

A Study of the Reading Interests of Graduates on National Service Scheme in Ghana

Olive Akpebu Adjah

*Institute of African Studies Library,
University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana
oadjah@libr.ug.edu.gh*

Abstract

A highly educated person, such as a university graduate, is normally expected to continue to read on diverse subjects as a desirable lifelong activity. Any such person who deviates from this behaviour is considered to have transformed into an aliterate. Against this background, using the survey design and the random sampling technique, this study sought to find out if fresh graduates of tertiary institutions are reading immediately out of school or are already exhibiting signs of heading towards aliteracy. Graduates of Ghanaian tertiary institutions who graduated in 2009 and were serving the nation under the Ghana National Service Scheme formed the population of the study. Two hundred copies of a designed questionnaire were distributed to such graduates serving at the University of Ghana between June and July 2010, out of which 167 usable copies were returned for a response rate of 83.5%. The study found out that the majority of the respondents were still reading, and also perceived reading as essential for lifelong learning. However, it does not appear that they placed as much premium on reading as they did in school. The paper calls on academic libraries to pay attention to providing resources and services to improve the leisurely reading habits of their students, alongside academic reading requirements, so that students leave the university with acquired and cultivated habits of reading outside of academic requirements and settings.

Introduction

Reading has a relatively short history in Africa (Chakava, 1996). Africa is commonly referred to

as the “oral continent” (Finnegan, 2007); and in the traditional African society, information, usually stored in wise sayings, songs, stories, myths, fable, poetry, and proverbs, is most often transmitted or handed down by word of mouth. Unlike in a classroom, with syllabus, uniforms and permanent teachers, adult members of society serve as teachers because most Africans believe that knowledge and wisdom come with age.

The usual setting is for a child or adolescent to sit quietly beside elders, listening attentively, observing adult behaviour, hands-on training and/or co-joint activities to learn the process of any task or skill. In the usual African household, girls learned chores from elder female members and boys from the male members of the household. If a young adult wanted to learn a trade or profession, for example, dress making, craft work, trading, and so on, they were sent off to live with skilled members of the community. In a typical traditional society, a younger person who asks too many questions and argues is seen as disrespectful or precocious. Children are taught to be humble and to respect authority by submitting to decisions of the elderly without questions. This did not encourage the development of an inquiring mind because younger generations looked up to oral communication with the elders in the community for information and knowledge. Another limitation to this form of education and knowledge transfer is the absence of writings or records. Both limitations hampered the need and motivation to read or write.

The modernisation of African societies since colonial times brought with it literacy programmes, educational systems and students at the primary, secondary, tertiary and other levels. These systems naturally expect students to read extensively, intensively and frequently in order to gain information and improve their knowledge. However, many studies, including Applegate and Applegate (2004), Gebhard (2006), Nathanson, Pruslow and Levitt (2008), have reported that students described reading in terms of a chore or academic mandate. The

students' responses reflect their conviction that reading is an obligation and an academic survival skill which, according to Mullan (2010), accounts for reading remaining a relatively marginal activity in the daily lives of many young people after schooling. This point is reiterated by Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007) that many adolescents hit a 'literacy ceiling' when they reach middle and high school. They are unable or unwilling to access information in printed books resulting in frustration. Students then come to think of themselves as non-readers or poor readers and eventually avoid reading.

Furthermore, educated people may also face another reading-related problem that is known as aliteracy. Lary Mikulecky coined the term aliteracy in 1978, to describe capable readers who choose not to read, which Goodwin (1996) defines as the lack of reading habits in capable readers. A highly educated person, such as a university graduate, is normally expected to continue to read on diverse subjects as a desirable lifelong activity. An aliterate, therefore, is considered as one who deviates from a culture that considers a literate life as normal, desirable and good. In Ramsay's (2002) opinion, an aliterate should also be viewed from the point of a struggling, slow, frustrated reader who reads despite the feeling of enormous stress, confusion and pressure. This translates into a picture of a reluctant reader who in life will read what must be read but no more and, if at all, write using debased forms such as text messaging (Gorman 2005). Against this backdrop, Filicanevo (2007) warns that aliteracy will become an even bigger problem than it is today if the trend continues to grow unchecked. It would pose a bigger problem, because it breeds illiteracy and, according to Gallagher (2009), systematically kills the love for reading. Law (2010) laments that we are close to a world of aliteracy, wherein adequate reading and writing for appropriate lifelong learning are becoming optional and unloved, even among previously highly educated people.

