
Reading Habits and Library Use among Students in Colleges of Education in Ghana: A Case of Two Colleges of Education, Ghana

Deborah Kore Appiah*, Christiana Oduraa Kwaah**, Franklina Adjoa Yebowaah***

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 10 December 2021
Revised 6 January 2022
Accepted 5 February 2022

Keywords:

Reading Interests,
Library Use,
College Students,
Colleges of Education

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the outcome of a survey done in two colleges of education in Kumasi, Ghana to determine the reading habits of students. A questionnaire was conveniently administered to the third-year students of Wesley College of Education and St. Louis College of Education all in Kumasi the capital of Ashanti Region of Ghana. One hundred and sixty-two copies of the questionnaire were administered to the students in the two colleges. The study found that both parents and tutors influence students reading at the same rate, in both colleges students read an average of one book in two months which was not encouraging with the most preferred reading materials being course books followed by textbooks and fiction. Their purpose of reading is to broaden their knowledge, and to pass examination. They choose busy schedule on campus and too much academic work as the reasons which affect their reading habits. Furthermore, it was revealed that, too much family responsibilities and lack of conducive environment were major constraints that restrict their reading at home. The study recommends the following to enhance reading habits of the students: parents should create healthy surrounding for learning; students should also be motivated to read through the formation of reading clubs and group presentation of assignment.

1. Introduction

One other way of getting information is to read. Celik (2019), in his study, stated that reading habit is the routine activity done by individual awareness of reading as a source of need and desire. Celik (2019) cited Yilmaz (2002) and also stated that frequent library use indicates that users access the library for different purpose. He summed up that reading has positive influence on one's knowledge, educational performance, language and communication skills and personal improvement. The focal

* The Library, University for Development Studies, P. O. Box TL1652, Tamale, Ghana (appikodeb@gmail.com)

** Wesley College of Education, P.O. Box 1927, Kumasi, Ghana (kwaahchristieoduraa@yahoo.com)

*** The Library, SD-Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies, P.O. Box 64, Ghana (ayeboah@ubids.edu.gh)

International Journal of Knowledge Content Development & Technology, 13(1): 7-25, 2023.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5865/IJKCT.2023.13.1.007>

point of education is to make an individual a lifelong learner. Libraries are the gateway of information, knowledge and leisure; the influence of libraries on reading of a person is thus enormous. In order for an individual to cultivate the habits of reading, one has to utilize the library resources effectively. It is a mandatory for libraries to provide the resources in different information formats. This will help the user to get access to the needed information which will play a vital role in achieving relevant reading habits. By so doing, the frequency of library use influences the cultivation of reading habits and as the library usage declines the reading habits also reduce.

Students in academic institutions are expected to be independent readers who make use of information resources to create new knowledge. Eijansantos-Remanente (2017) citing Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, and Jesmin (2011) indicated that reading is an important lifelong learning which enhances intelligence, improves personality and enables one to know things around him/her and even beyond. It also helps an individual to become more complete in every aspect. Reading habit needs to be continuous and it should be life-long process using different approaches. Reading should not occur neither on examination nor interview purposes but it has to occur at all-time to build the well-being of the person (Adeniji & Omale, 2010).

Wema (2016) cited Chettri and Rout (2013) to indicate that the reading culture occurs as a result of reading habits and it should occur throughout one's life time. Continuous reading through the support from parents, colleagues, librarians and teachers promote reading habit and makes individual speak fluently in public. Onuoha, Unegbu, and Umahi (2013) indicated that once reading habits are inculcated in basic education then students in tertiary institutions are expected to possess reading skills to perform well.

Ameyaw and Anto (2018) also stated that reading skills are the gateway to knowledge. They further opined that reading is needed in all areas in life and occupations; for example, a hairdresser needs to read for instruction before applying the cream on someone's hair. The reading habit is best made at the developmental age and can last for life. Lack of reading has negative effects on individuals and the nation as a whole. As a result, parents and teachers should motivate pupils, and students to inculcate the habits of reading straight from infancy to adulthood to ginger them to possess reading skills.

Despite the many benefits of reading, not many regularly read for either leisure or for academic purposes. Lemanski (2011) indicated that the college is seen as the last stage of formal education for many individuals and thus, the responsibility of training students to become independent and lifelong learners rests on college institutions. He further suggested that students appear to rely only on their lecture notes and hardly refer to textbooks and prescribed reading lists. Unwillingness to read could explain students' difficulty in engaging in meaningful classroom discussion, as they prefer to listen passively to their tutors. Their written submissions tend to lack insight and, at times, closely resemble material found online.

Oyewole (2017), in his study, reported that reading habits among Nigerian students are very limited. He also found that few students read for pleasure while others read during examination time. He further indicated that with this trend, their reading restricts to only textbooks and reading ceases after the examination.

