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READING CULTURE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NIGERIA: A STUDY IN YOLA NORTH AND YOLA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ADAMAWA STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the reading culture among secondary school students in Yola North and Yola South Local Government Areas of Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study explores the concept of reading culture and decline of the culture in the Nigerian society. The study adopted Icek Ajzen's theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) theoritical approach and the data was collected using questionnaires, the research in question has to do with attitude formation which often occurs at very young ages. In view of this, the research was based on a survey involving selected samples of Nigerians children who had recently completed primary and secondary schools. The questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents to enable the researchers obtain information regarding reading behaviour that are relevant to the research. samples were draw from the area most accessible to the researchers; that is, Yola North and Yola South. Pupils who had completed primary education and the respondents with secondary education were polled from among first year students of the Federal College of Education Yola (only those fresh from secondary schools). The results indicate serious reading deficiencies and low involvement in extracurricular reading as expected. The results of the chi-square calculations based on observed table values and expected values in tables reveal a relationship between reading culture and involvement in extracurricular reading. In other words, there are statistically significant variations in responses in the extent to which people engage in reading depending on their level of competence. The general trend as previously pointed out is for the percentage of always responses to increase in accordance with better performance in the reading tests. The qualitative conclusion one may reach from this quantitative result is that, this is an empirical proof that indeed the ultimate factor in low involvement in extra-curricular reading could actually below reading ability. The study therefore recommended some way forward that will help in reversing the trend such excursions to libraries, exhibition, Government should take a bold step to increase the production of textbooks to reach the target figure of five textbook per pupil; revival of the school's literacy and debating societies and teaching of arts and literature etc. The paper concludes that reading culture should be encouraged not only in school but the society at large.

Keywords: Reading culture, literacy; life-long learning; voluntary reading

Introduction

Reading is the ability to make sense of print. It is a process of communication between the reader and the authors' text. As a meaning-making activity, reading involves the use of the readers' background experiences (and some obvious points in the choice of words provided in the text) to construct the authors' intended meaning. Comprehension is why we read therefore reading must be taught in the context of meaning. It must be taught in practical situations; wherein children can do any reading activity in an enjoyable way as they are assisted to see reading as a meaning making practice.

Reading is a language activity that has been used to develop a variety of skills and abilities: such as to discover specific facts, to see the writer's point of view, to read at a reasonable speed, to infer meaning of unknown words and to make meaning out of any written text. In other words, reading is a complex phenomenon that goes beyond the mere understanding of the meaning of words and sentences, but deals with the understanding of ideas. In this case, a persons' background comes into play and determines to what extent a person understands a concept and the kind of interpretation he gives to that concept.

Reading, whether for pleasure or for academic purpose, is an essential habit that forms the bedrock of greatness in everyone and every nation for national development imbibing reading culture has not been as widespread as accepting its importance. One could imagine the behavior of the staff in the first assertion above depicting the current state of Nigerians as regards reading culture. Reading is not for reading sake; comprehension is at the centre of reading. Ogungbemi, Adigun and Ogundipe (2018) described reading as a process that requires the use of complex thought processes to interpret printed symbols as meaningful units and comprehend them as a thought unit in order to understand a printed message. According to Collins (2012) Reading is a total integrative process that starts with the reader and includes the affective, psychomotor and cognitive domains. Okebukola (2014) affirmed that through reading, humans have the tools to transmit knowledge to each succeeding generation; it allows one to listen to the wisdom and people of the ages.

Reading about the past and present, particularly in technical and vocational education, will be able to project new ideas for national development. One can't stop the future, can't rewind the past, and the only way is to learn the secret, through formidable reading culture.

