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# **Reading for pleasure among junior high school students: case study of the Saint Andrew`s Anglican Complex Junior High School, Sekondi**

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## **Abstract**

This study focused on investigating reading for pleasure among Junior high school students. The research methodology adopted for the study was the case study approach. A total number of 93 respondents comprising 87 Students, 5 Teachers and 1 Headteacher participated in the study. Questionnaires were administered to solicit information from the respondents, whilst an interview schedule was used for the Teachers and Headteacher of the school. The findings suggested that majority of the respondents do not read for pleasure, they only engage in reading primarily to pass their examinations and not so much for their personal development, fun, or to be well informed. It was also found that the total time spent on reading daily by most of the respondents was between 1-2 hours. The research findings also showed that majority of the respondents consider television viewing as a serious drawback to their engagement in leisure reading. Some of the suggestions that the study offered for promoting reading for pleasure among students were that the schools need to implement reading promotion programmes that will make reading an experience that is actively sought out by students. The researcher also suggested that a functional school library should be set up within the basic educational system; that should be well-equipped with the necessary resources to serve the reading needs of the children. The school library should create a conducive environment for reading that can make the children feel at home to engage in reading for pleasure activities.

## **KEYWORDS**

Reading for pleasure, Reading habits, Basic education, Ghana

## **Introduction**

Education is considered to have a strong correlation with social and economic development. According to Usoro and Usanga (2007), “education plays an important role in the well-being of any nation that wants to sustain its prominence in the global scene. Education not only liberates; it is a vital tool for empowerment that allows meaningful contributions to society”.

Every nation has a policy on education that provides guidance on the type and quality of education that its citizens should acquire in order to function as a productive citizen. The bedrock of any educational system is the basic educational level. It is thus essential that high quality basic education for all, from a child’s youngest days forward must be a paramount concern to the society.

Reading is the gateway to education and it must be reiterated that a child’s ability to read and read well can make an enormous difference to both his/her school performance, career potential and personal success. It has been recognized as an important discipline and a child’s ability to read is the centre of the educational process. Lawal (1995) has opined that “if a learner possesses poor reading habits, he suffers serious handicaps not only in school but also later in the world of work. This is even true when one considers the fact that education is now learner centered with the more effective techniques placing a far greater emphasis on the learner’s ability to read”.

Holloway (1999) as cited in Kirsch et al. (2002) has asserted that “reading skills are essential to the achievement of lower and upper secondary students but after seven or eight years of elementary education, many students will lack sufficient proficiency as readers, and many adolescents continue to perform at an unacceptable levels”. On the other hand, a research study conducted by the International Reading Association (Moore et al, 1999) that has been cited in Clark and Rumbold (2006), states that:

“Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st Century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imaginations so they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read can be crucial”.

Bearing this in mind, many educators have recognize that one of the main purpose of education in all countries is to ensure that students acquire the necessary skills to be able to read with understanding so that they can cope in the changing world of the technological age. The importance of reading cannot be underestimated, because it could be considered as a window to the outside world and a prerequisite for success in life. The universal importance of reading was highlighted when UNESCO declared 1990 as the “International Year of Literacy”, reading skills are fundamental to everyday activities as well as necessary for personal intellectual growth.

Research by Khan (2003), as quoted by Kanade and Chudamani (2006), suggests that the “reading of books broadens the reader’s outlook. It enriches the mind and makes the reader an enlightened person. An enlightened person with a sharp mental ability can solve many problems in the neighbourhood, and can foster the human relationships between persons of differing backgrounds, and can move toward an advanced society”. In the words of Darko-Ampem (2005), as cited in Tella and Akande (2007), books impart knowledge to the reader, draw out and foster qualities such as imagination and self-understanding, and contribute to the child’s mental growth by stimulating the senses of touch, sight and hearing, the three channels by which people learn. It is clear that “books are indispensable tools for building the human resources needed for the scientific, technical, political and socio-economic development of a nation” (Charkin, 1993).

