

Analysis of Reading Interest Among Adolescents in The Digital Age (A study at Sman 4 Bogor)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify factors that may enhance adolescents' reading interest amid the current digital transformation. Conducted at SMAN 4, Bogor City, West Java, the research employs a descriptive-quantitative method with a proportionate random sampling technique. The sample includes 152 students drawn from a total population of 635. The findings reveal that education and parental involvement play pivotal roles in fostering reading interests, highlighting the profound impact of socialisation on individual behaviour. Furthermore, the study indicates that students' reading preferences have expanded beyond traditional printed books to various digital platforms, such as web articles, digital comics, and social media. Finally, the results suggest that students' habitus deeply influences the formation of reading interest. At the same time, advances in technology and the internet have fundamentally altered how high schoolers access and engage with literary resources.

Keywords: *Reading interest, digital era, adolescents, habitus, digital platforms*

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INTRODUCTION

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported in 2019 that Indonesia ranked 62nd out of 70 countries, placing it among the ten countries with the lowest literacy rates. Additionally, UNESCO data from January 2020 indicated that only 0.001 percent of the Indonesian population demonstrates an interest in reading, meaning that just one out of every 1,000 Indonesians enjoys reading. Low reading interest among students in Indonesia represents a significant national challenge. Multiple issues stem from this lack of engagement with reading. Suryanti and Megawanti (2022) identified seven consequences of low reading interest: poor learning outcomes, diminished human resource quality, societal backwardness, increased unemployment, limited socialization, a literacy crisis, and insufficient references.

Geske and Ozola (2008, as cited in Rachmania, 2017) found that parental socioeconomic status can influence a child's reading interest. This finding is consistent with Wahyuni (2009), who argued that, in addition to family environment factors, low reading interest is also attributable to limited purchasing power for books within society. This limitation is linked to lower economic status and a lack of awareness regarding the importance of books. The relatively high cost of books restricts access, as not all segments of society are able or willing to purchase them. Consequently, families with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to acquire books to meet their informational needs, while those with lower socioeconomic status are less able and less inclined to do so.

A review of the literature reveals that studies on reading interest can be categorized into three main areas. The first category examines factors influencing reading interest, including environmental influences, family background, socioeconomic status, and shifts in social conditions. The second category addresses the significance of reading interest and the consequences of low reading engagement. The third category explores interventions to address low reading interest, such as literacy programs that encourage activities like reading for 15 minutes before lessons begin. Most existing studies address general factors influencing reading interest, the impacts of low reading engagement, and strategies to mitigate these issues. However, research specifically examining students' reading interest within the context of the digital era remains limited. This study seeks to address this gap by analyzing the reading interest of high school students in the digital era, a period characterized by significant changes in social conditions. Such analysis is essential, as the digital era has substantially altered behaviors, including reading habits, particularly among high school students.

Rahayu and Widodo (2019) describe the digital era as a period of rapid transition and development, marked by broader and faster achievements than previous eras. Technological advancements have facilitated communication without

constraints of space, distance, or time (Muhasim, 2017). In this era, individuals are closely integrated with science and technology, and all activities and information dissemination are interconnected through digital platforms (Samad in Zuhria, 2022). The ease of access to digital media has transformed reading behaviors, enabling immediate access to reading materials. This convenience fosters a preference for rapid information consumption, often at the expense of accuracy, as individuals strive to be the first to acquire and share information.

Contemporary teenagers, including high school students, are deeply engaged with digital technology and the internet, resulting in frequent interaction with virtual environments. Technology shapes various aspects of adolescent behavior, notably reading habits. Teenagers now have easier access to both printed and digital reading materials. Digital reading is often perceived as more enjoyable, interactive, and conducive to multitasking compared to traditional print. Consequently, reading behavior has shifted from intensive to extensive reading (Naufal, 2017). However, this shift often leads to reduced concentration due to distractions such as notifications, messages, advertisements, and other online content (Pramesti, 2021). Both digital and printed reading formats offer distinct advantages and disadvantages.