In Nigeria, a study carried out by Henry (2014) revealed that about 40 percent of adult Nigerians never read a non- -fiction book from cover to cover after they finished school. The average Nigerian reads less than one book per year and only one percent (1%) of successful men and women in Nigeria read one non-fiction book per month. The same study showed that about 30 million Nigerians have graduated from high school with poor reading habits/skills. Some Nigerians may not read because they are not working in the fields or profession that make them read. The way of life of a nation is influenced by the percentage of the citizens who are literate, Cuba for example is adjacent to the United States of America and has the highest rate of literacy in the world. This is among the reasons why Cuba has a vibrant economy despite decades of diplomatic conflicts with the strongest nation in the world (Henry, 2014). Rubin (2015) asserted that being a former British Colony, Nigeria's literacy culture ought to be as standardized as that of the British. About 99% of British citizens can read and write. The same cannot be said of Nigeria. Lawal and Abe (2016) stated that out of about 814 million literate people in the world, developing countries especially in Africa represent a huge percentage. However, Latin America, Asia and others are making frantic efforts to drastically reduce the illiteracy rate.

In Nigeria, literacy is recognized as a basic tool for personal and national development. The National Policy on Education (2013) has "inculcation of Permanente Literacy and numeracy and ability to communicate efficiently'" as one of the objectives of school education. Some education stakeholders have attributed the serious drop in the reading culture in Nigeria to the lack of adequate awareness on its importance, inadequate library facilities, and laziness of learners, poor access to books and reading materials. Development is critical and essential to the sustenance and growth of any nation. A country is classified as developed when it is able to provide qualitative life to citizenry. Nigeria, for more than fifty years, has been battling with the problems of development in spite of huge human material and natural resources in her possession.

Development is a victim of definitional pluralism; it is a difficult word to define however, attempts have been made by erudite scholars to conceptualize development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications different countries have different priorities in their development policies.

If one compares their development levels, one would first have to make up one's mind about what development really means to the individual, what the person is supposed to achieve.

Recently, United Nations documents emphasized "human development", measured by adult literacy, life expectancy, access to three levels of education, as well as people's average income which is a necessary condition of their freedom of choice. According to the classical definition given by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and development (2024), development is sustainable if it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". "Sustainable" development could probably be otherwise called 'equitable and balanced". In order for development to continue indefinitely, it should balance the interests of different groups, within the same generation and among generations. This paper explores the critical decline of reading culture in Nigeria and its detrimental impact on national development, proposing strategies for revival.

The focus of this paper is on the reading culture among secondary school students in Nigeria specifically in Yola North and Yola South Local Government Area, Adamawa State Nigeria

Literature review

Perspectives on reading attitude in Nigeria It is important to point out that the kind of reading in question can be viewed only in respect of what Unoh (1985) refers to as "extra-curricular" reading which is "voluntary and self imposed." This is because the volume of reading imposed by academic or occupational imperatives may give a wrong picture if factored into reading attitude assessment. Such may only reflect motivations that are transitory in nature, and can terminate as soon as the academic or occupational motivations cease. Therefore, reading attitude may be defined as feelings and emotions, which make voluntary and self imposed reading more or less probable. This is the kind of reading that defines a reading culture, it is the kind of reading that is so poor in Nigeria. Though there may not be much controversy regarding the fact that attitudes to reading are not generally positive in Nigeria, it is still important to sight some empirical works that confirm this situation, especially those studies carried out among segments of the population that are supposed to read a lot. An interesting survey was conducted in the Lagos area (the commercial and social hob of Nigeria) and reported in Mammah (2005). It began with a 'feasibility' survey of reading habits with 208 respondents drawn from urban and semi urban Lagos who represent a cross-spectrum of gender and occupational categories. Results indicated that majority of the people were

