

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Tourism**

Tourism is a rapidly growing economic sector with significant impacts on various social, cultural, and economic aspects of a country. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism encompasses activities of people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, or other purposes. According to Prayogo (2018), tourism can simply be defined as the travel of individuals or groups from one place to another, planning within a specific timeframe, for recreational purposes and to gain entertainment that fulfills their desires. Furthermore, tourism involves everything related to the tourism industry, including the development of tourist attractions and other efforts connected to the field. Everything targeted by tourism includes objects and tourist attractions (Marsono, 2016).

Tourism has significant social impacts. Interactions between tourists and local communities can promote cultural understanding and tolerance but can also lead to social changes and the loss of local cultural identity if not managed properly. According to Chiu, Lee, & Chen (2014), interactions between tourists and local communities can enhance appreciation for cultural diversity and promote intercultural peace and understanding. However, research by Liu et al (2015) indicates that poorly managed tourism can result in cultural commodification and the loss of local traditions. For example, in many tourist destinations like Bali and Yogyakarta, local communities are actively involved in tourism management to ensure that traditions and cultures are preserved (Su, Wall, & Xu, 2016). This approach allows local communities to economically benefit from tourism while maintaining and promoting their cultural heritage.

Tourism also plays a crucial role in the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage. Tourist destinations such as historical sites, museums, and cultural events

attract visitors and provide a source of income that can be used for the preservation and maintenance of these heritage sites (Alazaizeh et al, 2016). For instance, the Old Town of Dubrovnik, Croatia, has taken measures to limit the number of daily tourists to protect its historical and cultural heritage (Jovanović and Ilic, 2016). It is important to manage tourist flows to prevent damage to historical sites and preserve the integrity of local cultures. Wise management ensures that historical sites can be enjoyed by future generations without sacrificing the cultural values they represent.

One of the main challenges is the negative environmental impact, such as pollution, ecosystem damage, and increased carbon emissions from transportation. This requires sustainable tourism practices that can reduce negative impacts and promote environmental conservation (Weaver, 2014). A clear example is the Galápagos National Park in Ecuador, which enforces strict visitor limits to protect its unique ecosystem (Lam-González et al, 2021).

Another challenge is economic dependence on tourism, which can lead to vulnerability to global market fluctuations and crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic that hit the global tourism industry hard (Gössling, Scott, & Hall, 2020). The pandemic caused a drastic decline in the number of international tourists, negatively impacting local economies heavily dependent on tourism (UNWTO, 2020).

Various strategies and approaches have been developed to promote sustainable and responsible tourism. One is the development of ecotourism, which emphasizes environmental conservation and local community empowerment. Ecotourism offers tourists educational experiences about nature and local cultures while minimizing negative environmental impacts. For example, Costa Rica has become a leader in ecotourism, with many national parks and nature reserves offering sustainable tourism experiences (Muskat, Nakanishi, & Blackman, 2014).

Moreover, technology also plays an essential role in supporting sustainable tourism through the use of mobile applications, online reservation systems, and social media platforms that can enhance efficiency and tourist experiences. Technology allows better management of tourist flows and monitoring of environmental impacts.

For instance, mobile applications can help tourists find information about destinations, organize their trips, and provide direct feedback to destination managers (Gretzel et al, 2015).

Another important strategy is the development of community-based tourism, where local communities actively manage and benefit from tourism. This approach ensures that tourism contributes to local socio-economic development and preserves cultural and traditional heritage. For example, in Tanzania, Maasai communities have developed community-based tourism that allows them to preserve their culture while earning income from tourism (Manyara & Jones, 2007; Ramos & Prideaux, 2014).

Tourism can also play a role in inclusive economic development by creating jobs and business opportunities for local communities, including underserved groups. According to the World Bank (2018), tourism can be an effective tool for poverty reduction by providing economic opportunities for communities in remote and underdeveloped areas. For instance, in Nepal, tourism has become one of the main sectors helping lift communities out of poverty by creating jobs in hospitality, tour guiding, and handicraft sales (Upadhayaya, 2018).

Overall, tourism is a complex and dynamic sector with great potential to support economic, social, and cultural development. However, the success of tourism depends on wise and sustainable management to address existing challenges and ensure that its benefits can be enjoyed by current and future generations. With a holistic and integrated approach, tourism can be a positive force supporting inclusive and sustainable development worldwide.

### **2.1.1 Cultural Tourism**

Cultural tourism is a form of tourism focused on exploring and appreciating the cultural heritage of a place and its people. This involves visiting historical sites, participating in local traditions, and interacting with unique arts and culture of the region. Cultural tourism includes various activities such as visiting museums, theaters, archaeological sites, and cultural events. Cultural tourism involves not only physical

sites but also living experiences that include the traditions and customs of local communities (Timothy, 2014).