Reading helps students in diverse ways by enhancing fluency and accuracy, improving language

use and also improving sentence structure. Reading benefits are well recognized, his study, however, revealed that majority of the students had poor reading habits. Adnan, Akram, and Akram (2016) cited Hopper (2005) and indicated that youth reading habits are fading due to the introduction of information communication technologies and that the Internet has worsened the situation. They also stated that reading habits of people are influenced by their lifestyles. Many researchers such Ogbodo (2010) and Singh (2011) have conducted studies on reading and its impact on students' educational performance in western countries. However, few studies have been conducted in Ghana on reading habits at the tertiary education level. Studies on reading habits in Ghana have been limited to basic, senior high schools and polytechnics (Owusu-Acheaw 2014). None of the researches has been conducted in respect of reading habits of students in the then teacher training colleges now called colleges of education in Ghana. It is against this background that the study was undertaken to identify Level 300 students' reading habits and usage of library information resources in St. Louis College of Education and Wesley College of Education both in Kumasi Metropolis, Ashanti Region of Ghana. The findings of the study would give a definite picture on students reading habits and library use. It will also add to the literature of reading habits.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The study objectives were as follows:

- (a) To examine the influence of reading habits among students
- (b) To identify the types of information resources students read in the library
- (c) To identify the importance of reading to students
- (d) To identify factors that hinder reading among students

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Influence of Reading Habit

The main aim of academic libraries is to support teaching, learning, research and knowledge dissemination. It is the mandatory for academic libraries to acquire information resources in different formats which should be available and accessible for all users. Liswaniso and Mubanga (2019) citing Lee and Spratley (2010) described reading as the cognitive process of identifying words in order to understand a reading text. They indicated that students with reading ability read with speed and understand what they read. They also stated that students with good reading habits are termed as people who give reading preference and do not wait for assignment or examination. They concluded that such students have a passion for reading and read frequently.

Wema (2018) cited Anunobi and Ukwoma (2016) to indicate that reading habit is related to the ability to read, write and speak a specific language. The basic literacies may lead to the enhancement of essential features in information literacy skills. He also indicated that reading sharpens individual's

mind and develops rational reasoning capacities which are crucial in improving economic growth and development which in turn bring about personal improvement. He further stated that reading for pleasure also improves one's vocabulary and mathematical skills specifically for the youth. A study done by Ameyaw and Anto (2018) at Eastbank Senior High School, Accra indicated that parents inspire their wards in reading because the rate the students see their family members at home reading, the more they try to imitate them.

2.2 Types of Information Resources Students Read in the Library

Reading materials play an essential role by inculcating reading interest in an individual. When a student locates a book, he/she loves, he/she will have time to read it. The library reading materials urge the library users to read and explore more. A study done by Kumara and Kumar (2019) on reading habits of students and faculty members in the universities of Karnataka State, India indicated that, majority of the students preferred to read newspapers/magazines followed by textbooks. Wema (2018), in his study, also found that students in higher learning institutions in Tanzania use their leisure time for reading newspapers, books and magazines. Others also access information online. Oriogu, et al. (2017) conducted a study on reading habits on students of Afe Babalola University, Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study indicates that, students mostly read notebooks, textbooks and electronic resources. A study done by Owusu-Acheaw (2014) established that extensive reading enhances students' academic performance. Also, Onuoha and Unegbu (2013) conducted research on reading among students at Babcock University, Nigeria and reported that most of the students generally read newspapers and others read magazines.

2.3 Purpose of Reading

Bulgurcuoglu (2016), in his study, stated that reading culture encourages lifelong learning skills of people when applying critical thinking and problem-solving skills. He also opines that lifelong learning is an outcome of on-going critical thinking process that humans develop over time in their minds which results into a behaviour. He further indicated that critical thinking is essential in improving reading habits of students for it inspires them to educate themselves through reading, examining, creating and understanding events properly and by getting the right information at the right time. He concluded that the reading habit helps to improve intellectual development and academic excellence of students by bringing up liable people in the country.

A study conducted by Liswaniso and Mubanga (2019) at the University of Namibia revealed that students have poor reading habits, they read only for study purposes, and that both male and female students have a uniform reading habit. They also reported that students' poor reading habits negatively affected the quality of their learning. A study done by Kirchner, Alexander, and Töttemeyer (2014) found a poor state of Namibian libraries with limited reading materials and poor reading habits among Namibian children. They concluded that the poor reading habit that starts earlier in children's lives is likely to be carried over to adult life.

Owusu Acheaw (2014), in his study, indicated that children who are not exposed to books early

in their lives tend to encounter difficulties inculcating reading habits later in life. Eijansantos-Remanente (2017) cited Abidin, et al. (2011) revealed that majority of their students spent more hours on the Internet for emails, movies, music and that only few of them read e-magazines, e-news and e-books. Onuoha, Unegbu, and Umahi (2013) conducted research on reading among students at Babcock University, Nigeria which revealed that most of the students read daily and devote more time to reading. They also indicated that the students read mainly for entertainment. They concluded that students participate in reading activities for fun and educational reasons.

2.4 Factors Affecting Reading

The last study objective is more likely one of the most key objectives of the study. Researches have shown the reasons that weaken the reading habits of students, but this question makes students accept themselves where the problem stands. Wema (2018), in his study, indicated factors affecting reading as follows: excessive academic work, low internet bandwidth and too much family duties. A study done by Skenderi and Ejupi (2017) on reading habits of university students in Macedonia, indicated that, the use of social networks, busy schedule at school, time spent with friends and the lack of will to read are the reasons which hinder students' reading habits. Hassan, Olesen, and Mathew's (2012) study also indicated that unfavorable factors such as lack of reading materials and lack of conducive environment at home can restrict reading.

3. Study Area

3.1 Brief History of St. Louis College of Education

St. Louis College of Education formerly called St Louis Teacher Training College is one of the teacher training colleges in Kumasi, Ashanti Region. In September 1960, the College was established by the Kumasi Catholic Church. It became St Louis College of Education in 2012 and is now affiliated to the University of Education, Winneba. In the period between 1974 and 1981, the College enrolled male students but now the College trains only female students. The College started with thirty-five students and now has students' population of one thousand two hundred and sixty-six (1,266), made up of 450 for Level 100, 419 for Level 200 and 397 for Level 300. The College started awarding certificate to 4-year Post Middle, 2-year Post Secondary, 3-year Post Secondary, 3-year Diploma in basic education and since 2019 runs degree programmes.

