

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 The Definition of Comic

Comics are a form of visual media that present stories through a series of images and text arranged in sequence. The distinctive feature of comics lies in the illustrated panels that form the narrative flow. As a visual art medium, comics are capable of conveying ideas in a unique and effective way, not only through words but also through visual expression.

Currently, comics can be found in various formats, both printed and digital. The styles of presentation also vary, ranging from light and funny to more serious and informative. It is this combination of images and text that makes comics easy to digest for various groups, including children, teenagers, and even adults. Comics in the world of education are no longer seen as mere entertainment. Many studies show that visual media such as comics can be quite effective learning tools. One reason for this is that comics can simplify complex concepts, making them easier to understand. Visual-based media is particularly suitable for teenagers because it stimulates interest and motivation to learn in a more natural way.

In practice, the use of comics in the classroom can create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere. Students not only read information, but also see illustrations that reinforce their understanding of the material. This certainly helps the process of remembering and understanding the content more deeply. The Advantages of Comics as a Medium of Information As a medium for conveying information, comics have their own advantages over more formal forms of communication. The stories in comics are usually told in a light and easy-to-understand style, so that the message to be

conveyed is more effective. In addition, comics are often able to evoke emotions in readers through characters, dialogue, and powerful illustrations.

Arsyad (2015) emphasises that visual media are attractive because of their concrete nature. This makes information that was previously abstract or complicated easier to digest. In the context of outreach, education, or cultural promotion, comics can bridge serious content with a more relaxed but still meaningful delivery.

Comics as a Means of Disseminating Cultural Values Comics also play an important role in introducing and preserving cultural values. Many local stories, legends, and regional histories can be repackaged in comic form to make them more accessible to the younger generation. Through attractive images and narratives, readers not only enjoy the story but also absorb the cultural messages contained within it. This is important, especially when the younger generation begins to feel distant from their cultural roots. Conveying cultural heritage through media they enjoy, such as comics, can be an effective strategy. In addition to being entertaining, comics can also be a means of introducing local identity and richness to the wider community.

These characteristics make comics particularly well-suited for the context of tourism, where increasing cultural awareness and visitor engagement are key objectives.

2.1.1.1 The Type of Comics

Modern Comics represent a form of visual narrative media that communicates stories through a sequence of images accompanied by text. What distinguishes comics from other visual art forms is the use of illustrated panels that guide readers through a continuous narrative flow. As a medium combining both art and storytelling, comics have

a unique ability to convey ideas effectively not only through written language but also through visual expression that stimulates imagination and emotion.

In today's era, comics appear in a variety of formats, from traditional printed books to digital publications available on online platforms. The diversity of style and tone is also extensive, ranging from humorous and entertaining narratives to more serious and informative themes. This fusion of image and text makes comics easily comprehensible for a wide range of audiences including children, adolescents, and adults.

Within the field of education, comics are no longer viewed merely as entertainment. Recent studies indicate that visual-based media, including comics, can function as powerful learning tools. They simplify abstract or complex information into more concrete and digestible forms. This visual approach is particularly effective for younger learners because it naturally captures attention, enhances motivation, and improves comprehension (Kusmajid et al., 2024).

The classroom application of comics can also create a more engaging learning environment. Learners are not only reading textual information but also observing visual representations that reinforce understanding. This multimodal learning process supports better recall and deeper comprehension of educational content (Yuliani & Setiawan, 2024).

As a medium of communication, comics offer several advantages compared to more formal text-based materials. Their narrative style tends to be light and approachable, allowing messages to be conveyed more effectively. Moreover, the combination of expressive characters, dialogue, and visual cues evokes emotional responses from readers, which enhances message retention and

engagement. Arsyad (2015) notes that visual media are appealing due to their concreteness, enabling audiences to grasp abstract or complex ideas more easily. Consequently, comics can bridge serious themes such as education, environmental issues, or cultural promotion with a more relatable and enjoyable presentation.

Beyond their educational value, comics also serve as an important means of preserving and promoting cultural values. Many traditional stories, folktales, and regional histories have been successfully adapted into comic form, making them more accessible to younger generations. Through engaging illustrations and compelling narratives, readers can both enjoy the story and internalize the cultural messages embedded within it. This becomes particularly significant in the modern era, when younger audiences often feel disconnected from their cultural heritage. Presenting these values through a medium they enjoy such as comics can be an effective strategy for cultural preservation.