The main benefits of cultural tourism are cultural preservation, education, and local economic enhancement. Cultural tourism encourages local communities to preserve and maintain their cultural heritage due to the increasing interest of tourists in local cultures (Throsby, 2016). Additionally, cultural tourism provides a valuable educational platform for both tourists and local residents. Tourists gain a deeper understanding of local history and traditions, while locals learn to appreciate and preserve their heritage (Lee & Chhabra, 2015). Economically, cultural tourism significantly contributes by creating jobs and generating income through the hospitality sector, food and beverage services, handicrafts, and tour guiding (OECD, 2018).

Despite its many benefits, cultural tourism also faces several challenges. The commercialization of local culture is one major challenge that can alter or erase the original meanings of cultural traditions and practices (Shepherd, 2018). Additionally, overtourism or excessive tourist numbers can damage cultural sites and disrupt the daily lives of local communities. Effective management is needed to balance the number of tourists and local capacity (Dodds & Butler, 2019). Maintaining the authenticity of cultural experiences is also a significant challenge, especially when there is pressure to adapt local cultures to be more attractive to tourists (Nyaupane & Timothy, 2022).

Case studies from Bali, Indonesia, and Kyoto, Japan, demonstrate how cultural tourism can be a major attraction. Bali is known for its arts, religious ceremonies, and traditional architecture, attracting tourists from all over the world. However, Bali also faces challenges such as commercialization and overtourism (Cole, Wardana, & Dharmiasih, 2021). Kyoto, Japan, is famous for its historical temples and well-preserved traditional culture. Cultural tourism in Kyoto is well-managed, but it still faces challenges in maintaining authenticity and handling large tourist flows (Yamamura, 2018).

Effective cultural tourism development strategies involve engaging local communities in tourism management and development. This ensures that economic and social benefits can be felt by local communities (Su & Wall, 2014). Additionally, education and training for tour guides and tourism industry players are crucial to ensure that they can convey cultural information accurately and sensitively (Black & Weiler, 2015). The implementation of sustainable tourism practices is also essential to maintain a balance between cultural preservation, tourist needs, and local community welfare (UNWTO, 2020).

In conclusion, cultural tourism offers great opportunities for cultural preservation, education, and economic enhancement. However, wise and sustainable management is needed to address challenges such as commercialization, overtourism, and maintaining authenticity. With the right approach, cultural tourism can provide long-term benefits for local communities and the preservation of the world's cultural heritage.

## **2.2 Semarang Historical Sites**

Semarang, the capital city of Central Java Province, is rich in historical and cultural heritage. As one of the main trading centers during the colonial era, Semarang has many historical buildings and significant sites that attract tourists. This literature review explored the history of tourism in Semarang, focusing on six iconic places: Marba Building in Kota Lama, Blenduk Church in Kota Lama, Lawang Sewu, Tugu Muda, Simpang Lima, and Sam Poo Kong Temple. The history of tourism in Semarang is heavily influenced by its cultural richness and colonial heritage. The Kota Lama area, known as the "Little Netherlands of Java", houses over 50 preserved colonial buildings, making it one of the best-preserved old towns in Indonesia (Tempo, 2023). Places such as Marba Building, Blenduk Church, Lawang Sewu, Tugu Muda, Simpang Lima, and Sam Poo Kong Temple offer more than just beautiful scenery and unique architecture; these places also contain deep historical stories. In addition to their historical importance, these sites are among the most visited attractions in Semarang. According

to Dinas Pariwisata Kota Semarang (2022), these landmarks attract thousands of visitors annually, reinforcing their role in the city's tourism industry. Sustainable management and promotion of these sites would help Semarang continue to attract tourists and preserve its cultural heritage for future generations.

### **2.2.1 Gedung Marba Kota Lama**

Kota Lama Semarang, often referred to as "Little Netherlands," is an area with many buildings featuring Dutch colonial architecture. One of the most prominent buildings in this area is Marba Building. The red identical building was built by Marta Bardjunet, a rich merchant from Yemen and marba name is taken from her name. The marba building was built in the 19th century. Initially, this building was used as the office of a shipping business. However, at the end, this building was used only as a warehouse (Hardiansyah, Wijayanti, & Schiffer, 2023). The architecture of Marba Building reflects the influence of European colonial architecture with distinctive elements such as high windows, detailed ornaments, and solid walls. Marba Building is now one of the main attractions for tourists visiting Kota Lama, and its historical value is an important part of Semarang's tourism development strategy (Santoso, 2024).

