and Bali. The main male character in the story is depicted as a popular student at school, either because of his intelligence, or because of his mischief. Meanwhile, the female lead character later also became popular because she pursued the love of the male main character. The experience of chasing the love of a popular boy at this school is what drives the story. Will the main female character get her love? Will the two of them continue to date? This question is always hanging in every part of the story. From the main plot, the supporting characters of the story, such as the friends of the main male and female characters, as well as the families of the two main characters, are presented to help the two main characters achieve their goals.

3.3 Promotion of Religious Values in Popular Stories on Wattpad Indonesia

In Wattpad's version of *Mariposa* (the first novel), the story, which consists of 46 parts, presents a sweet ending, with Iqbal and Acha, the two main male and female characters, unite. Meanwhile, in the Wattpad version of *Mozachiko* (the second novel), the story doesn't end with Moza and Chicko joining their heart. In part 40, the story ends with a parting dialogue between Moza and Chiko.

As the uniqueness of Wattpad's story, each part of the story focuses on one problem faced by the main character. In the first novel's story, Acha, whose full name is Natasha Kay Loovi, is said to move to

Arwana High School to pursue the love of Iqbal Guanna Freedy (Iqbal), a man who is popular because of his good looks and intelligence, but cold towards women. The story moves from being rejected by Iqbal, accepted by Iqbal, dating, not getting the blessing of the family, ending happily: dating with the blessing of the family. Meanwhile, in the second novel's story, Moza Adisti also struggled to get the love of Chiko Gadangga, a schoolmate in 10th grade class who is popular as a school champion, likes to fight but always prioritizes solidarity with his friends. In this story, the plot moves more complex because of the background of the character Moza, who has a stepfamily. Therefore, family problems also color the story, in addition to friendship issues. Religious values are introduced in various events and scenes in these two stories.

From a thematic point of view, both the first and second novels show the problem of finding the identity in the main character of adolescents. The school setting used in these two stories can represent any school, because what is prioritized is the school atmosphere complete with the social interactions that occur at school. The house setting that is used as a support for characterization reveals the middle to upper social class which is the similarity of the social characteristics of the main characters in both stories. Other supporting settings are bars and restaurants. In the second novel, the background bars are important to support Chiko's characterization as a hero. Meanwhile, in the first novel, the background of the bar is precisely to show Iqbal's dislike of the frenetic atmosphere of the bar.

The characterization of the male main character in both stories has physical characteristics that are handsome and strong. Iqbal is described as emphasizing brain power rather than physicality, while Chiko is described as prioritizing muscles over his brain. As a result, physical fights are more dominant in the second novel. Meanwhile, in the first novel, the main character Iqbal is mostly featured in competitions in science Olympiad or arguing in debates. Psychologically, the two main male characters have something in common, namely that they highly value family values and friendship, but cannot be firm in establishing relationships with women. Socially, these two main characters also have in common, namely having a wealthy family background and warm family conditions. Thanks to the family's condition that tends to be fine, the two main male characters are depicted as being focused on dealing with their problems with the women they like or like them. The characterization of the male main character in both stories seems close to everyday situations that are easily seen around, in the form of the smart and rich boy, and the naughty boy who is kind, solid, and easily angry.

On the other hand, the development of the female main character in both stories has the same physical characteristics, namely that both are beautiful. However, Acha is consistently shown as a smart, beautiful girl. Meanwhile, Moza is shown that there has been a physical change from a childish two-pigtail girl to a beautiful girl dressed in sexy clothes. Psychologically, both Acha and Moza have something in common, namely that they care deeply about family, are innocent, and are independent. Although the Acha family is a representation of a single mother family, Acha is described as more selfish and self-centered because she does not pay attention to the problems of friends or those around her. Meanwhile, Moza, because she lives in a family that consisted of her biological father and her step mother and sister, her inner problems are more varied. The competition for Chiko's love and the title of a school princess with her half sister, Nency, has made Moza's character more developed. Socially, the two main female characters are depicted as coming from middle-class families. The two main female characters have an unusual family background though. This non-mainstream representation of the family makes the problems of the female main character in both stories deeper and can help develop the motivation of the female main character who wants love persistently. In this case, the feelings of liking and love represented by the two main female characters are symbolic forms of the 'loss' they wish to fill. For Acha, she lost her father figure since she was a child, then she manifested it by liking the character Iqbal as a strong and kind man. As for Moza, she was not accepted by her step mother and step sister, so she manifested this love by seeking protection and acceptance from Chiko. From the description of the two main female characters, it can be seen that their characters are easily found in everyday life with the typical of the beautiful, smart, and choosy child. On the other hand there is the good child who is innocent, impressionable, and impulsive.

