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## From Literary Genre to Algorithmic Taxonomy: Platform Capitalism in Indonesian Digital Literature

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines transformations in Indonesian digital literature on reading-writing platforms such as Fizzo, Wattpad, NoverlToon, and GoodNovel. This research examines how various digital reading-writing platforms in Indonesia deconstruct literary classifications, disseminate works, and regulate reader engagement through an algorithm-driven genre system. The analysis is conducted using a critical analysis of digital reading-writing platforms, drawing on Fredric Jameson's concepts of cultural commodification and Nick Srnicek's ideas on platform capitalism. The results of the analysis indicate that literary genres on digital reading-writing platforms function not merely as aesthetic classifications but as market taxonomies controlled by algorithms designed by the platform systems to optimize work discovery, search, reader targeting, and platform engagement. This research also found that erotic and sensational narratives in literary works circulating on digital reading-writing platforms serve as commercially effective attractions for attracting readers with diverse reading preferences. Furthermore, digital reading-writing platforms have changed the literary ecosystem by driving demands for high productivity, retention systems, monetization, and the dissemination of works—all of which are fully controlled by the platform. Furthermore, this article identifies that the value and legitimacy of literature in the digital literary world are no longer confined to the conventional publishing industry and literary critics, but are shaped by popularity, visibility, algorithmic systems, and cross-media adaptations. This indicates that Indonesian digital literature, particularly that based on digital reading-writing platforms, has a close relationship with the digital capitalist system, placing digital literature at the intersection of artistic expression, market logic, and binding platform systems.



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## 1. Introduction

In recent years, digital literary platforms have grown rapidly in Indonesia. These platforms have brought about significant changes in the creative process, production, distribution, and consumption of literary works. Several popular digital literary platforms in Indonesia, such as Fizzo, Wattpad, NovelToon, and GoodNovel, each have their own distinct market. Many new Indonesian writers have emerged from these platforms, with their works reaching millions of readers and eventually being adapted into web series. This indicates that these platforms have become a new ecosystem for the creation and publication of contemporary literary works. These four platforms can also be considered major players compared to similar platforms, as evidenced by their user numbers on the Google Play Store and App Store.

At the time of writing, Fizzo has been downloaded by over 50 million users on the Google Play Store (Poligon 2025). Wattpad has been downloaded by over 100 million users on the Google Play Store (Wattpad 2025). NovelToon has been downloaded by more than 10 million users on the Google Play Store (NovelToon 2024). Goodnovel on the Google Play Store has been downloaded by more than 10 million users (GoodNovel 2025). These platforms have also established numerous cross-media partnerships. For instance, on Wattpad, many works that were first published there have gone on to be released as physical novels, adapted into series on streaming platforms, and turned into feature films. The same applies to works on NovelToon, Fizzo, and GoodNovel.

Through recommendation systems, genre categorization, monetization features, and reader engagement metrics, these platforms have created a new dynamic in the relationship between authors, readers, and literary texts within a highly competitive digital landscape—where anyone can write and publish their work more quickly and easily. This allows each platform to host hundreds, even millions, of literary works. With the flood of literary works on each platform, competition has become extremely fierce. New works are published almost every day. On one hand, the existence of digital reading-writing platforms allows anyone to become a writer with a single upload, but on the other hand, these writers must also be prepared to compete with numerous other writers and their works.

This has brought about a major transformation in the world of digital literary platforms. With so many works and authors, to ensure uploaded works do not feel lost in a vast jungle, each platform categorizes them into specific genres. However, it is important to note that the concept of “genre” on digital literary platforms like Fizzo, Wattpad, NovelToon, and GoodNovel differs from its conventional literary definition. Generally, in conventional literary studies, genre is an aesthetic and narrative classification used to organize literary forms. However, on digital literature platforms, genres are highly specific labels used to classify uploaded literary works,

such as “CEO,” “secret baby,” “contract marriage,” “alpha,” “hate-to-love,” “reincarnation,” “forbidden love,” and so on.

This classification serves as a taxonomy closely tied to algorithms, designed to enhance a work’s visibility, target readers, and boost user engagement on the platform. This indicates that the categorization of literature established by digital reading-writing platforms is not absolute; rather, each platform has its own criteria and policies regarding this categorization. Even within a single platform, this categorization can change rapidly, with categories added as new works are published. Hereinafter, these categories will be referred to as “genres” because the platforms themselves label them as such, and to simplify the discussion that follows. On digital reading-writing platforms, genres function as metadata that can be used to search for and group literary works, as well as to gauge market interest, thereby helping platforms to optimize visibility and reader retention.

