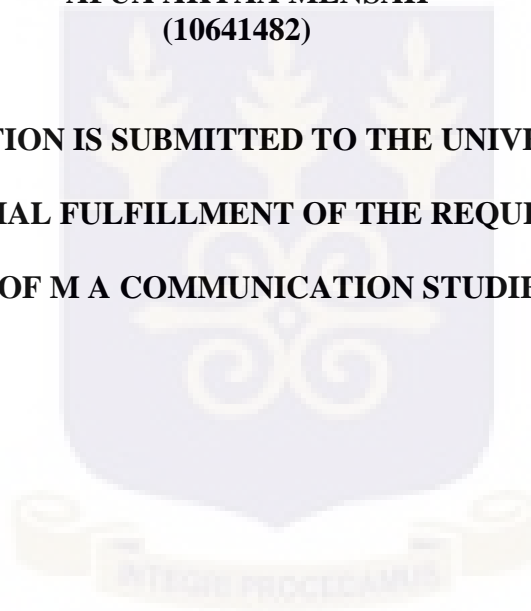**THE JUNIOR GRAPHIC AND READING HABITS OF YOUNG TEENAGERS**

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

AFUA AKYAA MENSAH
(10641482)

THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare and confirm that this dissertation is entirely my own work and was produced from research undertaken at the Department of Communication Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Gilbert Tietaah. All works by other scholars used in this study have been duly cited in-text and acknowledged in the bibliography section of the work.

Afua Akyaa Mensah

(Student)

Date:...21/2/2020...

Dr. Gilbert Tietaah

(Supervisor)

Date:...21-02-20...

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Almighty God and my family for enabling me to complete my programme, my husband for his immense support, my children and parents for their encouragement especially through those times when it was difficult to combine both work and studies. I also dedicate this work to my supervisor, Dr. Tietaah, for his awesome patience with me throughout the period of the development of this study. God bless you all.

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ABSTRACT

Reading is a skill that is vital to the development of an individual's mind and for that matter the growth and progression of one's life. It is even more beneficial for children when they are in their most impressionable stage of development, to develop good reading habits in them as they progress through the various stages of life as pupils, students, and into the adult life of career-hood. Reading for leisure has been seen as an effective way to cultivate the creative and critical thinking skills of children, and to enable them develop strong social skills. Furthermore, recreational reading contributes to the development of literary skills, vocabulary expansion, and memory improvement. This study was designed to find out the reading habits of teenagers from Star International Preparatory School in Teshie, and the Ministry of Health Basic School in Korle Bu. The choice of these two schools was informed by the intuition that pupils from the two schools would differ substantially in terms of their projected socio-economic backgrounds, and this difference should produce differences in terms of access to information generally, and in their leisure reading habits. It used the *Junior Graphic* newspaper, a leisure (non-academic) reading material, as an indicator of reading habits. A sample size of sixty students was chosen from each school, totalling a hundred and twenty. The study was based on the mass media theories of uses and gratifications and media systems dependency. The research applied quantitative methodology and the survey method of data collection by administering close-ended questionnaires to the sampled students to find out their engagement with the *Junior Graphic*. The study ascertained why the selected teenagers chose to read the *Junior Graphic*, what content they normally read in the newspaper, and the reasons for their reading practices. The study found that a majority of respondents read the *Junior Graphic* for no more than an hour a day, and in effect, that leisure reading was not a habitual or routine part of the media and information habits of teenagers. However, when they read, the reasons have tended to be for purposes of news/information, social validation, and education or knowledge acquisition.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

In what has been characterized as an information age (Kline, 2005; Merber, 2009), reading has gained currency for accomplishments in all spheres of human endeavour such as social, political, economic and educational. Hence reading habits must be nurtured and enhanced. This chapter expresses the context and contentions that characterize policies and practices regarding the reading habits of teenagers in other parts of the African continent and the world. The discourse suggests an inexcusable recession in reading habits within a dynamic and technologically driven media ecology. Following from this, the chapter addresses the research problem, explains the objectives of the study and the research questions, provides brief profiles of the subjects of the research interest, and describes the scope and significance of the study.

1.1 Background

Reading depends on the individual's ability to interpret printed or electronic page fully and accurately. Reading habits amount to how much a person reads, how often they read, when they do and what content in the material they look out for (Rosli, Razali, Zamil, Noor & Baharuddin, 2017). The habit is best acquired at a young age, and once formed it can last a lifetime and this is said to play an important role in the life of a person. It is not only the gateway to knowledge acquisition but also aids in the development of an individual, academically, socially and personally (Chettri & Rout, 2013). Reading contributes to the smooth progression through life from childhood as a pupil to being a student, an employee, employer or entrepreneur. For this progression to be realized, reading has to be a habit and the formation and early inculcation of this habit as a young child leads to the drive to seek knowledge through reading as they grow.

Good reading habits empower a person with the opportunity to broaden his or her knowledge base but yet, reading habits among students in general have become a source of concern to stakeholders, who constantly complain about the low standards in both writing and speaking of the English language (Arthur, 2006). When attention is paid to reading habits and improved, it will increase the vocabulary of individuals and enable them to speak and write well. Reading attitudes lead to positive reading experiences which also lead to higher academic performance. There are varied reasons why an individual may read. Some read to be abreast with trending issues, some read to alleviate boredom, while others read to while away time or to acquire knowledge in order to pass their examination among others. To some, reading is for leisure and a hobby (Stebbins 2013). Reading is further considered as a basic tool for learning and therefore important to every individual.

1.2 Importance of Reading

The European Literacy Policy Network (ELPN) defines literacy as the ability to read and write at a level whereby individuals can effectively understand and use written communication in all media (print or electronic), including digital literacy (ELPN, 2012). Owusu-Acheaw (2014), also defines reading as the process of looking at written symbols and making meaning of them or an active endeavour by a reader to comprehend a writer's message.

The super structure of human civilization is built on the foundation of literacy. The impact of literacy on socio-economic development is positive and can be easily determined by comparing the standard of living, per capita income, Gross Domestic Product, industrialization and development of infrastructure within a country (Lal, 2015). Literacy enhances the working capabilities of people by providing them with skill development. Literacy and socio-economic

development have an endless companionship that has proven over time to be an asset for any individual, group, or country that identifies the importance of said combination. Reading is important because it develops the mind. Understanding the written word is one way the mind grows in its ability to understand new things.

Teaching young children to read helps them develop their learning skills for adulthood. A person who knows how to read can educate him or herself in things they were not previously aware of especially in this age of technological advancement where the world is overflowing with information. Therefore, without the ability to read it will be difficult for an individual to identify what they need to know much more make sense of the words they see before them. This implies that reading enables a person to take advantage of the information opportunities available today.

Every individual needs to make that choice to read. In this regard, reading can be classified as either recreational or assigned. Leisure reading is termed as voluntary reading where the books or reading materials are selected by the individual without pressure from another individual. This contributes a lot to the development of enduring reading habits that very often span a lifetime and have a positive effect on the reader's language and literacy skills. However, research has documented that globally, most teenagers tend to read mostly for academic purposes such as learning for class participation, to pass examinations, school projects, among others as against recreational reading (Loan & Shah, 2017).

Reading is an essential and important feature in creating a literate Ghanaian society. According to Owusu-Acheaw (2014), good reading habits are strong weapons necessary for the Ghanaian student to excel in life. However, Agyemang Duah (2015) found that the Ghanaian student was yet to make this discovery for their own advancement. For Agyeman-Duah (2014), the reading

habits of the Ghanaian youth has never been impressive. He observed that youngsters preferred to sleep or watch movies when they had nothing to do than to read a newspaper or a book. Another key observation his study made was the stagnation in the number and use of public and community libraries, partly leading to the falling educational standards since students' interests in reading beyond recommended course materials was waning.

A 2008 report released by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) indicated that teachers of the English language were concerned about the kind of English presented by pupils at the various levels of national examinations; especially as English is the generally accepted official language in both academic and corporate communication in the country (WAEC 2008). In an earlier study by Ameyaw and Anto (2018), they recommended that young ones must be coached to develop good reading habits since it is essential to the attainment of quality education and improvement in their literacy skills. Their study argued that good reading habits do not only increase knowledge but also facilitate mental development. The study found that a lot of innovative ideas have come about as a result of the innovators reading on various subjects and analyzing the diverse information and knowledge they have acquired from reading, to arrive at unique ideas (Ameyaw & Anto, 2018).

