

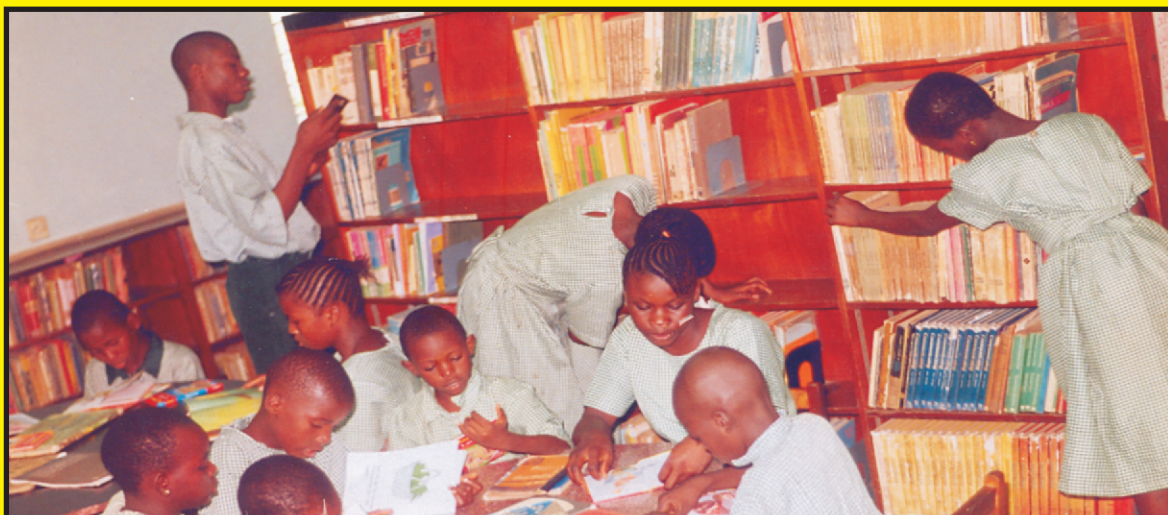
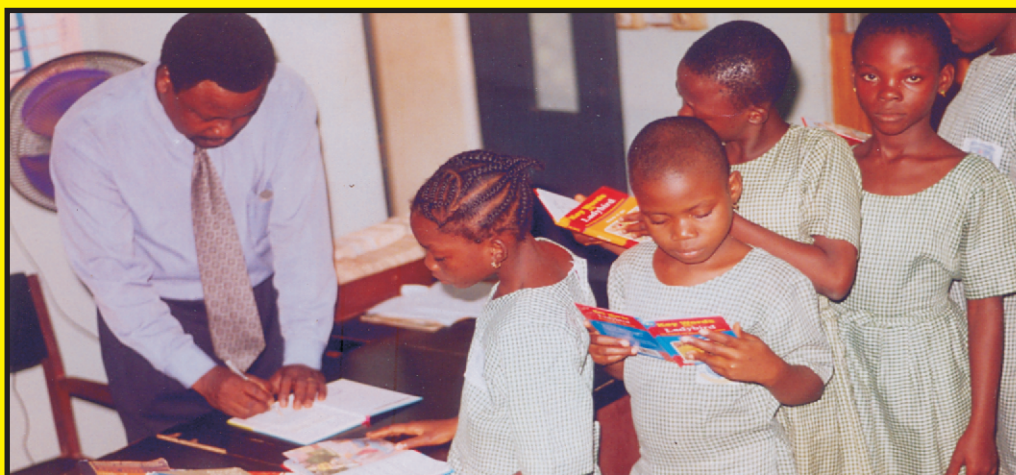
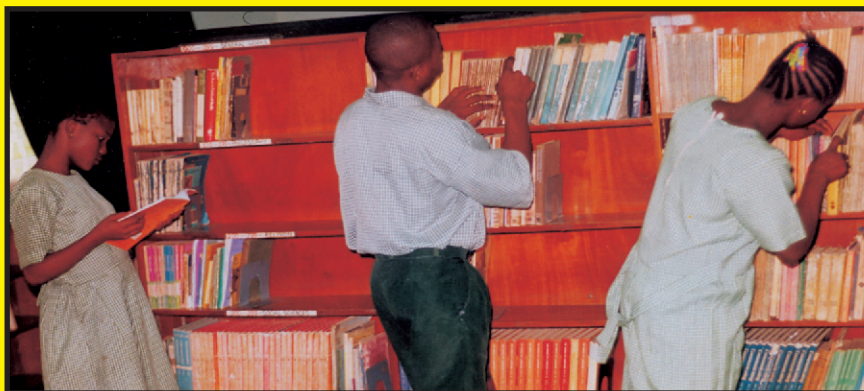


