



Bad Reading Habit: A Cause of Poor Academic performance and Low Health Standard among Library and Information Sciences Students, University of Jos, Nigeria

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Abstract. This paper investigated bad reading habit: A cause of poor academic performance and low health standard among University of Jos, library and information sciences students Plateau State, Nigeria. The study was poised by the moribund state of reading habits among students. The study formulated 5 research questions which includes; what are the causes of bad reading habit? What are the consequences of bad reading habit on the health of Library and Information Science students? among others. Paper adopted a survey research type and cross-sectional research design. The population of the study consisted of 376 undergraduate library and information science students of University of Jos for the academic session 2018/1019. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the sample size of 150 which was used for the study. The instrument used for data collection in the study was a structured questionnaire otherwise referred to as close ended questionnaire. Face and content validity was established for the instrument while the reliability index was established using Alpha Cronbach. To be 0,87 which made the instrument reliable for use. Face to face method of data collection was adopted using the instrument (questionnaire) and the analysis was conducted using simple percentage. The study concluded among others that, Bad reading habit amongst students have significant negative impact on their academic achievement and health condition. Amongst the recommendations made by the study includes; Students should be encouraged to borrow books from the library regularly since this can help them to inculcate reading habits.

1. Introduction

The global assertion and maxim that education is a potent instrument for attainment of sustainable development in all human society today cannot be over-emphasized. Education is conceived as a powerful tool which is instrumental in bringing of the desired changes in the social, cultural, and economic life of a person. This education can only be attained through formal or informal way of teaching which relies on the supplies of library and information services. Reading is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. It is acognitive process that involves decoding symbols to arrive at meaning. Reading is a skill, and it can be acquired with a sound mind. Ogbonna (2014) defined reading as the ability to recognize and understand meaning from a text. The reader seeks to understand the meaning of a written text; evaluates its significance and uses what he has read to enhance his knowledge, effectiveness or pleasure. Ogugua (2015) regarded reading as an active mental process that makes one to use his brain and at the end, becomes smarter. He also saw it as a fundamental skill builder, because every course of study on the planet has matching books to grow with. It helps one to improve vocabulary and expands one's horizons. It improves memory and helps to build self-esteem. Every child is supposed to be fully competent in reading to succeed in school and discharge responsibilities as a citizen of a country. Reading is the only form of entertainment that is also an essential life skill. It is a skill that must be nurtured from a child's earliest years or else the child will not read well (bad reading habit).

Reading habit refers to habitual and regular reading of books and information materials among individuals. It is one of the attributes of a developed nation. Reading habit can be enhanced through

provision of suitable reading materials at home, schools and public places. Reading habit can be imparted in children early enough through lullaby, songs, toys, music, choice of television programs, use of libraries, resource centers and book clubs. Bad reading habit is a calamity that can befall a nation. It is quite unfortunate that many parents in developing countries are not exposed to the hidden treasures in reading. Alternatively, they can spend huge amount of money on other things they may consider pertinent to them. Little did they know that those things can 'vanish' in one day under the custody of a child that is wallowing in ignorance. A child gets a lot of exposure, understands his culture and his environment when books are read.

Good reading habit will increase the knowledge of an individual as well as widen the understanding of such individual which will translate to improved performance. Performance is a task seen in terms of how successful it is performed. It is also accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed. In a contract, performance is deemed to be the fulfillment of an obligation, in a manner that releases the performer from all liabilities under the contract.

Bad reading habit occurs in a child when that child knows how to read, but was not supported to reach a full potential as a reader. This situation is obtainable both in children and adults because reading, in Nigeria is not considered a relevant leisure activity as it cannot be compared with interactive activity on the internet. Bad reading habit has taken deep roots in the part of the students, either as a result of paucity of qualified teachers, ill-health of students, bad method of teaching, outdated textbooks, family background, psychological factors and poor teaching methods on the part of teachers to mention but a few. Bad reading can cause several problems in a student but the most worrisome is when it affects the four areas of life-physical, mental, social and spiritual. The activities of these four areas of life are interwoven. What affects one can be transferred to the others. For instance, when one is not physically well, let's say: worries and anxiety of many "carry over" in exams. These worries and anxiety may flow into other areas of life, causing mental illness or depression, the student and even the family will face social disorder. The next consequence is loss of spiritual dimension. The researcher has also been opportune to observe different scenario where people suffered great losses because of lack of information which could have been averted through reading. Typical examples are not reading equipment manuals, examination

instructions, signposts, billboard, and medical prescriptions and so on. Lives have been lost in such cases due to bad reading habit.