Problem Statement

Azu (1994) commented that the premium put on literacy and reading by education systems has gradually eroded the traditional authority held by the elders as custodians and communicators of knowledge in African societies. However, the

literacy and reading skills that were expected to supplant these traditional forms of communication are themselves being affected by the gradual relapse of educated people into aliteracy. Chakava (1996) and Olufowobi and Makinde (2011) even state categorically that most Africans do not continue reading after formal education is completed. Chakava (1996) argues that this was because when the book was introduced in Africa, reading was not promoted as an activity one could engage in for pleasure. People were forced to read and most of what they read were strange and contradicted their own beliefs, therefore they learnt to endure reading, but did not read for pleasure. The problem is further exacerbated by the rapid growth and popularity of modern technology-driven modes of communication that do not require much reading and writing, such as radio, TV, the Internet and mobile phones.

Objectives

Against this background, this paper reports the findings from a survey of fresh graduates of tertiary institutions to find out if they are reading immediately out of school or are already exhibiting signs of heading towards aliteracy. By so doing, the study sought to investigate the suggestion by Priyanto (2007) that the world of librarianship should go beyond the confines of the library to understand things surrounding it, more especially the population that community or public libraries serve. He states that issues such as the literacy, illiteracy, reading habits and aliteracy of library users should be investigated and considered in terms of how they affect a library and how it should respond appropriately with improved services. Finally, the paper also intends to offer recommendations to enhance the reading habits of graduates of tertiary institutions to promote their lifelong learning.

Methodology

The survey research method was used in the study, which was carried out between June and July 2010. Graduates of Ghanaian tertiary institutions who graduated in the previous year (2009) and were serving the nation under the Ghana National Service Scheme formed the population of the study. The University of Ghana, Legon, was chosen as the

research site because it is one of the sites that receive graduates of various disciplinary and tertiary institution backgrounds. The total number of national service persons at the university at the time of the study was 701, and a sample of 200 was decided upon as an adequate sampling depth. Three faculties in the university, namely: Science, Arts, and Social Studies, were targeted for the sampling of the national service persons.

A five-page, 20-item questionnaire, titled ‘Reading Interests of New Graduates’, containing both closed and open-ended questions, was the main data collection instrument. Questions focused on factors relating to what the respondents read in school and are reading outside of school, sources of the reading materials, preferred formats of reading materials, and how they spend their leisure time. Other questions pertained to sources they consult when they need information, what they think about reading as a lifelong activity, and what kind of materials one should read as a lifelong activity. There were also questions that sought to find out the value they place on books by asking if they give or would give them out as valuable gifts during birthdays and weddings. Respondents had the opportunity to select their responses and use the open-ended questions to write additional information.

Permission and approval was sought from the University of Ghana’s Human Resource and Organization Development Directorate in order to motivate the support and active participation of the national service persons in the study. The list of the service persons was obtained from the Directorate, and respondents were assured that their responses would remain anonymous. Out of the 200 copies of the questionnaire that were distributed, 167 were retrieved and found usable, for a response rate of 83.5%.

Profile of the Respondents

The 167 respondents comprised two main categories: those who helped faculty in teaching or research (43%), and those who did administrative and other professional duties (57%). The gender composition was 68 (41%) females and 99 (59%) males. Respondents ranged in age from 20 to 40, with the preponderant majority (69%) within the 21 to 25 years age bracket (Table 1).

Table 1: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20	2	1
21-25	115	69
26-30	36	22
31-35	10	6
36-40	2	1
Above 40	2	1
Total	166	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

Graduates from the University of Ghana formed the bulk (83%) of the respondents. Others were from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (5), University of Cape Coast (4), Accra Polytechnic (11), Institute of Professional Studies (2), and a respondent each from Kumasi Polytechnic, Cape Coast Polytechnic, Korlebu, Narbita College, Central University College, all in Ghana, and the University of Wales. UK.