### **2.2.2 Lawang Sewu**

Lawang Sewu, meaning "a thousand doors" in Javanese, is one of the most iconic buildings in Semarang. Built in the early 20th century, this building served as the headquarters of the Dutch East Indies Railway Company (Nederlandsch-Indische Spoorweg Maatschappij or NIS). The architectural style of Lawang Sewu combines European, Javanese, and Moorish influences, making it a unique and beautiful building (Gbran & Sari, 2023). Lawang Sewu is famous for its historical significance and mysterious legends that attract many tourists. Various efforts have been made to preserve and promote Lawang Sewu as a significant tourist attraction in Semarang (Sopyan & Widiyanto, 2015).

### **2.2.3 Blenduk Church**

Blenduk Church is the oldest church in Central Java and one of the most prominent colonial landmarks in Semarang. Built in 1753 during the Dutch colonial era, the church has undergone several renovations, with its most notable transformation in 1894, resulting in its iconic neoclassical architectural design (Ardiyanto, Djunaedi, & Suryabrata, 2015). The distinctive octagonal structure and large copper-plated dome set Blenduk Church apart from other colonial era buildings, reflecting strong European influences while adapting to the tropical climate of Indonesia (Harjanto, 2018).

As a historic Protestant church, Blenduk played a crucial role in Semarang's religious and cultural development, serving the Dutch and European settlers who resided in the city. Over time, it became a landmark within Kota Lama, an area known for its well preserved Dutch colonial heritage. Its stunning architecture, historical significance, and religious importance continue to attract both worshippers and tourists interested in Semarang's past (Rohendi, 2020).

Today, Blenduk Church remains an active place of worship while also functioning as a heritage tourism site. Various efforts have been made to preserve and promote the church, including conservation initiatives, guided tours, and inclusion in Semarang's historical tourism programs (Semarang Tourism Office, 2022). These efforts help ensure that Blenduk Church continues to be recognized as an essential cultural and architectural landmark in Semarang.

### **2.2.4 Tugu Muda**

Tugu Muda is a monument built to commemorate the struggle of Semarang residents during the Battle of Five Days against Japanese troops in October 1945. This monument stands in the center of Semarang and is surrounded by historical buildings such as Lawang Sewu, the Semarang Cathedral, and the Mandala Bhakti Museum. Tugu Muda is an important symbol of the struggle and spirit of the people of Semarang, and it is a popular tourist destination (Yanuarsari & Haryadi, 2019). Tugu Muda also

plays a significant role in the celebration of historical events and ceremonies in Semarang (Allam et al, 2022). Constructed in 1953, the monument has since become one of Semarang's most significant landmarks, embodying the collective memory and pride of its citizens. The site frequently hosts commemorations and important events, becoming a gathering place for those who wish to pay tribute to the sacrifices made during the war. This aspect of Tugu Muda attracts numerous tourists, particularly those interested in Indonesia's fight for independence and the broader historical context of the era.

Furthermore, Tugu Muda is more than just a historical monument; it serves as a vibrant focal point for cultural and social activities in Semarang. The monument's presence enhances the city's cultural landscape, providing a venue for a variety of events ranging from cultural festivals to social gatherings. This multifunctional use underscores the monument's role in contemporary society, bridging the past and the present, and ensuring that the legacy of the Five-Day Battle continues to inspire future generations.

### **2.2.5 Simpang Lima**

Simpang Lima is a major intersection in the heart of Semarang and serves as one of the city's central points. This area has become a commercial and recreational center with various shops, hotels, and restaurants. Simpang Lima is known for its lively atmosphere, especially at night when various street food vendors and entertainment are available (Anggraini & Wijayanti, 2023). This area is also the location for many cultural events and festivals, making it a must-visit place for tourists in Semarang (Amalia & Purwaningsih, 2017).

Anggraini and Wijayanti (2023) notes that Simpang Lima has been a center of social and economic activities in Semarang since the mid-20th century. The area has grown rapidly alongside the city's modernization, making it a popular destination for tourists and locals alike. Simpang Lima is not only a shopping center but also a dynamic place for recreation and entertainment. Various activities such as cultural festivals,

night markets, and sports events are often held here, attracting thousands of visitors each year.

### **2.2.6 Sam Poo Kong Temple**

Sam Poo Kong Temple is the oldest Chinese temple in Semarang and a significant symbol of the city's multicultural heritage. This temple was built to honor Admiral Zheng He, a Muslim Chinese explorer who visited Semarang in the early 15th century. The architecture of Sam Poo Kong Temple combines Chinese and Javanese styles, and the temple complex includes several shrines and pavilions (Aisyah et al, 2022). Sam Poo Kong Temple is not only a religious site but also a tourist destination that attracts visitors with its historical and cultural significance (Ikasari, 2021).

