Impact of Wattpad Reading on Filipino Junior High School's Reading Habit and Social Values

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Abstract

The present study investigated the teenage learner’s perceptions of the impact of Wattpad reading on their lives. A total of 120 Filipino junior high school students participated in a qualitative survey of their perceptions of Wattpad reading influence on their reading habits and values. Data showed that Wattpad as a reading platform has positively influenced teenage users' reading habits and values. Undeniably, a good number of the participants have gained maturity, self-reflection, motivation, creative imagination, and a love of reading from consistent Wattpad engagement. Still, there are adverse effects for those who have developed an addiction to reading, such as (1) development of an irritable temperament, (2) reduced interest in socializing with loved ones and friends, (3) mismanagement of time, (4) disregard for health and (5) profanity. Despite the disadvantages, the academe could capitalize on students’ natural interest in Wattpad. This study recommends that Wattpad be used in the classroom in developing the reading habits, reflection and writing skills of students while strengthening their sense of maturity, open-mindedness and empathy; thus, be a valuable addition to the teachers' arsenal of teaching and learning tools especially in these challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: digital, social behavior, Wattpad reading, influence on reading habit and values, junior high school

Introduction

In today's digital world, online reading finds its way to the mobile phones of teenagers. Wattpad, a unique app for reading and sharing stories, launched in 2007, has the Philippines as the second-largest Wattpad community in the world with over 5 million registered members, second to the USA. According to Gardner as cited by Bold (2019), 45% of Wattpad users are aged between 13 and 18 and that 47% of the writers who have or will be published as a result of being on Wattpad wrote in Filipino or a Filipino-English hybrid (Taglish). Wattpad has 300
millions of collections of books that any visitor to this site can download for free. Millions of people worldwide download and upload narratives from fan fiction to classic daily. The unique feature of this app, creating a social community of readers who, apart from being able to comment on a shared story by another user, may have a chance to share their own created stories with other readers. Despite the criticisms received by this fan-fiction as being "not real literature," the transactional nature of this venue and the emotional engagement the users derive from the app has made Wattpad a "global sensation" in young adult literature. Despite its popularity and some observations about the negative impact of Wattpad on teenagers' behavior, very few studies empirically investigated Wattpad's effect on students' reading habits, nor its influence on students' learning or behavior. A few of these studies are enumerated here.

Muchtar (2015) examined the effects of multimedia technology on electrical engineering students' reading achievement and found that most of the students perceived the positive impacts of multimedia devices on reading. These maintain their reading speed and use their best skill in reading. It was concluded that multimedia offers tools for thinking more deeply, pursuing curiosity and exploring and expanding intelligence as learners build "mental models" with which students can visualize connections between ideas on any topic. Likewise, Bal (2018) did a phenomenological study of 12 middle school students employing survey and semi-structured interviews of participants' use of Wattpad and the relationship between in-school and out-of-school reading and writing experiences. Data showed that students had a negative perception of in-school reading and writing activities, feeling restricted and pressured during such activities. Furthermore, Wattpad was considered a venue where participants could express themselves comfortably. They shared positive experiences characterized by willingness, diversity, meaningfulness, and entertainment contrary to the feeling of being bored, obliged, and restricted and perceiving the activity as meaningless.

Contrary to the positive findings yielded by Muchtar (2015) and Bal (2018), Kaya, Kaya, Sagun and Koc (2019), exploring risk behavior tendencies of teenagers who use Wattpad, found that the suicide tendencies and nutrition habits of the students who know Wattpad application are significantly higher than those who do not see the application. Such result was attributed to data showing teenagers have long-term-nutritional problems and the depressive effects of the contents encountered on the internet made them vulnerable to risky situations.

As an online reading platform, Wattpad has changed the reading habit of teenagers. This change can impact the frequency of reading of teenagers, their preferred literary genres, and their attitudes, behaviors, and values towards their families, their friends, and their communities.