Results and Discussion

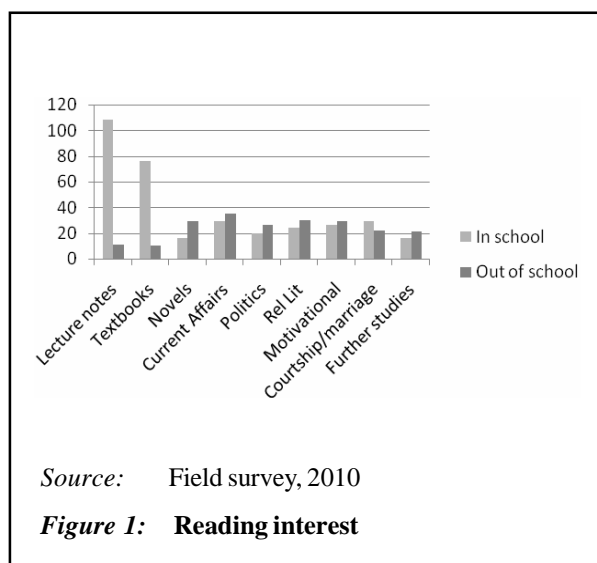
Reading Interests

In order to provide relevant and adequate information on reading interests in and out of school, respondents were asked to rate in order of preference how much of lecture notes, textbooks, novels, motivational books, materials for further studies, and on political issues, religious matters and current affairs they read in school, and were being read out of school.

As indicated in Figure 1, while in school, 102 (65%) of respondents read mainly their lecture notes, followed by 76 (46%) respondents who read textbooks. These findings suggest that the respondents did not make much attempt to look for other sources of information beyond what they received from their lecturers. The finding in respect of lecture notes is consistent with that of Oyewumi and Ebijuwa (2009) and Edem and Ofre (2010) that the majority of students read their lecture notes and handouts with the main purpose of passing their

examinations, while very few read to satisfy recreational interests or intellectual curiosity. Oyewumi and Ebijuwa (2009) reported that 67% of their respondents used the library to read lecture notes, and the same percentage stated that they are motivated to read because of examinations. The other rankings after lecture notes and textbooks are as follows: materials on courtship, marriage and relationships(17%), and current affairs (17%) of the respondents, respectively; motivational books (16%), religious books (14%), political issues (12%), and novels and for further studies (6% respectively). It would have been interesting to find out why materials on marriage and courtship attracted the third highest position in the ranking. But it could mean that many of the respondents were, while in school, looking forward to marriage as probably the next stage in their rites of passage in life.

The respondents were asked to rank the same materials out of school in terms of their reading emphasis. Expectedly, the least read were lecture notes (7%) and textbooks (6%). The number who still read textbooks could be graduates who help teach as part of their national service duties. The responses also show that out-of-school reading of the graduated shifted to materials that provide information on current affairs (21% of the respondents), religious literature (18%), motivational books (17%), novels (17%), political issues (16%), courtship and marriage (13%), and further studies (13%).



Time Spent Reading

Having established what respondents were reading in and out of school, the study attempted to find out if they were spending as much time reading as they did when in school. The respondents were requested to respond “yes” or “no” to a question on where they were spending as much time. The majority of the respondents (53.6%) indicated that they did not place as much emphasis on reading as they did when they were in school. These findings are similar to what Salter and Brook (2007) observed in their study that students are most likely to read when engaged in an academic setting and less likely to read outside that environment.