already familiar with books, and appreciated their value to themselves and the society. They even identified favourite subject areas. Yet, they were not interested in actually reading, claiming they could not find books they would love to read and could not find the time to either go or look for them or read them. Mammah (2015) therefore observes that in spite of the fact that the bulk of literature from Africa comes from Nigeria and the fact that some Nigerian writers are household names across the globe, Nigerians have been fast ignoring, even abandoning books. Mammah reiterates this tragedy by referring to his recent visit to Onitsha along with a German publisher, the visit was made on account of the world famous Onitsha market literature. It was discovered that while Onitsha remained commercially buoyant, its book status had been almost completely eroded: The bookshops, printing presses, publishers, authors and itinerant book vendors are now few and far between, and Onitsha's schools, which used to be status symbols, now rely on coercion to compel parents to send their children there. Whatever happened to the land that had inspired texts as vivid and diverse as Veronica My Daughter, When Love Whispers and Chike And The River; and nutured and encouraged authors and such book people as Ogali Ogali, Cyprian Ekwensi, Chinua Achebe and Emmanuel Obiechinna? In the same direction, Ifedili (2009), attempts to verify the general belief that the reading culture in Nigeria is alarmingly low. The researcher focuses on students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria who by virtue of the level of their educational pursuit should be exemplary in reading. She based her study on the assumption that the poor reading culture has become a missing link in the Nigeria's educational development, such that it is now the ultimate factor in failure rates, dropout rates, and the production of half-baked graduates from our institutions. She employed a stratified random sampling method in which she selected the 10 universities that participated in the study. The sample was made up of 8500 students (4,800 males and 3,700 females). Eight hundred and fifty lecturers were also randomly selected to participate in the study. The instrument used in gathering the data was a questionnaire titled "Student Reading Habit Inventory (SRHI)". Some experts verified the validity of the instrument. The reliability was done using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at .67. The final Spearman-Brown formula yielded 0.80, proving that the instrument was reliable. The first part of the questionnaire requested demographic information while the second part requested information on reading culture among the students. The third part was on the availability of those things that could motivate the student to read, while the fourth part was on the respondents' personal goal setting and goal achievement. In addition to filling the questionnaire, some of the participants were also randomly interviewed. The statistical analyses were based on Z-tests and simple percentages. The major findings were: that there was a high decline rate in reading culture among students in the tertiary institutions, that 60% of students read prescribed textbooks only during examination period, that browsing and watching television have taken most of students' time for reading, and that only 21% of students buy novels to read for knowledge and pleasure. Based on the above, Ifedili (2009) recommends that a compulsory reading course for all students should be introduced in the universities. In addition to this, Ifedili recommends regular reading assignments for students, book subsidy by governments, as well as awareness campaigns. One must point out the fact that Mammah (2005) and Ifedili (2009) appears to be emphatic on solutions that relate to book awareness campaigns, government policy and publishers' appropriate response. Ifedili however points out the need for general curriculum reviews that would emphasise reading assignments. While these are obviously relevant, the question of whether the people can

read well or not was characteristically not adequately addressed in these works. Yet, the extent of reading culture could be a crucial factor in reading attitude formation. This paper, as stated earlier, is an attempt to empirically address this research gap.

Theoretical framework

Icek Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) posits that individual behavior is driven by intentions, which are shaped by three core factors: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms (social pressure), and perceived behavioral control (ease or difficulty of performing the action). Developed in 1985 as an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action, this cognitive model predicts that stronger intentions and higher perceived control lead to a greater likelihood of performing a specific behavior .How strong an attempt the individual makes to engage in the behavior and how much control that individual has over the behavior (behavioral control) are influential in whether he or she engages in the behavior. Behavioral intention is produced from a combination of attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2002). Behavioral control is similar to self-efficacy, and depends on the individual's perception of how difficult it is going to be to engage in the behavior. The more favorable a person's attitude is toward behavior and subjective norms, and the greater the perceived behavioral control, the stronger that person's intention will be to perform the behavior in question.

Methodology

The research in question has to do with attitude formation which often occurs at very young ages. In view of this, the research was based on a survey involving selected samples of Nigerians children who had recently completed primary and secondary schools. A researcher-designed questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents to enable the researcher obtain information regarding reading behaviour that are relevant to the research. For the purpose of making a credible statement about the reading competence of the research subjects, there was a need to administer (along with the questionnaire) reading a test that basically had a proficiency measurement objective.

