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THE NEED FOR COUNSELLING INTERVENTION TO REVITALIZE READING CULTURE AMONG REMEDIAL STUDENTS OF THE ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA UNIVERSITY, BAUCHI

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated the need to revitalize reading culture among remedial students of ATBU Bauchi, Bauchi State, Nigeria. The design of the study was descriptive survey. The population of the study comprises four hundred and fifty (450) remedial students in ATBU. The sample consisted of only 95 respondents randomly selected from the population. A questionnaire tagged Reading Culture Assessment Questionnaire (RECAQ) which was developed and constructed by the researchers was used for the study. Three research questions guided the study and descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentage and means were used in the data analyses of the study. Among the major findings were that types of resources available were textbooks, lecture notes, projects and theses as well as internet sources. Also revealed was that lack of personal timetable, poor time management and lack of readiness to learning as the major causes of poor reading culture. Among the recommendations given were the needs for Counselling for effective study habit so as to enhance good reading culture among the students. Also recommended is the need for the provision of adequate resources and conducive environment for learning.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In today's world, literacy is power and inability to read and write is a great deprivation. Many educators acknowledge that reading is the key to continuous success in schools and it enriches one's personal life. Also a positive relationship exists between reading and writing in that students who were exposed to additional reading experiences and activities performed better in writing than those who concentrated only on writing practices or studied formal grammar. Most institutions

of public higher education exist to educate students. Students, their families, and policymakers expect that the state's public colleges and universities will do everything possible to help students complete their degree, and college completion should be the institution's top priority. If student's reading literacy level is low, in most cases it automatically implies difficulties in the acquisition of several other subjects. Consequently obtaining education in general (Coatney 2009).

Definitions of reading and reading literacy have changed over time in parallel with changes in society, the economy and culture. The concept of learning, and particularly the concept of lifelong learning, has expanded perceptions of reading literacy and the demands made on it. Elley (1994) opined that Reading had been connected with passing examinations and had been seen as a way of accomplishing academic success. This view did not inspire pupils to read during their leisure time since they associated reading with textbooks and attending school. Pupils associated reading as an activity that they are forced to do, so that they could be successful in the future. Evidently the education systems examination-oriented structure could be seen as one of the obstacles to creating a reading culture.

It is axiomatic that few years back a family that produced a school certificate graduate had cause to rejoice. This was because the school certificate holder was not easy to come by in those days. The products of the missionary and government schools were better compared to the secondary school learners today. The skills of reading and writing demonstrated then by secondary school leavers made them essential commodities in the various fields of work under government and private establishment (Unagha 2008). Their fluency in English language and their reading and writing dexterity were evident to the stuff of education received then. Patronage of school libraries incorporated to secondary school system becomes highly affected because students of today have poor reading culture.

However, this has turned out to have a multiply effect as most university graduates are ill-equipped and half baked. Secondary school learners cannot take minutes at meetings while primary school leaving

certificate is no more accorded recognition. The performance of students nowadays is attributed to their poor background in the reading culture which is a carryover from their primary school through the secondary and up to the University level.

To read is to get ideas from print or written materials. Reading is a way of acquiring knowledge. Ike (1999) observed that reading is a means of tapping knowledge from superior minds. When children read for pleasure, when they get hooked on books, they acquire, involuntarily and without conscious effort, nearly all of the so-called "language skills" many people are so concerned about. They will become adequate readers, acquire a large vocabulary, develop the ability to understand and use complex grammatical constructions, develop a good writing style, and become good (but not necessarily perfect) spellers. Although free voluntary reading alone will not ensure attainment of the highest levels of literacy, it will at least ensure an acceptable level.

According to Denton and West (2002) Reading is a term used to refer to an interaction by which meaning encoded in visual stimuli by an author makes meaning in the mind of the reader. It involves the recognition of printed or written symbols which serve as stimuli for the recall or meaning through the intellectual manipulation of concepts already possessed by the reader. The resulting meanings are thereafter organized into thought process according to the purpose adopted by the reader, such an organization leads to modified thought and/or behaviour, or else leads to a new behaviour which takes its place either in personal or in social development (Balster, 1992).

From another perspective, reading is defined as the vocalization of words in a given passage and the process of giving meaning to materials. This definition

refers to reading aloud which beginners do quite often and enables teachers to detect and to correct errors spontaneously. Although, reading can be done aloud but vocalization in the course of silent reading slows down reading pace. For reading to be effective, it should be done with a good speed. Reading speed is expressed in the number of character or words read per minute.

