

# Analyzing Values from Bob Ong's Novels through Moral Criticism: A Basis for Learning Material Development

Inah Sophia B. Maglalang, Shanaya Arian V. Ramos, Geraldine Marion E. Boneo, Ac P. Namit, and Jovelle R. Olivares  
*Laguna University, Santa Cruz, Laguna, Philippines*

inahsophiam@gmail.com

## Abstract

This study examines the Filipino values reflected in Bob Ong's novels *Alamat ng Gubat*, *Kapitan Sino*, *ABNKKBSNPLAko?!*, and *Bakit Baliktad Magbasa ng Libro ang mga Pilipino?* through moral criticism and explores teachers' perceptions of declining values among students and the use of these novels in values integration. Using a qualitative design, the researchers analyzed selected passages from the novels and interview responses from secondary public school teachers in Laguna who graduated with a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English and teach values education. The findings show that teachers perceive respect, responsibility, honesty, empathy, discipline, and value of education as gradually declining among students. The literary analysis, meanwhile, revealed values such as adaptability, acceptance, altruism, camaraderie, care and compassion, debt of gratitude, friendship, generosity, heroism, honesty, love and emotional bonds, resilience, respect, responsibility, self-improvement, sense of shame, value of education, and wisdom. The respondents also viewed Bob Ong's novels as relatable, culturally grounded, and suitable for higher grade levels because they present moral lessons in an engaging and humorous way. The study recommends the development of learner-centered instructional materials such as workbooks, modules, interactive activities, and audiovisual resources that can help integrate Filipino values into English instruction.

**Keywords:** Bob Ong; moral criticism; Filipino values; values education; instructional materials

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the Study

In an era characterized by rapid globalization and technological advancements, the moral and ethical foundations of the youth are constantly being challenged. The fast-paced nature of modern society often leads to the erosion of traditional values, making it increasingly important to reinforce Filipino values among young learners. Education serves as a crucial platform for instilling these values. In the context of teaching, literature is valuable material that can be integrated into the classroom to build up these characters.

Literature has long been recognized as a powerful tool for moral and ethical education, providing narratives that reflect societal norms, cultural identity, and moral dilemmas. Literature plays a crucial role in preserving Filipino identity and values, making it an essential component of educational curricula (Aguas, 2024). This study explores the potential of Bob Ong's novels to instill values that shape responsible Filipino citizens.

Despite the recognized potential of contemporary Filipino literature as a tool for moral and ethical education, its integration into classroom instruction remains limited. There is a lack of understanding regarding how such literary works, particularly those by Bob Ong, can effectively reinforce Filipino values and promote character formation among students. This research seeks to address this gap by investigating the integration of Bob Ong's novels into subject areas and assessing their impact on instilling Filipino values and shaping responsible citizens.

To achieve this, the study focuses on four novels by contemporary Filipino author Bob Ong: *Alamat ng Gubat*, *Kapitan Sino*, *ABNKKBSNPLAko?!*, and *Bakit Baliktad Magbasa Ng Libro Ang Mga Pilipino?*. These novels have significantly influenced previous generations, presenting narratives that resonate with Filipino culture, social realities, and moral lessons. Bob Ong's literary works serve as a profound reflection of core Filipino values, often portrayed through the lens of everyday experiences and social observations that are both relatable, timely, and relevant. By analyzing these works through a moral literary approach, this research aims to identify key Filipino values that can be effectively incorporated into classroom instruction. Social-oriented virtues contribute to increased life satisfaction and academic success, making them an essential aspect of values education. (Datu & Bernardo, 2020).

Additionally, this research seeks to develop instructional materials that integrate values education within classroom instruction as this is an integral part of sustainable education, which has been emphasized in prior studies (Rajevska & Kūkoja, 2021).

Through this study, educators can gain insights into the role of literature in values formation and develop effective teaching strategies that align with the cultural and moral development of Filipino students.

### 1.2. Statement of the Problem

This study analyzes the works of Bob Ong through a moral lens, extracting values that can be gathered from his novels. It also gathers the perceptions of teachers who graduated with a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English and currently teach values education in order to identify values that are missing or declining among students. In addition, the study seeks recommendations on what instructional materials should be developed to promote values education.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

What values are currently lacking or gradually declining among students based on teachers' perception?

What values are present in the novels of Bob Ong?

What are teachers' perceptions about using the novels of Bob Ong as a basis for values education integration in teaching English as a subject?

Based on the result, what instructional materials could be developed to aid in the students' value development?

### 1.3. Hypotheses

This study is focused on testing the following hypothesis:

Ho: There are no significant Filipino values reflected in Bob Ong's novels that are applicable to the Filipino culture, indicating that they do not show ideas that may give readers insights about Filipino identity and values.

Ha: There are significant Filipino values displayed in Bob Ong's novels, indicating that these values play an important role in shaping the readers' Filipino identity and values.

### 1.4. Significance of the Study

In this section, the findings and outcomes of this study are intended to assist the following groups:

**Curriculum Planners.** This study will provide curriculum planners with valuable insights into how the integration of contemporary literature, particularly Bob Ong's works, can enhance classroom instruction. This study employs stories that reflect Filipino traditions and culture to support the development of a curriculum that is not only culturally rich but also morally and socially relevant.

**Guidance Counselors.** They will gain a deeper understanding of how literature can be a powerful tool for promoting ethical and responsible behaviors. The moral lessons embedded in Filipino literary works can serve as a foundation for counseling sessions that nurture the personal and social development of students, guiding them toward becoming holistically developed individuals.

**Parents.** The findings will help parents recognize the important role that literature plays in their children's character development. Parents can better support the reinforcement of values at home, aligning their efforts with those of the school.