The study was conducted to provide qualitative evidence on the impact of Wattpad on teenagers reading habits and values. Generally, it was observed that teachers and parents perceive the students' use of Wattpad negatively- since the narratives downloaded by teenagers on Wattpad are also written by teenagers like them. Teachers do not use Wattpad as literary readings in classrooms. In many schools in the Philippines, reading is given as a requirement; therefore, students do not read for enjoyment's sake, according to Almario (cited by Florendo, 2014). Technology does not help in raising the interest of students in reading. Between gaming and reading, teens would prefer the former over the latter. In 2019, the Department of Education reported that Filipino students aged 15 -16 who took the assessment done in reading literacy by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scored 340 in Reading Literacy
which is below the average of participating countries all over the world (www.deped.gov.ph). This report shows a decline in the reading literacy of teenage students.

The present study responds to the dearth of research on the influence of online reading on Filipino junior high school students’ reading habits, learning, and values. The present study aimed to determine the impact of Wattpad reading on students' lives. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the preferred literary genres by junior high students in reading Wattpad?
2. What is the frequency of students' engagement in reading Wattpad?
3. What are the students' perceived positive and negative impacts of Wattpad on their reading habits and values?

Methods

Participants

The present study surveyed 120 Filipino junior high school students of Palawan State University-Laboratory High School. These students were selected because Wattpad is an online site that needs an internet connection. Most high school students come from middle-class families and generally have access to the internet connection at home or on their smartphones. In addition, the participants reported that they regularly use Wattpad.

Instruments and Data Sets

Researchers-made questionnaire. The present study is a qualitative descriptive inquiry that uses a researcher-made questionnaire. The research instrument was composed of two parts. Part 1 was a checklist consisting of questions on frequency and length of time in reading and preferred genres in Wattpad. The students had to check only one option for frequency and length of time. For preferred genres, they could check more than one option. Part 2 consisted of seven (7) open-ended questions about the positive and negative impacts of reading Wattpad. Blank spaces were provided in the questionnaire so students could write in a sentence or a paragraph their perceptions about the positive and negative impacts of Wattpad on their attitudes, behaviors, and values.

Procedure

After permission to conduct the study had been sought from the Dean of the College of Teacher Education and permission to collect data had been granted by the Principal's Office of the PSU Laboratory Junior High School, the researchers administered the surveys to classrooms. Because the researchers were also college professors with teaching loads, they conducted the surveys during their non-teaching periods. The surveys were administered from November to December 2018. In every survey, thirty minutes of the class time was requested from the teachers. The researchers introduced themselves, explained the purpose of the study and requested the students to identify themselves if they were Wattpad readers. The identified students were given the time to read the informed consent and decide whether to join the research. Twenty minutes were given to students to answer the survey in either English or Filipino.

Data Analyses
Frequency distribution, percentage, and rank were employed to get the results of part 1 on preferred genres and frequency and length of time in reading Wattpad and thematic analysis for the sentence or paragraph responses to the open-ended questions.

**Results and Discussion**

This section contains the results of the survey gathered from the 120 junior high school students of Palawan State University during the second semester of the school year 2018-2019. Pseudonyms were used in presenting the respondents’ scripts to protect their identities.

**Literary genres preferred by junior students in reading Wattpad.** Figure 1 shows that junior high school students preferred genres of mystery (69), fantasy (68), romance (67), and horror (62); and the least preferred are chick lit (12) and spiritual (10).

Figure 1: Preferred Literary Genres

| Literary Genres         | Number of Participants |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Mystery                 | 69                     |
| Fantasy                 | 68                     |
| Romance                 | 67                     |
| Horror                  | 62                     |
| Fan Fiction             | 56                     |
| Detective               | 55                     |
| Adventure               | 49                     |
| Vampire                 | 44                     |
| Short Story             | 43                     |
| Historical Fiction      | 33                     |
| Science Fiction         | 32                     |
| Humor                   | 30                     |
| Classic                 | 28                     |

Data shows that mystery, fantasy, romance, and horror are the most preferred genres. According to the respondents, these genres help them relax and forget their worries and problems in life. One student said, "Yes, these can remove teenage stress, especially when teachers loaded us with assignments." Another one said, "Yes because I was able to escape reality because of reading in a span of time. I escaped my cruel family life." Students experience problems, and they use Wattpad as a refuge to escape from the realities of life. Here, Wattpad is seen as a haven of safety for students with school and family problems. According to Day (2018), students read to relax and have fun. Harvey (2019) added that fiction served as a comfort for readers with family problems. However, too much reading for pleasure can harm the teenager if it becomes an addiction. That activity is harmful to the person with addiction and to everyone around them (Horvath, Misra, Epner, and Cooper, 2015). The literary genres preferred by the teenagers provide them with emotional satisfaction to forget their problems.
Reasons for preferring the literary genres. When asked why they preferred these genres, students responded that through these genres they can relax, have fun, gain knowledge and information, and escape from family and school-related problems. Shekainah said: It removes stress for many teenagers especially when we have so many school tasks to do.

