

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION STUDIES**

**READING HABITS AND ITS EFFECT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF  
THE STUDENTS OF ST. JOHN'S GRAMMAR SENIOR HIGH SECONDARY**

**SCHOOL, ACCRA**

**BY**

**EBENEZER KWADJO POBI**

**(10071655)**

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LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR  
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**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that, this dissertation is the original work of Ebenezer Kwadjo Pobi, which was undertaken personally under the supervision of Dr. Evelyn D. Markwei. This is my own research and has not been presented either in whole or in part for another degree elsewhere. All references cited in this work are fully acknowledged.

Sign: .....

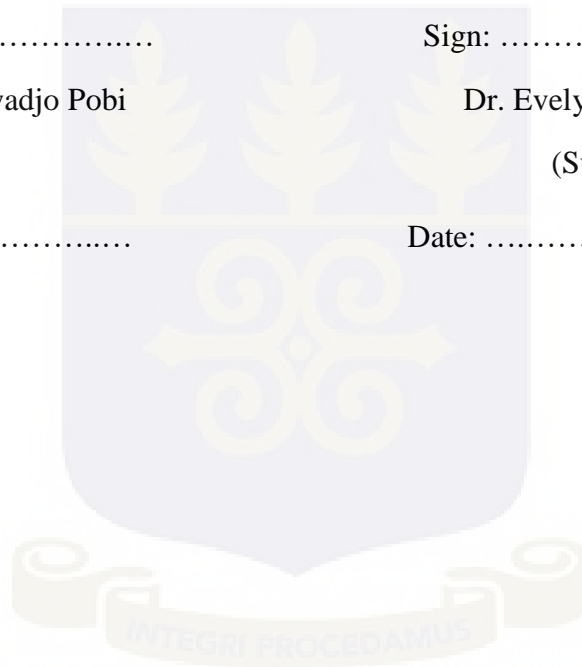
Ebenezer Kwadjo Pobi  
(Student)

Date: .....

Sign: .....

Dr. Evelyn D. Markwei  
(Supervisor)

Date: .....



## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research first to the Almighty God for guiding me through this work. I also dedicate the work to my family Mercy, Janet, Samuel, Isaac, Stephen and Grace.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I wish to, first and foremost, express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the Almighty God for his care, guidance and sustenance throughout my life. I seize this opportunity to acknowledge the enormous support given to me by my supervisor Dr. Evelyn D. Markwei. Throughout this research, I was fortunate to have benefited from the competent and conscientious assistance of my lecturer and supervisor Dr. Evelyn D. Markwei of the Department of Information Studies. She, indeed, stimulated my thoughts in this fascinating field of study.

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b><u>PAGES</u></b>
<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	i
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	ii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	iii
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	iv
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	viii
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	ix
<b>ABSTRACTS</b> .....	x
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b>	
1.0 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Profile of St. Johns Grammar Senior High Secondary School .....	3
1.3 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.4 Purpose of the Study .....	6
1.5 Objectives of the Study .....	6
1.6 Research Question .....	6
1.7 Theoretical Framework .....	7
1.8 Scope and Limitation of the Study .....	8
1.9 Significance of the Study .....	8
1.10 Organization of the study .....	9
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b>	
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	10
2.1 Introduction .....	10
2.2 Definition of Reading .....	10
2.3 Importance and Benefits of Reading .....	12
2.4 Reading habits among secondary school students .....	14
2.5 Factors affecting reading habits .....	18
2.6 The effects of reading habits on academic performance .....	21
Conclusion .....	23

**CHAPTER THREE**

3.0	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	25
3.1	Introduction .....	25
3.2	Research Design .....	25
3.2.1	Justification for Research Design .....	26
3.3	Location and Population for the study .....	26
3.4	Sampling Procedures .....	27
3.5	Instrument for Data Collection .....	29
3.6	Data collection procedure .....	30
3.7	Data Analysis .....	31
3.8	Ethical considerations in the Research .....	32

**CHAPTER FOUR**

4.0	DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS .....	33
4.1	Introduction .....	33
4.2	Demography of respondents .....	33
4.2.1	Gender of respondents .....	34
4.2.2	Age of respondents .....	34
4.2.3	Level of education of respondents .....	34
4.2.4	Occupation of father/Guardian .....	35
4.2.5	Occupation of mother/Guardian .....	35
4.2.6	Educational background of mother .....	36
4.2.7	Educational background of father .....	37
4.3	Reading interest or habits .....	37
4.3.1	Perception of reading .....	37
4.3.2	Reading beyond class schedule .....	38
4.3.3	Frequency of reading .....	38
4.3.4	Time spent per day in reading .....	39
4.4	Types of reading materials .....	39
4.4.1	Type of storybooks they read .....	40
4.4.2	Number of books read per term .....	40

	<b><u>PAGES</u></b>
4.4.3 Access to reading materials .....	41
4.5 Purpose for reading .....	41
4.5.1 Enjoyment of reading .....	42
4.6 Perception of students reading habits and academic performance .....	42
4.6.1 Use of leisure time .....	44
4.7 Factors that affect or hinder reading habits .....	45
4.8 Library use .....	45
4.8.1 Purposes for visiting the library .....	46
4.8.2 Reference materials in the library .....	47
4.9 Attitude to reading .....	47
4.10 Discussion of Findings .....	49
4.10.1 Reading Interest or habits of students .....	50
4.10.2 The types of materials they read .....	51
4.10.3 Their Purpose for reading .....	52
4.10.4 Perception of students reading habits and academic performance .....	53
4.10.5 Factors that affect or hinder reading habits.....	54
 <b>CHAPTER FIVE</b>	
5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	57
5.1 Introduction .....	57
5.2 Summary .....	57
5.2.1 Reading Interest or Habits of the students of St. Johns Grammar .....	57
5.2.2 Types of Materials read .....	58
5.2.3 Purpose for reading .....	58
5.2.4 Perception of students reading habits and Academic Performance .....	58
5.2.5 Factors that affects or hinder reading .....	59
5.2.6 Library Use .....	59
5.2.7 Attitude to Reading .....	60
5.3 Conclusion .....	60
5.4 Recommendations .....	61
5.4.1 School Authorities .....	61

	<b><u>PAGES</u></b>
5.4.2 Improving the Library .....	62
5.4.3 Parents Encouragement .....	62
5.4.4 For Further Research .....	62
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	63
APPENDIX .....	73



**LIST OF TABLES**

	<b><u>PAGES</u></b>
Table 1: Gender distribution of respondents .....	34
Table 2: Age of respondents .....	34
Table 3: Level of education of respondents .....	34
Table 4 : Occupation of fathers .....	35
Table 5 : Occupation of mothers .....	35
Table 6 : Educational level of mothers .....	36
Table 7 : Educational level of father .....	37
Table 8 : Perception of reading .....	37
Table 9 : Reading beyond class schedule .....	38
Table 10 : Frequency of reading .....	38
Table 11 : Time spent per day in reading .....	39
Table 12 : Materials read .....	39
Table 13a : Type of storybooks read (Fiction or Novel) .....	40
Table 13b : Number of books read per term .....	40
Table 14 : Access to reading materials .....	41
Table 15 : Reasons for reading .....	41
Table 16 : Enjoying reading .....	42
Table 17 : Academic Performance .....	43
Table 18 : Extent to which you agree with the following statement on reading ...	43
Table 19 : Use of leisure time .....	44
Table 20 : Hindrances to reading .....	45
Table 21a : Availability of school library.....	45
Table 21b : Library visit .....	46
Table 22 : Purpose for visiting the library .....	46
Table 23 : Reference material use in the library .....	47
Table 24 : Extent to which you agree with the following statements .....	48

**LIST OF FIGURES**

	<b><u>PAGES</u></b>
Figure 1: Mathewson Model .....	7



### **ABSTRACT**

Habitual reading is considered as one of the most important exercise for enhancing one's academic performance. Regular reading increases one's vocabulary and ability to think, improves one's verbal and writing abilities, and broadens one's horizon. Thus, it is important for students to adopt the reading culture for improved academic performance.

The main objectives of the study is to: investigate the reading habits of students of St. Johns Grammar Secondary School, find out the types of materials they read, ascertain their purposes for reading and their perception of reading habits and academic performance, and lastly to find out factors that affect or hinder their reading habits. The study used the survey methodology and questionnaire as the main data collection instrument. Simple random sampling was used to select 133 students to participate in the study. Out of the 133 copies of questionnaires distributed, 131 were completed giving a response rate of 98.5%. The data was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency tables were used to present the findings.

The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the respondents acknowledged the importance of reading, read story books, textbooks and class notes. Their purposes for reading included acquiring knowledge, learning new things, improving their vocabulary and grades, passing examination and for pleasure. The participants unanimously agreed that reading habits have a direct influence on students' academic performance. The study recommended that both parents and school authorities must encourage students to read habitually for increased academic performance. The school library must be stocked with current, relevant and interesting books to increase library use and love for reading among the students.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

The Cambridge English Dictionary defines reading as “the skill or activity of getting information from books”. Regular reading is considered to be one of the most powerful influences in the promotion of one’s personal development and social progress in general. Some researchers, for example Palani (cited in Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2014) believes that systematic and regular reading improves the academic, filters the sensations, promote tasks, and render viewpoints for one’s living, thereby preparing him or her for an effectual involvement in the social and political life. Regular reading has several benefits to the people who engage in it. It is known to promote knowledge acquisition, stress reduction, vocabulary expansion, memory improvement, focus and concentration and good writing skills. It is also therapeutic. For example reading of spiritual texts has been linked to inner peace and calmness, and lowering of blood pressure. Such benefits are likely to improve the academic performance of any student. Thus reading and intellectual achievements are interconnected and rest on each other.

The ability to cultivate and develop good reading habits enables one to have the opportunity of broaden his or her knowledge. For example, all elementary school subjects such as mathematics, science, social studies and even spelling require students to read. Rosenberg (2003) stressed that an early exposure of a child to books and literacy activities in their early childhood makes them to understand the functions of prints which manifests literate behaviour long before they are formally learn to read. Such people also read faster with great ease than their counterparts who might have had no previous experience with books.

Reading habit among students in general has become a source of worry to many including educationists who continue to complain about low standards in both writing and speaking of the English language. Reading also increases the vocabulary of individuals and enables them to speak and write well. Reading attitudes lead to positive reading experiences which also lead to higher academic performance. People read for various reasons. Some read to find more information on an aspect of social living, some read to alleviate boredom, some read to while away time, and some also read to gain specific information. To others, reading doubles as a form of leisure and hobby. Others also read to acquire knowledge in order to pass their examination (Stebbins 2013).

Reading is considered as a basic tool for learning and therefore important to every individual. Consequently the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have focussed most of her activities within the area of promoting reading among communities. For instance, as far back as 1972 UNESCO launched a programme captioned, 'Books for All' for the member states to implement to improve reading habits in their various countries. The main purpose of the programme was to promote and encourage reading habits among people globally.

A paper also delivered at the 65<sup>th</sup> IFLA Councils and General Conference held in Bangkok, Thailand in 1999, indicated that if developing countries, especially Asia and Africa do not put adequate measures in place to promote reading habits in their respective countries more people will become illiterate by the end of the century.

In most African countries, reading in general has been recognised as an academic exercise often linked to the reading of only textbooks which deals with the core content of the subject matter. Formation of reading habits among students in Ghana should be a matter of concern

to all stakeholders in the country. Rosenberg (2003) states that a reading nation is a winning nation therefore efforts should be made to promote reading among students in the country.

## **1.2 Profile of St. John's Grammar Senior High Secondary School**

St. John's Grammar Senior High Secondary School (JOHNSCO) was established on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1954 by a prominent entrepreneur called Mr. John Hayford Mensah (a.k.a Kodwo Wangara). He was supported by the following people, MP and the then Trade Minister, Mr P.K.K. Quaidoo, Nana Essilfie Bondzi, Mr Charles Ocansey and Mr S.M. Arko ("St John's Grammar celebrates anniversary - Graphic Online," n.d.).

