

LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY



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*A Communication Channel For National Development*

# EDUCATION

## EDUCATION: *A Communication Channel For National Development*

*A Book of Readings in Honour of  
PROF. ABATUNDE BUSAYO*

EDITED BY

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*A Publication of the  
Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo*



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for National Development

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A Publication of the Faculty of Education,  
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pedagogy and educational testing. He has a chain of publications to his credit in local, national and international journals. He has authored and co-authored many publications.

Professor Bashiru Babatunde Oderinde, the educator, researcher, author, administrator and professor of Language Education was inaugurated to the referred Professorial Chair in October 2007. He gloriously retired in September, 2010 after meritorious services to the Education industry specifically and to God and humanity in general.

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## ASSESSMENT OF READING INTEREST OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN OJO AREA OF LAGOS STATE

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### Abstract

*The study investigated the reading interest of primary school teachers in Ojo Area of Lagos State. It is believed that teachers who would train Nigerian children to be literate by giving them sound education need to be equipped before they could perform their duty effectively as role models. One hundred and forty-five teachers selected from fifteen primary schools in Ojo Area were involved. A questionnaire entitled, "Reading Interest Inventory" was administered to the teachers to collect data and using simple percentage and pearson product moment correlation co-efficient, the two hypotheses raised were tested at .05 level of significance. Findings revealed that teachers' reading interest did not correlate significantly with level of library patronage while material always read did not correlate significantly with teachers' possession of bookshelves at home. The need for government, parents and teachers to encourage the setting up of school libraries in primary schools is stressed.*

### Introduction

In this present dispensation when browsing the World Wide Web, playing with highly compact handset and passing non-stop SMS's seem to be the order of the day, reading a book in a peaceful corner of a library has become an obsolete idea for most people. While technology is slowly sweeping across every facet of human endeavour, the reading habit is fast vanishing into the thin air. It is the most effective process of conscious learning which influences the extent and accuracy of information, as well as the attitudes, moral, belief, judgement and action of readers.

Oyetunde (2009) describes reading as the ability to obtain information from print. In other words, reading is the ability to make sense of the context of what is read. Onukaogu and Moh (2008) notes that, reading is a vital tool that can catalyze and sustain development in our nation. This means that development can be promoted by empowering the people with reading. Reading no doubt is capable of transforming and reforming individual lives as well as the entire community. Venezky (1990:9) cited in Onukaogu and Moh (2008) has described reading comprehensively by saying that:



reading is clearly primary to any definition of literacy and some cases others are secondary. Writing, as a means of recording communication presupposes reading otherwise it is copying. Similarly numeracy and document knowledge are supplementary to reading and have no roles in the literacy equation without it. The skilled reader ignorant of numeracy and document formats still will obtain meaning from print. On the other hand, the non-reader who is skilled in arithmetic and some document styles will stumble in an environment based on print.

From the foregoing, it could be seen that reading is the pivot or the core of literacy and literacy is a vital instrument for "enhancing development, sustaining a people's culture and facilitating their development". (Onukaogu and Moh, 2008).

The reading habit of primary school teachers in contemporary African society is fast fading off. The cause of this has been traced to many factors such as non-availability of reading materials, existence of obsolete reading materials on most library shelves, and poor reading culture of Africans. (Anibogu, 2009)

It can be deduced from the above that the importance of reading cannot be overemphasized and this is because reading habit plays a very crucial role in equipping a person towards achieving practical efficiency. Books are the most suitable medium through which knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation. Books yield their best readers presented to them at the age in which each particular master-piece can ideally be achieved and digested for according to Peterson (1992), books provide the most effective means of disseminating and popularizing scientific and technological knowledge in a given society. Good reading habit is essential for primary school teachers as this serves as the bedrock for literacy.

Ezeokoli (2004) asserts that reading is enormous and inestimable value in the making of an individual. It is one of the salient activities in the learning process. It is a means of acquiring literacy. Reading is the gateway to information and new knowledge. It is a tool by which a teacher keeps abreast with current information in the education system. No teacher can outgrow the art and the more materials one can read the better informed one becomes, because both knowledge and experience grow together base on materials one is able to read and digest.