Frequency of engagement in reading Wattpad. Table 1 reveals that 35 percent of the students did not answer the number of hours spent reading; followed by about 17 percent spend 120 minutes reading Wattpad on their phones daily; next, sixteen (16) students read for 60 minutes and another 16 students for 30-45 minutes; 14 (11.66%) students read for 180 minutes; and lastly 12 (10%) students read for more than 180 minutes daily. Students who did not answer stated that they read depending on their mood and on the battery life of their smartphones.

Table 1: Frequency of Engagement in Reading Wattpad Daily on Smartphones

| No. of Minutes                  | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE | RANK |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Depends on battery life of smartphone | 42        | 35.00      | 1    |
| 120                            | 20        | 16.66      | 2    |
| 60                             | 16        | 13.33      | 3.5  |
| 30-35                          | 16        | 13.33      | 3.5  |
| 180                            | 14        | 11.66      | 5    |
| >180                           | 12        | 10.00      | 6    |

Frequency of students' engagement in Wattpad reading. Out of 120 respondents, 55 percent reported reading Wattpad narratives for less than four hours daily on their smartphones. It can be inferred that they have a reading habit. Since they have an average of 16 waking hours and they spend six to eight hours in school, they still have time for their other activities. Through this time management, they would have a balanced life. However, even though the majority of the respondents could balance their time, still 10% of them had a hard time managing time by spending four to six hours a day or more reading Wattpad as stated by Kyla, "Yes, because sometimes you stay up late to read." In addition, some of the respondents were multi-tasking. While they were eating, they were reading Wattpad narratives. During break time in school, some students would read narratives on their smartphones instead of eating their meals. While some who really could not control themselves crave to finish the narratives that they could not put down their smartphones even during class hours.

To sum up, 55% of the respondents have made reading a hobby while 10% have been addicted to reading for they have no control over the number of hours they spend reading in a day. These findings show that Wattpad could help develop the reading habit of teenagers, particularly now that there is a decline in the leisure reading done by students. It is good to note that 55 percent of the respondents have made Wattpad reading as a hobby. However, for the 10 percent who have become addicted to reading Wattpad, the activity interferes already with their academic responsibilities. According to Gotschall (2018), people are pulled to read on and on the stories because fiction gives them joy. Reading for pleasure is fine as long as other activities are not sacrificed.

The positive impact of reading Wattpad on attitudes, behaviors, and values. The study found that maturity, self-reflection, motivation, open-mindedness and empathy, imagination, and love of reading are the positive impacts of Wattpad. The more a person enjoys...
reading a narrative in a trancelike state, the more impact the narrative has on the reader's attitude, behavior, and values (Trombetta, 2017). According to Galda (2001), reading develops the whole person where a reader experienced navigating the complex world where he lives through myriad experiences lived by the characters in the story. The reading of literature can rewire the brain of children thus affecting their views about their own lived world (Murphy, 2012).

**Developing a sense of maturity.** One of the positive impacts of Wattpad on teenage students is maturity. By reading stories with lessons and some with "sexually mature" content, teenage students understand that these stories are advanced for their age. Since most Wattpad readers are female, more than 44 percent of the respondents said that their expectations of the opposite sex get higher and higher, and that keeps them from having a relationship with the opposite sex. According to Bethany, she has learned so much beyond her age, but she has learned how to control her emotion. Similarly, Moira has enjoyed reading so much she never thinks of finding a boyfriend. Although some of the respondents get this "kilig" vibes, they know that they do not have the right to experience sexual intercourse just as described in the story. Rather than having an actual lover, they are satisfied just reading romantic narratives. This finding shows that extensive reading of romantic narratives influences the teenager's attitude toward the opposite sex. They can experience having romantic affair with the opposite sex without actually experiencing it. According to Harris (2016), fiction is used as a substitute for what people cannot find in life. People prefer imagined reality than actual existence. Dr. Oatley and Dr. Mar, cognitive psychologists, tested the brains of fiction readers and discovered that their test subjects created intense graphic mental simulations of the sights, sounds, movements, and tastes as if they were living the events they were reading about (Seiter, 2019). This finding is in contrast with the study of Barzo (2018) that teens with addiction to Wattpad lose their values of self-control, respect, and became more aggressive and adventurous. In terms of maturity and based on the responds of the teenagers, it can be inferred that Wattpad helps the teens to raise their standards with regard to the opposite sex. The contrasting findings show us that Wattpad reading could impact teen readers both ways; while narratives could positively affect the most disciplined and mature readers, the same could negatively affect readers who seek "escape" from reality and who when misguided, may develop addiction to reading narratives with violent, suicidal or rebellious characters.

