

**THE ROLE OF INFORMATION MATERIAL ACCESSIBILITY AND FAMILY
INFLUENCE ON THE READING HABITS OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN IJEBU ODE, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The ability to read effectively is fundamental to students' academic success and lifelong learning. This study examined the role of information material accessibility and family influence on the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 989 senior secondary school students, from which a sample of 426 respondents was selected using simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured and validated questionnaire designed to elicit information on students' reading habits, accessibility of information materials, family influence, and challenges affecting reading. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (multiple regression analysis). Findings revealed that the reading habits of the students were generally good (grand mean = 3.99), with reading largely driven by academic purposes. The study further showed that essential information materials such as textbooks, subject notebooks, and

dictionaries were readily accessible, while supplementary materials were moderately available (grand mean = 3.80). Family influence, particularly parental encouragement and provision of reading materials, was found to significantly support students' reading habits, whereas environmental distractions posed moderate challenges. The regression analysis indicated that information material accessibility and family influence jointly exert a significant influence on students' reading habits ($R^2 = 0.272$; $F(2,423) = 80.297$; $p < 0.05$).

The study concludes that improving access to information materials and strengthening family support mechanisms are critical to sustaining positive reading habits among senior secondary school students.

Keywords: Reading habits; Information material accessibility; Family influence; Secondary school students; Ogun State

Introduction

Reading is a foundational academic skill and a critical instrument for intellectual development, lifelong learning, and national educational advancement. In secondary education, reading habits directly influence students' comprehension abilities, vocabulary development, critical thinking skills, and academic performance. Despite the centrality of reading to learning outcomes, several studies in Nigeria have reported a steady decline in reading culture among secondary school students, often manifested in poor performance in external examinations such as WAEC, NECO, and UTME (Aina, Ogungbeni, Adigun & Ogundipe, 2020; Eze & Uzoigwe, 2022).

In contemporary Nigerian society, students' reading habits are increasingly shaped by both environmental and socio-familial factors. Access to relevant and adequate information materials—such as textbooks, library resources, and digital information tools—plays a decisive role in sustaining students' interest in reading (Lawal & Mohammed, 2021). Equally important is family influence, particularly parental encouragement, availability of reading materials at home, parental literacy level, and the general home literacy environment (Ogbuiyi & Akinwale, 2019).

Ijebu-Ode, a major urban centre in Ogun State with a mix of public and private secondary schools, presents a relevant context for examining these variables. While schools exist within reach, disparities remain in school library provision, access to learning materials, and parental capacity to support reading at home. This study therefore investigates the joint and relative influence of information material accessibility and family influence on the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State.

Reading engages the mind of the reader. Despite its importance, it seems the interest in reading is diminishing among the youths and the influence of technology may be one of the major causes. Reading involves an action which is possible only if someone forms the habit of reading and practice right from childhood. Reading, according to Thuku (2017), boosts the quality of life, reinforces and merges people together in a unifying force. Reading is often referred to as communication between the mind and printed materials, which involves getting meaning, message and ideas. It enriches the

reader's imagination and stimulates intellectual growth. Reading can be explained as a learned practice of seeking knowledge, information or entertainment through the written word.

Literature Review

Concept of Reading Habit

Reading habit refers to a consistent and sustained pattern of reading behaviour developed over time for academic, informational, or recreational purposes. It reflects not only the frequency of reading but also the motivation, material preference, and purpose of reading (Eze, Obiozor & Omeje, 2021). According to Issa, Aliyu and Akangbe (2020), reading habit is a learned behaviour that must be nurtured through continuous exposure to reading materials and positive reinforcement from school and home environments. Empirical studies in Nigeria indicate that students with strong reading habits demonstrate better academic performance and cognitive development than their counterparts with weak or irregular reading patterns (Adeyemi & Olatoye, 2019).