Based on the analysis of the teen fiction genre story, it can be seen that popular stories have strength in terms of their closeness to the realities of everyday life, which are often not disguised by aesthetic metaphors, although sometimes they are excessive in plotting the story, because every writer tries to make the story always invite readers' interest. Therefore, in popular stories, the issue of values can be conveyed more clearly, because popular stories also aim to build a moral compass in the reader. Black and white,

the good and the bad, the boundaries are more visible in these two stories. The measure of political correctness in these two stories is also seen in the way the reader responds to one scene or one sentence.

One example of Mozachiko's story is in part 2 where Chiko kisses Moza in front of a crowd only to prove to Jaka, a former of Moza, that Chiko is dating Moza. Readers' comments on this scene reached 2700, most of whom disagreed with Chiko's actions. This also happens in the first novel, which often reaps thousands of comments when presenting scenes that show Acha's courage as a woman to confess her feelings to the man she likes first, even to the point of changing schools for the man she likes. The scene that appeared in part 3 drew 4400 comments which partly expressed admiration for the determination of this female main character.

The religious values promoted in these two works can be categorized at the level of belief, the level of religious practice, and the level of behavior / morals. At the level of belief, the main male character in both works is described as Muslim. Whereas the female main character is not explicitly explained about her beliefs, but implicitly, because there is no discourse about dating different religions, it can be said that the main female character also has the same beliefs. At the level of religious practice, the two main male characters are depicted as praying. Iqbal is depicted praying once at home, while Chiko is depicted praying 3 times in the school prayer room. At the level of behavior / morals, we can find more religious values in these two works.

Moral according to Al Ghazali (in Zubaidi) is a constant act, which is done repeatedly in order to form a habit (Zubaidi, 2013). These morals can lead to both good and bad behavior. The religious value of the work emerges through the good morals displayed by the characters. Good qualities such as patience, sincerity, gratitude, tawakal, and receiving sustenance as they are after trying, are shown especially through the way the main characters of the two stories face challenges in their lives. The main female characters in both stories are depicted as girls who have patience, in the sense of trying their best to achieve their goals. Both are described as smart girls. Although their goal in both stories is to get the love of their ideal man, this patient trait is shown in their ability to face the character of the guy they like. After they get answers from their male idol, their goal is achieved. In the development of the story, the two main female characters have to face the attitude of the male main characters who tend to become possessive after repaying the love of the female main character. When faced with this possessive attitude, the two

main female characters tend to be looking for solutions to problems. This is a reflection of the nature of tawakal which means not giving up on circumstances. In *Mozachiko*, Moza's attitude towards her stepfamily's unwillingness to accept her is also a reflection of her sincerity and gratitude. Moza shows that she accepts the reality of her step mother and step sister's dislike, but she doesn't resent the situation either. She is even grateful that she can still live in the house with her beloved biological father.

In the two main male characters, who are portrayed as popular boys in school, the superiority of characters is clever, brave, responsible, and full of affection. The antipathy attitude they show at the beginning of the story by rejecting the liking of the two main female characters is a form of the introvert personality of the main male characters. When they start to like the main female characters, they begin to be able to open up and accept the existence of the female main character as part of their life, moreover they do not want to lose it. This change in attitude shows the nature of gratitude and tawakal which are part of the characteristics of the two main male characters.

Thus religious values are shown especially through the ways the main characters try to cope with their problems along their search for identity.

4 DISCUSSION

The use of digital literacy tool like Wattpad is nonetheless value free. The content published in it definitely hold certain values. The definition of value that is used in a limited manner in this study is the value described by Aljo Klamer in a chapter of the book About Values (Klaimer, 2017) which shows that valuing is along with acting. In life, we cannot escape values. Values can be based on 3 aspects: economic, cultural and moral. According to Klamer, value is a concept that is difficult to grasp, because it really depends on the context (Europe, 2021). However, values are always the basis of the statement "what is important to someone".

Klamer sees value as the quality of an action, object, practice, people and social entities that are considered good, useful, important, beautiful, desirable, constructive, and so on. This value has a personal dimension - in the sense that the value is experienced by a person - and social - in the sense that the value comes from the influence that is shared among groups of people.

Based on the meaning of the value offered by Klamer, the religious values studied in this paper are religious values based on the meanings contained in the teen fiction on Wattpad. Thus, the religious meaning used here is a definition constructed from the phenomena that appear in the story. Religion as the root word of religious has a meaning related to religion or belief in God or following the practice of a religion or a religious person. The meaning used by Merriam Webster's dictionary needs to be reviewed. In a report on its website, the Council of Europe explains that religion describes the relationship between people and what they consider to be holy, sacred, spiritual or great (Neville, 2021). Usually religion will be complemented by a structured set of practices that bind a community of people who share the same beliefs. Religion is distinguished from belief which has a broader meaning and one of them is understood as a commitment / action that rejects the dimensions of existence beyond this world. Based on these definitions, it can be concluded that religion contains practices that will bind its followers to what is considered great or holy. In the same web, it is shown that in Europe there are 19 religions and beliefs that exist. Meanwhile in Indonesia it is officially recognized that there are 6 religions and beliefs. This shows that being religious is a condition in which a person practices based on the religion he believes in.