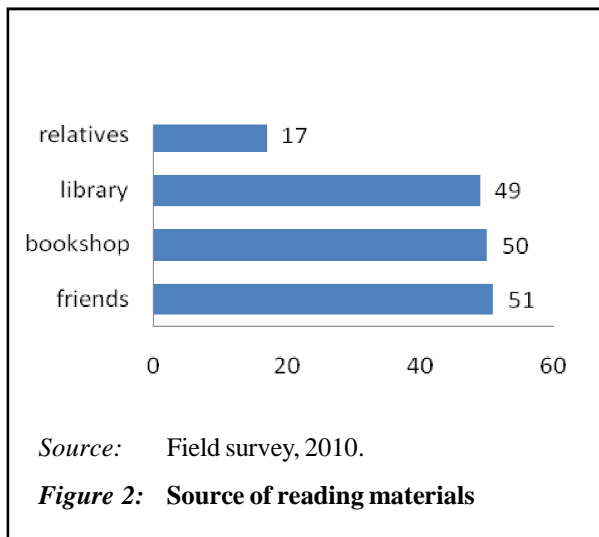
In an open-ended response, as to why they do not read that much, reasons stated are that they get tired after work (30.6%); they have more pressing things to do (6%); it is boring (6%); need more time for oneself (2.4%); have no interest in reading anymore (1.8%); there are less things to study (1.2%); and no pressure on one to read (1.2%). Other responses were that particular types of books are difficult to come by or in other words there is nothing to read (1.2%), need to rest the brain (1.2%), no examinations (4.2%), no lecture notes to read (3.6%), no good libraries (6%), economic and social challenges (6%), pressure from work and motherhood (1.2%) and laziness (6%).

On the other hand, 46.4% of the population who claimed they still read, as much as they did when they were in school, did so because they had access to books and had enough time to read (3.6%); they had examinations to write (6%), and because education has no end (6%). Some read out of habit (5.4%); and 10.8% read because their job demands that they read. Some (15.0%); believed they must read to broaden their knowledge, and 6% because of capacity building. Some stated they read for pleasure (1.2%), and 1.8% read because they wished to further their education.

Source of Reading Materials

Attempt was made to find out where respondents obtained their reading materials. This was in order to find out if they were using libraries as one of their main sources of reading materials (Figure 2). About the same number of the respondents indicated that friends (31%), bookshop (30%), and library (29%)

were the major sources of the materials that they read. Relatives came a distant fourth at 10% of the respondents. These findings support Rothbauer’s (2009) argument that choice of reading materials is usually influenced by trusted sources or people one meets on a nearly daily-basis who are also likely to provide new materials, such as friends, libraries or bookshops. The findings also show that many of the graduates were purchasing or would purchase books for their own reading purposes, if they cannot obtain them from friends or libraries. The respondents who indicated library as their source of materials shows that the graduates, only recently out of school, continue to value libraries as their source of reading materials, as much as friends and the bookshop.



Format of Reading Materials

From table 2, it is observed that 62.3% of the respondents preferred print documents, 29.2% preferred electronic materials, and 8.4% were comfortable with both formats. The reason they provided for their preferences included : print materials are very convenient because they are easy to carry about (33%); one could read the print format anywhere in bed, in a car, and even during power outages; print formats of documents are easily accessible (24%); print documents are easier to read (14.4%); one can always refer to, highlight important points and even write short notes in the document

(3%); keep a copy for one oneself (3%). Some respondents (17.3%) claimed that they avoided electronic format of reading materials for health reasons stating that they wish to avoid the strain on their eyes due to prolonged use of the computer. Three (3%) respondents, respectively, noted that print documents are less expensive, and that they are more familiar with print format.

The 49 (29.3%) respondents who preferred information in electronic format gave the following reasons: it is easily accessible (47%); concise (2%); entertaining (14.2%); interactive (2%); easy to navigate (6%); cheaper (6%); concise, fast and gives access to current information, which enhances research (27%). One interesting comment was that electronic sources of information “store a lot of documents which you can use without using the library”. However, fourteen respondents (8.4%) wrote that one could get variety and more information from both formats, and that both print and electronic materials are accessible.

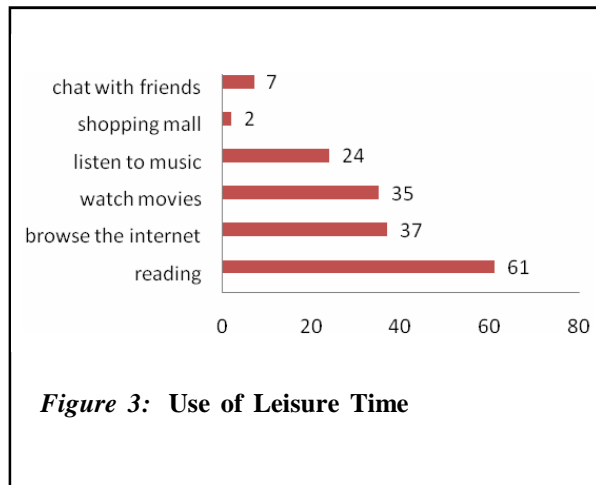
Table 2: Format of reading materials

Format	Respondents	Percentage
Electronic	49	29.3%
Print	104	62.3%
Both	14	8.4%
Total	167	100%

Source: Field survey, 2010.

