

**THE ACT OF READING, ROLES AND MOTIVATION OF
PARTICIPANTS OF KUALA LUMPUR BOOK APPRECIATION
CLUB**

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**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
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PARTICIPANTS OF KUALA LUMPUR BOOK
APPRECIATION CLUB**

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THE ACT OF READING, ROLES AND MOTIVATION OF PARTICIPANTS OF KUALA LUMPUR BOOK APPRECIATION CLUB

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to look at the effect of book club discussion towards the act of reading, its role in community practice as well as the participants' motivation. Knowledge power is essential and crucial in developing the nation to harness the power of information and communication technology. One of the prominent ways to do this is to cultivate and create a reading culture in the society. Along the line of globalization and changes in the dimension in which people connect with each other, book club has also evolved with the emergence of the Internet and social media. From past studies, joining a book club can enhance people to read more and inculcate the love of reading in general. Book club in its very essence is community-based. It needs participants of all joiners to make it work. Now that book clubs have also evolved online, it is also worth researching the roles and effect of these book clubs online to its members in its discussion and in community practice. Apart from that, online book clubs that are not connected to education strain will produce readers that read simply for the joy of reading and pleasure. This feature makes online book clubs, which are rapidly developing, worth studying further. Thus, this study aims to analyse the effect of discussion to the act of reading of its participants, role of a book club in community practice, and reading motivation of participants in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC). For this study, a qualitative approach was adopted, and focus group interviews were adopted at one of these online book clubs in Malaysia. The study showed that most participants revealed that they have used the book club and participated in the activities as means of connecting to other people in finding like-minded people while engaging in moral discussions. The voluntary involvement in KLBAC has helped to develop a higher intrinsic motivation to read while introducing a bigger variety of reading materials. This later has expanded the participants'

discussion horizons, especially in critical thinking discussions while at the same time emphasizing the importance of moderators in such activity. The discussion on the backstory of the reading materials, help in improving the book storyline, and cultivating an active reading process are other results that affect the participants' act of reading. The study hopes to shed light on act of reading of the participants, social place of a book group in society, and their motivation.

Keywords: Reading Habit, Act of Reading, Reading Motivation, Book Club Roles, Online Book Club.

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TINDAKAN MEMBACA, PERANAN DAN MOTIVASI AHLI KELAB BUKU KUALA LUMPUR BOOK APPRECIATION CLUB

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini cuba melihat pengaruh diskusi kelab buku terhadap tindakan membaca, peranannya dalam amalan masyarakat serta motivasi ahli kelab buku. Kuasa pengetahuan adalah penting dan signifikan dalam membangunkan negara untuk memanfaatkan kuasa teknologi maklumat dan komunikasi. Salah satu cara yang menonjol untuk melakukan ini adalah dengan memupuk dan mewujudkan budaya membaca dalam masyarakat. Sejalan dengan era globalisasi dan perubahan dalam dimensi di mana orang ramai berhubung antara satu sama lain, kelab buku juga telah berkembang dengan kemunculan Internet dan media sosial. Berdasarkan kajian-kajian sebelum ini, menyertai kelab buku boleh menggalakkan lebih ramai orang untuk membaca dengan lebih banyak dan menyemai minat untuk membaca. Kelab buku pada dasarnya adalah berasaskan komuniti. Ia memerlukan penglibatan daripada semua peserta untuk menjadikannya berfungsi dengan baik. Memandangkan kelab buku juga telah berkembang dalam talian, ia adalah penting untuk peranan dan pengaruh kelab buku atas talian terhadap ahlinya dalam aktiviti perbincangan dan dalam amalan komuniti diselidik. Selain itu, kelab buku atas talian yang tidak berkaitan dengan usaha pendidikan akan melahirkan pembaca yang memilih untuk membaca demi keseronokan dan kesenangan membaca. Ciri inilah yang menjadikan kelab buku atas talian, yang sedang berkembang pesat, patut dikaji lebih lanjut. Justeru itu, kajian ini adalah bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh diskusi dalam tindakan membaca, peranan kelab buku dalam amalan masyarakat serta motivasi membaca oleh peserta KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC). Untuk kajian ini, pendekatan kualitatif telah diguna pakai, dan temu bual kumpulan fokus telah dibuat pada peserta salah satu kelab buku dalam talian di Malaysia. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa kebanyakan peserta mendedahkan bahawa mereka telah

menggunakan kelab buku dan mengambil bahagian dalam aktiviti-aktiviti sebagai cara untuk berhubung mencari individu-individu yang berfikiran sama sambil melibatkan diri dalam perbincangan moral. Penglibatan sukarela dalam KLBAC telah membantu membangunkan motivasi intrinsik yang lebih tinggi untuk membaca sambil memperkenalkan pelbagai jenis-jenis bahan bacaan. Ini kemudiannya telah meluaskan ufuk perbincangan peserta, terutamanya dalam perbincangan pemikiran kritis dan pada masa yang sama menekankan kepentingan moderator dalam aktiviti tersebut. Perbincangan mengenai latar belakang bahan bacaan, membantu dalam menambah baik jalan cerita buku, dan memupuk proses membaca yang aktif adalah hasil lain yang mempengaruhi tindakan peserta-peserta dalam aktiviti membaca. Kajian ini diharap dapat memberi informasi tentang tindakan membaca ahli dalam kelab buku, peranan sosial kelab buku dalam masyarakat serta motivasi ahli kelab buku.

Kata Kunci: Tabiat Membaca, Tindakan Membaca, Motivasi Membaca, Peranan Kelab Buku, Kelab Buku dalam Talian.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the Study	1
1.3 Statement of Problem	6
1.4 Research Objectives	9
1.5 Research Questions	10
1.6 Significance of Study	10
1.7 Limitations of Study	12
1.8 Conclusion	13
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Related Literature	14
2.2.1 Emergence and Evolution of Book Club	14
2.2.2 Book Club in Malaysian Context	19
2.2.3 Reading Theories and Processes in Book Club	22
2.2.4 Role of Book Clubs in Community Practice	26
2.2.5 Reading Motivation and Book Club	28
2.2.6 Past Studies on Book Club	33

2.3	Theoretical Framework	38
2.4	Conclusion	41
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		42
3.1	Introduction	42
3.2	Research Design	42
3.3	Population Sample	44
	3.3.1 Kuala Lumpur Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC)	46
3.4	Instrument	48
3.5	Reliability and Validity	53
3.6	Data Collection and Data Analysis	55
3.7	Conclusion	57
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS		58
4.1	Introduction	58
4.2	Description of Participants	59
4.3	Findings Based on Research Questions	60
	4.3.1 Role of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC)	
	In Community Practice	60
	4.3.1.1 Book Club as a Means of Connecting to the Society	60
	4.3.1.2 Finding Other People with Same Interest	65
	4.3.1.3 Passion in Reading	68
	4.3.1.4 Moral Discussion in Book Club	69
	4.3.2 Act of Reading of Participants in KL Book Appreciation Club	
	(KLBAC)	71
	4.3.2.1 Expand Horizon by Discussion	72
	4.3.2.2 Critical Thinking in Discussion	75
	4.3.2.3 Significance of Moderator	78
	4.3.2.4 Relevance of Narrative Background	83
	4.3.2.5 Improving Book Storyline	85
	4.3.2.6 Relating Oneself to Book Content by Comparative Analysis	87

4.3.3	Reading Motivation in Members of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC)	89
4.3.3.1	Motivation in Reading Together	89
4.3.3.2	Exposed to Bigger Variety of Reading Materials	94
4.4	Conclusion	96
 CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION		97
5.1	Introduction	97
5.2	Discussions	98
	Research Objectives and Related Findings and Discussion	98
5.3	Limitations of Study	108
5.4	Implications of Study	109
5.5	Recommendations for Future Research	111
 REFERENCES		116
 APPENDICES		124

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Title	Page
Figure 2.1	Theoretical Framework	39
Figure 3.1	Data Collection Flow	56

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

KLBC	KL Book Appreciation Club
IQRA	Integrated Quality Reading Approach
PLC Kit	Professional Learning Community Kit
SoLLaT@USM	School of Languages, Literacies, and Translation
KLBC	KL Book Exchange Club

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This is a study is to find out on how book discussion affects the act of reading to its participants in an online book club and role of book club in community practice. This study also aims to understand further participants' reading motivation in book clubs. Book club has long been associated with the community, despite having numerous names. The study focuses on members of one of the largest online book club communities in Malaysia, which is called The KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC). To date, the club has close to 9000+ followers online. To answer the research question, this qualitative research design uses focus group interviews for the research methodology. For the study, 12 members of the book club were selected as the primary sample of the study in 2 focus group interviews. This chapter includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions. Apart from that, this chapter will also include the significance as well as limitations of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Malaysia, like any other developing country, aspires to be one of the active global players in the world in the fields of economics, politics, and socio-cultural. To achieve this, not only the country has to perform better in industry, but, most importantly, the society needs to uplift themselves to be their best self to achieve this goal. Knowledge power is

essential and crucial in developing the nation to harness the power of information and communication technology (Pandian, 2011). One of the prominent ways to do this is to cultivate and create a reading culture in society (Ambigapathy Pandian & Kell, 2007).

According to research by Kirsch & Guthrie (1984), reading contributes significantly to job success, career development and the ability to respond to change. The importance of reading has resulted in so much research being done to understand the nature of reading (Kirsch & Guthrie, 1984). With reading comes the emergence of a book club.

Book clubs have long existed in the community, whether it is specifically called book clubs or not; as long as the society meets up to discuss their hobby or leisure activity that involves a book, it has somewhat carried the characteristics of a book club. According to Foster (2006), book club is a gathering of students in small groups across time to talk about books they have read. This can also be applied to adults alike. Hence, a book club can be said to be a gathering of people to discuss books that they have read. These groups of people have existed for a long time. Studies such as Taylor (2008) have shown that groups of people have met to talk about books ever since reading materials existed.

Hence, book club nowadays ranges from official to unofficial. From official clubs made by the government to school clubs formed by teachers to book clubs formed by people with the same interest. In general, reading for Malaysians has not flourished so much as we would have wanted. In a survey by the Malaysian National Library (2006) with a sample 60,441 respondents, it was found that the literacy rate has slightly decreased to 92 percent from 93 percent in 1996 (Nor Shahriza Abdul Karim & Amelia Hasan, 2007). On average, Malaysians read 2 books per annum. In an article in 2022 (Jing, 2022), the number has increased to 15 to 20 books per annum. However, with a population of 31.7 million, the

average number of books per annum that should be read by Malaysian is 30 books per year. This shows that reading culture is not widespread in the country. Hence, book club growth is also not as rapid as in other developing countries. This little growth in reading can be attributed to the reading attitude of Malaysians. Due to this, plenty of research have been done on reading attitude (Fatma et al., 2014), (Balai & Muniandy, 2013), (Affidah Morni & Siti Huzaimah Sahari, 2013), (Tiew Wai Sin, 2010), (Nor Shahriza & Amelia, 2007) and (Na'imah, Amran dan Rosy, 2000) as cited from (Mohd Kasim, Mohd Khir, & Zaharim, 2019). According to Balai and Muniandy (2013), reading attitude is the feeling felt by an individual towards reading. It can also lead to acceptance or rejection of reading activity to a person (McKenna, Kear & Ellsworth, 1995). As per the same researcher, this attitude may also stem from past experiences related to reading and social system together with the environment surrounding a person.

While book clubs have flourished and are acknowledged in other countries, such as the United States of America, as seen in (Foster, 2016) in her study of high school book club and (Scharber, 2009) in her study for an online book club, as well as Taylor (2007) in her study for adult book club United Kingdom, to name a few, book club in Malaysia is not widespread. One of the noted and recorded book club activity in Malaysia would be from the Integrated Quality Reading Approach (IQRA) which was launched in 2009 to connect the university with communities in reading activities by offering book clubs, film series, and school-based reading programs at schools, workplaces, and other community centres (Ambigapathy Pandian et al., 2009). Apart from that, Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia has launched '*Kelab Membaca Sinar Pintar*' in 2008 in accordance with the official opening ceremony of 'Reading Festival 2008' (Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, 2016). This book club opens its door to all Malaysians and has a multitude of social activities such as forums,

book discussions, storytelling time, as well as book subscriptions. Its main target is mainly parents; however, children are all welcome too. As we know, book clubs are also proven to be an effective tool in teaching. One of a teacher community platform implementing book club was the '*Komuniti Pembelajaran Profesional*' (Iksan, Ariffin & Imam, 2021). In this platform, teachers get together to upgrade the teaching and learning process. Ministry of Education prepared a Professional Learning Community Kit or also known as PLC Kit to this platform with various strategies to help with teaching and learning. One of the strategies implemented in this platform is the creation of a book club for teachers for them to get together and collaborate in data collection in their own reading. These are some of the examples of official book clubs documented. However, as per the nature of book clubs, there will be many other book clubs that go unrecorded as they are informal book clubs.

Along the lines of globalization and changes in the dimension in which people connect with each other, book clubs have also evolved with the emergence of the Internet and social media. The Internet is undoubtedly one of mankind's most innovative creations. It has successfully opened doors to an endless stream of information to the whole world. Not only that, but the Internet is also the key to connecting millions of users from almost every part of the world. With the emergence of the internet, software such as Wattpad was created that allows anyone to post and publish stories via the net. Readers and writers alike connect with each other from the comment section. This allows readers to not just read but to critically view and comment and provide instant feedback to writers (Rebora & Pianzola, 2018). With the touch of one finger, the reader could connect with another reader via an online book club. These can be done via specific channels, an online website, or a book club managed in social media. Due to the large amount of people on social media,

individual book club and smaller scale book club has also emerged from this platform. According to Wok, Aidid & Misman (2012), social media on the Internet is like service where people create network and social relationship among people. It allows any information sharing activity, which includes sharing interests. A study done by Pew (2013) found that a whopping 81 percent of teens use social network and 95 percent of them are on the internet (Zickuhr, Rainie, ft Purcell, 2013). This emergence of Internet has allowed people to participate and collaborate with each other. This provided a medium for connected learning environment.

In the digital age, traditional book clubs are evolving to embrace technology, revolutionizing the way readers connect, engage, and share their love for literature. One exemplary illustration of this evolution is the KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC), a vibrant online community that has seamlessly integrated digital platforms to transform the conventional book club experience. KLBAC stands as a good example of how bookclubs has transcend from fully offline platform to integrating both offline and online medium in doing normal bookclub activities. It demonstrates how technology has redefined the boundaries of literary discourse and community engagement. KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) leverages digital communication tools to connect book enthusiasts from diverse corners of the globe.

This new digital era has also highlighted to us of the importance of promoting reading habits in a new setting (Ambigapathy Pandian & Shanthi Balraj, 2005). One of the clear examples of how the media has helped in promoting with reading and book club would be the example of the success of Oprah's Book Club. The book club was operated and mediated in Television channel, and no longer in traditional face to face format (Scharber, 2009). Even publishers are gaining from the rise of New Media and technological

advancement online. In a study by Fadli Abdullah (2018), it was found that publishing houses also uses the technology advancement in analysing and planning book marketing. Apart from that, publishers start to publish e-books in response to the technology. Internet and social media are used as a medium to promote their products and as a delivery platform direct to consumer (Mustafa. E. S & Abdullah, F, 2018). Book club hence is not excluded from this. People use social media to connect with other people for the love of books and the discussion.

However, despite the evolution of book club, it is the essence of the discussion conducted in book clubs, which are most essential to book club member's growth in their reading. Reading together in book club affects one's reading skill in terms of the critical review of the material, and from the sharing session, transference of book input to one's personal life may occur. Book club allows for active reading for the community. No matter the discussion has taken place online or offline, the quality of discourse develops one reading skills. The sharing session cultivates love and nurture people to read.

1.3 Statement of Problem

We have long been plagued by the low number of readers in Malaysia. Although the literacy rate is more than 75%, reading habit has not developed as it should. In a survey by National Literacy Survey (2005) done by the National Library as cited in (Inderjit, 2014), Malaysians read an average of two books per year. In more recent news (Jing, 2022), our average number of books read has increased to 15 to 20 books per annum, However, this number is still not in line with the expected average number of

books read, which is 30 per books in accordance with our population rate of 31.7 million. There are many factors of why Malaysians do not read as much. One of the main factors is the poor reading culture. Poor reading culture can further be broken down to reading as a non-preferred activity and poor enabling environment for reading practices.

Reading in Malaysia is not preferred amongst other activity as it is associated with boredom, bad past reading experience, negative thoughts, and attitude and difficult (Pandian, 2011). From the survey done in the same study, 64 percent of the respondents indicated that they were more interested in other activities, 15 percent indicated that they did not have time, and 13 percent were not interested in reading. Aside from that, according to Inderjit (2014), for children, they only prefer to read in preparation for their examinations rather than read for entertainment and acquiring knowledge. According to Milad (2019), from *The International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, it was found that mainstream readers are students using books for examinations, instead of reading for knowledge and pleasure. There is simply too much emphasis put on excelling examinations and this obsession banishes reading from view (Doraisamy, *The New Straits Times*, 15 September 1983). Furthermore, previous study done by Agnes (1998) shows that Malaysians are minimally aware of the importance of reading and do not partake much on reading related activities. This may be largely due to other media such as the Internet providing infotainment and interactivity in a much more active way (Ambigapathy Pandian, 2004b). This, unfortunately, has nurtured a perception that reading is tedious and monotonous activity (Pandian, 2011).

Poor enabling environment for reading practices is another reason that contributes to the poor reading habits in Malaysia. The lack of focus, direction and support from immediate friends and family kills the motivation to developing a reading culture (Pandian, 2011). Parents also discourage on reading for pleasure as the time spent could have been used for reading for examinations (Ambigapathy, 1993; Norazit & Fatimah, 1992).

The weak reading culture of Malaysia breeds 'reluctant readers' in the society. They refer to people who can read but choose not to (Smith, 1994). This stems from poor reading culture culminated from low interest in reading and association of reading for examination. In 1926, according to Rankin (1972), the task of teaching reading for pleasure was found to not be handled properly in school. The concept of 'ludic' readers, which refers to an approach where reading is seen as a form of play where reading is a lifelong source of joy should be implemented in school (Verhoeven & Snow, 2001). The boom of reluctant reader in time will create a generation of non-readers in the future, which further worsen the issue (Inderjit, 2014).