Population

The general aim of the research made it necessary to make recommendations that would be applicable to Nigeria. However, Sampling from across Nigeria is not only unrealistic, it is also absolutely unnecessary. This researcher, therefore, drew samples from the area most accessible to them; that is, Yola North and Yola South. These researchers considered the cities to be considerably cosmopolitan to yield samples that could possibly reflect (to a reasonable extent) the Nigerian situation regarding the issues studied. Pupils who had completed primary education could, at the time of this research, be found in JS one classes in any of the 15 secondary schools in Yola. The respondents with secondary education were polled from among first year students of the Federal College of Education Yola (only those fresh from secondary schools).

Sampling technique

The researchers as much as possible, within the limits of practical realities in the field, made the administration of the research instruments purposive. In view of the fact that the research involved the administration of reading test, there was a need to identify points of data collection that were appropriated for the research. Such points of data collection were places where classroom conditions were conducive, and the cooperation of respondents and their teachers could be guaranteed to a reasonable extent. Purposive sampling, which is often referred to as a technique of convenience was therefore employed. In this

approach "the researchers use their own judgment about which respondents to choose, and picks only those who best meet the purposes of the study" (Ikeagwu, 1998:189). Based on the above general procedure, the researcher obtained a total of 303 responses (150 and 153 for primary school educated respondents and secondary school educated respondents respectively).The samples were obtained from four secondary schools and the tertiary institution earlier identified. The purposive system was based on the need to have representation from public schools and private schools, and to have reasonable balance of female and male respondents. In this regard, two of the secondary schools were private schools while two were public schools. The respondents were selected in such a way that 100 (about 70%) of the respondents with primary education were from the public schools to reflect the fact that over 70% of the pupils in the area of study are in the public schools. Such a distinction was not made with secondary school educated respondents who were polled from among first year students of the Federal College of Education Yola.

Research instrument

The research instrument used in carrying out this research included: Two separate cloze tests (cloze tests 1 and 2) and a researcher designed questionnaire.

Cloze Tests 1 and 2. The cloze tests as an instrument of reading proficiency assessment has been variously subjected to tests of concurrent validity; that is, it has been compared statistically with other standard tests and found to be capable of yielding credible result. It also has the advantage of being considerably objective and capable of reflecting the psycholinguistic process involved in reading by prompting the reader to ask cognitive questions instead of responding to the tester's questions. In addition to these, it is also believed to be capable of simultaneously testing the different reading levels (literal, interpretive, critical and creative) as indicated in the Stieglitz Informal Reading Inventory (2nd Edition), listed in Reading Assessment Data Base (2010:34). Two such cloze tests were used such that people belonging to each identified level of literacy training will respond to the one appropriate for their levels. For this research, only people with primary and secondary education were tested. At this point, it is necessary to recall that in the discussion of reading culture (above), the idea of using educational levels as bases of assessment is established as a relevant principle in reading measurement (Hillerich,1978). This is applied here as a theoretical basis for having separate tests for different levels of literacy training, as long as the passages used for the tests are deemed appropriate via standard readability tests. For this research, the passages used were first ascertained to be appropriate by the researchers on the basis of face validity. They were subsequently confirmed to be appropriate by an experienced reading researcher. They were also further tested using the Fry readability test, a test developed in an L2 situation and therefore deemed most suitable (as stated earlier) for the respondents in this research who also live in a second language situation.

One other crucial issue with the test passages is the deletion system used to construct the cloze tests. For the passages administered to respondents with primary education, every eighth word was deleted, while in the case of the respondents with secondary education, every fifth word was deleted. This was done in conformity with the standard practice of varying deletion system according to level of expected competence. In both passages, the first two sentences are left intact and proper nouns are not deleted.

