

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Surabaya, known as a city with a strong colonial history, not only leaves a legacy in the form of Dutch buildings, but also the stories of local figures who shaped the city's history before the colonial era. One such figure is Adipati Raden Sawunggaling, also known by his nickname Joko Berek. Sawunggaling was not only a respected leader but also played a crucial role in the opening of new lands in Surabaya. He is known as a forest clearer who opened up areas such as Lidah Wetan, a former wilderness area called Alas Nambas Kelingan, and transformed it into settlements. This role is crucial in shaping the city's identity and demonstrates that Surabaya's history is far more complex than just a colonial story.

Sawunggaling was not only a leader but also a figure who contributed significantly to the development of the city of Surabaya. One of his important roles was as a land clearer, opening up new land for settlements and development centers. His history as a land clearer also played a crucial role in the formation of the Surabaya region as we know it today. Furthermore, Joko Berek not only named areas within Surabaya, but also gave these names special meanings that reflect the characteristics and identity of each place he explored. Therefore, Surabaya's history is not only closely linked to the colonial period, but also rich in local heritage from the era of the dukes, particularly Duke Raden Sawunggaling.

However, as time goes by, his figure has faded from the memory of the younger generation, so that many no longer know his story or influence in Surabaya's local history. Proven by the results of the questionnaire that I have distributed to 72 teenagers domiciled in Surabaya with an age range of 17-21 years, only 21.5% of the total number of respondents knew

about the story of Raden Sawunggaling, while the remaining 70.5% admitted to never know or heard about the story of Raden Sawunggaling.

In the modern era, adolescents' interest in history tends to decline, especially when compared to other subjects or topics considered more relevant to everyday life. According to Putri (2021) in Rikhana (2023), history ranked fourth on the list of least-favorite subjects among 1,340 12th-grade high school respondents. This phenomenon indicates that many adolescents consider history boring and uninteresting. However, history plays a crucial role in shaping identity and collective awareness, particularly regarding local figures with strong historical ties to their regions.

Selecting a target audience for teenagers is crucial because adolescence is a critical phase in the formation of identity and mindset. According to John W. Santrock in his book *Adolescence: Teenage Development*, which refers to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, adolescents are in the formal operational stage (SANTROCK, 2016). At this stage, adolescents begin to think abstractly, logically, and systematically. It is also at this stage that adolescents seek to discover who they truly are, including their values, beliefs, and life goals. By targeting adolescents aged 17–21, we can influence their thinking, provide insights that shape positive values, and encourage engagement in important issues such as history and culture. Creative approaches such as web comics or visual media are particularly effective because adolescents tend to be more open to new and innovative ideas. Furthermore, knowledge of local history can foster pride and a love for local culture (Santrock, 2019). However, rigid and formal delivery of historical information is often less engaging for adolescents, so interactive and visual methods are needed to capture their interest and raise awareness of the importance of history.

One way to address the decline in adolescent interest in history is through a creative and engaging approach. Engaging learning media, such as comics, play a crucial role in this regard (Putri & Dewi, 2020). Comics can convey historical narratives visually, dynamically, and engagingly, thereby stimulating adolescents' interest in learning more about historical figures. According to Sadiman et al., as cited in Dian R. Puspananda (2022), comics as an educational medium provide a more engaging learning experience because adolescents tend to prefer visual storytelling over lengthy academic texts.

Comics as an educational medium have great potential to convey historical narratives in a dynamic and engaging way. According to Sadiman et al., as cited in Dian R. Puspananda (2022), comics can increase students' learning interest because they are more drawn to visual stories than to lengthy, formal academic texts. Comics also allow students to learn in a more relaxed atmosphere, allowing them to better understand the material.