This shift in the function of genre on digital reading-writing platforms signifies a massive shift in the world of literature. The term genre in literature, which was once used to distinguish form, structure, and style, has now become a labelling tool to enhance the visibility of works and is inseparable from the logic of platform capitalism and the commodification of culture. Fredric Jameson (1990) argues that the logic of late capitalist culture transforms culture into an economic commodity inseparable from market circulation. This commodification within the world of digital reading-writing platforms occurs through algorithmic systems that utilize metadata to regulate visibility, engagement, and monetization. As Nick Srnicek (2017) explains, digital platforms operate by reading and analyzing user participation, data circulation, and user screen time through algorithmic systems, which can then be exploited to generate economic profit.

Therefore, in the world of digital platforms, literary works are no longer merely aesthetic expressions, responses to social situations, and cultural products, but also economic commodities or economic tools for generating profit. Through recommendation systems, genre categorization, reader metrics, and monetization strategies, the digital reading-writing platforms market works to the appropriate target markets. In other words, the platform learns users’ habits and interests so it can provide relevant recommendations, sparing users the need to painstakingly search through all the works on the platform to find those that match their preferences. The existence of highly specific genres such as “CEO,” “secret baby,” “contract marriage,” “Dracula,” “mystery,” “reincarnation,” and so on makes it easier for platforms to categorize published works and for readers to find the works they want to read.

Over the past few years, studies on digital literature in Indonesia have focused on reader interaction, the narrative structure of digital literature, and popular digital literary works across

various digital reading-writing platforms. For example, Pramatanti (2018) found that comments from readers on ongoing works uploaded to Wattpad can influence plot development. There is also research by Krismayani and Arfa (2022) on market preferences, which found that romantic stories featuring handsome, wealthy men as the main characters are extremely popular and dominate Wattpad. Furthermore, research by Fahmy et al. (2023) on works published on Fizzo indicates that many novels published there tend to explore simple, similar themes—a trend driven by market preferences.

Regarding market preferences, Faiza et al. (2024) explain that high reader interest in a work can influence its development; now, many digital reading-writing platforms are collaborating with various parties to adapt popular digital literary works into other formats, such as printed novels, web series, and films. Furthermore, Pertiwi and Wati (2022) emphasize in their research that digital reading-writing platforms play a significant role in expanding literacy culture and enhancing public access to the production and consumption of literature.

Globally, Thomas (2011) explains in his research that platforms like Wattpad have transformed the way literary works are read, written, and published through network engagement and reader-writer interactions that can be established more openly and easily. A similar point is made by Liu et al. (2025), who note that digital fiction and web literature platforms are heavily influenced by platform systems related to reader engagement and competitive dynamics.

These studies provide crucial insights into the world of digital culture and the influence of digital reading-writing platforms on the practices of reading, writing, and publishing literary works in the digital age. However, most of the existing research has focused primarily on reader participation, the narrative styles of digital literary works, and the opportunities for adapting various digital literary works into other forms, while discussions regarding the transformation of literary genres, market segmentation, and the visibility of literary works in the algorithm-driven world of digital reading-writing platforms remain very limited; consequently, the relationship between platform capitalism and the transformation of literary genres in Indonesian digital literature has yet to be fully explored.

This study analyzes digital reading-writing platforms such as Fizzo, Wattpad, NovelToon, and GoodNovel—which are currently popular, with millions of users—to examine how these platforms in Indonesia deconstruct literary classifications, disseminate works, and regulate reader engagement through algorithm-driven genre systems. This article argues that literary genres in the digital literary space—particularly those based on platforms—no longer function as aesthetic classifications as they do in conventional literary works. Instead, these genres serve as market taxonomies driven by algorithms designed to optimize the visibility of literary works,

reader engagement, user acquisition, personalized recommendation systems tailored to user preferences, and commercial strategies.

## **2. Method**

This study employs a critical analysis of digital literary platforms. The critical analysis in this study examines how various digital reading-writing platforms in Indonesia deconstruct literary classifications, disseminate works, and regulate reader engagement through algorithm-driven genre systems. Thus, the study not only describes the features and systems of the platforms but also analyzes the relationships among digital literature, platform capitalism, cultural commodification, and the workings of the digital economy that govern the publication of Indonesian digital literature. The material objects of this study consist of four widely used digital literary reading-writing platforms in Indonesia: Fizzo, Wattpad, NovelToon, and GoodNovel. These four platforms were selected as the subjects of study due to their popularity in Indonesia and their active role in the production of Indonesian-language literature, as evidenced by the large number of Indonesian-language works that have been published and are currently in the process of being published (ongoing).