However, the advancement in communication and entertainment technology in today's world is negatively impacting teenagers' interest in reading non-academic materials such as novels, newspapers and magazines. As a result, Ghanaian leaders, parents, guardians, and teachers are working hard to nullify that old saying that 'if you want to hide something from a Ghanaian or an African child, hide it in a book'. In such quest, efforts are being channeled into arousing reading interests in young ones through the establishment of mobile libraries as well as reading and spelling competitions (Asamoah Hassan, 2003). As Nyamekye (2016) states, reading

habits and interests are not innate but developed over time. Wolf (2006) also opined that the act of reading should not be seen as transferable through genes but that a conscious effort must be made to guide young teens to mold good reading habits. Focused effort should therefore be directed at developing reading in children from infancy (Chettri & Rout, 2013) since the development of a child's leisure reading habits leads to improvement in future learning abilities and skills. At higher levels of education and with longer texts to consider and contend with, the understanding of word relationships, sentence construction or structure, and a good interpretation of the context becomes more significant. It is therefore very important that reading habits are instilled and constantly improved in children from an early age to last them a life time (Green, 2001). This improvement can only be effectively planned and efficiently executed based on empirical assessment and diagnosis of the challenges and enablers of current reading habits.

Reading serves as a catalyst for success, provides avenues for obtaining information for the development of ideas, and facilitates mastery in language and vocabulary which ultimately enable a person to develop and have opinions on issues related to his or her existence in the world. Thus, reading as a social phenomenon is necessary for healthy intellectual growth, self-education and lifelong learning. It is therefore necessary for an individual to have a healthy reading habit and it is prudent that children are introduced to good reading habits in order for reading to be a natural preference for them as they grow through adolescence into adulthood. This study investigates reading habits of the readers of the *Junior Graphic* newspaper. Reading habits are measured by how often, what, and how well teenagers read (Loan & Shah, 2017). The habit here according to Green (2001), could also refer to the reading, and the normal time spent on reading materials. Sahai (1970) conducted a study on newspaper and magazine

reading interests of library users which revealed that more than 90 percent of the users read newspapers and magazines rather than books.

Reading habits, according to Clarke and Akerman (2015) could be influenced to a large extent by social and economic factors such as the disposable income of the school going child. Gender as a demographic variable is also a predictor of what (Hopper, 2005), how (Millard, 1997) and how much (OECD/UNESCO, 2003) young people read. In the study by Clarke and Akerman (2015), boys were found to be less enthusiastic about reading than girls. With regard to the socio-economic factors that influence reading habit, the ability or inability of a pupil to purchase reading materials, the role of parents and the availability of other reading materials at home were dominant. The less able or endowed pupils were to afford reading materials, the less interested they were in reading, the study found. Furthermore, recent studies show that there is an increasing rate of illiteracy all over the world as a result of poor socio-economic statuses (Wilson, Anderson and Fielding, 2004).

A study conducted by the World Statistics Institute (WSI) in 2004 showed that over 27 percent of people were illiterates globally. A later study by WSI in 2008 revealed that illiteracy rates were ascending at 32 percent and these rates are quite worrying because illiteracy has negative effects on society's development (MediaCet, 2010).

1.3 The *Junior Graphic*

 In an attempt to satisfy young readers' interests, the Graphic Communication Group launched the *Junior Graphic*, a subsidiary newspaper in the year 2000 with predominantly teenagers as its target readers. *Junior Graphic* is a paid-for sixteen page newspaper published every Wednesday at a selling price of GHS 1.50. The content of *Junior Graphic* ranges from teen

news, pieces of advice, puzzles, stories, articles, letters to Aunty Betty and the Editor among others. Close to two decades after the first publication, there is the need to assess the reading habits of its primary target audiences; in terms of what they read, for how long and when they read the *Junior Graphic.*

A proper evaluation of what teenagers read in *Junior Graphic*, for how long they read and the periods they do read can be taken advantage of, for example, to revise the content of the newspaper to improve the existing habits and make the newspaper more appealing to teenagers (Shafi and Loan, 2010) which can help in attracting them to read more. It would also establish what roles other stakeholders have to play in the formation of these habits.

1.4 Statement of the problem

In the contemporary media ecology, reading has become a strategic activity, in that, people read to achieve a purpose. Examples of such purposeful reading are to pass an examination, to prepare for an interview or to project oneself as knowledgeable; all pointing to the fact that both adults and children read. In today's environment, it is rare to find a teenager sitting alone reading a hard copy novel or an electronic version of it either on their phones, tablets or laptops. Rather, it is a common sight to encounter teenagers interacting with contemporaries through WhatsApp, Instagram, Tweets, conversing in chat rooms, watching movies and playing games (Issa, 2012). Studies (Leu & Leu 1997; Olszak 2015) have found that due to a lack of reading habits in teenagers, they fail to realize that leisure reading fosters personal, moral and intellectual growth and these benefits can only be attained if a person chooses to read other literature than their academic readings.

In the 21st century reading and the search for information in newspapers have taken a back seat and give way to new media and other desires. However, not all teenagers tend to spend their free or leisure times in the virtual world or online. Some teenagers still get to know their world through reading of non-academic materials such as newspapers and in Ghana, a few teenagers still voluntarily buy non-academic reading materials such as the *Junior Graphic* Newspaper.

Junior Graphic as a newspaper, and a non-academic material, has been in existence for decades, yet, there exists scanty documentation on the habits of its target readers namely teenagers. Not much work has been done on newspaper readership of teenagers in Ghana. Most of the literature on reading habits pertain to Europe, American and Asia. From the above, it may be the case that Junior Graphic, with its teen centered content, could be leveraged to battle the lack of enthusiasm to read amongst today's Ghanaian teenagers as found by Anti (2000). His study found that the enthusiasm on the part of young adults to read leisurely is on the decline but could be aroused. It is against this background that this study has become necessary.

Scales and Rhee (2001) found that media preferences of teenagers consist of newspapers, movies, music, magazines and books. However, newspapers were the least preferred in comparison to the other types of non-academic reading materials. Tella and Akande (2007) also found that most people especially children and teenagers in Sub-Saharan Africa had less access to books and other learning materials and this tended to affect their reading culture. That notwithstanding, there is a dearth of knowledge in Ghana on teenagers' reading habits of newspapers and more specifically, *Junior Graphic*. The problem this study sought to investigate is, in an attempt by teenagers to seek information in the *Junior Graphic*, what habits

manifest so that the attention of teachers, parents and publishers could be drawn to them to help these teenagers make the best out of their reading experience.

1.5 Research objectives

The main objective of the study is to understand the reading habits of teenagers, identify their preferences, reading duration and times. Specifically, this study sought to

1.   assess teenagers' reading preferences of *Junior Graphic* content.

2.   explore teenagers' reading times/periods of *Junior Graphic*.

3.   document the duration of reading the *Junior Graphic* among teenagers.

4.   document the frequency of reading the *Junior Graphic* among teenagers.

1.6 Research questions

Following from the objectives articulated above, the following specific research questions were formulated to guide the design and execution of this study.

1.   What are teenagers' reading preferences of *Junior Graphic* content?

2.   What times do teenagers engage with the *Junior Graphic* content?

3.   How long do teenagers read *Junior Graphic* content?

4.   How often do teenagers read *Junior Graphic* content?

1.7 Scope of study

The goal of this research was to determine the habits of teenagers' leisure reading, especially with regards to the reading of the *Junior Graphic* as a non-academic text that covers different subjects for young people. This study pertains to 120 teenagers between the ages of 12 to 15 years in two schools, one public and the other private, that are subscribers and readers of *Junior Graphic,* and to find out what the teenagers look out for when they read the *Junior Graphic.*

The justification for both private and public schools is that, the Ghanaian education system is basically in these two forms.

Teenagers often read the *Junior Graphic* as extracurricular reading, yet little empirical evidence has been gathered about their newspaper reading habits. This study therefore, sought to fill this gap.