The questionnaire

A copy of the questionnaire was attached to each test (both 1 and 2) such that each respondent was made to respond to the test items on the questionnaire. The questionnaire had

two sections: sections A and B. Section A required personal information such as age, gender, state of origin and so on. This was to help achieve a considerable evenness in distribution, according to these yardsticks, though some of these variables did not feature for analyses purposes. Section B required information about the respondents' involvement in extra-curricular reading. These responses were based on a selected list of principal uses of reading skills outside the instructional environment. This list included reading newspapers and magazines, novels, plays, poetry, biographies, religious materials and general interest books. The extents of involvement in reading the above areas were measured on the scales at 'often' 'occasionally' and 'never'. These were scored statistically and consequently aggregated to provide statistical statements about respondents' interest in recreational reading. Of course, the result was later correlated with competent levels that emerged from the tests.

Data collection procedure

Collecting data in Nigeria is beset with many problems. One of such problems is the attitude of the people to research instruments such as tests and questionnaires. People have been known to receive and subsequently dump research questionnaire. In view of this and in view of the nature of this research with its requirement for a reading test, the researcher decided to concentrate mainly on situations in which it was possible to ensure that respondents gave proper attention to the tests. For a research nature, it was generally required that the subjects of the reading test responded to the test in the presence of the administrator of the test. For this purpose, schools seemed to be the best situations to administer the test. This explains why only schools were used. Also, the researcher found it expedient to test graduates of primary school by testing first year secondary school pupils and to test secondary school leavers by testing first year tertiary education students. While the tests and questionnaire were being administered, care was taken not to make the atmosphere too formal or intimidating. It must be said though that it may not be possible to completely eliminate some measure of anxiety from any test situation. In spite of the cooperation of teachers, it was observed that many respondents actually were clearly very lackadaisical about the exercise. Many respondents preferred to fill only the questionnaire and leave the test unattended to others simply scribbled things at random just to be seen to be busy while the time allotted lasted. Indeed, the decision to use only one reading test for this research was taken in anticipation of this difficulty and to reduce pressure on the respondents. Fifty-five minutes were initially recommended for the test but practical reality on the field soon revealed that strict adherence to that time would jeopardize the entire exercise as only a few respondents would have actually cooperated if the time conditions were not relaxed.

Procedure for data analysis

The data analyzed in this research are in the following categories:

i. The results of the cloze tests administered to determine reading proficiency levels.

ii. Data relating to the extent to which the selected respondents engage in extra-curricular reading.

For the first category, the results obtained were analyzed by first categorizing the scores obtained from the cloze test into score groups of 0-39 (frustrating level), 40-59 (instructional level) and 60 and above (independent level). The categorization of reading competence expectancy was based on simple percentages, with tables provided to illustrate the percentage distribution for both primary and secondary levels. For the second category of data, the system of simple percentage was also adopted to determine the percentages of respondents that selected any of the options of "always", "occasionally" or "never". The

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number of responses for these three options (for each of the identified types of reading activities) was tabulated along with the percentage values.

Data presentation

Reading proficiency level

Table 1: respondents with the primary education

No of respondents	Independent 60-100	Instructional 40 – 59	Frustration 0-39
160	16	42	102
	9.04%	20%	70.6%

Table 2: Respondent with Secondary Education

No of respondents	Independent 60-100	Instructional 40 – 59	Frustration 0-39
153	61	18	124
	0.65%	18.3%	81.05%

As envisaged reading proficiency level was low with only 9.04% of respondents with primary education and 0.65% of those of those with secondary education able to read at independent level, a material scientifically adjudged to be appropriate for their level of literacy training Level of Extracurricular reading .