Use of Leisure Time

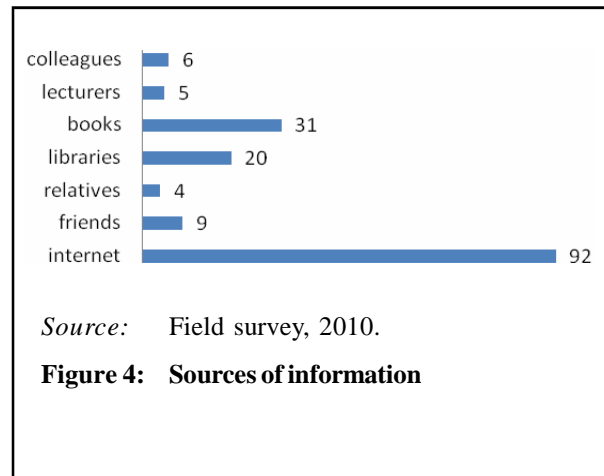
The results and discussion presented so far show that the graduates continued to read after school. Attempt was then made to find out how respondents spend their leisure periods on reading in comparison to other demands on their leisure time. The respondents were asked to rank reading, watching movies, listening to music, chatting with friends, browsing the internet and visiting the shopping mall in order of preference (Figure 3).



Most of the respondents (37%) indicated that they spent their leisure periods reading; 22% would prefer to browse the Internet; 21% would watch movies; 14% would prefer to listen to music; and 1% respondents would prefer to visit a shopping mall. This is very encouraging as it suggests that respondents have high interest to read. These findings vary from those of Salter and Brook (2007), Gambrell (2008) and Chukwumah and Amalaha (2010) which reported that their respondents preferred to participate in visual activities (watching television, videos and DVDs), activities that were affecting their reading time adversely. This may be because the fresh graduates were only recently out of school, and were yet to lose the zeal for reading that they cultivated while in school.

Sources of Information

Attempt was made in the survey to find out respondents' sources of information (Figure 4). If they have any information need, what sources do they consult? They were asked to rank friends, relatives, libraries, books, internet, lecturers, and colleagues in order of preference.



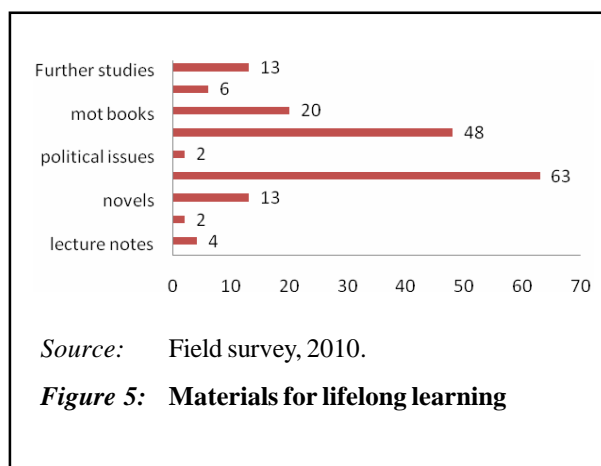
Source: Field survey, 2010.