Both of these reading issues of poor reading culture as well as abundance of reluctant readers can be eradicated in some ways via book club. Book club works either way, to solidify the love of reading to and promote lifelong reading and learning to people who are already in love with books and can also entice new love for reading for reluctant readers. With the evolution of internet, book club has also pierced the internet. Online book clubs provide affinity spaces to its members where they provide informal learning platform for collaborative learning (Colwell, Woodward & Hutchinson, 2018). To keep up with the evolving digital phase, an online based book club was decided to be researched. KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) was chosen to be the subject of

the study as it is one of the largest online book club in Malaysia. With the size of the book club, it is one of the active groups operating on Facebook with stable stream of activities and interaction. Both factors were as important as it gives more credibility to the book club itself.

This study started off with the question of the researcher, of what book clubs are about – to what effect does it relate to the society. In an effort to look at how book club can help with uplifting poor reading culture and breeding ludic readers, this study aims to shed light to book clubs on how its role in society and how the participants' reading motivation and act of reading are affected by it.

1.4 Research Objectives

There are three research objectives of this study which are:

1. To discover the role of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) in community practice.
2. To evaluate the effect of group discussion in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) to the act of reading.
3. To evaluate the effect of reading motivation of participants in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC).

1.5 Research Questions

From the research objectives, three research questions have been formulated which will be used as the basis of this study. The results of the research findings should be able to answer all the research questions. The research questions formulated in this study are:

1. What is the role of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) in community practice?
2. How does the group discussion in the KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) impact the act of reading for its participants?
3. How does group discussion in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) affect reading motivation to its participants?

1.6 Significance of the Study

With this study, it is hoped that the findings of this study will help shed some light on the benefits of joining book club. This study will hopefully benefit education field, profitable or non-profitable reading organization as well as the publishing industry. On education and organizations that are interrelated with books and reading, the finding of the role of book club can help in the nourishment of reading, and social skills obtained from the discussions from book club will help decision makers and teachers alike to try out having book club in schools as well as incorporate book club into reading activities and yearly planning that involves reading and books. With the shedding of information of how book clubs can affect the community in reading, more people may take up reading as a hobby and flourish the book industry as a whole. For organizations, be it from government based or non-government based, the findings on the role of book club to the empowerment

for the reader may shape the reading activities and book related events planning.

For publishers, the findings on the role of book club on reading and society can definitely help publishers to plan on their next marketing strategy. According to Shojaee & Azman (2013), the invention of Internet has created new way or avenue for increasing customer circle and finding new customer, including the usage of social media.

The influence of online book club in book selection may help publishing companies think about the book niche, or type of books that are currently on demand from readers. Furthermore, reviews stemmed from discussion in book club members could make or break sales for the publishers. Electronic Word of Mouth can be a powerful tool to promote books, to advertise them further, such as the recommendation of the book in a book club site or social media site to another book club member (Weber, 2009) as cited from (Shojaee & Azman, 2013). Apart from that, publishers can make use of the online book clubs to sponsor or contribute by giving off discount values or codes to help raise chances of their books being selected in book discussions and further increase the chances of the number of books being sold in the market. Hence, both sales and marketing strategies can be further narrowed down with this finding.

Not to be missed, this research can also help researchers alike on understanding the whole phenomenon in reading in a book club. As per stated in background of studies, there are numerous studies done internationally on book clubs, effects of book clubs and its role in community. However, the study of book club in Malaysia itself is scarce and could be that it goes unrecorded as small activities in school etcetera. This study could help researchers to explore further on book club scenario in Malaysia.

1.7 Limitations of Study

There are a few limitations to this study. First off, the study may not be able to be applied to all population because the samples taken are very specific. The chosen online book club may have different discussion than the other book club. Book selection in the book club may also differ. Apart from that, the selected book club member may vary in age. Due to the difference in social skill and cognitive progress, the findings may not be applicable to school students and adults alike. While it is expected that the result of the study may overlap between all readers in all stages, in which some social and cognitive skills developed from the discussions may be the same, however the level may differ. This also applies to members of different book clubs as well.

Another limitation found after the samples were chosen, was that there was actually a limitation in terms of sample size. This is because, albeit the online book group members were thousands, once the criteria of the focus group samples were identified, namely that they must have been to a book discussion previously, it is found that the people who actually went to the discussion groups were similar, and of the same people. This closes down the sample size to an even smaller number, making the search of the sample for the study more difficult.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has talked about background of the study, statement of the research problem, research objectives and research questions. In the background of study, it has touched on how book club has long evolved in various forms, whether it is in formal setting, planned or in a more relaxed environment, unplanned between social groups. Its members can be of properly arranged by institution or a group made by friends with similar reading likes. With the online revolution taking place, this reading groups have also evolved together. Nowadays, people may connect in book club, regardless of if they have or have not seen its members' face to face.

This study aims to explore and understand more on the online book club, its act to reading, understanding the role of them in community as well as the reading motivation in book club. This study was propelled by the weak reading habit and poor casual reading of the people in Malaysia in general. While book clubs have been acclaimed and researched widely internationally, book clubs, especially on the ones that are joined and created voluntarily, are not being widely researched yet. This chapter has also included on the significance of the study as well as limitations of the study. Exploring the issue further has multiple benefits to various organizations, from school institution, government, and non-government agencies as well as researchers alike.

The next chapter will discuss further on the literature review connected with the study for more in-depth information related to the study. This will instill background information in regard to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, all the related literature will be collected and reviewed. The literature review is important in giving more insight and depth to the topic that is to be studied. In this chapter, the literature review is divided and grouped into the main topics and past studies that have been done.

The presentation of this chapter begins with the background of the emergence of the book club and its evolution, followed by a book club in our country's context, the reading process, and theories in the book club, book club's role in community practice, reading motivation in the book club, past studies on book clubs. Finally, the theoretical framework of this study follows.

2.2 Related Literature

2.2.1 Emergence and Evolution of Book Club

The book club has been around for a long time. According to Taylor (2007), groups of readers have been identified to have meetings to discuss their reading ever since reading materials were available and accessible. This may have begun during the era of women's clubs which formed as a vehicle for personal education for the ladies, even before higher education was openly available for women. These reading groups have helped to provide intellectual and social stimulation for the members (Taylor, 2007). These groups, whether

named or unnamed can be called book clubs as their main function is to gather and discuss books.

One popular book movement began as a course offered at Columbia College in 1920 under the direction of John Erskine to discuss books. This movement focuses on its goal of self-education through reading for understanding and information (Taylor, 2007). Claiming that it is a means for learning to think through the activities done in reading “good books”, they operate using a discussion protocol of only those read can participate in the discussion, discussion only for the selected work with the support of opinions from the work and that leaders can only ask question and not participate in answering.

Fast forward to contemporary times, the book club world is stirred again with the emergence of the Oprah Book Club (Taylor, 2007). When Oprah Winfrey, the host, and producer of the talk show, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, announced on September 17, 1996, that she was starting a book club as a regular feature of her program in order “to get America reading again.”, a reading initiative was formed (Hall, 2001). The book club operated where each month, Oprah would select a title and will then produce one whole episode will be dedicated to the selected book in the discussion.

Aside from the general adult society, book club is also very much applicable to schools and the education system. Teachers make book club part of the curriculum for academic reasons in line with reading support. Book clubs have a sizeable body of research linking literature discussions to reading comprehension in schools (Palincsar, 1987; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Chinn et al., 2001). Taffy Raphael is no stranger in the book club world. She has studied book clubs in many types of classrooms ranging from literature-based elementary classrooms to special education children and ethnically diverse classrooms (Foster, 2006). Much of these studies revolved around the way students talk

after individual and whole class reader response activities to books discussed in a classroom. A model of book club was developed and studied by Raphael (Foster, 2006). Her study investigated what and how students chose to talk in book clubs. In book clubs, most of the activities revolve around activities that will initiate a response from the students after thinking of the books (Tyler, 2014). This promotes various reading and cognitive interactions with the text, which will be discussed further in the reading process in book clubs.

With the development of science and technology, particularly the Internet and usage of the World Wide Web, the traditional essence of a book club is a 'meet up session' between its members shifted to 'virtual meet ups'. Supported further by social media platforms, general book clubs nowadays may also operate online, as well as offline (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; Scharber, 2009). The emergence of online book clubs is one example of old and new literacy practices being weaved together.

With this evolution, social media platforms begins to have literacy evolution as well, such as the rise of Bookstagram, and BookTok. Taking the world by storm, TikTok provides a platform for digital literacy, especially for the youth. BookTok is a sub-community within Tiktok, where readers and book lovers unite under the same interest (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). The authenticity of Tiktok media creation, calls for a digital space for its users, championing diversity and multimodal learning through independent reading, literature circles, or book talks. BookTok exists and thrives as an out-of-school literacy practice (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021).

The invention of the Internet and the World Wide Web has changed the situation of book clubs. No longer constricted to physical meetups for a book club meeting, the online book club has emerged on the scene (Wyant & Bowen, 2018). These clubs can range from

semi-online book club, where the certain discussion takes place online but still has meetups face-to-face or fully online book club where participants do not even need to meet up to conduct the discussion. According to Scharber (2009), the emergence of the online book club is growing in popularity due to the frequent references to an online book club in non-empirical journals.

According to Castek et al. (2006), online book clubs are one of the ways to bring the Internet to the literature program. The ability of online forums to provide a worldwide audience for book discussions to enrich comprehension while exposing students to new perspectives makes online book clubs rapidly emerging. Starkey and Tempest (2005) also mentioned on advantages and disadvantages of online book clubs, while providing tips for their success. Articles like this help promote online book clubs and provide support to the emergence of new online book clubs. There are also websites that provide lists of online book clubs, for adults and kids alike (Scharber, 2009). This makes online book clubs even more accessible to the public and society can easily find and join these book clubs. Realizing the emergence of online book clubs, public libraries also have joined in offering online book club services where patrons can sign up to receive a five-minute sample of books in case patrons are interested in borrowing the books. This is also apparent in efforts done by bookstore chains, such as Barnes and Nobles.

This bookstore chain has developed its own online book club where the participants are able to have chat via discussion boards with authors or join the conversation about bestsellers. More to Scharber (2009), there are also online book clubs that are organized according to the genre of age. Since discussions are posted online, users can view the discussion thread as well as view how popular the thread is. One example of a thread from Barnes and Noble Teen Club had been viewed over 3000 times in the summer of 2007. The

interesting part of online book clubs' threads will mean that new users are also able to participate and catch up on the discussion (Zornow, 2014). Having information on the edge of the fingertip means that no one gets left behind. As opposed to regular book clubs meeting whereby if one has missed one of the meetings, members of online book clubs will not miss the whole discussion session conducted on the day.

While some book club operates from their own website or parent website, the emergence and popularity of social media have made it a medium for hosting an online book club. Kaplan and Haenlein as cited from (Huy, Nguyen, Dinh & Tran, 2019) have referred to social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that are built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, allowing the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (p. 61). The combination of the ease of social media and the amount of time society is spending on social media has made social media platforms an undeniably easy platform that book clubs can join. As cited in Criswell, J., & Canty, N. (2014), one of the contributing factors is the rise of usage of smartphones and tablet computers. In the UK, 70% of UK residents are currently on some sort of social media. Knowing this, publishers and book chains are also taking on this advantage by using social media for their publishing, and marketing including hosting book clubs on social media. Publishers and bookstores use this medium to expand their market coverage globally. Through the mutually beneficial discussions and debates that take place in book clubs from the platform of social media, publishers can build community and fanbase from the online book clubs, as well as their brand as the titles and authors are widely accessible (Huy, Nguyen, Dinh & Tran, 2019). Besides networking, publishers and retailers can facilitate the transaction, generate sales, provide after-sales support and build customer rapport. If the publishing industry continues to be digitally inclined, social media's ability to exploit

these book markets from online book clubs will remain relevant (Criswell & Canty, 2014).

The emergence of an online book club may also have been influenced by the New Literacy Studies theory. New Literacy Studies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Leu., 2004) is defined as flexible and sustainable mastery of the practice of old and new communication technology. Participating in an online book club serves as a forum for people to socialize, discuss books, and utilize new literacies like chatting and posting messages for discussion while being attached to the “old” literacy practice of reading a printed text (Scharber, 2009).

The popular media phenomenon has also changed the landscape for Book Clubs. The existence and popularity of Oprah’s Book Club and the book-to-media sensation, of the Harry Potter Series, have catapulted the rise of all kinds of book clubs (Hoffert, 2006; Rooney, 2005). Whilst books in Oprah Book Club were more for adult reading, the popularity has produced a rippled effect on all other kinds of book clubs as well. Through the phenomenon, it entices people to not only read but also discuss the reading materials. Hence, through social engagement, book clubs have risen up both in the online and offline medium.

In the next sub-topic, the reading process and cognitive development that happens within the circle of the book club will be discussed further. These processes encompass how the clubs operate and the way it benefits their members.

2.2.2 Book Club in Malaysia Context

According to a study done by Pandian (2011), one of the major setbacks in the development of the rate of reading in Malaysia is the lack of reading culture. Non-reading

society will deter critical reading skills among local students, and this gives rise to a plethora of problems, especially in the country's vision of developing a knowledge-based economy (Pandian, 2005 & 2007) as cited from (Pandian, 2011). In an effort towards curbing this issue, most documented book clubs in Malaysia revolves around educational setting which tries to absorb the community into these societal activities into a reading culture.

In light to address this issue, the School of Languages, Literacies, and Translation (SoLLaT@USM) proposed an approach codenamed IQRA', which stands for Innovative Quality Reading Approach. This program is designed to address quality issues pertaining to reading especially those that relate to the development of critical thought, analytical skills, and the development of reading literacy, based on the belief that effective reading and critical thinking skills are essential in an evolving global environment (Pandian, 2011). The purpose of the program is to inculcate reading habits and instill a strong community sense to produce a well-informed society. IQRA' is an adaptation of the original book club model in the United States in recognition of the fact that local cultural norms, as well as prevailing belief systems, play a vital role in shaping reading habits for the society. This book club partakes in debate, critical review, and book trade amongst its members. This effort was hoped to create more partnerships among universities, libraries, and organizations. What is enlightening about this program is that it does not cover only students at the university, but also USM staff, as well as the public to join in the fun.

Apart from IQRA', there is also the creation of 'Kelab Membaca Sinar Pintar' by Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia. This book club was formed in 2008 in accordance with the year's reading festival. The reading club is proposed nationwide and is targeted at parents, which indirectly considers their children as well. Activities schemes, guidelines, as well as

workshops, are provided to mentors or moderators who wish to create a book group in their community. A wide range of activities is planned in this book club including writing, literature exposure, storytelling as well as community visits for its participants to join. In schools, teachers get together to form book clubs to improve teaching and learning in schools.

In learning improvement, one of the recorded programs was the Intercultural Reading Programme (IRP) done in secondary schools to promote intercultural understanding between the three major races in Malaysia. From the study done by Mehar et al. (2017), in the program, students were expected to read the text and discuss various issues together in relation to the text during the scheduled English period. Though this program is quite rigid in its nature, however, this poses an exemplary usage of how book club can bring society together. In promoting intercultural ties between races, books were used as a tool to discover and discuss related issues. Consequently, races may learn and understand each other better from the development of the program. Going away from the educational and workforce need for literacy, there are many other unrecorded book clubs. If one were to search on Malaysia book club on the search domain, plenty of book club's searches will appear. They are of a myriad of offline, online, and both online and offline sites. Some of the book club includes the KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC), which operates via social media Facebook and has one of the highest numbers of participants. Apart from this, there is also the Paperback book club, Buku Jalanan, and Bookends Malaysia Book Club. However, at a glance, these online book clubs seemed to be centered in the capital city of states. Most of the book clubs focus on getting people of the same likes together, as a social activity. As book clubs or reading groups are a simple get-together between people, there should be more book clubs that are offline.

2.2.3 Reading Theories and Processes in Book Club

The process of reading is defined as examining and grasping the meaning of printed or written characters, or letters (Liu, 2010). In reading, there is passive reading and active reading. Passive reading is characterized as the result of a profusion of books, which desires to receive thoughts or 'mind pictures' which are hazy, as opposed to active reading, where the mind is vigorously reacting to the words in the text by thinking of it over and over until it is part of their own (Radway, 1997, p. 143). As such, passive reading is defined as lazy and small input is being received cognitively. While reading should not be a pain and much work, reading passively will not benefit the reader as much as active reading, as when the reader retains the information by going over and converging on the new information and the reader's own input (old information).

Rosenblatt's reading theory is widely spread in the reading and education world. According to Taylor (2007), in 1938, Rosenblatt refers to reading as a process of making meaning out of the books even before the educational institution was embracing the idea. For Rosenblatt, reading is a process manifested in a time and place and not only a process where one studies a textual object, as in reading for memorizing etcetera (Marhaeni, 2016). In reading, readers will study the text, analyse, and then interpret the meaning behind the text, before moving forth on responding to the linguistic cues available in the text.

One of the most notable theories from Rosenblatt is the Reader-Response Theory. Reader Response Theory is an important groundwork in a book club as it can supplement the notion of what readers undergo in the reading process. Fish (1980) and Bleich (1975), argue that readings are not located in a text but are made by readers. Reading is said to be a "wholly subjective process and the nature of what is perceived is determined by the

personality of the perceiver. This means that the understanding of the text and the meaning of the text will depend on what is being comprehended by the reader. According to Foster (2006), reading is not only an individual making meaning from a text, but it is also a collection of attitudes, thoughts, practices, and beliefs experienced from interaction with others and internalized over time. In Reader Response Theory, it is demonstrated how readers go about making meaning, and what kinds of responses readers tend to make. In her theory, Rosenblatt described reading as a process manifested in a time and place, instead of seeing reading as just a study of a textual object. Readers build their own creations through a recursive process of using experiences, personal impressions, and choosing referents during reading activity. Further, Rosenblatt's reading theory connects us to the two stances of reading – efferent reading and aesthetic reading. Simply put, efferent reading and aesthetic reading stances go on the difference between reading for practical purposes (work or education) or reading for pleasure (to be carried away during reading in living in the moment of the text) (Taylor, 2007). However, it is important to note, that these two stances may meet anywhere in the reading spectrum and do not necessarily be two different things. They converge in reading activity, like a situation where one starts reading for work or education but as the material gets better, the reader may find it pleasurable that they go back and forth between the two reading stances.