Level of reading as extracurricular activity

Table 3: Extracurricular reading respondent with primary education

Books	Never	Occasionally	Always
Novels	14 (8. %)	102 (60%	44 (323%)
Plays	16 (14%)	122(68%)	22 (18%)
Poetry	25 (16.67%)	108(66%)	27 (17.33%)
Biographies	13 (13.03%)	111(67.3%)	36(21.3%)
Religious materials	23 (15.3%)	40(20%)	35(26.33%)
Newspapers	30(20%)	103(63%)	97 (26.67%)
General interest	20(12.6%)	110 (64.67%)	30(22.62%)

Table 4: excuriculer reading (respondent with Secondary Education

Books	Never	Occasionally	Always
Novels	23 (10.46%)	98 (56.21%	32 (33.33%)
Plays	13(9.6%)	119(71.24%)	21 (18.95%)
Poetry	12 (11.33%)	115(69.93%)	26 (17.33%)
Biographies	15 (11.12%)	106(69.28%)	32(19.60%)
Religious materials	8 (5.23%)	47 (30.72%)	98(64.05%)
Newspapers	13(8.5%)	105 (67.97%)	35 (23.53%)
General interest	19(12.41%)	86(55.6%)	48(32.03%)

The Relationship between reading competence and interest in reading. In this section, the relationship between reading competence and levels of involvement in extracurricular or recreational reading are presented as statistically tested. Also, the relationship between reading competence and affective and conative variables of interest are statistically tested and presented. These are done by presenting cross tabulations indicating how respondents belonging to each reading performance level engage in reading via a summation of their responses to the questionnaire item requesting them to indicate how they read in the last three month. Also, respondents' responses to attitudinal question are tabulated according to their reading levels (independent, instructional and frustration).

Discussions

The results indicate serious reading deficiencies and low involvement in extracurricular reading as expected. The results of the chi-square calculations based on observed table values and expected values in tables reveal a relationship between reading culture and involvement in extracurricular reading. In other words, there are statistically significant variations in responses in the extent to which people engage in reading depending on their level of competence. The general trend as previously pointed out is for the percentage of "always' responses to increase in accordance with better performance in the reading tests. The qualitative conclusion one may reach from this quantitative result is that, this is an empirical proof that indeed the ultimate factor in low involvement in extra-curricular reading could actually be low reading ability. The concept of reflectance motivation applies to the fact that reading is a primary means of gaining mastery over the modern social environment which individuals begin to pursue as soon as they start schooling. As the above statistics however indicate, people begin to vary at what Athey (1985) refers to as the age of industry or inferiority (the schooling age). For those who develop the early skills, those skills (Robert White's concept of personal competence) constitute his notion of master reinforcer which ultimately molds the final attitude that characterize individuals' disposition towards reading. Therefore, the key issue is the level of competence in reading generated at the schooling age. While the researchers does not wish to ignore the popular reading culture improvement activities, it is pertinent to point out that the current research appears to prove that the primary matter should be the improvement of reading ability. If people cannot read well in the first place, there is some limitation in the impact efforts to give them books to read and preaching to them about the benefits of reading. As Strang (1978:81 puts this matter "skill in reading is in itself a motivating factor and a pre-requisite to interest in reading". It is important for those of us working in reading related academic disciplines to realize that the urgent challenge is to fashion out ways of improving reading ability in the schools. It is only when this is done that other motivational strategies can really have impact in enhancing reading culture. One must point out the fact that the data in question reveal quite clearly that reading culture is generally poor among all categories of respondents regardless of the level of reading competence. This means that there are actually a number of seemingly competent readers who do not use their "adequate" skills enough, thereby making it seemingly imperative to consider other factors in trying to explain the poor reading culture. However, since statistics have revealed significant variations in reading involvement on the basis of reading competence, and since the starting point of reading is the ability to use reading skills, one cannot but advocate that the issue of reading competence be given prominence in these discussions in view of the strong possibility that existing wrong attitudes to reading are products of cognitive factors related to the inability to read well in the first place.