The improvement of children’s reading remains one of the most important challenges for contemporary educators. As compared to children a couple of decades back, the young generation now has access to a wide variety of leisure activities. There is an intense competition at the moment between books and recent innovative, attractive and engaging gadgets, like TV, Computer and Video games and the Internet that are capturing the time and attention of children and students, making them lose interest in reading for pleasure. The time our children and students will use to read their books, learn and do the assignments given to them in school is used in Internet Cafes, watching TV, films and playing video and computer games all at the detriment of recreational reading (Majid and Tan, 2007).

It is clear from the foregoing discussions that the ability to read is essential for successful communication, as it is required to solve practical problems of daily life, it is necessary for the growth and well-being of an individual in order for him/her to comprehend road signs, warning labels, telephone books, newspapers, books and so on (Colberg and Snart, 1992). Therefore, it is the view of this researcher that high school students who constitute an important component of the basic educational system in Ghana must be encouraged and motivated to read for pleasure, since the reading for pleasure habit offers numerous benefits and “positively related to better academic achievement”.

In a world in which the television has taken over the lives of many children, it is our duty to tell children the importance of written word. In the end, children should be able to read books for both information and enjoyment. The enthusiasm, interest, and love for books should be built up in children from tender ages. When children are able to read they can learn just about anything they want to know and that the doors of the world would be opened to people who can read. Creating a love of reading in students is potentially one of the powerful ways of improving academic standards in the basic education set up.

The education of the child is vital for the existence of the society as it is the child that would grow into adulthood for society’s very survival and continuity. Since a child’s ability to read is the centre of the educational process, the researcher chose the Saint Andrew’s Anglican Complex Junior High School, which is, situated at Sekondi directly behind the Saint Andrew the Apostle

Cathedral to investigate the prospects of promoting reading for pleasure among junior high students.

## **Statement of the problem**

The research problem for this study is focused on the need to seek an understanding on the importance and value of reading for pleasure in the daily life of students in the basic educational system. Knowing this will help the researcher to take necessary measures for promoting reading for pleasure among children. In most parts of Africa, including Ghana reading is perceived as an academic exercise and a means to pass examinations. According to Majid and Tan (2007) there is an “overemphasis on study-related reading thus ignoring the recreational or free voluntary reading. With increasing pressure on children to perform well academically, it is not surprising that children often associate books and reading with learning, schoolwork, school projects and passing examinations”

Perhaps the most difficult task or challenge that faces educators today is the ability to employ a variety of strategies based approach to enable them teach learners to inculcate the attitude of reading for pleasure, in order to reverse the abysmally low students` scores in English Language at both the Junior and Senior High School examinations. Clearly, this is not an easy task, due to the pressure from educators and parents on students to learn more from school text to enable them perform better in both School and external examinations, leading to high academic standards being set for them.

This is the exact situation that prevails at Saint Andrew’s Anglican Complex Junior High School, which is situated at Sekondi. The students seldom read as a hobby, since most of the school day is devoted to the reading of nothing other than the school textbooks and preparation for examinations. The sad reality is that, in spite of the encouragement from the teachers to students to make some time to read for pleasure, the habit of library visits and pleasure reading was not encouraging in the school. The students would not hesitate to read school-related materials, getting them to become life-long readers and to read for pleasure remains an uphill task.

## **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this research was to investigate the pattern of reading for pleasure among Junior High School Students in the Saint Andrew’s Anglican Complex Junior High School in Sekondi.

