

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Every citizen needs to have an awareness of national defense because that awareness cannot grow by itself. Planned efforts are needed to instill the values of national defense in the Indonesian people. (Zainal, et al., 2014; 3). Awareness of national defense is already stated in the 1945 Constitution in Article 27 paragraph 3, which reads: "Every citizen has the right and obligation to participate in efforts to defend the country." In addition, awareness of national defense is also stated in Article 9 of Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 3 of 2002 which explains that awareness of national defense can be done through civic education, basic military training and service as a national soldier either voluntarily or obligatory or service according to profession. In the book National Defense Education published by the East Java Veteran Development University (Zainal, et al., 2014; 26) there are still many citizens who do not care about the fate of their nation and country because they have been exposed to the current of globalization so that the values of national defense need to be instilled in teenagers through formal and non-formal education.

In this era of globalization and rapid technological development, people can easily access information from around the world through the internet and social media. The generation born in this digital era will be the nation's future generations, continuing to preserve Indonesian history so that it is not forgotten by future generations. However, the reality is that many teenagers prefer studying foreign history or culture over their own. This situation has led to a shift in cultural values and national identity, marked by a decline in nationalism among teenagers. According to Suryadi (in Nursamsi & Jumardi, 2022; 1), "Nationalist sentiment, often referred to as national consciousness or nationalist spirit, has recently been declining in our country due to globalization."

A sense of nationalism can be demonstrated in various ways, such as having knowledge of history and maintaining the good name of the nation and state. According to Soebijantoro in (Azrial, et al., 2024; 1) "Indonesia is one of the countries in the world that has a long historical background." However, many teenagers are starting to forget or even not know the existing history because they are more interested in the culture or history of foreign

nations that have entered Indonesia due to the influence of globalization. If this is not immediately addressed, then awareness of national defense or a sense of nationalism in the younger generation could threaten the integrity of the nation and weaken national integration. Therefore, concrete and targeted efforts are needed to revitalize a sense of love for the homeland and pride in national identity among teenagers aged 17-21 years.

Surabaya is a city that played a significant role in the history of the Indonesian people's struggle against foreign colonialism. The city is known as a fierce battlefield, where freedom fighters bravely confronted the occupying forces, particularly during the historic Battle of November 10, 1945. According to information reported by *website* detik.com (7/10/2023), in the fierce battle that took place in the city of Surabaya, thousands of Surabaya residents with limited weapons were willing to die by showing courage and determination to defend independence, making Surabaya a city known as the "City of Heroes" (Firosoya, 2023). The spirit of patriotism and nationalism of the Indonesian people burned from various groups, from youth, soldiers, civilians to athletes united against a foreign military force that was much larger and fully armed. Reported in *website* kompas.com (11/13/2023) in the Battle of November 10, Colonel Sungkono led the BKR troops in Surabaya calmly and confidently in facing the more experienced and fully armed Allied troops, successfully repelling them, so that his popularity increased in the community (Widya, 2023). Sungkono's calmness was described by Bung Tomo in his book *Battle of November 10, 1945: Testimony & Experience of a Historical Actor* (Sutomo/Bung Tomo, 2008; 132) "until the last moments of defending the city of Surabaya, Commander Sungkono calmly remained in his headquarters".

After distributing questionnaires to several teenagers on Thursday, October 3, 2024, with a total of 101 respondents, data obtained showed that 52.5% of people did not know and 47.5% of people knew who Major General Sungkono was. However, of the 47.5% of people who knew Major General Sungkono, some only knew his name without knowing what role he played in fighting for the independence of the City of Surabaya. Of the 101 respondents, 76.4% of those who filled out the questionnaire were teenagers aged 17 to 21 years. This indicates that the attitude of love for the homeland that should be present in the younger generation is starting to disappear. Even though teenagers or the younger generation have an obligation to defend the country and maintain its existence. (Zainal, et al., 2014; 5)

Adolescence is a transitional process in human life that bridges childhood with adulthood, where during adolescence, the development of genetic, biological, environmental, and social factors occurs (Santrock, 2010; 402). Experts explain that the structure of the brain during adolescence experiences significant changes so that adolescents have an increased ability to process information (Santrock, 2010: 408). According to John W. Santrock, adolescence is divided into several phases, namely; early adolescence which lasts around the ages of 10-14 years, middle adolescence which lasts around the ages of 14-17 years, and late adolescence which lasts from the ages of 17-21 years. (Santrock, 2010). Reported from *websiteHalodoc* (November 24, 2023) states that as adolescents enter late adolescence, they begin to think more abstractly and critically, understanding complex concepts and evaluating different views and perspectives. This correlates with the search for identity, a key issue often experienced by adolescents. Behavioral changes in adolescents are often characterized by rebelliousness, anxiety, and instability. This is based on environmental conditions that are less suited to the developmental needs of adolescents. Furthermore, adolescents need a sound belief system to guide their behavior in society (Ida, 2019; 4).