However, religion does not only bind individuals, religion also colors social life. Religion can be an identity, or religion can be a differentiator from others. In this context, religion influences values. Values in religion function in three ways, namely as a basis for obligation, as a barrier that directs culture and thought processes, and as a special moral tradition (Davis, 2020). As a basis for obligation, values in religion are needed to instill a fundamental human life constitution based on obligations in that religion. Religion shows that humans are responsible. In all developing religions in the world, this human responsibility is the basis of his obligation to the Great or the Holy (Davis, 2020). Furthermore, religion as a cultural guide, it can be understood that religion is contained in culture. Therefore the value contained in the various cultures in which the religion develops is very strong in the ideas contained in that religion. In simple terms, it can be said that religion is at the same time a place for contesting cultural values and norms in the society that adheres to it. And lastly, religion as a basis of values for the tradition of morality. It can be explained that each religion develops its own moral standards by considering the conception of what is seen as natural (Cawelti, 1972).

In relation to the religious values discussed in this paper, religious will be limited to the second sense, where religious values are a place for the contestation of cultural values and norms in the society that adheres to them. The results of the analysis show that the religious values in the two popular works on Wattpad Indonesia are a form of contestation between youth culture in the form of a teenager's lifestyle and the norms that apply in society. In the storytelling, religious values appear as the actions of the main characters to deal with conflicts in their lives as teenagers. Religious values color their search for identity to become teenagers with good morals, especially for the people they care about.

As a place of contestation of religious values, the genres examined in this paper also influence these values. Teen fiction genre is a category of fictional stories that tell the life of teenagers. Teen fiction in Wattpad Indonesia has become a part of popular culture which has the characteristics of communal or mass production so that the way of studying it must be distinguished from the high culture. The emergence of popular culture since the 1960s has made it necessary for researchers of that period to define popular literature. Cawelti suggested that popular literature researchers understand the formula. In his view, the formula is a system of conventions for structuring cultural products, in this case popular literature. Formulas are tied to a certain culture and time period. In relation to teen fiction on Wattpad Indonesia, an identifiable formula is related to Indonesian popular literature that has developed since the 1970s. This formula includes the convention of a macho male protagonist (smart, superhero) and a female protagonist who is feminine, innocent, but brave. In addition, a thematic convention about teenage romance appears with the main setting of school or campus. Popular literature in Indonesia has a wide audience because it is considered capable of capturing the realities of the times because popular novel authors are usually young authors who are considered to represent that era. Popular novels, according to Adji, also have a big sociological effect. This cultural product is able to create social icons from young people in the novel. These figures represent young people and become idol figures. Here is the power of popular literature, where it not only reproduces reality, but also produces reality. The hallmark of popular literature is the existence of a strong element of entertainment and didactic elements (Damono, 1993). Popular literature thus aims to build or spread values that build its readers in an entertaining way. Based on this understanding, the two popular novels on Wattpad Indonesia show their

influence on their readers through the thousands of responses they have received from publishing on Wattpad. These two works follow the formula for popular youth literature that has emerged since the 1970s in Indonesia. By prioritizing moral values and entertainment, these two works have succeeded in reproducing the reality of teenagers in Indonesia in the early second millennium era, as well as supporting the creation of a reality in the form of strengthening the youth romance genre.

5 CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, Wattpad as a digital literacy tool for storytelling appears with an attractive visualization and prioritizes interactivity with its readers. Wattpad offers 21 storytelling sub genres including teen fiction. In Indonesia, teen fiction on Wattpad Indonesia reaches the most readership, which proves an extraordinary readership of this subgenre. The uniqueness of teen fiction on Wattpad appears through the visualization of storytelling which also prioritizes interactivity both through reader comments and through the author's greeting style in every part of the story they write. This interaction can sometimes also affect the plot of the story. The strengths of teen fiction in presenting popular stories from teenagers, with plot patterns that have been formulated about teenage love stories, with the presence of a prominent male main character, as well as an innocent but brave female main character, make these stories represent everyday life without being covered with an aesthetic metaphor. Thus, the didactic element in these popular stories takes precedence because these stories promote building a moral compass, which rests on religion and norms. Although teen fiction in value can help adolescents understand this moral compass, more extensive research needs to be done to see more accurately the representations of what values live in the imaginary society in these stories.

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