Summary of major findings

Many factors militate against reading culture in Nigeria, some of which are discussed below:

Socio-cultural factors

In most families, children are not familiar with reading; their parents can neither read nor write to serve as role model to them. Books are not easily available because nobody is interested in buying and stacking books; in the Child's immediate environment, there are no reading rooms; no books and no book shelves. Some parents lack knowledge on how to help their children; there

are no programmes such as family literacy where parents and their wards are brought together and taught their roles in promoting reading; some parents are too busy to give their children the necessary attention needed at home.

Language is a major factor militating against reading culture in Nigeria; reading becomes a struggle if the learner is not competent in the language. Findings shows that there is a correlation between language proficiency and comprehension (Okpala, 2014).Literacy education is successful in a positive learning atmosphere in which learners and teachers feel comfortable with the overall language use. The background knowledge of the child which includes his mother-tongue forms the initial bases for learning. Authors should be encouraged to develop quality prose in different mother-tongues for the Nigerian child. Factors that affect comprehension during reading are: (1) What the learner already knows and brings to learning experience, (2) The mother-tongue of the learner, (3) The cultural background of the learner, including family culture, oral tradition, and indigenous knowledge of the learners and their relationship to the literacy being acquired, and (4) The identity of the learner in relation to gender, class, religion, and race (Quarie & Glanz, 2011).

The non-availability of good books is another factor militating against reading culture in Nigeria. Developing a reading culture is dependent on availability of books. There should be a public library in every community and a school library in every primary and secondary school but this is not the case in Nigeria. The few libraries available lack adequate funding so they can't afford to buy good quality books. The cost of books is high coupled with poor distribution network of locally published books.

Some researchers believe that Nigerian children prefer watching television, listening to radio or playing computer games to reading (Anyagwa, 2000). However, some other researchers share a different opinion on the effect of Information Communication Technology (ICT) on reading. Okebukola (2004) stated that ICT has not negatively impacted the reading culture of Nigerian children. The findings show that Nigerian children are still reading but online, ICT is a welcome development and has come to stay. All stakeholders should find ways of redirecting children's use of ICT for positive benefits.

The vast majority of the world's information today is not digested; it is in print from mostly books. Reading's culture among young adults is not exactly on the wane but the delivery mechanism has changed. Communication with words is thriving but in a new formant, reading online (okebukala, 2014). For many years, especially in the west, there have been doubts whether the written medium of narration would survive the onslaught of technology. Will children and adult who spend most of their time in front of a television or computer continue to read books? Similar fears were expressed at the end of the 19" century with the emergence of films and cartoons, books survived that. The need today is the thoughtful integration of book reading with high technology i.e. the integration of multi-media activities such as photography, printing and drawing, sewing and crafts, 3 - D and digital at, hip-hop and online services in our libraries. Oke (2016) in Simsaye and Quadri (201 8) affirmed also that a conscious effort should be made all Stakeholders in the educational system to promote the reading culture. If the culture of reading is inculcated, youths will overcome the threat and overbearing influence of the social media and computer games that are hindering their development.

Noise culture

The trend among the Nigerian youth now is towards music. There is always crowd, for example in any music show, compared to when one has books exhibition. The major reason is that most people perceive noise to be an integral part of their culture. A learning environment

requires places for quiet study. Most schools are in densely populated areas where distractions prevent the smooth flow of learning activities.

Undue importance attached to wealth

Looking at the Politicians remunerations or take home in Nigeria today. One might feel that it is the easiest way to be wealthy without little or no stress. Many Nigerian people celebrate mediocrity at the expense of intellectuals. The case of the seemingly longest of ASUU strikes which took place 2014 is still fresh in the mind. Similarly, the sister Institutions: Polytechnics and Colleges of Education went on strike etc. over a meager request/demand to improve their various institutions. The "wardrobe allowance" of the National lawmakers, states Assemblies, security votes of governors etc. cannot be compared. Some people abandon their educational careers for the pursuit of money. Many have abandoned their education in search of "quick money", which they believe can be gotten in business or politics. The researcher may not be surprised in Nigeria if PhD students in technical and vocational education abandon a research (almost concluded) for a senatorial seat or house of representative, etc. as the case may be.