This phenomenon warrants further investigation, as teenagers, including high school students, constitute the largest group of internet users. According to the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), internet penetration among individuals aged 13 to 18 reached 99.16% in 2021-2022. This indicates that high school students have extensive access to a wide range of reading materials available online. In light of these considerations, this research aims to address the following question: “What is the reading interest among high school students in the digital era?” The objective is to describe the reading interest of high school students within this context. Such analysis is essential to provide new insights and understanding regarding reading interest in the digital era, given the substantial changes in behavior and reading habits, particularly among high school students.

METHOD

This study utilizes a descriptive research method with a quantitative survey approach. Such research aims to determine the value of one or more independent variables without making comparisons or establishing relationships with other variables (Sugiyono, 2012). The objective is to describe phenomena, events, or occurrences that are currently taking place (Ibrahim, 2004). The research was conducted at SMAN 4 Bogor City, West Java. This school was selected due to the diversity of its student population. SMAN 4 Bogor City is classified as a middle-ranked high school based on the Top 1000 schools in 2022 according to UTBK scores (ltmpt.ac.id, 2022). The surrounding area includes both elite housing complexes and densely populated settlements. Additionally, the zoning system has contributed to the

varied characteristics of the student body, ensuring representation from a range of academic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

The study population comprised 635 students from grades X and XI. A sample of 152 students was selected using a proportionate random sampling technique. Data were collected by distributing questionnaires via Google Forms to the selected students, with the link shared through WhatsApp groups. The questionnaire included 46 closed-ended questions organized into seven categories: attention, frequency, feeling, awareness, library visits, reading preferences, and economic aspect. Data analysis was conducted using frequency distribution and results were presented in tables, diagrams, and pie charts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results show that the majority of respondents, specifically 100 individuals (65.8%), expressed a positive interest in reading, indicating that most senior high school students have a relatively high level of reading interest. Meanwhile, 44 respondents (28.9%) reported a neutral attitude, and 8 respondents (5.3%) stated that they do not like reading. Only 8 respondents (5.3%) indicated feeling bored while reading. These findings suggest that, overall, respondents tend to have a high interest in reading.

The elevated reading interest observed among respondents is consistent with data from the National Library of Indonesia (Perpusnas), which reports an increase in national reading enthusiasm. According to Perpusnas, Indonesia's Reading Interest Index (TGM) reached 63.9 points in 2022, a 7.4% increase from the previous year's score of 59.52 points. This score is categorized as high, whereas in previous years, Indonesia's reading interest level was consistently classified as medium. Regionally, Yogyakarta recorded the highest national TGM score at 72.29 points, followed by Central Java at 70.96 points, and West Java, where SMAN 4 Bogor is located, at 70.1 points. The high TGM score in West Java corresponds with the findings of this study.

The data indicate that 45 respondents (29.6%) regularly allocate time for reading, while 36 respondents (23.7%) do not. The proportion of respondents who express a desire to read regularly is higher, with 93 individuals (61.2%) indicating such a preference, and only 13 respondents (8.6%) lacking this intention. This suggests that not allocating time for reading does not necessarily reflect an absence of intention to read regularly. Most respondents demonstrate relatively good reading habits, as 70 individuals (46%) spend more than 30 minutes per day reading. Conversely, 32 respondents (21.1%) read only when required, and 2 respondents (1.3%) do not read at all. Although many respondents spend a considerable amount of time reading daily, 26 individuals (17.1%) reported not having read any books in the past year, indicating that not all respondents read books.