It would be very beneficial if awareness of national defense was instilled in teenagers. However, if this problem is not addressed, it could lead to a decline in national integration among the younger generation. According to the website *kemendikbud.go.id* (July 10, 2020), understanding history is fundamental to benefiting from and learning from it (Marchianatalahutu, 2020). A decline in adolescents' understanding of history will lead to a loss of historical values in future generations. This can weaken the sense of togetherness and patriotism in community life.

Given these problems, a solution is needed to address the fading sense of nationalism among adolescents by introducing stories of heroes to increase awareness of national defense and nationalism. According to Putra & Milenia in (Abdul & Susi, 2022), "one component that plays a crucial role in learning is understanding learning media." Based on research conducted by Rideout, Roberts & Foehr in (Santrock, 2022), it is confirmed that the average adolescent spends most of their time with media. Adolescents have a habit of using gadgets when they are together, even in everyday life, the use of gadgets has become commonplace for adolescents (Masnuna, et al., 2020; 105).

Based on the results of research conducted by Subroto et al. in (Abdul & Susi, 2022; 4), it is explained that comics are a simple and interesting learning medium and can increase the motivation and learning outcomes of adolescents. Comics are currently a popular medium among various groups. Teenagers are more likely to use comics as a contemporary medium because of their engaging format (Ayuswantana, 2014; 2). According to Will Eisner in (McCloud, 1993; 5) comics are images created sequentially at a very slow tempo to convey a message accurately.

According to *websitecnnindonesia.com* (3/12/2023) comics originate from local legends or imaginary characters created manually or digitally following the current developments. Each comic has its own advantages that are favored by readers. Digital comics have several advantages compared to printed comics, especially in terms of accessibility and flexibility. Digital comics make it easier for readers to enjoy comics without having to own a physical copy. One of the digital comic platforms that is popular with comic readers is Line Webtoon which has 6 million active users in Indonesia with the majority of its users being teenagers aged 16-24 (Faradilla, et al. 2023; 10). With these advantages, it strengthens the basis for creating a digital comic introducing the history of Major General Sungkono, a commander of the Surabaya army who played a role in repelling the allied forces in the battle of November 10, 1945 to teenagers aged 17-21 in the Surabaya city area.

1.2 Problem Identification

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

1. Teenagers are more concerned with foreign history and culture introduced by globalization than with preserving their own national history and culture, which can erode national integration and awareness of national defense. (Nursamsi & Jumardi, 2022;1)
2. The lack of awareness of national defense and a sense of nationalism among teenagers aged 17-21 who are starting to forget the history of heroes and prefer to preserve foreign cultures. (Widiastuti, 2021: 1) As a result, many young men and women are unaware of the history of the heroes who fought for independence in Surabaya. One such example is Major General Sungkono, a military commander

who played a role in the fight for Indonesian independence in Surabaya. (Sutomo/Bung Tomo, 2008)

3. From the results of the interview conducted with observer and history Mr. Ady Setyawan, it was revealed that the learning media was too textual so it was less interesting for teenagers and the process of introducing history and culture to teenagers did not run optimally.

1.3 Problem Statement

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

How to design a web comic about the history of Major General Sungkono's struggle to become a media for introducing history to teenagers aged 17-21 years?

1.4 Problem Limitations

The limitations in this plan are as follows;

1. The comic design is only intended to introduce the history of Major General Sungkono to teenagers aged 17-21 years.
2. This design focuses on the story of Major General Sungkono when he joined the People's Security Agency in the Battle of November 10 in Surabaya.
3. The story is based on the book Battle of November 10: Testimony & Experience of a Historical Actor by Bung Tomo (2008), Battle of Surabaya 1945: Sacred to My Land by Frank Palmos, and several websites that review his story. However, the storytelling in the comic will not be exactly the same as the existing story.
4. The media used in this design is a webtoon-based digital comic.

1.5 Planning Purpose

This design has the following objectives:

1. Find a media for introducing history that is acceptable to the public. teenager.
2. The design is in the form of a webtoon-based digital comic which is expected to be able to provide clear information regarding the history of Major General Sungkono.
3. Introducing Major General Sungkono to teenagers aged 17-21 years in Surabaya.
4. Increase awareness of national defense among teenagers as a form of nationalism to strengthen national integration.