In most book clubs, two types of reading theories are often used, which are transference and transactional reading. According to American Heritage Dictionary, (1992) as cited from (Jones, 1999), transference in reading is the process by which the emotion and desire originally associated with a person or event are unconsciously transferred or shifted to another person or event. Readers who participate in book clubs often exhibit transference by comparing and merging their personal lives with the fictional lives of

characters that are in the selected reading material. Book club members often use the lessons learned in the books and apply them to their own lives. When the transference process takes place in reading, readers can see or imagine themselves in the text, making the process of relating their situation or memories, to the event in the reading material seamless. When the reader can connect with the reading materials, it is more often than not, they no longer feel alone and become more willing to bond with other book club members, creating a connection in book club discourse (Jones, 1999). It is also most likely that other members of the book club are also experiencing the same thing and when members combine together in discussing issues during meetups, they are collaborating on ideas and creating a deeper bond among themselves.

Transactional reading, on the other hand, is defined as the encounter between reader and particular text, in which the reader and text share elements of a common story (Marhaeni, 2016). This explains why some books feel more relatable to one person than to another and that some people might like the book while some may not. However, if the similarity of person or event in the book context to the reader is too eerily similar, it can also bring back wounded memories and can also hinder the reader from liking the book. In reading, according to Iser (1987), the reader will continue to focus and refocus on expectations and memories whilst building consistent and meaningful connections with the reading material. Transactional reading is a continual process of reading from start to end of the book.

This reading theory is applicable to what members of the book club do. Even though in the book club, members discuss together the work that they have read and interpret, however, the discussion will stem from their own understanding of the selected work discussed first (Kong & Fitch, 2003). Before the meet-up, members of the book club will

have to read the work and analyze as well as bring context from the text to themselves. During the discussion, members speak up on their perspective and their own meaning of the text and exchange them with the other members, bringing deeper understanding and in-depth conversation of the reading materials. In book clubs, readers bring their own meaning, hear one another's, speak up on their own opinion and perspective, defend ideas of their own, and ultimately, build an interpretation of the text that combines multiple views from their own understanding and its members (Foster, 2006). This creates a collaborative understanding of the discussed text. Through book club conversations, a group understanding of the reading process and various books' contents will be established. Essentially, a book club acts as a forum for people that allows reading processes and discussion of the text, and exchange of ideas and meaning of a story to be socially constructed among participants.

In book clubs, readers use exploratory talk to explore reading processes and the content of the book. Blau (2003) has studied the active process of students' making meaning out of the literature that they have studied and others' meaning on it in high school and college literature classes. Blau has also explained the growth in reading is not only from listening to explanation from the instructor or teacher making sense of the text but also in the metacognitive process of how the reader forms the meaning of his own from the text (Foster, 2006). This exploratory talk allows discussions to take place and shift simultaneously between the content of the book and the reading process. The discussion in book clubs allows students to not only be passively taught about the reading material but also to actively explore and construct meaning from the text or reading material.

2.2.4 Role of Book Clubs in Community Practice

In the previous subtopics, benefits and the reading process in a book club have been studied. One of the major processes involved in any book club will be the meaning-making and community share of discourse analysis of the reading text.

Book clubs allow readers to benefit from one another. Since there are different members who originate from different places, different cultural or regional backgrounds, and essentially, different mindsets and upbringing, book clubs benefit the members with varying degrees of knowledge in expertise. This exposes members to learn from a more capable peer, especially when the person shares his or her knowledge and better expertise with others (Foster, 2006). In turn, members that are less capable in the area benefit from the new knowledge shared.

In the discussion that takes place in book clubs, naturally, there will be examples of opinions and ideas that challenge and contradict other members' ideas. Hence, apart from benefiting from new knowledge shared, learners gain access to alternative perspectives from the others (Foster, 2006). Book clubs also allow for comments that challenge and contradict other members' ideas. Obviously, in the self-interpreting process and individual meaning-making work of texts, one would not be gaining this value and skills. From the discourse, learners will also learn how to socialize, and abundant social skills will be explored and shared (Foster, 2006). These group discussions allow members to take in others' ideas and responses and allow the learners to consider their merits.

These exchanges of ideas are often referred to as community share or community of practice. According to Goatley, Brock, & Raphael (1995) community share consists of sharing information in the ways conversations are conducted. This includes listening to

others, taking turns, asking to follow up or clarify questions, and making comments related to the text or comments that relate the text to another situation. Community practice, on the other hand, as explained by Lave and Wenger (1991), exists when the shared ideas, commitments, and memories are established and developed through the continuous participation in a book club as a means of community activities. Belonging to this community activity means that members acquire tools, routine, vocabulary, and symbols of the accumulated knowledge. Besides getting direct knowledge from members, learning is extended through relationships and participation in these "joint enterprises" (Wenger, 1999, p. 73). Community share, in which participants discuss the text and exchange ideas provides a starting point in which a book exploration is done. Through these discussions, some parts of the books, through transactional and transference reading theory may be struck a particular liking to a book or reading in general.

Another lens that can be looked at for book clubs is the conversation analysis as a means for second language analysis. Research has found that cognition in learning can be understood as a socially shared or community phenomenon. This strengthen the concept of learning as a social practice (Ro, 2019). In the same research, it is found that learners oriented learning through practices from the extensive reading in book club. Learners learn and imitate vocabulary from facilitators, and within the support of the group, begin forming 'inexplainable input' to something comprehensible (Ro, 2019).

Due to the discussion and recommendation from online book clubs, opinions and reviews on books are also rapidly encouraged (Huy, Nguyen, Dinh & Tran, 2019). From there on, these interaction forums can be facilitated in book purchase experience as customers or book club members can be persuaded by publishers to purchase books from the engagement created (Laing, 2008). With reader and consumer engagement, marketing

strategies may be laid out, such as attractive messages, posts, promotional programs on new books, and more (Huy, Nguyen, Dinh & Tran, 2019).

In the media, there is also the emergence of citizen authors. Citizen authors are authors that use the technology and media in giving full access to the global village (or readers online) thus developing relationships with other authors and readers and having a wider discourse of books (Johnson,2017). Citizen author writes, shares, and promotes their work directly to consumers. The ease of access to connect to other readers forms an intimacy or direct connection. In relation to online book clubs, the emergence of these citizen authors means that there are new means of discourse regarding these authors, and members of a book club can directly reach, comment, and review these works. All of this affects book club operation and its relativity to the community (Johnson, 2017). The revolution of the Internet and the world wide web has made a lot of things accessible at the tip of the fingers and the role of online book clubs in community practice wished to be studied even further in this study.

2.2.5 Reading Motivation and Book Club

As per discussed in Chapter 1, reading culture in Malaysia is relatively weak. Reading is found to be a non-preferred activity and there are a lot of poor enabling environment for reading practices (Pandian, 2011). Reading in Malaysia is often associated with negative connotation, mostly stemming from it being a boring activity, negative thoughts and attitude, as well as it being perceived as a difficult activity. Children in Malaysia read mainly for examination and not for pleasure (Inderjit, 2014).

A lot of this reading culture is affected by reading motivation.

This is also seen happening in Indonesia as well. Unfortunately, according to Rifai et al. (2023), reading is not a widespread habit among Indonesians. In one study, it is found that university students in Indonesia are mostly reluctant readers (Wijayanti, 2020). The students are not keen on reading books for pleasure. Students only read for the sake of university assignments, as a primary motive in reading. It is noted in the study that to create a healthy reading habit, a lot of involvement from multiple parties together with commitment is needed. Participation from parents, teachers and community members can help guide in book selection and explore processes to enjoy reading as whole.

In another study done to elementary school students in Germany, in contrast, it is found that motivation is one of the key factor in finding out the difference in reading materials in school and out of school (Locker et al., 2019). From the study, higher intrinsic motivation in reading was found for students in reading recreational books, however, it was found that students had lower intrinsic motivation in reading school books and textbooks. The study further deduced that this could be case as students does not feel the autonomy in reading process and the book choice upon reading school books, hence resulting in the difference motivation for both types of books.

These are some glimpse of Malaysian reading local culture in comparison to other countries. As we can see, reading motivation, which is directly related to reading enjoyment and reading culture as a whole, differs from countries and also stages in life. While most Malaysians do not lean towards reading as whole, from the study found from the German students, it is imperative to set a good reading habit from small, which will transcend from primary school to university and later to adult life. We will now explore more on reading motivation theories as a whole.

According to Ma'rof & Haslinda (2004) as cited from (Mohd Kasim, Mohd Khir, & Zaharim, 2019), motivation is an internal factor that moves and gives direction to one's thinking, thoughts, and behaviour. Motivation is an important factor in one's life, in reading or other activities. According to Deci, Koestner & Ryan (1999), reading motivation can be referred to as a person's personal goals, values, and beliefs on reading topics, processes, and outcomes. One of the factors that determine the reading habit of a person is reading motivation (Castle, 2015).

There are two types of motivation, namely Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation from (Mohd Kasim, Mohd Khir, & Zaharim, 2019). Intrinsic motivation refers to the inner urge in oneself to do something, for example, personal liking or hobby while extrinsic motivation refers to motivation that is moved by external factors, such as parents' push or rewards (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). When the desire to read is being controlled externally, readers are only motivated not because they are interested in reading but because they are aiming for something else, like rewards or good grades (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999). Motivation to read is a central feature of reading engagement (Schutte & Malouff, 2007). Reading engagement is a reader immersion experience when interacting with text. This reading engagement focuses on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to read. Research has shown that both extrinsically and intrinsically regulated motivation help predict how much a person reads, however, among the two, intrinsic motivation is the better predictor (Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox, 1999). Experimental research has found that in children increases in intrinsic reading motivation led to more reading engagement (Guthrie & Cox, 2001; Guthrie et al., 2004; Guthrie, Wigfield, & VonSecker, 2000).

In reading motivation, 10 theoretical dimensions were acknowledged, which are

reading efficacy, challenge, curiosity, involvement, importance, recognition, performance, social, compliance, and avoidance (Schutte & Malouff, 2007). Apart from that, studies from Guthrie and Knowles as cited from (Verhoeven & Snow, 2001) there are seven principles of reading motivation which is, conceptual themes, real-world interactions, self-direction, interesting texts, cognitive strategies, social collaboration, and self-expression. These principles help determine the level of reading motivation.

There are several functions of reading. The three factors are titled utility, enjoyment, and escape (Schutte & Malouff, 2007). Greaney and Neuman (1990), suggested that reading may serve four purposes gaining knowledge, increasing personal empowerment, participating in society, and being occupationally effective. It is important to look at the purposes of reading because indirectly, these are the main motivations of why people read.

Being in a book club can help with fostering reading habits. The connected learning approach is a theme that is very close to book club. According to Kumasi (2014), the connected learning approach revolves around pursuing a personal interest with the support of other people, which could lead to intrinsic motivation in reading itself. Being in a book club can help with social culture in reading together and in time, cultivate stronger reading habits. This boost of motivation in reading together helps book club participants have high motivation in reading. In many areas, reading can be a demanding task for certain texts as they have unusual rhetoric or unfamiliar cultural background (Saidin, Razak & Yazid, 2017), however, in reading together, this reading anxiety can lessen as participants share their knowledge and thus reduce the anxiety of reading of the unknown and boost reading motivation. Reading motivation is situated in an iterative relationship between reader, text, and reason for reading, all nested in a larger sociocultural context (Neugebauer, 2014).

Support from the book club, alongside participation in discussion of the specific

theme of book discussion, can cultivate a stronger reading habit for the book club participant. Admittedly, the lure of joining a book club itself may be the participants' own interest in reading and in the book, however with the motivation spiking from the discussion, it may help to cultivate lifelong readers and shape good reading habits. According to (Neugebauer, 2014), research shows that interest in reading about a given topic or area can become a more general form of reading interest. This shift of interest however will depend on the external support available, as well as the materials being available (Hidi & Renninger, 2006).

According to Walberg and Tsai (1985) as cited from Karim & Hasan (2007), a positive attitude toward reading is the strongest factor correlated to reading achievement. From the same research, factors that contributed to the positive attitude toward reading believe that reading is important, enjoyment in reading, having a high self-concept as a reader, and having a verbally stimulating environment where verbal interaction takes place regularly. Again, this depicts closely a situation that can be seen in a book club discussion. A positive reading attitude will lead to a positive reading experience, which in time will help in cultivating lasting reading habits.

Motivation to read is an important feature of reading engagement. Reading engagement has few features related to reading competency, the utilitarian aspect of reading, and the social aspects of reading (Schoutte & Malouff, 2007). Both Intrinsic and Extrinsic lie on a continuum of self-determination. This determination is high intrinsic as people show interest, enjoyment, and satisfaction through reading while at the non-self-determined lies the external regulation, of complying with others' requests or receiving any reward, or avoiding any punishment. (Schoutte & Malouff, 2007). Guthrie (2010) as cited (Marinak, 2013), described certain contexts necessary to promote engaged reading.

Engaged reading may be a combination of motivation and thoughtfulness. Engaged readers enjoy learning, are mastery-oriented, intrinsically motivated, and have self-efficacy when approaching literacy tasks.

2.2.6 Past Studies on Book Clubs

Essentially, book clubs are done both in school and outside school, for both children and adults alike, whether in an educational institution or not. Schools, some of them have book clubs integrated into the curriculum. But there is also outside schoolbook clubs for children, most likely to inculcate pleasure reading rather than reading for selected literary works in the syllabus (Petrich, 2015). Past studies have also been done on various types of students from normal students in the classroom to special students as well as students from a multi-cultural background and so forth.

One of the studies was done by Raphael (Goatley & Raphael, 1992; Raphael, McMahon, Goatley, Bentley, Boyd, Pardo & Woodman, 1992;) on exploring what students talk about in book clubs and how their discourse takes place in book clubs. In the study, nine purposes and benefits of book clubs were found for its members. Purposes such as sharing sessions over written works, clarifying points of confusion, discussing main themes as well as relating to other texts, students moved to critique the author's success and examine the author's purpose, to discussing the process of response and relating ideas from text to personal experience and prior knowledge (Foster, 2006). This study sheds light mainly on the discourse activities, providing researchers with a guideline on the reading activities that are done in the book club. However, as the research was done quite a while

back, a lot of changes and advancement has taken over, therefore, in this sense, while the main idea is still prevalent, the way discourse takes effect and platform of discussion may have changed, and this requires further research to take place.

Research on book clubs was also done on non-traditional learners. These learners are categorized as 'at risk' students and had experienced special services or pull-out programs, as per Hauschildt and McMahon (1996). The purpose of the study was to explore what roles students take in book clubs and investigate the nature of book clubs with these students who are labeled to have limited language knowledge. With the method of recording, videotaping, and transcribing ongoing activities in the book club for a month, it is found that all members were participating in a variety of participation modes such as leaders in book clubs, the person who orchestrated the talk flow, and responses. It is difficult to assign the students to a specific role in book clubs. Rather, the students took a turn in directing the book club direction and responding to others in clarifying ideas, explaining, arguing, or agreeing on matters in the book club discourse sessions. From the study, the researchers suggest that students' success in book clubs may indicate that they may or may not need to pull out of programs.

Hauschildt and McMahon (1996) also dabbled in a study for non-traditional learners, where 5 'resistant learners' were put together in the book club to explore engagement and support can be done to help the students. The essence of book clubs where students read and discuss meaningful parts of the text is retained however due to the students' nature, the teacher included herself in a limited participatory role in the book club, to model and guide the talk. As the students seemed to be more comfortable dealing with direct questions than affirmative ones, direct questions were used to engage and built responses. Over time, it was found that the students were able to participate in a way book

clubs should be. From observation, it is found that the "construct of resistance all but disappeared" (Hauschildt & McMahon, 1996, p. 585) and that these students with difficulty can actively participate in book clubs with the right support and guidance.

Both of these studies provided an overview of how book club can help in terms of dealing with non-voluntary learners. In this sense, while the focus of this study is on voluntary participants from the book club, it is worth to look at how book club have the impact and affect even on people who are not into books or book clubs as it may solidify book club effects and provide more concrete understanding of the subject matter.

Raphael as cited from (Foster, 2006) was also in book club research for students of different ages, cultures, and languages in conducting book club (Goatley & Raphael, 1992; McMahon, Raphael, Goatley, & Pardo, 1997; Raphael, McMahon, Goatley, Bentley, Boyd, Pardo, & Woodman, 1992; Raphael, Pardo, Highfield, & McMahon, 1997). The research was about the development of the literary conversation, its growth of it, and the instruction needed to support the learners thinking. In addition to that, Kong and Fitch (2002) also studied learners from diverse cultures and languages in operating book clubs. In the class consisting of Vietnam, Hmong, Caucasian, Latino, Haitian, Somali, and Bosnian students, it is found that students were able to connect, share knowledge, and collaborate in constructing meanings by making sense of the texts using contextual clues and connecting with personal experience. This means that even with limited language capability, students are able to benefit from book clubs. When the reading assessment was made, the students have shown to have improved their vocabulary and demonstrated greater awareness of strategic reading processes. This study documents the benefit of participation in book clubs in students' vocabulary development and reading strategies. This research is beneficial as it touches on second language learners and the impact book club has in their literacy

journey. Many book clubs research focused on homogenous groups, and having this research added on knowledge on the existing diverse readerships, including individuals from different cultural backgrounds, linguistic communities, socioeconomic statuses, and abilities. However, due to the specificity of the group, a researcher researching on the topic will need to include a lot of other researches as each of the research is specified to only one group of sample.

Book Clubs were also researched for the ones outside of school. In the study conducted by Scharber (2009), she has found that in a case study utilizing Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (Herring, 2006) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995) in three book clubs, findings have shown that these online book clubs were able to support continued voluntary reading, engage struggling or non-readers and offers safe scaffold for youth to expand and broaden their new literacy skills as well as practices. This study is important as it examines the new 'literacy practice' in the emergence of online book clubs also since the book club was out of school and not necessary of the school curriculum, the findings were based on students' voluntary participation in the book club in their natural setting and state. Although this study sheds light on reading engagement and literacy development, the specific mechanisms through which this occurs are not fully understood. Further research is needed to explore how book club activities foster and develop literacy practices in students.

For adults, one study of participants during the Great Books Program by Davis 1960 as cited from (Taylor, 2007) intended to assess the effect of participation of the program for adult education has shown that the effect of the program on the members was that members had increased knowledge and continued participation has to lead to a higher number of hours spent in serious reading and preparation for the discussion for the

program.

A qualitative study done by Taylor (2007) also examines public book discussion groups to research the effect of discussion on the act of reading. It researched how book groups talk about their reading, their reading conclusion and information gathered, the role of text in the discussion, and what the book discussion reveals. It was found that group reading is a continuous process, where 'reading is a circle' (Taylor, 2007). The study found that book groups engage in two types of discussion, mainly reading as dissection and reading as creation. This study has generated a wealth of knowledge on the discourse process happening in book clubs for book clubs. For future research, a research on the use of book club for professional learnings can be done. This may apply to specific professional domain and how book club can support the professional growth, collaboration and and social practice for the group.