## **2.3 Digital Marketing**

Promotion is one of the main elements in marketing strategy aimed at increasing awareness, interest, and sales of products or services to consumers. Promotion includes various communication activities such as advertising, direct sales, sales promotions, public relations, and digital marketing. According to Kotler et al (2016), promotion is a way to inform, persuade, and remind consumers about the benefits of a particular product or service, with the ultimate goal of influencing consumer behavior. One important aspect of promotion is selecting the right media to effectively reach the target audience. In the digital era, social media, email marketing, and search engine optimization (SEO) have become very effective tools in reaching consumers widely and directly (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Moreover, effective promotion involves creating messages that are engaging and relevant to consumers, as well as determining the right timing for delivering those messages (Belch & Belch, 2018).

Promotion not only serves to attract new customers but also to retain existing customers through loyalty programs and special offers. According to Andrews and Shimp (2018), ongoing promotional programs can enhance customer loyalty and increase repeat sales. Additionally, effective promotion can improve brand image and

build long-term relationships with consumers (Batra & Keller, 2016). In the context of globalization, promotion must also consider cultural differences and consumer preferences in various international markets. This requires companies to adjust their promotional strategies to suit the characteristics of local markets (De Mooij, 2019).

However, promotion also faces challenges such as changing consumer behavior, technological advancements, and increasing competition. Companies need to continuously monitor market trends and innovate in their promotional strategies to stay relevant and competitive (Kasemsap, 2015). Furthermore, the effectiveness of promotion must be continuously measured through data analysis and consumer feedback to ensure that the implemented strategies produce the desired results (Kotler, Keller, & Ang, 2018). Therefore, well-planned and measured promotion can significantly contribute to business success and the achievement of marketing goals.

Advertising, as one form of promotion, plays a very important role in introducing products or services to a wide audience. Advertisements can be delivered through various media such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, the internet, and social media. According to Belch and Belch (2018), effective advertising should be able to attract attention, generate interest, create desire, and prompt action (AIDA: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action). In the digital context, advertisements often use targeting techniques to ensure that the delivered message reaches the right audience. This increases the effectiveness of advertisements and maximizes return on investment (ROI) (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Sales promotion is another form of promotion aimed at increasing short-term sales. This can include discounts, coupons, free samples, contests, and other special offers. According to Andrews and Shimp (2018), well-designed sales promotions can stimulate impulsive purchases and increase sales volume. However, sales promotions must also be conducted carefully to avoid erosion of profit margins and maintain a positive brand image (Batra & Keller, 2016).

Digital marketing has drastically changed the promotional landscape. With technological advancements, companies can now reach a global audience at lower costs

compared to traditional media. According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), digital marketing includes various activities such as content marketing, social media marketing, email marketing, affiliate marketing, and paid search advertising (PPC). Digital marketing enables message personalization and direct interaction with consumers, which can increase engagement and loyalty (Holliman & Rowley, 2014).

Effective promotional strategy should be holistic and integrated, combining various promotional elements to create strong and consistent campaigns. According to Schultz, Patti, and Kitchen (2013), integrated marketing communications (IMC) is an approach that combines all communication tools and channels to deliver a consistent and cohesive message to consumers. IMC ensures that all forms of promotional communication work together to achieve the established marketing goals (Kotler, Keller, & Ang, 2018).

Overall, promotion is a vital component in marketing strategy that helps companies increase awareness, attract interest, and drive sales. Through the selection of appropriate media, the creation of engaging messages, and the continuous measurement of effectiveness, companies can maximize the impact of their promotions and achieve long-term success in a competitive market.

## **2.4 Storytelling**

Storytelling is a communication method that has been used by humans since ancient times to convey information, values, and traditions from one generation to the next. In the modern context, storytelling is not only a tool for entertainment but also plays a crucial role in various fields such as education, marketing, and therapy. According to Haven (2014), storytelling is an effective way to influence the thoughts, emotions, and actions of the audience because of the ability of stories to make information more memorable and understandable. By using strong narratives, storytelling can create an emotional connection between the storyteller and the listener, which in turn can enhance the appeal and impact of the conveyed message.

In the field of marketing, storytelling has become a very popular strategy for building brands and increasing consumer engagement. According to Fog, Budtz, & Yakaboylu (2005) in previous research by Keskin et al (2016), a good story can transform a brand into something more than just a product or service, it gives meaning and context that makes the brand more relevant and appealing to consumers. Successful examples of storytelling in marketing include advertising campaigns such as Nike's "Just Do It" or Coca-Cola's "Share a Coke," which use stories to build emotional connections with their audiences. Gensler et al. (2013) add that in the digital era, storytelling allows brands to build a solid online community and interact directly with their consumers through social media platforms.