## **Objectives of the study**

The specific study objectives are namely:-

- To find out whether the students read for pleasure
- To determine what students read for pleasure and how often
- To find out the amount of time children spend in reading

- To identify the major factors hindering children from reading
- To identify measures needed for improvement and development of reading habits
- To identify the sources of reading materials which the children wholly depend on
- To make recommendations for enhancing reading for pleasure among students

## **Literature Review**

### **Defining reading for pleasure**

Reading is an essential competency in the 21st Century. The importance of reading undertaken in childhood cannot be underestimated, since it provides a foundation for the acquisition of knowledge as well as for a love of reading for pleasure. Reading for pleasure refers to “reading that is done out of the reader’s own freewill anticipating the satisfaction that he will get from the act of reading and it typically involves materials that reflect the reader’s own choice, at a time and place that suits him” (Clark and Rumbold, 2006).

Cremin (2007) posit that reading for pleasure is “oriented towards finding personal meaning and purpose and related to human need to make sense of the world, the desire to understand, to make things work, to make connections, engage emotionally and feel deeply. In finding resonances in the text, whether inter-personal, extra-personal or inter-textual”. In the opinion of Neil (1998), it is a ‘form of play that allows us to experience other worlds and roles in our imagination”.

It clear from the above that reading is more than just enjoyable fiction, it also includes satisfying our fascination to learn more about things that interest us. It is also a way of connecting with text. The most fundamental issue is thus that learners have opportunities to read for enjoyment, not only for school and educational purposes. The value of reading for pleasure is that you can select from millions of books and topics for enjoyment.

Woods (2001) outlines a more elaborate explanation for reading for pleasure noting that “reading can change your life, it can inform, motivate, inspire and elevate; but it must be reading you do for yourself, at your own pace, in your own way, and that has a bearing on your background, interests, values, beliefs and aspirations”. Reading that is forced on you in a mechanistic way and formally assessed may have the reverse effect, the major purpose becoming pleasing the teacher and passing tests, and a preoccupation, with form rather than substance.

### **Reasons for reading**

Research shows that people read books for various purposes. Generally, the reasons for reading are as follows: first, reading evokes curiosity and sensibility; next, reading helps the reader build good viewpoints and enhances personality; again, reading broadens the reader’s experiences and strengthens the willingness to realize one’s goals; fourth, reading makes the reader explore information and use it to create knowledge and finally, reading has therapeutic value (Lee, 2006).

According to Dungworth et al. (2004) as cited in Clark and Rumbold (2006), reading has many functions in students' everyday lives. In a survey administered to students, the researchers found that most of them read for enjoyment and also the activity relaxes them. The second most popular reason was that it stimulates their imaginations and they can be transported to other worlds. Other students also viewed reading as educational and informative.

Benton and Fox (1985) conclude that "stories provide the possibility of educating the feelings and can offer their readers potential growth points for the development of a more subtle awareness of human behaviour".

Nestle Family Monitor (2003) as cited in Clark and Rumbold (2006) asked 11-18 year-olds why they read, 55% of these students stated that books help them understand different cultures and people around the world, 40% stated that they acquired new information on different topics, and 33% indicated that books were a great way to discover new interests. When asked how they would describe reading, half of the students responded that it relaxed them, while a third stated that it was enjoyable, two-fifths explained that reading was educational, and a quarter indicated that it provided them with more information. However, a quarter also described reading as boring. The findings of these research studies revealed that students read for different reasons and that not all read for pleasure.

## **Benefits of reading for pleasure**

Reading for pleasure seems to be an important foundation for developing reading habits for learners as well as later for adults. Reading for pleasure is associated with numerous educational and social benefits and is positively linked to various literacy-related benefits:

- When children read for pleasure, literacy competence is developed. Several studies that have examined the relationship between the amount of reported pleasure reading and children's achievement, found that book reading was the activity which proved to have the strongest correlation with reading proficiency (Cox and Guthrie, 2001; Marson, 1997; Pucci, 1998). Those who read more are better readers, when children become readers and enjoy it, they will inevitably become literate; reading will lead to learning and this, in turn, is intertwined with development.
- Tella and Akande (2007) found that there are many potential benefits in a good book provided it grasps and holds student's interest. Not only do students expand their language by reading widely, they also learn much about other times and places, stimulate their imagination, gain insights into human nature, are able to follow their specific interest and hobbies enjoy and escape from unpleasant realities. Once children learn to appreciate books, they would read more often and improve their vocabulary.