The school started with only four students during its maiden year and was accommodated in a temporary structure at Kokomlemle, then a predominantly residential suburb of Accra.

The school was established at the time the people in the country were fighting for independence from the British. The founders then had strong nationalist inclinations with education as their priority. Whilst most of the secondary schools that were in the existence at that time were single-sex schools, this school was co-educational.

French, Latin and Greek were taught in the school apart from the traditional subjects which earned the school its name "Grammar School" with the motto "Virtute et Industria" meaning "Virtue and hard Work". The mission statement of the school is not different from what the founders envisaged. The mission and vision of the founders were; "To provide relevant education to all Ghanaians at all levels to enable them to acquire skills that will assist them to develop their potential, to be productive, to facilitate poverty reduction and to promote socio-economic growth and national development".

A decade after its inception, JOHNSCO was relocated from Kokomlemle, which was then succumbing to the urban sprawl to Achimota on the Accra – Nsawam road which was considered to be a more suitable academic environment. A year later, that is 1965, JOHNSCO

was absorbed into the public school system. The government took the entire land and building on the school compound in 1968 and in 1970, the proprietor moved the preparatory and the primary department to its new place behind Achimota Brewery Company Limited (“St. John’s Grammar celebrates anniversary - Graphic Online,” n.d.).

The school which started with only four students can now boast of a total enrolment of 1,893 consisting of Forms 1 and 2 as at May, 2016. Out of this number, the males constitute 1,017 whilst the remaining 876 are females. There are 550 boarders made up of 302 males and 248 females. The school also has staff strength of 117 comprising 78 teachers and 39 non-teaching staff members. The school offers the following subjects; General Arts, General Science, Agricultural Science, Business, Vocational which comprises Visual Arts and Home Economics. According to the authorities, the school performs better in Business and General Science programmes. By dint of hard work by both teachers and students, the school has been placed among the grade ‘A’ schools in the country. Most of the grandaunts from the school also occupy higher positions in the country. They can be found in almost all the facet of the economy contributing their quota to the nation’s development. The school also placed emphasis on co-curricular activities in which some of the students have excelled. This has also enhanced the reputation of the school (“St John’s Grammar celebrates anniversary - Graphic Online,” n.d.).

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The current problems of students such as poor performance in examinations as well as poor speaking and writing of English have been attributed to lack of reading habits amongst them. Poor reading habits in the secondary schools have become an issue of great concern among parents, government and educationists in the country.

In Ghana, the performance of students' writing WASSCE examinations in the country has been deteriorating for some time now. This deterioration has been attributed to poor reading habits among students'. For example the Chief Examiner's report for the WASSCE examinations for 2012 and 2013 revealed a percentage failure of 31.19% and 19.15% respectively. . The report attributed the poor performance to lack of intensive and extensive reading, poor communication skills, and lack of understanding of questions, poor orthography or spelling skills (Chief Examiners Report 2013). The report recommended that students must read widely to broaden their knowledge and improve on their vocabulary.

Another report by Ghana Education Service in 2014 also indicated a fall in students' performance in English. Only 45.2% passed the subject to qualify for tertiary education with 20.9% of examination candidates getting Grade 9 in the English language in 2014.

A review of the literature showed that research on reading habits in Ghana have focused on tertiary students and school pupils. For example Afenyo (1999) studied the reading habits of undergraduate students of the School of Administration, University of Ghana; Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2014) studied reading habits and academic performance of students of the Koforidua Polytechnic; and Adablah (1992) also studied the reading habits of teachers in selected sub-districts of Accra Metropolitan area. With regard to pupils, Arthur (2006) researched the reading habits of children in the Sunyani Municipality, while Brew (2006) studied the reading habits of children in private and public schools. No research was found in the literature on the reading habits and its effects on academic performance of students in secondary schools in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana and it is against this background that the researcher intends to investigate reading habits and its effects on academic performance of students of St. John's Grammar Secondary School in Accra.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate reading habits and its effects on academic performance of students' at St. John's Grammar Senior High Secondary School in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the study**

The research seeks to achieve the following objectives:-

- i. To investigate the reading habits of students of St. John's Grammar Secondary School.
- ii. To find out the types of materials they read and their purposes for reading
- iii. To find out the perception of students on reading habits and academic performance and the factors that affect their reading habits.

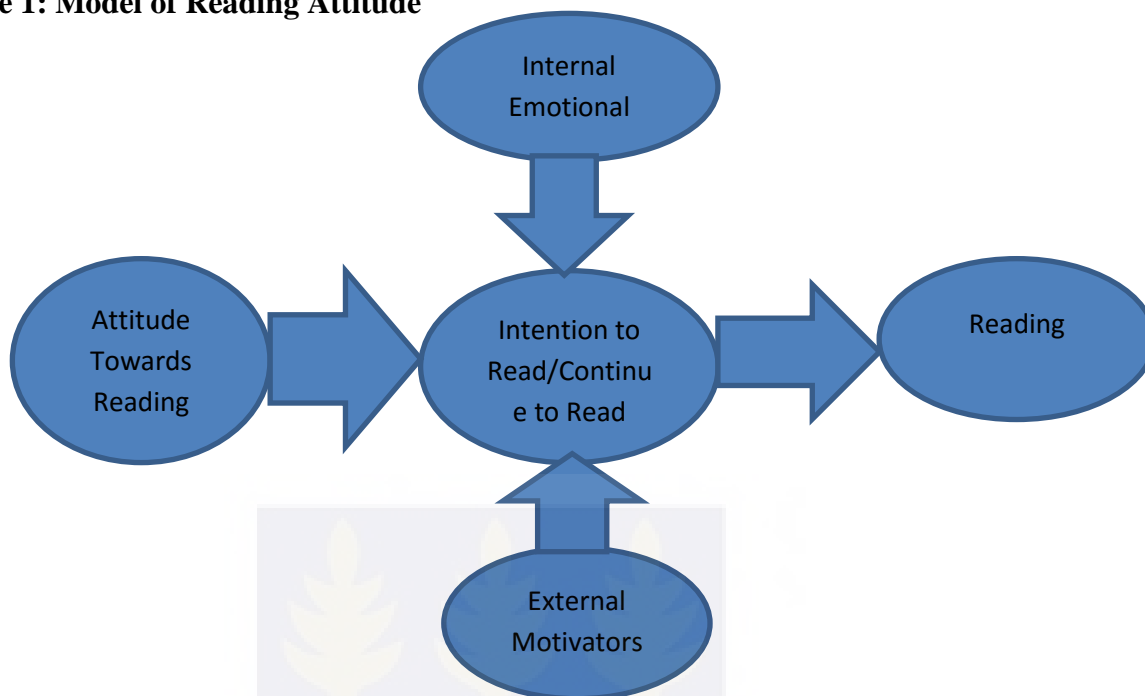
#### **1.6 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions;

- i. What are the reading interests of students of St. John's Grammar secondary students?
- ii. What types of materials do they read and for what purposes do they read?
- iii. What is the perception of students on reading habits and academic performance and what factors affects their reading?

## 1.7 Theoretical Framework

**Figure 1: Model of Reading Attitude**



Source: Mathewson (2004)

The above model by Mathewson cited in (Lukhele, Nazarene, Lukhele, & Commons, 2013) show a simplified picture for attitude formation and sustenance in order to achieve a good reading behaviour or habit. Mathewson came out of this model when he was trying to find out how attitudes are formed towards reading. Mathewson proposes that good attitude on its own is not sufficient enough to ensure that actual reading behaviour has been cultivated, but rather has to be influenced by intention to read or keep on reading.

Mathewson's model of reading attitude also consist of external motivators and internal emotional states which are seen as a key elements that influence the intention to read and to keep on reading.

The external motivators are the constituents of the following 'incentives, purposes, norms and settings outside the parameters of the readers. Incentives and purposes could be anything that

can motivate someone to read and these could be in the form of the person receiving prizes, attaining good marks at exams or been socially based.

The internal emotional state on the other hand was explained to have involved the reader's concentration on the text he reads by putting aside all the other emotions that may be experienced while engaging in the construction of a writer's meaning in the text in order for the reader to recreate meaning of what has been read.

### **1.8 Scope and limitations of the Study**

The investigation covered reading habits and its impact on students of St. John's Grammar School of the Greater Accra Region in Ghana. This study was limited to the Forms 1 & 2 students belonging to St. John's Grammar Senior High School in Accra. The Form 3s were not included in the study because the researcher got to the school to distribute the questionnaire when they were done with their final exams and gone home.

### **1.9 Significance of the study**

The study is significant for many reasons:

The study is important since it would contribute to the body of knowledge on reading habits of secondary students in Ghana. The outcome of the study also contributes to the sum total of human knowledge. In addition to the above, the outcome of the study offers the following contributions;

- i. It is expected to kindle or renew interest for further research into the reading habits of students of Senior High Secondary School in Ghana and to add to knowledge in this area.
- ii. It is anticipated that, the findings of the study will be of value to the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service in formulating policies that will promote reading among high school students in the country.

- iii. The findings and recommendations based on the findings are expected to inform the St. John's Grammar School authorities on how to promote and improve the reading habits of students.
- iv. The findings may also help to improve on library provision and services in the school.

### **1.10 Organization of the study**

The study was organised into five main chapters.

This chapter describes an overview of the research work. It also deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose, objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, scope and limitations, and significance of the study.

**Chapter two** looked at the relevant literature in relation to the study.

**Chapter three** discussed the methods used for the study including, research design, study location, population and sampling procedures, data collection instruments and procedures, presentation of findings.

**Chapter four** also dealt with the analysis and discussion of findings.

**Chapter five** was devoted to the summary, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature on the reading habits and its impact on academic performance of students at St. John's Grammar Senior High School. It presents information on reading definitions, importance and benefits of reading, factors that hinder reading, students' reading habits and reading habits and academic performance of secondary school students. The chapter also presents some related findings on reading habits.

#### 2.2 Definition of Reading

Reading came into being at the time written languages were used as a medium of communicating complex ideas to create a larger meaningful whole, be it scientific observation, artistic expression or religious truth. Such reading is a special activity, during which the reader consumes written material enabling him to achieve some goal, be they utilitarian enjoyment, personal fulfilment, or a combination of these three (Stebbins, 2013). He further indicated that, most people use their eyes to read, they can certainly realise many of these ends by consuming the relevant material aurally, by hearing words originally set out to be read, or tactile, by feeling text written in Braille. Modern reading consists of understanding more or less complex ideas expressed, at least initially, in written language.

According to World Book Encyclopaedia (2006) reading is the act of "getting meaning from printed or written words". It is the foundation of the study and one of the most important skills in day-to-day life. Reading gives the clue to all sorts of information. It enables one to study how to improve or do things, to like stories, to find what other people trust, and to develop ideas and to put in place plans of our own. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1995) also defines reading as "the act of or an instance of reading or pursuing reading or

reproduce mentally or vocally the written or printed words of a book by following the symbols with the eye or by feeling embossed symbols with the fingers. For example, Braille design for the blind.”

Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2002) defines reading as the “process of recognizing written or printed words and understanding their meaning”. This type of reading often allows the reader to pay close attention to what he or she is reading, poses a series of mental questions to him-self as he reads along, and the answers to these questions will help him or her to better understand the text he or she reads.

Day and Bamford (1998) defined “reading as the construction of meaning from a printed or written message”. The interpretation of substance requires the reader connecting the information from the written report with foregoing apprehension to arrive at meaning or understanding.

Eskey (2005) referred to reading as a purposeful and creative mental process in which a reader gets the meaning from his background knowledge or the information in the text. Reading can therefore be seen as a procedure of proving a dynamic sense which may require an effectual way of communicating with the writer and the reader. It is sometimes difficult for an adult to develop a reading habit if this is not acquired during early teen age. Though, some people know how to read, they read very little.