Majority of respondents (55%) indicated the Internet as their first choice, while fewer respondents chose books (19%), libraries (12%), friends (5%), colleagues (4%), lecturers (3%), and relatives (2%). However, the survey did not ascertain what sources or materials the 55% of the respondents who chose the Internet consulted, considering that there are electronic formats of books, journals, magazines and newspapers available online. The Internet is a useful source of information, which allows users to have faster access to information. In spite of the benefits, however, there is growing concern of its adverse effect on reading and the use of materials outside the Internet. If the reason for using the Internet is the speed with which information can be accessed, then there is cause for alarm. This is because, according to Agee (2005) and Law (2010), many young people prefer to gather information from sources such as the television, radio and the computer because of the speed with which information is obtained, at a click of a mouse, switching to a radio or TV station, or after typing in a few search words on the computer keyboard. Looking for information this way demands little actual reading and comprehension, suggesting that

respondents do not invest as much time in searching for, reading and evaluating information as they would with printed materials. Browsing information is not the same as reading for information. Agee (2005) goes on further to state that the print format is being challenged, and reading is gradually being pushed out of the society because reading requires patience, learning and frequent practice on the individual level. Edem and Ofre (2010) reiterate this in a study, that the readymade answers that the Internet seems to offer students do not encourage them to use printed books and journals or even use the libraries to access books and journals. Law (2011) also laments that even after finding information online, users will only read short articles or just abstracts. In other words, the briefer the text, the more likely it is to be read.

Perception, Reasons and Materials for Reading as Lifelong Activity

The study established that the respondents considered reading to be a necessary lifelong activity as indicated by 96% of them. They were also asked to rank desirability for lifelong reading activity of materials on further studies, family life, motivational advice, religion, political issues, current affairs, and novels, school textbooks and lecture notes. Figure 5 presents their responses in respect of the different materials.



materials on current affairs as most important for lifelong learning, followed by religious literature (29%), motivational books (12%), further studies (8%), novels (8%), family life (4%), and lecture notes, political issues and school textbooks (only 1% each).

On why the respondents considered reading to be a worthwhile lifelong activity, 35.9% of them indicated that reading gives access to information for development. Other reasons given were: it broadens the mind; it is educational and entertaining; one can learn a lot from books; it enables one to discover new things all the time; empowers one to acquire wisdom. Other provided reasons are: it gives one an edge over others because it is informative, insightful and makes room for further thinking; and improves and enhances language and vocabulary, which enhances one’s work output. Some of the respondents believed that reading is one interesting and productive way of spending one’s time because it makes one to become well informed and confident, while some others wrote that nobody can do without reading because learning never ends. One respondent commented that reading could even have therapeutic benefits for which reason it should be a lifelong activity. The few respondents (3%) who think reading should not be a lifelong activity stated that reading is not fun, it does not solve problems and that the brain should be allowed to rest.

Respondents were given the opportunity to comment further on the topic of lifelong reading, by asking about what they thought the library could do to help promote reading. Suggestions offered were that attention should be paid to promoting the culture of reading, that there should be extension services to encourage people to read the right kinds of books and not to rely solely on the Internet. Respondents also recommended that the libraries should stock current and interesting books and discard outdated books as they put readers off; that books should be provided to schools to inculcate reading habits; and that libraries should be provided in the rural areas.

Majority (38%) of the respondents ranked

Books as Birthday or Wedding Gifts

The survey attempted to find out specific behaviours by respondents might help propagate the need to read as a lifelong activity. Two questions put to respondents attempted to find out if respondents would give out books as “valuable” gifts in the eyes of both the giver and the receiver on special occasions such as birthday or wedding. According to Mann (1971), the book as a gift is an interesting phenomena since the “ownership of books confers status and therefore, to give books is also a status conferring action”. One hundred and thirty-three respondents (82%) said they would give out books as birthday gifts as against 30 (18%) who said they would not. Respondents were asked if they would give out books as wedding present. One hundred and seven respondents (64%) said they would give out books as wedding presents and 60 (36%) said they would not.

Two of the reasons that respondents gave for not giving out books as a birthday presents or wedding gifts are: Africans do not cherish books; it is more common among Europeans, and not usual among Africans to give out books on such occasions. During weddings in most parts of Ghana, one is sure to find drinking glasses, wall clocks, kitchen accessories and wall hangings forming the majority of presents. This may be due to the home-making values that Ghanaian society place on weddings. That possibly also explains the reduction in number of respondents who were willing to give out books as birthday presents (82%) as against wedding presents (64%). It could also be because birthdays are seen by some people as more individualistic, just like reading, than weddings. Other respondents will not give out books as birthday gifts or wedding presents because they are not sure the recipients will read, or that they thought the recipients would appreciate other gifts better than books. A respondent commented interestingly: “It has never crossed my mind to give out books as presents during such special occasions”.