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Factors Affecting the Reading Habits of Minors in Nigeria: A Literature Review

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Abstract

Reading has been identified as a spring through which knowledge is acquired. However, it has been observed that there is lack of enthusiasm among minors in Nigeria. This has largely contributed to the poor performance in their general examination such as WAEC and NECO. The objectives of this study were to identify the factors affecting minors and also highlight the challenges militating against the reading habits of minors. Minors in this study include children and teenagers. The study showed that availability of reading materials, access to a wide range of reading materials, parental involvement, availability of reading materials, peer influence, the increasing use of technology, the curriculum in schools among others. The challenges faced on reading habits include the family background of students, lack of reading materials; lack of functional libraries in most of the schools surveyed and a similar lack of trained librarians or teacher librarians among others. Recommendations made included

Keywords: *Reading campaigns , Parents, pupils, Primary schools*

Introduction

Reading and academic achievements are interrelated and dependent on each other. Students often come from different environments and localities with different levels of academic achievement. Therefore, they differ in the pattern of reading habits before entering into a formal school setting; each student has acquired a unique array of background knowledge and learning experiences through the social interactions he/she has experienced in multiple environments. Much of student knowledge and experiences are gained through interactions beginning at home. Parents hold great responsibilities in raising their child and in becoming their child's first teacher. As the child's first teacher and role model, parents face the important task of having conversations, providing certain experiences and creating a literacy rich environment within the home that fosters and aids in a child's language acquisition and social and emotional development. A child does not become literate on his own. The child should receive help from parents and teachers. For this reason, the first teacher the child has is the parents and his first school is the home. The parents must bestow love

for learning in the child and guide him to persevere on his own. To want to learn is more important than to teach.

Reading is a complex process that involves cognitive, physical, intellectual, cultural, and linguistic processes. Research shows that learners who read extensively tend to accomplish a high level of academic achievement (Hassan, LatiffAzim, Muhammad & Abdullah, 2021). Reading is an attempt to comprehend the writer's message for personal growth and success in the relevant fields. Thus, psychologists consider it a multifaceted cognitive process of constructing meanings from texts, (Abid, Aslam, Alghamid & Kumar, 2023). It requires integrating information within and across text units ranging from the individual word to phrases and sentences, to paragraphs and chapters, to complete articles and books. The cognitive components of reading comprehension have been rigorously tested (Elleman & Oslund, 2019). Reading is a spring in which knowledge is acquired. A complex process involving the whole individual in active coordination to secure meaning for printed text, graphics, or symbols. It is also a specialized skill that involves several skills.

Habit is a fundamental part of living (Ibrahim, 2014). It is that activity which is done effortlessly. Habits are routine and repetitive behavior. They are not instinctive like hunger or thirst. Therefore, good habits towards a task may lead students in the right direction, as the saying goes "habits die hard". Therefore, to develop good reading habits, students need to be exposed to reading strategies. The activity of reading is regarded as a habit when it is repeatedly carried out. Reading habits are measured in terms of amount of materials read, frequency of reading as well as average time spent on reading (Abeyrathna, Phas & Zainab, 2004). Reading habits is a well-planned and deliberate pattern of study which has attained a form of consistency on the part of students toward understanding of subjects. It could be nurtured at an early age (Babalola, 2020). Reading is an essential tool for knowledge transfer and the habits of reading is an activity that increases skills in reading strategies.