In understanding book club as a means of community involvement, a study was done on the implementation and direction of a community in Indonesia. In an effort to increase reading culture to keep up with technological advancement, Barru Membaca community was created to cultivate reading literacy among people of Barru district, Sulawesi, Indonesia (Askar & Abdullah, 2022). Several programs were adopted in program such as pop-up library, book traveling and book club. This program was responded positively in inculcating the love of reading and is considered a success for the people in Barru regency.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The prominent theoretical framework will be as follows:

1. Reader Response Theory:

As the study wishes to explore and understand more about how the group discussions affect the act of reading and how the discussions bring more impact to the members of the book club, this will be the main theory to be focused on as this theory provides us with the guideline of what readers do during their solitary reading and what they bring and manipulate during the discussion. This theory is mainly on how readers respond to a text and consequently how the process interlays with each other during reading. Reader Response theory explores how its members respond to literature in several ways, such as creating the image from text, associating text with something similar, expressing an opinion, feeling, questioning, and other responses.

2. Community Practice Perspective:

As reading is a social process where learners are actively engaged in constructing meaning, the study will base on Community Practice Perspective. This explores how knowledge about reading is being established in a community. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), the community of practice exists through its shared repertoire of ideas, commitments, and memories established and nurtured through participation in community activities. Belonging to a community practice will mean members share ways of doing things together.

3. Intrinsic-Extrinsic Theory of Reading Motivation:

Motivation to read is a central feature of reading engagement (Schutte & Malouff,

2007). This reading engagement focuses on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to read. Research has shown that both extrinsically and intrinsically regulated motivation help predict how much a person reads. The connected learning concept in book club allows for extrinsic motivation to be in reading in book club while passionate discussions help grow intrinsic motivation of reading in book club members.

To illustrate further the connections between the three (3) perspectives, a figure, Figure 2.1: Theoretical Framework below has been made to depict the connection between the frameworks used to solidify the study.

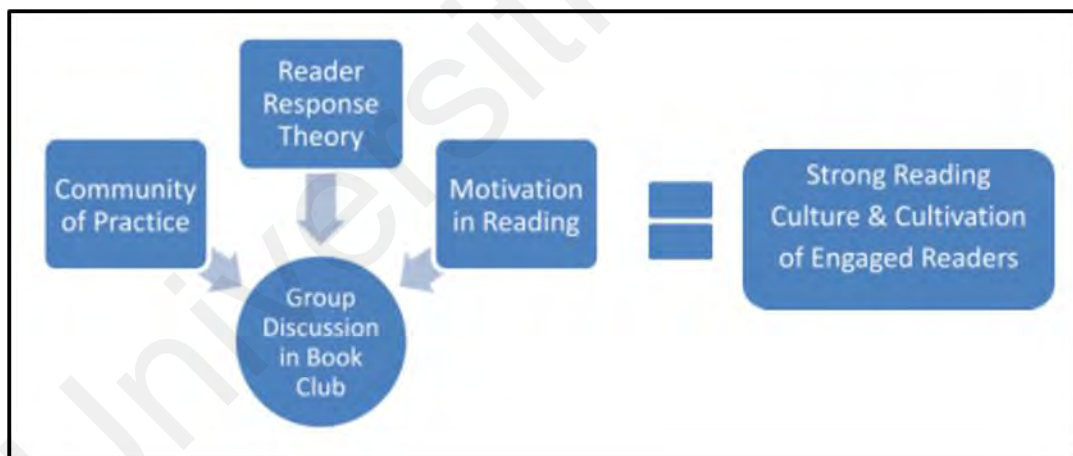


Figure 2.1: Theoretical Framework

Based on the diagram, the study views learning in book club discussions as members participating in the community of practice. Members bring their initial response (Reader Response Theory) to share with other members. This discussion driven by interests, concerns, social needs, and reading needs of groups (Reading Motivation) makes up a

socially constructed understanding of the text. All social activities of talking, listening, and reading are experiences that one goes through in participation in book clubs that further build interaction, relationships, and activities (Foster, 2006). The collective knowledge is shared and expanded including the knowledge of the reading process and the transaction of interaction between readers (all members of the club) and the text. All this culmination, processes of the act of reading that happens in the book, motivation gained from the social and reading activity, all in belonging to a community of practice affect the role of the book club in the society by creating a strong reading culture of engaged readers.

Each theory offers a unique perspective on the phenomenon in the study. By integrating multiple theories, more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics involved in group discussions in the KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) can be gained. For example, Reader Response Theory helps understand individual readers' experiences and interpretations, while the Community Practice Perspective sheds light on the social context and collective meaning-making processes within the book club. Meanwhile, the Intrinsic-Extrinsic Theory of Reading Motivation provides insights into the motivational factors driving participants' engagement with reading. By examining the research questions through the lens of multiple theories, more holistic analysis that considers various aspects of the phenomenon can be conducted. Each theory may highlight different aspects or dimensions of the research questions, allowing for a richer and more nuanced analysis. Integrating multiple theories can lead to theoretical synergy, where the strengths of each theory complement and enrich one another. This can lead to the development of novel insights or frameworks that go beyond what any single theory can offer.

By basing the study on all these theories, the researcher will be able to understand better what goes in during the discussion, and the social connections of book clubs to the bigger context of society.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter consists of all the related literature that is connected to the study. This chapter has enclosed the background of the emergence and the development of book clubs, book club in the Malaysian context, the reading process and theories in the book club, book club's role in the community practice, reading motivation in the book club, the role of book clubs in community practice, and previous studies on book clubs.

The literature review that was presented brings to the research objective and research question of this study. In an attempt to understand further of what the roles of online book clubs to its participant are and how these roles of online book clubs affect society, the literature review has touched on the reading processes that took place in book clubs to explore the benefit and what opportunities of reading skills that participants acquire upon joining book clubs. From the community sharing ground and meaning making from the text, these reading, and social skills may influence community reading behaviour as a whole in culminating engaged readers. Lastly, in this chapter, reading motivation is also touched on, specifically how being in a book club and joining the discussion may provide intrinsic motivation in the reading journey itself.

The main gap in the research on online book clubs involves the role of online book clubs to their participants. There is also the question of how the role of online book clubs in community practice and that is what this research attempts to uncover.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the detailed methodology regarding the study will be explained further. The chapter consists of research methods that will include design, sample and instrument, methods of data collection and methods of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This research used qualitative approach on one online book club in Malaysia. Qualitative approach is used as researcher attempts to understand further on the nature of book club discussion and its relations to the society. For the study, focus group interview method will be used. According to Cheng (2014), more and more research has pointed out on focus group being one a common method to collect data for qualitative studies.

According to Krueger & Casey (2000) as cited from (Cheng, 2014), a focus group is a special group with specific intention, required to complete certain process. The design of the focus group interview is meant to understand the how book club discussions affect its members further by analysing social and reading skills employed and used during the discussion. Apart from that, participants' motivation, and role of book club in community will be explored through the interview data.

According to Morgan (1998), as cited from (Cheng, 2014), the size of the focus group is closely related to recruitment conditions and research purposes. Further from (Cheng, 2014), it is generally accepted that a focus group of six to eight participants are sufficient (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Some studies reported as few as four and as many as fifteen however there is no conclusive study as to how many exact participants should be in in a focus group study as it depends on the nature and purpose of the study. For this study, 2 focus groups with 6 respondents per focus group were chosen. In total, 12 respondents were chosen for the study.

Further, according to Krueger and Casey (2014), normally a focus group will be deemed enough once data saturation is met. In this study, one of the limitations the researcher had to face was that after going through more than 8 past group discussion events, it was found that the respondents that attended these discussions were of the same people. The nature of each event attracted individuals with similar interests or backgrounds. This homogeneity limited the diversity of respondents in each past book club discussion. In each event, only 1 or 2 people were varied from the other discussion. After approaching 30 respondents, only 12 in total confirmed their participation for the study. Book club meetings are typically scheduled at specific times, and members may have commitments that prevent them from participating in a focus group outside of these scheduled meetings. This makes it challenging to coordinate and schedule focus group sessions, in which some of the respondents were not able to commit, and thus, smaller pool of samples obtained. However, having said that, upon obtaining the data, many of the emerged ideas from the focus group discussion bear similar ideas, and that the researcher, were able to group them into similar themes.

3.3 Population Sample

For the sample, it will involve the members of the book club The KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) that has attended at least one book club discussion. The KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) is an online based book club with their own social media page (Facebook page).

This study puts a focus in book club that has evolved with technology. Hence, in this sense, researcher intends to put highlight on bookclub that operates from online medium. The KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) meets the criteria of the study which is a book club that operates online. More information on KL Appreciation Book Club shall be revealed in the next sub-section.

All respondents are from purposive and snowball sampling as all the samples must be members of an online book club that has previously joined a book club discussion within the book club group. Purposive sampling and snowball sampling are used as the study is specific for book club members, and in this study, voluntary individuals that joins book club and has previously joined a discussion.

The main essence of the research topic is on the group discussion that takes place within the book club, justifying why every one of the participants will have to at least join a book discussion before to qualify as sample. As the book club has many activities, to simply choose respondents based on their total duration of joining the book club may not be accurate. The same goes with active respondents. Both pool of respondents may not confirm that they fit into the main criteria as they may have joined the book club for a long time but is inactive, or they are active in the book club activities but have not once participated in any book discussions as the book club holds many other activities as well.

As for the focus group interview, 12 members of the book club will be chosen. The participant will be chosen from the list of people who has signed up or attended previous discussion. This factor is chosen to ensure respondent has participated in the club's book discussion. The respondents vary in age and gender, and are adults aged 18 and above. Snowballing method was used as it was discovered later that most of the respondents that actually attended book group discussions are amongst the same faces, and since almost all of them knew each other, the respondents recommended other samples. To find the samples, researcher went through book discussions under 'events' of the KLBAC Group and went on to search for samples that has ticked 'yes' in attending the book discussion event. From there, the researcher approached each of the sample if they would like to be a part of the study and to confirm if they have ever attended a book group before.

Focus group interview is being selected as the technique for the sample due to the nature of the study in trying to find out individual experience in being in book club community and their reading motivation in participating in group discussion. Due to the limitation of members found that actually went on book discussion versus the total number of book club members, the sample size went down as the people who attended the book discussion meetings were of the same people and only a handful of people. In average, each discussion group events had around 8-12 confirmed attendees. The researcher went to approach about 30 respondents however only 12 agreed to take part of the study. Thus, 2 focus group interviews with 6 members per focus group were conducted. Both of focus groups respondents bore the similarities of having attended at least one book club discussion and comprised of all 3 races, Chinese, Indian and Malay. Apart from that, all of them are also adult with age 18 and older. The only difference between the 2 focus groups

were the genders. The first focus group respondents were all women, where the second focus group respondent had a male in it. For this study however, gender, age and race have no importance as long as they have attended a discussion which is the center of the study.

With the average number of under 15 for each discussion event, 2 focus groups with 12 people were chosen to identify most prevalent themes within the data set. As the focus group discussion uses semi structured discussion guide, both focus groups conversational data flourishes from the interaction of the participants themselves. To ensure data received uncover most themes needed for the study, 2 focus groups discussions were done in alignment with the average size of samples.

3.3.1 KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC)

The KL Book Appreciation Club, or better known as KLBAC was founded on April 16, 2015. Founded by Datin Diana Yeong, she started looking for people to adopt books that her children had outgrown around 2013. Due to this, she formed a Facebook Group named KL Book Exchange Club (KLBEC). This was mainly for selling and buying books online. This group eventually expanded, and Diana found its members demanding for a book club. Therefore, giving in to the members' demand for a book club, she started another Facebook Group of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC). This is where members could discuss everything related to books. The group is being moderated by 5 moderators/admin and has 9000+ members as of current.

KL BAC holds monthly book discussions of all sorts of genre. The admins of the group also run author spotlights where readers can discuss works of featured author, book related sales charities, reading challenges and book chains. They are sometimes also mini shows or talks with authors, as well as workshops on reading or writing. The activities are mix of offline and online but now, with COVID-19, most activities including book discussions are held virtually.

In one of her speeches in an event 2008, Diana mentioned of the initial 'role' of the club that was formed, and that was 'in hopes of getting to know some other Malaysian book lovers, and inadvertently created a community'. She continued by mentioning how the book club formed 'became a virtual home for many Malaysian readers of every stripe, a space to debate our love-hate relationships' with books and authors. The group has spawned multiple niche communities, as well as some very real-life friendships which have formed out of this mutual appreciation of books and reading alike.

With this idea of the initial 'role' that was presented by the founder, this study attempts to find out the 'roles' of the book clubs from the members' point of view and how it is similar or different to the primary 'roles' that were presented by the founder of the book club. Thus, instead of using the term 'benefits' or advantages of the club to its members, this study continues to use the term 'role' as it attempts to uncover how the club affected its members in community practice, and how its members see its role in their social circle and in community.

3.4 Instrument

The instrument used for this study is the focus group interview questions. For the focus group interview, questions will be asked during the interview to understand how the discussion affect act of reading amongst the participants, form connection between role of book club and its influence towards community practice, and participants' motivation. Interviews were conducted within one to one and a half hour. Going further than two hours will likely tire participants while interview less than an hour may not yield adequate data for findings. The focus group interview is semi structured interview where the research prepares a few questions, moderate the group and at the same time let discussions flow between participants. As this study is deeply connected to societal connection of book club and its participants, focus group interview enables researcher to also look at the dynamics of conversation between the participants during the interview and the natural social cues picked up during the interview.

For the focus group interview, questions will be based on the research objectives and questions itself. To help with finding answers for the research questions, the set of questions for the focus group is guided from previous literature as well as related theories for the scope of study. As the study uses semi-structured discussion, the data is expected to produce various themes from natural discussion flow in which the theories presented in chapter 2 can help illuminate the findings further.

For the semi structured interview, researcher formulated nine questions. Questions were formed with research objectives and questions in mind. Skeletal framework of questions were inspired from Krueger (1998) as cited from (Cheng, 2014) which briefs more on skeletal frame of questions in interview. In semi-structured interview, while this

may not be fully followed, but having clear idea on question arrangement help interview flow better. In forming the questions, the researcher put in mind to have the following:

1. Opening Questions;
2. Introductory Questions;
3. Key Questions;
4. Transfer Questions (supplementary questions); and
5. Closing Questions

It is worth noting that as per open interview, answers are expected to overlap with each other. There is no hard and fast rules in the interview questions, as researcher is looking more into the enrichment of the interview answers on experience, meaning and perspective of respondents on the nature of study. Apart from that, as per mentioned, any social interaction in between respondents is welcomed as the study looks at the nature of the respondents' inclination to the book club. For ease of explanation on how questions are formulated, it will be explained further below in sections as per Research Questions.

Section 1

The first section will uncover answer for Research Question 1, which is 'What is the role of book club in community practice? For this research question, researcher would like to look at participants' point of view of the role of book club to the participants' lives and how they are affected by it. As the book club is more of a social group, interview questions will dig deeper on activities as well as feelings of the participants towards the book club. Elements from community practice perspective shall be looked at to explore on how

community practice bonds through the shared activities respondents do together from the book club. This opens up on how reading together as a social process and shares more on how readers collaborate with each other and becoming a community with shared entities.

Section 2

This section will probe further on answers that will lead to discovery of Research Question 2, which is ‘How does the group discussion in the KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) impact the act of reading for its participants’. The main part of this research question is to dive deeper of how reader response to literary texts in discussion. In reading alone, the process goes back and forth between reader and text alone whilst in reading together, social interaction in discussion affects the act of reading done towards the literary text. Concept of Reader Response Theory will be referred to gain more understanding on respondents’ perspective on how their reading acts changes or evolve in discussion.

From past literature, one study of ‘When adults talk in circles: Book groups and contemporary reading practices’ showcases some samples of act of reading happening in a discussion in book club. Using this act of readings as guide to understand what may have happened during a discussion, questions are formulated as to see the effect of discussion to the act of reading for the participants in the book club.

1. Appeal factors
2. Author's life or intentions
3. Counterproductive element
4. Cultural authorities

5. Disagreement-Tension
6. Discussible
7. Equipment for Living
8. Group as motivator
9. Suggesting revisions
10. Reader expectations
11. Reading strategies
12. Reference to outside/other reading
13. Reference to physical text.
14. Reference to shared reading
15. Reflection on reading
16. Using personal experiences

Section 3

This section of interview tries to answer Research Question 3, which is ‘How does group discussion in book club affect reading motivation to its participants?’ As motivation is a central feature in reading engagement, elements of intrinsic and extrinsic theory of motivation acts more of a guide to study how learning together affects participants’ motivation in the current activity and if it further extends to after discussion. There are many factors that may affect motivation in discussion, and thus the researcher would like to tap further on respondents’ feeling on this. Some of the questions that may invoke answers may be of questions relating choice of materials, or the after effect of reading (Lin, Luarn & Huang, 2015).

1. Do you feel like you learn more from reading in the discussion than on your own?
2. Do you like hard, challenging books?
3. If the topic of the day is interesting, do you feel like you are able to read harder material?
4. If yes, do you read more about it afterwards on your own?
5. How do you feel on books that makes you question and think?
6. Do you think finishing every reading assignment is very important?
7. How do you feel when you see/hear others agreeing your points in discussion?
8. Have you ever gotten compliments for your points or others complimenting your reading?
9. How do you feel when someone recognizes your reading?
10. Do you feel that it is important to participate in the discussion?
11. Do you feel that you are more motivated in reading since you have joined the book club?

From the elements of theory infused, researcher formulated 9 questions for the interview. The list of final questions is as per below and the questions are in italic font signifies the extensions of the base questions in case researcher needs to probe further for a more comprehensive answer.

1. What makes you join a book club?
2. How do you feel about being in a book club and why?
3. How do members talk about their reading – often, what do they bring to the discussion table?