**Future researchers.** This study lays the groundwork for future research into the role of modern Filipino writers in the development of values education. It opens avenues for investigating how contemporary Filipino literature can be integrated into education and its impact on character development, paving the way for new insights into this field of study.

**Students.** Bob Ong's works provide students with an opportunity to engage with Filipino values and enhance their awareness of their cultural heritage. In addition to building character development, these novels will help students develop the skills necessary to become responsible and engaged citizens.

**Teachers.** This research will assist teachers in integrating Filipino values into their English lessons, not just to improve their linguistic skills but also to develop character. By implementing these techniques, instructors can produce a more immersive and interactive learning experience.

### 1.5. Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on analyzing the works of Bob Ong and identifying key Filipino values present. In addition, this study examines the perception of secondary public school teachers who graduated with a Bachelor of secondary education major in English that currently teach values education. The study seeks to gain insight into what values are currently declining among the youth and the instructional materials that could be developed to promote values development.

The study will be confined to the novels of Bob Ong, excluding other works of literature that may also influence values education namely, "Alamat ng Gubat," "Kapitan Sino," "ABNKKBSNPLAKo?!" and "Bakit Baliktad Magbasa Ng Libro Ang Mga Pilipino?" The novels are also analyzed through the moral literary approach, thus excluding criticisms and interpretations arising from the use of other literary analysis methods.

This study is limited to secondary public school teachers who graduated with a bachelor of secondary education major in English and currently teach values education at the secondary level, focusing on their perception of what values and positive attitudes are currently declining among students. It does not cover values teachers who are graduates of other programs or teaching in other grade levels. Data will be gathered using a questionnaire, which will assess teachers' notions of what instructional materials could be produced to promote values among students. The findings of this study will apply only to the respondents and cannot be generalized to all teachers.

### 1.6. Definition of Terms

To facilitate a clearer understanding of the study, the terms herein were defined operationally.

**Contemporary Literature** - writing produced since World War II reflecting the current social, and cultural zeitgeist of a country.

**Filipino Values** - core principles, beliefs, and ideals shared in the Filipino community to guide behavior and define the understanding of what is societally good, right, and important.

**Instructional Materials** - tools used by teachers to support students' learning. It includes but is not limited to textbooks, tests, and visual aids.

**Integration** - the process of combining concepts, topics, and ideas from another subject to create a cohesive curriculum.

**Learning Material Development** - the process of creating, adapting, and evaluating materials that aid student learning.

Moral Literary Approach - a literary criticism approach that examines a work based on its moral and ethical teachings.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

The study of literature has long been regarded as a means of understanding human experiences, cultural heritage, and moral values. Literary works reflect the beliefs, traditions, and ethical considerations of a society, making them essential tools in shaping the moral consciousness of individuals. In the Philippine context, literature has played a crucial role in preserving and reinforcing Filipino identity, values, and social norms. As the world continues to experience rapid globalization and technological advancements, the younger generation is increasingly exposed to diverse influences that challenge traditional moral values. This reality necessitates the integration of values education into the academic curriculum, particularly through the study of literature.

Bob Ong, a contemporary Filipino author known for his satirical yet socially relevant works, presents narratives that encapsulate Filipino culture, social issues, and moral lessons. His novels, written in a conversational and humorous tone, resonate deeply with Filipino readers, making them accessible yet thought-provoking literary pieces. The potential of his works in reinforcing values education has yet to be fully explored in academic settings, despite their significant impact on contemporary Filipino readership. Given the increasing concerns regarding the decline of moral values among the youth, the need for effective instructional materials that integrate literature and values education has become more pressing.

This chapter reviews existing literature and studies related to the integration of values in literature, with a particular focus on the use of Filipino literary texts in moral education. The discussion is structured into three major themes: (1) extracting values from literature, which examines how literary works contribute to character formation, ethical awareness, and cultural preservation; (2) declining values among the youth, which explores contemporary studies on the moral and ethical challenges faced by students today; and (3) integrating values into instructional materials, which discusses pedagogical approaches and frameworks for embedding values education within literary instruction.

By synthesizing relevant literature and theoretical perspectives, this review aims to establish a foundation for the present study's examination of Bob Ong's novels as tools for instilling Filipino values. Furthermore, it seeks to underscore the importance of utilizing contemporary literature to bridge the gap between traditional moral teachings and the modern experiences of students. Through this exploration, the study aspires to provide insights into how literature can be leveraged to develop instructional materials that foster both academic and ethical growth among learners.

### 2.1. Extracting Values from Literature

Throughout history, literature has served as a means of transmitting moral and ethical values across generations. Not only does it reflect societal norms, but it also challenges individuals to critically engage with ethical dilemmas, thereby fostering personal growth and character development. By depicting characters facing difficult decisions, literature allows readers to explore the consequences of actions and internalize important moral lessons (Naufal & Apriyanto, 2024).

Moreover, numerous studies highlight how literature influences ethical perspectives. For instance, Putri and Simanjuntak (2022) examined Tere Liye's novel *Pulang* and identified three major categories of moral values: religious, social, and personal. Their research emphasized that literature provides readers with scenarios that illustrate the importance of faith, responsibility, and integrity, all of which contribute to moral formation. Similarly, Masjid et al. (2023) explored how children's poetry serves as an avenue for instilling virtues such as honesty, patience, and perseverance at an early age. Their study reinforces the notion that literature plays a fundamental role in shaping moral consciousness from childhood to adulthood.

In addition, literature has long functioned as a moral compass for societies. As Villanueva (2022) pointed out in his analysis of *Biag ni Lam-ang*, epics and folk narratives often contain timeless moral lessons such as bravery, sacrifice, and justice. These narratives remain relevant today because they continue to inspire individuals to uphold ethical standards and contribute to their communities. Given this, it is evident that literature does not merely entertain; rather, it cultivates ethical awareness and encourages self-reflection.