1.8 Brief Profile of the Schools

Star International School is a privately-owned co-educational preparatory school which was established 25 years ago with crèche facilities and has expanded to include Junior High facilities. The school started with only 8 students during its first year at its current site at Teshie in the Ledzokuku Municipality of the Greater Accra Region. Over two decades after its inception, the school has increased in student numbers to 432 and staff strength of 40 comprising teachers and non-teaching staff. The school places emphasis on extra-curricular activities such as leisure reading hence its weekly subscription to over 150 copies *Junior Graphic* to meet the leisure reading needs of its young population (Kyei Baffour, Head of school).

The Ministry of Health Basic Schools, Korle Bu, is a cluster of government preparatory school which was established 40 years ago and has facilities that cater for kindergarten through to Junior High level of both sexes. With over a thousand pupils, the school also subscribes to over 350 weekly editions of the *Junior Graphic*. The Ministry of Health Basic Schools is located within the Korle Bu Hospital grounds mostly catering for the children of Hospital staff. Both schools and their pupils' access to *Junior Graphic* is mostly by official subscription for the teenagers to easily purchase on the school premises either from their school's library or the

office of the head teacher of the school, and in rare cases, by purchase from public newsstands (Felix Ohene, Head of School).

1.9 Justification and significance of study

Teenagers read for varied reasons. According to Al-Nafisah and Al-Shorman (2010), reading could be motivated by teenagers' own interest or preference for a certain media content. Also, teenagers may read because it is an academic requirement. These reading interests and habits could be taken advantage of to help teenagers improve their literacy development. This is because studies have shown a positive correlation between students' free time reading for fun and their reading achievements (National Center for Education Statistics, 1993; Shefelbine 1998).

Findings of this study will also help ascertain basic information on the reading habits of teenagers collectively as well as individually and specifically with regards to the reading of *Junior Graphic*. A proper evaluation of what teenagers read in the *Junior Graphic*, for how long they read and the periods they read can be taken advantage of to improve the reading interests of teenagers and hopefully promote greater reading achievements amongst Ghana's teens.

Also, academia involves rigorous research, search for information, advancement of knowledge, the need for interpretation and the critique of literature. Reading habits form a key aspect of this venture and cannot be compromised in any way.

1.10 Operational definitions of terms

Reading habits: Reading habits is the measurement of how often, how long, what, when and how well one reads. (Loan & Shah, 2017).

Teenagers: A person, male or female between 13 and 19 years

Reading preference: A preference infers a "forced choice" in which one selects what to read from a defined collection found in a library or bookstore.

Reading interests: An interest reflects one's personal curiosity and imagination. This interest informs one's reading preferences.

Reading times/periods: This specifies what time or schedule of the day teenagers read. Be it morning, afternoon, evening. Other times could be during school break, during free time at home among others.

Reading duration: Reading duration refers to the length of time that a teenager engages a particular reading material.

Reading frequency: This defines the regularity or otherwise at which a teenager reads a particular reading material.

1.11 Organization of work

The study is organized in five chapters. Chapter One provided an introduction comprising the background to the study and statement of the problem. Chapter Two presents the theoretical framework and a review of related studies. Chapter Three focuses on the methodology and contains a description of the research design, data sources and the sampling techniques employed in the study. Chapter Four presents findings. A discussion of these findings and appropriate recommendations are presented in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework that underpinned this study as well as the literature review which supported the direction of the study. The theories are the Uses and Gratifications theory and the Media Systems Dependency theory. Theories are a set of interrelated constructs and definitions that give a systematic view of a given phenomenon by identifying relations among variables (Kerlinger, 1997). Many studies have focused on ways to help students acquire good reading habits. In order to effectively guide this research, this chapter reviews some related studies, noting their points of significance to this study.

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and Gratifications was propounded by Blumler and Katz (1974) when they envisioned uses and gratifications research as a movement away from exploring what media do to users and rather, toward what users do with media (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rosengren, 1983). The key tenets of the theory are to identify the motivations of people for using a particular media and the gratifications they expect and obtain (Perse, 2004).

Years of research have produced a long list of motivations for the use of media corresponding with many forms of media, but books and newspapers are less flashy, and have been pushed to the side in favor of more modern and technologically advanced media such as online trending news (Severin & Tankard, 2001)

Uses and gratifications theory argues that the user actively and intentionally selects media based on the readers' psychological and social environment, their needs and motivation to communicate, their attitudes and expectations about the media, their communication behaviour, and the outcomes or consequences of their behaviour (Rubin, 2002). In addition, individuals are often careful in their media selection process rather than just passive users of media.

The theory argues that media use is tied to pre-existing norms and values (Blumler, 1979; Abelman, 2006), which is suspected to be particularly pronounced among avid readers. Uses and gratifications scales have been adapted for various media uses including television, newspapers, Internet, and even specific television genres such as reality and sports programming (Armfield, Dixon, & Dougherty, 2006).

Several works have added factors, including the reading motivations which added surveillance, entertainment/diversion, interpersonal utility, and para-social interaction. The added factors could take on different dimensions when considering reader motivations, but it is also possible that reading brings gratifications that are not found with other forms of media.

However, the theory has been criticized for the problem of media hegemony. The critics of this theory argue that it goes too far to claim that people are at liberty to select media and its interpretation. Another criticism is that the Uses and Gratifications theory is vague and unable to define key concepts. That notwithstanding, a key tenet of this theory which is that a user actively and intentionally selects media based on the his or her psychological and social environment, his or her needs and motivation to communicate, his or her attitudes and expectations about the media, his or her communication behaviour, and the outcomes or consequences of their behavior, will support this study's first objective of assessing teenagers'

reading preferences of *Junior Graphic* content. The selection of any content according to the theory is actively and intentionally undertaken based on the teenagers' motivation and the gratification these teenagers seek to have.

2.1. 2 Media System Dependency Theory

Media System Dependency theory is built on the principle that the more an individual depends on having his or her needs gratified by media use, the more important will be the role of that media in the person's life. As a result, that media would have more influence on the individual's life. The theory was developed by Melvin De Fleur and Sandra Ball Rokeach (1957). Their first argument was that the basis for the influence of the media is hinged on the relationship between the bigger social system, the media's role in that system and the relationship between the audience and the media.

Secondly, the extent to which an audience depends on media information is vital in understanding when and why media messages change the beliefs, behaviour and feelings of the audience. Another argument put forward is that in order for humans to understand the social world and act meaningfully they increasingly come to depend on the media. Finally, the higher the need and the intensity of the dependency, the higher the chances that the media and the messages they produce will have an effect, though not everyone will be equally influenced by the media.

This theory helps to assess the times and duration that teenagers engage with *Junior Graphic* since the Media System Dependency theory proffers that the more an individual depends on having his or her needs gratified by media use, the more significant that the media will be to the individual.

2.2 Related Studies

Palani (2012) assessed ways to promote reading habits in order to create a literate society. The study argued that the multiple recreation centres and the inception of mass media have dwindled the interest of people in reading. His study found that devoting time to read is vital in shaping an individual's personality and an important avenue of effective learning. Palani (2012) therefore recommended some strategies to help grow student's reading habits. One of the strategies is the Accelerated Reader Program that motivates students with rewards to encourage them to read beyond their required classroom texts. Another strategy is the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), a practice of allotting classroom time for everyone, including the teacher, to read self-selected materials. Others are the constant use of dictionary to facilitate easy understanding of what is read, daily newspaper reading, visiting libraries among others. This is relevant to this study in finding out strategies that have been put in place in these schools to improve reading habits.

Mugambi (2015), explored the correlation between reading habits, materials read and the academic achievements of primary school pupils in Ontulili, a rural community in Kenya. The study was a survey and in all 171 questionnaires were analyzed. Participants included 98 girls and 73 boys who ranged from age six to seventeen years. The study found that underdeveloped reading habits and a lack of basic reading skills were key predictors of low scores in final examinations. Other variables that impacted on reading habits are the individual, family, societal, cultural, and economic predictors. The study revealed that despite the severe scarcity of learning materials leading to low reading skills and low preparedness for further education, participants in this rural community were highly content with the low availability and state of reading resources. The study recommended that to promote reading, well equipped libraries in line with the present academic demands must be made available. Regarding the types of

materials students read, 99.4 percent said they read textbooks; 95.3 percent read storybooks; 87.7 percent read Bibles; and 47.4 percent read newspapers and magazines. Observations made showed that four of the five schools in the study area had none of these collections mentioned by participants apart from textbooks. The findings, therefore, suggested that there was the need for equal educational opportunities for communities such as Ontulili, in which children were struggling for the basic educational materials such as libraries to get the needed reading exposure.