The data observed include genre categorization systems, work tagging structures, work monetization mechanisms, reader engagement systems, author incentive programs, and literary work publishing systems for each platform. Additionally, several samples of literary works discussed in this study, the interface of each platform, and the content organization systems on each platform are analyzed to examine patterns of genre classification, work visibility, and reader engagement.

In this analysis, the concept of the logic of late-capitalist culture—an idea proposed by Fredric Jameson—and platform capitalism—a concept developed by Nick Srnicek—are employed as the primary theoretical frameworks. Jameson's framework is used to examine the commodification of literary production and the market logic increasingly dominating the ideology of digital literary reading-writing platforms. Srnicek's theory is applied to analyze how platform systems regulate reader engagement, the monetization of works, and the dissemination of works.

Several stages were employed in this research. First, the four digital reading-writing platforms previously discussed were thoroughly and deeply examined to identify the literary genre categorizations, tagging systems, monetization systems, and reader engagement mechanisms implemented on these platforms. Second, the identified literary genre categorizations, tagging systems, and monetization systems were analyzed to examine how each platform classifies, segments, and distributes literary works. Third, the results of this identification and analysis are then interpreted using Jameson's concepts regarding the

commodification of culture and Srnicek's theory of platform capitalism to understand the relationship between the transformation of the literary genre system into a classification system that determines the visibility of works, monetization, and reader engagement with market logic on digital literary platforms. Finally, conclusions are drawn.

### 3. Taxonomy of Algorithmic Genres and Market Segmentation

In today's digital age, platforms such as Wattpad, Fizzo, NovelToon, and GoodNovel have brought significant changes to the world of literature. These platforms not only transform the creative process, production, distribution, and consumption of literary works but also reshape their categorization. Hayles (2021) explains that digital media creates new consumption patterns through continuous data systems and digital interactions. This is clearly evident in the role of genre on the digital reading-writing platforms mentioned earlier. Genre no longer functions solely as an aesthetic and formal classification of literary works, as it does in print and oral literature. Todorov (1976) explains that genre is generally understood as a literary classification that groups texts according to their narrative structure, thematic elements, and aesthetic characteristics.

Therefore, genre generally functions as a framework that distinguishes forms of literary works, for example, dividing them into novels, poetry, drama, and short stories. At a more specific level, genre can also refer to the themes addressed by literary works, such as romance, thriller, science fiction, and horror. However, digital reading-writing platforms have now shifted the function of genre. Genre, which was originally limited to categorizing literary works and understanding their forms, has now transformed into a market tagging system that helps platforms segment the market, increase discoverability, and maintain reader engagement.

Platforms like Wattpad, Fizzo, NovelToon, and GoodNovel organize works into highly specific categories or labels, such as CEO, alpha, secret baby, contract marriage, hate-to-love, revenge, reincarnation, billionaire, mafia, and so on. Fizzo even has distinct genre divisions for female and male readers. Genres for female readers lean more toward romance-themed content, such as office romance, urban romance, contract marriage, secret baby, enemies-to-lovers, and so on—differing from genres aimed at male readers: harem, warlord, crazy rich, games, systems, and so on.

Wattpad and GoodNovel also use a similar genre classification system, one that is highly specific and is categorized by the story themes featured in the works. A slightly different classification exists on NovelToon: on this platform, genres are used not only to indicate a work's theme but also to categorize its format. The main genres are novels, short stories, and comics, each with more specific subgenres based on theme, such as fanfiction, mystery, modern romance, and so on. Suryami and Mujiningsih (2022) explain that every digital reading-writing

app offers different genres and forms of literary works, and these cannot be generalized. This indicates that literary genres on various digital platforms now primarily function as thematic labels to simplify readers' searches and help reach the right audience. This shift in the role of genres has a significant impact on users' continued engagement with the platform, because as the platform provides story recommendations tailored to their interests, their screen time increases—which, of course, benefits the platform.

These label specifications also serve as metadata that helps the platform understand users' interests and literary preferences, which will be highly beneficial in curating reading recommendations for their readers. Consequently, different readers receive varying reading recommendations on their home screens. Parnell (2023) argues that digital literary platforms like Wattpad distribute works to users through datafication, personalization, and highly specific microgenre classifications—all integral to their recommendation systems.

This genre classification is not entirely in the hands of authors; rather, it is also controlled by the platform system. This is clearly evident when authors publish a work; even though they have selected a genre they believe suits their story, ultimately, it is the platform system that determines and places those works into the category deemed most appropriate. This platform can automatically change the genre classification previously assigned by the author using its algorithm. Authors do not have full control over the genre classification of the literary works they write; ultimately, the platform's system holds the reins and makes the final decision on the work's genre. This aligns with Srnicek's (2017) view that digital platforms function not only as distribution channels but also as digital infrastructure that governs content dissemination, user interaction, and exposure.