- *Do they sometimes share their own story/likes/dislikes, tell others how they feel the same way/discuss how the story plot should go about, create their ideal text.*
4. In your opinion, how does a book discussion change the way one interprets a text?
 5. In your opinion, how does reading together differs from solitary reading?
 - *Do you learn more from group reading?*
 - *Are you able to read harder material with group reading?*
 6. In your experience, describe a fruitful group discussion.
 - *What do you gain from a good discussion?*
 - *How do you feel afterwards?*
 7. Describe your feelings when encounter positive interaction in group discussion (for example when your points are supported/validated/complimented).
 8. How has your reading motivation change since you joined the book club?
 9. How has book club affected your life or your personal growth?
 - *Do you find the discussion to be beneficial for you outside the book club setting?*
If yes, how?
 - *Do you feel that joining a book club strengthens your position in a community?*

3.5 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are important factors in research. For quantitative research, reliability and validity are essential and are easier to be done due to the numerical base of research. In qualitative research, the goal of the research is mainly to explore and understand certain phenomenon. This may or not be a case of testing a hypothesis, instead

most qualitative research is building new concept from group up. According to Noble and Smith (2015), in qualitative, the factor of reliability and validity are conceptualized as trustworthiness, rigor and quality in qualitative paradigm. Most qualitative research use the term rigor in the paradigm.

For qualitative research, being aware of personal biases influencing findings, keeping meticulous record, and demonstrating consistent and transparent decision and data interpretation, as well as establishing comparison case, can help strengthen the validity and reliability of the research. This is of course, with the act of searching for valid and abundance of data to support the research.

With this in mind, there were several steps taken by researcher to increase validity and reliability of the study. In this study, this study is based on few main theoretical frameworks from other studies, to provide skeletal base to the whole structure and instrument produced to ensure it is in line with past studies. For data collection, to ensure of a valid and honest answers from respondents, the questions are not revealed before the interview itself. Apart from that, to reduce any biasness, all the respondents were completely unknown to the researcher prior to the interview. On data collection, to ensure data received is of in line with the study, follow up questions were prepared in case further elaborated data is needed. For the instrument questions, a pilot study was conducted with two book club members, albeit they were of different book club, to ensure the questions were suitable and is comprehensive enough for the study. There were overlapping answers for some questions, however as it provided further enrichment for the data needed, the questions were not removed and maintained.

Recording and transcription is checked with another Masters student to ensure the transcription is correct. After the transcription, coding will be done line by line, and each

budding code will be recorded before being grouped into similar codes and rewording to form a general theme to answer the research questions.

In conclusion, for qualitative studies, it is imperative that strategies are being done to increase the credibility of the study during research design and implementation (Golafshani, 2003).

3.6 Data Collection and Data Analysis

For data collection, it will consist of the focus group interview data. Due to the pandemic of Covid-19, the researcher performed the interview online via Google Meet with respondents. The first focus group was done on late 2020 and subsequently another focus group was done late 2021. Researcher recorded the whole interview for transcription using the 'Record' function in Google Meet. The questions formulated for the interview touched on each section according to the research questions. In total, the final list of questions were nine questions. To ensure that every participant contributed in the discussion, alongside with the questions, researcher made sure to interject the discussion occasionally to call out on the names of participants in which the researcher felt that she needs more input from.

For the focus group interview data analysis, it is video and audio recorded to be transcribed. The whole interview was taped using recorder available from Google Meet function from a computer. The content was then transcribed in verbatim. For the transcription, researcher transcribed manually before going over the transcription for coding purposes. Researcher proceeded with line-by-line coding or sentence coding from the verbatim transcription. General themes were built to answer the research questions. For

the theme generation, researcher manually goes through the transcription. The method of inductive thematic analysis was used to gather findings as researcher goes through the transcription for familiarization of data, goes by line-by-line initial coding, grouping, and reviewing code names before developing them into major themes to be presented. In finding guide of how the themes were to be developed, researcher referred to techniques and examples presented in *Applied Thematic Analysis* by Greg Guest, Kathleen M. MacQueen, Emily E. Namey. Some of the techniques such as the Codebook development idea were referred to in finding synonyms and similar words before relating all similar sub themes together and creating major themes altogether.

Flow chart of the steps of the Data Collection is depicted in Figure 3.1: Data Collection Flow as below:

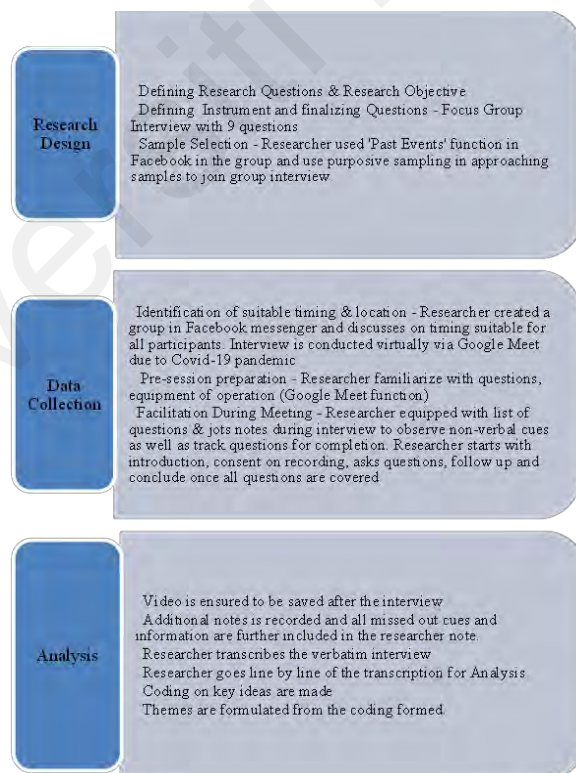


Figure 3.1: Data Collection Flow

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented on the detailed methodology regarding the study where it is explained further. This chapter consists of research methods that include design, sample, instrument, methods of data collection and methods of data analysis. For the

approach of study, this research will be in qualitative form where case study for its main design with focus group interview as the method of collecting data. For the sample of the data, it will be of purposive sampling which is to members of the KLBAC book club who have joined a discussion from the book group prior to the interview. To collect the data, researcher will undergo focus group interview with participants. To analyse the data, interview will be audio and video recorded to be transcribed. In the next chapter, the analysis of data findings will be presented and explained further.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study will be presented. The content from focus group interview was transcribed, which was further coded into themes. Major themes have been extracted and grouped according to the research questions for the presentation. The method of inductive thematic analysis was used to gather findings as researcher goes through the transcription for familiarization of data, goes by line-by-line initial coding, grouping, and reviewing code names before developing them into major themes to be presented.

The researcher aims to find out the effect of the discussion in the act of reading , discover the role of book club in the community, and find out the reading motivation behind the participants in book. From the research objectives, three research questions have been formulated which will be used as the basis of this study. The results of the research findings are presented as an answer to each of the research questions as below:

1. What is the role of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) in community practice?
2. How does the group discussion in the KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) impact the act of reading for its participants?
3. How does group discussion in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) affect reading motivation to its participants?

The findings of this study will be discussed according to the research questions. Each of themes found from the discussion will be grouped under the research questions.

4.2 Description of Participants

The research uses Focus Group interview to obtain data to uncover the research questions. 12 participants were chosen from the Facebook Group of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC), divided to 2 focus group interviews. The sample were from purposive sampling, as researcher went through the groups' past discussion events, and approached on members who has ticked going. For further verification, each of the respondents were asked once again if they fulfill the criteria of the sample which are:

1. Member of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC).
2. Have attended at least one book discussion in the group previously.

The 12 respondents were female and male all above the age of 18, with the race of three Malay, three Chinese, four Indians, and two others. From the interview done, it can be concluded that some of them knew each other from book club sessions and some of them are in multiple book clubs instead of only one. The details of the respondents can be summarized as in Appendix E. All of the participants will be letter coded as to protect anonymity. Code name R is used for respondents in focus group 1 and Code name B is used for respondents in focus group 2.

4.3 Findings Based on Research Questions

4.3.1 Role of Participants in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) in Community Practice

Before going forth of presenting the findings for this research question, it is worth explaining on the term community practice. Community practice is defined as practice that exists when the shared ideas, commitments and memories are established and developed through the continuous participation in book club as a means of community activities (Foster, 2006). Hence, with this notion, researcher aims to find out what is the role of book club activities that it brings to the participants in terms of societal contribution. As per mentioned in the previous chapter, the term role was used for the study in hopes to get on the members' perspectives on what do they think of the book club roles in their lives in terms of connecting them to the society and if it reflects on the founders initial goal and role when forming the club.

4.3.1.1 Book Club as Means of Connecting to the Society

One of the most apparent findings from the focus group interview was that most participants revealed that they have used the book club and participated in the activities in means of connecting to other people. Most of them were happy to make new friends and acquaintance who share the same favourite pastime. The respondents mentioned:

R6: “..the online discussion, it’s nice to connect with people..”

R4: “..So, uhm, what I enjoy most is, like she said, the online discussion, it’s nice to connect

with people..”.

R4: “I have made many friends, I have met people in the club that are my friends now.”.

In a way, the book club serves as a link between the people and a wider connection to the community. In this context, a book club serves as a social hub where individuals come together to engage in literary discussions, share perspectives, and build relationships. It provides a platform for members to connect with others in their community, fostering a sense of belonging and camaraderie.

R3: “..in a way I treat book club as my reading network-to share my own thoughts, findings from the readings that I’ve made. I do enjoy the rapport among friends that manage to clique. It helps makes things fresh, helps me get out of a reading rut”.

As the interview took place when the world was facing a pandemic, respondents also mentioned that the existence of the book club enabled them to reach out to other people online.

R3: “Yeah, it allow me to get out of rut of the pandemic and I’m being connected to other people, even online is better than nothing..”

One of the respondents also used book club activity as means of reconnecting to an old friend, as a method to cheer up a friend.

R1: “So one of the way that we thought that you know, because he has just lost his job..he’s

a lawyer, and he, he, he looks down. So we thought of like, 'Okay why don't we discuss a book? – Just to give a reason to say hi, you know... We just need to uhh, make a friend happy or actually asking him how he was without actually asking that..'

One of the respondents also noted that initially, his goal of joining the book club wasn't serious, but it turned out to be something much more than just temporary connection, delving him into the book group itself.

B4: "So that actually I looked like my first post I, I was my first post, was asking for people whether I can borrow a Kinokuniya privilege card, a member card because I needed the discount on the books and but after that I think I got into the, the first book discussion, I think with Tina...."

This does not stop from using book club activities to lift one up, but respondents also mentioned in terms of connecting with society, respondents felt that the connection felt within the activities empower their own self as well. From being connected to others, participants fuel their inner or human need of communication in terms of belongingness and needs.

R5: "I feel connected to others and that I feel content or satisfied in learning something new or listening to others."

R4: "Like, I have a book club, where they see empowerment in reading together. So the discussion will be like 45 minutes to 1 hour and then the other hour will be chit chat and catching up.."

R3: "...the energy I get from discussion and seeing how enthusiastic others are fuels me.."

R5: "Once I leave a good discussion, most times, um, I feel, feel a sense of belonging"

R1: "Yeah, for introverts like me, talking and discussing books has often refueled me. I seek comfort for me, and gets me in good mood to perform other 'life tasks' required of me."

R5: "Seeing other people, sometimes, gives me positive energy, helps me deal better getting back to my mundane routine.."

The emphasis here is on fostering a sense of community and belonging within a broader social context. Members may engage in activities beyond book discussions. The engagement extends beyond the confines of the book club meetings to encompass broader societal issues, community involvement, and social connections outside of the literary realm.

R1: In some discussions, I would say, we don't, we don't just discuss...the books, we help each other, we share our struggles, too."

B6: "I'm actually in a few book clubs. But for KL Bac in particular, I liked the fact that I somehow belonged to something. Most people in the group are very supportive."

This was shared in both of the focus groups that were done. In general, participants searched for other people with connected minds, people they can assure to be likely to them, to be more specific, people they can call their own. With this, the respondents felt like they belong to something, where they can seek each other. One participant noted that:

B2: "I'm not sure a lot of it is for the good or worse, but it has been really great, so I think I joined because I wanted to be in that kind of a community where everybody understands."

Another participant added how the members of the club were all different, but same

in such a way that they share the love of reading together.

B1: "... here I had a community that had, I mean because there was so many different people that had different interests and therefore like the different genres that I liked, I could actually connect with people. Also I got book news, and then sometimes like when the book activities you know and then we have discussions and and meetings. It was really fun."

B1: "It's definitely, it's definitely enriched my life. Uh, because previously I used to kind of feel alone in this mad world. Where I'm, I'm reading and reading and reading and then I've got no one to share it with and so it's been wonderful to to make new friends who read as as widely and sometimes as variedly. it's been, it's been really wonderful to be a part of this community and to know that I'm not alone, you know?"

B4: ".. it's all like just having a life concentration of the people who like the same thing you do it. Just feels nice. It's a community, yeah."

One of the respondents even went a step further as she mentioned how the members of KLBAC somehow turned into her lifelong friends, beyond virtual conversations as well as virtual meetings. The members became her friends which consoled and helped her in real time when she was in trouble.

B3: "I, uh, I feel, it's more of a social thing for me. It's not so much of a you know, wanting to achieve something, so it's part of it is yeah you mean and talk about the book, but it's also, seeing your friends which is well, actually a lot of people have been asking, you know, are we going to have face to face discussions again because you know we have not seen each other? For two years and we miss each other, seeing each other on zoom or Google Meet,

it's just not the same, so it's very much a social thing. Uhm, and so when I think about the uh discussion, part of it is just getting to meet friends and just chat with them about books that we have both read and loved or hated.”

From the excerpts, it is seen that respondents use the book club to connect with other people, some to merely get in touch with others, or obtain human interaction, whilst some delve in deeper to seek comfort in others, and as means to relief stress. While some participants join book clubs primarily for the social interaction, others may seek intellectual stimulation, professional networking, or personal growth. This is in line with past literature studies that views reading together as a social process. For example, the Progressive Era women’s Clubs was formed as a vehicle of self education to women, long before women had the privilege of learning (Taylor, 2007). The book clubs groups formed provided intellectual and social stimulation for their members. The whole unified feeling with others in the book group provides the respondents’ a sense of security in the belongingness.

In conclusion, book clubs serves as more than just literary discussion groups but as dynamic social communities that provide members with opportunities for connection, support, and enrichment. By examining the experiences and perspectives of participants, book clubs can be said to contribute to individuals' sense of belonging and engagement with society.

4.3.1.2 Finding Other People with Same Interest

Apart from simply connecting to others both online and offline, several participants also mentioned that the book club and its activities have enabled them to find like-minded people. While joining a book club can indeed connect you to society, the emphasis here is

more on finding individuals who share a specific interest in reading and discussing books. The primary goal is to locate like-minded people with whom you can engage in intellectual conversations and explore your passion for literature together. One respondent said:

R4: "I think one of the reasons I joined KLBAC was for the discussions. That was not my prime reasons though, the reason is really because I just wanted to talk to people who liked book and read book..", "I just wanted to meet Malaysians who liked to read, who liked to go to bookshops, who liked to go to the libraries, who liked to collect books, you know, who just really, really love reading like I do.."

R6: I have also discovered a love for dystopian or magical realism, something I wouldn't have otherwise, and I've got to admit, discussing about them is fun. It's nice to belong to something, online tribe of people who enjoy the same thing.

R1: "...this book discussions allow me to share my reading pastime, with fellow, readers. It's pure joy.

Most participants noted the exhilarating feeling upon finding likeminded people, in this case, people who liked books or liked reading and dissecting books as much as they are.

R3: "...the book club, makes me feel that, not all the posting, but most of the posting, made me feel like uhh I'm close to the people, I can chat with them with likeminded people.."

R5: "I feel that you do meet likeminded people, and um, you do make new friends".

R2: "Uh, I joined the book club since 2017...and I am glad I am able to participate with likeminded people".

B1: "Uh, because previously I used to kind of feel alone in this mad world. Where I'm, I'm

reading and reading and reading and then I've got no one to share It with and so it's been wonderful to to make new friends who read as as widely and sometimes as variedly.”

B2: “I think it's quite comforting because like I said, I got like-minded people who share your passion for reading and they're also people who are not as like-minded with your reading material and you you hear a completely different point of view, something that you've not thought of, which is what I've actually come to realize.”

As the respondents find other likeminded people, which brings them closer to the society, book club was used a safe space in social sphere as they mingle with people with same interests. It is also quite apparent in both focus group that the respondents were in search of something, expressing their hardship in finding other people that have the same interest as them. This is very much connected to Malaysian’s book culture and reading rate, in which we will uncover more in the next chapter.

R1: “...I really like KLBAC because I think, um, they are, very, very, um, sort of, professional, and um, there is no, regardless what genre you are reading, there is no backlashing, there is no whatever. You can read whatever, as long as it is reading. So I really, really, appreciate that.”

R1: “..It’s open, ...I don’t feel self-conscious to read whatever I like, or pursue, pursue different genres, even if it’s not conforming to a certain ‘deemed educated’ genre. I just, read what I like, what I feel like pursuing..”.

B1: “You know everybody is very very understanding and everybody is like, OK, oh, you don't know these. OK, let me tell you about this, but there's no there’s no judgment I I think that's the cool thing about it. It's very much like I've become friends with a whole bunch of

new people who I would never ordinarily have become friends with.”

With book club participation, participants find other people of the same interest and invest in their relation with the people. Book club allows them to expand their connection circle and a place they can seek shelter and companionship from each other.

One of the most revolutionary book clubs that highlights on the importance of gathering people with likeminded ideas and interest in reading, was from the emergence of Oprah Book Club. Oprah’s book club had successfully pooled in people from all walks of life with the same interest, which evidently, also provided a sense of belonging and safe safe for its members in the means of social construction of knowledge (Hall, 2001)

In conclusion, one of the role of book clubs is in facilitating connections among individuals who share a common interest in reading and discussing books. Book clubs acts as spaces where like-minded individuals can come together to engage in intellectual conversations, explore their passion for literature, and forge meaningful relationships with others who share their interests. Participants express a desire to connect with individuals who share their love for reading, discussing books, and exploring literary themes and ideas. For many participants, joining a book club serves as a means of locating like-minded people with whom they can engage in stimulating conversations and share their enthusiasm for literature. As this reading circle is small, participants value book clubs as safe spaces where individuals can feel accepted, understood, and valued for their shared interests and intellectual pursuits.

4.3.1.3 Passion in Reading

One of the biggest roles of the book club to its members is to mediate the members’ passion in reading and connect them to other people. Passion in reading was very much prevalent and can be seen from the way the participants describe how their time was used,

and thus how they view the club as well.

B1: "So it's it's interesting for me because I've been a reader all my life, so I'm, I read so much"

As expected, a lot of them were individual reader, and had been reading all their life. The focus group discussion replies made clear of participants passion in reading. It seems that reading were a part of their life, something that they always come back to. One of the respondents said:

B3: "So I have other hobbies, so if I don't feel like reading, it's OK. I I would just do something else for a while because I know I'll always come back to reading. Since you know, reading has been a part of my life since I was young"

It is this passion that anchors the book club participation and connect its members together. In a way, passion in reading in participants themselves becomes a function of the book club in community.