• History of the College Library

The original College Library was located in a small section of one of the dormitories and later moved to the top of the lecture hall. The library was designed to house more than 6,000 volumes with seating capacity of 150 students.

The College Library subscribes to four daily newspapers. These are: "Daily Graphic", "Ghanaian

Times”, “Mirror”, and “Spectator”. All the newspapers are also bound yearly for preservation and future use. The College Library provides current and up to date information resources such as books, newspapers, newsletters, dissertations and magazines that are useful for teaching, learning, research, and knowledge dissemination. The photocopier machine of the Library is housed in the Periodical Section on the first floor. It also has air conditioners and ceiling fans to make the place conducive for learning and for research work. The College Library also has fifteen computers.

3.2 Brief History of Wesley College of Education

In 1922, the Methodist Church set up Wesley College of Education in Aburi and was then moved to Kumasi in 1924. It was primarily founded to train teachers, catechists and ministers. The College was the first higher institution in the northern sector of Ghana. The students’ population during that time was 74, made up of 7 students from ministerial training, 48 student teachers while 19 were student catechists. In 1930, the College enrolled female students to be trained as teachers. The female students were accommodated at Mmofraturu. The College membership shoot up to 135 in 1930.

Currently, the College has one thousand two hundred and fifty-four students made up of 417 Level 100, 418 Level 200 and 419 Level 300 students. In 2012, the Colleges of Education Act (Act 847) was passed to give legal support to the conversion of all teacher training colleges in Ghana to Colleges of Education. The College started awarding the following certificates to its graduates: 2-year Cert ‘B’; 4-year Cert ‘A’; 2-year Post-Secondary Cert ‘A’; 3-year Post-Secondary and Cert ‘A’; Diploma in Basic Education (DBE) and now B. Ed in Education.

Wesley College of Education is affiliated to the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi.

• History of the College Library

Wesley College of Education Library was established in 1924. The original College Library was located in a small section in the administration block and in 2010, it was moved to the new Library building constructed by the get Fund for all Colleges of Education in Ghana. The Library is easily accessible and its holdings also compliment the students lecture notes. The library holdings give a vital background information on reading for the courses done in the College. The library provides printing and photocopying services for users. The College Library has twenty desktop computers with (Wi-Fi) internet connectivity. The seating capacity is eighty. The ambience in the library is welcoming. The available air conditioners and the fans make the room conducive for users to access and utilize the available information resources.

4. Methodology

The study used a survey research design. A questionnaire was used to collect data for the study.

Respondents were drawn from third year students of St Louis College of Education and Wesley College of Education all of Kumasi, Ghana. The former is an all- female only institution and the latter one is a mixed college. These students were selected because they were seniors and more likely to have expertise in using the library. This is because they were then preparing to write their final examination and thus were more likely to read and use the library for more information to augment their lecture notes. Also, the choice of the colleges was determined by the fact that they are the only two public colleges of education institutions in the Kumasi Metropolis.

The total population for the study was eight hundred and fourteen level 300 students. This consists of 397 and 417 students from St. Louis College and Wesley College of Education respectively. A simple random sampling technique was used in this study. This is a method where all the elements of the total population stand the equal chances of being selected for a study. Nwana (1981) stated that a population in several hundred requires 20% sample size. However, a population in a small number of thousands needs 10% sample size, and for several thousand needs a sample size of 5% or less. From the foregoing recommendation by Nwana (1981), a sampling size of 20% each was randomly used to select 162 from the total population of Level 300 students. **Table 1** below depicts the colleges and the total number of Level 300 students sampled.

Table 1. Colleges and the Number of Level 300 Respondents Sampled

Name of College	Population	Sample Size
St. Louis College of Education	397	79.4
Wesley College of Education	417	83.4
Total	814	162.8

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The questionnaire comprised of 20 closed and open-ended items to assess the students' reading. A five-part questionnaire was used. Part A assessed students' demographic information with variables like gender, age, institution attended, level of study and educational level of parents. Part B identified students' reading habits, that is, how much time they spend reading, family members who read at home, the last time they read a book and reasons for not reading. Part C assessed students' library use, that is, frequency of using the library, their common sources of reading materials, how often they borrow books from the library, types of material they read and the reasons of using the College Library. Part D investigated whether the students have used any public library before, what source of materials they use and reasons for using the public library. In part E, students were asked to indicate reading benefits and the factors affecting their reading habit.

The administration of the questionnaire was done by one of the researchers when students were on break. The responses from the questionnaire were retrieved from the respondents within six weeks that is from 2nd June to 17th July, 2020. The completed questionnaire was interpreted using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in the form of tables, frequencies and percentages.

5. Findings and Discussion

This section presents the outcomes of the findings following the order of the study objectives as presented in the write-up. This study involved 161 respondents with diverse opinions based on the study and other factors affecting students' propensity to read were also reported. Out of 162 Level 300 students who participated in this study in both colleges, 161 of the respondents returned their questionnaire giving a response rate of 99.3% which is highly representative of the entire population.

5.1 Background Information of Respondents

Data was gathered on the background of students in order to determine how it ultimately influences their reading habit. The background information included gender, age, programme they offer and educational background of parent. These have been presented in the following sub-headings.

5.2 Gender of Respondents

Gender was essential to the study because it influenced reading habit. It was against this background that the respondents in the study were asked to specify their gender. **Table 2** displays the gender grouping for students from both colleges.