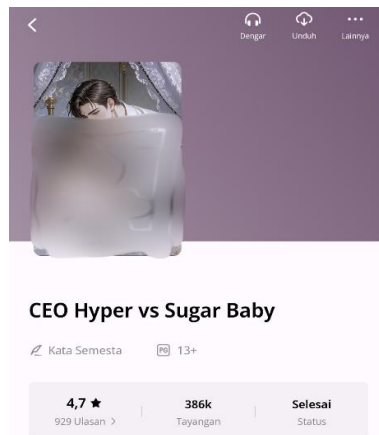
A literary work whose genre has been predetermined by the platform may, at some point in an ongoing series, undergo a genre shift that differs from its original classification. For example, a work that initially falls under the CEO genre may shift to the "secret baby" genre after several subsequent chapters, depending on the plot's progression. This demonstrates that genres can continue to evolve, particularly in ongoing works published in installments where the conflict remains unresolved. Frow (2015) explains that genre is a socially constructed system that evolves both historically and institutionally. Consequently, the role of genre within digital reading-writing platforms can evolve and shift. Genres serve as a navigation tool that helps readers find works that best match their preferences. Through this navigation, platforms can retain readers for longer periods, especially as the range of genres offered expands; readers gain more reading options, and the platform benefits. The longer readers spend on the platform, the greater the economic value it generates. Huck and Zhou (2011) explain that companies continue to compete to become consumers' top choice by implementing various strategies.

This situation indicates that cultural products have now become economic tools driven by capitalists seeking to profit from them. Literature is no longer solely about aesthetic expression, social reflection, and socio-cultural criticism; it has also become part of the capitalist production system. Therefore, genre shifts emerge not due to aesthetic developments, but because such genres are effective in attracting a broader market—much like a platform casting a very wide net to catch more fish. The more literary genre specifications a platform offers, the greater its chances of attracting readers, as the greater the variety of genres, the more reading options readers have. As the number of users on this digital reading-writing platform increases, so will the platform's profits. This demonstrates that in the present day, culture is increasingly difficult to separate from capitalist ideology and consumer culture (Jameson 1990). In line with this, Srnicek (2017) explains that digital platforms have been reorganizing cultural production through user data, which platform systems can analyze via screen time and the content users most frequently view. Consequently, the shift in genre functions—which is heavily dependent on platform algorithms—serves as evidence that literature on digital reading-writing platforms is shaped by economic logic and the capitalist platform system.

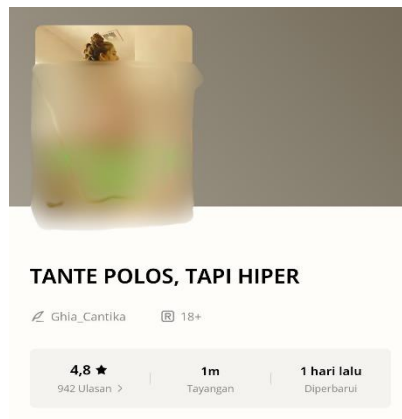
#### **4. The Commodification of Desire and Erotic Visibility**

The commodification of literature on digital reading-writing platforms is also evident in the increasing distribution of works that highlight eroticism and sensational themes. Platforms like Fizzo, NovelToon, Wattpad, and GoodNovel feature numerous works related to possessive relationships, taboo romance, infidelity, and overtly explicit erotic relationships—works that would not be freely available in bookstores in Indonesia. Through digital reading-writing platforms, such literary works can be easily created, distributed, recommended, and promoted directly via category systems, popular pages, and user recommendations.

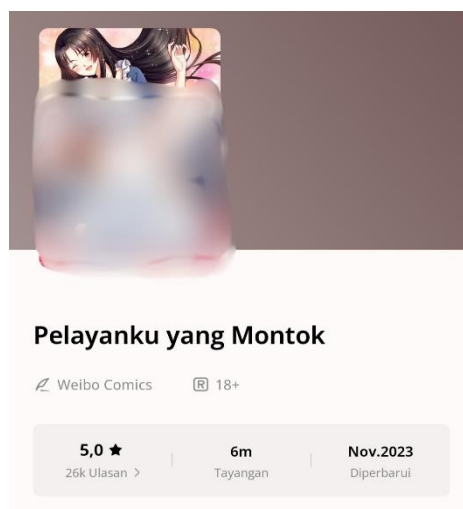
Additionally, many works with provocative titles, featuring intimate illustrations and explicit sexual narratives that dominate much of the story's content, have become products designed to attract readers' attention in the digital literary market. Undeniably, works like these have their own market, and with the strict selection criteria of physical bookstores in Indonesia for literary works that emphasize eroticism and sensationalism, digital reading-writing platforms that are more unrestricted stand to benefit significantly. Although digital reading-writing platforms like Fizzo and others actually have moderation systems, the moderation often remains inconsistent. Gillespie (2018) explains that digital platforms operate through complex content moderation and processing systems, but these systems also depend on user engagement levels; thus, when the system detects high user engagement, it tends to retain that content.