Reading habits involves books, printed articles and electronic materials. Each category of reading has a different effect on reading habits. Comparing reading materials of students in different countries, Nur, Zamil, Noor and Baharuddin (2017) found that students' preference in terms of types of materials read differed. They concluded that students reading' habits depended on their attitudes towards reading, the environment and reading materials they preferred. As important as reading is, the authors contended that reading materials ignite the spark of reading and are significant in maintaining and sustaining reading interest which contributes to the nurturing of the reading habit. Consequently, the authors recommended that the habit of reading should be instilled at an early age and if nurtured properly as the child grows, they would be more likely to retain and improve their habit of reading. From their survey of reading materials of secondary and tertiary school students in six countries and referencing thirteen journals and academic work, they concluded that the amount of time put into reading, the topics chosen to read about, where the students choose to read them, influenced their interest in reading thus impacting their reading habit.

Ameyaw and Anto (2018), used case study to assess reading habit among students and its effect on academic performance. They discovered that students recognized the importance of reading

and indicated that reading helps them to broaden their knowledge. Also, the study found that majority of respondents acknowledged that reading habits had effects on them and that, the said habits supported their studies. They found that a child's family background and location influence his or her response to leisure reading. The study also reported that majority of the young people did indicate that reading habits have an effect on them and stressed that reading has supported their studies.

A survey conducted by Annamalai and Muniandi (2014), revealed that students had low interest in reading and did not enjoy reading as much as they enjoyed other technology related activities. They also found that if students read at all, they showed a preference for newspaper and magazine reading to other forms of printed materials. Despite the limitations of their study which included the small sample size and a limited number of variables studied (i.e. the exclusion of factors such as socio-economic background, reading exposure and the availability of reading materials) researchers recommended alternative mediums other than conventional books to motivate students to read more.

In his assessment of student reading habits and its effect on academic performance, Owusu-Acheaw (2014) found that reading habits influenced academic performance and that there was a relationship between reading habits and academic performance leading to the recommendation for students to be encouraged to use the library for research as against lecture note and hand-outs. Similarly, Bashir and Mattoo (2012) found that good reading habits act as a strong weapon for students to excel and that it was the reading habit which helped the learner to obtain meaningful and desirable knowledge.

Howard (2011) used Focus Group Discussions in his study to explore the importance of pleasure reading in the lives of young teens. The study found that teens, like adults, unconsciously used pleasure reading as a means of everyday life information seeking to gain significant insights into personal values, cultural identity, physical safety and security and the understanding of the physical world in their transition from the teenage years to adulthood. And for Faulkner (2002) and Eyre (2003) pleasure reading could play a vital role in preparing young people for adult roles in life.

While reading has this substantial impact on the all-round development of a person, Fayez-Ahwad (2009) has concluded that in the modern multi-media society, radio, television, cell phones, computers and the internet, have captured a big slice of time and reading has had to take a back seat. CopperWiki (2008) reported similar findings that reading habits among children are on the decline and the reasons for decline in reading habits was as a result of technological advancements. In another study on the effects of mobile phone usage on reading habits by Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2014), respondents opined that the use of mobile phones would enable them to read more as well as improve their performance in reading since mobile phone enabled them to conveniently access reading materials wherever they found themselves.

Moyer (2010) used face-to-face interviews to assess other forms that reading manifests. Moyer (2010) found that today's teens were reading as much as teens in the past but their methods and formats of reading were so different from the older generations. The study suggested that adolescent literacy leisure activities were not being captured. More recently, Pandey (2018) reported that while 21st century reading materials are characterized by the electronic format, e-paper among others, yet print media continuously remains relevant. Pandey (2018) also found that an appreciable number of the students sampled has interest in newspaper reading.

All the literature reviewed above agree on the importance of good reading habits. They further suggest ways in which reading could be made more convenient for teenagers such as ready availability of reading materials as well as online access. However, most of the studies (Littelfield 2006; Loh 2009) contrast on teenagers' reading preference. While some studies record teenagers mostly preferring magazines and newspapers, others record most teenagers preferring textbooks and storybooks.

2.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the theories supporting the study – Uses and Gratifications, and Media System Dependency – as well as gave recommending ways to improve reading habits of teenagers and ways through which technology and socio-economic factors that affect habits of teenagers with regards to reading for leisure. The chapter also reviewed related literature, emphasizing their differences and similarities.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

The study sought to assess habits that inform how teenagers engage with the *Junior Graphic.* The previous chapter reviewed related literature as well as elaborated the theoretical underpinnings of this study, which should hopefully provide the logic and context for understanding the findings. This chapter further explains how the study was conducted. It describes the population, sampling and sampling procedure and instruments used in carrying out the study. It also explains the data collection procedure and how data gathered was analyzed.

3.1 Research Design

A quantitative research design was used to achieve the study's objectives. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) explained that the quantitative approach enables analytical assessment of prevailing condition and attitudes, and the possible reasons for these. They also praise the quantitative approach for advantages. These advantages comprise the accuracy in measuring and reporting results and the ease with which researchers can collect a great quantity of data.

The quantitative method used was a survey. According to Babbie (2014), survey is the appropriate technique to gather original data to describe a large population. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) defined a survey as a research method for collecting data from a pre-defined group of respondents to gain information and insights on various topics of interest with the use of a questionnaire. It also involves collecting and analysing numerical data. A quantitative research method was employed to help achieve the study's objectives because Wimmer and Dominick (2011) argued that, the approach enables a descriptive and analytical assessment of

prevailing conditions and attitudes. Also, due to the large numbers of teenagers sampled for the study, the survey was deemed appropriate since it allowed the researcher collect voluminous data with ease from diverse teenagers and also enabled the many variables that formed reading habits to be studied. The study sought to measure variables that form reading habits. These considerations make the survey design suitable for the study.

3.2 Population sampling and sampling procedure

The total number of elements about which inferences are made is what is defined by Cooper and Schindler (2014) as the population. Mohammed (2011) also defined a study population as a large group of subjects or individuals who share similar traits. He argued that since researchers cannot test every subject in a population because of its large size, time and cost, there is the need for researchers to get a sample out of the population. The process of sampling makes it possible to draw inferences or make generalizations on the basis of careful observation of variables within a small proportion of the population. According to Etikan and Bala (2017), the sampling technique involves gaining information from a section of a larger population to make inferences about that larger population. Sampling is the selection of a representative part of an entire population in order to determine the characteristics of the whole population (Singleton, 2010). Therefore, all elements in the population according to Cooper and Schindler (2014) must qualify for the study.

By way of sampling, two schools, Star International School and Ministry of Health Basic Schools, were purposively sampled. The basis for their sampling was that, they are among the leading subscribers to weekly editions of *Junior Graphic*; Star International being the leading subscribing private school and MOH School being the leading subscribing public school.

Hundred and twenty Junior High School pupils were randomly sampled. Random sampling gives each element in a set, an equal chance of being selected. To select the study participants, the researcher obtained a list of the forms 1, 2 and 3 students and assigned each student numbers. For each class, the numbers were then written on pieces of papers, folded and placed in a bowl. The papers were thoroughly stirred and 60 papers were drawn out of the bowl individually for each school forming the units of analysis for the study. The researcher decided on the 120 pupils since studies (Liu, 2005; Pandian 2000) of similar nature employed numbers within same range. Also, this sample size is considered by Wimmer and Dominick (2001) to be enough to claim representativeness to the population. This study also used 120 since it gives a true representation of the number population for the two schools.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

The tools that enable researchers to gather data for their work are the data collection instruments. The researcher used a close-ended questionnaire to gather data. The questionnaire was divided into five sections;

Section A: Demographic data

Section B: content interest of students

Section C: Time spent reading

Section D: Leisure time activities

Section E: Duration of reading

Section F: Factors that affect or hinder their reading habits

Section G: Perception of students reading habits and academic performance

The questionnaire was structured using simple language. There were twenty-six (26) questions in all. Almost all the questions were closed ended questions with possible answers, and respondents were asked to choose appropriate answers.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher secured a letter from the Department of Communications Studies and submitted to the management of the two schools. From there, the researcher ascertained from the school heads, the most convenient dates and time to administer the questionnaires. On arrival at the schools on the approved dates, management facilitated the survey by introducing the researcher to the students. The questionnaire was self-administered to 120 sampled pupils who waited in the libraries of their schools for the survey to take place.