The other respondents would give out a book as a memorial (2.4%), a souvenir (2.4%), because they think it is the best treasure (34.2%), a source of wisdom (13.8%), or provides information which enriches knowledge (22.8%), or could change lives (6%). Respondents will give out books to encourage reading (6%) and share information (3.6%). The

very low 6% who would give out books to encourage reading shows that the respondents did not consider it their responsibility to help promote the culture of reading in the society or even among their relatives and friends. But it can be perceived that if many people in a society begin to give out books as gifts at birthdays, weddings and other occasions such as Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day etc, it could serve as a motivational lever to transform reading habits.

Recommendations

From this survey it appears that libraries have a role to play in ensuring that graduates do not fall into aliteracy. There are various activities librarians can provide in improving reading and preventing aliteracy. Thus, librarians, should spearhead the activities listed below:

- Librarians can begin by forging and strengthening relationships with various stakeholders in literacy and reading culture, including faculty of tertiary institutions. They could sensitise faculty at various forums, such as seminars and academic committee meetings, on the problems of aliteracy and the need to revisit educational methods to make reading an enjoyable daily life process that would contribute to lifelong learning. Libraries should also work with faculty and university administrators to ensure that book titles on reading lists are made available in libraries for students to go and consult, while the giving out of handouts should be discouraged. In that way, students may develop inquiring minds and lifelong self-motivated reading and writing skills and interests. Librarians should also partner with other stakeholders, such as education policy makers, appropriate government ministries, non-governmental agencies and media houses, to mount a sustained information literacy and reading advocacy campaigns, as well as promotion and extension services towards ensuring that students do not become alliterates after schooling.
- Libraries could have sections with familiar settings of the relaxed areas in homes, like the living room, with comfortable chairs, large enough for students to stretch out if need be.

The usual chairs and desk always bring to mind a classroom setting. The image of the library needs to be improved upon to position the library not only as a place to study and do researches, but also as a place of relaxation where one can sit to enjoy leisure reading. For example, in Brownless Biomedical Library, University of Melbourne, Australia the ground floor area was transformed to include a casual café-style space on entry, with booths and informal seating in vibrant colours. Students spoke positively about the new setting and called it “night club image” (Kent et al., 2011).

- Librarians need to educate students that there is more information available offline than online. Most people are under the impression that every piece of information is available on the web, so if it is not the web, then the document or the information does not exist. As Darnton (2011) argues, although it is said that the future is digital, it does not mean that the printed material will cease to be important. This argument supported by Law (2010), which noted that about 44% of websites disappear within a year and that more books are produced every year with only a tiny fraction of archival materials digitised. There is the need to educate students on proper balance between the use of printed and online materials and how to evaluate information from the Internet.

Conclusion

The population sampled does not fit entirely into the definitions of capable readers who chose not to read (Mikulecky, 1978); people who lack reading habits (Goodwin, 1996); or have lost reading habits but choose to read anyway (Ramsay, 2002). On the other hand, this same sample cannot be described as enthusiastic or avid readers but rather moderate to light readers, who even when they need to read or look for information would prefer information on the web. This raises a red flag, which will take the concerted efforts of librarians, the library associations, educationists, to ensure that this societal challenge is tackled effectively or risk having the aliteracy rate eventually surpassing the illiteracy rate.