**Figure 1: Novel Hyper CEO vs Sugar Baby (Semesta 2025)**



**Figure 2: Novel Aunty is Innocent but Hyper (Ghia\_Cantika 2025)**



**Figure 3: Comic My Busty Maid (Comics 2023)**

Several novels on Fizzo, such as "CEO Hyper vs Sugar Baby" or "Hyper CEO vs Sugar Baby" (CHSB) by Kata Semesta and "Tante Polos, but Hyper" or "Aunty is Innocent but Hyper" (TPTH) by Ghia Cantika, as well as the comic titled "Pelayanku yang Montok" or "My Busty Maid" (PYM) by Weibo Comics, are among the works with a fairly high readership. The novel CHSB has been read by over 386,000 readers (as of the writing of this article, April 27, 2026), while approximately one million readers have read the novel TPTH, and the comic PYM has now surpassed approximately six million readers. These three works not only feature sensual titles but also feature covers with intimate, sensual visual illustrations. The titles and cover illustrations of these works are heavily imbued with the hot, erotic fantasy and sexual desire.

The popularity of these works demonstrates that eroticism, sensuality, and sensational themes hold significant commercial appeal in the world of digital literature, particularly on digital reading-writing platforms. One reason these works enjoy such high popularity is that readers who prefer this type of story cannot find it in Indonesian bookstores. Indonesian bookstores and publishers of printed literary works are bound by very strict ethical guidelines, preventing them from publishing and selling literary works that explicitly contain erotic elements. Consequently, enthusiasts of such works turn to digital reading-writing platforms.

On digital reading-writing platforms, erotic elements and sensational scenes can circulate freely, even though these platforms actually have rules prohibiting the depiction of overly explicit sexual scenes; in practice, however, there are still many works containing highly explicit sexual scenes. Eroticism and sexual scenes are not merely plot variations on these platforms but also serve as strategies to attract readers, particularly those who lack access to print media. This results in digital reading-writing platforms having a vast user base with a diverse range of content.

Due to the high retention rates and popularity of such works, an increasing number of similar works are circulating within the digital reading-writing platform ecosystem, including on Fizzo, Wattpad, NovelToon, and GoodNovel. Actually, this is not a surprising phenomenon, because when works featuring strong erotic themes and sensational relationships attract many readers and gain high popularity, other authors tend to follow this pattern, producing similar works to achieve the same readership and popularity. This indicates that market preferences and reader consumption help shape the types of works circulating on digital reading-writing platforms.

In the world of digital literature, where reading and writing are based on digital platforms, literary aesthetics are no longer the primary focus; instead, capitalist logic dominates. Digital reading-writing platforms will continue to recommend popular works and even promote them across other digital platforms. This results in a culture shaped not only by humans but also by the platform system, popularity metrics, and engagement patterns (Striphas 2015). As long as

erotic and sensational works maintain high reader preference and attract a large audience, these works will not disappear from circulation on digital reading-writing platforms, even with moderation systems in place to filter them.

In short, the platform will continue to distribute and recommend works that have the potential to attract readers' attention and increase their screen time on the platform, even if those works are erotic and filled with explicit sexual scenes. This, once again, cannot be separated from the capitalist ideology these platforms embrace. On digital reading-writing platforms, erotic and sensational elements in literary works are part of a commodification process aimed at maximizing economic profit for the platform.

### **5. Literary Labor Under Platform Capitalism**

Digital reading-writing platforms have not only changed the spheres of production, distribution, and consumption, but also significantly altered the way literary writers work on them. Platforms such as Fizzo, Wattpad, NovelToon, and GoodNovel have different approaches, but are nearly identical in how they compensate their writers. On digital reading-writing platforms, writers are not only tasked with writing their works but must also independently act as editors of their own stories; they must also consistently maintain daily updates (because the majority of literary works on these platforms are uploaded in an ongoing or unfinished state).

Additionally, authors must devise ways to keep readers engaged so that their readership continues to grow; as more readers stay engaged, the work's visibility within the system increases, which in turn helps the platform's algorithm distribute the work to a wider audience. Essentially, the more readers who remain engaged with a work, the greater the chance it will gain the platform's attention—leading to broader distribution to more users. With a large readership, the author's earnings will increase as well.