- Research by Schackne (2002) states that reading for pleasure is more effective in improving comprehension than traditional skill-based reading instruction. Reading for pleasure, even comic books is the most effective way to increase vocabulary. Extensive reading is nearly always superior to direct instruction on tests of reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing and grammar, and reading as a leisure activity is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary, and reading speed.

## **Reading for pleasure among students**

The students' attitude toward reading will play an important role in whether or not he/she engages in reading for pleasure. McKenna (2001) revealed that learners with positive reading attitude enjoy varied reading, and frequently participate in reading activities. They read for pleasure, enjoy visiting the library, and choose to read during free time, read for information, talk about reading, enjoy receiving books as gifts, share books with family members. They have strong feelings of enjoyment when reading for creation or learning. They strongly agree that reading is important. Reading attitudes manifest themselves in reading related behaviours.

Research have shown that when students are interested in what they are being taught and have access to many different reading materials that they enjoy, student effort, learning, motivation and attitude improve (Clark and Rumbold, 2006). Sanacore and Palumbo (2009) notes that when children read materials that interest them, they are more apt to read often; to increase their awareness of content-specific concepts, text structure, and general world knowledge; to improve their fluency, meaning-making, vocabulary, phonics, writing, grammar, and spelling skills and strategies; to become competent and confident in reading more challenging materials, and to continue reading as a lifetime activity.

Unagha (2008) notes that the school library “helps children to enjoy reading, learning, and using library resources as lifelong habits, and gives them the chance to evaluate and use information. It exposes them to a range of thoughts, opinions, and ideas, and gives them awareness of other cultures”. On the other hand, Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) suggest that “students learn more about various types of books (expository and narrative) because of library visits, which as a result, significantly increase student motivation to read. During library visits, the librarian plays a very important role in promoting student reading”.

## **Factors militating against reading for pleasure**

Haugh (2004) has revealed that “poor literacy skills, cultural factors, peer influence, inadequate supplies of suitable reading material, an overloaded curriculum and the constant competition from multi-channel television and the World Wide Web (WWW) are only a few of the many factors that militated against the ideal of children reading for pleasure”. A study conducted in Jamaica also indicates that low literacy levels, a shortage of books, a traditionally oral culture

and a low per capita are some of the factors militating against reading for pleasure (Hamilton, 1984).

Makenzi (2004) postulate that due to high levels of illiteracy in the developing world, many children do not get a positive start on reading like their counterparts in the developed world. Whereas in the developed world books are easily available in homes and parents who are literate read stories with their children while promoting reading from a tender age, the perception a child in the developing world gets of the book is that of a book being a serious tool for study to be used mainly for academic success.

Tiemensma (2008) notes that many parents acknowledge the importance of reading with and to children but do not always have time. The need for both parents to go out to work and the absence of someone responsible at home to take care of children, means that many are left without adult supervision. Some parents do not value literacy and may be uncooperative and uninformed about supporting their child's literacy development. Money may be available, but since literacy itself is not valued, money is not spent on magazines, newspapers and books.

Fayose (2003) makes the point that teenagers do not read for pleasure because they do not find books that are of interest to them. Children of this age, have their psychological and growing up problems, which are hardly discussed in their reading materials. Eight-five (85%) percent of adolescent children in a research project based in Nigerian indicated that they do not use libraries because the resources do not meet their need. It is further, explained that teenagers do not read for pleasure, because their voluntary reading interest decline, as a result of new academic subjects that are added to their curriculum and the children themselves also develop interests in other personal non-reading areas or are loaded with other responsibilities that reduces their time and motivation for voluntary reading.