**Encourages self-reflection.** Thirty one percent of the participants reported that through reading Wattpad, they realized something about their studies, relationship with their parents, relationship with the society or their roles in life. Kathy stated, "I understand better my emotions." Dina reported that she sees what could possibly happen if she does not take her studies seriously. Shaira, another student, also maintained, "I learned so much about family life (from reading Wattpad) and how difficult problems can be. According to them, the Wattpad narratives help them to reflect about who they are, how to control their emotions, how to relate with their parents particularly when they are being scolded, the possible consequences for not taking their studies seriously, and their roles as children, students, and citizens of the country. From these statements, it can be derived that Wattpad develops in teens the values of self-reflection. According to McGinley and Kamberelis (cited in Galda, 2001), third- and fourth grade readers use the books they read to better understand their own lived worlds. Hsu (2012) established that reading fiction creates new perspectives and helps people to understand themselves and empathize with others.

**Strengthens motivation to achieve one's goal.** About 62 percent of the respondents established that reading Wattpad motivates and encourages them to love reading and improve
themselves. Kyla said that reading (Wattpad) inspires her to do her best for the better. Rowena agrees that reading has inspired her to keep reading while Kathy reported that she learned that one should work hard for one's dream. Motivation is important because if the students are interested to improve themselves, they will strive to do whatever things that need to be done.

**Develops open-mindedness and empathy.** About 20 percent of the participants responded that Wattpad helps them broaden their understanding of the people around them. One student said that she has become broadminded, and through this broad-mindedness, she becomes aware of her attitude about life. She learns not to give hasty judgment. Another student stated that her understanding of her parents whenever she is reprimanded deepens and this affects her attitude towards her relationship with them. If in the past she sulks and gets angry with her parents, now she understands why her parents scold her. Another young woman named Trisha said that Wattpad had benefited her because she has learned what advice to give her younger peers. These students learned the realities of life, that life is complex and there are strategies they could use to cope with these realities as given by one student who now gives advice to other teenagers like her. This finding shows that extensive Wattpad reading reshapes teens’ attitudes toward life, their parents, and their peers. Open-mindedness and empathy, according to Martin (2015), are developed by students engaged in pleasure reading. According to him, the fictional characters in the novel teach us to better understand our own struggles and emotional upheaval and those struggles and emotional mood swings of people around us. In the two studies published in 2006 and 2009 by Dr. Oatley and Dr. Mar, they found that pleasure readers are better able to understand people, empathize with them and see the world from their perspectives (Kidd & Castano, 2013). Hence, Wattpad helps develop the teens' values of open-mindedness and empathy.

**Develops creative imagination.** Sixty-five percent of the respondents reported that reading Wattpad widens their imagination. According to one student, "Yes, because the books are portals to other worlds we couldn't experience." They said that they become more imaginative because of the various genres they read like fantasy, adventure, science fiction, historical romance, and mystery. They feel that they live in another world, and they become more imaginative with the play of words as they explore their ideas. Pinky writes (through Wattpad), I learned how authors write and this enhances my imagination. This finding shows that extensive reading on Wattpad develops the values of imagination of teens. Through Wattpad, they can imagine themselves as the characters in the narratives, thinking and doing what those characters do and facing and solving dilemmas of the characters. If they read three books a week, they would have three different characters to imagine with. This finding is similar to Garro's (2014) in her research, where she found that reading stimulates play which in turn stimulates the imagination. Imagination is important in cognitive development as cited by Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007). In their study, they discovered that while students are reading, they are using their imaginations. Hence, Wattpad can help teens to develop their values of imagination which is important in cognitive development.