The way authors earn income on digital reading-writing platforms differs significantly from the print literary sphere because, within the digital reading-writing platform environment, the monetization system heavily determines an author's earnings, and each platform generally has different monetization systems, such as paid chapters, readership bonuses, exclusive contracts, and incentives based on reader activity. On platforms like Fizzo, an author's income heavily depends on the number of readers, reader retention rates, and the consistency of story updates. Reader retention refers to the percentage of readers who continue following a story from the first chapter to the last. The reason retention is so critical to an author's income is that this percentage indicates how long readers stay engaged; the longer readers stay engaged, the more revenue the platform generates. This is why digital reading-writing platforms will increasingly prioritize works that have the potential to keep readers engaged for longer. Long-term readers

will view more ads, spend more time in the app, and increase app traffic, generating useful activity data for the platform. Literary activity on digital reading-writing platforms is highly dependent on reader engagement metrics and content performance, which ultimately relate to economic profit.

Before Fizzo implemented its retention system, during its initial launch, it offered quite attractive compensation to its exclusive writers, such as contract bonuses, monthly activity bonuses, completion bonuses, and ad exposure bonuses within their works. To receive these bonuses, writers had to meet certain requirements, such as a minimum daily word count and consistent story updates. However, these bonuses are no longer offered; Fizzo now pays its writers solely based on retention rates and ad exposure. Currently, Fizzo writers must write at least 150,000 words and have a minimum of 5,000 readers to earn any income in a given month.

The initial royalties Fizzo paid to its writers were part of a strategy to attract as many writers as possible to the platform and fill it with a wealth of content.

However, now that Fizzo has an abundance of content, the rules have been changed, making it increasingly difficult for writers to earn income. Ultimately, Fizzo is nothing more than a corporate entity that prioritizes profits over its writers' well-being. Reiter (2016) asserts that the capitalist system prioritizes shareholders and corporate profits, often neglecting workers' well-being. This leads to workers—in this case, writers on digital reading-writing apps—experiencing alienation from the fruits of their labor because they cannot enjoy the rewards of their hard work (Müller 2018). The ongoing changes in platform policies regarding monetization systems demonstrate that writers' positions within the platform-based digital literary ecosystem are highly vulnerable and not a top priority for the platforms. Whenever monetization rules change, it is the platforms that stand to benefit the most. The relationship between writers and platforms is influenced by the platforms' economic interests and operational systems, which can be adjusted to meet market needs and align with their business strategies. This, however, is not a new phenomenon in the capitalist world. Capital owners—in this case, the platforms—are the rule-makers and authorities, free to make changes that benefit them as much as possible and minimize their losses.

Unlike Fizzo, which implements a contract system from the very start of a work's creation, NovelToon features both contract-free works and works under exclusive contracts. Contract-free works can only generate income from reader donations, while contracted works earn revenue from ads within the work itself. There are also retention bonuses, but these come with very strict criteria, such as a reader retention rate exceeding 65% and passing an editor's review. Reaching a 65% retention rate is no easy feat, given the vast number of works available on

NovelToon. Contracted works may also be adapted into audiobooks, comics, short dramas, print publications, and other formats in the future (NovelToon 2025).

GoodNovel implements a monetization system that differs from those of the two previous digital reading-writing platforms. All works published on GoodNovel are contracted works. GoodNovel offers three types of writing contracts: non-exclusive (NEX), exclusive (EX), and premium exclusive (EXP) (Goodnovel 2025). NEX works can be published on other platforms, but EX and EXP works cannot be published on other platforms and are only available on Goodnovel. NEX works receive a completion bonus of 30 USD for completing at least 150 words and 50% of revenue from paid chapter access.

The difference between EX and EXP contracts lies in the bonuses received. The EX contract offers a contract signing bonus of up to 100 USD, a monthly activity bonus of 50 USD, a completion bonus of up to 250 USD, and a 50% revenue share from paid chapter unlocks. The EXP contract offers a contract signing bonus of up to 50 USD, a monthly activity bonus of 150 USD, a completion bonus of up to 325 USD, and 50% of the revenue from paid chapter releases. The contract signing bonus, monthly activity bonus, and completion bonus are not readily available to authors. Authors must meet specific criteria to receive these bonuses: a minimum number of words per month, a maximum number of days off for chapter updates, a minimum number of readers, and the author's revenue from paid chapters. The EXP contract signing bonus of 100 USD will be awarded to the author if they meet the word count and quality targets set by the editor within two months of the contract being signed.