Other than the themes of morality embedded in literary works, ethical literary criticism also provides a structured way to analyze values in texts. In this regard, Tabunan (2022) investigated the moral dilemmas presented in Ariel Sotelo Tabag's *Panangsapul iti Puraw a Kabalio*. The study demonstrated that literature is not only a reflection of ethical concerns but also a medium through which readers can critically examine real-world moral conflicts. Therefore, literature remains a powerful tool for deepening moral engagement, as it provides narratives that provoke thought and inspire ethical action.

Beyond personal morality, literature also plays a crucial role in promoting socially oriented virtues, which are essential for building harmonious communities. These virtues include fairness, kindness, leadership, teamwork, and respect for diversity. By engaging with literary texts that emphasize these values, readers develop empathy and an awareness of social justice issues, which contributes to their ability to navigate complex social interactions (Tatad & Espina, 2023).

The study conducted by Tatad and Espina (2023) on F. Sionil Jose's short stories provides a compelling example of how literature reinforces social virtues. Their research analyzed how Jose's narratives depict Filipino cultural values, particularly the tension between individual ambition and collective responsibility. They found that Jose's characters often struggle with moral conflicts that reflect broader social realities, such as economic inequality, political corruption, and cultural identity. These stories not only entertain but also serve as a critique of societal norms, encouraging readers to reflect on issues of justice and morality in their own communities.

Another example of literature's role in fostering social values can be found in Indonesian Folk Narratives: On the Interstices of National Identity, National Values, and Character Education, a study by Novianti (2022). The research explored how folk literature in Indonesia serves as a tool for strengthening national identity and ethical awareness. The study found that traditional stories promote unity, resilience, and respect for cultural diversity, values that are crucial in fostering social cohesion. This aligns with the broader concept of literature as a tool for moral instruction, as it encourages readers to internalize the virtues necessary for responsible citizenship.

The importance of literature in developing social values is further reinforced by Naufal and Apriyanto's (2024) study on *Si Anak Savana* by Tere Liye. Their analysis of the novel revealed that it promotes values such as responsibility, environmental awareness, and respect for others. As an educational tool, the novel teaches students how literature can shape their attitudes toward ethical living and social engagement. The study concluded that literature when incorporated into formal education, enhances students' understanding of their roles as ethical and socially responsible individuals.

Additionally, literature can serve as a medium for encouraging social transformation. Villanueva's (2022) research on *Biag ni Lam-ang* demonstrated how epics and folk narratives influence national consciousness by preserving traditional values while also critiquing unjust social structures. The study emphasized that literature not only documents cultural heritage but also serves as a call to action, inspiring readers to challenge oppression and advocate for justice.

Moreover, the integration of social values into literature has been recognized in children's literature as well. Masjid et al. (2023) explored how poetry and storytelling are used to instill social values in young readers. Their findings revealed that children's literature is particularly effective in shaping early attitudes toward cooperation, inclusivity, and ethical responsibility. Given the increasing exposure of young people to digital and mass media content, literature remains a vital resource in reinforcing positive social behaviors.

While existing literature provides valuable insights into the values extracted from various literary works, there remains a lack of studies focusing on Bob Ong's novels, particularly through the lens of moral criticism. Previous research has extensively analyzed values in classical Filipino literature and folk narratives (Villanueva, 2022; Tatad & Espina, 2023), yet contemporary Filipino literature, such as Bob Ong's works, has not been thoroughly examined in relation to values education. Furthermore, while studies have explored moral values in selected novels (Putri & Simanjuntak, 2022; Naufal & Apriyanto, 2024), they primarily focus on foreign or traditional texts, leaving a gap in understanding how modern Filipino literature shapes ethical and social values among readers.

Additionally, existing research on digital and contemporary literature has emphasized its influence on reading habits and engagement (Novianti, 2022) but has not fully explored its potential to reinforce Filipino values and character formation. Given Bob Ong's popularity and influence among Filipino readers, it is essential to investigate how his works contribute to moral education and whether they can be integrated into instructional materials for values education. This study aims to address these gaps by examining Bob Ong's novels through moral criticism, identifying the ethical and social values embedded in his narratives, and assessing their relevance in shaping responsible Filipino citizens.

## 2.2. Declining Values Among the Youth

De Giorgis (2023) defined values as crucial beliefs or principles that a specific society deems desirable, serving as a foundation of ethical and socially accepted behaviors. Leal Filho et al. (2022) echoed these sentiments by adding that values are significant in developing one's individual and collective identity. They also emphasized social values as values driving positive human action.

Other than its societal importance, internalizing values also contributes to the efficacy of individuals in producing positive outcomes for themselves. A study conducted by Pastorelli et al. (2022) on 11 different cultural groups, including the Philippines, showed the importance of honing prosocial behaviors among the youth for them to develop positive traits and redirect themselves from negative patterns of behavior. This study showed that having strong values contributes to one's ability to act for the benefit of others while maintaining a strong moral compass that protects one from harmful activities. Moreover, Datu et al. (2020) reported the positive effect of social-oriented values (i.e., fairness, teamwork, leadership, forgiveness, and kindness) on the academic achievement of Filipino high school students. Gomez (2024) contributed to these sentiments by revealing that effective values education leads to improved interpersonal relationships, scholastic achievement, and social harmony. The study highlighted the contribution of values in achieving both social well-being and satisfaction through academic success.