Onwubiko (1985) summarised the intents of modern reading into four major parts which are reading for pleasure, leisure and relaxation, information, and knowledge acquisition.

Ely (2001) explained reading as a complicated activity requiring multiple skills, together with “letter and word recognition, grapheme and phoneme correspondence, semantic knowledge, syntactic understanding, comprehension and interpretation” (p. 432). Students needs to acquire and continue to practice what they are been taught alongside reading habits in order to achieve

academic success. Generally, reading is understood to be a mode of obtaining additional information and understanding. It does not only give understanding but rather enables a person to become matured as well as broadens one's horizon on contemporary issues (Kim and Anderson, 2011).

Ogunrombi and Adio (1995) stated that habit can be explained as a learned stimulus-response sequence, therefore reading habit can be considered as a learned stimulus-response sequence on the part of the reader to understand a writer's message. They further explain that reading is an essential aid for accomplishing inner security, enjoying leisure, apportioning the hard skills which are met in books and for keeping level with the occurrences in the world at large. Reading habits according to Kaur and Thiyagarajah (1999) refer to a regular tendency to read. Reading habits is also explained by Sangkaeo (1999) as a behaviour that signifies the likeness of reading and tastes of reading. Shen (2006) asserts that reading habits denote how frequently, a type of material is read.

### **2.3 Importance and benefits of reading**

'Reading plays an important part in the daily lives of most people. People read road signs, maps, and labels on medicine bottles, fill out forms, apply for jobs and so on. The capability to perform such actions is occasionally referred to as functional reading or literacy. Reading is also significant at school, at work and even during leisure time. Students also may read for information from a computer for a class project. Besides reading in the classroom and on the job, people read books, magazines and other printed materials for personal information and recreation. Many people also read to study more about their particular interests such as sports, science, current events and so on' (World Book of Encyclopaedia, 2006).

Learning to read is one of the main intellectual experiences that give the basis for a child's future victory at school. Reading is considered as a procedure, a way of reasoning and a sort of real experience which requires several complicated capabilities, the skill to discern printed

words, to skim for information and then perhaps to read exhaustively (World Book of Encyclopaedia, 2006).

Ghana being a member of the UNESCO held a crusade for the promotion of good reading habits after UNESCO's declaration of promoting reading worldwide. The campaign is to help improve reading habits in order to spread literacy among the people in the communities (UNESCO, 1975, 1982).

According to Chettri and Rout (2013), reading is the beginning of a child's education. The success or non-success of his educational life will depend to a larger scope upon his reading ability. It may be considered as a fundamental skill in the learning process and every effort should be made to develop it from infancy. Studies have also revealed that teachers do not have much control on children as parents do. A good reading habit has also been found to be imperative for a healthy academic development which also plays a critical role in allowing a person attain practical efficiency.

Karim and Hasan (2007) said that, reading contributes significantly to job success, career development and ability to respond to change. This is because the more one reads, the more knowledgeable one becomes. More knowledge also brings more confidence and confidence in turn builds self-esteem which allows one to express him or herself well anywhere he finds himself. Leppanen et al (2005) emphasises that as early as the beginning of primary school, children's reading skills had contributed to their reading habits, such as reading book, magazines and television subtitles. Reading possession is therefore important in the development of reading habits among the students.

Dadzie (2008) asserts that reading as the ability to understand words contained in a document and make use of the knowledge for personal growth and development. This implies that one always make meaning out of recorded information be it in print or non-print.

Stadler (1980) said that reading provides the background or base for grammatical efficiency especially during childhood in both languages. It also contributes to thinking in both languages.

Research conducted by Nestle Family Monitor/Market and Opinion Research International (NFM/MORI) in 2003 indicated at that time that, 68% of the young people aged between 11 – 18 years prefer to read in bed which means that there is an interest in reading among the people.

The victory and non-success of one's educational life rely on to a large scope upon his/her reading skill. A child can grow up with some difficulties if he/she does not acquire reading habits, especially when in line of work that requires reading. A good reading habit is also important for a healthy academic growth and also plays a critical part that enables one to achieve practical efficiency (Chettri and Rout, 2013). They further mentioned that pleasure reading is a development of life-long reading habits that can strengthen language, skills and verbal fluency.

Bignold (2003) indicated that the habit of reading improves children's reading skills. Moreover, reading, be it for study or pleasure is important since it aids widen ones skills and understanding (Green, 2002). Cunningham and Stanovich (1998) assert that reading volumes both inside and outside the school has an important effect on the growth of reading rapidly and fluency, vocabulary, general knowledge, and spoken capability. Edem and Ofre cited in (Ihuoma, 2012) conducted a study on Reading and internet use activities of undergraduate students of the University of Calabar and the results revealed that, the students agreed to the benefits of reading to their academic achievement but stressed that internet usage has been a contributing factor to their poor reading habits.

## 2.4 Reading habits among secondary school students

According to McKool (2007), reading interest is defined as readings done when students are outside the school compound. Furthermore, the US Department of Education (2005) defined reading interests as whether or not students like to read in their spare time or at home or whether they like to go to the library. Besides, reading interest is also defined by the number of books read in a month and the number of times students read in a week and the favourite genres and types of English reading materials.

Reading habits in Western societies usually begins in early primary school where children learn to read and where some of them develop their initial interest in reading materials beyond that required at school. In their development, this may occur later in primary education or at the secondary level, when reading certain genres of materials become a routine. By the end of secondary school students are supposed to have acquired the basis of reading as an activity and with this background, the committed readers among them will have entered the establishment stage. By now these readers will have learned to find their material, how to pay for it, with whom to discuss it, how to fit it into their lives. In short they have become familiar with and now more or less fully participate in the social world in which their kind of reading is framed (Stebbins, 2013).

Similarly Shen (2006) also identifies reading habits as how frequently, how much and what students read. Several researchers in the past have also spent much of their time examining learners' reading habits. These researchers uncovered that reading habits is usually related to students; gender, age, educational background, academic performance and professional growth.

A Malaysian Reading Profile Survey conducted by the National Library of Malaysia in 2010 reported that Malaysians who are at the age of 10 and above only read approximately eight to twelve books a year (Gleed, 2013). Imran cited in (Khairuddin, 2013) commented on the

report saying that, though reading has a lot of benefits, Malaysians in general and students in particular have not adopted the reading habit. A study done by Imran cited in (Khairuddin, 2013) also discovered that students had interest in reading; however, they have not reached a point where they take reading as a habit. A research conducted by Mohamad, Majid and Ooi (2011) on the reading interests of Chinese Malaysian students found that 48% of the respondents in the study indicated that they read only when there is time. These students further indicated that they read newspapers, magazines and comics (Mohamad, Majid & Ooi, 2011). However, it was further revealed that, 20% of the respondents read to pass time while 10% indicated that they read because they believe reading is fun (Mohamad, Majid & Ooi, 2011). In addition to this, the result of their research also indicated that only two students out of the 60 students read novels or story books for more than four hours per day (Mohamad, Majid & Ooi, 2011). Based on these findings, one can therefore conclude that Malaysian Chinese students have not adapted to the habit of reading for pleasure.

Mokhtari and Sheorey cited in (Karim and Hasan, 2007) examined reading habits of 85 University Students who were enrolled in development reading course at the University in the Midwestern USA. The study reported that students read an average of 4hours and 75minutes per week and those who scored higher on the text of reading comprehension spend slightly more time on non-academic reading.

In recent survey on reading habits by the Malaysian National Library 2006, with a sample of 60,441 respondents, it was found that the literacy rate has slightly decreased to 92% from 93% in 1996 and this was attributed to the youth not doing enough reading because there has never been a reading culture of the people so it has become strenuous to generate one when there are no examples or people to imitate, and the background is also not favourable to reading. This supports the assertion that reading is for the Westerns and African and Asian culture have

nothing to do with reading therefore making Africans and Asians not cultivating a habit of reading.

Tella and Akande (2007) asserts that most people in Sub-Saharan Africa have less access to books and other learning materials and this can affect their reading culture. The authors found that reading was done when there is an examination to write and this attitude was seen to have affected students in the development of their reading culture. This was confirmed by Edem & Ofre, cited in (Ihuoma, 2012) that reading to pass examinations, tests and continuous assessments is the main motivator for reading among some university students studying at University of Calabar, Nigeria.

It is obvious that for students to adopt a reading culture, it must be part of all facets of their life but not only on some aspects such as school work (Magara & Batambuze, 2005). In support of Magara & Batambuze, Ufomadu cited in (Oguntayo, 2008) that most of the citizenry in Uganda do not read, rather they only read when it can-not be avoided especially when they are in school studying to pass their examinations and once this is done, they bid farewell to reading.

Kumar et al (2010) stressed that the school library must provide the needed environment by integrating itself completely into the educational system to achieve the overall objectives of the school. The authors further stated that the better way of doing this is to stimulate the intellectual growth of the student through the provision of appropriate instructional materials for teachers and reading materials for students. Therefore, students should be taught how to sift data through independent reading in order to improve one's reading habits.

Reading is not the only way that people come to know the world in which they live. Though, some people know how to read, they read very little. Moreover, some people are unable to read. Some are illiterate and since reading is an acquired skill they have not bothered to master

sufficiently. Others are severely dyslectic and so they are unable to learn to read well and still others are effectively illiterate, because the language they know is neither spoken nor published where they are presently living (Stebbins, 2013).

A study conducted by Burgess and Jones (2010) on reading habits of college students at Oklahoma State University. In all 209 undergraduate students participated in the study. The females rated material from the mystery, religion and romance genres more than their male counterparts. The study further revealed that, the females read books and magazines for fun more often than their male counterparts. The males on the other hand were found to have read newspapers and played video games more often than females. The study further reported that approximately 77% of the participants reported using books to prepare for classes, quiz, or homework twice per week while reading books for fun per week was 24%. Fifty-four per cent also reported that they do not read books for fun and 30% of the female also indicated they read books for fun compared to 11% of their male counterparts. The study concluded that most of the students who participated were not engaged in reading books for fun.

## **2.5 Factors affecting reading habits**

There are several factors that may influence the reading habits of students. The major factor known to affect reading habits is the educational system in place. Reading habits of secondary school student are very much affected by an educational system in which students' perceived reading as academic tasks and for examination purposes Pandian cited in (Edina anak Lanying, 2005). In Europe for instance, one of the most important determining factors in explaining why people read is correlated to the amount of time people have at their disposal, their level of literacy and the value they place in scientific knowledge (Kotei, 1979).

The information technology has also changed the focus of reading from knowledge acquisition to entertainment (Deuze, 2005).

Chauhan and Lal (2012) indicated that the advent of the internet age and advancement in information technology have altered reading habits considerably. The cultural change with the advent of the information technology has also eaten into the time available for reading especially when the students are at home. Most of the students today have less time available for their reading at home and at school unless they are forced to go to prep.

Chaudhry and Low (2009) and Ramaiah (2006) also indicated that the conventional book is slowly being replaced by electronic books and electronics resources. American Association of School Librarians (1998) perceives reading as a private act, a personal and an individual relationship with a book. They went on further to state that information gathering, options for spending leisure time and social and economic variables are those that affect the setting up of this relationship.

A survey on reading habits of 119 participants by Annamalai and Muniandy (2013) revealed that Malaysian Polytechnic Business students do not enjoy reading much as compared to their involvement in technological activities. Annamalai and Muniandy (2013) also reported that 80.1% of the University students of Malaysia studied were found to be reluctant readers of English language materials which he attributed to the failure of the students' background, home and school which has impacted greatly on their reading habits. He further explained that for one to develop a good reading habit one has to be influenced by some factors which he mentioned as exposure to media and computers.