A total of 102 respondents (67.1%) strongly agreed and 42 (27.6%) agreed that reading offers many benefits, while 8 respondents (5.3%) were neutral. These results indicate that most respondents are aware of the benefits and importance of reading, even if their reading habits are not fully established. This awareness may contribute to the further development of reading interest. Regarding sources of reading materials, 83 respondents (53.9%) obtain materials from bookstores as well as

libraries, suggesting that bookstores are visited more frequently than libraries. For non-printed reading materials, digital content is preferred, with 108 respondents (71%) obtaining materials via social media and 80 respondents (52.6%) using Google. Instagram (46 respondents, 30.2%) and Twitter (33 respondents, 21.7%) are the most preferred social media platforms, followed by websites (44 respondents, 28.9%). The data also show that respondents are more likely to access reading materials online (66.4%, 101 respondents) than offline (33.6%, 51 respondents). For offline media, printed books remain the preferred choice (105 respondents, 69%).

In relation to reading purposes, 65 respondents (42.7%) read to gain knowledge, while 79 respondents (53.3%) read for entertainment. Therefore, Pie Chart 6 will be analyzed using Pierre Bourdieu's approach to leisure and work. In the context of Bourdieu's theory, reading for work (to gain knowledge) can be considered a form of cultural capital that supports an individual's social capital. The data show that 42.7% of respondents read to expand their knowledge, indicating that a significant portion of respondents is interested in enhancing their knowledge as part of their preparation for future careers and life.

A total of 79 respondents (53.3%) reported reading for entertainment, indicating a preference for using reading as a means of recreation. The majority of respondents also prefer fiction (113 respondents, 74.3%) over non-fiction, suggesting a greater inclination toward entertainment and escapism, even among those who read to increase their knowledge.

In summary, respondents' reading habits are shaped by several factors, such as the pursuit of knowledge, entertainment, and escapism. According to Bourdieu's theoretical framework, these behaviors represent efforts to access and utilize cultural capital in accordance with academic and personal objectives. Within the school context, most students demonstrate a positive interest in web articles and news. Twitter threads, books, and comics are the most popular reading materials among respondents. In contrast, audiobooks, textbooks, and academic books are less favored. Interest in poetry varies more than for other types of reading materials. Overall, respondents' reading preferences are highly diverse. Certain materials, such as books and news, receive a strong positive response, while others, such as web articles and audiobooks, elicit a more moderate positive response. The high level of interest in news suggests that respondents are aware of current issues and motivated to understand them. This indicates active engagement with news and global developments.

Significant differences exist in the genres most preferred by respondents. Fantasy is the most favored genre, with 75 respondents (49.3%) indicating they strongly like it and 50 respondents (32.9%) stating they like it. Only 7 respondents (4.6%) reported disliking and 2 respondents (1.3%) strongly disliking fantasy. Romance is the second most preferred genre, with 63 respondents (41.4%) strongly liking and 56 respondents (36.8%) liking it. Only 7 respondents (4.6%) expressed dislike for romance. Academic textbooks are the least favored type of reading material, with only 13 respondents (8.6%) strongly liking and 73 respondents (48%) liking them. In contrast, 32 respondents (21.1%) indicated dislike and 8 respondents (5.3%) reported strong dislike. Horror is the second least favored genre, with 52 respondents (34.2%) strongly liking and 42 respondents (27.6%) liking it, while 28

respondents (18.4%) reported disliking and 12 respondents (7.9%) strongly disliking horror.

A notable finding is the strong interest in the fantasy genre, with 75 respondents (49.3%) strongly liking and 50 respondents (32.9%) liking it. Fantasy offers imaginative worlds distinct from reality, and this preference may indicate a desire to escape daily routines and explore creative realms. Another interesting finding is the similarity between respondents who prefer reading printed books and those who prefer using electronic devices. Respondents who favor printed books constitute 26.5%, while those who prefer electronic devices make up 27.7%. This indicates the diversity of preferences in how respondents access reading materials. Regarding the use of computers or laptops as a reading platform, 21.4% of respondents prefer reading on a computer or laptop; however, a relatively high level of dislike (16.4%) suggests that some respondents do not choose this medium, possibly due to its association with schoolwork or assignments. Smartphones are also a popular reading platform, with 17.2% of respondents strongly liking and 17.2% liking this option. However, 6.3% of respondents report dislike and 6.7% report strong dislike for reading on smartphones. The findings demonstrate considerable diversity in the methods respondents use to access reading materials, with preferences distributed among printed books, electronic devices, and smartphones. The relatively high level of disapproval of reading on computers, laptops, and smartphones indicates that educators and literacy program designers should carefully consider the integration of technology in reading and learning.