According to Iheanachi (2007) the ability to read is a skill that a person can develop or acquire. This skill has become more necessary now than before because, in order to live well and succeed in our modern and complex world, which has become a reading world, one requires an effective reading skill. Iheanachi (2007) maintained that the average Nigerian was neither taught neither how to read well nor how to acquire the skill for reading proficiently. The quality of the library collection and its relevance to the specific school community will impact the amount students read, especially voluntarily, which is a critical factor in developing a habit of reading.

Librarians and information Professionals need to be aware of the popular culture in their own Libraries, by orientation and speaking to students and surveying them to discover their interest. Reading books should be part of the school library collection, as they are important for students too. Clay (2005) notes that many adults learned to read with light reading materials like comic books, magazines or teen romance. Uhegbu (2007) suggests, if easy materials inspire students to read, then perhaps more materials for light reading should be made available. This type of reading often motivates the reader to read more and students who prefer light reading material as teens will generally move into other, more sophisticated, materials in time. Library collections need to be large and varied and collection development decisions can also support the reading lives of students, libraries that encourage a

culture of reading will offer a wide selection of books, as stronger readers often choose more complex materials, and light reading materials should only be a part of what is available (Clay 2005). To develop a culture of reading and meet the needs of all students in specific schools, school library collections should have wide-ranging selections of books that include many reading levels, genres, topics and formats.

Although creating a culture of reading in the library is a worthy accomplishment, the ultimate goal is for students to become lifelong readers, in and out of school. All higher institutions do have libraries, but most are staffed for only a few hours each week by unprofessional without library qualifications. Libraries have a historic mission of fostering literacy and learning. The relegation of that vital institution in recent decades is indeed a matter of great sadness. Libraries, learning and reading can and do change lives and they have a role to play in determining the future of our society. Womboh (2008) opined that Libraries are vital to education; and research has shown that current lower levels of proficiency in reading are due to underfunding of libraries and their services. When these students are bombarded with lectures and they rush to the library to source information, their manner of approach to the library and its information materials speak volumes of poor knowledge of library user education. There is therefore urgent need to make library user education or information literacy education an independent general studies course in all tertiary institutions in the country with units not less than two allotted to it. And its teaching should be handled by professional academic librarians who are experts in the field.

Teachers and Librarians have common goals in the area of literacy and can work collaboratively to effectively develop a culture of reading in their school

that positively impacts student literacy and achievement. The culture of reading will not move beyond the library if teacher-librarians are using and promoting best practices in reading instruction in the library only to have the students return to their classrooms to read a class novel, answer questions, and become turned off reading (Elley 1994). Professional collaboration is critical for teacher-librarians to extend the culture of reading beyond the library walls and be effective literacy leaders in their school. It is also beneficial if teacher-librarians are able to understand the language of reading teachers, and use this when planning and collaborating. For teachers to effectively develop a culture of reading in their schools, they should be an integral part of their school literacy program. Although it is beneficial to students when the librarian is in the library promoting reading and developing a culture of reading, to be a true school literacy leader, librarian also needs to be involved at the classroom level. Collaborating with teachers connecting with their colleagues will allow teacher and librarians to have an impact on literacy and create a culture of reading school-wide.

Traditionally, teachers and librarians were considered the authority in schools for literature and reading needs providing support for school literacy programs, encouraged the love of reading and nurtured lifelong reading habits by providing access to print collections and promoting independent reading (Beck and Juel, 1999). Over time this focus on literacy changed, due in part to the increased use of computers and the Internet. Library foundational documents in English speaking countries reflect this shift in emphasis, with reading promotion being replaced by information literacy and inquiry-based learning as the focal point of library programmes.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the development of our reading habits and culture will improve the nation's human resources that will champion the much-expected sustainable development. Massive investment in improving access to books through public institutions such as schools and libraries is a matter of absolute urgency. Books and libraries are essential especially in this information age where knowledge and information have acquired the materiality of capital and commodity. Whose uneven accumulation will dictate the wealth of countries or otherwise. In order to achieve a total national consciousness of the value and benefits of reading, all stakeholders in the reading chain which include writers, publishers, booksellers, the media, teachers at all levels, librarians, civil societies, the corporate sector, religious bodies, community based organizations, non-governmental organizations, governments at all levels etc must support and participate actively in this clarion call.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Researches have shown that there are many different and usually very complex causes of poor reading cultures in students especially in Academic institutions. For example, often those are factors beyond school influence, such as the income level and education, which correlates with the academic achievements of students, but there are quite many factors that influence students' reading and learning achievements at school (Goodwin, 2000). The problem is, simply, that there seems to be a decrease in both the quantity and quality of reading material. This trend seems to be affecting both developed and developing countries.