In the contemporary world, there is a considerable shift in values among the youth. These could be attributed to various factors such as shifts in priorities and rapid modernization. Rajevska et al. (2021) found that self-direction values among Latvian youth have weakened over the past decade. In the Philippines, core values have been challenged by several studies due to their ambivalent nature. For instance, Benitez (2022) revealed that factors such as colonization, modernization, and technology have contributed to the contorted understanding of traditional Filipino values, thus leading to the ambivalent practice of values of *bayanihan* (solidarity), *pakikisama* (getting along with others), and *utang na loob* (depth of gratitude). The vague interpretation of the aforementioned traits leads to ineffective practice and misrepresentation. Suazo (2023) complemented these findings by stressing that there is a need for a decolonized view of Philippine culture, values, and identity. Additionally, Felipe-Dimong et al. (2024) found that the deterioration of family-oriented values, specifically the caring culture, among the youth has contributed to the neglect of elder family members. Hence, the study claimed that educational and legal steps should be taken to preserve such traditional values.

In light of the growing concern for the perception of Filipino values and their preservation, numerous studies have also illuminated approaches to safeguarding Filipino values despite rapid global advancements. In another study by Benítez (2022), he stood in defense of the ambivalence of Filipino values and norms by encouraging a shift in viewing Filipino values from ambivalent to pragmatic. He also underscored the significance of integrating Filipino values into the curricula. Furthermore, Arcega (2022) found a pragmatic approach to preserving the traditional Filipino values system by adapting the application of these values to the contemporary world rather than creating a new value system to cater to modernization.

Studies have highlighted the importance of education in developing and preserving values among the youth. A study conducted by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (2021) revealed 19 common values that Filipinos feel are most important to them, the top 3 being family, education, and health. However, the commission also mentioned the need for schools to teach values that ranked lower on the list, such as work and livelihood, humanitarianism, peace, environmental awareness, heritage preservation, and creative achievements. Additionally, Olaya (2023) emphasized the need to reintroduce ethical behavior and social responsibility in the educational landscape and the need for programs that instill values in students. To put it succinctly, the declining values among the youth could be mitigated through their integration into the curricula.

### 2.3. Integrating Values into Instructional Materials

Nurturing academic excellence alongside character development has gained significant attention due to the rapidly changing educational landscape. Dixit and Pathank (2021) emphasized that values education must not be recognized as a separate area of discipline; instead, its significance must be placed across various subject areas. Moreover, they claimed that the integration of values prepares learners to achieve beyond literacy; they are taught valuable life-long skills (e.g., empathy, truthfulness, self-control, and gratitude) that would contribute positively to overcoming real-world trials after their time in the academe.

In addition, Kilag et. al. (2023) recognized the importance of values education in the holistic development of Filipino students. They echoed Dixit and Pathank's concern about the traditional method of teaching values, which is done through a stand-alone subject area. Moreover, they noted the need to contextualize learning and integrate values with other subject areas in order for learners to have a more comprehensive grasp of how values appear in various aspects of their lives. This proves that values integration gives learners a more comprehensive learning experience, enhancing not only their knowledge but also their affective attributes.

Integration of values and language learning has been an area of interest for several studies. Choo (2021), for instance, recognized the shift in teaching English, literature, language, and literacy by uncovering their interconnectedness with ethics. In addition, Choo underscored the opportunity for teachers to acquaint learners with ethical concerns, providing them a platform to practice ethical criticism on literature for secondary and tertiary students.

In a more recent study conducted by Eslit (2023), results highlighted the interconnectedness of language, literature, critical thinking, moral reasoning, and value integration in education. His findings showed that literary works hold capabilities to enhance critical thinking skills and aid in moral development by exposing the readers to hypothetical scenarios that allow them to reflect on their values when faced with critical ethical dilemmas. These sentiments were supported by Ata's (2023) study on teaching values through literary text in English, which explained various strategies for incorporating values into teaching. The researchers' findings proved that teaching values through literary texts is an effective method for values and ethical development.

A study undertaken by Abubakar et. al. (2021) revealed that integrating local cultural values in education and adopting an interdisciplinary approach to character development significantly enhances character formation. Moreover, the study suggested another approach to integration, which is the utilization of technological instructional aids to further optimize the learning experience. This cross-disciplinary approach delivered through engaging materials further solidifies the grounds for integrating values.

Another approach was undertaken by Yumna et. al. (2024) when they conducted a study employing a transformative strategy by integrating moral values in interactive e-books. The particular study sought to emphasize neglected yet essential parts of the Madrasah curriculum. Their study showed that weaving moral and Islamic values into interactive instructional material enhanced knowledge retention and promoted the development of ethical values among Generation Z students. This could also be taken into consideration when integrating declining traditional Filipino values in a way that is engaging and interesting to the current generation of learners.

Studies examining the content of English textbooks have been undertaken. A study conducted by Arwanto et. al. (2024) on the representation of moral values in Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks revealed that there is minimal integration of moral values in the workbooks. As a consequence, they urged textbook developers to include more representation of moral values in EFL textbooks in order to teach students not only to communicate in English but also to educate them on the proper decorum and way of interaction. These findings could be taken as a piece of advice for creating a values-oriented textbook that fits the context of Philippine education.

The mentioned techniques for integration have supported the idea of weaving values taken from literature through the use of educational materials. In a different study, Eslit (2023) shed light on the resilience of Filipino folklore and how these pieces of literature hold significant cultural values that reflect the Filipino identity. Among his findings of withstanding Filipino values are the importance of family, a sense of justice, and respect for nature. The researchers emphasized the opportunity to incorporate culturally relevant narratives into the educational curricula to maintain their endurance.

While the cited studies revealed opportunities for the utilization of literature to enhance values development, specific studies that exploit the ethical teachings from contemporary Filipino literature have yet to surface. Hence, this study seeks to undertake such a topic to fortify character development through the use of Bob Ong's novels.