A study done by Early (2011) on leisure reading habits by gender reported that, several factors had contributed to the apathy in reading outside of the school compared to the reading that normally takes place while in school. Leisure reading therefore refers to a reading done by someone on his own. Early's findings revealed some interesting responses. When he tried to find out if the students read and the reasons for their reading, the students across all levels studied, especially the female students overwhelmingly selected several reasons why they liked

to read than their male counterparts did. Interestingly, the males also overwhelmingly gave more reasons why they are not reading. He broke his findings down to various levels of the students' according to their gender and this also revealed the following results. When he picked the students' of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, 16% of the males gave reasons for disinterested in reading compared to 31% who expressed the same, which was almost twice the percentage of their male counterparts. He then focused on the students of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade to confirm the finding and the results of the students of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade showed a different scenario. There was a huge difference between their responses. The results shown that, 53% of male responses checked at least a reason why they do not read compared to 26% of females.

Early (2011) concluded that, the findings do not indicate that generally the students do not read but rather some gave their reasons for their dis-interest in reading. He was also of the view that if teachers of the school in which the study was conducted can link in-school and out-of-school reading, then the students will look at their in school reading in a more positive way. He further revealed that classroom assignment given to the students also affects their perception of reading whiles they are out of school.

Clark (2010) also indicated that various studies have shown a link between students reading especially when they are in school than when they are out of school.

Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007) observed that, there exists a positive correlation between readings during leisure period with better success in school. They further indicated in their study on leisure reading habits of urban adolescents at Urban Middle School in large North-eastern city in the United State that, 72% of the students studied indicated that they participate in leisure reading, 50% also said that they read when there is a chance, and 22% said they have been reading constantly.

A study conducted by Edwards (2009) revealed that students who did not want to read most often come to like reading of materials such as novels and comic books. These books were perceived to be trash, so teachers usually ask school librarians not to include them in the library's stock. He, however, indicated that research has also shown that these books are already placed in most of the school libraries.

Marin (2009) mentioned specifically that, students are being exposed to several types of text from books and written text, to new digital forms of text such as webpages and blogs.

Kennedy and Hill (2006) examined gender and fourth grades reading habits and attitudes between 2001 and 2006. The study revealed that girls scored higher reading achievement than boys in nearly all the countries that took part of the study and some of these countries are Denmark, Hungary, Iran and South Africa. Various reading studies have also shown that girls differ from boys when it comes to their reading attitudes and other measures of motivation. Girls are found to have more positive attitudes towards reading as well as demonstrating more positive reading self-concept and engaging more often in reading activities outside of school. Kennedy & Hill's results trends for 26 countries revealed differences between boys and girls in the top and bottom thirds of the achievement distribution. However, countries such as Denmark, Hungary, Iran and South Africa were found to have shown differences between girls having larger reading habits than boys. There were also no significant effects on gender in most of the countries that were included in the analyses.

## **2.6 The effects of reading habits on Academic performance of students**

According to Mokhtari and Sheorey (1994), Academic reading is operationally defined as “reading textbook and other materials typically required for study.

This type of reading was meaningfully classified into textbooks, research papers, journal articles, library books and any other materials assigned for coursework” (p. 52). The study

also explained non-academic reading to mean a type of reading which is categorised into various materials such as books, newspapers, magazines and so on which has nothing to do with academic work. The study further shows no significant difference between high and low proficient readers with reference to the amount of time one spent on reading academic or non-academic material when a survey was conducted on students of University English Second Language (ESL) on reading habits. Annamalai and Muniandy (2013) indicated that examination has been seen as an important activity in students' life which enables them to consider reading as essential aid to help them to attain their educational objectives and success in their studies. Edina anak Lanying (2005) also indicated that difficulties students usually face such as low english proficiency was linked to inadequate vocabulary to discern the text which diverts their focus on the text which subsequently leads to their dispassionate to hold on to reading.

According to Ely (2001), the perspective of the study which employed academic performance involves a sequence of actions and characters which a learner must obtain to enable him/her engage in intellectual education. A reader therefore attempts to examine what he/she has read which can be brought to memory. Students need to acquire and continue to practice what they have been taught alongside reading in order to achieve academic success. Study habits are normally applied by learners for obtaining knowledge, skills and ideas. A good reading habit improves academic performance and educational success.

Jemide (2001) postulated that reading habits is usually based on theories that have been propounded on how to augment academic performance among students through good study habits.

Agina-Obu (2001) asserts that apart from other factors that can affect academic performance, success needs the acquisition of effective and good reading habits, dedication to learning as well as willingness to accept corrections. Reading habits require thorough reading, note

taking, group study, attending to class activities, doing assignment as well as playing active role in the school academic curricula. The following were also recognised by Agina-Obu (2001) as factors that contribute to poor academic performance. These are: insufficient facilities, laziness, over-indulgence in television programs, movies, social network (eg. twitter, Facebook, what Sapp), lack of good library facilities at home and at school, poor lighting system, secret cults as well as general indiscipline among secondary school students.

Aiken (2000) indicated that academic achievement is the aspect of measuring the effects of negatively standardised sets of experience. The meaning of the above definition explains achievement as being past performance though some scholars view achievement as relating to the classroom alone. Benwari and Nemine (2014) also indicated that, the proponents of this view trust that achievement is assessed based on the students' performance in a text or examination in which the end result is the achievement. They therefore explain that educational attainment is the degree of performance that is unveiled by an individual. In other words, it is the level of victory achieved at the close of educational task which can be perceived to mean the extent to which one is able to achieve after education has taken place.

Irogbu (2002) explains that academic achievement as the degree of effectiveness and intellectual substantiated by an individual after study has taken place. A study done by Graetz (1995) on socio economic status of the parents of some students revealed that, the socio economic background of some of the respondents had a great impact on the student's academic performance.

## **Conclusion**

In the course of the research literatures such as textbooks, international and local online articles related to the study were reviewed. Whiles reviewing the literature efforts were made to look at the types of materials read, importance of reading, perception of students on reading habits

and their academic performance, factors that affects or hinders reading habits among others. The review was geared towards the objectives of the study. The literatures reviewed revealed that reading habits of secondary school students had not been encouraging and efforts are been made by the authorities to inculcate reading habits in the students.

It was also identified that much research had not been done on reading habits of secondary school Students' especially in Ghana as compare to other parts of the world which much have been done. The researcher is therefore suggesting for more research to be done at this area.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology, design and techniques used for the data collection. Design such as quantitative method and techniques such as sampling procedure, location and the population for the study, instrument for data collection, and data analysis among others have been explained as well as the quantitative analysis technique that was used.

#### 3.2 Research Design

Research designs according to Creswell (2014) are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research study. The design consist of a clear statement of the research question as well as plans for gathering, processing, and interpreting the findings intended to answer the question or objectives which some researchers refer to as a strategy of inquiry

The study adopted a quantitative survey method. A quantitative research involves collecting and analysing numerical data and applying statistical text. It is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. Relationships that exist among quantitative variables are usually depicted with graphs. Quantitative research is also a form of research in which the investigators use the correlational statistics to describe and measure the degree or association between two or more variables or sets of scores. The variables used can therefore be measured on instruments so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures. Quantitative data usually includes closed-ended responses (Creswell, 2012, 2014, p.12).

### **3.2.1 Justification for Research Design**

The study adopted a quantitative survey method for the following reasons;

- i. Quantitative research provides precise, reliable and numerical data that can be used to generalize finding.
- ii. Quantitative data is collected and analyse at a lesser cost.
- iii. Quantitative data provides better objective and accuracy of data
- iv. It allows data to be gathered and combined with statistical information
- v. Quantitative research allows any phenomenon to be measured objectively.
- vi. Collecting and collating data about groups can be quite revealing, providing insights that would not otherwise be apparent.
- vii. It allows the researcher to pursue issues in a greater depth in more realistic situations.
- viii. It allows fast data processing and analysis of huge amounts of data
- ix. The population is widely covered when using quantitative research design.
- x. Finally, less time is used for data collection and analysis using statistical software (Black, 1999; Balnaves and Caputi, 2001; Panneerselvan, 2011; Sarantakos, 2013).

### **3.3 Location and Population for the Study**

According to Busha and Harter (1980), a population is fundamental to survey research. A population is any set of persons or objects that possess at least one common characteristic. For example various survey research projects within secondary school may define the following kinds of groups as population. All Form One students, All Form Two students, All Form Three Students, All Day students, All Boarders/Boarding students, All General Arts students. Peil (1995) also mentions that the elements that make up the population should be identical either by living together in a defined territory of having a common nationality.

The population under studied are Forms 1 and 2 students of St. John's Grammar Senior High Secondary School in Accra. The total number of students is 1,893. The males constitute 1,017 and females 876. The Form 3s were excluded from the study because they were preparing to write their final examinations in May at the time of the data collection.

The study was carried out at St. Johns Grammar Secondary School in the GA West Metropolitan Area under Dome-Kwabinya constituency in the Greater Accra Region. The school is situated on Achimota-Nsawam highway, about thirty (30) minutes' drive from University of Ghana campus. The school is opposite Achimota Mall and few meters away from GIHOC Pharmaceuticals Company and Best Point Loans and Savings Company. The researcher was anxious to find out the reading habits of the students therefore choosing it as a study area. The school was relocated to its present place after it had been in existence for some time and this was due to the initial land acquired for the school and also the area fast growing as residential area which was not conducive for academic work.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedures**

Best (1980) observed that the primary aim of a research is to discover principles that have universal application. The process of sampling makes it possible to draw differences or make generalizations on the basis of careful observation of variables within a small proportion of the population.

Kumar (2005) asserts that "A sample is a segment of the population selected to represent the population as a whole" (p. 24). A sample should therefore be representative as well as be able to allow the researcher to make accurate estimates of the thoughts and behaviour of the larger population.

According to Singleton (2010), a sample refers to that part of the plan that indicates how cases are to be selected for observation. There are two types of sampling design and they are

probability and non-probability. Probability sampling is referred to as more scientific but not always feasible or economical. Rather its characteristics are that all cases in the population are randomly selected and have a known probability of being included in the sample. In non-probability the chances of selecting any case are not known because cases are non-randomly selected.

Assuming that a nationwide survey is being planned to determine reading interest of secondary school students, a random sample can be used to select from the population of all the Form ones or Twos nationwide by subject group. Furthermore, to ensure that the sample is representative of all subject groups (Forms 1 or 2) nationwide, the sample should be designed so that it comprises of the same proportions of male and female Forms 1 or 2s in all the secondary schools. Thus, a good sample resembles its parent population it is also large enough to allow generalization, within measurable limits of accuracy to the subject group from which it was selected.

Therefore random sampling refers to a process that gives each element in a set, such as each case in a population, an equal chance of being selected or a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. In order to obtain a representative sample for the data collection, a sample size of 7% of the total population of 1,893, that is 133 students of the Forms 1 and 2 were selected for the study. This was based on Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) assertion that, a “sample should be as large as the researcher can obtain with a reasonable expenditure of time and energy” (p. 116). The 7% was chosen because of the limited time available for the completion of the study.

To select the study participants, the Fish bowl random method was used as follows: The researcher obtained a list of the forms 1 and 2 students and assigned each student numbers 01 to 01893. The numbers were then written on pieces of papers, folded and placed in a bowl. The papers were thoroughly stirred and 133 papers were drawn out of the bowl individually

(Thomas and Brubaker, 2000). The researcher ticked the 133 numbers on the list and the students with those numbers were selected to participate in the study. .

### **3.5 Instrument for Data Collection**

Research instruments are considered as a tool that enables researchers to gather data for their research studies. Questionnaires are written instrument, interviews are verbal communication between respondents and the interviewee and observation are among the several instruments for data collection. Questionnaire, being a data collection instrument is seen to have more merits over the other survey instruments such as interview and observation.

Questionnaire as a survey instrument was seen to have had considerable merits over the other two which are the interview and the observation. For example, Busha and Harter (1980) also mention a number of advantages of questionnaires as follows:

It allows a wider coverage of the sample than the interview.