An uninformant teacher cannot give out what he does not have, Umoh (1991) notes that reading is an indispensable tool of learning in the various fields of academic engagement. The circumstance of modern life demand the development of good reading habit for the implementation of the national goals and on individual level for the fullest and most beneficial participation in the society.

A typical library is stocked with current and relevant books which can help teachers update their knowledge. Omojuwa (1999) postulates that teachers are the most important factor in teaching/learning process and if teachers are ignorant in their discipline and impact wrong information they are not only useless but dangerous.

It is amazing that in spite of the numerous benefits associated with reading, many teachers discountenance reading and its attendant discipline. The rate by which teachers read print

materials or have library cards is worrisome. Most teachers make no provision for library in their schools, due to non availability of books and the financial problems in the purchase of books.

### Reading Habit

According to Sangkaco (1999) reading habit refers to the behaviour which expresses the likeness of reading individual, types of reading and tastes of readers. It is a pattern which on individual organizes his or her reading. One's ability to read is at the heart of self education and lifelong learning. In order to cope with new knowledge in this ever-changing world and that of the technological age, one must cultivate good reading habit. The reading culture of most primary school teachers is Ojo zone is discouraging and this is a back up to the word of Sangkaco (1999) "we are not a reading society in Africa but chatting society, the culture habit of people proffer to listening and chatting more than reading".

Chandilanga (2006) states that the skyrocketing prices of books have affected the reading culture in Africa to some extent. In his reference to the word of the renowned writer Alfred Msadala who noted that since the book industry was liberalized some years ago, the textbook market is in the hand of the private sector and to a certain extent so many things have occurred on the negative side. The good reading habit has been thwarted and the culture of taking pleasure in books has disappeared. The practice of exchanging novels, magazine and other reading materials must be revived in our society.

### Book Availability and Access

Fasanmi (1999) observes that the acquisition of knowledge can be effective through the acquisition and reading of books. Books impact knowledge to the reader, draws out and foster qualities such as imagination and self understanding and contributes to the teachers' development by stimulating the senses of touch, sight and hearing.

Access to book refers to availability of quality literature in the classroom, school, community or home libraries. In an ideal home environment where reading is encouraged, such a learner stands better chance of gaining sound knowledge of self, family, community and the society at large which promotes unity, progress and mutual understanding.

However, it could be stated that there is a chronic shortage of an increasing digital divide. The dramatic increase in the number of pupils and a corresponding demand for more relevant books courtesy of the universal primary education project has accelerated pressure on the education system. The family income in most homes do not help matter.

### Some of the Major Aspects of the Home that Contributes to Reading Literacy Development.

Firstly, the economic resource is an important aspect of the home environment. When and when reading materials are in steady supply to a home this convey to children and parents that learning to read is desirable and worth every effort given to it.

Secondly, social and culture resources. Society and culture are inherent in influences on the perceived importance of reading for academic and personal success.



In addition to that, out of school literacy activities can be highly rewarding. Teachers and children not only enjoy reading for recreation but also for practicing skill, they are being learned. Reading for fun or to investigate topics of interest is the hall mark of lifelong reading.

However, school policy and curriculum just as school environment and resources are two major factors in school which are capable of affecting reading literacy acquisition.

#### How Do We Revive our Dying Reading Culture?

There is need to review reading culture among Nigerians. Generally, reading for pleasure in the country is not something that has been widely encouraged. Many people see reading as something you do in order to pass examination and to this end most students spend time to read their books during examination.

Promoting the view that reading could be something pleasurable would be an effort worth taking to kick start changing current attitude. It could be the start to hailing the decline. Also, television, mobile phones and the internet is more appealing to teachers than having a book to themselves.

#### Statement of the Problem

Without any iota of doubt there are several benefits obtainable from reading, but it is surprising that many teachers find it very difficult if not almost impossible to read apart from their discipline. It is highly discouraging when the reading rate at which teachers read print materials or have library cards is taken into account.

The essence of this paper is to find out whether majority of teachers read other print materials apart from reading books in their discipline. Also to find out if most teachers have bookshelves at home which they consult for further study and research.

The following hypotheses were tested in this study at .05 level of confidence.

1. There is no significant correlation between interest in reading and patronage of library.
2. There is no significant correlation between materials always read and possession of bookshelf at home.