In most developing countries, people are still struggling with irregular electric power supply. One cannot rely on electric power supply for any business no matter how small. Children and adults cannot enjoy regular television programs due to power failure. This situation goes to prove that the best option to get information is through reading. Indeed, it is good to read because an informed person is a reformed person. Thus, it is in the researchers interest to find out the effect of bad reading habit on library and information science students in the University of Jos

However, to the best knowledge of the researcher, no previous studies had identified the effect of bad reading habit on the four areas of life – physical, mental, social and spiritual; which is worrisome to humanity.

2. Statement of the Problem

The future of any country literally lies on the shoulder of the younger generation. Parents and teachers have the hefty responsibility of nurturing the young ones into mature and responsible adult and citizens. This difficult responsibility does not just entail 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 read. The preliminary observation by the researcher revealed 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. There is therefore, a need to carry out this research to see how bad reading habit affects them especially in the four areas of life (physical, Social, Spiritual and mental).

Awareness of the consequences of bad reading habit will lead to success and self-reliance during examinations among students as they embrace

reading as a corrective measure, making lecturers to update themselves with new methods of teaching and use of educational materials to facilitate learning. It will also make the federal government to introduce and enforce reading skill as a subject to be taught from kindergarten.

3. Research question

The study sought to provide answers to the following research questions:

- What are the causes of bad reading habit?
- What are the consequences of bad reading habit on LIS students' health?
- What effects does bad reading habit have on academic achievement of LIS students?
- What are the factors hindering reading habit amongst LIS students?
- What are the possible ways of curtailing bad reading habit LIS students?

4. Literature Review

Experts tell us that we retain 10% of what we hear, 40% of what we write and 60% of what we commit to memory. Now, the most staggering statistics of all is that we retain close to 100% of what we teach. We may not all be teachers, who stand up in front of a class, but we should be sharing what we know. Okebukola (2004) affirms 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 ages. Individuals read for various reasons such as joy, recreation, relaxation, information and knowledge development. Palani (2012), reports that reading is the distinguishing proof of the images/symbols and the relationship of proper significance with them. It requires recognizing and comprehension. Comprehension skills help the learner to comprehend the importance of words in isolation and in context. Palani (2012) thinks reading is a process of assessing, judging, envisioning and critical thinking. Reading is a basic instrument for the exchange of knowledge and the habit of reading is an academic activity that builds abilities in reading methods. To know about the world and its environment, a child makes a difference himself through the reading of books, daily papers, and different magazines. Once the child has been instructed to read and has built up the affection for books, he /she can investigate for himself the abundance of human encounters and information through reading. Children, who miss the chance of connecting with books in their initial stages of life, find it difficult to obtain good reading habit in their

later years (Deavers, 2000). "Laws die but books never". Indeed, books are the most appropriate medium through which information is transmitted from one era to another or from one person to another, (Issa et al, 2012). Philip (2009) says, "Reading habit tends to be associated with course work and examinations, rarely with pleasure in developing countries". However, it is obvious that irrespective of the discipline it will be difficult if not impossible for students to exhibit their talents when they failed to read extensively.

4.1 Importance of Reading to Students

Kurtus (2002) opines that reading habit is a fundamental practice that can leave a positive effect on all age groups. The study stressed further that the acquisition of knowledge through reading is a decent approach, however, it must be productive information, encourage a man to get on in a profession, pass an examination, be great at decision, or get hold of a status for learning.

4.2 Kinds of Bad Reading Habits

Speed reading is a bad reading habit but it can be great habit if you can master it. You can read many materials in less time. Conversely, the faster you read, the easier is it to miss the point if you did not master it. Reading too slow is equally not good. Any reading below 150 words per minute is very low. **Reading in poor light** is another bad reading habit. It is like navigating a dark street without street lighting. What is written may be misunderstood by a reader because of a missed punctuation mark on account of poor lighting. One must ensure direct light either from the sun or artificial lighting falls on the written page from above you, preferably from the left. This would help one to see the reading material clearly without missing any of the words or punctuation marks. **Reading the ending** just after starting the book is another unsavory habit. If one is reading a thriller with loads of suspense built into the plot, one will miss out on the thrill of unraveling the mystery page by page. **Reading with poor posture** such as while lying in bed is another terrible habit that is not conducive to serious reading. If you are reading your textbooks lying down, it is cumbersome to take down notes. The best posture is to sit straight-backed on a comfortable chair with the book held below the eyes at a 60-degree angle and at a distance of fifteen inches from the eyes. The danger is that the unnatural angle, while reading on bed, will not only strain the eyes but also other parts of the body such as the arms, neck, legs and spine. **Judging the book by its cover** can be deceptive and discouraging. Often, a book's