Table 2. Respondents by Gender per College

Name of College	Female	Male	Percentage (%)
St. Louis College of Education	40 (25.0%)	42 (26.0%)	51.0
Wesley College of Education	79 (49.0%)	-	49.0
Total	119 (74.0%)	42 (26.0 %)	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The results indicated that within Wesley College of Education (WESCO) sample, there were more male students constituting 42 (51.2%) as compared to 40 (49.0%) female students. Generally, admission in institutions in Ghana is skewed in favour of males as compared to females (Appiah, 2017). It is possible to conclude that this trend is the same with the students in WESCO. In the case of St. Louis College of Education, all the respondents were females because it is a single sex institution.

5.3 Age of Respondents for Both Colleges

The age of the respondents was of importance to the study and how it influenced reading. For this reason, the students were asked to specify their age groups.

Table 3. Age Distribution of Students for Both Colleges

Age	Wesley College of Education		St. Louis College of Education		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
14-19	12	14.5	-	-	12	7.4
20-25	52	62.6	51	64.6	103	63.5
26-31	19	22.9	28	35.4	47	29.1
Total	83	100	79	100	162	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The age distribution of all the students indicated that within Wesley College of Education, 52 (62.6 %) students were within 20-25 years and were young adults. Findings from St. Louis College of Education also showed that 51 (64.6%) students were between the ages of 20-25. These findings show that in both colleges, majority (63.5%) of the students were within the age bracket of 20-25. Generally, there were more elderly students 28 (35.4%) within the ages of 26-31 among St. Louis College than WESCO which was 19 (22.9%). However, within Wesley College of Education, 12 (14.5%) students were within the ages of 14-19 while St. Louis College has none of this age groups. None of the students from both colleges was within the age range of 32-37.

5.4 Programme Offered by Students

Table 4. Distribution of Programmes Offered by Students

Programme	Wesley College of Education		St. Louis College of Education		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Diploma, Basic Education, General	26	32.0	67	85.0	93	58.0
Diploma, Early Childhood Education	-	-	12	15.0	12	7.4
Diploma, French Education	28	34.0	-	-	28	17.3
Diploma, Mathematics and Science Education	17	21.0	-	-	17	10.5
Diploma, Art Education	11	13.0	-	-	11	6.8
Total	82	100	79	100	161	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The respondents were asked to indicate the programmes of study they were pursuing. **Table 4** indicates that five programmes were being offered by the students. Two of the programmes (Diploma, Basic Education (General) and Diploma, Early Childhood Education) were St. Louis College of Education programmes whilst Diploma, Basic Education (General), Diploma, French Education, Diploma, Mathematics and Science Education, Diploma, Art Education were being pursued by students at Wesley College of Education.

As expected, majority of students 67 (84.8%) from St. Louis College of Education offered Diploma, Basic Education General and 12 (15.1%) students offered Diploma, Early Childhood Education whilst at Wesley College of Education, 26 (31.7%) students offered Diploma, Basic Education General, 28 (34.1%) offered Diploma, French Education, 17 (20.7%) offered Diploma, Mathematics and Science Education while 11 (13.4%) offered Diploma, Art Education. It can be concluded that most (58.0%) of the students in the study from both colleges offered Diploma in Basic Education General.

With regards to their parents' educational status, the findings show that in both Colleges, majority 93 (58.0%) of their parents were secondary school leavers and 42 (26.0%) were primary school leavers. Generally, there were more graduate parents 16 (19.5%) within WESCO than St. Louis College which was 10 (12.6%).

5.5 Influence of Reading Habits among Students

The first objective of the study was to examine reading among the Level 300 students of the two colleges of education under study. This objective had multiple or varied responses. Respondents' opinions were sought and the results from both colleges show that parents (23.0%) and tutors (23.0%) influence the students to read followed by their classmates (21.1%) and friends (19.9%) while the response rate for siblings was 13.0%. It is to be noted that although both parents and tutors influence them at the same rate, tutors would have more influence because of their daily interaction with the students in school. Also, classmates would have more impact than friends because of the frequency of their association with their fellow students. This study agreed to that of Ameyaw and Anto's (2018) study which indicate that parents inspire their wards in reading because the rate the students see their family members at home reading, the more they try to imitate them. Reading serves as a significant source of acquiring knowledge and enables one to develop competency in critical thinking. This habit must start from home to equip the children in their basic, secondary and tertiary levels of education.

In terms of frequency and time invested in reading, it was established that within Wesley College of Education, 38 (46.3%) of the students spent 45mins or more a day for reading, 30 (36.5%) spent 2-3 hours a day in reading whilst 14 (17.0%) spent 1-hour 30mins for reading. However, in the case of St. Louis College of Education, 39 (49.3%) of the students used 45mins or more for reading, 33 (41.7%) spent 2-3 hours for reading and 7 (8.8%) spent 1-hour 30mins a day for reading. Concerning frequency of reading a book, within Wesley College of Education, study found out that 30 (36.5%) of the students read one book in two months, 27 (32.9%) read one book a month, 25 (30.4%) read two books in a month. Similar findings pertained in St. Louis College of Education where 27 (34.1%) read one book in two months, 26 (32.9%) read one book a month while 26 (32.9%) read two books in a month. The results indicate that in both colleges, majority (35.4%) of the students read one book in two months. The findings of this study are similar to that of Andayani and Maryam's (2019) study at Tangerang City Community School, Indonesia which revealed that majority (44.2%) of their respondents read one book a month.