Authors can earn a 50 USD EXP contract signing bonus if their work reaches 30,000 words. The EXP monthly activity bonus can be earned if the number of readers reaches 25,000, the minimum word count in a single month is 25,000, and the minimum revenue share from the work is 30 USD. The monthly activity bonus for EXP is awarded to authors if they can update 50,000 words within 25 days, and this applies only for the first three months. Starting in the fourth month, EXP work must generate a minimum revenue share of 20 USD to qualify for the monthly activity bonus. The EXP completion bonus is determined based on the total number of words in the work and the total net revenue share. The EXP completion bonus is determined based on the number of words completed and the revenue share in the month of completion, which must reach a minimum of 30 USD. Although the bonuses offered for EX and EXP work may seem substantial at first, securing an EX or EXP contract is no easy feat. A rigorous selection process evaluates not only the quality of the work but also its potential for market acceptance and appeal to a wide readership.

Wattpad, arguably the earliest digital reading-writing platform to boom in Indonesia, is now undergoing significant changes as well. When it first emerged, all works on Wattpad were free,

with no payment system; readers might only see a few ads. However, as Wattpad's popularity has grown and amid fierce competition from similar apps, Wattpad has joined the market trend by introducing a premium system and paid stories for select works. The system implemented by Wattpad differs significantly from those of the three previous platforms because paid stories or premium works are not accessible to authors who register their works; instead, they are accessed through an invitation-only system. Wattpad invites works deemed highly popular and with significant market potential to join this paid system, where authors earn revenue. Works that do not receive this invitation, of course, will not generate any income.

Although every digital reading-writing platform has its own monetization system, all ultimately aim to prioritize the platform's profits. If a work does not sell well on the platform, the platform will not incur significant losses because it still receives new works, which naturally minimize its expenses. Without bearing the high production costs, the platform continues to receive new works. On the other hand, authors who have worked hard to create works on digital reading-writing platforms are not guaranteed to earn income. Modern digital culture relies heavily on forms of free labor—that is, user activities on digital platforms that continuously generate profit for the platform (Terranova 2000).

Digital platforms profit from various user activities and the data their systems continuously collect (Srnicsek 2017). In line with this, Andrejevic (2012) explains that digital media users are not only consumers but also sources of labor and data for the platforms. When users create content, upload it, and then interact with it, they provide data to the platform; these actions generate economic value for the platform. This makes it clear that literary works and authors on digital reading-writing platforms are tools used by the platforms for economic gain. Whether their works have few or many readers, still generate profit for the platform by expanding the collection of works available on the platform; however, authors often do not receive commensurate benefits after working hard to write and complete their pieces.

Writing literary works on digital reading-writing platforms is no longer merely a creative practice and a social response. These platforms have become a source of income for both the platforms and the writers. The existence of digital reading-writing platforms is closely linked to economic benefits driven by consistent, sustainable productivity and market demand. Thus, literary works within the digital reading-writing platform environment have become part of a platform-based cultural production system, which is a digital economic system wrapped in creativity. Digital reading-writing platforms are setting new standards in contemporary literary production because, particularly in platform-based digital literature, the value of a work is no longer judged solely by the quality of the story and its aesthetic value, but also by the level of

traffic it generates. Popularity and reader engagement have become critical factors in monetization, promotion, and the dissemination of works to a broader market.

### **6. Literary Value and Commercial Circulation Measured by Metrics**

The number of readers, reader retention, popularity, reader engagement, and reader screen time for a digital literary work are critical factors in the digital literary ecosystem, which is based on reading-writing platforms such as Wattpad, NovelToon, Fizzo, and GoodNovel. The higher the reader retention rate for a work, the greater the chance that the platform will continue to promote it. Using advanced algorithms, these platforms can track how long users stay engaged with a work and how far readers progress through the story. The higher the reader's screen time and the more readers who follow the story through to the final chapter, the greater the chance that the work will become popular and continue to be distributed by the platform.

Platforms will continue to boost exposure for literary works that have the potential to attract more readers. The more readers there are, the wider the work will be distributed. A high number of readers and a high retention rate will make it easier for a work to gain popularity. This has become a new benchmark for the legitimacy of literary works. Without going through literary critics or a direct, in-depth evaluation, a work can become extremely popular and go viral in an instant. This indicates that today, the value of a literary work is no longer determined solely by conventional literary institutions but is also shaped by the platform system.

This shift in legitimacy is clearly evident in the numerous digital literary works that are subsequently adapted across various media. This form of cross-media adaptation occurs without evaluation by literary critics or literary award institutions in Indonesia, but is based on its popularity on digital reading-writing platforms. Currently, many Indonesian publishers and production houses are even deliberately exploring various digital reading-writing platforms to find popular works with a high readership to publish in print or turn into web series and films. The reason is that these works already have an established readership and a clear market, so when published in print or adapted into feature films, their sales potential is higher than that of entirely new works—especially if the author is still a newcomer.