Information Material Accessibility and Reading Habit

Information materials include print, non-print, and digital resources such as textbooks, novels, dictionaries, charts, atlases, electronic databases, audio-visual materials, and internet-based resources. Accessibility implies not only physical availability but also ease of use, relevance, and students' awareness of such resources (Lawal & Mohammed, 2021). Several Nigerian studies affirm that availability of functional school libraries and relevant learning resources significantly enhances students' reading habits. Oyesiku and Olatokun (2020) found that students in schools with well-stocked libraries read more frequently and show greater academic engagement. Similarly, Afolabi and Abidoye (2022) observed that limited access to reading materials discourages voluntary reading among secondary school students. There has been a great concern over the high decline in the reading culture in Nigeria especially among the younger generation. The appalling level of decline of reading culture and apathy towards books among the youth is becoming embarrassing. The mass failure being experienced recently in most of the national examinations like WEAC, NECO, NEBTEB, JAMB amongst others are surely connected to this drop and lack of interest in reading among students.

However, many public secondary schools in Nigeria still operate without functional libraries or current materials, thereby constraining students' reading opportunities (Eze & Uzoigwe, 2022).

Family Influence and Reading Habit

Family influence encompasses parental educational level, socio-economic status, reading culture at home, parental encouragement, and availability of reading materials

in the household. The family is the child's first literacy environment and plays a decisive role in shaping early and sustained reading behaviour (Ogbuiyi & Akinwale, 2019). Recent studies demonstrate that students whose parents actively encourage reading, buy books, and model reading behaviour are more likely to develop positive reading habits (Aina et al., 2020). Conversely, homes characterized by low literacy levels, economic hardship, and minimal parental involvement often produce students with weak reading interest (Eze et al., 2021). In Nigeria, socio-economic status remains a critical determinant of home literacy support, especially in public secondary schools (Adeyemi & Olatoye, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Reading is a fundamental skill that underpins academic achievement, cognitive development, and lifelong learning. At the senior secondary school level, effective reading habits are essential for comprehension of subject content and success in external examinations such as WAEC, NECO, and UTME. Despite its importance, concerns persist among educators, librarians, and parents in Nigeria about the declining reading culture among secondary school students, particularly in public schools. In many Nigerian secondary schools, students' reading habits are increasingly constrained by limited accessibility to relevant information materials, including textbooks, reference sources, and functional school library resources. Where such materials are inadequate, outdated, or poorly organized, students' motivation to read beyond classroom requirements is significantly reduced. Although some schools may possess basic learning materials, the extent to which these resources are accessible and supportive of sustained reading habits remains questionable. Beyond school-based factors, the family environment plays a crucial role in shaping students' reading behaviour. Parental encouragement, provision of reading materials at home, parents' educational background, and the general home literacy environment are known to influence students' interest and commitment to reading. However, in many households, economic pressures, limited parental involvement, and competing demands on students' time may negatively affect the development of positive reading habits. Existing studies in Nigeria have often examined information materials availability or family influence on reading habits independently, with limited empirical attention given to their combined effect, particularly among senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State. This gap in the literature necessitates a focused investigation into how information material accessibility and family influence jointly affect the reading habits of senior secondary school students in the study area. Therefore, the problem addressed by this study is the inadequate understanding of the extent to which accessibility to information materials and family influence contribute to the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, Nigeria. Addressing this problem is essential for developing effective school-based and family-oriented strategies to promote sustainable reading habits and improve students' academic outcomes.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design, which was considered appropriate for examining the influence of information material accessibility and family-related factors on the reading habits of senior secondary school students. The design enabled the collection of data from a relatively large population and facilitated the analysis of relationships among the study variables. The population of the study comprised 989 senior secondary school students drawn from selected public secondary schools in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. This population was considered suitable because senior secondary school students are at a critical stage of academic development where reading habits significantly influence academic performance. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 426 students, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal chance of being included in the study. This sampling technique enhanced the representativeness and generalisability of the findings. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher and validated by experts in Library and Information Science and Measurement and Evaluation. The instrument was designed to elicit information on students' reading habits, accessibility to information materials, and family influence variables. The reliability of the questionnaire was established through a pilot study, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.74 that was considered adequate for the study. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) to answer the research questions, while inferential statistics (multiple regression analysis) were used to test the formulated hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance.