#### 2.4. Synthesis

The undeniable role of literature in instilling values, morals, and ethical teachings has long been a subject of academic undertaking. Literature has become a tool that mirrors the struggles, dilemmas, and values of society (Moono, 2023). By engaging readers in the rich tapestry of narratives and scenarios, works of literature aid in honing empathy, critical thinking, and reflection, consequently developing their character. Numerous studies underscored the effectiveness of using well-chosen literary works as a means of inculcating values to learners. The extraction of relevant values from texts integrated into the curriculum contributes to providing students with a contextualized and interdisciplinary approach to character formation.

However, the opportunity to utilize literature stands abreast with the increasing concern of deteriorating values among the youth. The aforementioned research highlighted the shift in values of the current generation due to the fast-evolving cultural shifts, which in certain instances, dominate over traditional and cultural values development. The ambiguous representation and limited exposure to traditional values have plagued the youth's ability to internalize significant morals in their daily lives. Studies have highlighted the crucial role of education in addressing this matter.

An auspicious strategy for mitigating this decline is the integration of values into instructional materials. Weaving ethical teachings into the curricula proposes an opportunity for educators to aid learners in extending their development beyond the cognitive level, enabling growth in affective and behavioral areas as well. Learning materials embedded with values encourage internalization, fortifying the use of values in real-world situations. Moreover, studies have emphasized the importance of aligning learning materials to the cultural background of students to guarantee its congruity and impact.

In conclusion, literary works contain a repertoire of narratives that could be beneficial for character development, however, it require strategic and innovative methods to maintain their effectiveness in addressing the contemporary challenges of waning values among the youth. Integrating values into instructional materials appears to be the bridge connecting the gap between literature and practical values teaching. Thus, the researchers of this study undertake the opportunity to use the works of a contemporary, such as Bob Ong, as a means of using literature to develop learning materials that would address current concerns regarding the values, or lack thereof, among the youth.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in three key educational theories that underscore literature as a vital medium for values acquisition among Filipinos, particularly through the works of Bob Ong. These theories, Social Learning Theory, Constructivism, and Hilda Taba's Curriculum Development Model, serve as foundational pillars for understanding how literature can facilitate moral education and how these insights can inform the development of instructional materials tailored to students' needs.

Social Learning Theory, developed by Albert Bandura, posits that learning occurs in social contexts through observation, imitation, and modeling. This theory is particularly relevant to this study, as Ong's narratives serve as indirect experiences that allow students to internalize values and behaviors. Bandura's concept of the symbolic model suggests that individuals can learn behaviors not only through direct experiences but also by observing and engaging with characters in literature. By immersing themselves in Ong's novels, students are exposed to diverse perspectives and moral dilemmas, which may influence their behavioral and ethical development. This underscores literature's role as both an engaging medium and a powerful tool for character formation.

Beyond being engaging narratives, Ong's novels serve as valuable tools for moral and ethical education. Constructivism, as developed by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, is a learning theory and educational philosophy that emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing their own understanding of the world rather than passively absorbing information. Through reading, students engage in a process of meaning-making, where they interpret, analyze, and internalize knowledge based on their prior experiences and social interactions. Literature, in this context, becomes a catalyst for cognitive and moral development, prompting students to critically examine societal issues, question their own beliefs, and formulate personal values. Ong's novels, with their intricate themes and moral dilemmas, encourage reflective thinking and interactive discussions, allowing learners to actively shape their ethical principles, cultural identity, and social awareness. This process fosters deeper engagement with literature, empowering students to connect their learning to real-world experiences and develop a more profound understanding of morality and human behavior.

Incorporating elements of Hilda Taba's Curriculum Development Model further provides a structured approach to integrating Ong's literature into instructional materials. Taba's model emphasizes the active role of educators in diagnosing students' needs, identifying essential Filipino values embedded in literature, and designing learning objectives that adapt to students' evolving educational requirements. Through a systematic process of content selection, organization, and instructional material development, teachers can effectively bridge literary analysis with values education, ensuring that students not only engage with the text but also apply its moral lessons in real-life contexts.

Together, these theories form a cohesive framework that highlights the intersection of literature, moral education, and curriculum development. By applying Social Learning Theory, Constructivism, and Taba's Curriculum Model, this study seeks to demonstrate how Bob Ong's novels can serve as effective tools for values education and character development in contemporary classrooms.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Research Design**

This research will use a qualitative research design to understand and analyze the moral values in the chosen novels of Bob Ong. This method will allow the researchers to delve into the moral and ethical implications of the stories, and the educators' views on the dominant values among the Filipino youth today. This study will use a moral criticism approach to deeply analyze Bob Ong's novels, and understand the values that are shown in the novels, as well as to look into the insight of teachers regarding the declining values of the students.

### **4.2. Research Locale**

The research will be conducted in the province of Laguna, Philippines, in chosen public secondary schools in this area. Laguna was chosen because of its diversity of students serving urban and rural communities with a wide variety of different cultural values.

### **4.3. Population of the Study**

The target population of this study is secondary public school teachers who graduated with a Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English but are currently teaching values education and who are willing to share their insights about including literature in values education. Twenty teachers will be selected and interviewed from several high schools in the province of Laguna to ensure that there will be a wide range of perspectives and experiences.

### **4.4. Research Instrument**

The research instrument utilized for this study is a semi-structured interview guide designed to collect insights from secondary public school values teachers who graduated with a bachelor of secondary education major in English regarding the declining or lacking values among the youth. In addition, the researchers will use a researcher-made questionnaire as an interview guide and checklist, which is composed of three sections to ensure a comprehensive collection of data.

The first section gathers the respondents' profiles, such as name, sex, age, and the school they teach in. The second section is the interview guide questions, composed of two questions. The first question asks about what values are currently declining or missing among students. The second question asks about the teachers' perception of the utilization of Bob Ong's novels as a basis for values integration. The third section is a checklist wherein teachers would tick the type of instructional materials they think would best fit in addressing the issue at hand and explain why they chose such options.