In education, storytelling is used as a tool to facilitate learning and develop students' critical and creative skills. According to Lenhart et al (2020), storytelling can help students understand complex concepts in a simpler and more engaging way. Stories can also be used to teach moral values, history, and culture, as well as to develop empathy and intercultural understanding (Robin, 2016). In the context of language learning, storytelling can help students improve their language skills through enjoyable and meaningful listening and speaking exercises (Wright, 2015).

Storytelling also has important applications in therapy and personal development. According to Epston, Markham, & Marsten (2016), narrative therapy is an approach where individuals tell and reconstruct their life stories to provide new meaning and improve their emotional well-being. By identifying and changing negative or unhelpful narratives, individuals can develop a more positive and constructive perspective on themselves and their lives. Research by Stirling and McLeod (2023) shows that positive narratives can enhance psychological well-being and help individuals cope with trauma and stress.

In the digital era, storytelling has evolved with the advent of new technologies and media. Digital storytelling, which combines traditional narrative elements with digital media such as video, audio, and animation, has opened up new opportunities for creativity and expression (Lambert et al, 2023). According to Robin (2016), digital

storytelling not only makes stories more engaging and interactive but also allows for the dissemination of stories to a wider audience through online platforms and social media. This enables stories to reach more people and create a greater impact.

However, despite its many benefits, storytelling also faces challenges. One of the challenges is the risk of manipulation and misuse, where stories can be used to spread misinformation or for propaganda purposes. Therefore, it is important to develop media literacy and critical thinking in evaluating the stories we hear or read (Silverblatt, 2014). Additionally, in the context of marketing, there is the challenge of ensuring that the stories told remain authentic and not exaggerated, as consumers are becoming more savvy and skeptical of dishonest or manipulative marketing strategies (Gilliam & Flaherty, 2015).

Overall, storytelling is a powerful communication tool with wide applications in various fields. With the ability to inspire, educate, and influence, storytelling has great potential to make a positive impact on the lives of individuals and society. However, like any other tool, storytelling must be used ethically and responsibly to ensure that its benefits can be maximized without causing negative effects.

## **2.5 Manhwa Description**

Manhwa is a term used to describe Korean comic books or graphic novels, encompassing a wide range of genres, styles, and formats. Originating in South Korea, manhwa is similar to Japanese manga but is distinct in its art style, cultural references, and right-to-left reading format. According to Jang and Song (2017), Manhwa is a synonym for all genres of Korean comics published in print and online.

Manhwa is a type of comic made by Korean authors. Manhwa has gained popularity due to its visual effects and design styles, according to Ahmad. The webtoon is a new genre of publishing Korean comics (manhwa) online, and is considered a unique case in the global cartoon market. The increase of Internet users and digital cultural consumption has established conditions for fostering the platform for webtoons and their production (Jang & Song, 2017). Manhwa has gained global popularity due

to its accessibility through digital platforms such as Webtoon, which allows creators to publish and distribute their work directly to a broad audience. The medium's versatility and cultural depth have contributed to its growing influence in the global comic industry.

## **2.6 Comic Description**

Comics are a unique and diverse media that combines visual and textual elements to create narratives. As an art form, comics have evolved for over a century and have become one of the most popular forms of entertainment and communication worldwide. In this literature review, various definitions and characteristics of comics would be explored from the perspective of several prominent experts, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of what comics are and how they function as a media. Comics are a unique narrative media that combines images and text in a continuous sequence to tell stories or convey messages. The definitions and characteristics of comics discussed in this literature review show that comics are a complex and versatile art form, utilizing various visual and textual elements to create engaging and meaningful narratives. By understanding these elements, we can better appreciate and analyze comics as a rich and diverse communication media.

Comics are a form of visual media that have become an integral part of popular culture across various parts of the world. This section provides an overview of the definition of comics from the perspectives of several prominent experts, illustrating how comics can be understood and appreciated as a unique form of art and communication media as follows.

David Carrier (2000) In his book "The Aesthetics of Comics," David Carrier defines comics as "narratives composed of images arranged in a sequential order, usually accompanied by text." Carrier emphasizes that comics are a narrative media that combines visual and textual elements to create a complete story. This definition acknowledges the importance of text in comics, which is often used for dialogue, narration, or description, and how the text interacts with the images to create meaning.