In a probing question, students were asked to indicate the last time they read a book. Within

Wesley College of Education, 43 (52.4%) of the students opined that the last time they read a book was the preceding week, 24 (29.2%) read the book in the preceding month while 15 (18.2%) read it in three to four months earlier. With reference to St. Louis College of Education, 36 (45.5%) of the students indicated that the last time they read a book was just the preceding week, 25 (31.6%) was a month earlier and 18 (22.7%) read the book in three to four months earlier. The result indicates that in both colleges, majority (49.0%) established that the last time they read a book was the preceding week. The findings agree with that of Celik's (2019) research on reading habits at Erbil, Iraq.

5.6 Library Use

The main aim of academic libraries is to acquire information resources to support teaching, learning, research, knowledge dissemination and also to help its parent's institution to achieve its vision and mission. Libraries also provide scholarly information resources in different formats and make them available and accessible for students, researchers and faculty members to use. Students' library use was examined to help determine how frequently they use the College Library. It was established that within Wesley College of Education, 22 (26.8%) of the students visit the College Library during examination time, 17 (20.7%) of them visit the library twice a week, 16 (19.5%) use it once a month, 14 (17.0%) use it weekly while 13 (15.8%) use it daily. On the part of St. Louis College of Education, 31 (39.2%) of the students use the library in the course of examination, 20 (25.3%) use the library daily, 19 (24.0%) use the library on weekly basis and 9 (11.3%) of the students use the library monthly. Overall, 53 (32.9%) of the students from both colleges used the library during examination time. This finding agrees with that of Onuoha, Unegbu, and Umahi (2013) research on reading among students at Babcock University, Nigeria which stated that most of the students do not use the library frequently but patronize it during examination time.

5.7 Sources of Reading Materials

As shown in **Fig. 1**, in WESCO, 27 (29.2%) of the students obtain their sources of reading materials through online, 19 (23.1%) from gifts 17 (20.7%) of the students obtain their source from the library, 13 (15.8%) from the bookshop while 9 (10.9%) get their source from friends, Similar findings pertained to St. Louis with 24 (30.3%) of respondents stating online, 21 (26.5%) said friends, 19 (24.0%) stated library and 15 (18.9%) indicated gift as sources of reading materials. These results indicate that majority of students from both colleges obtain their reading materials mainly from online sources with a rating 51 (31.6%) followed by library with 40 (24.8%), gifts with 37 (22.9%) and the least were friends with 33 (20.4%) response rate. In a probing question, students were asked whether they borrow books from the library. Majority 144 (89.4%) of the students from both colleges said they do not borrow books from the library while only 17 (10.6%) of the students responded positively. By asking students why they do not borrow books from the library, the results were as follows: 48 (29.8%) of the students said the library books are old, 24 (14.9%) said they have enough books to read, 19 (11.8%) said it was due to penalty imposed

on overdue books, 18 (11.2%) indicated that the borrowing process is cumbersome, 16 (9.9%) said they have handouts for the reading list, 11 (6.8%) indicated laziness while 8 (4.9%) said they read from their phone. This study agrees with Liswaniso and Mubanga's (2019) findings on reading habits among students from University of Namibia which indicated that 36% of the students do not borrow books from the library.

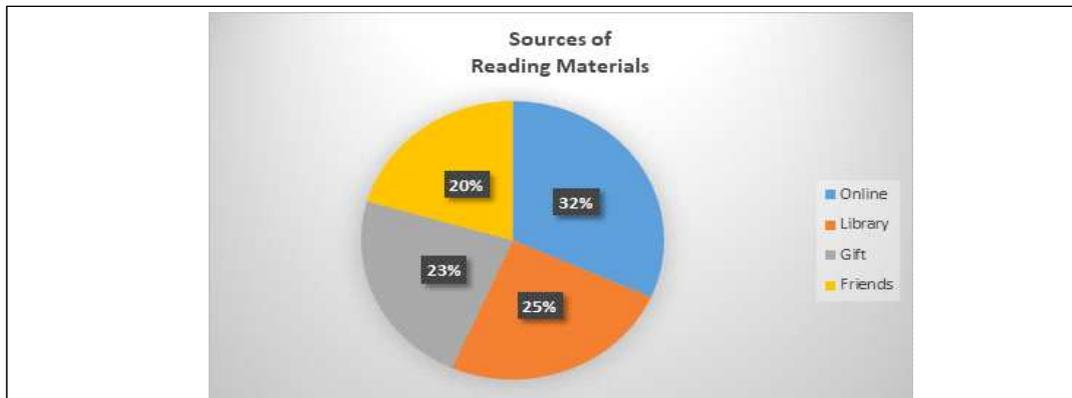


Fig. 1. Sources of Reading Materials

Source: Field Survey, 2020

5.8 Other Reading Sources

Students were asked to indicate other reading sources they use. The findings established the following: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, watch TV, preferred talking to friends and listening to radio. For example, out of 161 students from both colleges, 79(49%) read from Facebook, 31(19%) read from Twitter, 24(15%) read from YouTube, 15(9%) watch TV, 8 (5%) listening to radio and 4(3%) preferred talking to friends. This finding is in line with Wema (2018) findings on reading culture among students in higher learning institutions in Tanzania which show that the students also read from other sources like Facebook, YouTube and TV.