The habit of reading is a pattern in which an individual organizes his reading. To know about the world and its environment, a child helps himself through reading books, newspapers, and other magazines. Once the child has been taught to read and has developed a love for books, he can explore for himself the wealth of human experiences and knowledge through reading. Children, who miss the opportunity of getting in touch with books in their early stages of life, find it hard to acquire good reading habits in their later years. Reading habits is a behavior that expresses the liking for reading of individual types and tastes for reading (Ramatu et al., 2015). Having reading habit in students is very necessary, because one of

the most important factors of education is the ability to read, understand and critically apprehend the text. However for student to be able to inculcate reading habits he/she must develop the habits of reading on daily basis. In addition, reading and reading habits is understood to be almost the same, but nevertheless, it is important to introduce children to reading very early in life even before the child steps into school. This way the children can perceive reading as a means of enjoyment, self – development, and learning. This is because it is widely believed that enterprise of developing reading habits has to start at the early part of a child's life and that there should be a conducive reading environment to stimulate lifelong reading.

Parenting is the single largest variable implicated in childhood learning process, reading, literacy development, numeracy, punctuality, school interest, academic achievement and mental stability. It plays a potential role in overcoming learning problems in children and the adolescent population. Therefore, increasing precise knowledge of the parenting concept is a great necessity. The contemporary concept of the role and contribution of parents in a way rejects the so called single direction of influence of the parents on their children's development, replacing it with an intense interaction of three factors such as; the child, the parent and the wider social environment (Ceka & Murati, 2016).

This interaction is constantly being seen as a mutual influence and process moving from the parent to the child and the other way round, which as such triggers a variety of factors which in one way or another may impact the children's development and education, in both, positive as well as negative sense. It is an undeniable fact that parents are the ones who brought the children to life; they are the ones who reproduce the human kind in a given society, as in this way they contribute to the development of human history. Parents or family as a whole, are one of the direct holders of educational work.

Parental engagement and motivation consists of partnerships between families, schools and communities, raising parental awareness of the benefits of engaging in their children's education, and providing them with the skills to do so Emerson et.al (2012). Parental engagement and motivation can be conceptualized as behaviors and statements reflecting involvement in and approval or encouragement of students reading activities, emitted with or without the intention of promoting those students reading motivation and activity. Parental engagement and motivation for reading includes factors such as the availability of reading materials in the home, parental reading behavior, and the frequency of reading to the child. Reading enrichment activity at home has a significant positive influence on students' reading achievement.

Greater parents' engagement can be associated with stronger pre-literacy skills and literacy experiences during the preschool years were associated with subsequent reading achievement. Parent's reading attitudes and behaviors can also be related to children's reading achievement. Parental beliefs about reading are not only an important key to understanding the variety of activities in which parents engage with their young children but also in relation to preschool children's language and reading competencies. Parents have the more major role to play in cultivating the young ones into reading habits which help them to mature and to be responsible citizens. This difficult responsibility not only give rise to providing the children under their care with the right quotient and mix of relevant skills, character and civic exposure in order to be able to take over the responsibilities that time has destined for them, but also, and even more critical – is the task of teaching the child to conduct relevant investigations and research in all fields to solve social, political and technological problems. To achieve this, a child must be well equipped with good reading habits.

According to Tella and Akande (2007) ability to read is at the heart of self-education and lifelong learning and that it is an art capable of transforming life and society. The importance of reading cannot be overemphasized because no learning activity or situation can occur without reading. However, one of the greatest problems in education is that reading has become a real tool for acquiring knowledge in all areas of human life. Therefore, knowledge acquisition is based on the ability to read and interpret materials correctly. This does not deny that knowledge can be acquired without reading it. Although people read for many reasons, studies have shown that sometimes, especially in developing countries, students' reading habits are low because reading is not considered a leisure activity as it is not part of children's social interactions (Babalola, 2020).

Ezeala (2020) submitted that students have low interest towards reading and the majority of these students do not know how to read well, and thus, they are faced with reading challenges amid examination periods. Students still struggle with reading skill acquisition even after secondary school education. This has led to their total dependence on teachers note for their success even at higher degree levels. Failure to succeed in these exams has left many in bad health conditions which can lead to death, mental and permanent disability. Beyond educational achievement, parental engagement and motivation is associated with various indicators of student's development. These include: more regular school attendance, better social skills, improved behavior, better adaptation to school, increased social capital, a greater sense of personal competence and efficacy for learning. It is on this note that this study is designed to

investigate parental engagement and motivation as determinant to reading habits of secondary school students.