3.5 Data Analysis

Responses from questionnaires administered were analyzed. This analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, version 24 that presents the social scientist with a useful working language for data analysis. The data were compared with existing literature to identify similarities and trends in the findings.

3.6 Ethical Considerations in the Research

An ethical consideration ensures that no individual suffers any adverse consequences as a result of the study. According to Singleton (2010), ethical consideration is acting in moral and responsible ways. Hence, the researcher followed the ethical requirements of the University of Ghana and sought institutional approval through a written letter. The purpose of the study was explained to all participants and the confidentiality of their responses was guaranteed.

3.7 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the methodological considerations used to achieve the set objectives for this research were discussed. These include selecting a mixed method approach for the study, as

well as presenting a systematic account of how data was collected. Chapter four will present the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of the data and discussions of the findings. Data was collected using questionnaires as the main data collection instrument. All 120 questionnaires distributed were returned translating to a 100 percent response rate. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, that is frequency tables and charts with the aid of SPSS software.

4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 1: Gender and Age variables

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	55	45.8
Female	65	54.2
Total	120	100.0
Age		
Under 12 years	5	4.2
Between 12 to 14 years	115	95.8
Total	120	100.0

All the 120 respondents said they read *Junior Graphic.* More than half (54.2%) of the respondents were females and the remaining 45.8 percent were males. That is, female respondents of the sample outnumbered the male respondents. The age of respondents ranged between 12 years to 14 years (95.8%) with very few (4.2%) of them being under 12 years of age.

4.1.1 Reading the *Junior Graphic* as habit

Table 2: How long respondents have been Reading the *Junior Graphic*

Duration	Frequency	Percent
Below 5 months	5	4.2
Over 5 months to 1 year	11	9.2
1-2 years	41	34.2
3-4 years	29	24.2
5-6 years	3	2.5
6 years and above	31	25.8
Total	120	100.0

The findings showed that majority of the respondents have been reading the *Junior Graphic* between 1 to 2 years (34.2%). Also, close to a quarter of the respondents (24.2%) have been reading for 3 to 4 years and a quarter (25.8%) have been reading the *Junior Graphic* for 6 years and above.

Respondents who have been reading the *Junior Graphic* for five months to one year were 13.3 percent and for five months or less were less than 5 percent (4.2%). Cumulatively, more than 80 percent of respondents have been reading the *Junior Graphic* between 1 to 6 years or more.

4.2 Access to copies of *Junior Graphic*

Table 3: Where respondents get copies of *Junior Graphic*

Responses	Frequency	Percent
From the news vendor	3	2.5
From my school/community library	103	85.8
I borrow from friends/mates	6	5.0
Parents buy for me	5	4.2
Others	3	2.5
Total	120	100.0

A greater majority of the respondents (88.3%), get their copies of the *Junior Graphic* from their School/Community library compared to very few who get it from the news vendors

(2.5%), while those whose parents bought the newspaper for them were below five percent (4.2%). Also, five percent of respondents borrowed from friends.

4.2.1 When they miss an edition of *Junior Graphic*

Table 4: Reasons for missing an edition of *Junior Graphic*

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
None at the library	66	55.0
None at vendor	5	4.2
Intentionally ignore	5	4.2
No access to friends' copy	6	5.0
None at home	13	10.8
No money to buy	25	20.8
Total	120	100.0

When respondents were asked where they acquired copies of the Junior Graphic from, majority of readers of *Junior Graphic* said they acquire them from the School/Community library. In that same way, more than half (55.0%) of respondents will miss an edition of the *Junior Graphic* if none was at the library or school. Other ways respondents could miss an addition of the *Junior Graphic* is when there is no money to buy (20.8%), when there is none at home (10.8%), no access to friends' copies (5.0%), intentionally ignoring it (4.2%) and if there was no copies at the news stand of the external vendor(4.2%).

4.2.2 Amount of reading time

Table 5: Time spent reading *Junior Graphic*

Time	Frequency	Percent
10-20 minutes	23	19.2
21-40 minutes	29	24.2
41 minutes to 1 hour	12	10.0
1 hour and more	39	32.5
1 day	7	5.8
2 days	3	2.5
3 days	1	.8

4 days - 1 week	5	4.2
1 week or more	1	.8
Total	120	100.0

More than 30 percent (32.5%) of the respondents spend an hour or more *reading the Junior Graphic* and more than 20 percent (24.2%) spend between 21 to 40 minutes reading the Junior Graphic. Also, 19.2 percent of respondents spend 10 to 20 minutes reading the Junior Graphic and 10 percent spends about 41 minutes to an hour reading *Junior Graphic*. Cumulatively, less than 15 percent spent one day reading the *Junior Graphic*, as observed from above. Those who spent a day reading the *Junior Graphic* were 5.8 percent, while 4.2 percent spend 4 days to one week reading the *Junior Graphic*. Respondents who spent 2 days and less made up 2.5 percent of the respondents and less than one percent (0.8%) spend 3 days. Finally, less than one percent spend a week or more reading the Junior Graphic.

4.2.3 Average reading Time: Crosstabulation

Table 6: Average time spent reading *Junior Graphic*: Crosstabulation

Time spent	Have you always read the JG for the period you indicated in Q5?		Total
	Yes	No	
10-20 minutes	18 78.30%	5 21.70%	23 100.00%
21-40 minutes	20 69.00%	9 31.00%	29 100.00%
41 minutes to 1 hour	8 66.70%	4 33.30%	12 100.00%
1 hour and more	33 84.60%	6 15.40%	39 100.00%
1 day	5 71.40%	2 28.60%	7 100.00%
2 days	3 100.00%	0 0.00%	3 100.00%
3 days	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	1 100.00%
4 days - 1 week	5 100.00%	0 0.00%	5 100.00%
1 week or more	0 0.00%	1 100.00%	1 100.00%

| Total | 92 | 28 | 120 |
| | 76.70% | 23.30% | 100.00% |

Except for one respondent who said he/she spent one week or more, all others said the times stated in table 4.2.2 truly indicated the regular times they spend reading the *Junior Graphic.*

4.3 Liking for *Junior Graphic*

Figure 1: What Respondents liked most in the *Junior Graphic*
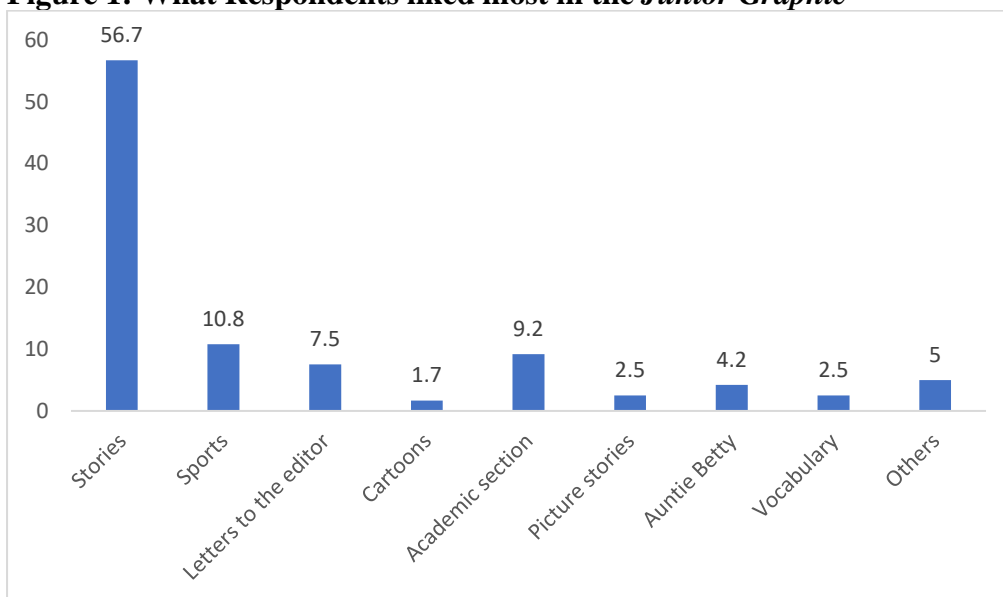
The above findings showed that more than half (56.7%) of the respondents preferred stories in the *Junior Graphic* and they formed the greater majority. Again, 10.8 percent preferred sports, while close to 10 percent (9.2%) preferred the academic section and about 8 percent (7.5%) preferred the letters to the editor. Five respondents (4.2%) preferred the Auntie Betty section, three respondents (2.5%) preferred picture stories as well as vocabularies and 2 respondents (1.7%) preferred cartoons.