cover can be attractive with its gloss, arresting photographs, and attractive graphics. Check the blurb, preliminary and subsidiary pages of the book to decide. *Flipping pages* to finish a book is a bad reading habit. It will make one not to know the important parts of the book that the author has penned. *Reading more than one book at a time* is not a good habit as one will not be able to do justice to any of the books. *Folding the edge of the page* to use it as a marker is among the most obnoxious habits ever possible. This habit ensures quick mutilation of the book especially if one is a frequent start and stop reader.

4.3 Good Reading Habit

Developing good reading habit is very crucial to students' educational outcome as there cannot be academic success and all round development without good reading habits. According to Owusu-Acheaw (2014), reading habits determine the academic achievements of students. To a great extent it also shape students' personality and enhance thinking abilities to create new ideas, thus, the creative abilities would be heightened. Good reading habit is making the most of your reading time measured in terms of the quality and quantity of what you understand and remember. Reading is a meaning-making activity. So if for example, one is able to identify the main ideas and supporting details in a given text and can express it in his own words, then, good reading has taken place. It is not negotiable for a student to plan very well on how to daily use his precious time to read. The way you arrange your daily schedule will have a good or bad effect on the progress you make academically. Time is never sold but can be created. It is only a wise student that cannot joke with his time. "Every man who knows when and how to read has it in his power to magnify himself, multiply the ways in which he exists and to make his life full, significant and interesting".

4.4 Role of the Library in creating Reading Habit

The need to promote effective reading habits among the general populace of Nigeria has been receiving attention from organizations such as the National Library of Nigeria, the Reading Association of Nigeria and the Nigerian Book Development Council. Since 1981, the National Library of Nigeria has been sponsoring the readership promotion campaign in the country. This is done as part of the strategies to ginger up the reading culture in Nigeria. The objectives of the readership campaign are; to encourage more reading Nigerians, to promote the increase in production of reading materials in

Nigeria, both in quality and variety and to identify the major obstacles those inhibits reading in the country and find ways of eliminating them. The problem with the set objectives is that the readership promotion campaign has been restricted largely to Abuja, Lagos, and some few state capitals. The impact has not really been felt in other parts of the country because the National library has not been adequately funded to put the campaign in prints or electronic media. The observation notwithstanding, the library can play an important role in the promotion of reading habits among Nigerians. Libraries, especially school libraries, are fundamental to the design, implementation, and attainment of educational excellence. Libraries are an integral part of the educational development of school children and youth. Without the support of efficient libraries, schools cannot successfully achieve the goals of education, which are: The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity; The inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes of the individual and the Nigerian society; The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around, and the acquisition of appropriate skills and social abilities and competence as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society. (NPE, 2004). Issa, Aliyu, Akangbe, and Adedeji (2012) conducted similar study to federal polytechnic students and found that the students mostly read notebooks and textbooks and it is closely related to the finding of students' reason to read, namely to pass examination. The similar finding of reading to pass examination is also shown by Owusu-Acheaw (2014) and Rasiah, Kaur&Nagaratnam (2011), while textbook as the mostly-read materials is also revealed by Akanda, Hoq, and Hasan (2013). Issa et al. (2012) note that the findings indicate less positive reading habit orientation since reading for examinations is considered forced reading and it is not likely to promote readers' awareness of recreational use of reading.

5. Methodology

The design adopted for this study was cross sectional survey research design. The population of the study consisted of all the 376 undergraduate library and information science students of University of Jos for the academic session 2018/1019. From the total population a sample size of 100 students were randomly selected and used for the study, the selection was randomly done to ensure all elements have equal chance of being selected. A close endedquestionnaire was used in generating data for the study and the instrument was subjected to content and face validity from necessary expert. The

reliability coefficient was also gotten through Alpha Cronbach method to be 0,87 which made the instrument reliable for use. The data was collected

using a face to face method otherwise referred to as on the spot method and the data collected were analyzed using simple percentage.