Reading is an essential tool for learning exchange and the habit of reading is an academic activity that builds abilities in reading methodologies. In recent times, lack of cultivating the habits of reading has been the concern of all the stakeholders in education sectors. The lack of enthusiasm of secondary school students for reading has contributed to many failures such as poor writing and a limited understanding of what they are taught in class. Research has shown that students who read extensively are likely to achieve good academic performance (Mwangi & Bwire, 2020; Petrus & Shah, 2020). Other studies have seemed to discover and elucidate the various ways in which secondary school students in Nigeria could develop the habits of reading amidst divergent distractions around them especially in the 21st century society as well as the roles of stakeholders towards enhancing the reading habits of secondary school.

Statement of the Problem

There are so many benefits attached to reading among children reading, however, many students are always reluctant to engage in reading activities during their early adolescence (Traux, 2010). This has resulted into poor performance in general examination such as West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), NABTEB and JAMB over the years. Research findings such as Ajayi, (2012); Alawiye, Owolabi, and Olagesin, (2012); and Bamidele, (2017) have shown that there is poor reading culture among school children in Nigeria. Samuel (2019) traced the increase in failure till 2019 and discovered that about 80% of students usually fail WAEC examination every year. The poor performance of the students may be due to students' attitude towards their reading and reading habits. Hence, this study.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

1. identify the factors affecting the reading habits of minors in Nigeria
2. highlight the challenges militating against reading habits of minors in Nigeria

Literature Review

Narrative paradigm theory was propounded by Walter Fisher in 1984 and was adjusted in 1987. It stresses the effectiveness of influence through narration, that is, persuasion through storytelling. Using a more subjective theoretical orientation, Fisher argues that human beings are fundamentally storytelling creatures; therefore, the most persuasive or influential message is not that of rational fact, but instead a narrative that convinces us of

“good reasons” for engaging in a particular action or belief (Hinampas, 2021). The concept gives the relative definition of humans as the beings whose storytelling competencies are top notch. A human can adequately bypass a message more diligently and effectively using communications theories. The narrative paradigm theory explains that the storytelling capabilities of human beings are, greater important when giving clarifications more than when supplying convincing ideas about a certain situation matter which has crucially been incorporated in human inventive and communication lifestyles (Mark 2021).

Definitions of parenting are not explicit in the domains of instruments used to measure it. Most studies have explained parenting in relation to the phenomenon of concern by using various terms and conceptual bases that represent the meaning and attributes of the parenting concept, such as parenthood, child-rearing, childcare, parental role and function, parent-child relationships, family process, and socialization (Virasiri, Yunibhand & Chaiyawat, 2011). These varied terms can be confusing for people because of the real meaning and construct of these concepts and as a result, gaps in research in the area of parenting might occur.

Berg-Nielsen and Holsen (2013) opined that parenting is not the same as parenthood, which means to be a father or a mother who gives birth. It is a more comprehensive term than child rearing, and it is limited to the relationships between parents and children, whereas grandparents or relatives, as well as teachers, can take part only in child rearing practices. Certainly, parenthood means being a parent. However, parenting is more than that. Parenting is the function, role, and responsibility of the parent in the family unit that can imply the commitment of an individual or individuals to provide for the physical and psychosocial needs of a child. In particular, parenting means the role performed by a person that possesses parental status in order to suitably and positively enhances development in every aspect of their child’s life. It is the primary method used by parents for socializing children. Virasiri, Yunibhand and Chaiyawat (2011) posited that parenting is the most important factor in the learning and educational development of every society and the world.

Ilori and Abdulahi (2016) highlighted various roles of libraries in promoting reading habit as following: creating an enabling environment, provision of reading materials, library orientation programmes and motivation of students to be avid readers through literary competition and giving of prizes and other incentives. Ailakhu and Unegbu (2017) asserted that school librarians should continue and improve their reading promotional strategies the more, so that the impact will be overwhelmingly felt by all and sundry. Government has a significant role to play in

developing the reading habits of students in the nation. There is urgent need to re-design the school curriculum to emphasize the acquisition of reading skills, train and re-train teachers and adequately fund the school system for the sustainability of educational standards in Nigeria.