Ultimately, these characteristics position comics as a highly suitable medium for tourism promotion. Their ability to combine storytelling, emotion, and cultural representation enables them to increase awareness, foster appreciation, and deepen engagement with local heritage key objectives in developing cultural and community-based tourism.

2.1.1.2 The Example of a Comic that Promotes Tourism Destinations

In recent years, the use of comics as a creative medium for promoting tourism destinations has gained significant attention. Comics combine visual art and narrative storytelling, allowing tourism messages to be delivered in a more emotional, engaging, and memorable way. They can bridge cultural understanding and increase

public interest in exploring specific destinations through relatable storylines and appealing illustrations.

One notable example from Indonesia is “Explore Nusantara”, a digital comic project launched in 2022 by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. This series aims to introduce Indonesia’s diverse cultural and natural heritage through stories of young travelers visiting various regions such as Yogyakarta, Toraja, and Lombok. Each episode integrates folklore, traditional cuisine, and local craftsmanship as part of the narrative. According to Nugroho and Hartanti (2023), Explore Nusantara successfully increased youth engagement with cultural tourism topics on digital platforms and encouraged domestic travel among younger audiences. The project demonstrates how comics can serve both educational and promotional purposes while maintaining a sense of national identity.

In Thailand, the “Bangkok Tales” initiative (2023), developed by the Tourism Authority of Thailand, uses comics to portray the cultural richness of Bangkok’s neighborhoods. Chaisiri and Wattanapanich (2024) highlight how this project effectively presents local food, heritage sites, and street culture through humor and relatable characters, making tourism information more accessible and enjoyable for both locals and international visitors.

Meanwhile, South Korea’s “Travel Webtoon Project” (2022) integrates popular webtoon aesthetics into tourism marketing campaigns. Lee and Park (2023) found that the project’s narrative-driven approach featuring characters visiting real destinations like Jeonju Hanok Village enhanced emotional engagement and motivated Gen Z audiences to travel.

In Europe, Spain’s “Camino de Santiago Graphic Journey” (2021) uses comics to convey the cultural and spiritual aspects of the

pilgrimage route. González and Ortega (2022) explain that this visual narrative approach successfully strengthened the storytelling aspect of heritage tourism by presenting historical and cultural messages in a visually appealing format.

Finally, Malaysia's "Heritage Heroes" (2023) presents local children as protagonists exploring UNESCO heritage cities such as George Town and Melaka. Bilingual and culturally embedded comic narratives can increase accessibility for wider audiences while simultaneously preserving and promoting local cultural identity. Similar trends have been observed in Malaysian creative media, where storytelling products are designed to reach international audiences without losing their local cultural values (Hasri et al., 2020).

These diverse examples from Indonesia to Europe illustrate that comics can function as a powerful medium for destination marketing, cultural education, and storytelling. The use of visual narratives helps audiences emotionally connect with a place, while the inclusion of cultural symbols and local values enhances authenticity. For the Wonolopo Tourism Village Comic Project, these studies serve as references in developing a bilingual comic that not only promotes tourism but also preserves cultural heritage and supports community based storytelling.

2.1.1.3 The Definition of Storyboard in Comics

A storyboard in comics refers to a visual planning tool that outlines the sequence of panels, camera angles, and scene compositions before the final illustration process begins. It functions as a blueprint that translates the written script into a visual narrative, determining how the story will unfold on each page (Duncan & Smith, 2015). The storyboard includes sketches of key scenes, placement of

characters, and transitions between panels, helping artists visualize pacing, rhythm, and the emotional tone of the story (Gravett, 2020).

According to McCloud (2020), the storyboard stage allows creators to experiment with visual flow, ensuring clarity and coherence in how readers interpret the story's movement and mood. It also facilitates communication between writers, illustrators, and designers, aligning their creative vision before entering detailed artwork production. In the context of comic creation, the storyboard serves as both an organizational and creative instrument, bridging the gap between scriptwriting and final illustration.

Thus, the storyboard plays a crucial role in maintaining narrative consistency, visual harmony, and effective storytelling within comic production. It not only enhances readability but also supports the delivery of emotional and informational depth through well-structured visual storytelling.

2.1.1.4 The Design of Comics

Comic design refers to the process of arranging visual and textual elements such as panels, characters, backgrounds, and dialogue into a meaningful and aesthetically balanced composition. The visual layout plays an important role in shaping the reader's understanding and emotional engagement. As stated by Groensteen (2007) and Eisner (2008), the strength of comic design lies in its ability to combine images and text in a rhythm that supports the story's mood and message.