## **Methodology**

The case study method was adopted to carry out the research enquiry. Leedy and Omrod (2001) asserts that the case study design is a type of qualitative research in which in-depth data are gathered relative to a single individual, program, or event, for the purpose of learning more about an unknown or poorly understood situation. Questionnaire made up of both close-ended and open-ended questions and interview schedule were the main instruments used for collecting data for the study (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993). The study was conducted during the month of July 2009 among Saint Andrew's Junior High School Students in Sekondi. The overall population for the study comprise J. H. S. 1 and J. H. S. 2 students, Teachers and the Head teacher of the Saint Andrew's Anglican Complex Junior High School.

For this study the whole population was used for the case study. Given the fact that the total population of the Saint Andrew's Anglican Junior High School was 93, it was felt that this was a manageable number and as a result all of them were used without any need for sampling, thus the target population constituted the sample size.

## Results and Discussion

### Students` reading for pleasure

The study which was undertaken among students of the Junior High School found out that most of them 52 (59.8%) did not read daily for pleasure. The results indicated that only 40.2% of the respondents engaged in reading daily. The research as well confirmed that the respondents 58 (66.7%) only engaged in reading primarily to pass their examinations and not so much for their personal development, fun, or to be well informed. This trend was not surprising to the researcher since it was evident that most of the respondents mostly read if they had examinations, thus their over reliance on their teachers and textbooks and other materials that would enable them pass their examinations. This result confirms the assertions of Sangkaeo (1999) who has opined that the reading culture of Africans is poor. It must be noted that the present generation of children have been touted as constituting leaders of tomorrow, thus if this state of affairs remains and children are not given the necessary encouragement to read for pleasure for their personal development, the continent would be doomed. Table 1 below shows the reasons for reading:-

**Table 1: Reason for reading**

Reasons	Frequency		
	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely
To pass exams	58 (66.7%)	19 (21.8%)	10 (11.5%)
It is fun	30 (34.5%)	17 (19.5%)	40 (46.0%)
It helps me understand more about myself	15 (17.2%)	27 (31.0%)	45 (51.8%)
To help me find out what I want / need to know	48 (55.2%)	20 (23.0%)	19 (21.8%)
For personal development	25 (28.7%)	30 (34.5%)	42 (48.3%)
To while away time	12 (13.8%)	30 (34.5%)	45 (51.7%)
It is skill for life	18 (20.7%)	28 (32.2%)	41 (47.1%)

Field Survey 2009

### Preferred type of reading materials

The study also investigated the type of materials the respondents liked to read outside of school. It was found out that textbooks were the preferred type of reading materials and 51.7% of the students reported reading such materials most of the time. Some 48.3 % of the students reported reading storybooks most of the time. These were followed by newspapers, Internet/Websites, song lyrics, magazines and the least read by the respondents was audio book. Table 2 gives details of the results.

**Table 2: Preferred type of reading materials (Multiple responses)**

Subject	Frequency		
	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely
Story book	42 (48.3%)	25 (28.7%)	20 (23.0%)
Textbooks	45 (51.7%)	20 (23.0%)	22 (25.3%)
Internet / Website	18 (20.7%)	22 (25.3%)	47 (54.0%)
Newspapers	25 (28.7%)	42 (48.3%)	20 (23.3%)
Magazines	15 (17.2%)	27 (31.1%)	45 (51.7%)
Song lyrics	18 (20.7%)	23 (26.4%)	46 (52.9%)
Audio book	10 (11.5%)	15 (17.2%)	62 (71.3%)

Field Survey 2009

### Time spent on reading for pleasure

The study investigated the total time spent in reading per day by the respondents. The data for the study revealed that the total time spent in reading per day by the respondents extended from less than an hour to more than 5 hours. The least time spent on reading was less than an hour. This was indicated by 29 representing 33.3% of the respondents whilst 4 representing 4.6% of the respondents indicated that they could read for more than 5 hours. On the whole, most of the respondents 49 (56.3%) spent 1-2 hours per day on reading. The total time spent in reading daily is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Total time spent in reading daily**