5.9 Preferred Reading Materials

Reading materials can be in different forms. They can be fictions or scholarly materials. With respect to the students' preferred reading materials, from WESCO, 25 (30.4%) students were of the opinion that they prefer reading prescribed course books, 20 (24.3%) prefer reading textbooks, 15 (18.2%) prefer reading novels/fictions, 12 (14.6%) prefer religious books while 10 (12.1%) prefer reading newspapers. Within St. Louis, 18 (22.7%) prefer reading prescribed course books, 17 (21.5%) prefer reading novels/fictions, 15 (18.9%) prefer reading textbooks, 13 (16.4%) prefer reading newspapers, 10 (12.6%) read religious books and 6 (7.5%) prefer reading magazines. The findings show that in both colleges, the most preferred reading materials were prescribed course books with 43 (26.7%) of respondents preferring this option followed by textbooks with 35 (21.7%) response rate

whilst novels/fictions were the preferred option of 32 (19.9%) of the respondents. Only St. Louis students read magazines in the library. This finding corroborates with Liswaniso and Mubanga's (2019) findings on reading habits among students from University of Namibia which show that the students mainly read their prescribed course books and only a few students read religious books.

In a probing question, student were asked to indicate their preferred reading formats. The choices of students' reading formats are greatly influenced by their availability and their ability to access them. With regards to the formats that they preferred to access information, students from both colleges had a high preference for both print and electronic resources. This is because majority of the students 66 (40.9%) from the two colleges preferred their reading materials in both formats, followed by print 64 (39.7%) and electronic 31(19.2%) and the reason for this was quite obvious because of power outage they can rely on print. This also confirms earlier study conducted by Eluwole, Shorunke, and Makinde (2017) which reported that 71.7% of their respondents use both print and electronic formats.

Concerning user satisfaction of the library in terms of building, services and the content, **Fig. 2** below depicts responses by the students.

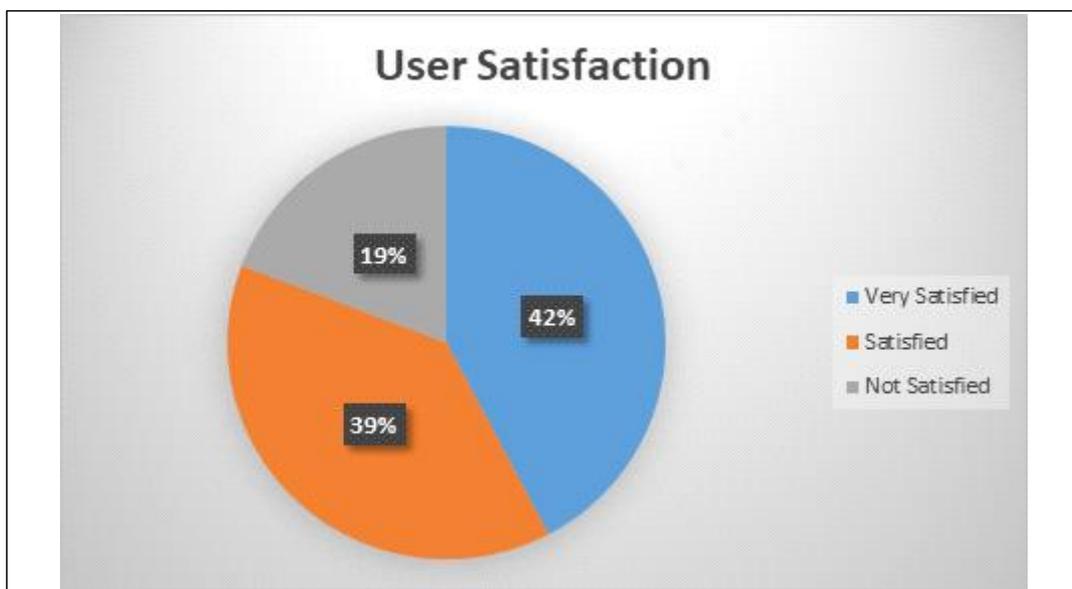


Fig. 2. User Satisfaction

Source: Field Survey, 2020

From **Fig. 2**, regarding the level of user satisfaction with the services, contents and building in the library, in WESCO, 36 (43.9%) of the students were very satisfied, 38 (46.3%) were satisfied while 8 (9.7%) indicated it as not satisfactory. In the case of St. Louis College of Education, 32 (40.5%) of the students were very satisfied, 24 (30.3%) were satisfied and 23 (29.1%) were not satisfied. The result shows that in both colleges, 68 (42.2%) of the respondents were very satisfied with the services, content and building of their library followed by satisfied with response

rate of 38.5% and the least in respect of not satisfied was rated by 19.2% of the students.

5.10 Importance of Reading

The study sought to identify the importance of reading. The students were given some options/reasons as a guide to choose from in responding to this query. The students were then asked to select one or a combination of the reasons for reading. Their responses are illustrated in **Table 5** below.

Table 5. Benefits of Reading

Reasons	Wesley College of Education		St. Louis College of Education		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Broaden my knowledge, pass examination, improve my vocabulary	10	12.0	21	26.5	31	19.0
Broaden my knowledge,	11	13.4	17	21.5	28	17.0
Improve my vocabulary	12	14.6	14	18.0	26	16.0
Improve reading skills and improve my vocabulary	13	16.0	12	15.0	25	16.0
Broaden my knowledge, pass examination, improve my vocabulary, do research, improve reading skills, do research, for relaxation and entertainment	16	20.0	6	7.5	22	14.0
Pass examination and improve my vocabulary	14	17.0	7	9.0	21	13.0
Do research, relaxation and for entertainment	6	7.0	2	2.5	8	5.0
Total	82	100	79	100	161	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

It is evident from **Table 5** that, 31 (19.0%) of the students from both colleges read to broaden their knowledge, pass examination and improve their vocabulary, 28 (17.0%) read to broaden their knowledge while 26 (16.0%) engage in reading to improve their vocabulary, 25 (16.0%) read to improve reading skills and improve their vocabulary and 22 (14.0%) required all the above-mentioned reasons for reading. Also, 21 (13.0%) read to pass examination and improve their vocabulary and 8 (5.0%) read to do research, for relaxation and entertainment. In this study, (17.0%) of the students from both colleges read to broaden their knowledge, pass examination and improve their vocabulary followed by enabling them to broaden their knowledge. Bulgurcuoglu (2016), in his study, stated that reading helps to improve intellectual development and academic excellence of students by bringing up reliable people in the country.