Research Questions

1. What are the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State?
2. What information materials are accessible to senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode?
3. What family influence factors affect the reading habits of the students?
4. What challenges inhibit effective reading habits among the students?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: Information material accessibility and family influence do not have a significant joint influence on the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State.

Results and Discussion of findings

Research Question 1: What are the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu ode, Ogun State?

Table 1: Reading Habits

Statements	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Undecided (%)	Mean	SD
Interest						4.28	1.022
I like reading books on my subject area	264(62)	131(30.8)	11(2.6)	14(3.3)	6(1.4)	4.49	.818
I prefer finishing my studying and my assignments first before watching television program	275(64.6)	99(23.2)	16(3.8)	24(5.6)	12(2.8)	4.41	.998
I see to it that extracurricular activities do not disturb my studies	267(62.7)	94(22.1)	32(7.5)	24(5.6)	9(2.1)	4.38	.989
I read because I like reading	253(59.4)	117(27.4)	11(2.6)	33(7.7)	12(2.8)	4.33	1.038
I love reading novels	234(54.9)	84(19.7)	47(11)	37(8.7)	24(5.6)	4.10	1.228
I like reading generally	157(36.9)	174(40.8)	28(6.6)	61(14.3)	6(1.4)	3.97	1.066
Purpose						4.17	1.011
I study harder to improve my performance when I get low grades	266(62.4)	125(29.3)	11(2.6)	13(3.1)	11(2.6)	4.46	.892
I study very well for quizzes and test	246(57.7)	134(31.5)	20(4.7)	14(3.3)	12(2.8)	4.38	.931
I read in other to improve my vocabulary	207(48.6)	145(34)	45(10.6)	18(4.2)	11(2.6)	4.22	.973
I spend less time with my friends during school days to concentrate more on my studies	219(51.4)	114(26.8)	56(13.1)	28(6.6)	9(2.1)	4.19	1.032
I read when I have examination or test	130(30.5)	121(28.4)	65(15.3)	95(22.3)	15(3.5)	3.60	1.229
Types of materials you read						4.04	1.109
I always read my class notes	254(59.6)	105(24.6)	18(4.2)	41(9.6)	8(1.9)	4.31	1.050

I love reading novels	212(49.8)	138(32.4)	34(8)	30(7)	12(2.8)	4.19	1.038
I read my textbook regularly	150(35.2)	179(42)	20(4.7)	62(14.6)	15(3.5)	3.91	1.137
I do make use of my dictionary	157(36.9)	126(29.6)	37(8.7)	100(23.5)	6(1.4)	3.77	1.213
Frequency of reading						3.41	1.192
I read weekly	222(52.1)	130(30.5)	27(6.3)	38(8.9)	9(2.1)	4.22	1.043
I read as time permits	197(46.2)	104(24.4)	38(8.9)	74(17.4)	13(3.1)	3.93	1.233
I read daily	124(29.1)	101(23.7)	18(4.2)	171(40.1)	12(2.8)	3.36	1.338
I dislike reading	87(20.4)	34(8)	38(8.9)	267(61.3)	6(1.4)	2.85	1.243
I don't read at all	54(12.7)	50(11.7)	57(13.4)	259(60.8)	6(1.4)	2.73	1.105
Grand Mean						3.99	1.079

Source: Field Study, 2019

The results in Table 1 indicate that the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode are generally good, as shown by the grand mean of 3.99. The students demonstrated strong interest in reading, particularly reading books related to their subject areas and prioritising academic work over leisure activities such as watching television. Reading was largely purpose-driven, as many students reported studying to improve academic performance, vocabulary, and examination results. In terms of materials read, class notes, textbooks, and novels were the most frequently used resources. However, the frequency of reading suggests that while many students read weekly or as time permits, daily reading is less common. Overall, the findings suggest a positive disposition towards reading, although sustained daily reading habits remain relatively weak among the students.