Time spent reading	Frequency	Percentage
Less than an hour	29	33.3
1-2 hours	49	56.3
3-4 hours	4	4.6
4-5 hours	1	1.2
More than 5 hours	4	4.6
Total	87	100.0

Field Survey: 2009

The key findings of this study shows that the total time spent on reading daily by majority of the respondents (56.3%) was 1-2 hours. This corroborated the findings of a study in Sri Lanka conducted by Abeyrathna and Zainab (2004) that also found majority of the students (53%) who indicated reading between 1-2 hours every day. It is clear from this findings that the reading habits of the respondents is not all that encouraging since there are some students that read even less than an hour per day. Generally, before reading habits can be referred to as being good, it is

expected that at least 65-70 percent of the students should read up to 2-3 hours on a daily basis without any hindrances ( Tella and Akande, 2007).

### **Factors hindering student from reading for pleasure**

The respondents were asked to indicate factors that hindered them from reading for pleasure. The study as indicated in Table 4 below revealed that 45 (51.7%) of the respondents were of the view that Watching Television was a major hindrance in their reading for pleasure pursuits. Tuition/Extra classes was the next major factor which prevented 20 (23.0%) of the students in reading for pleasure. On the other hand, only 12 (13.8%) and 10 (11.5%) of the respondents respectively felt home assignments given by teacher and playing sports/games hindered them from reading for pleasure. The Table 4 indicates the results.

**Table 4: Factors hindering student from reading for pleasure**

<b>Hindrances</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Playing Sports / Games	10	11.5
Watching Television	45	51.7
Tuition / Extra classes	20	23.0
Home assignments giving by Teachers	12	13.8
None of these	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Field Survey: 2009

The result of findings as shown in Table 4 reveals that most of the respondents (51.7%) considered watching television as a serious impediment to their reading for pleasure. This finding confirms an outcome of an earlier study that investigated the favorite pastimes activities of primary and middle school children in China which reported that watching television and computer games was the most popular leisure activities, followed by reading books (Majid and Tan, 2007). Television viewing has been described in many studies as one of the reason why children do not read. An IEA study also found that television viewing occupies much of children’s time and that those who often watch television tend to score at lower levels (Elley, 1992). It must be stated that the respondents in this study were not asked how much time they spent daily watching television.

### **Improving reading habits**

The students were asked to indicate what could be done to improve reading habits. It was observed that a little over half 44 (50.6%) of the respondents suggested the need to provide more access to reading materials. This was followed by the need to make reading compulsory in the academic curriculum 26 (29.9%). Some also indicated the need to start reading clubs in the school 14 (16.1%) and finally, encouragement by family and friends for students to read 3 (3.4%). The details of the findings are shown in Table 5 below:-

**Table 5: Suggestions on how to improving reading habits**

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Making reading compulsory in the academic curriculum	26	29.9
Start reading clubs	14	16.1
Encouragement by family and friends	3	3.4
Provide more access to reading materials	44	50.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Field Survey: 2009

The responses of the respondents/subjects as shown in Table 5 reveals that (50.6%) of them would prefer to have more access to books or reading materials to enable them engage in reading for pleasure. Some (29.9%) of the respondents thought that the school should make reading compulsory in the academic curriculum to promote reading for pleasure among students. It is vital that more emphasis is placed on access to and availability of books and literary materials that are attractive and generate children's interest in reading for pleasure. Makotsi (2005) notes that children and adults need access to a wide range of reading materials to help them acquire and maintain fluent reading skills, broaden horizons, and think independently and critically. Regular access to books, coupled with effective reading programmes as suggested by the students could help in developing the habit of reading for pleasure.