Akande and Oyedepo (2019) concluded in their study, that the reading habits of secondary students should be given rapt attention because of the imminent danger of losing reading habits in the era of information and communication technologies, where the use of social media sites is the order of the day. Their study also recommended that there must be a fixed time for reading a variety of reading materials that will appeal to students and that adopting different methods to arouse the interest of students could enhance their reading habits.

Bamidele and Ilshan (2019) stated in their research that in order to improve students' academic achievement in Nigeria, the government and some Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) organized workshops, seminars and quiz competitions to promote of reading habits/culture in Nigeria. In addition, the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), Ogun State Chapter, held a daylong interactive session with selected secondary schools. Among the activities of the day, were quiz competition and a lecture on career talk that aimed, among other goals, to arouse the reading habits of young ones (Nigerian Library Association, Ogun State Chapter, 2014). As well, in 2014 a keynote address at the opening ceremony of the National Conference/Annual General Meeting of Nigerian Library Association was titled "Restoring reading culture and use of library among young Nigerian adults: Implications for empowering citizens and Nigerian society".

Iloeje (2014) opined that every child must be encouraged to read and assist in becoming fully competent in reading so that they can succeed in school, succeed in life and become a responsible adult citizen. He further advised the students on their part to strive harder to ensure better performance. It is important to note that from the foregoing discussion, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have made many efforts to inculcate and sustain the reading habits among secondary school students. Reading is often simply referred to as communication between the mind and printed materials, which involves getting the meaning, message and thought. It enriches readers' imaginations and intellectual growth faster (Ibrahim, 2014). In other words, Reading can be explained as a practice of seeking knowledge, information or entertainment through written words. Knowledge and information can be acquired by reading books, journals, magazines and electronic resources. It helps reap one of the greatest virtues—the ability to understand and not condemn (Chettri & Rout, 2013).To fulfill numerous

types of knowledge processes, it is crucial to start reading at an early age to seek knowledge more effectually.

Kaur and Jawald (2018) conducted a research on a comparative study of Urban and Rural Reading Habits: problems of the rural reader. This study revealed that fewer quality academic reading materials, outdated collections, unwelcoming behavior of staff, less community involvement, poor library access, lack of photocopy printing services, less customers focus, lack of ICT services, flexibility in operating hours, requirements of staff training and internet access were the main problems affecting their reading habits. The ability to read is an art of self-education and lifelong learning which is capable of transforming life and society. Habits are an act done by people regularly as their daily activity even they don't know it is their habits because they do it regularly either consciously or unconsciously.

The Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching (2010: 258) defines habit as a pattern of behavior that is regular and which has become almost automatic as a result of repetition. Reading habits can be identified as one of the factors that can serve as a mediators of students' achievement in education and life-long endeavour. It can be said to be a generic habits and can be successfully and sufficiently extended and nurtured both through family and educational institutions. It reflects the personal choice of material to be read as well as the time and place to read it. Interest in reading provides motivation for more reading. It suggests the sociological aspect of the reading process, the group of readers and patterns and types of behavior. Developing reading culture involves motivating students. It is very important to recognize that, parents, teachers, and librarians have vital roles to play among secondary school students to enable them to embark on voracious reading and developing good reading culture.

Dollah and Khan (2017) specified that reading habits play important role in enhancing students' academic performance in schools. In order to achieve successful academic performance among students, parents must give more attention to monitor their children's education progress at home. Parents provide a multidimensional role and are considered to be their child's first teachers and socializing agents (Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2006). They are caregivers that provide a nurturing environment where a child can feel safe, while providing the essential needs that motivate active reading within the child. Parents are the first educators the children come in contact with. They are the first teachers and role models for their children, and therefore have a strong influence on their learning. Impacting knowledge to the children through reading at the early stage adds a lot of meaning to

their lives (Whalley, 2017). There is a correlation and causal relationship between parental involvement and student motivation to read. In the correlation, motivation works more than any other relationship and this motivation come through the proactive reading involvement of parents with their child (Zaheer, Muhammed, Tariq & Chaudary, 2021). Reading makes them eager to explore things written in books as they grow older, thereby cultivating reading culture and learning about things, places, events and experience (Deal & Peterson, 2016). Therefore, parental involvement is vital in supporting a child's literacy development.