This demonstrates that digital reading-writing platforms have entered the core of the literary ecosystem with a wide-reaching network. Today, digital platforms, the publishing industry, and the global market are interconnected, transforming how literary works are produced, promoted, and distributed (Murray 2018). Wattpad, NovelToon, GoodNovel, and Fizzo are examples of digital reading-writing platforms that have established numerous collaborations with print literary publishers and production houses to cross-media adapt popular works on their platforms. The popularity of literature in the digital world has become a new form of legitimacy, determining a work's exposure across various media and its commercial value.

This has blurred the lines between literary value, digital popularity, and market performance within the digital literary ecosystem on digital reading-writing platforms. On digital reading-writing platforms, the value of a literary work can be gauged by the number of readers and its level of popularity. For this reason, the value of a contemporary literary work depends heavily on its ability to capture the attention of a platform's algorithms, thereby gaining significant exposure, increasing its readership, and encouraging readers to continue following the story's development.

This situation indicates that the culture of digital reading-writing platforms will continue to drive the production of works that are more market-friendly; it is, therefore, no surprise that numerous digital literary works share similar plots and conflicts. A work with a specific plot that succeeds and attracts millions of readers will encourage other writers to create similar works, in the hope of achieving the same success. Popular works are often built on specific narrative formulas that are continuously reproduced because they already have an established market (Cawelti 1976). This strategy may or may not succeed, but the abundance of works with uniform themes and conflicts suggests that it is quite effective. Whether consciously or not, the logic of the platform and market interests has influenced the trends in form, structure, and orientation of literary production based on digital reading-writing platforms.

## 7. Conclusion

Digital reading-writing platforms have significantly transformed the production, consumption, and distribution of literary works. Digital reading-writing platforms such as Wattpad, Fizzo, NovelToon, and GoodNovel have now become a key part of the literary writing and publishing ecosystem. These platforms have even established cross-media partnerships with print publishers and production companies so that the literary works on them can be adapted into formats such as print, web series, and film. Furthermore, these platforms have also brought changes to literary genre classification, the nature of reader interaction (by allowing readers to engage more closely with authors through work comment sections), monetization systems for generating revenue, and broader exposure for literary works. As a form of popular culture, digital platforms have a distinct ideology closely tied to capitalist logic, which tends to prioritize economic profit. Therefore, in terms of literary genre classification, these platforms differ from conventional literature; literary genres on digital reading-writing platforms are categorized very specifically, and this categorization is closely tied to the platform's algorithmic system, designed to help readers find works aligned with their interests and to enable the platform to target specific reader markets. Through this ease of use, the platform can also generate economic profit.

Furthermore, these platforms are also more open and not bound by strict ethical rules when presenting works that contain sensational, sensual, and erotic content presented explicitly. Such works can circulate freely on Wattpad, Fizzo, NovelToon, and GoodNovel, even though these platforms have implemented moderation systems. However, in reality, the large number of readers and high retention rates mean that these works can still circulate and be accessed freely. It cannot be denied that such works have served as a draw for these platforms, acting as a commercial strategy to attract a broader user base with diverse reading preferences—much like a one-stop shop offering a variety of reading materials that are not easily accessible in traditional Indonesian bookstores due to strict restrictions and regulations.

Literary works on digital reading-writing platforms are closely tied to high productivity demands (due to daily update targets for ongoing works), market tastes, and exposure governed by the platform's algorithmic system. The shifts in the world of Indonesian digital literature, particularly on digital reading-writing platforms, reveal a changing relationship among literature, capitalist logic, and technology. In this digital age, digital literary works cannot escape the shackles of commodification, which is used as a tool to generate economic profit. However, it is also important to remember that behind the commodification of digital literature—which prioritizes market-driven economic profit over the aesthetic and social value of a literary work—it does not mean that meaningful and high-quality literary works are absent from these platforms. The changes brought about by digital literature actually demonstrate that the complex interplay between aesthetic expression, market logic, platform governance, and the consumption of digital culture increasingly shapes literature. It is this dynamic that will keep literature alive and ensure it remains a subject of ongoing discussion; after all, digital literary works are a form of literary adaptation in today's increasingly digital world, and they also represent a form of literary resistance to ensure its survival and prevent its disappearance amidst an ever-diversifying entertainment industry.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declare that there is no conflict of interest related to this research.

### **AI Statement**

In preparing this article, the author used Grammarly for the purpose of improving writing and correcting grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The author assumes full responsibility for the content of the article and its scientific accuracy.

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