It provides access to more educated respondents.

It provides an opportunity for respondents to give frank and anonymous answers.

It can be completed by respondents at their own leisure within the time required by the researcher and objective data can be collected through the method.

A single instrument can be duplicated and distributed to numerous respondents which can produce a large amount of data.

The Survey instrument used at St. John's Grammar School to elicit information was a questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into six sections;

Section A: Demographic data

Section B: Reading interest or habits of students

Section C: Types of materials they read

Section D: Purpose for reading

Section E: Perception of students reading habits and academic performance

Section F: Factors that affect or hinder their reading habits

The following measures were taken in structuring the questions: a simple language was used.

There were twenty-seven (27) questions in all. Almost all the questions were closed ended questions with possible answers, and respondents were asked to choose appropriate answers.

These measures were taken to enable the respondents complete the questions quickly.

### **3.6 Data collection Procedures**

The researcher initially collected an introductory letter from the Department of Information Studies to the school authorities. The purpose of the letter was to introduce the researcher and also the purpose of the study to the school authorities so that he could be permitted to use the school for the study. The researcher was introduced to the class teachers of Forms 1 and 2. He latter briefed the teachers about the data collection procedures and a date for data collection was agreed upon. On 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2016, the researcher went to the school, and together with the teachers went to forms one and two classrooms. After he was introduced to the class by the teachers he briefed the students about the purpose of the study, sought their consent and assured them of the confidentiality of their responses. He called out the names on his list and gave them the questionnaires to fill out. The questions that needed further clarification were duly explained to them. Out of the 133 questionnaires distributed 131 were completed and returned.

### 3.7 Data Analysis

The data was coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 24. SPSS, a software package, presents the social scientist with a useful working language for data analysis. It has also been designed to make the system easily accessible to users with no prior computer experience.

The SPSS was selected for the analysis of the data collected for a number of reasons outlined by the author of the package as follows;

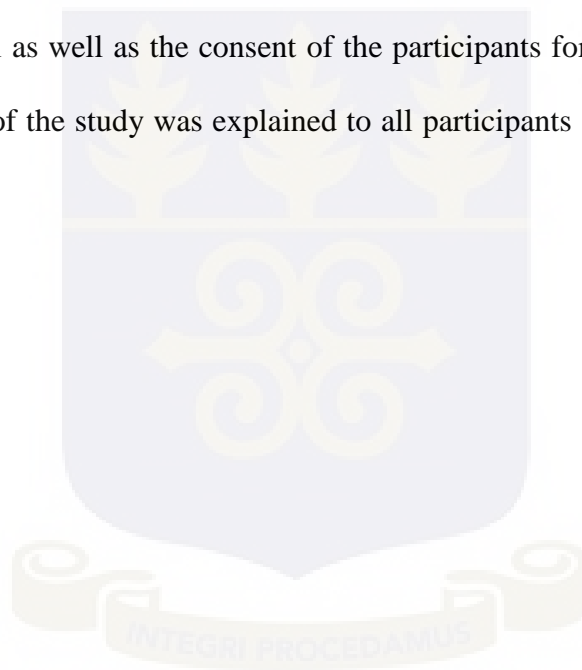
- i. Students do not have to learn a system of elaborate code to tell a computer what analysis to conduct but can simply enter their data into an easy-to-use data editor.
- ii. Students can produce graphs of distributions of variables by simply selecting items from pull down menus to make appropriate transformations to variables.
- iii. Various statistical analyses can be selected by clicking on appropriate options.
- iv. Researchers do not have to spend time disturbing themselves with the ins and outs of a statistical software package, or learning new programmes for conducting analyses that take hours to master.
- v. SPSS is the most widely used statistical software in social science Healey cited in (Arthur, 2006).

The data from the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables. Before analysing the data, the responses were coded. A value was given for each response to maintain consistency.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations in the Research**

An ethical consideration according to Fowler (2014, p.140) is “a manner in which research is carried out so that no individual suffers any adverse consequences as a result of the study”. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) referred to ethical consideration as a question of right and wrong in conducting a study. Singleton (2010) explains ethical consideration as an act in moral and responsible ways. It is also the understanding and analysing the origins, meaning and underlying principles of moral conduct.

The researcher followed the ethical requirements of the University of Ghana and sought institutional approval as well as the consent of the participants for the study through a written letter. The purpose of the study was explained to all participants and their confidentiality was assured.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of the data and discussions of the findings. The purpose of the study is to find out the reading habits and its effect on academic performance of students' of St. John's Grammar Senior High School in Accra. The study was carried out using questionnaires as the main data collection instrument. Out of the 133 questionnaires distributed, 131 were returned translating to a 98.5% response rate.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and charts with the aid of SPSS software. The results were presented under the following headings;

- i. Demographic information of respondents
- ii. Reading interest or habits of respondents
- iii. Types of reading materials
- iv. Purpose for reading
- v. Perception of students reading habits and academic performance
- vi. Factors that affect or hinder reading habits
- vii. Library use
- viii. Attitude to reading

#### 4.2 DEMOGRAPHY OF RESPONDENTS

Demographic data collected included gender, level of education, and age of respondents. It is believed that parent's educational background usually has an influence on the reading habits of their children. Therefore, information on parent's occupation and level of education was also sought.

#### 4.2.1 Gender of respondents

Table 1: Gender distribution of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	59	45.0
Female	72	55.0
Total	131	100

Source: Field Study, 2016

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. Out of 131 respondents 59 or 45% are males' whiles 72 or 55% are females.

#### 4.2.2 Age of respondents

Table 2: Age of respondents

Age range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Up to 14 years	2	1.5
15-17 years	91	69.5
18 years or more	37	28.2
Non Response	1	0.8
Total	131	100

Source: Field Study, 2016

The results of the age distribution (Table 2) indicate that majority of the respondents are between 15 and 17 years or 69.5%, whereas 37 respondents constituting 28.2% are 18 years and above. .

#### 4.2.3 Level of education of respondents

Table 3: Level of education of respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
SHS 1	67	51.1
SHS 2	62	47.3
Non response	2	1.5
Total	131	100.0

Source: Field Study, 2016

The respondents were further asked to indicate their forms and Table 3 shows that 67 or 51.1% are in Form 1 and 62 or 47.3% are in Form 2. The percentage of the respondents in form one is higher than those in form two. This is because the form ones have more classes than the form twos making them less unavailable at the time of the data collection.

#### 4.2.4 Occupation of father/Guardian

Table 4: Occupation of fathers

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Legal Practitioner	3	2.3
Public/Civil Servant	41	31.3
Self employed	73	55.7
Educationist	11	8.4
Others (please specify)	1	0.8
Non-response	2	1.5
Total	131	100

Source: Field Study, 2016

The respondents were asked to indicate their father's occupation, and Table 4 shows that most of their fathers (55.7%) are self-employed, 31.3%, are public servants, and 8.4% are educationist (Teachers). Other occupation mentioned by respondents is Legal Practitioners and Artisan.

#### 4.2.5 Occupation of Mother/Guardian

Table 5: Occupation of Mothers

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Legal Practitioner	2	1.5
Public/Civil Servant	19	14.5
Self employed	97	74.0
Educationist	8	6.2
Others (please specify)	3	2.3
Non-response	2	1.5
Total	131	100

Source: Field Study, 2016

The respondents were asked to indicate the occupation of their mothers and the results from Table 5 shows that most of the respondents' mothers (74%) are self-employed, followed by Public/Civil Servant (14.5%), Educationist (6.2%), and Legal Practitioners (3.8%) In Ghana, most self-employed people are traders who often leave home early in the morning and come late in the evening. Therefore parents who are self-employed may not be able to supervise their children to do extra reading when they come back from school.

#### 4.2.6 Educational background of mother

Table 6: Educational level of Mothers

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	6	4.6
Junior High School	42	32.1
Senior High School	43	32.8
Graduate	37	28.2
Others (please specify)	1	0.8
No Response	2	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

The respondents were asked to indicate the educational background of their mothers. The educational levels of respondents' mothers (Table 6) are: Senior High 32.8%, followed by Junior High 32.1%, and tertiary education 28.2%. A few of the respondents (4.6%) indicated their mothers are illiterates. Since most of the mothers of respondents have some form of education, they are likely to encourage their children on the need to read and also educate them about the benefits they stand to derive through reading.

#### 4.2.7 Educational background of father

Table 7: Educational level of fathers

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	1	0.8
Junior High School	16	12.2
Senior High School	37	28.2
Graduate	74	56.5
Others	1	0.8
No response	2	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

Table 7 also shows that more than half of respondents' fathers (56.5%) have University education, while 28.2% and 12.2% have Senior and Junior High education respectively. The results show that the fathers of respondents are more educated than the mothers considering the fact that more than 50% of them have university education.

#### 4.3 READING INTEREST OR HABITS

The researcher further sought to determine the reading interest or habits of the respondents and so they were asked to indicate whether they read at all, their perception about reading, the frequency with which they read, and number of hours they spend on reading.

##### 4.3.1 Perception of reading

Table 8: Perception of reading

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Difficult	4	3.1
Interesting	89	67.9
Rewarding	6	4.6
Boring	10	7.6
Enjoyable	20	15.3
Non-response	2	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

With regards to the perception of reading, Table 8 shows that generally, reading is well perceived by respondents. Majority of the respondents (67.9%) perceive reading as interesting, 15.3% perceive it as enjoyable, and 4.6% see it as rewarding. Only 7.6% and 3.1% indicated reading as boring and difficult respectively.

#### 4.3.2 Reading beyond class schedule

Table 9: Reading beyond class schedule

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	90	68.7
No	37	28.2
Non-response	4	3.1
<b>Total</b>	131	100

Source: Field Study, 2016

It is therefore not surprising that when they asked to indicate whether they read after classes, Table 9 shows that majority of them (68.7%) indicated they do read. The implication of this finding is that, majority of the respondents do not depend solely on what is been taught in class but do some form of reading beyond what is taught in the class.

#### 4.3.3 Frequency of reading

Table 10: Frequency of reading

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily	82	62.6
Weekly	30	22.9
Once every two weeks	2	1.5
Monthly	11	8.4
Others (please specify)	4	3.1
Non-response	2	1.5
<b>Total</b>	131	100

Source: Field Study, 2016

The respondents were also asked to indicate the frequency with which they read. Table 10 shows that majority of the respondents (62.6%) read daily and 22.9% read weekly. Others are once a month and once every two weeks.

#### 4.3.4 Time spent per day in reading

Table 11: Time spent per day in reading

Hours spent in reading per day	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 to 2 hours	62	47.3
2 to 3 hours	36	27.5
3 to 4 hours	12	9.2
4 to 5 hours	10	7.6
Others (please specify)	11	8.4
<b>Total</b>	131	100

Source: Field Study, 2016

The respondents were asked to indicate the time they spend reading per day. Table 11 shows that 47.3% read 1 to 2 hours a day and 27.5% read 2 to 3 hours a day. Others are 3 to 4 hours (9.2%) and 4 to 5 hours (7.6%).

#### 4.4 TYPES OF READING MATERIALS

The researcher wanted to know the types of materials read by the student's, that is whether they read story books, textbooks, class notes, newspapers or magazines.

The respondents were given the chance to tick all that apply.

Table 12: Materials read

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Storybooks	95	72.5
Textbook	87	66.4
Class Notes	79	60.3
Newspapers	41	31.3
Magazines	42	32.1
Others	8	6.1

Source: Field Study, 2016

The results (Table 12) indicate that, 72.5% of the respondents read Storybooks, 66.4% read textbooks, 60.3% read class notes, 31.3% read Newspapers and 32.1% read Magazines. The study revealed interesting results that shows that majority of the respondents read story books. The researcher was expecting all of them instead of 60.3% to indicate that they read their class notes since they will need to read their class notes to write their examinations.