Socio-economical conditions and Library resources are significant in achieving good reading culture in which some students are affected by it due to the negative and low standards of facilities in the institution environment. Currently, students in Remedial classes have poor reading culture in which may be at the detriment of their future endeavour of learning achievements and anticipation during their higher institution stage. There is need for counseling intervention for these students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi (ATBU). Hence, the need for this study which would assess the level of revitalization of reading culture among the Remedial students in ATBU, Bauchi.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Below are the objectives of this study:

1. To identify the types of resources available and utilized for reading among remedial students in ATBU, Bauchi.
2. To identify the causes of poor reading culture among remedial students of ATBU, Bauchi.
3. To also identify the solutions to the causes of poor reading culture among remedial students of ATBU, Bauchi.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the types of resources available which are utilized by the remedial students in ATBU?
2. What are the causes of poor reading culture among the remedial students in ATBU Bauchi?
3. What are the solutions that can curb poor reading culture among remedial students of ATBU Bauchi?

### METHODOLOGY

The design of this research is a descriptive survey. The design was centered on the revitalization of reading culture among remedial students of the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi and its counseling implication descriptive survey design according to Nwana (2005) Nworgu (2006) is a situation where by a description is made about a given phenomena. The population of the study comprised of four hundred and fifty (450) remedial students in ATBU, Bauchi. A sample of 95 respondents was selected for the study using simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire constructed by the researchers tagged reading culture assessment questionnaire draft of the questionnaire was given out to three colleagues in the department of educational foundation ATBU Bauchi the instrument on a different population other than the subject of the study. Cronach alpha was used to obtain the correlation co-efficient for readability which yields 0.68 which was adjoined to be correct for the study.

The instruments were administered to the respondents by the researchers directly. The researcher's liased with the directorate of remedial studies ATBU to organize and prepare the students for the data collection which lasted for a period of five days. The remedial students were gathered in two classrooms of forty and thirty five respondents each and a counselling and guidance talks were given by the two counsellors (researchers) on how to read and pass examinations every well. Later instructions on how to fill the questionnaire was given by the researchers. All the subjects responded to the questionnaire independently. All the copies of the questionnaire administered were retrieved and collated. Frequencies, percentage mean counts were used to analyze the data collected. This type of statistics was used because the data is on the nominal

scale as such descriptive statistics was used for the data analysis.

## RESULTS

**Research Question 1:** What are the types of resources available and utilized for reading among remedial students in ATBU?

**Table I:** Resources available for reading among ATBU remedial students

S/N	Resources available	Frequency	Percentage	Remark
1	Relevant textbooks	30	31.58	2 <sup>nd</sup>
2	Internet services	08	8.42	5 <sup>th</sup>
3	Lecture notes	32	33.68	1 <sup>st</sup>
4	Projects/theses	10	10.53	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	News papers	15	15.79	3 <sup>rd</sup>
6	Total	95	100	

Table I presented the resources available which can be utilized by the students for effective reading culture which will enhance effective study habit. Among the resources lecture notes has a frequency count of 32 respondents which was ranked to be number one with 34%. It was however, followed by relevant

textbook which has 30 frequency count with 32%. The third however was the provision of newspapers with 15 frequency count and 16%. The fourth and fifth respectively was projects and theses as well as internet services which both accounted for 11 and 8 percents.

**Research Question II:** What are the causes of poor reading culture among the remedial students in ATBU Bauchi?

**Table II:** Mean responses on causes responsible for poor reading culture among the students.

S/N	Causes of poor reading culture	Mean responses	Extent of contribution
1	Lack of personal time table	3.58	Great extent
2	Laxity on the part of the students	3.52	Great Extent
3	Lack of readiness to learning	3.51	Great Extent
4	Poor time management by students	3.50	Great Extent
5	Lack of adequate use of library	3.48	Poor Extent
6	Anxiety and lack of interest	3.32	Poor Extent
7	Lack of readiness to learning	2.58	Poor Extent
8	Poor study skills	2.32	Poor Extent
9	Inadequate learning resources	2.30	Poor Extent
10	Hostile learning environment	2.12	Poor Extent

The data on table II indicated that four factors were found to be responsible for poor reading culture among the remedial students of ATBU. The mean response of the first factor that is lack of personal time table was found to be 3.58 which was considered to have contributed significantly for poor reading culture among the remedial students. Laxity on the part of the students, lack of readiness to learning and poor time management

followed very closely with 3.52, 3.51 and 3.50 respectively. The other factors mentioned do not play significant roles on the subject's poor reading culture and they are: lack of adequate use of library (3.48), anxiety and lack of interest (3.32), lack of readiness to learning (2.58), poor study skills (3.32), inadequate learning resources (2.30) and hostile learning environment (2.12).