4.3.1.4 Moral Discussion in Book Club

Aside from social connecting with others and relating to the group with same passion, another theme emerged from the findings were respondents highlighted that as an individual, their growth can somewhat be contributed from the discussion. This personal growth is mainly from the moral discussion that takes place in the group. With the information gathered and deep discussion on society and worldly issues, participants grow their own self over time.

Through the lens of others and deep talks on the material, worldly issue as well as social issues were brought up and discussed.

R6: *"..then someone else brought in the issue of nurture versus nature, the monster was let loose, had he had the proper upbringing with parental guidance, how he would have turned out but because he didn't and he was kind of thrown out...and then we also brought up issues like IQ versus EQ.*

R4: *"I think we should get to the point, where we don't discriminate against people, and we should see the anomaly as anomaly (referring to book content). I feel that we should read more book and be less discriminatory as a result of reading.*

R4: *"What I mean is, as readers, I feel we should think and we should understand differences.*

R6: *"On a bigger note, it has also made me more aware of things like, climate change, refugee crisis, influence of social media on the world, you know, things like that."*

The discussion on these issues affected the respondents' character. Most of them agreed that the discussions have made them become more empathetic person.

R5: *"For me, I think it helps us to be more empathy. How much personal experience affects or changes how people view things/opinion or anything that matters."*

R1: *"When, uh, when I am in this type of group discussion, the feels you get from it gives you more than just entertainment, or uh, self-indulgence from reading the book. Much more than that. You get taught many things, and even fiction can teach you a lot, especially on being empathetic."*

R1: *"..I get to share, discuss on many things, and being allowed to agree to disagree*

positively in a discussion helped me to increase my empathy and understanding towards many human behaviour.”

In one of the past finding, one finding that emerges was the notion of truth. In book clubs, members explore and talked about truth. They see the difficulties of truth, as how you do you know if something is true, the truth extension, who has access to truthfulness and what is the evidence of truth (Foster, 2006). Discussions such as this help in developing moral characters of book clubs, as well as providing social constructive knowledge of moral compass between the participants.

Through the discussions conducted, apart from learning on the book itself, respondents were exposed to current issue and feedbacks in turn, help shape who they are and provide them on an update on vital current issues happening in the world. This fact is particularly important, as we would want to create society that cares, and society that cares starts from society that are aware of things happening in their surroundings. Book club plays a role in this cultivation in the community practice.

4.3.2 Act of Reading of Participants in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC)

According to Taylor (2007), in 1938, Rosenblatt refers reading as a process of making meaning out of the books. Growth in reading is not only from listening from explanation from the instructor or teacher making sense of the text, but also in the metacognitive process of how the reader forms meaning of his own from the text (Foster, 2006).

Act of reading ranges from the process of meaning making, to social interaction that takes place during discussion. In book clubs, readers bring their own meaning, hear one another's, speak up on their own opinion and perspective, defend ideas of their own and ultimately, build an interpretation of the text that combines multiple views from their own understanding and its members (Foster, 2006). Apart from the text itself, participants also discuss on the author's life, background story.

From the interview held, participants express various social interactions and acts of reading happening during discussion. The discussion that takes place affect the act of reading, moulding new comprehension of the text. Holding true to one of the study's frameworks of the process of transference and transactional process in reading, there are many aspects in reading together that uses this theory.

4.3.2.1 Expand Horizon by Discussion

Perhaps one of the most obvious and prominent aspect in act of reading is that respondents feel that in general, they get to expand horizon by attending book group discussion. Whether they contributed to the book discussion or be a silent listener, all of the respondents agreed how their perspectives were widened and their existing knowledge of the book broadened with the input received from the book discussion.

R5: "A book discussion teases your thoughts and insight to the text and see if you came across the same text the same way, sometimes to validate their thoughts too, or other times to see if anyone came up with something different. I guess, this is why people go to discussion as well. To know things that we do not know, or to have added knowledge in regards to the book itself."

R5: *“It’s always interesting.. and sometimes surprising how people can interpret the same text, you know, very differently. It changes how we view things in daily life.”*

R4: *“So I’ve gone to discussion where I didn’t talk that much, didn’t contribute that much verbally but because there’s so many others who shared and know more than I did, I become very enriched. It doesn’t really matter to me if they like what I say or not, because it is just my opinion, but it does matter to me that I do learn.”*

Even though the book plot and interpretation may remain the same, however, with the discussion of the book, participants get more depth of the books.

R6: *“In my personal view, discussion gives a different perspective and more layers to the book but most of the time, it doesn’t change the interpretation of the book. Like, the book interpretation most of the time remain the same for me, it is just that upon hearing others, I get their views of the book from them.”*

In attending book discussion, participants bring their innate background, view and this shapes their opinion and thoughts on thing. No one person would have the exact same thoughts, and this enriches the discussion. Participants mostly said:

R1: *“There is, uhm, many factors making discussions interesting. Culture, upbringing, education and uhm, social interaction plays an important role in forming an opinion. This is similar in interpreting a text from a book.”*

R2: *“Yes, as different people come up with different perspectives, views and ideas of looking at a text. No one looks at the text the same way, so the answer to this question, is a yes. Book discussions do help us open our minds to different point of views, which we never thought of,*

previously.”

R1: “Sharing experiences and knowledge about a subject helps book members to widen our knowledge and allow us to form an informed opinion. As I said before, many things affect the formulation of our opinion and sometimes, upon hearing others’ opinion and combine with our background, it can create, a, a whole new thing, or knowledge for us.”

Expanding horizon on things and adding new knowledge makes group discussion different from solitary reading. Participants get new comprehension, add new items to their existing knowledge as well as form different thoughts through the discussion. Participants noted that this criterion makes reading together different than their solitary reading. Some of the excerpts from participants included:

R6: “For me reading together has certain difference, of course, from reading on your own. I for one, learn more from group reading. As we know, um, group reading gives one more, more depth and understanding to the store.”

R4: “When you read as a group, uh, there is more space for interpretation, there are more uh subtext that can be discovered, uh, you know, it is more comprehensive than just one person, because you are just you, reading with your own biases, likes and dislikes, whereas when you read it as a group, the reading, yeah, you read it own your own but when you discuss, it’s much more eye opening.”

R4: “So I think it is good to do books like this with somebody else, because they can help you to understand it. What’s interesting about reading as a group is that everybody brings in their own perspectives, people do research as well, you know they share trivia, they share information that they found out, for instance the context that the story was written, or why

such book was written.”

Due to this particular factor as well, in learning new things, expanding their horizon and perspectives on the books and so many other layers in it, makes participants eager to be in group discussion and for some of them, became one of the main causes of joining book club.

R4: “So I really enjoyed, um, book discussions then because it’s always interesting to see how other people perceive the same book, the same characters, their thought process, the, uh, what they bring..how they project as well, you know? How they look at the book and feel differently about the plot, or how it turned out.”

R6: “...the discussion are nice because one book can be looked at so many points of view because it’s nice when there are people from different background also, so the way they looked at the book is very different from the way I would, so it’s nice to just have different point of view and different way of analysing the book.”

R3: “For an introvert like me, looking at books from others’ view, forcing myself to read more, to read other books that I have minimal liking, or my usual go-to, this are some of the things, I feel, I may have grown myself with, with the book club.”

4.3.2.2 Critical Thinking in Discussion

One of the most apparent effects of group discussion towards discussion is that participants engage in critical thinking from the content of the discussion. The depth of the discussion attended allows participants to relate, reflect and engage in the transference and transactional reading process.

R4: “..I think the point of discussion at the end of the day, is to think. To think more, to think better. You know, it’s not just about, uh, escapism, it’s not just about reading and uh, uh, how, uh I feel that we must read to think, and we go to these discussions to think.”

R3: “ ..for me, something happens in the discussion that changes my way of thinking. Not sure how to explain it but it makes me ponder what I have read. Seeing the text in another view from the other members sometimes makes me think more.”

R5: “A fruitful book discussion to me is always a discussion that left me thinking even more..and got me doing extended research about the topics that interest me.”

R3: “After a good discussion, when I look at the story at a different view, it makes my mind reeling. Or if, if the book is reallyyyy thought-provoking, it makes me think further. Sometimes I think of the book for the whole day afterwards.”

B1: So definitely I would say the discussion is rewarding and it, it it can actually lead to you thinking it can lead to you thinking critical thoughts that you never had about that, that kind of that book.

Apart from generating critical thoughts of the reading material, book group members also get to reflect and be critical of author’s style of writing. Identifying and talking about on author’s life or background story or even their writing style is one of an act of reading. One of the respondents note that:

R4: “If you have read several books of the same author, you tend to see that sometimes, they recycle the same formulas. So, I read on, an Asian author, a south east Asian author and I

was, I really like the book. This was this year, but I realized that, “oh, this formula, there’s always this kind of guy, there’s always this thing happening, you know this kind of thing, so, if you’ve read several books from the same author, you tend to see, or the same genre, or the same, uh, country even, or era, you do see the connections.

In joining book discussions, participants also note and discuss on their personal notion towards specific authors, and how they feel about them. To be able to discuss on the author’s preference and style, takes critical engagement from the participants. One of the participants was mentioning how he felt awful that an award-winning author was actually flip sided in nature.

B4: And yeah, that. That’s all, that’s all things that you make you think. About like, why do we honor this person with ideas so horrible and we give it to someone, who was victimized by his ideas and and I I feel like reading itself and being a community and knowing about all these other people, it it makes us more conscientious. And our reading life feature. I mean, some people who say that, “oh yeah, maybe you end up hating some authors...” and all that. But maybe sometimes we we have to be a bit cautious about what we are reading and. And I don't think I think being discerning is a good thing.

The participant added on that the fact that he knows of the author changes fully of how he interprets the author’s work:

B4 : Not like that, more like, when you're reading something and you're reading it as state when I read it as a teenager. To me it's like, oh, it says horror or along those things but it

just flew over my head. But if you read it now, knowing certain things about him (the author). A lot of it makes more sense in a way. And it's a deeper reading and I have a better understanding of the story.

Thus, all in all, deep engagement in discussion allows participants to be in a higher order thinking skill, which is the critical thinking skills that is needed in many aspects of life.

4.3.2.3 Significance of Moderator

Another important point that was highlighted many times throughout the interview was that all participants felt moderator's role in book group discussion as an imperative tool to successful discussion. The significance of the moderator in book club discussions is multifold, encompassing facilitation, focus maintenance, encouragement of participation, promotion of critical thinking, conflict resolution, and the enhancement of overall enjoyment. The moderator's role in the discussion affects many reading notions and act of reading in the group.

The moderator serves as a catalyst for participation within the group. By fostering a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere, the moderator empowers all members to contribute their perspectives and engage in meaningful dialogue. One of the participants said that with moderator's help in steering the discussion, the feeling of dissecting a daunting book can be lessened:

R6: "...it makes a big difference when the moderator, is, uh, is good. The you kind of look forward, even though the book is like, you know, it's a bit daunting but when you have a good moderator, it uh, you know, you feel a little, like safer to, to venture into a new genre and try

it.”

Additionally, the moderator plays a vital role in promoting critical thinking among book club members. By posing thought-provoking questions and encouraging analytical discourse, the moderator challenges participants to delve beneath the surface of the text, unraveling its layers of meaning and symbolism. This cultivation of critical thinking skills not only deepens members' understanding and appreciation of the literary work but also fosters intellectual growth and curiosity.

R4: “I think a good discussion leader will ask further questions, um, they will prompt participants to think even more, not just questions relating to the book, for instance questions asking, “How do you, uh, relate this to character?”, “Has something like this happened in your own life?”.

Another participant stated that after a good discussion with the help of a good moderator, more book revelations will come in:

R3: “...R4 actually put down almost all the criteria in the good moderator to make a discussion, um, lively, enjoyable and when you end the discussion, you come to an understanding of, “Oh this is what, um, I mean, there’s more to the book than just reading the book, there’s more behind those reading.

A moderator shoulders the responsibility of not only guiding conversations but also enriching them with valuable context and information. One crucial aspect of this preparatory work is

conducting thorough research to equip oneself with a comprehensive understanding of the book's backstory, historical context, and authorial influences. By delving into these foundational elements, moderators can provide participants with a deeper appreciation of the text and foster more nuanced discussions.

R6: "I also think that a facilitators job is quite great, uh the background information. For example, we did a Frankenstein by Mary Shelley and everyone thinks it is a horror story, but ended up being an ethical discussion on the sci-fi group and David Farrell, one of the moderators, he's an industry professor in, uh Japan, and he, did quite a background research on Mary Shelley".

R6: "You know, so I think I wouldn't have looked at that, the book, Frankenstein, I'm just bringing up an example, in all these different highlights, had it not been for everyone asking for all those questions and the moderators preparedness etc."

This is evident when some of the participants commented how their discussions are enriched with the help of the moderator's preparedness:

R4: "To me, a good discussion engages all senses, like the sight, the smell, sense, the sound, touch all those things. So when a discussion lead takes the extra effort to prepare audience for the context of the book, we become more enriched with background information of the book."

Through skilled facilitation, the moderator ensures that all members have the opportunity to express their thoughts and insights, fostering an environment of inclusivity and engagement.

R3: "To have a good discussion, moderator plays an important thing. They, they need to ensure that all members speak up, like if that person is silent, give a question directly to him or her. It is the moderator's, I feel, their skill to fill up any lapse in the discussions."

A good moderator as noted from the participants response, helps them to view things differently and aids in deeper comprehension from providing backstory to asking relevant questions to help participants reflect and thus thinking critically of the reading material with view of current or real-life scenario.

This was also strengthened by the second focus group attendants, which all of the participants agreed how moderators are the ones that move the discussion or be an anchor to lead the discussion.

B2: Moderator actually brings everybody together. And they generally prepare a set of questions about the book, and then everybody takes turns answering, giving their own opinions and what they think about it and all that but. It's not just that "OK, this is the book that we read. Everybody talks about it". It's not like that. There is a set of a set list of questions pertaining to the books, the characters, the theme, the way the authors written and stuff like that, and it's generally, I think the burden lies or the person who's moderating the group so that they have the biggest responsibility and how they moderate the meeting is how it goes.

B3 : I think it's really down to the moderator like what's in why I said earlier. It depends on how to moderate are many just the discussion. I know I I don't know I I mainly I've been

lucky that all the moderators that I've in the book discussions that I've been participating in have been on the ball so to speak.

One of the participants, who had been moderating several discussions, shared his idea on ideal moderating:

B4 : It's fun to see if the others can see your point of view as well, and also for me in some discussion, I have to learn how to moderate myself because I tend to want to talk a lot and say a lot of things and half the time be like "OK. I feel calm down I feel great". And a good moderator should know how to make sure everyone contributes and don't let certain people end up dominating the discussion.

When the moderators are well prepared, or if they have more background information than the participants that joins, it changes tremendously on how participants get or process information received from the discussion. Participants note that some moderators were very knowledgeable but in a more discreet way.

B4 : Yeah, but I remember he he he there's a few papers that he shared that he writes on the ecological impact of certain novels. I think he wrote about the the one that annihilation the one. I think he wrote about the Southern Reach novels, which has a lot of environmental theme to it and a few other books as well. So, so he's well written and well published on those fronts, but he doesn't show it off, you know? So you don't really know you know.

In conclusion, the significance of a moderator in book club discussions cannot be overstated. From facilitating dialogue and maintaining focus to encouraging participation and promoting critical thinking, the moderator plays a pivotal role in shaping the dynamic

and enriching discussion experience. By fostering a sense of community and intellectual exploration, the moderator enhances the enjoyment and value of the book club for all its members, ensuring that each gathering becomes a rewarding journey of literary discovery and communal engagement.

4.3.2.4 Relevance of Narrative Background

Apart from moderator, another aspect in act of reading that was affected from group discussion was the fact that if it had more discussion on the backstory of the reading materials, the discussion becomes more enriched. The backstory of a book typically refers to the narrative or context that exists behind the main plot or events portrayed in the book. It encompasses the history, motivations, and experiences of the characters, as well as the world-building elements that may not be explicitly presented in the story but still influence the plot. The backstory can include details about the characters' pasts, the setting's history, any significant events that occurred before the main storyline, and the relationships between characters. It serves to add depth, richness, and context to the primary narrative, enhancing the reader's understanding and immersion in the book's world.

In the interview, several participants responded in favour on the importance of backstory in aiding them to fathom the reading materials even better. Having a backstory helps participant's act of reading in understanding the materials better. Some of the participants excerpts are as per below:

R3: "Sometimes, having the background story of the author opens up a new thing or

discovery with the text.”

R6: “Yeah, I agree with that, too. Having background story of the author sometimes adds something to the discussion.”

R1: “Yes, so yes, when there is good deal of information shared about the book or back story of the book, discussions become, more, more enriched...”

R4: “So what makes a good discussion is so many elements, you know, of course proper research by discussion lead, encouraging participants not only to read the book but read media that concerns that history time of that book. Getting the context makes you get comprehensive info of the world at that time, and with that understanding, then you can really really understand the book.”

Sometimes, having the backstory being told and discussed during the discussions is what makes the book club discussion different from solitary reading, and backstory of work can sometimes open up a whole new world to the participants.

B2: “Before I joined the romance club and this is I was reading romance novels from way back when and long time ago and most of its historical stuff, and I found that I learned quite a lot. When we went to England for a visit once right, I knew the ‘two door’ history and was in shock. I absorbed so much knowledge from all my romance novels. ”

B6: “But I must highlight on some discussions where there is rich backstory that is shared, those ‘extras’ info of the books are usually the things I don’t get if I were to read it alone.”

B4: “Well, I don’t say that you must read all this classical or foundational work of a genre, but I think it does, it is interesting to see, Oh yeah, this is where this subgenre started. “This is how it used to be discussed, like how it’s written, how this book is written, and how influential it was” and and you start having this web of idea of how books start

inspiring other books and and I find that it it every time I read some other new book now, now I can see..Yeah, where the influencers are coming from.

In summary, the significance of backstory in guiding book discussions is undeniable. Backstory provides essential context and depth to the narrative, allowing readers to grasp the complexities of plot, character, and theme more fully. It serves as a catalyst for engaging discussions, enabling participants to analyze the text with clarity and insight. It is a vital tool for facilitating insightful conversations and enriching the overall literary experience for all participants.