Gravett (2022) notes that the layout and the relationship between images and words direct the reader's attention and create visual tension. Meanwhile, McCloud (2020) emphasizes that design decisions, such as the use of perspective, spacing between panels, and framing, are not just decorative choices—they

determine how readers perceive and emotionally connect with the story. Therefore, good comic design balances artistic style with narrative purpose, creating a reading experience that is both visually engaging and easy to follow.

2.1.1.5 The Procedure of Comic Design

The process of designing a comic consists of several stages that gradually develop the visual narrative. It usually begins with concept development and exploration of visual style, followed by creating a storyboard, rough sketches, and panel layouts. The next stages involve inking, coloring, and lettering, which together define the final visual identity of the comic (Hatfield, 2005; Gravett, 2020).

McCloud (2020) highlights that each stage requires careful attention to composition, pacing, and readability to ensure the story can be understood clearly and emotionally felt by the audience. Collaboration between writers, illustrators, and designers is also essential so that the visual form supports the intended narrative meaning. Ultimately, the goal of the design process is not only to create something visually appealing but also to communicate messages effectively through cohesive visual storytelling.

2.1.1.6 The Role of Visual Elements in Comics

Visual elements such as line, shape, color, space, and typography play an important role in expressing meaning, emotion, and atmosphere in comics. Eisner (2008) describes visual form as a kind of language, where every line, color, and shadow conveys tone and rhythm. Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) also explain that visual grammar how images are arranged spatially determines how readers interpret meaning.

For example, color can indicate mood or time shifts, dynamic lines can suggest movement or tension, and typography can express a character's tone of voice. When these elements work together, they create a visual system that guides readers' emotions and understanding without the need for excessive text. Mastery of these visual components is therefore essential for comic artists to produce storytelling that feels alive and immersive.

2.1.1.7 The Principles of Comic Design

The visual design of comics is guided by several universal design principles: balance, contrast, emphasis, rhythm, unity, and proportion. These principles ensure that each panel and page maintains visual harmony and narrative clarity (Gravett, 2020; McCloud, 2020). Balance provides stability in the layout, contrast directs attention to key moments, and rhythm controls the pace of the reader's eye movement from panel to panel.

Groensteen (2021) emphasizes that rhythm and unity are crucial because they determine how the story's visual flow is perceived across multiple panels. When these principles are applied effectively, the comic can guide readers through an emotional and visual journey without relying heavily on text. In short, successful comic design transforms static images into a dynamic storytelling experience where visual coherence strengthens both comprehension and enjoyment.

2.2 Local History

Local history is an important foundation that helps shape the cultural identity of a community. This term is used to describe the process of studying and recording events, figures, traditions, and developments that

occur in a particular area, such as a village, sub-district, or small town. Unlike national history, which usually discusses political and social events on a large scale, local history provides a closer picture of the daily lives of the community. This makes it easier for people to feel connected to the stories of the past around them.

The Role of Local History in Shaping a Sense of Belonging, Kartodirdjo (1992) explains that understanding local history not only adds to one's knowledge of national history, but also provides a more familiar and realistic perspective. Old stories feel alive because they took place in familiar places. From this, a sense of belonging and pride in one's region arises. Communities that are familiar with their local history tend to appreciate their local culture more and strive to preserve their traditions. **Local History as a Strengthenener of Social Bonds** In addition to fostering cultural identity, local history also strengthens relationships between community members. Stories of the past become shared memories that are passed down from generation to generation. For example, commemorating the village's historical day is often used as an occasion to gather and foster a sense of togetherness. These shared stories play a major role in maintaining unity, especially in communities with diverse backgrounds.

Obstacles in Preserving Local History Local history is often overlooked, especially among young people. One reason for this is that the way history is presented can seem rigid and boring. According to Suyanto (2018), teaching methods that rely solely on textbooks or lectures are not effective enough to attract students' interest in learning. If history is not connected to everyday life, people will feel that stories from the past are distant and unimportant. **Creative Efforts to Present Local History** To overcome this, new ways are needed to make local history feel more alive. The use of visual media, storytelling methods, or digital media can be options. Comics, films, or interactive exhibitions

can transform old stories into interesting and relevant tales. In this way, history is not just a record of the past, but also an inspiration for current and future generations. Overall, local history is a bridge to understanding identity, fostering pride, and preserving cultural values across generations. Making it more interesting through creative media is an important step in cultural preservation and enjoyable history education.