#### 4.4.1 Type of story books they read

The respondents were further asked if they read fiction or novel as a storybook. Table 13a shows that majority of them (91.6%) read both and 8.4% do not read any storybooks.

Table 13a: Type of storybooks read (Fiction or Novel)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Both	120	91.6
None	11	8.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

#### 4.4.2 Number of books read per term

As a follow up, respondents were also asked to indicate the number of books they read per term. Table 13b shows that 17.6% read one book per term, 22.9% read two books, 27.5% read three books and 18.3% read four books per term.

Table 13b: Number of books read per term

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
One book per term	23	17.6
Two books	30	22.9
Three books	36	27.5
Four books	24	18.3
Others	11	8.4
Non-response	7	5.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

#### 4.4.3 Access to reading materials

The researcher then wanted to know how they access their reading materials. The respondents were asked to select the number of answers that apply. Table 14 shows that majority of the respondents (69.5%) borrow it from their friends, 57.3% purchase them, and 49.6% borrow them from the library. Others are from relatives (30.5%), and from the Public Library (8.4%). It can be concluded that the sources of their reading materials are friends and the school library.

Table 14: Access to reading materials

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Purchase	75	57.3
From Friends	91	69.5
From Relatives	40	30.5
From School Library	65	49.6
From Public Library	11	8.4
Others	2	1.5

Source: Field Study, 2016

#### 4.5 PURPOSE FOR READING

The researcher then wanted to know from the respondents their purposes for reading. An option was given to the respondents to tick as many that apply.

Table 15: Reasons for reading

Response	Frequency	Percentage
To compliment my studies	52	39.7
To pass examination	66	50.4
For Pleasure	47	35.9
To acquire Knowledge	93	71.0
To improve my grades	55	42.0
To learn new things	92	70.2
To improve my vocabulary	87	66.4
To improve my spoken and written English	84	64.1
Others	8	6.1

Source: Field Study, 2016

Table 15 shows the respondents mostly read to acquire knowledge (71.0%), learn new things (70.2%), improve on their vocabulary (66.4%), and improve on their verbal and written English.

Others are to pass their examinations (50.4%) and to improve on their grades (42.0%). Only 35.9% of the respondents indicated they read for pleasure.

#### 4.5.1 Enjoyment of reading

The respondents were asked to indicate how they feel when they engage in reading, whether they enjoy it very much, quite a lot, a bit, not much or not at all.

Table 16: Enjoying reading

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very much	83	63.4
Quite a lot	30	22.9
A bit	9	6.9
Not much	8	6.1
Not at all	1	0.8
Total	131	100

Source: Field Study, 2016

Table 16 shows that most of the respondents (63.4%) enjoy reading very much. This is followed by enjoy reading quite a lot (22.9%), a bit (6.9%), and not much (6.1%). Only 0.8% indicated they do not enjoy reading at all.

#### 4.6 PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS READING HABITS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The study sought to find out from students whether reading has enhanced their academic performance, so they were asked if reading has actually enhanced their academic performance. The result (Table 17) shows that majority of the students (96.9%) agree that reading has enhanced their academic performance

Table 17: Academic Performance

Reading influence on academic performance	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	127	96.9
No	4	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

As a follow-up question the respondents were asked to indicate the specific ways in which reading has impacted on their academic performance by strongly agreeing, agreeing or disagreeing with the following statements:

Table 18: Extent to which you agree with the following statements on reading;

1. It has improved my ability to understand
2. My written english has improved
3. I can now speak english fluently
4. It has broaden my horizon
5. I do better in my examinations

Statements	Responses		
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
<b>It has improved my ability to understand</b>	78(59.5%)	47(35.9%)	2(1.5%)
<b>My written english has improved</b>	81(61.8%)	42(32.1%)	4(3.1%)
<b>I can now speak english fluently</b>	65(49.6%)	58(44.3%)	2(1.5%)
<b>It has broaden my horizon</b>	51(38.9%)	53(40.5%)	9(6.9%)
<b>I do better in my examinations</b>	62(47.3%)	57(43.5%)	2(1.5%)

Source: Field Study, 2016

The result from Table 18 indicates a mixed set of responses for the respondents. Whilst the overall responses for statement number 1 indicate that more respondents 59.5% strongly agreed, 35.9% agreed and 1.5% disagreed with the statement that “reading has improved their

ability to understand”. For statement number 2, the majority of respondents 61.8% strongly agreed, 32.1% agreed and 3.1% disagreed that reading has improved their written English. For the third statement, the table indicates that more respondents 49.6% strongly agreed with the statement that their spoken English has been improved, 44.3% agreed and 1.5% disagrees with it. A little over 40.0% of the respondents agree, 38.9% strongly agreed and 6.9% disagreed with the statement number 4 that reading has broadened their horizon. Similarly more respondents 47.3% strongly agreed, 43.5% agreed and 1.5% disagreed with the statement number 5 that reading has improved their performance in examinations.

#### 4.6.1 Use of leisure time

The respondents were asked to indicate how they used of their leisure time. The results (Table 19) shows that they used their leisure time to do various things including reading storybooks (26.7), listening to music 8.4%, browsing the internet (7.6%), and watching movies (6.9%). Others are visiting social media sites, watching TV, and engaging in sporting activities.

Table 19: Use of leisure time

Leisure time	Frequency	Percentage
Watch TV	8	6.1
Read storybooks	35	26.7
Browse the internet	10	7.6
Visit social media sites	9	6.9
Listen to music	11	8.4
Watch movies	9	6.9
Engage in sporting activities	3	2.3
Others (please specify)	1	0.8
Non-responses	1	0.8
Error in Answer	44	33.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

#### 4.7 FACTORS THAT AFFECT OR HINDER READING HABITS

The respondents were required to indicate the factors that affect or hinder their reading habits. The results (Table 20) shows that the three main hindrances to their reading are lack of time to read (30.5%), lack of money to buy the books (16.0%), and lack of access to reading materials (14.5%). Others are lack of interest in reading and lack of encouragement to read.

Table 20: Hindrances to reading

Hindrances to reading	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of access to reading materials	19	14.5
Lack of money to buy the books	21	16.0
Lack of interest in reading	10	7.6
Lack of time to read	40	30.5
Was not encourage to read	5	3.8
Others (please specify)	1	0.8
Non-response	5	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

#### 4.8 LIBRARY USE

The school has a library but the researcher wanted to find out whether the respondents were aware of the library so they were asked to indicate whether their school had a library. Over 98% of the respondents answered yes to the question meaning they all know there is a library in the school except one respondent (Table 21a).

Table 21a: Availability of school library

	Response	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	129	98.5
	No	1	0.8
	Total	130	99.2
	Non-response	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 21b Library visit

	Response	Frequency	Percentage
	Yes	98	<b>74.8</b>
	No	32	<b>24.4</b>
	Total	130	<b>99.2</b>
	Non-response	1	<b>0.8</b>
Total		131	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Study, 2016

Follow-up question was whether they visited the library and 74.8% indicated they patronize the library (Table 21b).

The respondents were further asked to indicate why they do not visit the library, and varying views were expressed. One (1) respondent stated the attitude of the librarian, 8.0% indicated not having time, 0.8% preferred to read class notes instead of visiting the library, 6.4% indicated lack of current materials whilst the rest of the respondents (84%) indicated visiting the public library instead. Thus it is probable that the library is not well patronized by respondents because of lack of current materials

#### 4.8.1 Purposes for visiting the library

Table 22: Purpose for visiting the library

Responds	Frequency	Percentage
To read for pleasure	49	37.4
To do assignment	68	51.9
To borrow a textbook	34	26.0
To borrow a storybook Fiction or Novel	38	29.0
To study and pass my exams	59	45.0
To access the internet	9	6.9
To request for photocopy service	3	2.3
To conduct a research	88	67.2
To seek information on current issues	61	46.6
To read Newspapers	44	33.6

Source: Field Study, 2016

When the respondents were asked to indicate their purposes for visiting the library, the findings (Table 22) shows that majority of the respondents go to the library to conduct research (67.2%), do assignment (51.9%), seek information (46.6%), study for exams (45.0%), read for pleasure (37.4%), and read newspapers (33.6%) in descending order. Others are to borrow textbooks or storybooks, and to access the Internet.

#### 4.8.2 Reference materials in the library

Table 23: Reference material use in the library

	Response	Frequency	Percentage
	Dictionary	100	76.3
	Textbook	19	14.5
	Internet	1	0.8
	Total	120	91.6
	Non-response	11	8.4
Total		131	100.0

Source: Field Study, 2016

The respondents were asked to indicate the type of reference material used and most of the respondents 76.3% indicated they used dictionary. They were asked to mention other reference materials available in the library and no one indicated the library had other reference materials. But the research later visited the library and found out that the library has other reference material such as encyclopaedia Britannica.

#### 4.9 ATTITUDE TO READING

The study also sought to find the attitudes of the respondents towards reading and so they were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with those statements as follows:

1. I often start reading a book but get bored after few chapters
2. I cannot find the time to read

3. Reading is hard work
4. I cannot find things to read that interest me
5. I will rather read my notes
6. I think reading is a waste of time

Table 24: Extent to which you agree with the following statements;

Statements	Agree	Disagree	Non-response	Total
I often start reading a book but get bored after a few chapters	54(41.2%)	75(57.3%)	2(1.5%)	131(100.0%)
I cannot find the time to read	49(37.4%)	80(61.1%)	2(1.5%)	131(100.0%)
Reading is hard work	41(31.3%)	88(67.2%)	2(1.5%)	131(100.0%)
I cannot find things to read that interest me	37(28.2%)	92(70.2%)	2(1.5%)	131(100.0%)
I will rather read my notes	84(64.1%)	45(34.4%)	2(1.5%)	131(100.0%)
I think reading is a waste of time	5(3.8%)	122(93.1%)	4(3.1%)	131(100.0%)

Source: Field Study, 2016

Table 24 shows that a fair number of the respondents (41.2%) agreed and 57.3% disagreed to the statement that “I often start reading a book but get bored after a few chapters.

For the statement number 2, 37.4% of the respondents agreed and 61.1% disagreed with “I cannot find the time to read” In other words, majority of the respondents are able to find time to read.

A little over 40 of the respondents (31.3%) agreed and majority 67.2% of the respondents disagreed with statement number 3, that reading is hard work.

Similarly 28.2% agreed and 70.2% disagreed with the statement that I cannot find things to read that interest me. The implication of this finding is that most of the respondents thought there are a lot of interesting things to read about.

Whilst the overall responses for statement number 5 indicated more respondents 64.1% agreed, and 34.4% disagreed with the statement that I will rather read my notes.

Meanwhile 3.8% agreed and majority of the respondents 93.1% disagreed with statement number 6 that “I think reading is a waste of time”. An insignificant number of the respondents perceived reading as a waste of time implying that reading is something one needs to do all the time in order to improve oneself.

#### **4.10 DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS**

Reading behaviour of students in its totality contributes to the development of their lives. Reading has been seen as the basic tool for learning and enjoyment and these makes an individual to leave a better live. Reading also enables the reader to better understand the values that will enable them to analyse other people’s ideas.

The study was carried out to find out the reading habits of students at St. John’s Grammar Senior High School in Accra. The following objectives were investigated as outlined in the first chapter as follows. It sought to find out;

- i. To investigate the reading habits of the students of St. John’s Grammar Secondary School.
- ii. To find out the types of materials they read and their purposes for reading
- iii. To find out the perception of students on reading habits and academic performance and the factors that affects their reading habits.