Eke (2017) argues that several researchers have affirmed that relationship between children's reading and their interactions with their parents have long been recognized as a significant factor in early childhood reading development. Nwokaogu (2016) affirmed that nature bestowed indispensable role in parents to support their children's early development of sustainable reading habits. Indian Department of School Education and Literacy (2021) opined that reading is the foundation of learning, which motivates children to read books independently, develops creativity, critical thinking, vocabulary and the ability to express both verbally and in writing. It helps children to relate to their surroundings and real life situation. Thus, there is a need for parents to be involved in programmes in which students read for pleasure and develop their skills through a process that is enjoyable and sustainable and which remains with them for life.

Anunobi (2022) solicited for parents' supports in the development of reading culture by challenging parents to join hands with the National Library of Nigeria to ensure that every Nigerian child reads a book, a sentence in (their) mother tongues or English language. She further stressed that the making of a great village, city or town starts small. Parents should not allow the candle of the library's light to extinguish. Pope and Galle (2016) also emphasized that parents must prioritize their involvement in reading campaigns in order to enhance delivering effective programmes that improve literacy attainment, attitudes and behaviours meant to develop, encourage and stimulate the reading culture of children.

Ogunrombi & Gboyega (1995) highlighted inhibiting factors: the family background of students where few homes are conducive to reading owing to noise and lack of reading materials; the lack of functional libraries in most of the schools surveyed and a similar lack of trained librarians or teacher librarians; the failure to provide library periods in schools; language teachers and shortage of equipment and resources for teaching reading skills; and a heavy reliance on school texts. Taking cognizance of all the aforementioned inhibiting factors, all educational stakeholders should be involved in developing and sustaining the reading habits of

secondary There are several factors that adolescent are faced which serve as a barrier towards cultivating good reading habits and thereby achieving greater academic achievement.

According to the research carried out by Ameyaw and Anto (2018) out of 104 respondents,(58.65%) expressed that the main factors that hinder their study is a lack of conducive home environment, followed by (16.35%) who revealed that inadequate novels/fiction in the school library while (13.46%) indicated a lack of reading materials at home. Alawiye, Owolabi, and Olagesin, (2012) revealed that among the factors indicated as a hindrance to the students' reading habits, lack of comprehension and television, social network and radio programs were rated higher by the students. In 2014, Ibrahim also reported that the Nigerian children and youths, and unfortunately the adults all over the world are today glued more to television than books. The films, T/V, video games, Facebook, and twitter, among others have completely taken the place of the book. A report by National Endowment for the Arts (2007) in United States revealed that mass media largely influences the reading habits of students nowadays and the environment is polluted by the constant bombardment of media contents which are not directed to encourage young people towards cultivating good and effective reading habits.

Bamidele (2017) examined the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study aimed to determine the frequency and types of reading materials that students engaged with, as well as the factors that influenced their reading habits. The sample consisted of 968 students from three public senior secondary schools in Ogun State. She reported in her research that out of 968 respondents, 585(60.4%) of the respondents agreed that addition to social media mostly affect their reading, (%), Lack of reading materials in the schools and at home 566 (58.5%). Followed by television and radio programme 574 (59.3%), growing distractions of internet 567(58.6%). Also, 544(56.2%) indicated that the total absence of trained profession librarians/teachers to deliver lecture on reading, lack of seminar and workshop on reading skills 539(55.7%) while 423 (43.7%) of the respondents agreed that school library is not conducive for reading. Majority of the respondents confirmed that the above factors affecting reading habits.

In the research of Kowale (2015), he examined on the relationship of secondary school student students' background factors (family type, parents' income level, educational level, occupation and occupational designation) and their reading habits. He discovered the negative relationship between family type and reading habits, which implies that reading habits of students increases with irregularity of family and vice

versa. The implication of this is that students from irregular family such as polygamous and single parents' family are more favorably disposed to reading than those from regular monogamous family. A negative relationship was established between parents' educational level and reading habits, this implies that students' from lowly educated parents' are more favourably disposed to reading than those from highly educated parents and vice versa. This may be due to the fact that highly educated parents that are engaged in formal and cooperate businesses do not have time to monitor the reading habits of their children reading habits.

