CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter gave information about the phenomenon that inspired the researcher to conduct this research. This chapter consisted of five parts; the first one was the background. The background explained the problem and why the researcher chose this topic and conducted this research. The second was the problem formulation; it contained the research question, which was later answered in chapter four of this thesis. The third part was the operational definition, which explained some terms found in this thesis that correlated with the topic and aimed to avoid term misinterpretation in this research. The fourth was the research aim that would be achieved when the problem formulation was answered. Then the last part was the study's significance, which described the research's practicality.

A. Background of the Study

Extensive reading is an activity that students feel comfortable with when they are reading. Fatimah (2019) states that "extensive reading is the activity of reading a large amount of text and enjoyable input to get information by using an interesting way". Extensive Reading is not just a learning strategy in class, but a transformative practice that improves language skills, fosters a love for reading, and adapts to modern digital learning environments. Moreover, this activity allows students to engage in reading beyond classroom settings and choose materials based on their interests.

In the current modern era, the advanced growth of technology has been supporting students in facilitating their reading activities. The students do not need to bring books if they want to read, because in this era, many technologies present books in electronic form. It is supported by Richard (2015), who views various software available to support students' reading skills. Lots of e-literature can be found on the web. One of the applications advantageous for students' reading activities is Wattpad, which provides many diverse stories with various genres, e.g., romance, thriller, comedy, etc. The users have an account to log into this platform, not only the web, but Wattpad also exists in

the application form. The users of this application was 80 million in the last update in 2020. As the platform increases daily, this application has been chosen as one of the technology tools to help students facilitate their reading activities. The students can choose the reading materials in various genres on Wattpad based on their interests. According to Permatasari et al. (2020), Wattpad is a potential platform for students to do Extensive Reading activities independently.

Based on a preliminary study through interviews at a state university in Tasikmalaya, some students, especially in the English Education Department, choose Wattpad as their platform to read some stories or a novel to pass their time. The students can do this activity continuously. Automatically, this activity becomes their habit, and it will be their experience in extensive reading. It is supported by Owusu-Acheaw (2014), who defined reading habits as a structured plan of study that takes the form of a continuous activity of students' academic comprehension.

There are previous relevant studies on the same topic. However, the studies have yet to explore students' perceptions of extensive reading experience through Wattpad. Some relevant studies have found that using Wattpad can improve students' reading skills; for example, Sari (2017) shows that Wattpad is a valuable social media platform that motivates students to read well. Along the same line, Rahayu (2019) found that high school students feel encouraged to read e-literature via Wattpad. In 2024, Andaresa et al. found that Wattpad can influence students' reading habits, and it includes improved students' language skills, expanded vocabulary, enhanced grammar comprehension, and reading proficiency.

This study needs to be carried out because there are still limited studies that reveal students' perceptions, especially perceptions of the higher students in the college, based on their experience in facilitating extensive reading activity outside of the class, towards using a big social platform like Wattpad. Students' perceptions of extensive reading experience needs are valued and need to be discovered for the future implementation of the activity on the platform to

encourage students' reading activity for pleasure, especially for the higher students. In the same line, this research is the continuation as well as an update of previous studies.

B. Formulation of the Problem

The question of the research is formulated as follows: What are the students' perceptions of using Wattpad as an application to facilitate their extensive reading experience?

C. Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding the terms set out in this study, the researcher provides the definitions related to this study as follows;

Students' perceptions	:	It is an understanding, view, and opinion of the university students after they use Wattpad for their extensive reading experience. It measured from three aspects (cognitive, affective, and conative)
Wattpad	:	Wattpad is an application developed for online reading, offering advantages that enhance the reading experience and promote reader-response theory among EFL college students. It can be used as a tool for doing an extensive reading activity.
Extensive Reading	:	It is a reading activity for students to find an enjoyable reading text for them based on their interests and then understand it after reading it.

D. Aims of the Research

The research aims to explore the students' perceptions of an extensive reading experience through Wattpad.

E. Significance of the Research

 1. **Theoretical Significance**

   This research advanced the theoretical knowledge of how students perceive using Wattpad as a reading tool for an extensive reading experience. The study contributed to the abundance of knowledge on digital platforms in education, especially language acquisition, by examining how students perceive Wattpad in their extensive reading experiences. The results could provide insight into how motivation, comprehension, and reading habits are impacted by engaging and captivating reading apps like Wattpad. Furthermore, by providing a theoretical framework for further research on technology-assisted reading practices, this study may aid in bridging the gap between conventional reading techniques and contemporary digital approaches.

 2. **Practical Significance**

   As a practical contribution, this research could serve as a reference for teachers looking to enrich their students' extensive reading practices. This research might encourage teachers to adopt digital tools that resonate with students' interests by showing the incorporation of Wattpad into class activities or free-reading sessions. Using the findings, teachers created stimulating reading assignments and enhanced classroom interactivity using selected materials from Wattpad. Furthermore, the study could suggest how educational uses of Wattpad could be enhanced and thus would be useful in devising learning programs and teaching methodologies.

 3. **Empirical Significance**

   This research aimed to demonstrate how Wattpad aided students in developing their reading skills. These findings, alongside educational theory, were invaluable for teachers and researchers investigating the integration of digital reading resources into the teaching-learning process. Additionally, the data might demonstrate relationships between the level of enhancement in reading proficiency, and vocabulary improvement tempered against the frequency of interaction with Wattpad as an instructional tool.