### **Sources of Information**

The study also investigated the sources of information that the respondents mostly depended on. The participating students were asked to indicate their most used source of information. It was found out that teachers were the major source of the information for students with 45 (51.7%). This was followed by the library 25 (28.7%), parent 10 (11.5%) and friends 5 (5.8%) in that order. The least used source of information among the respondents was the Internet 2 (2.3%). Table 6 below reveals the details:-

**Table 6: Sources of Information**

<b>Sources</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Library	25	28.7
Teacher(s)	45	51.7
Parent	10	11.5
Friend	5	5.8
Other(s)	2	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Field Survey: 2009

The study as shown in Table 6 reveals that 45 (51.7%) of the participants indicated that they depended mostly on teachers as their sources of information. One possible reason could be the over-reliance on teachers notes and use of recommended textbooks to enable the students pass tests and examinations. It appears that the respondents prime motives for reading was geared towards academically-related reasons in passing examinations that could have serious implications for their personal and career development in the future. Also the non-availability of professional librarian / teacher-librarian as a result of a lack of an active, functional library in the school might have contributed to the over-reliance on teachers as sources of information by the respondents. It is important to emphasize that the classroom teacher and the school librarian each play a unique part in helping learners discover the joy of reading.

## **Conclusion**

The study investigated the pattern of reading for pleasure among Junior high school students. One established way for building a literate nation and improving the overall reading skills is through encouraging reading for pleasure. However, the findings of the study suggest that a majority of the students were reading to improve their academic performance, in order to gain admission to the senior high school. This situation could be due to pressure from their parents and teachers to improve their academic performance.

Another dimension to the problem can also be attributed to the lack of a functional library in most schools, lack of book availability and access to reading materials that can match students reading interests have culminated in the decline in read for pleasure habits among students. In addition, recent technological advancements coupled with many other leisure activities are competing for the time and attention of students thus contributing to the decline in reading for pleasure.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the under listed recommendations were made for the enhancement of reading for pleasure among students in the basic educational system:-

### **Library Provision**

School libraries are crucial in the literacy development of the child and it can help children to enjoy reading, learning, and using library resources to develop critical thinking and lifelong learning skills. A school library is part of a school; therefore it should be house in an appropriate building that should have space for the collection, well-equipped with necessary resources to serve the reading needs of the children. The school library should create an environment conducive for reading so that the children feel at home and comfortable. The functional school

library must have a teacher librarian to be in charge of the organization of the library services that would encourage students to read more books, magazines and newspapers regularly.

### **Reading promotion programmes**

Secondly, in order to ensure that the students reap the benefits of reading for pleasure, schools need to implement reading promotion programmes that will make reading an experience that is actively sought out by students. Schools would therefore need broad ranging approaches to consult students in order to learn of their interests and to ensure that the range of reading materials available in school reflects these interests. The schools should organize debates and essay competitions, story hours, quiz and spelling bee competition and other reading activities for students on regular intervals so as to generate reading interest and information gathering habit.

### **Teachers` Involvement**

Next, teachers are recognized as the next set of people who spend most of their time with children after their parents. They need to recognize that a diverse range of reading materials will encourage students to read, and they will need to engage children in the planning and request for appropriate numbers of books for classrooms and school libraries. Teachers need to appreciate the importance of reading, since it would afford them the opportunity to motivate and encourage their students to read widely.

### **Parents Involvement**

Again, increased parental involvement is needed to address literacy problems of children. Ideally parents need to be involved in their children's education to be effective, and also to be involved in their reading activities for it to be developed. Parents should provide appropriate reading materials, controlling television viewing and helping the children in their home and routine assignments so that they can have ample time to engage in reading for pleasure activities.

### **Role of the Public libraries**

Finally, in order to get children to read for pleasure, there is the need to encourage public libraries to reach out to their communities by organizing outreach activities. Public libraries need to make concerted efforts to providing access to more interesting and engaging reading materials. Libraries need to liaise with school authorities and teachers to ensure that appropriate books are available for all reading levels.

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