The findings of this study reveal that senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode generally exhibit a good reading habit, as reflected by the grand mean score of 3.99. The students showed strong interest in reading, particularly materials related to their academic subjects, and demonstrated purposeful reading aimed at improving examination performance and vocabulary. This suggests that reading among the respondents is largely academically motivated, rather than purely recreational. This finding is consistent with the study of Aina, Ogungbeni, Adigun, and Ogundipe (2020), who reported that Nigerian secondary school students tend to read mainly to pass examinations and improve academic outcomes, rather than for leisure. Similarly, Issa, Aliyu, and Akangbe (2020) found that students' reading habits were positively oriented

toward class notes and textbooks, with limited engagement in extensive daily reading. However, the relatively low mean score for daily reading in the present study supports earlier observations that sustained reading culture among secondary school students in Nigeria remains weak and irregular.

Research Question 2

What information materials are accessible to senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode?

Table 2: Accessibility of Information Materials (N = 426)

S/N	Information Materials	Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Rarely (%)	Never (%)	Undecided (%)	Mean	SD
1.	Textbooks	54.0	27.0	7.0	8.2	3.8	4.19	1.115
2.	Subject notebooks	58.7	11.7	8.7	18.3	2.6	4.06	1.280
3.	Dictionaries	45.1	27.7	17.4	5.9	4.0	4.04	1.104
4.	Pictures	33.1	39.4	17.4	5.6	4.0	3.92	1.042
5.	Novels	44.8	23.9	12.2	14.1	4.9	3.90	1.253
6.	Globes	26.1	29.1	20.4	13.4	11.0	3.46	1.305
7.	Charts	20.9	34.7	20.2	17.8	6.3	3.46	1.186
8.	Atlas/Maps	24.6	28.9	17.1	20.9	8.5	3.40	1.289
Grand mean							3.80	

The results in Table 2 indicate that information materials are generally accessible to senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode, as reflected by the grand mean score of 3.80, which falls within the “*sometimes available*” to “*always available*” range. Core academic materials such as textbooks ($\bar{x} = 4.19$), subject notebooks ($\bar{x} = 4.06$), and dictionaries ($\bar{x} = 4.04$) were reported as *always available*, suggesting that students have adequate access to essential learning resources that support academic reading. Other materials such as pictures, novels, charts, globes, and atlases/maps were rated as *sometimes available*, indicating moderate but inconsistent access. This uneven availability may limit students’ exposure to diverse reading materials necessary for developing sustained and recreational reading habits.

The finding aligns with Oyesiku and Olatokun (2020), who reported that while textbooks and notebooks are commonly available in Nigerian secondary schools, supplementary materials are often insufficient. Similarly, Lawal and Mohammed (2021) found that students’ access to instructional materials is largely limited to core textbooks, with inadequate provision of enriching resources. However, the result slightly contrasts with Afolabi and Abidoye (2022), who observed generally low

availability of information materials in some public secondary schools, suggesting contextual differences across locations.

Research question 3: What family influences are prevalent among senior secondary school students?