Also, negative relationship between parents' occupational designation and reading habits implies that students from highly designated parents are found not to exhibit favorable reading habits unlike their counterparts from lowly designated parental background. On the other hand, the positive relationship between family income and reading habits implies that the reading habits students' increase with increased family income. In other words, students from higher family income background are more favorably disposed to reading than those from low family income backgrounds. This may be due to the fact that students from high-family-income backgrounds have access to more books and other information materials.

According to Olasehinde et al. (2015), many schools (public and private) have not complied with library provisions in the National Policy on Education (NPE). Ilori and Abdulahi (2016) highlighted various roles of libraries in promoting reading habit as following: creating an enabling environment, provision of reading materials, library orientation programmes and motivation of students to be avid readers through literary competition and giving of prizes and other incentives. Ailakhu and Unegbu (2017) asserted that school librarians should continue and improve their reading promotional strategies the more, so that the impact will be overwhelmingly felt by all and sundry. Government has a significant role to play in developing the reading habits of students in the nation. There is urgent need to re-design the school curriculum at secondary school level to emphasize the acquisition of reading skills, train and re-train teachers and adequately fund the school system for the sustainability of educational standards in Nigeria. Reading should be given a place in the secondary school curriculum apart from language classes such as English, Yoruba and French classes.

In an interview conducted, Haliru et al. (2015), found that teachers are eager to have reading in the school curriculum. Therefore, government should integrate reading into the school curriculum in order to facilitate the turning of Nigeria into a reading society, where students at all levels

would be passionate about. Simth (2017) highlights some factors influencing reading habits: Availability of reading materials: The availability of reading materials is an important factor that affects the reading habits of students. Research has shown that students who have access to a wide range of reading materials, such as books, magazines, and newspapers, are more likely to develop a reading habit. Parental involvement: Parents play a crucial role in developing the reading habits of their children. Research has shown that children whose parents are actively involved in their reading habits are more likely to develop a reading habit.

Peer influence is another factor that affects the reading habits of secondary school students. Students who have peers who enjoy reading are more likely to develop a reading habit themselves. The increasing use of technology, such as smartphones and social media, has been identified as a factor that negatively affects the reading habits of students. Many students spend a significant amount of time on their devices, which leaves them with little time to read. The curriculum in schools also plays a role in the reading habits of students. If the curriculum does not place enough emphasis on reading, students may not develop a reading habit. School guidance counsellors also have roles to play in developing the reading habits of students; through counselling and sharing success stories of people who attained great heights through good reading habits while they were young such as Ben Carson. Portraits or pictures of people who have excelled due to their good reading habits should be placed at strategic places to motivate students.

Students should not be left out in the effort towards developing reading habits. All efforts should be harnessed in order to remove distractions that are capable of subjugating their reading time to watching television, using social media sites such as: Facebook, 2go, WhatsApp, and twitter among others. Students should be engaged in intensive and extensive reading that would illuminate their minds, sharpen their intellect and guarantee their educational success and all round development.

Conclusion

This study has shown that parents have crucial roles to play in children's reading culture because they aid the pupils' psychological and physiological responses to tasks assigned to them. This study has identified factors affecting reading habits as: availability of reading materials, access to a wide range of reading materials, parental involvement, availability of reading materials, peer influence, the increasing use of technology and the curriculum in schools among others. The challenges faced on reading habits include the family background of

students, lack of reading materials; lack of functional libraries in most of the schools surveyed and a similar lack of trained librarians or teacher librarians; the failure to provide library periods in schools; language teachers and shortage of equipment and resources for teaching reading skills; and a heavy reliance on school texts.

Recommendations

1. Parents should be encouraged to read with their children, sit with them while they read, and create time to read with them.
2. Parents should motivate their children to read by buying them new books, granting their wishes when they read books, and rewarding them for reading.
3. Educators and parents should work together to address negative attitudes towards reading among secondary school students, such as only reading when exams are around the corner or reading only to please parents.
4. Schools should provide reading resources such as libraries and encourage students to visit frequently. This will provide students with access to a variety of reading materials and promote good reading habits.
5. Government re-design the school curriculum to emphasize the acquisition of reading skills, train and re-train teachers and adequately fund the school system for the sustainability of educational standards in Nigeria.

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