#### Methodology

A total of 15 schools selected by random sampling from the Ojo Local Education District V were used. A total of 145 teachers were randomly sampled from the 15 schools.

A questionnaire designed for primary school teachers was administered to the teachers. The questionnaire has two sections, A & B. Section A contains items related to the demographic data of the teachers while section B deals with items bothering on the reading interest of the teachers. Using the Cronbach Alpha statistical tool, a correlation co-efficient of .63 was established.

#### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to Gender.

Gender	X	Df	Assu. Sig
Male	25	144	0.798
Female	92		
Missing (sex not indicated)	28		
Total	145		

Table 1 reveals that 92% of the respondents are female and likewise 25% are male. This implies that the study cuts across both sexes which confirms that the study is not gender biased.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant correlation between interest in reading and level of patronage of library.

Table 2: Correlation of Interest in Reading with Level of Patronage in Library.

Item	X	Df	T-Value	Ass. Sig	r
Interest in reading	9.2000	144	12.963	0.10	0.212
Level of patronage in library	7.5310				

Results in table 2 show that there is no significant relationship between interest in reading and level of patronage of library. This reflects in a correlation (r) index of 0.212 at .05 level of significance which shows a weak relationship. The table value derived stood at 0.423 which is less than 1. Therefore, the calculated value of (r) is less than the table value. Since the calculated value of (r) is less than the table value, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between students interest in reading and level of patronage of library is not rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant correlation between materials always read and possession of book shelves at home

Table 3: Correlation of Materials always read and Possession of Bookshelves at Home.

Item	X	Df	T-Value	Ass. Sig	r
Materials always read	8.3379	144	-2.777	0.005	0.231
Possession of bookshelves at home	8.7586				

The degree of relationship between the students materials read and possession of bookshelves at home was established by means of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r). Results in table 3 show that there is no significant relationship between materials always read and possession of bookshelves at home. This shows in a correlation (r) index of 0.231 at .05 level of significance which shows a weak relationship. The table value



derived stood at 0.423 which is less than 1. Therefore the calculated value of ( $r$ ) is less than the table value. Since the calculated value of ( $r$ ) is less than the table value, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between material always read and possession of bookshelves at home is not rejected.

### Findings

Results show that most primary school teachers only read books on their discipline. The result also confirms that teachers in primary schools in Ojo zone only engage in reading to teach and not for personal development, fun, or to be well informed. The result further reveals that teachers doggedly concentrate on their textbooks and lecture notes to the detriments of other materials.

### Implication for the Achievement of Quality Basic Education

The race towards achieving the millennium development goals of attaining universal basic quality education by the year 2015 is in top gear by almost every country. Since education is the bedrock of every meaningful development it is then imperative to invest and re-invest in education. Nations of the world who place premium on quality education can boast of quality services and human resources. There is need for massive campaign for literacy awakening education for all. Government funding of education is presently on the upward review to ensure meeting up with quality basic education, which of course is not easy to come by. With the support of educational stakeholders the goal cannot be too difficult to achieve (Abidemi, 2008).

Sanglao (1999) says the task of encouraging positive reading interest to foster and promote a love for reading culture in the society is not an easy task. In an attempt to achieve quality education every teacher must ensure improvement in their reading habit and reading culture.

### Recommendations

If the reading culture of primary school teachers is to be improved upon, certain issues must be worked upon such as follows;

Firstly, the librarian: The librarians working in the primary school libraries should endeavour to make the library attractive to both pupils and teachers. The librarians should be given roles that must always be coordinated with what is taking place in the classroom. In addition to that, the school library set up should allow comfortability like good sitting arrangement, ventilation, readable lighting facility and silent environment. Again, involvement of the mass media. Radio and television stations in the country should incorporate in their list of programmes "Reading Culture" through reading of interesting books on air.

Also, government funding must be reviewed in line with high cost of maintaining functional libraries in other civilized countries of the world. Library facilities should not only be available but adequate regardless of how remote the place is.

Government should not limit her efforts to procuring reading materials alone but welcome fully packaged multi-media equipment in primary school libraries. The opportunities brought by Information Communication Technology (ICT) should spread across.

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