Thierry Groensteen (2017) in "The System of Comics," describes comics as "a complex system of signs that combines images, text, and layout to create a narrative that can be read visually." Groensteen emphasizes that comics are a form of visual communication that utilizes various semiotic elements to convey meaning. According to him, comics rely not only on images and text but also on how these elements are arranged and integrated on the page. This definition highlights the complexity of comics as a system consisting of various elements working together to create a narrative.

### **2.6.1 Characteristics of Comics**

Comics combine the art of drawing with narrative text to convey stories, information, or ideas. The unique characteristics of comics make them an engaging and effective media for various purposes, ranging from entertainment to education. In this introduction, we would explore the key characteristics of comics that set them apart from other forms of media and contribute to their appeal and effectiveness. Each step is explained as follows:

#### **1. Images and Text**

Comics use a combination of images and text to convey a story. The images in comics can range from realistic illustrations to cartoons or abstractions, while text is often used for dialogue, narration, and sound effects. This combination allows comics to convey information in an engaging and easily understandable way. According to Carrier (2000), the interaction between images and text is at the core of comic narration, where text can clarify or add meaning to the images and vice versa.

#### **2. Panels and Sequence**

Panels are the basic units of comics, each containing images and/or text. These panels are arranged in a specific sequence to form the storyline. The sequence of panels helps readers follow the story's progression from one scene to the next. According to McCloud (1993) in previous research by Stamenković, Tasić, & Forceville (2018), this sequence is a key element that distinguishes comics from other forms of visual art. The

order of the panels not only determines the flow of the story but also its pace and rhythm.

### 3. Layout

Layout in comics refers to the way panels are arranged on the page. An effective layout helps guide the reader's eyes through the page and ensures that the story's flow is easy to follow. According to Eisner (1985) in previous research by Laakso (2020), a good layout is crucial for creating a smooth and enjoyable reading experience. Poor layout can lead to confusion and disrupt the story's flow.

### 4. Visual Symbolism

Comics often use visual symbolism to convey emotions, atmosphere, and actions. These symbols can include facial expressions, body language, or recognizable visual iconography. Visual symbolism allows comics to convey meaning quickly and efficiently, often without needing lengthy textual explanations. According to Groensteen (2007) in previous research by Baker (2017), visual symbolism is part of the complex system of signs used in comics to create rich and layered narratives.

## **2.6.2 Functions and Roles of Comics**

Comics have long been an integral part of popular culture and play a significant role in conveying stories, information, and ideas to diverse audiences. By combining visual elements with text, comics offer a unique and engaging way to communicate. The functions and roles of comics are varied, ranging from entertaining readers to serving as educational tools that simplify complex concepts. Additionally, comics function as a media for social and political critique, allowing writers and artists to voice their perspectives on contemporary issues. In this introduction, we would explore the various functions and roles of comics in society, as well as how this media has evolved and adapted over time. Few of the functions are explained as follows.

Education comics serve as an effective educational tool by simplifying complex concepts and making learning materials more engaging and easier to understand. According to Hayati, Rasyid, & Nelisa (2020), using comics in education can enhance

students' interest in learning and aid in better comprehension of the material. Moreover, comics are often employed as a medium for social and political critique. Works like "Maus" by Art Spiegelman, which addresses the Holocaust, and "Persepolis" by Marjane Satrapi, which narrates the Iranian Revolution, demonstrate how comics can entertain while also prompting readers to critically reflect on significant issues.

Comics also play a role in cultural expression by reflecting and influencing popular culture. They depict cultural norms, values, and traditions, as well as comment on social changes. Bongco (2014) notes that comics are a global art form, representing various local cultures, such as manga in Japan and manhua in China. Additionally, comics have the power to transform readers' experiences through visual narratives, transporting them to imaginative worlds filled with vivid characters and profound stories. This transformative aspect of comics provides both inspiration and entertainment, offering a temporary escape from reality.

Finally, comics as promotional media have proven effective in capturing audience attention and delivering messages in a unique and engaging way. By combining visual and narrative elements, comics convey promotional messages in a memorable and digestible manner. Kidman (2014) asserts that comics are a powerful medium because they simplify complex concepts through images and text, thus facilitating more effective communication with the audience. In the promotional context, comics can be used for a wide range of purposes, from product advertisements to social campaigns.

According to Endarini (2018), comics can attract the attention of various demographics, including children, teenagers, and adults. In marketing, the visual appeal of comics can enhance consumer engagement with a brand or product. The combination of images and text in comics creates a deeper and more interactive experience for the reader, which can increase the retention of the promotional message. Major companies like Marvel and DC Comics often collaborate with large brands to promote products through engaging stories and their iconic characters (Jones, 2015).