5.11 Factors that Hinder Students' Reading on Campus

As it is in the case with any human activity, the respondents had their fair share of challenges that hinder them in their reading activities on campus. Students were thus asked to point out factors that hinder their reading in school. The results indicated that in both colleges, 64 (39.7%) of the students mentioned inadequate novels in the library, busy schedule on campus and preparation for examination as the main factors that hinder their reading followed by 40 (24.8%) who revealed social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Blogs) and time spent with friends, 36 (22.3%) indicated busy schedule on campus and preparation for examination while only 21 (13.0%) indicated lack of reading habit and time spent with friends. Concerning factors that hinder students' reading habit at home, in both colleges, 81 (50.3%) of the students indicated watching TV, time spend with friends and lack of conducive environment interfere with their reading habits. This was followed by lack of reading materials, lack of motivation and lack of public library which were rated by 36 (22.3%), 20 (12.4%), and 6 (3.7%) respectively by the respondents. Additional challenges that emerged from this research indicated that some 18 (11.1%) students are engaged in too much family responsibilities and also, they are not able to afford buying books. The findings agree with Hassan, Olaseni, and Mathew's (2012), study which indicated that situation at home also affected reading.

6. Conclusion

Reading habit is a lifelong action and whoever acquires it, obtains satisfaction, relief, and joy. The results of the study indicated that in both colleges, parents and tutors influence students to read. The findings also established that in the two colleges of education studied, the overall students' reading habit was not encouraging since most students read only one book in two months. It also emerged from the study that majority of the students read from their prescribed course books for academic progress followed by textbooks and just few read other materials like fictions and newspapers. However, the study revealed that the reading habit and library use of students from these colleges of education need to be improved.

The study also established that reading helps students to broaden their knowledge. Challenges such as inadequate novels in the library, busy schedule on campus and preparation for examination hinder the reading habits of students on campus. The study further established that watching TV, time spent with friends and lack of conducive environment interfere with their reading habits. Additionally, lack of reading materials, lack of motivation and lack of public library are some of the challenges students encounter at home with regards to their acquisition of reading habits. This study findings are similar to other findings indicated by other researchers concerning students' reading habits and library use.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- (a) The College Library should launch to promote reading clinic to improve students' reading. Also, seminars and workshops should be organized for students to enhance their reading
-

habit. Among the students, those who can read perfectly may deliver speeches and share their own experiences on reading with others.

- (b) The College Library should make the library conducive for learning by providing the library with up-to-date books, journals, newspapers and novels/fictions.
- (c) The Academic Board should encourage tutors to inculcate reading habits in students by making communication skills mandatory course for all levels of study. Students can also be motivated to read through the formation of reading clubs and group presentation of assignments.
- (d) Parents should provide suitable reading materials and create favorable atmosphere for learning at home. They should also help their wards in their household chores to empower them to engage in constant reading.
- (e) Students need to be encouraged to read other informational books to boost their morale and make them all round. In spite of this, they should visit the college library to get updated information.

References

- Abidin, M. J. Z., Pour-Mohammadi, M., & Jesmin, A. (2011). A survey of online reading habits of rural secondary school students in Malaysia. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 3(1), 1-18.
- Adeniji, M. A. & Omale, A. (2010). Teaching reading comprehension in selected primary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 1, 1-7. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/349>
- Adnan, A., Akram, F., & Akram, A. (2016). Identification of factors promoting reading habits of students: A case study on Pakistan. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(17), 56-62.
- Ameyaw, S. K. & Anto, S. K. (2018). Read or perish: reading habits among students and its effect on academic performance: a case study of Eastbank Senior High School - Accra. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 1-23. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1748>.
- Andayani, U., & Maryam, S. (2019). The Portrait of Reading Habit and Interest of Tangerang City's Community. In *2nd Internasional Conference on Culture and Language in Southeast Asia (ICCLAS 2018)*, 219-221.
- Anunobi, C. V., & Ukwoma, S. (2016). Information literacy in Nigerian universities trends, challenges and opportunities. *New Library World*, 117(5/6), 343-359.
- Appiah, D. K. (2017). Information seeking behaviour of visually challenged students in public universities: A study of University of Ghana, Legon and University of Education, Winneba. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 1507. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphi>
-