#### **4.10.1 The reading interest or habits of students of St. Johns Grammar School**

The study found out the perception and interest of reading of the students and it was revealed that 67.9% of the respondents found reading interesting, enjoyment 15.3% and 4.6% rewarding. Similarly 7.6% and 3.1% found reading boring and difficult respectively (Table 8). Interestingly 68.7% read beyond normal class schedule, and 62.6% indicated reading daily, weekly 22.9%. Others 8.4% and 1.5% read once per month and forth-nightly (Table 10). The finding showed that 47.3% spend 1-2 hours reading daily and 2-3 hours 27.5%. Others spend 3-4 hours 9.2% and 4-5 hours 7.6% daily on reading. Mckool (2007) found that grade five students studied spend an average of 17 minutes per day in reading which is in contrast with the findings of this study. The study is also in line with Kaur and Thiyagarajah (1999) who found out that students prefer spending as much as 3-5 hours per week in reading, the responses indicated that 69.8% spend this amount of time on literary works, 28.6% Newspaper, and 25.4% Novels. The students read for leisure and not for educational purposes. The result of the finding is also in line with what other researchers had done on reading interest. McKool (2007) found out in her study that reading interest is developed by students when they read outside the school. A report by US Department of Education (2005) also revealed that reading interest is developed by students who like to read in their spare time or at home. The report further said that reading interest is also seen as a number of books one is likely to read within a month which will determine whether the person has interest in reading or not. The finding also confirms that Shen (2006) reported that reading interest or habits denote how frequently a type of material is read. The outcome of this study also supported similar study done by Imran cited in (Khairuddin, 2013) that students had interest in reading but have not reached a point where they take reading as a habit. This therefore means that, the interest of reading of the students is there and these students do not depend solely on what is being taught but rather read beyond class.

#### **4.10.2 The types of materials they read**

With regards to the types of materials they read, it was revealed by the study that most of the students 72.5% read storybooks, 66.4% read textbooks, 60.3% read their Class Notes, and 32.1% read magazines while 31.3% read Newspapers. This finding partially agrees with the findings of Owusu-Acheaw et al. (2014), where 62.% of the sampled respondents (Students of Koforidua Polytechnic, in Ghana) indicated they read lecture notes, 25% said they read textbooks, 3.0% indicated they read novels, and 10.0% said they read other materials. The finding of this current study and that of Owusu-Acheaw et al. (2014), contradict that of Ogbodo (2010), that students should be encouraged to read magazines instead of lecture notes/class notes and textbooks all the time. Ogbodo asserts that reading magazines at intervals help to relax, cool the brains of students and above all reduce mental fatigue. On the issue of the number of novels and fiction read by students, finding of the current study revealed that 91.6% of the respondents read three books of Fiction and Novel per term and this constitute 27.5%, 22.9% read two books per term, 18.3% read three books per term and 17.6% also read one book per term. This finding of the current study concurs partly with the finding of Owusu-Acheaw et al. (2014), where 7.0% of respondents indicated they read one to two novels or fiction books during an academic year, while, 11.1% read three to five novels or fiction materials within an academic year. Interestingly, according to Owusu-Acheaw et al. (2014), a whopping 81.9% of the respondents indicated that they neither read any fiction nor novels within the same academic year. This aspect of the finding of Owusu-Acheaw & Larson sharply contradicts the finding of the current study that did not highlight the unwillingness reading habits of the sampled population.

However, the current study's respondents believed that by reading fiction or novel will enable them to express themselves well. This confirms the findings of Kim and Anderson (2011) that reading does not further one's knowledge only but also enables the person to become mature.

On how the respondents access their reading materials, the current study revealed that 69.5% indicated that they got their reading materials from friends, 57.3% purchased their reading materials, 49.6% got it from school library, 30.5% got theirs from relatives and 8.4% got theirs from the public library. The study revealed that most of the respondents received their reading materials from friends because they do not have the means to acquire themselves. The finding therefore agrees with the assertion of (Tella & Akande, 2007) that most people in Sub-Saharan Africa have less access to books and other reading and learning materials which can affect their reading habits.

#### **4.10.3 Their purpose for reading**

The results of the study for the respondents purpose for reading revealed that most of the students 71.0% engaged in reading in order to acquire knowledge and 70.2% indicated that they read to learn new things, 66.4% read to improve their vocabulary, 64.1% read to improve their spoken and written english. Others 50.4% read in order to pass their exams, 42.0% read to enable them improve their grades, 39.7% read to complement their studies whilst 35.9% read for pleasure. This finding of the current study bears semblance with the study by Owusu-Acheaw et al. (2014), that sought to assess the importance of reading a Novel or Fiction where 62.5% indicated they read for better self-expression, 14.9% indicated that they read to learn new things, 10.1% expressed that they read for imagination of things, 8.5% said they read to complement their studies and 4.0% said they read to keep them from being bored. The current study finding also concurs with that of Issa (2012) that through reading individuals are in a position to augment or fasten objects, like stories, ascertain what others trust and develop intentions or beliefs of their own and also allows them to find information required for the day-to-day survival and development of the individual in the society, be it academic or socio-cultural. However, the findings of a study by Akabuikie and Asika (2012), contradict the finding of the current study where students only read to pass their exams.

A follow up question to find out whether the respondents enjoyed reading indicated that 63.4% enjoy reading very much, 22.9% enjoy it a lot, 6.9% indicated enjoying reading a bit but 6.1% said they did not enjoy reading at all. The finding of the study agrees with a study conducted by Kim and Anderson (2011) that reading is a way of obtaining additional information and knowledge. It does not only give knowledge but rather enables a person to become matured as well as broadens one's horizon on contemporary issues. Karim and Hasan (2007) also postulated that reading provides a professional growth because the more one reads the more knowledgeable one becomes. Ufomadu cited (in Oguntayo, 2008) found out from a study that most citizenry in Uganda do not read, rather they read when there is an examination to write and once this is done farewell is bit to reading. Annamalai and Muniandy (2013) also reported that Malaysian Polytechnic Business students do not enjoy reading much as compared to their involvement in technological activities.

Acquiring more knowledge also bring more confidence which in turn builds self-esteem which allows one to express him or herself well at anywhere. A good reading habit is therefore important for a healthy intellectual growth by students in acquiring knowledge for excellent academic work.

#### **4.10.4 The perception of students reading habits and academic performance**

The perception of respondents reading habits and their academic performance was sought and it was revealed that 96.9% indicated that reading had enhanced their academic performance, 61.8% had their written english improved, 59.5% were also able to understand whatever they read, 49.6% can now speak the english language very well, 47.3% were also able to perform better in their exams whilst 38.9% had their horizon been broadened. Students with good reading habits are in a position to discern questions comfortably and better express themselves as against their counterparts who do not have better reading habits or did not engage in reading at all. This finding is in line with Issa (2012) that engaging in reading all the time can

influence ones studying skills thereby improving one's academic performance. The finding of this study also supports the study by Benwari and Nemine (2014) that a good reading habit can improve academic performance and educational success of students. Those found not to be performing could be attributed to low or poor reading habits. This study also agrees with Jemide (2001) that reading habits usually enhances academic performance among students. This study is also in line with Agina-Obu (2001) who also found out that, apart from other factors that can affect academic performance, success needs the acquisition of effective and good reading habits. It was further revealed by his study that inadequate facilities, laziness, over-indulgence in television programs are factors that contribute to poor academic performance by students.

#### **4.10.5 Factors that affect or hinder their reading habits**

With regards to how leisure time was spend, 26.7% of the respondents indicated reading a story book, 8.4% indicated that the listen to music, 7.6% used their leisure time browsing the internet, while 6.9% of the respondents watch movie.

Most of the respondents 33.8% did not indicate what they use their leisure time for. The findings suggest that a sizeable number of the respondents do not know what they should use their leisure time for either to use to read or do something else. This current study finding confirms that assertion that with the emergence of the internet and social media majority of students now spend a lot of their time on browsing the internet and visiting social media sites in preference to reading a novel or fiction Owusu-Acheaw et al. (2014). Owusu-Acheaw and Larson's study indicated that about 62.0% of the respondents used their leisure time in visiting social media sites.

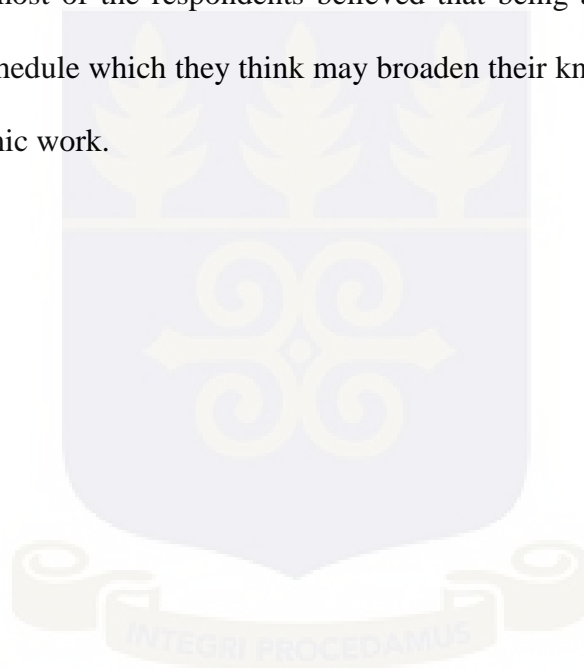
The respondents were asked what they think might hinder their reading ability and an interesting revelation was made. Most of the respondents 30.5% indicated there was no time

for them to read, 16.0% said they do not have the purchasing power to acquire the reading materials that interest them, 14.5% also said they do not have access to reading material though they desire to read, 7.6% indicated lacking interest in reading whilst 3.8% said they were not encourage to read. The findings revealed the need for parents to acquire and encourage their children to develop the habit of reading so that it can become part and parcel of them when they grow up. The finding of the study agrees with a research conducted by (Mohamad, Majit & Ooi, 2011) that 48% of the people studied in Malaysia University said to engage in reading when there is time. However, the finding of the current study and that of (Mohamad, Majit & Ooi, 2011), contradict the finding of (Owusu-Acheaw et al., 2014), where 30.0% of respondents indicated that the environment they found themselves was a hindrance to their reading habits, 10.0% indicated the social status of their parents, 3.0% expressed their unwillingness to reading and the majority (57.0%) indicated that mere laziness was a major hindrance to their reading habit.

Owusu-Acheaw et al., (2014), therefore concluded that parents need to encourage their children to develop the habit of reading from infancy so they can grow up with positive reading habit.

The study further finds out if there is a library in the school and majority (98.5%) of the respondents said the school had a library. A question was asked whether they visit the library and the purpose and 74.8% of the respondents indicated patronizing the library, 67.2% visited the library to conduct research, 51.9% visited the library to do their assignment, 46.6% visit to seek for information, 45.0% visit the library to study to pass their exams, 37.4% visit to read for pleasure, 33.6% visit to read newspapers, 29.0% also go there to borrow story books whilst 6.9% visit there to access the internet respectively. With regards to what reference material that is available for consultation in the library 76.3% of the respondents said the only one at the library is a dictionary which is mostly consulted.

Statements regarding attitude towards reading were posed and respondents were asked whether they agreed to those statements and it was found that most of the students 57.3% disagreed, 41.2% agreed to a statement that “I often start reading a book but get bored after reading few chapters”, 61.1% disagreed and 37.4% agreed on a statement “I cannot find time to read”, 67.2% disagreed and 31.3% also agreed on a statement that “reading is hard work”, 70.2% disagreed and 28.2% agreed on the following statement “I can’t find things that interest me”, meanwhile, 64.1% agreed and 34.4% disagreed on this statement that “I will rather read my notes”, whilst 93.1% disagreed and 3.8% agreed that “I think reading is a waste of time”. The deduction was that most of the respondents believed that being a student, they need to read beyond their class schedule which they think may broaden their knowledge in order to perform better in their academic work.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter is the summary, conclusion and recommendations. The purpose of the study was to investigate the reading habits and its impact on academic performance of students of St. John's Grammar Senior High Secondary School in Accra. The main objectives of the study are to find out:

- i. The reading habits of students of St. John's Grammar Secondary School.
- ii. The types of materials they read and their purposes for reading
- iii. The perception of students on reading habits and academic performance and the factors that affects their reading habits.