**Research Question III:** What are the solutions to the poor reading culture among the remedial students in ATBU Bauchi?

**Table III:** Ranking order of response as solutions to poor reading culture among the remedial students in ATBU Bauchi

S/N	Solutions to Learning problems	Frequency	%	Rank order
1	Effective study habit counseling	46	48	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Available of learning resources	38	40	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	Motivation by lecturers and adequate tutorials	10	11	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4	Encourage excursion and visitations	03	0.06	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	Parental investment	05	0.05	5 <sup>th</sup>
6	Total	95	100	

Table III indicated the solutions that can be offered to curtail the poor reading culture of the students (Remedial) in ATBU Bauchi. Effective study habit counselling was ranked to be number one with 46 frequency count and 48% followed by availability of adequate learning resources which was ranked number two having a frequency count of 38 and 40 as its

percentage. The third on the log was motivation by lecturers and adequate tutorials with frequency count of 10 and 11 percent. Encouraging excursions and visitations by university management was ranked to be number four with frequency count of 6 and 0.06%. The last but not the least was parental involvement with 0.5 as frequency count and 0.05 as percentage.

**SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS**

The summary of the major findings of this study are as follows:

- 1) The study reveals that the types of resources available that are utilized for reading in order of importance among the students are textbooks, lecture notes, newspapers, projects and theses as well as internet services

- 2) Amongst the causes of poor reading culture among the students of ATBU are; lack of personal time table, lack of readiness to learning and poor time management constituted the most serious ones.
- 3) The study also revealed that effective study habit counseling, availability of learning resources, motivation and parental involvement could serve

as the solutions to the problems of reading culture among the remedial students of ATBU Bauchi.

## DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

The study reveals that the resources available for effective reading culture among the remedial students of ATBU Bauchi are textbooks, newspapers, projects and theses as well as internet sources. This finding is in complete agreement with the finding of the Beck and Joels (1999) findings in their study indicated that for students effective reading culture there should be vast and abundant resources that could make reading interesting and worthwhile. The study is also not in agreement with Godwin (2000) study who found out that good students' readiness to learn alone is a major resource that could enhance students learning regardless of other resources available. To him the issues of availability of learning resources like the ones mentioned in this study are out of context.

Research questions II dwells on whether or not there are some factors that cause poor reading culture among the remedial students of ATBU Bauchi. The study reveals that lack of personal time table, lack of readiness to learn and poor time management are the major causes of poor reading culture of the remedial students. Other factors revealed to have exerted a greater influence was also lack of adequate use of library. This finding also corroborates Kagu and Mburzas' (2008) assertion that good time management, readiness to learn and having personal time table are essential ingredients for effective reading culture among university students. The finding also disagrees with Uhegbu (2007) findings who reiterated that even with the easy materials like comic books, magazines or teen romance; students can be able to read very well.

Research Question III tries to uncover the ways in which poor study habit or poor reading culture can be curtailed. The study reveals that effective study habit counselling, availability of adequate learning resources, motivation on the part of the students will help in no small measure in this regard. This study agrees with Sara's (2008) finding whose study revealed that counsellors has a great role to play in improving the study habit of students in the universities by employing counseling strategies like having good personal time table, good time management, effective use of library and effective skills in answering examination questions

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study conclusions were drawn. Poor reading culture by students has been found to be fuelled by some factors which include lack of effective use of library, poor time management, lack of personal time table among others. Strategies for curbing this menace according to the findings of this study involve effective study habit counseling which could promote adequate time management, having personal time table and effective use of library. This implies that a proper solution to poor reading culture among the students can only be solved by a proper understanding of, the child's developmental needs and a more understanding attitude from the schools, the parents and the larger community and hence the study revealed major causes of Poor Reading Culture and types of materials as well as the strategies for curbing poor reading culture. The teacher/counsellor should detect the major reason or cause of poor reading culture among the students and offer necessary panacea to it. All in all effective study habit counselling is



the solution to poor reading culture as revealed by this study.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings this study, the following recommendations were made:-

1. University authorities should endeavor to supply adequate resources in our libraries so as to make them rich for students' consultations
2. Government of the day should pay more than lip service in the provision of resources and learning materials in the campuses
3. Counsellors are duty bound to provide adequate counseling services in the university which must take into consideration the issue of effective study habit counselling.
4. There should be an orientation every year for the green horns who are entering the university for the first time where the counselling unit of the university will take care of inviting resources persons to talk on academic issues like note taking skills, planning time for study, survival kits for academic excellence and healthy habit in the schools as well as effective use of library.

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