During the duration of the interview, probing questions are incorporated to allow deeper elaboration of the respondent's answers to provide more context for their answers. The semi-structured format of the interview balances aspects of focused discussion and flexibility to explore further the emerging themes, guaranteeing deep comprehension of the issue. The checklist would also include follow-up questions to gather more detailed insight as to why the teachers chose certain instructional materials.

### **4.5. Data Gathering**

The procedure of the study involves all research-related activities necessary to achieve the objectives of the research and provide possible solutions to the identified problem. The data gathering process includes the preparation, validation, revision, and administration of the interview guide, as well as the collection and organization of responses.

The research instrument, a semi-structured interview guide, was carefully developed to ensure that it effectively gathers insights from secondary public school teachers regarding the decline of values among students and the potential role of literature in values education.

During data collection, participants were selected from various public secondary schools in Laguna. The interviews were scheduled based on the availability of the respondents, conducted either online or face-to-face for convenience. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for follow-up questions to ensure in-depth responses.

The researchers were responsible for administering and organizing the interviews, ensuring that all responses were properly recorded. Upon completion, the data was carefully transcribed, categorized, and analyzed based on emerging themes to extract meaningful insights. This systematic approach ensured that the gathered data provided a comprehensive understanding of the role of literature in values education and its practical application in instructional materials.

### **4.6. Treatment of Data**

In this study, the researchers employ multiple qualitative data treatment methods to ensure a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the values present in Bob Ong's novels and the perceptions of teachers regarding values education. Thematic analysis will be utilized to identify, analyze, and interpret recurring themes in both the selected literary texts and the teachers' responses. This approach will allow the researchers to extract Filipino values reflected in Bob Ong's novels by examining narrative elements, character actions, and moral dilemmas. Additionally, thematic analysis will help categorize the teachers' perceptions of values that are currently declining among students and their recommendations for instructional materials aimed at promoting character development.

To further enhance the depth of the analysis, the researchers will apply qualitative content analysis to systematically examine the novels. This method involves using predefined codes based on Filipino core values, such as altruism, responsibility, camaraderie, value of education, and debt of gratitude. Through this process, the researchers will carefully code specific passages, dialogues, and plot points that highlight relevant moral and ethical teachings. This structured examination of the texts aims to uncover the underlying values that can be integrated into classroom instruction.

Finally, the researchers will implement a systematic process of coding and categorization to organize the data into thematic clusters. Values emphasizing social relationships, ethical behavior, and cultural identity will be grouped into distinct categories to ensure clarity and coherence in the analysis. This process will help the researchers remain focused on addressing the study's research questions while offering meaningful interpretations of the collected data.

By combining these qualitative methods, the researchers aim to produce a nuanced and well-rounded analysis that will guide the development of instructional materials integrating Filipino values in English language education.

## 5. Results and Discussion

### 5.1. Respondents' Demographics

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of the four coded respondents presented in the source file.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographics

| No. | Description                  | R1           | R2           | R3           | R4           |
|-----|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1   | Sex                          | Female       | Female       | Female       | Female       |
| 2   | Age                          | 30 years old | 53 years old | 38 years old | 29 years old |
| 3   | Years of Teaching Experience | 9 years      | 30 years     | 17 years     | 10 years     |
| 4   | Qualifications               | BA           | Master       | Master       | Master       |

The demographic data show that all teachers who participated in the interview are female. Most of them hold master's degrees, while one respondent has a bachelor's degree. Their ages range from 29 to 53 years old, and their years of teaching experience range from 9 to 30 years, which provides a useful spread of perspectives.

### 5.2. Values Perceived as Declining Among Students

Teachers most frequently identified respect as the most visible declining value among students. Other values repeatedly mentioned include empathy, responsibility, honesty, discipline, family and relational bonds, altruism, care and concern, and the value of education.

Table 2. Coded responses - What values are currently lacking or gradually declining among students based on teachers' perception?

| Respondent | Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Codes                           |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| R1         | Siguro yung importance ng family. One lang yun ha, I think many values ngayon yung nawawala sa mga bata e noh. Nagkukulang sila ng respect sa opinion ng others, specially sa family nila. Siguro masasabi ko na yung values din na nawawala sakanila ay yung empathy. Naiisip nila since meron silang freedom na sabihin kung ano yung gusto nilang sabihin, gawin kung ano yung gusto nilang gawin, parang hindi na nila naiisip ano mararamdaman ng ibang tao pag sinabi nila 'yon, anong mararamdaman ng ibang tao kapag ginawa nila 'yon dun sa tao na yun.                                                                                                                                                              | Relationship and Familial Bonds |
|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Respect                         |
|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Empathy                         |
|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Care and Concern                |
| R2         | Yung respeto at yung paggalang. Ang feeling ng mga bata entitled sila, feeling nila ka-even lang nila ang mga teachers. They know their rights kaya nga lang nawawala yung values ng respect. Ito yung isang nakita ko, yung paggalang or respect, pagbibigay karangalan dun sa mga nakakatanda sakanila kahit nga mismo sa mga magulang nila eh. Napansin ko sa mga students, yung mga bata ngayon, yung skill in listening. They don't mind anymore. They don't care anymore. They are not giving a chance for their teacher to share knowledge to them, binabalewala na nila. They are no longer respectful, they no longer listen, they don't pay attention much dun sa mga nakatayo sa unahan. Yun yung nakakalungkot.   | Respect                         |
|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Value of Education              |
| R3         | Unang-una, discipline wala. Pag sa school, very limited lang yung discipline. Tapos respect, respect sa aspect na sa elders, respect sa knowledge, respect sa kapwa nila, tsaka dun sa pag-aaral nila, and yung interest nila towards learning wala na rin.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Discipline                      |
|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Respect                         |
| R4         | Yung mga bata ngayon kulang sa respeto, and then siguro yung honesty, and especially when it comes to academic dishonesty, and then siguro yung being responsible, being accountable dun sa mga bagay na ginagawa nila. Kaya ko nasabi yun kasi, for example, kahit yung simpleng pagbati sayo ng good morning, good afternoon, tapos nasa hallway lang kayo, dadaanan ka lang ng bata. Tapos yung ang bigat-bigat ng dala mo, papunta ka sa classroom, iilan lang yung mga estudyante ngayon na nag-iinitiate bibitbitin yung gamit mo, parang kulang sa initiative yung mga bata ngayon. May mga iilan din na mga estudyante na hindi responsible enough when it comes to submitting their outputs, requirements sa school. | Respect                         |
|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Honesty                         |
|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Altruism                        |