6. Results and findings

Table1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

GENDER	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Female	55	55%
Male	45	45%
Total	100	100%

Table 1 shows that 55 respondents representing 55% are males while the remaining 45 respondents representing 45% were females.

Table2: Distribution of Respondents base of level

Level	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
100	25	25%
200	25	25%
300	25	25%
400	25	25%
Total	100	100

Table 2 shows distribution of respondent’s base on level and the table reveals that equal percentage of 25 respondents was selected from each level to make the sample size used for the study as 100.

Table3: What are the causes of bad reading habit among students?

Causes	SA %	A %	D %	SD %
Library collection	25 (25)	39(39)	16 (16)	20 (20)
Teacher’s Attitude	25 (25)	43(43)	12(12)	20(20)
Influence of bad friends	23(23)	35(35)	19(19)	23(23)
Upbringing by parents	43(43)	23(23)	12(12)	22(22)

Table 3 above shows the causes of bad reading habit among students from which 25 respondent representing 25% strongly agreed that, library collection is a cause of bad reading habit, 39 respondents representing 39% agreed as well but 16 respondents representing 16% disagreed and the remaining 20 respondents representing 20% as well strongly disagreed and the item is accepted. On whether teachers’ attitude is a cause of bad reading habit 25 respondents representing 25% strongly agreed, 43 respondents also representing 43% agreed as well but 12 respondents representing 12%disagreed and the remaining 20 representing 20% strongly disagreed to the item and the item is accepted. Again, 43 respondents representing 43% strongly agreed that upbringing by parents is a cause of bad reading habit, 23% also agreed but 12% disagreed and the remaining 22% equally disagreed strongly with the item which makes it a positive one.

Table 4: What are the consequences of bad reading habits on students’ health?

Items	SA %	A %	D %	SD %
Physical sickness	33 (33)	25 (25)	22 (22)	20 (20)
Mental sickness	41 (41)	16 (16)	20 (20)	23 (23)
Social sickness	29 (29)	39 (39)	21 (21)	11 (23)
Spiritual sickness	23 (23)	61 (61)	6 (6)	10 (10)

Table 4 shows percentage responses on consequences of bad reading habit on health of students. 33% of the respondents who responded strongly agreed that, bad reading habit can bring about physical sickness, 25% of the respondents agreed as well but 22% disagreed and the remaining 20% also disagreed which makes the item a positive one. On whether bad reading habit can lead to mental sickness, 41% of the respondents strongly agreed, 39% agreed as well but 21% disagreed and the remaining 23% strongly disagreed and the item is accepted. Again, 29% respondents strongly agreed that bad reading habit cause social sickness, 39% agreed but 21% disagree and 11% strongly disagreed which makes the item acceptable Finally, 23% of the respondents strongly agreed that bad reading habit cause spiritual sickness, 61% agreed but 6% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed to the item which makes the item a positive one.

Table 5: What are the effects of bad reading habit on LIS students’ academic achievement?

Responses	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Affects comprehension level	29 (29)	30 (30)	21 (21)	20 (20)
Makes achievement in academics low	40 (40)	23 (23)	17 (17)	20 (20)
Makes achievement better	20 (20)	28 (28)	27 (27)	25 (25)
Develop vocabulary	20 (20)	20 (20)	35 (35)	25 (25)

Table 5 above shows percentage responses of respondents as regards effects of bad reading habit on academic achievement of LIS students. 29% of the respondents strongly agreed that bad reading habit affects their comprehension level, 30% of the respondents agreed as well but 21% disagreed while 20% strongly disagreed to the item which makes it a positive one. On whether bad reading habit makes achievement in academics low 40% of respondents strongly agreed, 28% agreed but 17% disagreed and 20% strongly disagreed to the item which makes it a positive one as well. 20% respondents strongly agreed that bad reading habit makes them achieve better in academics 28% agreed as well but 27% disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed which makes the item a negative one. Finally, 20% strongly agreed that bad reading habit enable them develop their vocabulary, 20% also agreed but 35% disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed.