4.3.1 Contribution to *Junior Graphic* content

Table 7: Respondents contribution to *Junior Graphic* content

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	41	34.5
No	78	65.5
Total	119	100.0

More than 30 percent (34.2%) of the respondents contribute to *Junior Graphic* content as compared with more than 60 percent (65.5) who do not contribute to *Junior Graphic* content.

4.3.2 Exclusivity of Content

Figure 2: Whether Respondents get same contents from other sources
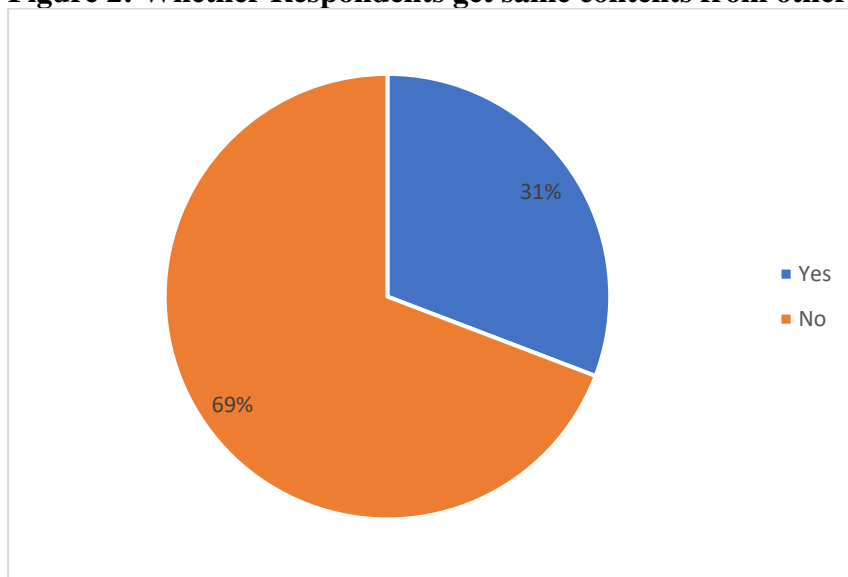
The findings showed that, 30 percent of the respondents get the same content from other sources as compared to 70 percent who said they do not get the same content in the *Junior Graphic* from any other source.

4.3.3 Other Sources of similar content

Table 8: Sources of content similar to *Junior Graphic*

Source	Frequency	Valid Percent
Television	12	32.4
Textbooks	8	21.6
Story book	9	24.3
Daily Graphic	1	2.7
Radio	1	2.7
Library	3	8.1
YouTube	2	5.4

Facebook	1	2.7
Total	37	100.0

On other sources that respondents get similar contents to that of *Junior Graphic*, it was seen that majority (32.4%) of the respondents said television has similar contents. Also, 24.3 percent said story books have similar contents to that of *Junior Graphic* and 21.6 percent said textbooks have similar contents to that of *Junior Graphic*. Three respondents (8.1%) said library has similar contents, two respondents (5.4%) said YouTube have similar contents, one respondent (2.7%) said Facebook, and one said Daily Graphic and one said radio have contents like that of the Junior Graphic.

4.3.4 Content ideas for *Junior Graphic*

Table 9: Other content Readers would like to see in *Junior Graphic*

Other content	Frequency	Percent
Drama	9	11.7
Trending new/songs	3	3.9
Comedy/Jokes	6	7.8
Puzzles/Riddles/quiz	10	13.0
More stories/news	17	22.1
Poem	3	3.9
Songs/Music	5	6.5
Sanitation	1	1.3
Creativity	1	1.3
Series	1	1.3
Documentary	2	2.6
Health care	1	1.3
Educative programs	1	1.3
Past questions	2	2.6
Current affair	1	1.3
French subject	1	1.3
General knowledge	3	3.9
Scientific stuff	1	1.3
Religious stuff	1	1.3
Vocational skills	1	1.3
Vocabulary	1	1.3
Parliament news	2	2.6
Fashionista	1	1.3

Profile of African leaders	1	1.3
Child's right	2	2.6
Total	77	100.0

The table summarizes what other forms of content respondents would like to see in the *Junior Graphic*. Most of them want more stories (22.1%), puzzles/riddles or quizzes (13.0%) and drama (11.7%).

4.4 Alternative uses of leisure time at school

Table 10: What respondents do when free at school

School leisure activities	Frequency	Percent
Play with friends	12	10.3
Read academic books	37	31.6
Spend time talking to friends	8	6.8
Read story books	32	27.4
Read Junior Graphic	28	23.9
Total	117	100.0

Majority of the respondents read academic books, read story books as well as read *Junior Graphic* in their free time at school. As observed from the findings, almost 32 percent read academic books, more than a quarter (27.4%) read story books and almost a quarter (23.9%) read *Junior Graphic* during their free times at Schools. Others play with their friends (10.3%) and less than 10 percent (6.8%) spend time talking to friends in their free time.

4.4.1 Alternative leisure time at home

Table 11: What respondent do when free at home

Home leisure activities	Frequency	Percent
Watch TV	49	41.9
Spend time on social media	7	6.0
Browse online	7	6.0
Read story books	33	28.2
Read Junior Graphic	21	17.9
Total	117	100.0

When free at home, majority of students would watch television compared to reading story books or *Junior Graphic*. From the findings, more than 40 percent (41.9%) watch TV during

their free time when at home. Others would read story books (28.2%), close to 18 percent (17.9%) still read *Junior Graphic* and seven respondents representing 6 percent, browse online as well as 6 percent would spend time on social media during their free time at home.

4.4.2 Time of the day for reading *Junior Graphic*

Table 12: Time of the day respondents read *Junior Graphic*

Time	Frequency	Valid Percent
Morning	52	44.4
Afternoon	36	30.8
Evening	6	5.1
During School break	8	6.8
During leisure hours	13	11.1
Others	2	1.7
Total	117	100.0

The findings showed that more than 40 percent (44.4%) of respondents read *Junior Graphic* in the morning and in the afternoon (30.8%). Almost 11 percent (10.8%) also read their *Junior Graphic* during leisure hours and very few read it during school break (6.7%) and in the evening.

4.5 Discretion in *Junior Graphic* reading time

Table 13: Self-selected or Assigned *Junior Graphic* reading time

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Self-selected	64	55.7
Assigned	51	44.3
Total	115	100.0

More than half (55.4%) of the respondents self-select the time they use in reading the *Junior Graphic* compared to less than 50 percent (44.3%) who are assigned the time they should read the *Junior Graphic*.

4.6 Reading under supervision

Table 14: Under whose supervision respondents read *Junior Graphic*

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Teacher	80	69.0
Parent	12	10.3
Elder sibling	8	6.9
Librarian	1	.9
Self	13	11.2
Others	2	1.7
Total	116	100.0

Majority of the respondents are supervised by the teachers in reading *Junior Graphic*. That is, as seen from the findings, close to 70 percent read Junior Graphic under their teacher's supervision. Close to 11 percent of respondents said they do not read the *Junior Graphic* under anybody's supervision and 10 percent said they read it under their parents' supervision. One (0.8%) respondent reads *Junior Graphic* under a Librarian's supervision. Both heads of schools admitted that teachers supervise the *Junior Graphic* reading sessions. This confirms student's responses as seen in the huge percentage of the teacher supervision of 69 percent.

4.7 Subsequent referrals

Table 15: Subsequent referral to the *Junior Graphic* after a first reading

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	77	67.0
No	38	33.0
Total	115	100.0

Close to 70 percent still refer to the *Junior Graphic* later after first reading, and 33.0 percent do not refer to the *Junior Graphic* at a later time after first reading.