**Cultivates genuine love of reading.** Reading Wattpad inculcates a love of reading, especially if the person likes the genre that he or she reads as shown in the scripts of students. Out of 120 participants, almost 94 percent maintained that reading Wattpad is fun. With the advent of technology, most teenagers do not want to read. They would rather watch than read. However, since this Wattpad application enables students to read or write and at the same time socialize with other people all over the world through stories, teenagers are encouraged to read, and even further, to write. Moreover, if a student follows an author, they want to be kept updated with the new story uploaded by their favorite author. According to Rina, Wattpad gives
one a chance to enjoy agent and not just play games or do face-booking. Cielo says that she feels happy when she reads stories. Likewise, Wanda reported that she reads as a pastime. It can be derived that reading Wattpad is a voluntary activity on the part of the readers. They choose their own material, their own time, and their own activity. They said that if they have nothing to do, they read rather than play games or chat on Facebook. They love to read so much that sometimes they stay up late at night; they do not do their house chores, and they cannot give time for other activities because reading consumes a lot of their free time. Reading is so enjoyable that once they curl on their favorite sofa or lie on their bed, they no longer put down their smartphones. This finding shows that Wattpad can change the attitude of teenagers about reading that they would prefer reading to digital gaming or social media. According to Chua (cited in Fairbrother, 2019), students who always or sometimes read books for leisure agreed that reading was pleasurable and enjoyable. Hence, the value of love of reading is fostered by Wattpad. Data have shown that maturity, self-reflection, motivation, open-mindedness and empathy, imagination, and love of reading are the positive impacts of Wattpad. The more a person enjoys reading a narrative in a trancelike state, the more impact the narrative has on the reader's attitude, behavior, and values (Van Schooten & De Glopper, 2006). According to Galda (2001), reading develops the whole person where a reader experienced navigating the complex world where he lives through a myriad of experiences lived by the characters in the story. The reading of literature can rewire the brain of children thus affecting their views about their own lived world (Murphy Paul, 2012).

**The negative impact of reading Wattpad on students' attitude, behavior, and values.** Despite the positive impact Wattpad has on its teen readers, there is also a negative impact, as identified in the data from the survey. Participants admitted, at varying degrees, the effect of Wattpad reading and excessive engagement on users' attitudes, behavior, and values such as irritation, time mismanagement, reduced attention to health, and profanity.

**Developing an irritable temperament.** About 18 percent of the respondents reported that they become annoyed easily when disrupted while reading. When students are so engaged in reading and then their parents call them to do something or anything that disrupts their readings, they are irritated. Their mood swings from being happy and relaxed to annoyance. They could not let others bother them for they are reliving the lives of characters in the narratives. Daniella mentioned, "I get irritated when I am asked to do house chores." Denise admitted that sometimes she got too engrossed in reading that she often did not want to leave the room and ignored her chores. Other students said that when parents called them, they ignored the calls and continued reading. This would result in their being reprimanded. Another student stated that her mother got angry with her because she kept on pouting after being disturbed while reading. This finding shows that too much reading on Wattpad may influence the attitude and behavior of students. They forgot their household responsibilities and they lose the value of self-control and obedience toward their parents. This attitude of being irritated is a sign of reading addiction as cited by Burnes (2015) when he stated that "Little things make you mad." Hence, the behavior of being irritated is related to their emotional control. Excessive reading of Wattpad could make the students lose their sense of responsibility and the values of obedience to their parents.

**Reduce socialization with family members and friends.** About 53 percent of the participants agreed that reading Wattpad can harm the bonding time among family members and even friends. They admitted that their excessive engagement with Wattpad has often taken their attention from friends and loved ones. According to Candy and Eliah, excessive Wattpad reading may weaken the bonding time with others, such as family and friends.
**Mismanagement of time.** About 40 percent of the participants maintained that time mismanagement is one of the negative effects of too much reading. When students are so engrossed in reading, they forget the passage of time, and they tend to neglect their other tasks. This attitude of having less consideration for the wise use of time is a negative impact of Wattpad on junior high school students. This is shown by one of the respondents who said, "I have preferred to just read (Wattpad) instead of reviewing for my lessons." Similarly, Czar admitted not being able to help in the house anymore while Ann reported mismanaging her time. This finding shows that teenagers with reading addiction cannot manage their time. The lack of time management impacts the teen's view of self because she only thinks of her happiness in one aspect of her life and does not consider other things that she needs to do. According to Fussman (2015), lack of time management is a sign of reading addiction. The reader does not have control over his use of the time that he spends more than 24 hours reading narratives or that he disregards other tasks he has to do for reading. A reading addict has this craving to finish the book in one sitting as if there is no tomorrow. Because of this, time management is not given priority; instead, the pleasure of reading is given more focus. Hence, Wattpad can make the teens lose their values of self-control in terms of time management.