The use of digital comics was chosen as a medium for introducing local heroes like Raden Sawunggaling because data shows that teenagers are the most frequent internet users. According to Iskandar (2019), of the approximately 88.1 million internet users in Indonesia, teenagers dominate. Research by APJII and the Center for Communication Studies at the University of Indonesia (UI) shows that the majority of internet users in Indonesia are between the ages of 18 and 25. This number of young users even accounts for almost half (49%) of the total number of Indonesian internet users. Teenagers tend to access entertainment from the internet, supported by a study conducted by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) and UNICEF (2014), which stated that there are three main motivations for accessing the internet: seeking information, connecting with friends, and seeking entertainment (Yunita et al., 2021). However, according to Saputra (2016) in Rini (2020), 70% of them use the internet for negative things such as cybercrime, cyberporn, and online games for more than three hours per day. With this, web comics are expected to be an entertainment medium that also increases their insight into local culture. Thus, web comics have the potential to increase teenagers' interest in local history or culture, so that they can use the internet more usefully.

By combining elements of entertainment and cultural education through digital media, web comics can make cultural introductions feel more relevant and vivid in the minds of teenagers. In line with Wulandari's (2022) opinion in Arini et al. (2023), utilizing digital media is one way to attract audience attention in this digital era. Furthermore, digital comics/web comics are considered more practical than physical comics because they can be easily accessed through various devices. Hermawati in Narestuti (2021) stated that digital comics are cost-effective because they do not require printing, binding, and duplication. With the freemium concept, these comics can be accessed by a wider audience without financial barriers (Alwie et al., 2020). Through this approach, web comics are expected to be a solution to increase teenagers' interest in history in this digital era, especially about local figures who contributed in the past.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the background explanation above, several problems that can be identified are as follows:

1. The lack of recognition of the local historical figure of the Duke of Surabaya Raden Sawunggaling has resulted in many young people today being less familiar with the Duke of Surabaya Raden Sawunggaling.
2. The method of delivering historical information is rigid, historical material is often delivered through traditional methods such as narrative and less interesting textbooks.
3. Younger generations living in the digital age are often more interested in modern, popular content, resulting in a gap in efforts to preserve cultural heritage and introduce history that suits their interests.

1.3 Problem Formulation

The problem formulation from the background explanation above is:

1. How to design a web comic about the story of Raden Sawunggaling as a medium to introduce local historical figures and their important role in Surabaya that is interesting for teenagers aged 17 to 21 years?

1.4 Limitation of the Problem

Based on the background presentation above, here are some limitations of the problem in this planning:

1. This research is limited to teenagers aged 17 to 21 years, because it contains several scenes containing elements of violence.
2. This design will be limited to the introduction of the historical figure of the Duke of Surabaya Raden Sawunggaling, without discussing other historical figures from different periods or regions.
3. This design is limited because it is only distributed through digital media without any physical media such as comic books and so on.
4. It may be a little inconsistent with some source versions because this design is a combination and drawing of conclusions from several sources that are given hyperbolic elements.

1.5 Planning Purpose

This design has several objectives, including:

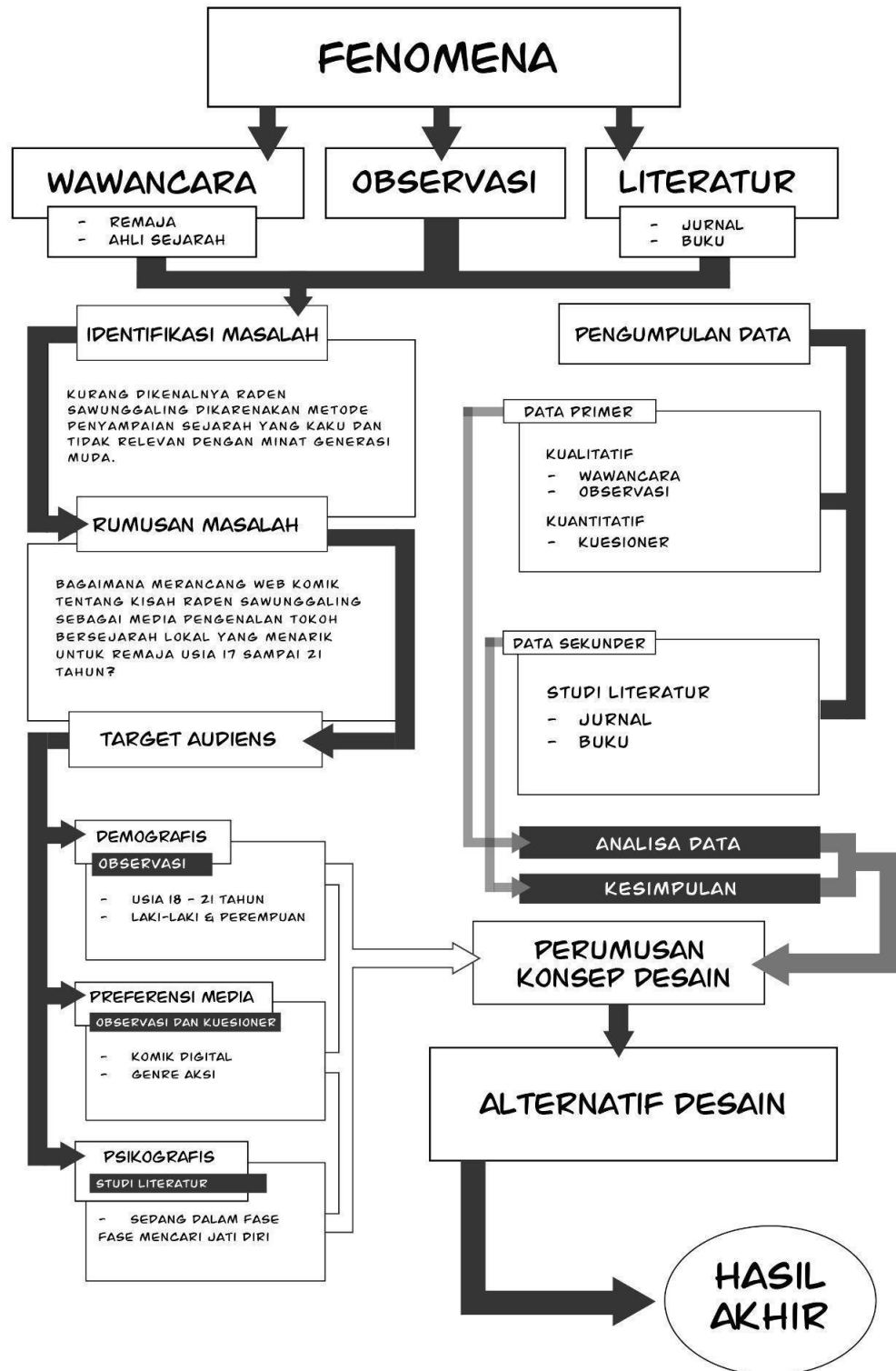
1. The main objective of this design is to introduce the figure of Adipati Raden Sawunggaling to teenagers, so that they understand his important role in the history of Surabaya, which many Surabaya teenagers today do not.
2. By using comic media which is more appealing to teenagers, this design aims to increase their interest and fascination with local history, especially regarding figures who may be less well known.
3. This design aims to simplify the delivery of complex historical information through comic visualization, making it easier to understand and more interesting for teenagers.

1.6 Benefits of planning

With this design, it is hoped that the target audience will receive benefits including the following;

1. This design is expected to increase youth awareness regarding the importance of local historical figures, such as Raden Sawunggaling, so that they will appreciate their local historical figures more.
2. This design plays a role in preserving local cultural heritage in a modern way, namely using comic media, so that the history of Raden Sawunggaling can be passed down to future generations.
3. By introducing local historical figures, this design can help teenagers understand the significant contributions of figures such as Raden Sawunggaling, thereby fostering a sense of pride in the cultural and historical identity of their region.

1.7 Planning Framework



Bagan 1.1 Planning Framework

(Source: Personal Document)