1.6 Benefits of Planning

With this design, it is hoped that it will provide benefits including the following;

1. This design contains a story about the history of Major General Sungkono using interesting illustrations, so it is hoped that this design will be able to increase students' interest in history.
2. This design introduces the history of Major General Sungkono's struggle. It is hoped that this design will contribute to increasing knowledge and information regarding the battle of November 10, 1945, especially for youth aged 17-21 in Surabaya.
3. This design analyzes the historical story of Major General Sungkono using a comic medium that has never been designed before. This new innovation is expected to support community activities in preserving history.

1.7 Framework of Thinking

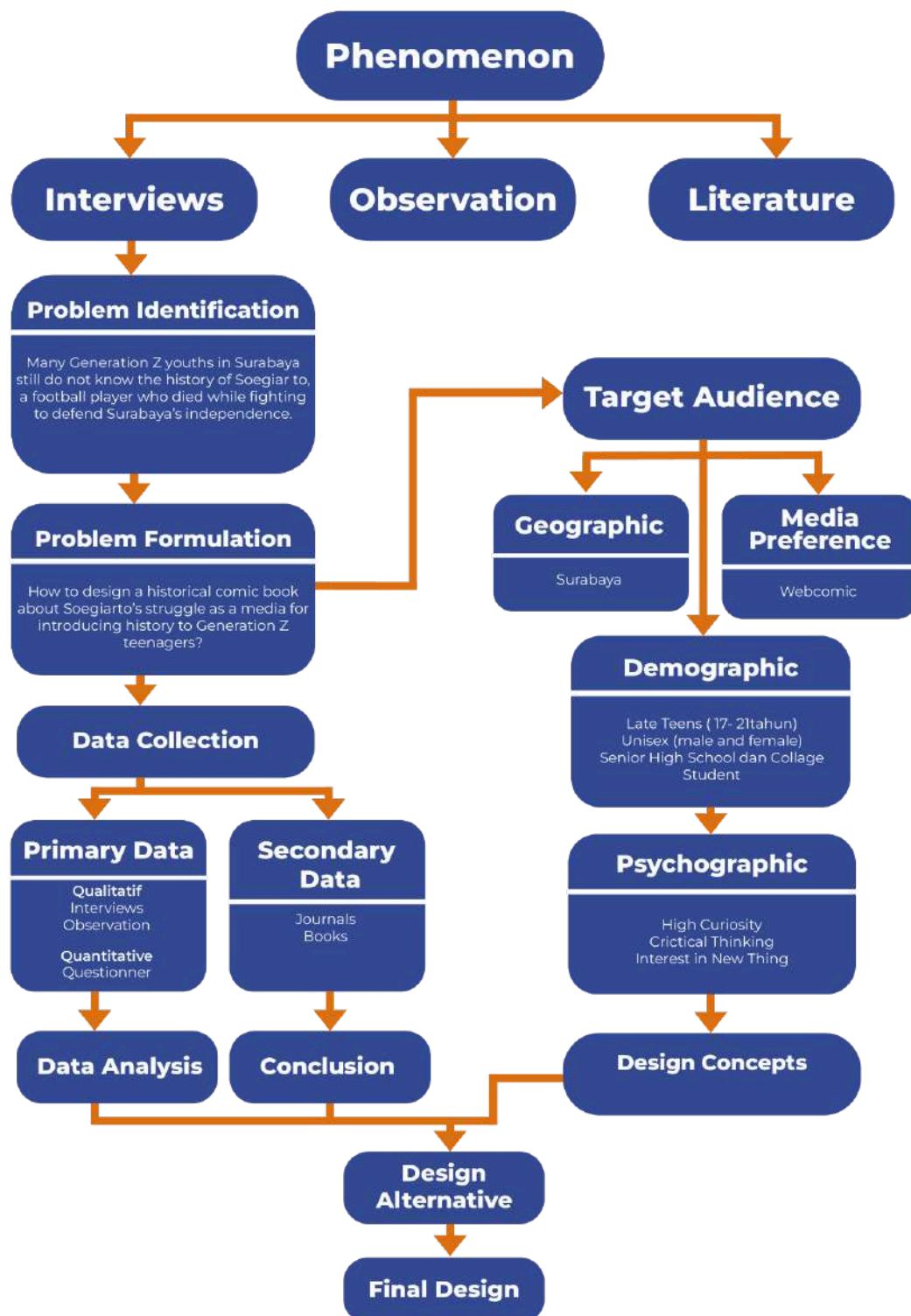


Figure 1.1 Framework of thinking

(Source: personal document)