All respondents included respect in their answers, making it the most dominant concern among the teachers. The responses also indicate that learners are perceived to show less empathy, weaker family and relational bonds, less appreciation of education, and limited self-discipline. In addition, honesty and altruism were described as declining, suggesting that the teachers see a weakening of moral integrity and selflessness among students.

### 5.3. Values Reflected in Bob Ong's Novels

The moral analysis of the selected novels reveals a wide range of Filipino values. The values are not presented as abstract ideas; instead, they are embedded in character actions, dialogue, social commentary, and humorous but pointed narratives that make the lessons memorable.

Table 3. Values reflected in the selected Bob Ong novels

| Value                    | Representative novels / idea |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Adaptability             | ALG; ABN                     |
| Acceptance               | ABN                          |
| Altruism                 | ALG; BBP; KSN                |
| Camaraderie              | BBP                          |
| Care and compassion      | ALG; KSN                     |
| Debt of gratitude        | BBP; ALG                     |
| Friendship               | ALG; BBP                     |
| Generosity               | ALG; KSN                     |
| Heroism                  | ALG; KSN                     |
| Honesty                  | BBP; KSN                     |
| Love and emotional bonds | KSN                          |
| Resilience               | ALG; BBP                     |
| Respect                  | ABN                          |
| Responsibility           | ALG; BBP; KSN                |
| Self-improvement         | ABN; ALG; KSN                |
| Sense of shame           | BBP                          |
| Value of education       | BBP; ABN                     |
| Wisdom                   | ALG; KSN                     |

The thematic analysis of the novels yielded values such as adaptability, acceptance, altruism, camaraderie, care and compassion, debt of gratitude, friendship, generosity, heroism, honesty, love and emotional bonds, resilience, respect, responsibility, self-improvement, sense of shame, value of education, and wisdom. These values show that Bob Ong's novels are rich in moral lessons and social reflections that can support values education.

#### 5.4. Teachers' Perceptions on Using Bob Ong's Novels in English Instruction

The respondents generally agree that Bob Ong's novels can serve as effective bases for values education integration in English. They describe the texts as socially relevant, humorous, relatable, and meaningful.

Table 4. Coded Responses - What are teachers' perceptions about using the novels of Bob Ong as a basis for values education integration in teaching English as a subject?

| Respondent | Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Codes          |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| R1         | Well, I believe oo. Ang napapansin ko kasi kay Bob Ong, more on issues sya socially, more on moral issues sya. Hindi lang sya actually external struggle nung character noh, merong mga libro si Bob Ong na ang tina-tackle ay yung parang internal struggle nung characters. Si Kapitan Sino 'diba, struggle nung character within himself. More on ganun eh. May libro rin sya na based on his own experiences. Ayun, definitely may mga makukuha tayong values sakanya and pasok naman sya para iintegrate sa English subject.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Strongly Agree |
| R2         | Yes, napakaganda nito pagdating sa values. Yung unang-una nyang akda, yung ABNKKBSNPLAko?!, sabi nila baka ito ay possible to true to life story nya, ni Bob Ong, kung sya man ay isang identity or isang tao lang, na hindi maganda ang naging karanasan nya sa edukasyon na maari nating sabihin na ang mga bata ay iba't-iba ng pamamaraan. There are different ways in which a child can learn, merong fast learner, may slow learner, merong late bloomer tayong tinatawag. So siguro, ito yung pagkakaroon natin ng sensitivity sa bawat isa, na ituring natin na ang bawat isa ay 'di natin kagaya. Nakita ko nga dun yung isang values na natutunan ko, napakasimple nya, sabi 'Diba totoo naman, makakapili ka ng bus, at pag nakakuha ka ng upuan swerte mo kung pwede ka makapili, pero hindi ka makakapili ng pasahero o taong makakatabi mo.' Yung mga ganong values, simple sya pero it will really rock your world. Marami kag mapupulot na aral. | Strongly Agree |
| R3         | Depende sa grade level. For example, on lower grades, I think hindi masyado nakakatulong kasi iba pa yung interest ng mga bata. Pero kung tipong mga higher grade level, siguro makakatulong sya kasi eye-opener sya. Ang maganda rin don, si Bob Ong gumagamit ng Filipino language, or the vernacular, which is relatable among students, compared kung gumagamit tayo ng ibang author, like let's say foreign author, or may ibang Filipino author naman na sobrang systematic ng pagkakasulat na hindi na relatable sa mga estudyante. Depende sa age range, mas madaling madigest yung mga novels ni Bob Ong, hindi rin pati gumagamit ng very difficult words kahit Filipino or English yung gamitin, hindi rin ganon ka difficult intindihin.                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Agree          |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| R4 | Absolutely, yung mga gawa nya very unique yung paraan nya ng pagsusulat na kahit funny, nandun yung humor pero meaningful, very relatable, and tunay na lahat ng students makakarelata dun sa mga words of wisdom ni Bob Ong. Yung novels kasi nya very Filipino, very makatotohanan siya. Hindi man nangyayari sakanila or maexperience nila, maaaring naexperience ng parents nila or ng mga taong nakapaligid sakanila. Beyond that humor, ni Bob Ong, talagang yung mga stories niya magbibigay ng important lessons, valuable lessons about life, about society, yung mga life choices nila, family, even love, and it's a fun way for students, thinking about values without making it feel like a lecture. | Strongly Agree |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|

Overall, the respondents agree that Bob Ong's works serve as effective educational tools because they present human experiences and societal issues in a manner that is accessible, relatable, and appropriate for learners, especially in higher grade levels.