4.3.2.5 Improving Book Storyline

Group discussion also affect act of reading in participants in terms of improving book storyline. Instead of formulating own ending, or a thinking of an ending to the story by own self, participants get to expand the selection of book storyline or a new ending to the reading materials by group discussion and hearing others' perspective on this. Often, during discussion, participants may be directed to questions that reflect their thinking and choice of how the story should be.

From here, participants gather and compile other people's thoughts and together, they engage in highest order of human learning skill, which is creating. From the accumulation of information, participants create something new, an extension of the reading material knowledge. For instance, one of the respondents stated:

R4: "But I think it is good to ask, is that the questions I asked, and I get asked is, what, how can the story be better?, what piece would you have put in, what would you have taken out, how would you have changed the action of the character? What do you feel was most

irrelevant in the story, how can the ending could be different, do you think the outcomes would have been different if somebody had behaved differently, you know, what do you think happened after that? What do you think happened after the last page? And some even do a full casting, like a very popular book and it hasn't been made to still yet, you'd asked, who would you cast in this role?

For other participants, the fact that open ended stories can be discussed during group discussion gave her option of a closure to the story, rather than having own questions left hanging. The respondent noted that:

*R1: "Well, for one, I am exposed to other interpretations of why a certain character behaves in a, a certain way, or or whether the ending was what I thought it was..especially in an open ended story. I hate, well not to say hate *laughs* but my least favourite type of book would be the ones where the ending is hanging or open ended. But when you read this types of books and join discussions, you will end up finding, finding many different version or ideas of how the book can be closed. When you read alone, of course, for sure the open ended part will not be explored further as it is just you, yourself."*

Creating a closure for books is an integral act of reading process and discussion in book discussion is seen to be aiding on this point. Rather than relying solely on their own interpretations or imagination, participants are exposed to a diverse range of perspectives and ideas through group discussions. This prompts them to consider different possibilities for the development of the storyline, including alternative plot twists, character actions, and resolutions.

In an essence, book groups is one of the agents that produces a text (Taylor, 2007). It consists of network and cooperation of many people who contributes to the work of art, namely the discussion of the books in book clubs, using their own prior knowledge and world understandings share. Within this perspective, we can deduce readers in book clubs as co producers of books as well. They determine the reception of a work, but at the same time, they act as the active participants in its creation (Taylor, 2007).

4.3.2.6 Relating to Book Content by Comparative Analysis

In book discussion, one of the more obvious facts that through the group meaning making process which aids reading comprehension of the material, participants are able to engage in active reading process, which is relating themselves to the book. It is the process of connecting personal experiences, perspectives, or knowledge to the material in a book by examining similarities and differences. Essentially, it involves reflecting on how the content of the book resonates with one's own life, beliefs, or understanding through the lens of comparison and contrast. Many books content can be compared with participants own self, such as the book character, book plot or even the setting of the story. For example, one respondent pointed out that:

R4: "If I ask a question about a particular character and somebody else may relate that character's motivation or actions, or mannerism, you know, uh just the character in general to something that they read in what, in another book, or a similar genre or a different genre."

Another respondent highlighted on how book resonates more when the conflicts in the book is being compared to a real life conflict:

B6: It gets deeper when we start comparing the internal conflict with ours, or how our feeling resonates with the book. For me, I feel deeper in discussion when I can connect with the book in some way. Some really good book discussion that moves me may have an impact on how overall I feel about the book but I will not say all discussion does that. For me it really depends on what and how much I get from the discussion.

Another critical thinking skills applied during book discussion that changes the act of reading is the essence of relating present time with the backstory or setting of the reading material by comparing with the current time. One respondent feels that it is particularly important to relate the setting in the reading material to the present time. She says:

R4: "I feel that a discussion of a book should be lifted off a book, it should be taken off the pages of the book because you must understand the context of which the book was written and if it was written very long time ago, we must relate it back today. How our perspectives have changed, you must be able to admire and criticize the book."

The same respondent added:

R4: "I feel like we are fooling ourselves or we are purposely ignorant if we say, "You know what those books are from that time, so let's not even talk about the fact that they were racist, because it goes further right, like why was it okay for them to speak this way, from privilege, from class distinctions, or that is the way they talk, that is who they were, they saw inequality between classes but they were still all white and anyone who is not white, is the other, is

different, completely lower even the lowest class in their hierarchy.”

Another respondent mentioned on the racial difference from the current time and as compared to past. Book discussed allows for this fact to be more apparent than reading on their own.

B2: Maybe that like you said, yeah that that at that point in time, you just read that you don't really think or analyze books so much. Yeah, and and then now I think because of the the issues with consent, we are much more like aware of those issues. Yeah yeah, correct for sure. It's just like. When I read Kutulu, I mean I could actually, see the racial slurs that he addressing all the other characters or the mention of all those other characters. And it was more apparent to me this time around.

In an active discussion, from the time and place setting of the reading materials, comes whatever issue from the time, in which participants can assimilate to the current issues happening now. Through this active type of discussion, participants are connected further to the reading material by comparing issues and topics emerging from the discussion.

4.3.3 Reading Motivation in Members of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC)

4.3.3.1 Motivation in Reading Together

According to Deci, Koestner & Ryan (1999), reading motivation can be referred to as a person's personal goals, values and beliefs on reading topics, processes, and its outcomes. Intrinsic motivation refers to inner urge in oneself to do something, for example,

personal liking or hobby while extrinsic motivation refers to motivation that are moved by external factors (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) as cited from from (Mohd Kasim, Mohd Khir, & Zaharim, 2019). As the respondents entering the book group requires voluntary effort, it can be deduced beforehand that in general, these respondents initially have higher intrinsic motivation to reading as compared to, perhaps, the general group of society. Somehow, even considering this, most of the respondents noted that their participation in book club has somehow affected their reading motivation.

R3: "Uh, for me, most of the discussions that I choose to attend are those that are generally that I will pick up willingly. So usually I will have to force myself to read it. Because I chose to commit to it. Some I literally died trying."

Some of the respondents said their motivation level increased with the book club discussions, but others have noted that their motivation level was the same. For the ones who agreed on the discussions increasing their motivation, they stated that mostly it is due to better comprehension of the materials that leads to higher motivation for the participants. This will mean that even though the motivation of understanding reading materials better comes from the help of others (extrinsic), it then affects the intrinsic part of participant motivation in reading better.

R5: "In general, I am a solitary reader and I don't often join group reads right, but reading together does help edge people to go faster, give some kind of motivation to read and finish the book, and also, the discussions in the group helps fathom the book better."

R2: "For me, I join book club, because, mm, reading in a book group makes things more

interesting for me, and clearer. Especially so, for you know, books that I consider to be boring, it can become interesting, when moderators and other readers in the discussion bring up points, ideas, or views that are different and unique to, uh, the platter. Sometimes I have not a single clue from the book if not from the discussions that were made.

Another concept worth noting in book groups and book discussion is Connected Learning Approach. According to Kumasi (2014), connected learning approach revolves around pursuing personal interest with the support of other people. Some of the respondents recorded no change in their motivation, however, some input that their motivation to read in book groups as they will have to read within certain time limit for discussion or challenges.

R6: "I'm a very competitive person so I have decided to join two book challenges next year.. Being in challenges, or aiming in challenges, this pushes me to read new books and for next year, I've planned to read more non-fiction and non-American writers.

B2 : " Last year when I was doing the TBNT challenge and I had all the book discussion groups in one month and that was just manic. I think one particular month I had like 6. I don't know how that happened, but that one month, there were six discussions. "

R2: "..I basically read more, I think. In terms of difficulty and variety, I read more. Because when it comes to difficulty, when you join some groups, you are encouraged by them, and group discussion members, some of them, uh, they do read books that I consider to be pretty difficult, like say, classics.

*B6: "personally I feel that my motivation has somewhat increased even without me noticing. And it's all because either sometimes I don't want to feel left out on the current book trend, or that I may have joined more discussion or challenges that I should *laughs*.*

Either way, I read more since I've joined the club, and that I also read more variety of books that I would have alone. "

Reading motivation also is increased extrinsically when respondents must go through a difficult book. With reading support and encouragement from fellow book club members, respondents said it was easier for them to finish certain books. Reading together in book club reduces reading anxiety as knowledge is shared. The respondents shared their view on this as below:

R4: "Or there was another time, for instance, War and Fiends, which is, a, huge book you know like, it's, it's just huge and it is very difficult to weight through it on your own. So I think it is a good to do books like this with somebody else, because they can help you to understand it"

R6: "Yes, I would say this is a definite yes for me, especially for a genre that is not a go to for me. I struggled with Red Rising by Pierce Brown not too long ago, and everyone in the group was very encouraging to get me to finish at least the first book. It was a heartwarming experience for me."

R1: "Like, like theology reads. I appreciate a sparring partner to test my understanding of the subject. I wouldn't, wouldn't want to be misguided."

Aside from having the support of other people, participants recorded higher motivation when they received feedback from others from their sharing. Higher motivation here is in the sense of happiness and proud when another member of the book club shares the same view, approves, and agrees with their points.

R1: "It is always a joy to see that some of them share the same view."

R2: "I would feel happy and satisfied, as there are people who shared the same thoughts as me and loved my ideas. Having said that, it is enlightening to hear other's ideas, too. And even though, it might not be the same with mine, but most of the time, it is still, uhm, quite interesting to hear."

R6: "Agreeing to all the others' point, that feeling of fulfilment and knowing that there are others who feel the same way that I do about important issues concerning ethics, memories, advent of science gets me going."

R6: "...um, when my points are acknowledged, most times I feel happy, proud and uplifted. Mostly because of the acknowledgements received."

Motivation in reading in book club is directly related to the engagement in reading and readers themselves. This is supported from the engagement perspective (Taylor, 2007). This perspective represents a process employed by skilled readers, where engagement is defined as a joint functioning motivation and social interactions during literacy activities. Engaged readers are motivated, strategic and socially interactive.

In a nutshell, participants' motivation is higher when they receive better comprehension with the reading materials from the discussion, join in book club activities such as the challenges and time limit in reading for discussion and higher when they receive positive feedbacks on their thoughts in the discussion.

4.3.3.2 Exposed to Bigger Variety of Reading Materials

Another prominent theme arises regarding reading motivation in book club discussions was that the reading motivation for participants remained constantly at high level, or in continuous flow due to the recommendation or introduction of materials during discussions. These new genres of materials or new titles encouraged the respondents to keep their reading rate high.

R1: "Sometimes, a good discussion can also be seen when you see other members discussing of similar books or recommending books and titles that are as interesting, or share similar stories."

R6: "The challenges come with recommendations for reading prompts, but, um, I usually, usually I will find recommendations from participants more in line with, you know, what I enjoy, rather than whatever the organisers do. I got all of this from Fb posts and recommendations on KLBAC. I wouldn't know where to start, if I were reading on my own."

R3: "Like R6, with book clubs, in general I am more exposed to other books that I usually will not pick up. From discussions threads to book post, sometimes I find interesting books along the way. Sometimes...I follow on genres that I have not had success reading on my own. These are, books from genre, either I don't like them, or, I wouldn't have picked them up. I think in terms of this, this, this helps in broadening my mind, expanding my reading selections."

R4: "For instance, when I read the Night Tiger, I really liked The Night Tiger, that it made me want to read on The Ghost Bride, that she wrote. It was not a book I would generally pick up but I read for the discussion and I really enjoyed it and I'm glad. So book discussion I feel are very good because they make you read books that you normally would not read, would

not come under your radar, because, you know, they're not authors that you are a fan of, or genres that you are interested in."

R2: "In terms of variety, like the others have covered, my reading has diversified, to include, um, sub-genres? Like medical memoirs. Or even cosy mysteries."

R1: "I like the fact that I get so many recommendations put forward by the book club member. Because of the ample recommendations, I do feel like I explore more subjects, more chance to see other types of books."

One of the respondents that run her own booktube was also saying how the recommendations of the books received from the discussion kept her booktube channel alive:

B5: "I find myself like there's like book recommendations and everything. Being in a group and also with the book discussion and stuff, and also say it's like I'm running my book tube channel so it's like, "oh I need to find like materials for this and that" or "what is the content I'm doing". So yeah, it it's it's a challenge, but I love the fact that you know it widens my horizon now and like keep challenging"

The recommendations given out from discussion of book club activities keep the participants motivated to read or venture out to new reading materials. While the participants may be a bookworm on their own, having participated in book club discussions, they are extrinsically motivated to keep reading or expand their reading library. With the reading recommendation, the reading list keeps on growing and is not at a static rate.

4.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, from the three research questions formulated, there are several themes that emerge as an answer to the questions.

For the first research question, book club plays a role in community practice by being a platform for the book club members to connect to the society, finding other people with same interests and building their own personal growth from the moral aspects that can be found from discussions happening in the book club.

For research question two, group discussion has affected participants' act of reading from expanding participants view on topic and engaging in critical thinking in discussion. Aside from that, other act of reading that recorded from group discussion doing was the importance of moderator in book discussion as well as the importance of backstory, in affecting participant process of act of reading. Participants were able to relate themselves to book content via compare as well as create new endings or possible endings for reading material from the book discussion attended.

For the third and last research question, participants recorded higher reading motivation in joining the book club activities as they have peer reading support, push from challenges and reading timeline as well as better comprehension on reading materials resulting to higher reading motivation. Besides that, reading motivation is increased in the book group participants since they are exposed to other or new reading materials, keeping their reading motivation level higher as compared to solitary reading.

In the next chapter, findings of this study shall be studied further in relation to the literature review done with the study. Further issues and recommendations will also be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, further discussion of what the findings of the research has shown about, together with the related literature will be discussed upon. To ensure linear information is being clarified even further, the discussion points will be explained as per the sequence of the study's research objectives.

Apart from the interpretation of findings that are interlaced with previous studies and related literature, this chapter will also emphasize on the significance of the findings to the involved stakeholder. This study aims to find out on the role of book club and the act of reading of the participants of the book club to the society as well as their reading motivation. To this, the researcher did a focus group interview to understand further of act of reading in collaborative discussion as well as the role of book club to the participants' life and their motivation in being in the book club.

Lastly, this chapter will also touch on suggestion for future research as well as the limitations faced. In the data found from the group interview, there were certain points that emerged that showed the researcher several other points that can be looked into, perhaps in another future research.

Conclusion of the chapter will briefly summarize the whole study, tie back all strings and enclosed conclusive information gained and discussed in the study.

5.2 Discussions

From the themes emerged from the focus group interview done, further similarities and assimilation was found to produce bigger context of themes. Thus, certain findings from Chapter 4 will be explained in wider scale aligned with the research objectives as below.

Research Objectives and Related Findings and Discussion

1. To discover the role of KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) in community practice.
2. To evaluate the effect of group discussion in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC) to the act of reading.
3. To evaluate on effect of reading motivation of participants in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC).

One of the biggest and most profound findings from the study was book club was seen as a social circle for the participants. It encompasses from finding people with the same interest to a wider bandwidth of deeper connection of real friends. From the input gathered from the group interview, book club was seen as a social connection – another social pathway to bigger social circle for the respondents. In community practice, the book club serves a route for people to find others with similar interest. As per the respondents, they were able to find similar people with similar interest, which in turn, form friendships outside of the book group connection. From the responses received from the interview, most were searching for other people who were as likeminded as they are. Some of the respondents were thankful for the people they met in book club, for it was difficult to find people of the same interest and passion in their prime social circle. To this, they fulfill their goal of expanding their reading rate as well as gaining and meeting fellow readers. As people interact, they establish a shared communicative context. This context is established by how people act and react to

each other's communicative efforts (Foster, 2006). Book club participation allows readers to share responses with each other, share reading needs and allow them to arrive at a socially constructed understanding of texts. Talking, listening, and reading are learning experiences benefited from book group discussions. Collective knowledge of group is shared and expanded, and this is not just for the content of the books but also on each's reading process (Foster, 2006).

Moving further than this, in a bigger context, the social circle obtained from the book club discussions yields a more important function in the society – proving to be a safe space in the social sphere. In a society where reading may not be of interest of everyone and held a different position than other hobbies as it is often interconnected with knowledge and nobility, book club provides a safe space where no judgement of the interest of reading should befall the members. Members are free to read whatever, to pass on reading reviews and opinions to be shared. Members are empowered when they share their personal views and experience, as well as their struggles in life. Though they were certain responses that indicates how cyber bullying can occur in the book club, however heavier weightage was being put to feeling of safety net received from the book club in finding other people who do not judge. This in turn build trust and rapport of people in the society. This was one of the core values that was achieved in Oprah's book club that in turn, made it into history of one of the most popular book clubs ever made (Jones, 1999). The idea that the participants were able to share their pain and conflict in relation to books made the book clubs relatable and very close to the society.

Also, in a bigger picture, as per the input of the interview, book group members morally learn and may possibly be a better person from the moral values obtained from book discussions. From building sense of empathy to making the world a better place by analysing

worldly crisis of poverty, refugee crisis and climate change, members of book club attending discussion learn from each other to internalize good thoughts and good values. According to Jones (1999), in her study for the explosion of Oprah's book club, it was found that book club participants use the lessons imparted in the novels and bring about change to their own lives. Through the discussions that took place in the book group discussions, members dive further in understanding many human behaviours which in turn may shape their own beliefs too. This is quite an apparent role of the book club found to its members and have a bigger impact in fulfilling their own role in place of society.

From this, we see that book club plays a very big role in society, not only from gathering people of the same likes with similar goals in community practice, but to also give back to the society by creating rapport and building partnership. The process of reading together becomes a social circle and social process, where readers intertwine their perspectives and views in reading and in turn build relationship amongst each other. From here, they give back to the society by encompassing values learned from the discussion. This social circle goes back and forth of generations and goes on layers of social interaction between people in the society.

This finding from the respondents' point of view as members of the book club strengthens the main role that was mentioned from the founder of the club, which was to connect fellow Malaysian book lovers, as well as creating a community. In the findings of this study, all of the respondents agreed that the club somewhat brought them together, with some of the respondents even going further by making true friendship from the community founded from the club. Regardless of the different ideas that members had when they first joined, upon embarking the club's activities, all of them bonded through the mutual appreciation of books. Thus, we see how the role of Kuala Lumpur Book Appreciation Club

(KLBAC) from the founder's intention was in line with how the book club impacted its members and how the members thought of the book club as well. In this aspect, the book club has had its fair of success in making likeminded people come closer together, forming a community.