**Disregard for health.** Thirty-three percent of the participants responded that lack of health concern is one of the negative effects of too much reading of Wattpad. When addiction to reading Wattpad narratives occurs, students have this tendency to abuse their physical health. According to Lisa, "I often stay up so late and miss my meals from time to time." Other respondents have similar experiences of missing meals and missing sleep. Because of excessive reading, they abuse the use of their eyes which results in astigmatism. Moreover, they also tend to forego eating just to read on Wattpad. This excessive reading leads to their lack of concern for their physical health. Some respondents admitted experiencing headaches, ulcers, and wearing graded eyeglasses at a young age. According to Keren Dali (2014), avid readers suffer from eye strain, poor diets, stomachache, and physical tiredness.

**Profanity.** About fifteen percent of the participants were influenced by the vulgar words they read on Wattpad. Some Wattpad narratives, particularly teenage fiction, contain vulgar words. When teens repeatedly see those vulgar words in the narratives they read, they tend to copy and use those bad words. Many girls admitted to learning foul words because some stories depict characters. Teenagers know those words are bad, but sometimes they cannot prevent themselves from uttering those bad words, especially when their emotions are negatively enhanced. Sometimes they become aggressive and say words that are not acceptable to others such as their classmates, friends, siblings, and even teachers and parents. Researches from Brigham Young University in Utah, USA, reported that reading aggression in literature could influence subsequent aggressive behavior (Sosa, et al.1993). Jacobs (2011) stated that exposure to such aggressive literature has a psychological impact on readers, affecting the way they respond to provocations.

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

The study showed that Wattpad as a reading platform has positively influenced teenage users' reading habits and values. Undeniably, a good number of the participants have gained maturity, self-reflection, motivation, creative imagination and a love of reading from consistent Wattpad engagement. Still, there are adverse effects for those who have developed an addiction to reading, such as (1) development of an irritable temperament, (2) reduced interest in socializing
with loved ones and friends, (3) mismanagement of time, (4) disregard for health and (5) profanity.

Despite the disadvantages identified by the participants, the academe could capitalize on students' natural interest in Wattpad. Rather than prescribing reading materials in school which students find boring and whose themes are distant from the learners' "reality", language teachers might explore how Wattpad could be useful in the classroom setting. The presence of a teacher is very important in the choice of Wattpad narratives whose plot are inspiring and whose characters are not the kind that demonstrates rebellious, violent, or suicidal personalities. A good number of Wattpad narratives are the product of genuine creativity of authors and may be useful materials in enhancing the reading, reflections, and writing skills in the classroom and in inculcating the values of empathy, open-mindedness, and maturity.

The insights above find support in Coban (2018), in his study of Turkish high school learners' reading preference and their interest in Wattpad. Coban found that love for reading and that "books are relaxing" are the two most important contributions to Turkish high school's desire to read. The participants in this study, just like the Filipino participants in the present study, have taken a similar preference for Wattpad. Another important finding is that most of the books required in school were not the same books that students find interesting. Coban stressed the importance that curriculum and school practices emphasize efferent reading over aesthetic or critical reading. Further, Coban emphasized the need to compare students' interest in reading with the texts that schools offer to develop a more supportive curriculum for the promotion of reading.