How often? Please state

4.7.1 Statistics on number of editions read in a month

Table 16: Statistics on number of editions read in a month

N	Valid	116
	Missing	4
Mean		3.4224
Mode		4.00

Std. Deviation	.86629

Averagely, a respondent reads 3.422 with SD = 0.866 editions of *Junior Graphic* in a month and the most frequent number of respondents read were 4. That is, majority of the respondents were reading all the four editions in a month.

4.8 Factors enabling time spent reading Junior *Graphic*

Table 17: Reason(s) that allow for increase (if any) in the time spent on reading *Junior Graphic*

Activities	Frequency	Valid Percent
More time available now	45	38.5
Parents insist on me to read	12	10.3
My friends also started reading more	3	2.6
Personal decision to read more	54	46.2
More interesting things	3	2.6
Total	117	100.0

On the reasons why a respondent would increase the time spent reading *Junior Graphic*, the findings show that, majority (46.2%) make personal decision to read more and close to 40 percent (38.5%) allow for increase in time spent reading *Junior Graphic* provided there is more time available. Again, 10.3 percent of parents are the cause of increase in the reading time of the respondents, three (2.5%) respondents said they increased their time because their friends have started reading and three respondents (2.5%) increase their reading times where there are interesting things to read.

4.8.1 Factors disabling time spent on *Junior Graphic*

Table 18: Reasons that decreased time spent on *Junior Graphic*

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
More time being spent on academic work	92	80.7
Getting same content through internet	8	7.0
Depending more on Radio / TV for same content in Junior Graphic	9	7.9
Repeated content	2	1.8

Others		3	2.6
Total		114	100.0

Majority of the respondents would decrease their time spent reading the *Junior Graphic* when they spend more time on academic work. As seen from the findings, 80 percent of the respondents decrease time spent on reading *Junior Graphic* when there is more academic work to be done. Other reasons why respondents would decrease the time spent in reading *Junior Graphic* is when they are able to get the same content through the internet, they depend more on radio/tv for the same content or when contents are repeated.

4.9 Summary Statistics

Table 19: Summary Statistics on Statement

Statement	N	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
I read *Junior Graphic* because I aspire to be well informed about what is going on in the world	117	3	4.1966	.79045
People around me would expect me to know the happenings around the world	117	3	4.0000	.93772
There are many benefits in reading *Junior Graphic*	117	3	4.4274	.59184
Reading JG makes me want to learn more	117	3	4.3675	.51859
I read the *Junior Graphic* as it has become a habit to do so	116	4	3.9397	.94445

The table above summarizes the statistics on the extent to which respondents agreed to the statements provided. It is observed from the findings that majority agreed or strongly agreed to the statement "There are many benefits in reading *Junior Graphic*". That statement had the highest rate with mean = 4.36 and SD = 0.59. This was followed by the statement "Reading *Junior Graphic* makes want to learn more" with mean = 4.36 and SD = 0.52. Respondents reading *Junior Graphic* because they aspire to be well informed, was the third most rated

statement with a mean of 4.20 and SD of 0.79. The statement, People around me would expect me to know the happenings around the world" was the fourth most rated with the mean = 4.00 and SD = 0.94. The least rated statement, "I read the *Junior Graphic* as it has become a habit to do so" had a mean of 3.94 and SD of 0.94. The findings showed that majority of the respondents read because they know the benefits of reading. They agreed that reading *Junior Graphic* makes them want to learn more and not really because reading *Junior Graphic* has become respondents' habit.

4.9.1 Reading to be well informed

Table 20: Reading Junior Graphic because respondents aspire to be well informed about what is going on in the world

Response scale	Frequency	Valid Percent
Strongly disagree	2	1.7
Disagree	2	1.7
Neutral	9	7.7
Agree	62	53.0
Strongly agree	42	35.9
Total	117	100.0

The highest percentage of respondents agreed that reading the *Junior Graphic* informs them about what is going on in the world around them while 3.4 percent disagreed. This implies that said respondents did not agree that *Junior Graphic* was the only medium they could rely on to inform them about happenings in the world.

4.9.2 Reading for social validation d

Table 21: Reading *Junior Graphic* because people around respondents would expect them to know the happenings around the world

Response scale	Frequency	Valid Percent
Strongly disagree	4	3.4
Disagree	6	5.1
Neutral	9	7.7
Agree	65	55.6
Strongly agree	33	28.2

Total	117	100.0

This question revealed that close to 60 percent of respondents read *Junior Graphic* in order to be informed enough as the people around them expects. However, 7.5 percent of respondents cannot be bothered whether or not those around them expects them to know about happenings in the world.

4.9.3 Benefits in reading *Junior Graphic*

Table 22: 4.9.3 There are many benefits in reading *Junior Graphic*

Response scale	Frequency	Valid Percent
Strongly disagree	1	.9
Agree	63	53.8
Strongly agree	53	45.3
Total	117	100.0

Less than a percentage of respondents strongly disagreed that reading *Junior Graphic* offered many benefits whilst more than 98 percent agreed in one form or the other that reading the *Junior Graphic* was beneficial.

4.9.4 Reading to learn

Table 23: Reading *Junior Graphic* makes me want to learn more

Response scale	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	2	1.7
Agree	70	59.8
Strongly agree	45	38.5
Total	117	100.0

More than 95 percent of respondents agreed that reading the *Junior Graphic* has a positive impact on their academics. This is because reading the *Junior Graphic* makes them want to learn more.

4.9.5 Reading as habit

Table 24: I read the Junior Graphic as it has become a habit to do so

Response scale	Frequency	Valid Percent

Strongly disagree	1	.9
Disagree	9	7.8
Neutral	22	19.0
Agree	48	41.4
Strongly agree	36	31.0
Total	116	100.0

This was respondents' self-assessment of being habitual *Junior Graphic* readers or otherwise. 40 percent of respondents agreed that reading Junior Graphic was a habit. However, less than 10 percent of respondents disagreed to reading the Junior Graphic out of habit.

4.10 Discussions of Findings

This study was carried out to find out the reading habits of pupils of two schools; Star International School at Teshie and the Ministry of Health Basic Schools, Korle Bu.

The objectives were to:

1. assess teenagers' reading preferences of Junior Graphic content.

2. explore teenagers' reading times/periods of Junior Graphic.

3. document teenagers' reading duration of the Junior Graphic

4. document teenagers' reading frequency of the Junior Graphic

Reading preferences of *Junior Graphic* content

The reading preferences of students show that more than half (56.7%) of the respondents preferred stories in the *Junior Graphic* and they formed the greater majority. This confirms finding from Fatiloro (2017) that teenagers will opt for stories especially if those stories are adventurous or stories they can easily relate with. The Uses and Gratifications Theory speaks to the gratification gained from reading the stories for which reason the teenagers engage with the *Junior Graphic.* However, more girls than boys prefer stories. Boys mostly prefer to read

about sports and sports personalities. And for most of these teenagers, the findings reveal that they seek such gratifications from other sources as TV and YouTube in the event that they do not have access to *Junior Graphic* as seen in sub-section 4.3.2. According to Nafiz (2016), the preferences and tastes of the present generation can change, but reading will continue to maintain its unique and indispensable position. This implies that when teenagers regularly have *Junior Graphic* close at hand with more interesting stories, positive attitudes could emerge.

Teenagers' Reading Times/Periods of *Junior Graphic*

With respect to the preferred time of reading, most of them (around 44 per cent) said they like to read in the morning. Furthermore, only a little over 10 percent read during their leisure time. The morning reading is often assigned by the two schools, giving an indication that teenagers have been programmed to accept and prefer morning as the appropriate reading time. Voluntary reading beyond the assigned reading times were rare. The implication is that leisure reading is on the decline as found by Glasier (2017). The study also found that most students prefer to play with friends when they are free at school and watch tv when free at home rather than to do leisure reading.

Document Teenagers' Reading Duration and Frequency of the *Junior Graphic*

The findings revealed that over 30 percent (32.5%) of the respondents spent an hour or more reading the *Junior Graphic*, and less than one percent (0.8%) of respondents spend 3 days reading *Junior Graphic*. This varies from findings on time spent reading in other studies. Hastings and Henry (2006) for example found that more than half of students (56%) spent less than an hour everyday, whereas finding of this work are similar to Loan (2011) who found that the majority of the students spent between 1-2 hours per day on reading a leisure material.