Reading Interest and the Transformation of Students' Reading Culture: Examining the Role of Family Habitus

A number of studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between higher socioeconomic status and reading interest. Based on the data presented earlier, it is evident that although the socioeconomic status of the respondents is relatively low, they nevertheless exhibit a considerable interest in reading: 100 respondents (65.8%) display a positive interest in reading, only 36 (23.7%) do not allocate time to read, 13 (8.6%) do not have the desire to read regularly, 70 (46%) spend more than 30 minutes per day reading, and 144 (94.7%) respondents agree that reading has many benefits. This phenomenon can be attributed to two main factors: education as a form of cultural capital and parents' role in fostering literacy. Parents with higher educational attainment are likely to possess greater cultural capital, such as knowledge, skills, and strong educational values. They understand the importance of literacy and education for their children's development. Parents with secondary or higher education levels tend to have well-formed ideas about how to encourage their children's reading interest and actively participate in their education at home (Baiti, 2020).

Regarding reading frequency, only 2 respondents (1.3%) reported not reading at all, while 26 respondents (17.1%) had not read any books in the past year. This suggests that although not all respondents read books, they may still engage in other forms of reading and derive benefits from these activities. In the digital era, reading extends beyond traditional materials such as books, magazines, textbooks, and academic journals. The data indicate that respondents respond positively to digital

reading materials, including web articles and news sources, with particular popularity observed for Twitter threads and comics.

The widespread adoption of online reading habits and the consumption of non-book materials among students can be largely attributed to the reading habitus developed within the family environment. A supportive family context that encourages reading helps shape students' habitus, increasing the likelihood that they will maintain reading practices in the future. According to Bourdieu, the internalization of a reading habitus typically occurs during childhood and often operates unconsciously (Dumais in Fardiana, 2020). Parents serve as essential role models in this process; those who regularly engage in reading are more likely to transmit these habits, as children tend to imitate parental behaviors.

As technological demands have increased in the digital era, parents have become accustomed to using technology for communication, work, and entertainment. Consequently, high school students are exposed from an early age to the use of smartphones and the internet for diverse purposes, including reading. This exposure has contributed to the development of a technological habitus among students, encompassing reading activities. Therefore, high school students are increasingly adept at adapting to the evolving digital landscape.

CONCLUSION

This study identifies three key findings concerning high school students' reading interest and the evolving culture of reading: (1) Education and parental involvement play a critical role in shaping children's reading interest, highlighting the influence of socialization on individual behavior and preferences; (2) Students' reading preferences extend beyond printed books to include digital platforms such as web articles, comics, and social media; (3) Habitus significantly influences reading interest, while technology and the internet are transforming how high school students access and utilize reading materials. Theoretically, this study demonstrates Pierre Bourdieu's concept that habitus is structured by the social conditions in which individuals or groups exist. In this context, students' reading habitus, developed within the family environment and internalized during childhood through observation of parental technology use, shapes their reading preferences and behaviors. Furthermore, the digital era has increased reliance on technology, leading young people to be strongly influenced by a pervasive technology in reading practices. Moreover, a high level of reading interest is evident among respondents despite their relatively low socioeconomic status, as measured by parental income.

Parents with higher educational backgrounds appear to possess greater cultural capital and are more likely to encourage reading in their children. This reflects the influence of habitus in shaping individual behavior and preferences. This study was conducted exclusively among adolescents in a single public high school in Bogor City, without comparison to the reading culture of adults who experienced a pre-digital reading environment. Therefore, further research is needed to compare adolescents and adults to gain a deeper understanding of the shift in reading culture during the digital era.

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