Poverty

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the impact of poverty is deeply felt. According to Tracy (2015) only a few people live above the poverty line. About 80% of Africans live under hazardous conditions. The per capita income of an average citizen in Nigeria, "the giant of Africa" with its abundant natural resources, is about two dollars. Many are too poor to send their children to school. They lack money to buy books and pay school fees. For technical and vocational education to thrive to next level, reading culture must improve.

Corruption

Corruption has affected Nigeria reading culture, particularly technical and vocational education on which national development depends. Corruption is present everywhere in Nigeria, from governmental institutions to private organizations. In schools for example, many students prefer to indulge in immoral acts rather than face their studies diligently. Situations like trading sex for grades, using money to buy examination grades, cheating in examination, etc. abound in our institutions of higher learning. Those who engage in these infamous acts usually consider reading as waste of time (Lawal & Abe, 2016).

Dearth of libraries

The role of the libraries in promoting reading is especially crucial in developing scientific, reflective thinking and creativity. However, these libraries (school and public) are either non-existent or not playing their expected role. State and local government and proprietors of schools (government and individual) have not complied with the library provisions in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2014). Public libraries are not being established where they are needed. Simsaye and Quadri (2018) observed that few existing public libraries are neither adequately funded not stocked with reading resources that can affect the lives of the citizens and more importantly improve technical and vocational education for national development. Libraries can help children and youths develop critical and independent thinking through their exposures to a wide variety of infrastructural resources and learning opportunities. Apart from the development of creative and critical thought, the role of the library in the promotion of reading culture can be seen in the readers development of values, attitudes and appreciation, especially of technical and vocational education for National development.

High book prices

Prices of text books, Novels and training manuals are expensive. A few years back, one could pick a good book for about N150.00 but now the prices have gone up. In essence. the

affordability becomes an issue to many children, youth and Nigerians who would have wanted to read. The unit cost of books in Nigeria is high because of the weakness of the naira as against US dollars. It does not matter whether the books are imported or produced locally. it is high time that our government at all levels saw what can be done to reduce the cost of books/reading materials for Nigerians to cultivate reading culture to enhance technical and vocational education for national development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, improving Reading culture in Nigeria should be a task for every stakeholder starting from the family unit to the authors/illustrators, to the school, to the librarians, the children themselves and the federal government.

This suggests that efforts to improve the reading culture in Nigeria, and possibly other second language reading situations elsewhere, must begin with reading competence improvement measures in the classroom. This is not to suggest that the existing teaching ideology should simply be practiced more efficiently. As a matter of fact, the existing approach to the teaching of reading in Nigerian schools must be re-examined both in terms of principle and practice. The existing system involves integrating the teaching of reading exclusively into the teaching of English language. This is the inevitable result of the separation of English language and Literature with only a partial exposure to literature at certain levels. The adoption of extensive reading strategies in all primary and secondary schools is therefore recommended.

Nigeria in such a time like this must encourage reading culture and give it priority in the development of educational policies. Nigeria, more than fifty years, after independence, must determine to overcome the challenge of illiteracy. One of the major instruments for national development is sufficient reading and literacy skills about, the past and present to make adjustment for a sustainable and dynamic future.

Suggestions

The followings are some suggestions/recommendations for improving reading culture in Nigeria:

1. The federal government should declare a national reading/literacy day. A family literacy programme that will bring together all stakeholders can be organized on national literacy day.
2. Every local government in Nigeria should have a public library.
3. Libraries should be well funded by the federal government.
4. The federal government should establish a board particularly for quality control of prose literature.
5. Prose with local contents should be encouraged.
6. Parents are encouraged to build up their own home library.
7. There should be reading on the school time-table so that it could receive the attention it deserves.

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