References

- Agee, J. (2005). Literacy, Aliteracy and Lifelong Learning. *New Library World*. 106, 5/6; 244-252.
- Applegate, A. and Applegate, M. (2004). The Peter Effect: Reading Habits and Attitudes of Preservice Teachers. *The Reading Teacher*, 57, 554-563.
- Azu, D. (1994). *The Ga Family and Social Change*. – Leiden: African Studies Centre.
- Chakava, H. (1996). *Publishing in Africa: One Man's Perspective*. Nairobi: Bellagio Publishing Network.
- Chukwumah, I. and Amalaha, R.O. (2010). The Video Film Industry and Its ‘Substitution’ for Literature and Reading in Africa: A Case of Nigeria’s Nollywood. *Film in African Literature Today*. No. 28/ Edited By Ernest N. Emenyonu. London: Heinemann, p.73-83.
- Darnton, R. (2011). 5 Myths about the Information Age. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. May 10. <http://Chronicle.Com> (Accessed 16/09/2011).
- Edem, M. B. and Ofre, E. T. (2010). Reading and Internet Use Activities of Undergraduate Students of the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria. *African Journal of Library, Archival and Information Science*, 20, (1)11-18.
- Filicanevo, L. (2007). When Aliteracy Strikes Students: More Students are choosing not to Read Books in their free time. *The Torch*. <http://www.torchonline.com>. (Accessed 4/12/2010)
- Finnegan, R. (2007). *The Oral and Beyond: Doing Things with Words in Africa*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Gallagher, K. (2009). *Readicide: How Schools are Killing Reading and what you can do about it*. Portland: Stenhouse.
- Gambrell, L. (2008, Feb/Mar). Patterns. Proust and the Power of Pleasure Reading. *Reading Today*, p.18.

- Gebhard, S (2006). The Lost Boys (and Girls): Readers in Neverland. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57 (5)454-463.
- Goodwin, L. (1996). Aliteracy among College Students: Why don't they Read? Rochester Institute of Technology. (Presentation at the College Reading Association Charleston, SC, November 1996).
- Gorman, M. (2005). The Indispensability of School Libraries and (School Librarians) *American Libraries* <http://www.accessmylibrary.com> (Accessed 16/09/ 2011).
- Hughes-Hassell S & Rodge, P (2007). The Leisure Reading Habits of Urban Adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 51(1) 22-33.
- Kent, P. et al (2011). New Generation Learning Spaces. *LINK: Connecting Commonwealth Libraries*. Issues No. 12. libraries@acu.ac.uk (Accessed 16/09/2011).
- Law, D (2010). Waiting for the Barbarians: Seeking Solutions or Awaiting Answers. <http://sites.google.com/site/dereklaw9064/publications> (Accessed 6/7/2011).
- Mann, P. H. (1971). *Books: Buyers and Borrowers*. London: Andre Deutsch.
- Mikulecky, L. (1978). Aliteracy and a Changing View of Reading Goals. (Presented At The 23rd Annual Meeting Of The International Reading Association, Houston, TX.)
- Mullan, K. (2010). Families that Read: A Time-Diary Analysis of Young People's And Parents' Reading. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 33: 414-430
- Nathanson, S., Pruslow, J. and Levitt, R. (2008). The Reading Habits and Literacy Attitudes of In-service and Prospective Teachers: Result of a Questionnaire Survey. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 59(4) 313-321.
- Olufowobi, O. O. and Makinde, S.O. (2011). Aliteracy a Threat to Educational Development. *Educational Research*. 2,(2)824-827.
- Oyewumi, O. and Ebijuwa, A.S. (2009). Reading Culture in an African University: Problems and Prospects. *The Information Manager*. 9, (2)30-35.
- Priyanto, I. F. (2007). Directing Students of LIS to the Wider World of Librarianship (Presented at the World Library and Information Congress: 73rd IFLA General Conference And Council, 19-23 August 2007, Durban, South Africa). 10p.
- Ramsay, J. G. (2002, Jan/Feb). Hell's Bibliophiles: The Fifth Way of Looking at an Aliterate. *Change* 43,1:51-6.
- Rothbauer, P. (2009). Exploring the Placelessness of Reading among Older Teens in a Canadian Rural Municipality. *The Library Quarterly*. 79, (4)465-483.
- Salter A and Brook, J (2007). Are we becoming an Aliterate Society? *College and Under-graduate Libraries*. 14, (3)27-43.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the support of Dr. Bright Dzobo, who offered suggestions at the initial stage of the research and Mr. I.K Antwi, Librarian of University for Development Studies, Tamale, who edited the draft of this paper; Michael Dzandu and Emefa Adjah for the statistical analysis of my findings.

Mrs. Olive Akpebu Adjah is a senior assistant librarian in the Institute of African Studies Library, University of Ghana, Legon. She holds an MPhil in Library and Information Studies from the University of Ghana, Legon.