Admittedly, our learners cannot be sheltered from certain types of genres all their life. Since one-third of their waking-up period is spent in school, teachers have an important role to play in choosing realistic and relevant reading materials which interest the audience and strengthen their morale and moral as well. Building a good foundation for a reading generation is one significant goal in building a nation. Teaching our students to exercise self-discipline and "good" judgment in reading will enable them to make wise options and take responsibility for their actions when they grow older. Once the learners have imbibed the right values, any kind of reading material can be interpreted with maturity and open-mindedness. Apart from developing a sincere enthusiasm for reading, learners have an infinite chance of acquiring the English language effectively through reading. Cho and Krashen (2015) reported a case study of a Korean English learner, examining the effects of long-term reading habits on second language acquisition. It was found that the learner has tremendously improved her English through developing a consistent engagement in pleasurable and compelling reading materials. Although watching movies and conferences with native English speakers also help, it is the reading of materials of which the subject derives enjoyment that substantial progress in a second language may take place, as proven in the experience of the Korean adult learner.

Totanes and Amarles (2020) proposed an instructional strategy on critical literacy in reading literary texts for grade 12 students. Findings from observations and series of validation created a newly-framed teaching strategy referred to as "Critical Scaffolding Method", divided into four phases namely, (Tapping the Learners' End), (2) Overseeing Students’ Thinking, (3) Thinking about Thinking, and (4) Supplying Critical Task. Language teachers may try this strategy in their own classrooms.

The current generation of learners is facing one of the most challenging times in history, where everyone has to battle the risks of Covid-19 and attempt to acquire quality education at
the same time. Where most Filipino high school learners in government schools today are expected to take more responsibility for their learning, there is no denying that those who have developed a very good foundation in reading are in a better position to learn with little or no supervision from either teacher or their parents.

We have learned from history that an exceptional reading skill has made a difference in the lives of some of the most prominent and most influential leaders of our time. When our youth are bombarded by plenty of information in the social media and where intents to take advantage of other people's lack of knowledge and inability to make wise judgments from what they see, what they hear and what they read, we in the academe could just wish, that we have readily equipped our young minds, long before, the ability to resist any undue influence of social media and armed with the wisdom from reading, our learners are able to confidently stand for their beliefs. This COVID-19 pandemic is teaching us about things that matter most.

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**Appendix A: Questionnaire**

**Reading Wattpad: Impact on the Social Behavior of Teens**
1. What are the different Wattpad genres that you read? (You may check more than one.)
   - ____ classic
   - ____ chicklit
   - ____ fan fiction
   - ____ fantasy
   - ____ horror
   - ____ mystery
   - ____ humor
   - ____ adventure
   - ____ science fiction
   - ____ others, please specify________

2. Why do you like to read this Wattpad genre?
   - Bakit mo napili ang ganitong uri ng Wattpad na kwento?

3. How many hours do you spend in reading a Wattpad story daily?
   - ____30-45 minutes
   - ____1 hour
   - ____2 hours
   - ____3 hours
   - ____ Others, please specify________
4. What are the positive effects of Wattpad to you as an offspring of your parents?
5. What are the positive effects of Wattpad to you as a teenager?
6. What are the positive effects of Wattpad to you as a student?
7. What are the negative effects of Wattpad to you as an offspring of your parents?
8. What are the negative effects of Wattpad to you as a teenager?
9. What are the negative effects of Wattpad to you as a student?

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Appendix A

Questionnaire
Reading Wattpad: Impact on the Social Behavior of Teens

1. What are the different Wattpad genres that you read? (You may check more than one.)
   _____ classic
   _____ chicklit
   _____ fan fiction
   _____ fantasy
   _____ horror
   _____ mystery
   _____ humor
   _____ adventure
   _____ science fiction
   _____ fan fiction
   _____ short story
   _____ romance
   _____ paranormal
   _____ historical fiction
   _____ detective
   _____ vampire
   _____ werewolf
   _____ others, please specify________

2. Why do you like to read this Wattpad genre?
   Bakit mo napili ang ganitong uri ng Wattpad na kwento?

3. How many hours do you spend in reading a Wattpad story daily?
   _____ 30-45 minutes
   _____ 1 hour
   _____ 2 hours
   _____ 3 hours
   _____ Others, please specify________

4. What are the positive effects of Wattpad to you as an offspring of your parents?
5. What are the positive effects of Wattpad to you as a teenager?
6. What are the positive effects of Wattpad to you as a student?
7. What are the negative effects of Wattpad to you as an offspring of your parents?
8. What are the negative effects of Wattpad to you as a teenager?
9. What are the negative effects of Wattpad to you as a student?