#### 5.2 Summary

##### 5.2.1 Reading interest or habit of the students of St. Johns Grammar School

- i. The study revealed that 68.7% of respondents read after class schedules.
- ii. It was clear from the study that 67.9% of the respondents perceive reading as interesting. Only 7.6% and 3.1% found reading to be boring and difficulty respectively.
- iii. The study further revealed that 62.6% of the respondents read daily, and 22.9% read weekly.
- iv. The study also found out that 47.3% and 27.5% of the respondents read between 1-2 hours and 2-3 hours daily respectfully.

### **5.2.2 Types of materials read**

- i. The types of materials read by respondents are storybooks, 72.5%; textbooks, 66.4%; class notes, 60.3%; newspapers, 31.3%; and magazines, 32.1%
- ii. It was revealed that the storybooks the majority of the students read are fiction and novel and this constitute 91.6% of the respondents, and only 8.4% do not read any storybook. The study further revealed that 17.6% read a book per term, 22.9% two books per term, 27.5% three books and 18.3% four books per term.
- iii. The students' sources of reading materials are from friends, school library and relatives. The study also established that 69.5% of the respondents receive their reading materials from friends, 57.3% purchase them, and 49.6% borrowed them from their school library. Others are from relatives, 30.5% and the Public library 8.4%.

### **5.2.3 Purpose for reading**

- iv. The findings of the study revealed that the students read for various purposes which include complementing their studies, for pleasure, to pass examinations and to improve grades. The findings revealed that, majority of the respondents, 70.2% and 71.0% read to learn new things and to acquire knowledge respectively. Over 66% read to improve their vocabulary.
- v. Over 63% of the respondents enjoy reading very much and 22.9% quite a bit. Only 6.9% and 0.8% indicated not much and did not enjoy reading at all respectfully.

### **5.2.4 Perception of students reading habits and academic performance**

- i. The study also established that the majority of the respondents, 96.9% indicated reading enhance their academic performance. Only 3.1% said it did not have any effect on their academic performance.
- ii. Majority of the respondents 93.9%, 90.8% and 79.4% generally agreed to the statements that reading has improved their spoken English, improved their performance

in examinations, and broadened their horizon respectively. Over 59% also strongly agreed that it has improved their understanding

- iii. The study further revealed that the respondents use their leisure time to read storybooks, watch television, browse the internet, visit social media site, watch movies and sports, and listen to music.

#### **5.2.5 Factors that affect or hinder reading**

- i. The following were found to be factors that affect students reading habits: Lack of access to reading materials, 14.5%; lack of money, 16.0%; lack of interest in reading, 7.6% and lack time to read 30.5%. A few of the respondents, 3.8% indicated they were not encouraged to read.

#### **5.2.6 Library use**

- i. The findings indicated that majority of the students, 98.5% are aware of the school library.
- ii. Over 74.8% of the respondents indicated they visited the library compared to 24.8% who did not visit the library.
- iii. Lack of visit to the library was attributed to outmoded reading materials found in the library.
- iv. The respondents visit the library for different purposes including: To conduct research, 67.2%; do assignment, 51.9%; seek information on current issues, 46.6%; to study to pass their examinations, 45.0% and read newspaper, 33.6%. Others are to access the internet, request for photocopy services, borrow text/storybooks, and read for pleasure.
- v. It was also indicated by the respondents (76.3%) that the only reference material in the library was a dictionary. The researcher later discovered a few copies of encyclopedias Britannica among the collection.

### 5.2.7 Attitude to reading

The respondents expressed different attitude towards reading:

- i. Most of the respondents, 57.3% disagreed and 41.2% agreed to the statement that “I often start reading a book but get bored after few chapters”.
- ii. Over 61% disagreed and 37.4% agreed to that statement that “I cannot find time to read”.
- iii. Majority of the respondents, 67.2% disagreed and 31.3% agreed to the statement that ”reading is hard work”.
- iv. Majority of them 70.2% agreed and 28.2% disagreed with the statement that “I cannot find things to read that interest me”.
- v. Similarly majority of them, 93.1% disagreed and 3.8% agreed with the statement that “I think reading is a waste of time”.
- vi. Meanwhile, 64.1% agreed and 34.4% disagreed with the statement that “I will rather read my notes”.

### 5.3 Conclusion

This study was carried out to ascertain the reading habits and its effect on academic performance of students of St. Johns Grammar Senior High School in a subbed in Accra.

Based on the findings of the study, it was revealed that the perception that people of Africa have not cultivated the culture of reading is not entirely true since most of the respondents were found to read different types of reading materials such as fiction, novels, newspapers, magazines, etc., after their normal school schedules. Reading was also found to impact their academic performance in different ways including knowledge acquisition, improvement in their verbal and written English, grades, performance in their examinations, and broadening of

their horizons. They however encountered problems such as, lack of access to reading materials, lack of money to buy the materials, lack of interest in reading, lack of encouragement to read and lack of time to read which hindered their quest to develop the reading culture. It is important for stakeholders to work together to solve these problems for more impactful academic performance.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been made based on the findings for the improvement of reading habits among the students of St John's Grammar School.

##### **5.4.1 School Authorities**

Some of the respondents indicated they needed to be encouraged to develop love for reading, therefore

- i. It will be appropriate for the authorities to at least add one lesson to the time table as a reading lesson.
- ii. Awards could be instituted to award best students in reading comprehension and those who read the most books per year.
- iii. School authorities should acquire relevant reading materials that may be of interest to the students.
- iv. The school librarian should also assist the authorities to help instill the love for reading in the students as this is believed to be one of the keys to success in both academic and life.
- v. The authorities could also conduct a survey to find out the materials that the students will be interested in and acquire them for the library. The students can suggest materials to be acquired for the library and this will enable the library to have a balanced collection whose content can be attractive to its clientele.

#### **5.4.2 Improving the library**

The findings indicated that some of the books in the library are outmoded and respondents lack money to buy reading materials therefore it is necessary for:

- i. The school authorities to collaborate with the Parents Teacher Association (PTA) and other stakeholders to solicit for more current reading materials to stock the library. This will encourage the students to patronize the library and also having access to adequate reading materials.
- ii. The school librarian should regularly weed out outmoded materials from the library's collection. When this is done, the students will be better encouraged to patronize the library.
- iii. The school librarian should also introduce the students to the Public Library for access to more reading materials.

#### **5.4.3 Parents encouragement**

- i. The parents of the students should be briefed about the benefits of reading during PTA meetings, so that they encourage their children to read more books to enable them form a habit of reading.
- ii. They should also be encouraged to buy the needed reading materials for their children.

#### **5.4.4 For further research**

- i. Finally, the researcher recommends that, further researcher could be conducted on reading habits or interest of students and academic performance within a larger catchment area or region for better knowledge and understanding of reading habits of Ghanaian students.

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**APPENDIX**

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON READING HABITS AND ITS EFFECT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS AT ST. JOHN'S GRAMMAR SENIOR HIGH SECONDARY SCHOOL, ACCRA.**

My name is Ebenezer K. Pobi, a Masters Student at School of Information and Communication Studies, University of Ghana. I am conducting a research on reading habits and its effect on academic performance of High School students. I will be grateful if you could spare a few moments to complete the questionnaire below to the best of your ability. Your confidentiality is fully assured and the information you provide will be used for academic purposes only. Thanks for your time.

**Please Tick [√] as appropriate.**

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Age: .....
3. In which form are you? .....
4. What is your Father/Guardian's occupation?
  - a) Legal Practitioner [ ]
  - b) Public/Civil Servant [ ]
  - c) Self Employed [ ]
  - d) Educationist [ ]
  - e) Others, Please specify.....
5. What is your Mother/Guardian's occupation?
  - a) Legal Practitioner [ ]
  - b) Public/Civil Servant [ ]
  - c) Self Employed [ ]
  - d) Educationist [ ]
  - e) Others (please specify).....
6. What is your mother's educational level?
  - a) Illiterate [ ]
  - b) Junior High School [ ]
  - c) Senior High School [ ]
  - d) Graduate [ ]
  - e) Others (please specify) .....
7. What is your father's educational level?
  - a) Illiterate [ ]
  - b) Junior High School [ ]
  - c) Senior High School [ ]
  - d) Graduate [ ]
  - e) Others (please specify) .....

**SECTION B: Reading Interest or Habits**

8. What is your perception about reading?
- a) Difficult
  - b) Interesting
  - c) Rewarding
  - d) Boring
  - e) Enjoyable
9. If you read, do you read beyond normal class schedule? Yes  No
10. How often do you read?
- a) Daily
  - b) Weekly
  - c) Once every two weeks
  - d) Monthly
  - e) Others (please specify).....
11. How much time do you spend per day on reading?
- a) 1 to 2 hours
  - b) 2 to 3 hours
  - c) 3 to 4 hours
  - d) 4 to 5 hours
  - e) Others (please specify).....

**SECTION C: Types of reading materials**

12. Which of these materials do you read? Please tick all that apply
- a) Story books
  - b) Textbook
  - c) Class notes
  - d) Newspapers
  - e) Magazines
  - f) Others (please specify).....
13. Do you read storybooks (fiction or novels)? Yes  No
14. If yes, how many do you read in a term?
- a) One book per term
  - b) Two books
  - c) Three books
  - d) Four books
  - e) Other (Please specify).....
15. How do you gain access to your reading materials? Tick all that apply
- a) Purchase
  - b) From Friends
  - c) From Relatives
  - d) From the School Library

- e) From the Public Library
- f) Others (please specify) .....

**SECTION D: Purpose for reading**

16. Why do you read? Please tick all that apply.

- a) To compliment my studies
- b) To pass examinations
- c) For pleasure
- d) To acquire knowledge
- e) To improve my grades
- f) To learn new things
- g) To improve my vocabulary
- h) To improve my spoken and written English
- i) Others (please specify) .....

17. How much do you enjoy reading?

- a) Very much
- b) Quite a lot
- c) A bit
- d) Not much
- e) Not at all

**SECTION E: Perception of students reading habits and their academic performance**

18. Has reading has an influence on your academic performance? Yes  No

19. If yes, to what extent do you agree with the following statements on the effect of reading on your academic work?

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
It has improved my ability to understand					
My written English has improved					
I can now speak English fluently					
It has broaden my horizon					
I do better in my examinations					
Others (please specify) .....					

**SECTION F: Factors that affect or hinder reading habits**

20. How do you use your leisure time?

- a) Watch TV
- b) Read story books
- c) Browse the Internet
- d) Visit social media sites
- e) Listen to music
- f) Watch movies
- g) Engage in sporting activities e.g. play soccer, basketball, volleyball etc
- h) Other (Please specify).....

21 What are some of the hindrances to your reading?

- a) Lack of access to reading materials
- b) Lack of money to buy the books
- c) Lack of interest in reading
- d) Lack of time to read
- e) Was not encourage to read
- f) Others (please specify) .....

**Library use**

22. Does your school have a library? Yes  No

23. If yes, do you visit the school library? Yes  No

24. If No, why? .....

25. For what purpose do you visit the library? (Please Tick as many as you can)

- a) To read for pleasure
- b) To do assignment
- c) To borrow a textbook
- d) To borrow a storybook (fiction or novel)
- e) To study to pass my exams
- f) To access the Internet
- g) To request for photocopy service
- h) To conduct a research
- i) To seek information on current issues
- j) To read Newspapers
- k) Others (please specify) .....

26. Which of these reference materials do you use in the library?

- a) Dictionary
- b) Others (please specify) .....

**Attitude to reading**

27. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statement?

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
a) I often start reading a book but get bored after a few chapters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) I cannot find the time to read	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Reading is hard work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) I cannot find things to read that interest me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) I will rather read my notes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) I think reading is a waste of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you