### 5.5. Suggested Instructional Materials

The source study indicates that teachers recommend learner-centered materials such as workbooks, digital modules, interactive activities, and audiovisual resources. These materials should include reflective questions, values-based exercises, and context-rich tasks that make the moral lessons in Bob Ong's novels more accessible to students.

Table 5. Coded Responses - What instructional materials could be developed to aid in the students' values development?

| Respondent | Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Codes                                                                        |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| R1         | Audiovisual pwede pero depende dun sa kung anong ilalagay nyo, pwede may video and such. Gamified, podcasts, and educational apps. More on gamified apps kasi gusto ng mga bata yung may makukuha sila pag nakasagot sila. Kids are more interested sa visual learning.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Audiovisual Presentation<br>Gamification<br>Podcasts                         |
| R2         | Audiovisual presentation kung magkakaroon ng lecture. Ito nga lang ay pag active ang Internet. Pero para maaccess sya siguro itong booklet. Maganda 'tong gamified quizzes kaya lang when you try to reach out sa mga public schools, medyo too good to be true. Maganda rin itong podcast, dahil itong podcast ay updated. Workbook siguro if this will be integration in your subject area. It is readily available, the problem with this nga lang is yung printing. Whether online or offline parehong may problema, but they are all attainable and workable.                                                                                                         | Audiovisual Presentation<br>Gamification<br>Booklet<br>Workbooks<br>Podcasts |
| R3         | I think workbook is number one. Kasi ang workbook pede mong gamitin sa school, pede sa bahay, kahit wala kang other sources, yun lang talaga. Pag may workbook, na maganda yung pagkakagawa, na specified lahat, like let's say may literary piece na 'don, and yung questions ay iba-ibang level, tapos may pre-test, post-test, and writing pa. Audiovisual presentation, maganda rin to sa discussion mismo sa klase. Pede rin kasi 'yan na habang nagpe-present tayo, tas after non magsasagot sila sa workbook nila or even during pede siya, para simultaneous na nangyari. Yung ebook pede siya na supplemental materials na lang, pandagdag lang sakanilang major. | Workbook<br>Audiovisual Presentation<br>Ebook                                |
| R4         | Yung audiovisual presentation, of course, ang mga bata ngayon gusto talaga nila nakikita nila. Booklet, okay din siya, yung parang handouts. Education apps, okay din yun. Gamified quizzes, okay din siya, and then workbook, and activity sheets pero pede na rin nasa workbook 'yun. Mas engaging, mas okay. Yung workbook and booklet naman parang binibigyan mo sila ng space to think and reflect, to process kung ano yung mga natutunan nila. Yung mga gamified, kahit simple games, nakakadagdag siya ng excitement. Naeenjoy naman nila 'yun without even realizing that they're learning about values.                                                          | Audiovisual Presentation<br>Booklet<br>Gamification<br>Workbook              |

The teachers favor audiovisual presentation, workbooks, booklets, gamified activities, podcasts, and ebooks as possible learning materials. Their responses suggest that practical, engaging, and accessible resources are more likely to help students internalize values while still making English lessons interesting.

### 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The analysis of teacher responses revealed that the most commonly cited declining values among students include: respect, honesty, responsibility, empathy, and value of education. These results highlighted growing concern regarding student behavior in both academic and social settings.

Thematic analysis of Bob Ong's novels identified a rich array of Filipino values portrayed through character actions and social reflections. Among these values are adaptability, acceptance, altruism, camaraderie, care and compassion, debt of gratitude, friendship, generosity, heroism, honesty, love and emotional bonds, resilience, respect, responsibility, self-improvement, sense of shame, value of education, and wisdom. These values are woven into the narratives and serve as moral lessons that reflect the lived realities, ethical choices, and cultural identity of the Filipino people.

The respondents expressed strong support for using Bob Ong's novels in English instruction with integrated values education. They highlighted the novels' relatability, cultural relevance, and humor as key reasons for their effectiveness. For instructional tools, the participants recommended workbooks, digital modules, interactive materials, and audiovisual content as means of enhancing engagement and values formation.

Filipino values such as respect, responsibility, honesty, and empathy are perceived by teachers as declining among students.

Bob Ong's novels are rich in moral lessons and social commentary that reflect core Filipino values applicable in both academic and real-life settings.

Research respondents affirm the potential of these novels to serve as effective mediums for integrating values education within English instruction.

Instructional materials that are interactive, culturally relevant, and learner-centered are vital in promoting values education in the 21st-century classroom.

Curriculum developers and English teachers should consider integrating selected works of Bob Ong into the junior and senior high school curriculum. These novels provide meaningful narratives that support both literary and values education objectives.

Instructional materials such as workbooks, modules, and multimedia resources should be developed, focusing on values-based discussions, reflective activities, and contextual learning. These materials should highlight the moral lessons found in Bob Ong's works.

Teacher training programs may include sessions on literary moral criticism and value integration strategies to strengthen the implementation of values-based instruction.

Future researchers may explore the application of other contemporary Filipino authors in values education or pilot-test the instructional materials developed from this study to assess their classroom effectiveness.

Schools and educational policymakers should advocate for the integration of culturally resonant texts in value formation programs to reinforce traditional Filipino values amid globalization and technological shifts.

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