Table 6: What are factors hindering reading habits amongst LIS students’

ITEMS	SA %	A %	D %	SD %
Lack of motivation to read	33 33	23 23	22 22	22 22
Lack of conducive Home Environment	40 40	21 21	19 19	20 20
Poorly equipped school library Inadequate novels/fiction in the School Library	31 31	24 24	20 20	25 25
Lack of reading materials at Home	29 29	31 31	23 23	17 17

Table 6 shows percentage responses of respondents on factors hindering reading habits amongst LIS students. 33% strongly agreed that lack of motivation is a factor hindering reading habit, 23% agreed to this but 22% disagreed and the remaining 22% strongly disagreed to the item making it a positive one. 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that, lack of conducive environment is another hindrance to reading habit, 21% agreed but 19% disagreed and 20% strongly disagreed which makes the item positive. On whether poorly equipped library also hinders reading habit, 31% strongly agreed, 24% agreed, while 20% disagreed and the remaining 25% strongly disagree and the item was accepted. Finally, 29% strongly agreed that, lack of reading materials at home hinders reading habit, 31% agreed but 23% disagreed and the remaining 17% strongly disagreed to the item, which makes it a positive one.

Table7: Ways of curtailing bad reading habits amongst LIS students

ITEMS	SA %	A %	D %	SD %
Incentives and gift for good readers	33 33	23 23	22 22	22 22
Reading competitions and scholarship	40 40	21 21	19 19	20 20
Books should be captivation and interesting	31 31	24 24	20 20	25 25
Conducive atmosphere with comfort to read	29 29	31 31	23 23	17 17

Table 7 depicts percentage responses of respondents on ways of curtailing reading habits amongst LIS students. 33% strongly agreed that, incentive and gifts for good readers will curtail bad reading habits, 23% agreed to this but 22% disagreed and the remaining 22% strongly disagreed to the item making it a positive one. 40% of the respondents strongly agreed that, reading competitions and scholarship for winners will curtail bad reading habit, 21% agreed but 19% disagreed and 20% strongly disagreed which makes the item positive. On whether captivating and interesting books will curtail bad reading habit, 31% strongly agreed, 24% agreed, while 20% disagreed and the remaining 25% strongly disagree and the item was accepted. Finally, 29% strongly agreed that, conducive atmosphere with comfort to read will curtail bad reading habit, 31% agreed but 23%

disagreed and the remaining 17% strongly disagreed to the item, which makes it a positive one.

7. Discussion

The analysis revealed some causes of bad reading habit to include bad influences, parent upbringing, and teachers’ attitude among others. It further shows that, bad reading habit can have some severe health consequences like mental sickness, social sickness, and spiritual sickness among others. Some factors that hinders reading habit amongst students includes lack of motivation, lack of reading materials, and poor reading environment to mention but a few. The analysis also showed that, most respondents agreed that with reading competition, scholarship, motivation, and provision of conducive reading

facilities can enable students imbibe positive reading habit as well as improve their academic achievement and health as it were. The findings here agree with those in the work of Ajila and Olutola (2000) which intimate that home condition influences the person reading habit since the parents are the major caretakers in a person's life. They stressed further that the family background and location of a child influences his/ her response to life circumstances and his level of performance.

8. Conclusion

From the findings of this study the following conclusions were drawn:

- Bad reading habit amongst students have significant negative impact on their academic achievement and health condition
- Teachers' attitude, home background, lack of motivation, peer influence, and inconducive environment are some causes of bad reading habit amongst students of LIS
- Overcoming the problems of bad reading habit will bring about improvement in academic achievement, improve health condition, build vocabulary, widen horizon of the students and equally increase their knowledge bank for meaningful personal and national development.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Teachers should encourage students to visit the school library and read any academic material that will help them in their reading habits and not limited to teaching notes.
- Students should be encouraged to borrow books from the library regularly since this can help them to inculcate reading habits.
- There should be a policy in the school to award students who can read and express themselves better.
- The school should stock the library with interesting story books that will attract students to come to the library.
- Parents should persuade their children to engage in constant reading both at home and school to acquire the spirit of the reading habit.
- Let gifts at Birthdays and other celebrations like good performance in school be books and other reading materials.

- Parents should provide their wards relevant reading materials that will help them to develop their reading habits.
- Parents should allow their children to view only educational television programs that will equip and empower them to engage in constant reading.
- The school should design a timetable for library hours to allow students to go the library at least one and half hours in each day.
- Parents should help their children to have a serene reading environment when they are at home.

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