Now that the role of book club has been discussed in a wider context, the essence of book club, which is the book discussions will be analysed further on their effect to the act of reading. In group discussion, one of the main reading skills that is being used is active reading. Depending on the depth and quality of the discussion, members have more chances to go through active reading versus passive reading. While solitary reading does not equal to passive reading, a good reading discussion has the potential of piquing the interest of its reader even further, enveloping them with the book content, and thus, members' go through active reading. Through the active reading process alongside with opinion sharing as well as debates, participants undergo and sharpen their critical thinking skills during these discussions. This is one of the most prominent acts of reading that is affected from book discussion. Most of the participants agree that a good book discussion gets them thinking, and more importantly, most of them agree the point of going to book discussion is more to have chance to think, to ponder on stuff, rather than simple 'escapism' as per quoted from one of the respondents. Seeing the text being explored in a different light, changes how the respondents think, and stimulates them to think further on the issue being raised in the discussion.

Apart from critical thinking of a specific matter, attending book group discussions has also revealed on critical thinking of the author's style of writing as well. In attending book discussion, especially in the same genre, participants talk about writing style, or notice

similar patterns of writing in books. This familiarity in works by the same author or other works by different authors helps readers to provide them with ideas about the boundaries of what could have been possible (Taylor, 2007). Rather than having this act of reading remain 'discrete' and 'solitary', in group reading, this becomes an accumulation of experience between members of the group regarding discussing the works of authors. This is an act of reading that may be missed in solitary reading but becomes more apparent when it is pointed or discussion of the content and the way the book is written. Apart from that, sharing knowledge and finding similar writing pattern from author enables readers to better able to understand a work further, especially so if other works of same author are being shared. Readers have implied expectation of the book if they have existing knowledge of works of the same author (Taylor, 2007). This is especially so in books that are produced in series. In both focus group interviews, respondents note how the outcome of discussion can alter their thoughts on the authors, and this in turn changes their buying behaviour of certain authors.

One of an acts of reading that is frequently done in book discussion, whether within realization or not, is the fact that during discussion, participants tend to compare and relate themselves, or the current present tense to the background of the story content. Discussion makes this act of relating things become more apparent, as discussion can be taken out of book context and apply it to the real life. To be able to admire and criticize a book, most often than not, participants will undergo comparison with the book. Not only that, with the help of moderator, participants can go back in time from the book content and relate it to present time. Everything in book discussion is open for relating, comparing and usually this is where participants can explore the book even further.

To this part, participants undergo the process of transference and transactional during their reading and discussion, where they transport themselves to another time, or to

another character. To be able to immerse oneself in the book characters or settings bring up further meaning to the engagement of the text. According to Jones (1999), from the book club studied, readers consistently use the psychological processes of transference and transaction reading by using fictional literature from the books to discuss sensitive areas of their lives. Further, from the same study, many cases of readers were identified to have seen themselves in the text, imagining themselves as the characters.

Book club discussions also provide social reassurance within the book club. One interesting fact from the interview was that sometimes, participants enter the discussion just for the sake of listening, just to hear other people's thoughts and opinions and if it aligns with their own. Readers have variety of interpretation for works because they belong to multiple interpretive communities (Taylor, 2007). This sense of satisfaction is not acquired in solitary reading, and participants felt happy and content upon knowing acknowledgement received, more so on heavy and important topic. Even on disagreement, it is enlightening and interesting to hear of an opposing view.

Apart from that, with listening to others in book discussion, participants are in favour with simply being laid out with multiple backgrounds and views on topics. They can be in the discussion and not contribute much, however, the discussion can affect them greatly when it is eye opening, and that they learn through new ideas and opinions. The result of this sharing is that participants grow themselves in the book club. According to Taylor (2007), this desire of knowing things through other people's lenses is one of the reasons people join book club. Instead of a singular work emerging, with the discussion, multiple explanations or multiple creation of texts are created from the discussion made in book club.

In concluding the impact of book discussion to the act of reading to its participants, reading process can be interpreted as a circle. The whole process of solitary reading,

analyzing, interpreting, understanding, coming to the discussion, having further interpretation together, critical views of text, mold of new literary understanding of the text proves that act of reading processes overlaps between each other, and they form a circle of process in which the reader builds understanding during their solitary reading of text and then assimilate the new perspectives or knowledge received from a discussion. According to Taylor (2007), reading in book group reading is a complex continuum of events that functions less linearly and more circularly. From the same study, it entails that readers anticipate reading a book, they read the book, they reflect on their reading, they anticipate group discussion, they participate in the discussion, and they often reflect on the book and its discussion after the group has met. The input received in book discussion will also shape the thinking for future discussions. In this way, we see the knowledge received and the group reading process going in circular motion, one affecting the other.

Apart from that, participants of a book discussion engage in two main types of reading process, mainly reading for dissection, and reading as a creation. In book discussion, members of the book club come together and sometimes on the discussion, they collaboratively create a new ending, improve the book storyline or a new creation of text from the discussions. This type of reading process engages the reader to the text even further in active reading. This is in line by a study done by Taylor (2007), that has mentioned that within the discussion context, reading may take form as dissection or creation of both where reading as dissection focuses on the work and what it is about and try to make sense of it while reading as a creation is more on readers build on their prior knowledge, and fill in details where the author did not and in such, creates a text of their own. In this, groups spend their time discussing what could have made the book better by identifying gaps in the plot, suggesting additions or deletions, critiquing physical aspects of the book, and contemplating

“what ifs” (Taylor, 2007).

In discussing reading motivation of participants in KL Book Appreciation Club (KLBAC), motivation was increased through the means of exposure of the general knowledge of the book content discussion and the book selection itself. Due to participants already establishing an interest towards reading in general, both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation goes on back and forth and hand in hand together in this study.

As a member of a book group, in general, in comparison to general adult population, one may assume that participants’ reading motivation is higher. Intrinsically, these people may have the ‘wants’ to read, to finish a book, or set a personal book goal. However, as per human innate nature of having highs and lows in all situations, this goes the same in reading in general. Even the most bookworm may go through low points in reading, and this was where the book club steps in. The process and result of book discussion may bore as an extrinsic factor but as it pushes participants reading motivation, for most times, it becomes an intrinsic motivation factor for the respondents. From the findings of the interview, participants’ motivation stayed on a high rate from exposure. When the word exposure is said, here are many meanings behind exposure in terms of motivation in this study as explained further in paragraphs below.

Most of the participants agreed that through better understanding of book content through discussion and listening to others’ perspectives and views, they are enriched and motivated to understand a story even further. Most of them find this fulfilling – and in this sense we are able to say that their intrinsic motivation in reading was increased, especially when dealing with partially read books, or difficult book than if they were to read it own their own. This is supported by Foster (2006), that says that book group discussions support the

idea of a more knowledgeable peer with more experience to help in making sense of a text. Book group members become adept in using various sources of information from each other to support understanding (Foster, 2006). Further from the same study, book clubs allow readers and learners to explore their own process of making sense of the books, but at the same time, provide opportunities for learners to benefit from other learners.

In hearing other people's thoughts and explanation on books, members gain new and added knowledge and this itself can be a form of motivation to participants. Being exposed to a different horizon and different lens of understanding, participants gain new knowledge which boosts their intrinsic motivation in reading because with this, participants have the urge to read and understand more. According to Foster (2006), the value and motivation in reading lies in knowing oneself better. Reading is determined by what the reader brings into the text or take away from it. Understanding the text better means to understand oneself better, and this, is one way of an intrinsic motivation in reading. Understanding a text better also means to be engaged more with the text. Engagement in reading contributes to intrinsic motivation. According to Guthrie, McGough, Bennett, and Rice (1996) as cited from Whittingham & Huffman (2009), engaged readers are more motivated, strategic, knowledgeable, and socially interactive. They are more motivated to comprehend texts that they read. From the same study, Guthrie (2001) believes that social motivation for reading relates to interpersonal relationships, and this refers to book group discussion. Therefore, it can be said that through the social interactions taking place in book group discussion in effort to understand the text more, members gain more intrinsic motivation in reading.

Exposure in reading together also means that respondents reading motivation increased as they are being exposed to new titles and new genres in book club. Majority of

the respondents agreed that they were exposed to so many other reading genres upon joining the book club and have picked up books that they would otherwise never thought of picking up. Aside from picking up new kinds of books, participants reading motivation increased when they are exposed to different reading groups, following on genres that they may not have success reading them on their own. Through the diversification of reading, respondents reading motivation increased. Many recommendations can be found from book threads, discussion posts and from the discussion itself.

Finally, book group members receive extrinsic motivation from the push attained prior to and during book discussions. Book challenges as an activity conducted within the book club sets members' motivation high as they are pumped to complete the challenges offered within the club. Often, these challenges come in the quantity of book read goals. One of the ways readers in book club become engaged readers is because their motivation of reading is higher. According to Ryan & Deci (2000) as cited from (Schutte, & Malouff, J, 2007), intrinsic and extrinsic motivation lie on a continuum of self-determination. At the non-self-determined end of continuum (which is the external factor), readers in book club may be more motivated in reading in complying with the request of others in order to achieve something (be able to participate in book club or complete challenge). But this brings to the self-determined end of continuum, which is intrinsic regulation, which shows behaviours of interest, enjoyment, and satisfaction upon achieving or joining a successful book group discussion. Many of the respondents noted that the number of books read upon joining the book club and its discussion rise dramatically, as they have external tasks to read, or to complete a number of challenges, or even to give out review to books.

Aside from that, even in agreement to join a book discussion gives book group members a reason to 'read' and set time to read. One respondent even pointed out that the

discussion became a purpose of reading for her, and that she could use the reason “I have to finish this book – I have a discussion on it coming along”. In comparison to self-push to finish a book, respondents feel the genuine need to finish reading, and in time, reads more than what their personal reading goal may be like. Often, respondents receive push and help from other discussion group members to finish reading a book prior to the discussion. This support received from other members become an extrinsic motivation to the respondents in reading. Even during a discussion, should the discussion outcome be well, members will have the urge to finish the book or take up another book similar to it.

In conclusion, both extrinsic and intrinsic factors push members to read more, and thus, keep their motivation in reading in a high rate. In between activities that members go through from the book club, members experience a form of motivation.

5.3 Limitations of Study

There are a few limitations to the study. First and foremost, this study cannot be applied to all types of book clubs available. One, this study focuses on an online book club, where their participants range from many ages, from adolescent to adult alike. Due to this broad range, findings will not be comparable to certain age group only (for example, elementary school children, or high school/universities) sample. Second, the study was done to a book club which may have different settings than another book club. The main purpose of the book club was connecting people with the same interest, and to share their love towards reading and everything book related. The members of this book club join the club voluntarily (assumably) and there is no educational linked purpose in joining the club. Through this, more focus is being given to the book club being researched where its members joined for the sake of joy and reading for pleasure. Therefore, while the findings may be used in

educational settings but changing the landscape of the research (reading for the pleasure vs reading for education purpose), the findings of the study may differ. Due to the limitations stated above, the findings cannot be generalized to other scope of studies pertaining to book club.

Another limitation found from the study was that from the focus group interview samples, it was found that even though the total number of book club members were very large, relatively there were very few numbers that actually joins the discussion. For an online book club this could mean many things, either there were many other passive members, or members could be joining for the sake of other reading activities and not just the discussion. Because of this, the purposive sampling became a snowball method as well, as to reach more respondents. When delved into deeper, one of the limitations of the study was found because for many discussions, the attendees seem to be overlapping and is of the same people, limiting the number of choices for samples for the focus group interview.

5.4 Implications of Study

The main implication of this study is that it is hoped to shed light on act of reading within book groups, their motivation, and the social place of book group in the society. With the study's findings, we see the book group as an important social tool for the society to come together, and to learn from each other and benefit from this and spread to others. In a way, the social connection and exposure of book club extends way more than just within its members, but also can be spread to other people outside the group. Together with its benefit on reading motivation and several acts of reading that may not be acquired with passive reading or reading alone, reading together translates to better comprehension, better reading motivation as well as serve as a reflection of things leading to critical thinking amongst its

members.

Aside from being useful to organization in learning institution, endorsing, and making book groups the next big thing can mean an incline in lifelong learners and genuine readers. This in turn may help nation's increase reading rate and rate of reading for pleasure. Literacy policies and programs from government agencies can be organized to cultivate a lifelong reading culture and new ways where citizens can participate in reading as a public activity. Only through this, can the beginning of lifelong learning process start, which enables learners in community to not just become passive spectator and knowledge consumer but to also become reflective and active knowledge producing citizens of the world (Pandian, 2011).

Another important research finding garnered from the study was that there are certain characteristics that deems the discussion to be a successful one. To reap the benefit of group discussion, how book clubs operate is worth looking into. In this research, participants laid out some of the things they feel can be done or has been done that made the discussion successful or in favour of their own. Studying these characteristics can be used as basis for book club projects, to be implemented either in formal or informal setting. This can be useful for public libraries as well as usage of book club formation in school. Government can really look at how they can improve on the said aspects in educational programs for both public and school students.

There were many parts of the interviews which revealed the downside of a discussion, or things that can be improved on. This also extends to how libraries work, or how title of texts is chosen alongside with the hurdles faced in a book club. All of these shed more light on the nature of reading and reading behaviours of the society and things that can be done and improved. All the sub information received can be utilized once again by public

and private sector organisations in making reading a culture in the society. On literary texts wise – publishing company can also take note on the characteristics of a good discussion related to the chosen texts in marketing or selecting new book to fill the book market.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

There were many parts during the discussion that the respondents brought up certain scenario in book clubs and one of the things picked up was the notion of how the important of book group setting in making the discussion period or session a rather, successful one. One of the most prevalent thoughts from the respondents derived from the fact that a good moderator has the power to change the outcome of the book discussion. Majority of the respondents highlighted on the importance of the moderator, from prepping the question list, distributing the information and possible questions asked in the book club discussions as well as moderating the whole discussion. It is the work of the moderator to be some sort of ‘narrator’ for the whole session of the discussion. According to Dail, Lea & Edwards (2009), a critical component of the success in the Community Book Club they developed for their study was the selection of book leader. It was found that the leader needed to be skillful in making sure participants were engaged, wants to voluntarily take roles and develop interest in books. In this, they must also be skillful in choosing appealing books to bring to the book club (Dail, Lea & Edwards, 2009).

Backstory of the text read in the book club discussions also prove to be a helpful addition in opening more criteria for discussions. This backstory, often, may come from the moderator of the group, which proves a point to which as a good moderator may as well read some backstory of the text or even the author and their works, to bring upon more discussion points during the session.

Apart from backstory and moderator, another important aspect found from the study was the fact that the success rate of the discussion may also stem from the physical setting of the book group. In a physical discussion, numbers of participants as well as author's presence, or addition of related events, all play a major role in determining participants' mood in the discussion. Some of the participants have agreed that number of participants in one discussion session is especially important, as a 'successful' discussion session deems to have equal chance for everyone to speak up, and that the moderator is careful to ensure everyone gets this chance and throws questions to the general audience, and not to any specific groups or people during the discussion.

Author's presence in group discussion was also on the spotlight during the discussion. From the respondent's point of view, having author presence affects the mood of the participants as they may have more tendency to sugarcoat details during the discussion in hopes to prevent any friction or conversational topics with the authors themselves, as to not sadden or anger the author. Due to this, deeper layer of the text which may require debates and the likes may not happen in the discussion and this will eventually be a session where only the top layer of the text is discussed, or that the text is not thoroughly 'dissected' by the participants.

However, having author around may boost excitement and self-esteem of members of book club. According to research done by Miller (2015), an alternative source of social interaction between book club group members can be from the members to the authors. The author presence may influence and change members reading attitude. Therefore, we can see that even having backstory of author's background or their presence can affect a book discussion mood and its members' motivation.

Other initiation from moderator may also affect the mood and setting of the discussion, such as one example from a participant that highlighted that she has went to one book club discussions in which the moderator brought forth outsiders who are very closely resembling the background of the characters or setting in the text itself. With the intention of enriching the book discussion, the fellow participants however disliked this idea, saying that with this act, the book group discussions went astray from discussing on the text, to highlighting and directing questions to the outsiders, and further discussions that were further away from relating to the actual text and mood of the book discussion went more to a Question & Answer Session with the outsiders instead.

In contrary, there was also an positive example given from the group interview, that discussions where the moderator took extra effort to indulge in other senses to understand the text better, bore a positive results to the attendees of the book discussion, to which the participants agreed that the effort to include in visual senses, as well as auditory, some what made the discussion livelier and that the participants had understood the text so much better with the addition of it.

Seeing how participants had their fair share of experiences and thoughts on setting of discussions in book club, this could be a potential topic for future researches to be discovered even further.

Another gap that can be looked and researched further is the social issues prevalent in social media platform. While KLBAC operates both online and offline (in the sense that book readings were done both online and offline), but essentially the book club operates mainly online, before information gets planned and distributed offline. During the discussion, one of the respondents highlighted few issues that are circulating in the online book club group – cyber bullying and social media narcissism.

The discussion revealed that one of the respondents had to endure on a cyber bullying spree in the group – debates that was normal during a book group discussion was brought out to personal Facebook pages and cyber-attacks were made. While no specific head or tail were delved further, this issue made the respondent felt distant towards the book club and tried to shy away from it afterwards. One thing that was noted from the revelation was the function and favouritism of the book club moderator. Again, even outside book discussion context, the admins of the group were charged as being biased in moderating and keeping discussions in a neutral setting. The moderation was claimed to not have been done thoroughly for all the discussion thread that was going on in the group, and a tinge of favouritism was noted in moderating discussion threads. Perhaps cyber bullying issue in book group can be explored further in a different study as this affects the dynamics of interaction going on as well as act of reading in book groups.

Another issue that was raised from the discussion that may be elaborated even further in another research was the social media issues, mainly on narcissism in posts, and sharing. A respondent has questioned that while the book club group was active online, with a lot of postings from its members, however the real ‘essence’ of reading – which is sharing opinions on reading content from books, was lacking. Claims were made that most of the posts were just top layer sharing of books, of book covers, book synopsis as well as sharing of personal book collections or sharing of book hauls. The real question if the books being displayed on social media was properly read – was left untold. This brings us to the higher level of social concern, one that is intertwined with social media in general. The idea of perfectionism, or the portrayal of perfection to garner likes and followings on post, has affected on this. On top of that, this also touches on the consumerism issues, even in the book industry where people hoard books, but only few were ever touched and read on.

Instead of sharing in depth of books, or book contents, even book review, most of the threads revolve around the outer characteristics or the physique of the books. This, however, was not the thought of majority of the respondents, however this may be worth investigating for future researchers involving online book clubs.

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