Table 3: Family influence

Statements	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Undecided (%)	Mean	SD
Socio-economic status						3.16	.986
My father encourages me to read and study	272(63.8)	79(18.5)	35(8.2)	37(8.7)	3(.7)	4.36	1.002
My parents buy books for me to read	249(58.5)	98(23)	38(8.9)	38(8.9)	3(.7)	4.30	1.004
My parent always encourages me to read because they also read	219(51.4)	86(20.2)	59(13.8)	54(12.7)	8(1.9)	4.07	1.152
I always imitate my siblings when they are reading	59(13.8)	148(34.7)	93(21.8)	90(21.1)	36(8.5)	3.24	1.181
My mother does not care whether I read or not	41(9.6)	45(10.6)	91(21.4)	236(55.4)	13(3.1)	2.68	1.034
The work my parents do make them not to have time for me	27(6.3)	25(5.9)	99(23.2)	259(60.8)	16(3.8)	2.50	.908
My family cannot afford buying materials for me to read	23(5.4)	25(5.9)	95(22.3)	274(64.3)	9(2.1)	2.48	.857
It is not in the interest of my father for me to read and study	37(8.7)	27(6.3)	46(10.8)	300(70.4)	16(3.8)	2.46	.987
My parents are divorced and this affects my academics activities	11(2.6)	19(4.5)	100(23.5)	276(64.8)	20(4.7)	2.35	.754
Environmental situation						2.91	1.055

I like reading because those around me encourages me to read	180(42.3)	100(23.5)	47(11)	89(20.9)	10(2.3)	3.82	1.246
My environment is conducive for reading	152(35.7)	86(20.2)	72(16.9)	103(24.2)	13(3.1)	3.61	1.273
My parents do not encourage me to read	59(13.8)	53(12.4)	93(21.8)	212(49.8)	9(2.1)	2.86	1.115
I am not interested in reading since no one around me reads	46(10.8)	59(13.8)	112(26.3)	206(48.4)	3(.7)	2.86	1.032
My friends always want me to play during my reading period	41(9.6)	68(16)	105(24.6)	193(45.3)	19(4.5)	2.81	1.069
There is no space for me to read	51(12)	40(9.4)	100(23.5)	226(53.1)	9(2.1)	2.76	1.064
The house is always busy with people	11(2.6)	38(8.9)	131(30.8)	227(53.3)	19(4.5)	2.52	.821
People around me always feel irritated when I am reading so I will stop	29(6.8)	33(7.7)	80(18.8)	262(61.5)	22(5.2)	2.50	.959
No time to read because I always hawk after school	19(4.5)	30(7)	77(18.1)	281(66)	19(4.5)	2.41	.861

Decision rule: if mean is ≤ 1.99 =strongly disagree, 2-2.99= disagree, 3-3.99 agree and 4-5=strongly agree.

The results in Table 3 show that family influence is a significant factor shaping the reading habits of senior secondary school students, with socio-economic status ($\bar{x} = 3.16$) exerting a stronger influence than environmental situation ($\bar{x} = 2.91$). High mean scores on items such as *father's encouragement to read* ($\bar{x} = 4.36$), *parents buying books* ($\bar{x} = 4.30$), and *parents modeling reading behaviour* ($\bar{x} = 4.07$) indicate that positive parental involvement and support are prevalent and strongly encourage students' reading habits. Conversely, items reflecting negative family conditions—such as lack of time, financial constraints, or parental disinterest—recorded lower mean scores, suggesting that these factors are less dominant among the respondents. The environmental dimension shows moderate influence, with encouragement from people around the students and a conducive reading environment supporting reading, though distractions and household activities still pose challenges. These findings are consistent with Aina et al. (2020), who found that parental encouragement and provision of reading materials significantly promote students' reading habits. Similarly, Ogbuiyi and Akinwale (2019) reported that family socio-economic status and home literacy environment are strong predictors of reading behaviour among Nigerian students. The results also align with Eze, Obiozor, and

Omeje (2021), who observed that while parental support enhances reading habits, environmental distractions at home can moderately hinder sustained reading.

Research Question 4

What challenges inhibit the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode?