2.3 The Definition of Tourism

Tourism refers to the activities of people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for leisure, business, or other purposes, for not more than one consecutive year. It involves both travel and the interaction between visitors, host communities, and local environments (UNWTO, 2023).

2.3.1 Tourism Village

A tourism village is a concept of tourism development based on the potential and local wisdom of a village. This concept not only offers natural beauty, but also the community life, traditions, crafts, and historical stories that characterise the village. Through tourism villages, local communities are invited to actively participate in planning, managing, and promoting their potential. Historical and Cultural Potential in Tourism Villages One of the unique aspects of tourism villages lies in their rich history and cultural values that are still preserved. Stories of the past, historic buildings, cultural sites, and traditions passed down from generation to generation are a special attraction for tourists. For example, Wonolopo Village is known for its interesting local history, which, if promoted in the right way, can increase tourist interest. Challenges in Promoting Tourist Villages Despite their great potential, many tourist villages still face challenges in terms of promotion. One of the main obstacles is the lack of creative, informative, and accessible promotional media. Historical or cultural information is often only conveyed through simple brochures or information boards at

tourist sites, which are not very appealing, especially to the younger generation who are more accustomed to digital and visual content.

Creative Promotion Strategies through Visual Media To address these challenges, more innovative promotion strategies that keep pace with technological developments are needed. The use of visual media, such as comics, can be an effective solution. Through comics, local historical and cultural stories can be packaged into interesting and easy-to-understand narratives. In addition, comics can also be distributed in print and digital formats, thereby reaching a wider audience. Benefits of Effective Promotion for Tourism Villages Creative promotion is expected to increase the popularity of tourism villages. This will not only increase the number of tourists but also contribute to cultural preservation and the welfare of the local community. When tourists are attracted to enjoy the unique history and culture of the village, the economy will grow, and at the same time, cultural heritage can continue to thrive and be known by future generations.

2.3.2 Wonolopo Tourism Village

Wonolopo Tourism Village serves as an illustrative case of community-based tourism in Indonesia, highlighting the balance between cultural preservation and local economic growth. Located in Mijen District, Semarang, Central Java, the village is known for its agricultural landscape, bamboo crafts, and community-driven tourism activities that reflect the participatory nature of rural tourism management (Sony Junaedi, Endah Dwi Hayati, & Muslimah, 2022). This model emphasizes local empowerment by involving residents directly in the planning and operation of tourism initiatives, ensuring that economic benefits are distributed equitably across the community.

The village's main attractions combine both natural and cultural heritage, including farming activities, traditional bamboo handicrafts,

culinary experiences, and ritual ceremonies that have been preserved for generations. These features provide authentic rural experiences that attract both domestic and international visitors seeking meaningful cultural encounters (Yessi Fitari & Samsul Ma'rif, 2017). The success of Wonolopo in maintaining its cultural authenticity while promoting economic development demonstrates how rural tourism can be sustained when managed collaboratively

However, Wonolopo still faces challenges in promotional strategy and destination branding. The lack of engaging and professional promotional media limits its visibility among broader audiences. In response, creative media such as comics can serve as an innovative approach to tourism promotion conveying cultural narratives and local identity in a visually appealing and accessible format (Annisa Fajri, 2023)

Supported by Indonesia's national program on Sustainable Tourism Villages, Wonolopo continues to develop its potential while maintaining local values. This initiative aligns with the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy's vision to strengthen creative and community-based tourism as a driver of sustainable rural development (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2024).

2.4 Promotion

The deployment of comics as a promotional medium stands at the intersection of visual communication theory and marketing strategy. Comics offer a compelling platform by coupling sequential imagery with narrative structures, enabling marketers to convey complex ideas, evoke emotion, and reinforce brand identity (El-Desouky, 2020). In the advertising domain, visual storytelling has been shown to evoke stronger emotional resonance and increase memorability compared to non-narrative visuals.

From a cognitive perspective, comics engage readers through what the Parallel Interfacing Narrative-Semantics (PINS) model describes as the interaction between narrative structure and semantic understanding (Your Brain on Comics, 2022). This model helps explain why readers can intuitively follow stories in comics, even when the textual content is minimal or simplified, making comics effective for engaging diverse audiences.

Moreover, recent studies in comic arts emphasize how visual narratives facilitate participatory engagement. For instance, Bertella (2024) highlights that humor integrated into comic strips can foster solidarity, provoke reflection, and stimulate audience participation in educational contexts. In promotional settings, humor and visual narrative techniques may similarly help break down barriers between the message and the audience, making promotional content feel more conversational and less persuasive.