Furthermore, an analysis of the reading times shows that on an average, a respondent spent 40 minutes reading daily. Mckool (2007) found that teenagers spend an average of 17 minutes per day in reading which is also in contrast with the findings of this study which was 40 minutes on the average. This therefore means that, the reading times of these students could decrease or increase beyond the scheduled times. Many respondents admitted that they did not read beyond the scheduled *Junior Graphic* reading hours of their schools. The general outcome of this study agrees with that of Khairuddin (2013) that students had interest in reading but have not reached a point where they take reading as a habit.

Due to the fact that over 60 percent of respondents agreed that reading *Junior Graphic* spurs them on to learn more, reiterates the Media Systems Dependency in that, the more these teenagers depend on having their academic needs gratified by *Junior Graphic* use, the more important Junior Graphic will be to them. They will as a result increasingly depend on it and intensity their dependency on it so that, the content of Junior Graphic will have the effect they desire on their academics as seen in the response. However not everyone's academic will be equally influenced by Junior Graphic.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the reading habits of students of Star School and MOH School. The main objectives of the study were to assess teenagers' reading preferences of *Junior Graphic* content. The study also sought to explore teenagers' reading times and periods as well as document teenagers' reading duration and frequency of the Junior Graphic

5.1 Summary

In summary:

- all the 120 respondents said they read *Junior Graphic,*

- majority of the respondents have been reading the *Junior Graphic* between 1 to 2 years (34.2%),

- the most preferred content are the stories

- most respondents read *Junior Graphic* in the morning

- respondents mostly read *Junior Graphic* for up to one hour within a week.

- majority of the respondents (88.3%) get their copies of the *Junior Graphic* from their school. Respondents' inability to secure an edition of *Junior Graphic* is mostly due to the unavailability of copies in their schools.

- Majority of respondents read academic books when they are at school and watch TV when they are at home.

- Up to 67 percent of respondents will read an edition of *Junior Graphic* again while 33 percent of respondents would not refer to the *Junior Graphic* after a first read.

However, the findings revealed that the more time respondents spent on academic work, the less time they read or referred to the Junior Graphic (tables 4.8 & 4.8.1)

- Majority of the respondents read *Junior Graphic* because they know the benefits of reading it not because to them it was a habit.

5.2 Conclusion

Junior Graphic was used in this study to measure the frequency, duration and reading times of teenage students of two schools in the Greater Accra region. The findings revealed that respondents were not conscious of and did not engage in leisure reading. Rather, reading periods and durations were assigned and supervised mostly by school authority. In order to improve voluntary reading habits, attention must be paid to the content that respondents suggested they wish to see published.

Due to the fact that socio economic factors such as lack of money to secure a copy of *Junior Graphic* was found to hinder access to *Junior Graphic,* as was testified to by respondents and heads of schools alike, subsidisation of the material is one way to support and encourage these students to read more. Also, care must be taken to encourage students to contribute to Junior Graphic content. Findings indicate a majority of respondents do not contribute and never have contributed any content to the Junior Graphic.

5.3 Recommendations

From the findings, the following recommendations are made to hopefully make it easier for all stakeholders to support teenagers develop better reading habits.

Awards could be instituted for subscribing schools to encourage the students to engage more hours in reading the *Junior Graphic* as a leisure material.

The intensification of the activities of Junior Graphic clubs could help reach out to younger children who could be attracted by the cartoons published in the Junior Graphic. This will help arouse their interest at very early ages before they attain twelve and beyond.

The school authorities to collaborate with the Parents Teacher Association (PTA) and other stakeholders to subsidise the purchase of more of the Junior Graphic so that more copies can be available in the schools.

Extra-curricular reading should be instituted as part of school and home schedules and possibly duration should be increased where the reading schedule already exists.

5.4 For further research

Finally, the researcher recommends that, further studies could be conducted on reading habits or interest of students and academic performance within a larger catchment area / region zone to produce a more reflective study over a larger area which might go a long way to foster adequate measures for drawing the interests of teenagers to the awesome world of reading.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for Pupils Who Read Junior Graphic

This questionnaire forms part of an academic research being conducted by a student at the Department of Communication Studies, University of Ghana to assess teenagers reading habits of the Junior Graphic. Thank you for agreeing to respond to these questions. All information given by respondents shall be used for the purpose of this academic research and shall be treated as confidential.

Please select only one option.

1. Please specify your sex

   o   Male

   o   Female

2. How old are you?

   o   Under 12 years

   o   Between 12 to 14 years

   o   Above 14 years

This section seeks to determine what content pupils like most in the Junior Graphic

3. Do you read Junior Graphic (J.G)?

   o   Yes

   o   No

4. How long have you been reading the Junior Graphic?

o   Below 5 months

o   Over 5 months – 1 year

o   1-2 yrs

o   3-4 yrs

o   5-6yrs

o   6 years and above

5. Where do you get copies of Junior Graphic?

o   From the news vendor
o   From my school/community library
o   I borrow from friends/mates
o   Parents buy for me
o   Any other? Specify**……………………….**

6. Why would you miss an edition of Junior Graphic?

o   None at the library

o   None at the vendor

o   Intentionally ignore

o   No access to friends' copy

o   None at home

o   No money to buy

7. How much time do you spend reading JG at a sitting?

o   10-20min

o   21-40min

o 41min-1hr

o 1hour and more

o 1 day

o 2days

o 3days

o 4days-1week

o 1 weeks or more

8. Have you always read the JG for the period you indicated in Q5?

    o Yes

    o No

9. What do you like most in the Junior Graphic?

o Stories

o Sports

o Letters to the editor

o Cartons

o Academic section

o Picture stories

o Any other? Specify**…………………**

10. Do you contribute to these contents?

o Yes

o No

11. Do get same content from other sources?

o Yes

o No

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9b. If yes state source…………………….

12. What other things would you like to see in the Junior Graphic?
Specify.

13. What do you do when you are free at school?
o Play with friends
o Read academic books
o Spend time talking to friends
o Read story books
o Read Junior Graphic

14. What do you do when you are free at home?
o Watch TV
o Spend time on social media
o Browse online
o Read story books
o Read Junior Graphic

This section seeks to determine what times/periods pupils like to read the Junior Graphic

15. At what time of the day do you read Junior Graphic?
o Morning
o Afternoon
o Evening
o During school break
o During leisure hours
o Any Other? Specify**………………….**

16. Are the time(s) you read the Junior Graphic self-selected or assigned by authority?
o Self-selected
o Assigned

17. Under whose supervision do you read Junior Graphic?

o   Teacher

o   Parent

o   Elder sibling

o   Librarian

o   Seniors in school

o   Any Other? Specify………………….

18. Do you refer to the Junior Graphic at a later time after a first reading?

o   Yes

o   No

19. How often? Please state…………

20. How many editions do you read in a month?

o   1

o   2

o   3

o   4

21. What reason (s) allow for increase (if any) in the time spent on reading Junior Graphic?

o   More time available now

o   Parents insist on me to read

o   My friends also started reading more

o   Personal decision to read more

o   Any others (specify)_____

22: What reason (s) (if any) decreased your time spent on Junior Graphic?

o   More time being spent on academic work

o   Getting same content through internet

o Depending more on Radio / TV for same content in Junior Graphic

o Any others (specify) _____

23: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

a. I read Junior Graphic because I aspire to be well informed about what is going on in the world
- o Strongly Agree
- o Agree
- o Neutral
- o Disagree
- o Strongly Disagree

b. People around me would expect me to know the happenings around the world
- o Strongly Agree
- o Agree
- o Neutral
- o Disagree
- o Strongly disagree

c. There are many benefits in reading JG
- o Strongly Agree
- o Agree
- o Neutral
- o Disagree
- o Strongly disagree

d. Reading JG makes me want to learn more
- o Strongly Agree
- o Agree
- o Neutral
- o Disagree
- o Strongly disagree

e. I read the JG as it has become a habit to do so"

- o Strongly Agree
- o Agree
- o Neutral
- o Disagree
- o Strongly disagree