lprac/1507

- Bulgurcuoglu, A. N. (2016). Relationship between critical thinking levels and attitudes towards reading habits among pre-service physical education teachers. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 11(8), 708-712. doi:10.5897/ERR2016.2713
- Celik, B. (2019). A study on using the university library and reading habits of students: A study on Tishk International University students in Erbil, Iraq. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 9(4), 224-240. doi:10.5539/ijel.v9n4p224
- Chettri, M. K., & Rout, S. K. (2013). Reading habits - an overview. *IOSR Journal of Humanities And Social Science*, 14(6), 13-17.
- Eijansantos-Remanente, M. C. (2015). *Factors affecting the academic reading habits of hospitality management students*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Maria_Cecilia_Remante/publication/316599851_Factors_affecting_academic_reading_among_students/links/5906b65b0f7e9bc0d590fd70/Factors-affecting-academic-reading-among-students.pdf
- Eluwole, O. A., Shrunke, O. A., & Makinde, O. O. (2017). A study of the reading habits and library use of students in Landmark University, Kwara State, Nigeria. *Journal of Applied Information Science and Technology*, 10(2), 62-72. Retrieved from <https://www.jaistonline.org/10vol2/7.pdf>
- Hassan, Olaseni, O. E., & Mathew. O. O. (2012). Effect of ICT on the reading habits of Rufus GIWA Polytechnic, OWO 1. *Canadian Journal of Scientific and Industrial Research*, 3(4), 238-245. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.408.8984&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Hopper, R. (2005). What are teenagers reading? Adolescent fiction reading habits and reading choices. *Literacy*, 39(3), 113-120.
- Kirchner, E., Alexander, S., & Totemeyer, A. J. (2014). *The reading habits/behaviour and preferences of African children: The Namibian chapter in collaboration with UNISA*. Windhoek: University of Namibia.
- Kumara, B., & Sampath Kumar, B. T. (2019). Impact of Reading habits on the Academic Achievements: A Survey. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 2269. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/2269>
- Lee, C. D., & Spratley, A. (2010). Reading in the Disciplines: The Challenges of Adolescent Literacy. Final Report from Carnegie Corporation of New York's Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy. *Carnegie Corporation of New York*.
- Lemanski, C. (2011). Access and assessment? Incentives for independent study. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 36(5), 565-581. doi:10.1080/02602930903541031
- Liswaniso, B. L., & Mubanga, G. N. (2019). Examining the reading habits of university students: A study of students at the Katima Mulilo campus of the University of Namibia. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 16(1), 140-152. Retrieved from <https://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/liwaniso.pdf>
- Nwana, O. C. (2013). *Introduction to education research for student teachers: Ibadan*. London: Heinemann Education Books Ltd.
- Ogbodo, R. O. (2010). *Effective Study Habits in Educational Sector: Counselling Implications*.
-

Edo Journal of Counselling, 3(2), 230-242. doi:10.4314/ejc.v3i2.63610

- Onuoha, U. D., Unegbu, E. V., & Umahi, F. O. (2013). Reading habits and library use among students of information resources management, Babcock University, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4.
- Owusu-Acheaw, M., & Larson, A. G. (2014). Reading habits among students and its effect on academic performance: A study of students of Koforidua Polytechnic. *Library philosophy and practice*, 1130.
- Oyewole, O. (2017). Impact of poor reading culture among selected secondary school students in Owo local government area of Ondo state, Nigeria. *Developing Country Studies*, 7(10), 88-101. Retrieved from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234683249.pdf>
- Oriogu, C. D., Subair, R. E., & Oriogu-Ogbuiyi, D. C. (2017). Effect of reading habits on the academic performance of students: A case study of the students of Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. *Effect of Reading Habits on the Academic Performance of Students: A Case Study of the Students of Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State.*, 2(5), 1-8. doi:10.11648/j.tecs.20170205.13
- Singh, Y. G. (2011). Academic achievement and study habits of higher secondary students. *International Referred Research Journal*, 3(27), 2.
- Skenderi, L., & Ejupi, S. (2017). The reading habits of university students in Macedonia. *KNOWLEDGE -International Journal*, 20(6), 2835-2839. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328492200>
- Wema, E. (2018). Investigating reading culture among students in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. *University of Dar es Salaam Library Journal*, 13(1), 4-19. Retrieved from <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/udslj/article/view/184586>

[About the authors]

Deborah Kore Appiah is a Senior Assistant Librarian; she holds a Degree in Special Education and Home Economics at the University of Education Winneba. MA and MPhil in Library and Information Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon. She is the head of the Tamale Campus Library of the University for Development Studies. She has attended a number of conferences both Local and International and has presented papers at some conferences. She has published a number of articles in peer reviewed journals. She is a member of Ghana Library Association (GLA) and University Teachers Association of Ghana(UTAG). Her research area is focused on Information and library management, and Information for special needs students. She can be reached appikodeb@gmail.com

Christiana Oduraa Kwaah is an Assistant Librarian, and the Collage Librarian for Wesley Collage of Education, Kumasi, Ghana. She holds a degree in Information Technology (IT) from the University of Education Winneba, (Kumasi Campus), Ghana. MA and MPhil in Library and Information Studies from the University of Ghana Legon. She has Attended a number of workshops and conferences

in the area of Librarianship. She is a member of Ghana Library Association (GLA) and Her research area is focused on Information Literacy. You can reach her on christianakwaah@gmail.com

Franklina Adjoa Yebowaah is is a Senior Assistant Librarian, she has a Diploma, BA, MA. and MPhil in Library and Information studies from University of Ghana. She is a PhD Student in Information Science at University of South Africa. She is currently the Head of Library of SD-Dombo University of Business and integrated Development Studies, Wa, Ghana. She is a member of Academic Board, Executive Committee and many other Boards and Committees in her institution. She is a member of Ghana Library Association (GLA), University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) and Athens Institute for Education and Research, A world of Academics and Research. She has attended a number of workshops and Conferences both local and International and has presented papers at conferences. She has publications in highly referred journals both local and international to her credit. Her current research area focuses on Information Literacy and Workplace Literacy in Academic Libraries. She can be on reached ayeboah@ubids.edu.gh or ayeboah123@gmail.com