Comics can also be used to communicate complex messages in a more easily understood manner. In health campaigns, for instance, comics have been used to educate the public about health issues in an entertaining and informative way. A study by King (2017) shows that medical comics can help patients and the general public better understand medical conditions and health procedures. Another example is anti-smoking campaigns that use comics to illustrate the dangers of smoking and promote a healthy lifestyle.

The uniqueness of comics as a promotional media also lies in their ability to build strong and emotional narratives. The narratives in comics allow readers to connect emotionally with characters and stories, which can enhance the effectiveness of the promotional message. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), emotionality is key in marketing because emotions can influence consumer purchasing decisions. By using comics, companies can create stories that touch hearts and inspire action. According to Kim and Lee (2018), storytelling in comics can increase brand awareness and customer loyalty through emotional engagement.

However, using comics as a promotional media also faces challenges. One of the main challenges is the perception that comics are for children and teenagers, which can limit acceptance by adult audiences. To overcome this, it is important for companies to create comic content that is relevant and appealing to all age groups. Additionally, there are challenges in terms of production and distribution costs of comics, especially for small companies that may not have sufficient resources (Stein, 2015).

In recent years, technological advancements have opened new opportunities for the use of comics as a promotional media. Digital comics, which can be accessed through mobile devices and online platforms, have expanded the reach and accessibility of comics. According to Jenkins (2006) in previous research by Mardhiyyah (2023), media convergence has allowed comics to interact with other media, such as films, video games, and social media, creating a more dynamic and interactive promotional ecosystem. Digital comics also offer advantages in terms of interactivity and personalization. With digital technology, readers can interact with

comic content through animations, sounds, and other interactive features, which can enhance user engagement and experience. Additionally, digital comics can be tailored to individual preferences, allowing for more personal and relevant promotional messages (Gibson, 2015).

Successful examples of using comics as a promotional media can be seen in marketing campaigns by major companies such as Coca-Cola and Nike. Coca-Cola, for example, used comics to promote the "Share a Coke" campaign by creating comic stories involving Coca-Cola bottles with popular names. This campaign managed to attract wide attention and significantly increase sales (Smith, 2020).

Overall, comics as a promotional media offer various advantages in terms of visual appeal, narrative capability, and potential interactivity. With the right approach, comics can be a very effective tool in marketing strategies to convey promotional messages, increase consumer engagement, and drive action. However, it is important for companies to understand the existing challenges and innovate in creating comic content that is relevant and appealing to their target audience.

## **2.7 Steps for Creating a Comic Book**

Comics are a narrative media that uses a combination of images and text to tell a story. As a unique form of art, comics require various skills from their creators, including writing, drawing, and visual storytelling abilities. The process of creating a comic consists of several stages, including planning, scriptwriting, storyboard creation, illustration, coloring, and finally distribution (Tsai, 2017). This literature review aims to explore each of these stages by referencing relevant literature. The process of creating a comic is a collaborative effort involving various creative and technical stages. In writing a story, there are several stages, like will, sensitivity, knowledge, hard work and creativity (Faidah, 2019). From the initial concept to distribution, each step requires skill and attention to detail. This literature review demonstrates that a deep understanding of each stage is key to creating successful and engaging comics for

readers. Through continuous research and practice, comic creators can continue to develop their abilities and contribute to the evolution of comic art.

### **2.7.1 Concept and Planning**

The first stage in creating a comic is concept and planning. According to McCloud (1993) in his book "Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art," the initial idea can come from various sources, such as personal experiences, observations of the surrounding environment, or creative imagination. This idea is then developed into a structured plot and lively characters. The importance of initial research is also emphasized to ensure that the created story has depth and authenticity. Planning also involves selecting the genre, theme, and target audience, which would influence the style and approach in creating the comic (Nurharini, Minarno, & Utami, 2022).

### **2.7.2 Scriptwriting**

Scriptwriting is a crucial step in the comic creation process. The script not only serves as a guide for the illustrator but also forms the basis for the storyline and character development. According to Abel and Madden (2008) in *Drawing Words and Writing Pictures*, a comic script consists of two main parts: visual descriptions and dialogue. Visual descriptions depict the scenes and actions occurring in each panel, while dialogue contains conversations between characters that advance the story. The scriptwriter must create a clear and engaging narrative that can be well-translated by the illustrator.

### **2.7.3 Storyboard Creation**

A storyboard is a series of rough sketches used to plan the story flow and visual composition of the comic. According to McCloud (1993) storyboarding helps organize the rhythm and continuity of the story, ensuring that each panel flows well into the next. At this stage, comic creators can evaluate and refine story elements before starting detailed drawing. Duncan and Smith (2009) in the previous research by Arsita and

Ridho (2019) in *The Power of Comics: History, Form, and Culture* add that storyboards also function to test how visual and narrative ideas would work within the comic's page space.