In sum, comics in promotion act as visual narratives with persuasive intent they do more than advertise; they tell a story. They can embed cultural values, brand identity, and calls to action within the flow of panels, inviting readers to experience the narrative rather than merely absorb a message. By blending marketing goals with narrative immersion, comics can achieve both reach and depth in promotional campaigns.

2.4.1 Comic as Promotional Media

Comics play an important role as a creative and engaging promotional medium. By combining stories and illustrations, comics can convey information about a tourist destination in a more vivid and easily understandable way. This makes comics effective in arousing the curiosity of potential tourists. Prasetyo and Lestari (2021) mention that

digital cultural comics can convey local narratives in an interesting way, thereby arousing curiosity, especially among the younger generation. One of the main advantages of comics as a promotional medium is their ability to present imaginative stories. Readers can experience the atmosphere and uniqueness of a tourist location through the visuals presented, even before actually visiting the place. In addition, comics are also flexible because they can be printed or distributed in digital format.

Distribution of comics in tourism promotion: Comics can be distributed through various channels, both printed such as brochures and comic books, as well as digital platforms such as social media, tourist village websites, or mobile applications. This digital distribution facilitates promotion to reach a wider audience, especially the younger generation who are familiar with technology. The impact of using comics for tourism promotion

The use of comics as a promotional medium is expected to increase public interest in visiting tourist destinations. In addition, comics also help to introduce local cultural and historical stories in a fun way. Thus, comics not only support tourism promotion but also contribute to the preservation of cultural values.

2.5 Previous Studies

Previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of visual storytelling in tourism promotion. Khater et al. (2025) argued that storytelling in tourism guides enhances emotional connections, cultural immersion, and visitors' engagement with tourism destinations.. Similarly, Springer (2023) explains that visual communication, including illustrations and comics, is effective in conveying cultural identity and authenticity, particularly in community-based tourism.

Khater et al. (2025) conducted a study entitled Weaving Tales: The Impact of Storytelling in Tourism Guides on Cultural Immersion. The

study aimed to examine how storytelling in tourism guides enhances tourists' cultural immersion and understanding of local heritage. The findings revealed that storytelling creates stronger emotional connections between tourists and destinations, making cultural experiences more memorable while increasing appreciation of local traditions. This study contributes to the present research by providing theoretical support for the use of storytelling as an effective strategy in tourism promotion. Similar to the present study, it emphasizes the importance of narrative in increasing visitor engagement with tourism destinations. However, unlike the previous study, which focused on tourism guides, the present study develops a bilingual comic as a promotional medium for Wonolopo Tourism Village using the Research and Development (R&D) method.

Can et al. (2024) conducted a study entitled *Fantasy or Reality? Unveiling the Power of Realistic Narratives in Tourism Social Media Advertising*. The objective of the study was to investigate how realistic narratives in tourism advertisements influence destination attachment and tourists' travel intentions. The results showed that narrative storytelling enhances emotional engagement, strengthens destination brand attachment, and encourages tourists' intention to visit destinations. These findings support the present study by demonstrating that narrative-based promotional media can effectively attract potential visitors. Both studies emphasize storytelling as an important strategy in tourism promotion. However, Can et al. focused on social media advertising, whereas the present study develops a bilingual comic that integrates local history, culture, and tourism information about Wonolopo Tourism Village.

Springer (2023) examined the role of visual communication in representing cultural identity within community-based tourism. The study aimed to explore how illustrations and visual communication promote the authenticity of tourism destinations. The findings indicated

that visual storytelling effectively communicates local identity, strengthens cultural authenticity, and increases visitors' interest in tourism destinations. This study contributes to the present research by supporting the use of visual communication as an effective tourism promotion strategy. While both studies focus on promoting community-based tourism through visual media, Springer discussed visual communication in general. In contrast, the present research specifically develops a bilingual comic and evaluates stakeholders' feedback regarding its effectiveness as a promotional medium for Wonolopo Tourism Village.

Based on these previous studies, storytelling and visual communication have significant potential to promote tourism destinations and increase visitors' engagement. However, previous studies mainly focused on tourism guides, social media advertising, or general visual communication. Research on developing bilingual comics as promotional media for tourism villages remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by developing a bilingual comic for Wonolopo Tourism Village that integrates local history, cultural preservation, and stakeholder feedback throughout the development process.