Table 4: Challenges Inhibiting Reading Habits (N = 426)

S/N	Challenges	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	UD (%)	Mean	SD
1.	Watching television daily	16.9	22.3	23.5	30.5	6.8	3.12	1.211
2.	Excessive internet browsing	11.0	20.4	27.0	36.2	5.4	2.96	1.106
3.	Assisting in shop after school	11.0	25.8	17.1	39.7	6.3	2.96	1.162
4.	Chatting with friends	10.8	19.0	26.3	38.3	5.6	2.91	1.107
5.	Reading only when instructed	13.6	12.9	23.9	42.3	7.3	2.83	1.167
6.	Playing games on handset	8.5	9.6	25.4	44.6	12.0	2.58	1.089
7.	Hawking after school	8.7	8.2	14.6	59.6	8.9	2.48	1.056
8.	Helping parents on the farm	6.8	8.9	17.1	59.9	7.3	<u>2.48</u>	<u>2.48</u>

The results in Table 4 reveal that several factors moderately inhibit the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode, as reflected by the overall mean score of 2.48, which indicates a *low to moderate level of challenge*. Among the identified challenges, watching television daily recorded the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 3.12$), indicating that it is the most prominent factor limiting students' reading time. This is followed by excessive internet browsing and assisting in shops after school ($\bar{x} = 2.96$ respectively), suggesting that digital distractions and economic-related activities compete with reading activities. Other challenges such as chatting with friends, reading only when instructed, and playing games on handsets were rated as moderate inhibitors, while hawking and farming activities showed relatively lower influence. These findings agree with Mokhtari, Reichard, and Gardner (2009), who found that television viewing and internet use significantly reduce students' time for academic reading. Similarly, Aina et al. (2020) reported that social media engagement and non-academic activities negatively affect reading habits among Nigerian secondary school students. The result also aligns with Eze and Uzoigwe (2022), who observed that socio-economic responsibilities, such as assisting parents in trading or farming, limit students' engagement in sustained reading, especially in public secondary schools.

Hypothesis analysis and results

Family influence and information materials availability will not jointly influence reading habit of senior secondary school students.

Table 5: Regression analysis showing the joint influence of family influence and information materials accessibility on reading habit

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	9641.493	2	4820.747	80.297	.000
Residual	25395.492	423	60.037		
Total	35036.986	425			

Dependent Variable: Reading Habit

The regression analysis in Table 5 shows that family influence and information materials accessibility jointly have a statistically significant influence on the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State. The result indicates that the regression model is significant $F(2,423) = 80.297$, $p < 0.05$), implying that the combined effect of the two independent variables reliably predicts students' reading habits. The associated coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.272$) shows that approximately 27.2% of the variance in students' reading habits is explained by the joint contribution of family influence and information material accessibility, while the remaining 72.8% may be attributed to other factors not considered in the model. This finding suggests that both the home environment and access to learning resources are critical determinants of reading behaviour among senior secondary school students. The result is consistent with the findings of Ogbuiyi and Akinwale (2019), who reported that family socio-economic background and home literacy support significantly predict students' reading habits and academic engagement. Similarly, Oyesiku and Olatokun (2020) found that accessibility to school library resources has a significant positive influence on students' reading behaviour in secondary schools. The present study therefore reinforces existing empirical evidence that improving both family support systems and access to information materials is essential for promoting sustainable reading habits among secondary school students in Nigeria.

Recommendations

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

1. School authorities should ensure regular updating and expansion of school library resources, including both print and digital materials.
2. Teachers and school librarians should organise reading clubs, book talks, reading competitions, and guided reading programmes to sustain students' interest in reading.
3. Parents should be sensitised through Parent–Teacher Association (PTA) meetings on the importance of encouraging reading and providing reading materials at home.

4. Schools should implement measures to moderate students' exposure to excessive television viewing and internet use during school days.
5. Guidance counsellors should actively address behavioural and environmental factors that distract students from regular reading.

Conclusion

The study established that information material accessibility and family influence play significant roles in shaping the reading habits of senior secondary school students in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State. Although students demonstrated generally good reading habits, sustained reading culture remains dependent on adequate access to diverse information materials and consistent parental support. Addressing challenges such as digital distractions and limited supplementary resources is essential for strengthening students' reading engagement. A collaborative effort involving schools, libraries, families, and educational policymakers is therefore necessary to promote effective and sustainable reading habits among secondary school students.

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