#### **2.7.4 Illustration Creation**

Illustration is the core of comics, where ideas and scripts are transformed into concrete images. Illustrators use various techniques, both traditional and digital, to create dynamic and expressive images. According to Arsita and Ridho (2019), the illustration creation process includes initial sketching, inking, and shading. Initial sketches are usually drawn with pencils to arrange the composition and character poses. After that, the main lines are inked to provide clarity and contrast. Finally, shading is added to give dimension and depth to the images.

#### **2.7.5 Coloring**

Coloring adds the finishing touch to illustrations, adding atmosphere and mood to the story. In *Color and Light: A Guide for the Realist Painter* explains that coloring can be done with various media, such as watercolor, colored pencils, or digitally using software like Adobe Photoshop or Procreate (Gurney, 2010). Effective coloring can enhance visual narration and help highlight important elements within the panels. Colorists must also pay attention to color harmonization and lighting to create an aesthetic and appealing composition.

#### **2.7.6 Layout and Text Placement**

After illustration and coloring are completed, the next stage is layout and text placement. In *Comics and Sequential Art*, good layout is key to ensuring a smooth story flow that is easy for readers to follow (Gateward and Jennings, 2019). Text placement includes dialogue, narration, and sound effects, all of which must be strategically placed within panels to avoid visual clutter. Font size and type must also be carefully chosen to ensure readability and fit with the comic's artistic style.

### **2.7.7 Distribution and Publication**

After all comic elements are finished, the final stage is distribution and publication. In *The System of Comics*, various distribution methods are available for comic creators, including print and digital publication (Groensteen, 2007). Traditional print publication involves collaborating with publishers who would print and distribute the comics to bookstores and comic shops. However, with technological advancements, many creators now choose to distribute their comics online through platforms like Webtoon, ComiXology, or personal websites. Digital distribution allows creators to reach a global audience with lower costs and greater flexibility in format and release timing.

## **2.8 Previous Works**

Several studies and creative works have explored the development of comics and motion comics as promotional and educational tools, particularly in the context of tourism. These works provide a valuable foundation for understanding the role of visual storytelling in introducing and promoting cultural and historical sites.

One such study is by Santoso (2024), titled *Perancangan Motion Comic Sebagai Media Promosi Pariwisata Kota Lama Semarang*. This research focuses on the design and development of a motion comic as a promotional medium for the Kota Lama area in Semarang. The motion comic combines visual animation and storytelling to highlight historical landmarks in Kota Lama, such as Blenduk Church and Spiegel Building. The dynamic elements in the motion comic effectively capture viewers' attention and serve as an innovative way to promote tourism. While Santoso's work focuses on motion comics, the current project, *Mystery of Dungeon: Semarang*, emphasizes a static comic format in English to reach a broader, international audience. Both works share a common goal of promoting Semarang's tourism but differ in their media format and target audience.

The *Mak Irits* Digital Comic by Fauziyah et al. (2022), titled *Mak Irits Digital Comic as a Tourism Introduction Media in Semarang City*, is another noteworthy example. This research highlights the use of digital comics to introduce tourism sites in Semarang, particularly targeting young audiences. The narrative is light and humorous, making it accessible and engaging for readers. However, unlike *Mystery of Dungeon: Semarang*, which incorporates fictional storytelling alongside historical facts, *Mak Irits* focuses more on comedic elements with less emphasis on historical depth. The main similarity lies in their use of digital comics as a medium for tourism promotion, but the tone, style, and target audience differ significantly.

Lastly, the manhwa *Quest Supremacy* by Taewan (2021), a Korean webtoon, also serves as a source of inspiration due to its strong character-driven narrative and integration of gamification elements. While *Quest Supremacy* focuses on a fictional high school setting where the protagonist completes quests to gain power, it shares a structural similarity with *Mystery of Dungeon: Semarang* in terms of incorporating challenges and goals for character progression. The difference lies in the thematic focus: *Quest Supremacy* is purely entertainment-driven, while *Mystery of Dungeon: Semarang* combines entertainment with education and tourism promotion.

By analyzing these works, *Mystery of Dungeon: Semarang* builds upon their strengths while addressing certain gaps. The project integrates historical education with an engaging fictional storyline, uses English to appeal to an international audience, and employs a static comic format that allows for easy dissemination across platforms such as Webtoon. These elements distinguish it from previous efforts and contribute to its effectiveness as a promotional medium for Semarang's rich cultural heritage.