

# The Reading Behavior of Junior Secondary Students During School Holidays in Botswana

**Despite reports that suggest a lack of a reading culture, a survey of a group of 12- to 15-year-olds in Botswana indicated that reading for pleasure and for academic purposes was widespread outside junior secondary schools.**

Arua E. Arua | Comfort E. Arua

Reports of the poor reading culture of Botswana appear periodically in the popular media, especially the newspapers (see Baputaki, 2006; Hosia, 2007; Seboni & Swardland, 2009). These impressionistic reports speak of an alarming deterioration in the culture of reading in Botswana. In the sense in which it is employed, “poor reading culture” means lack of a reading habit among children, adolescents, and adults, both educated and illiterate. The label thus encompasses complete illiteracy, functional illiteracy, and aliteracy (Sisulu, 2004).

Without supporting evidence, the poor reading culture label is difficult to justify for any population group in Botswana. Consequently, we, in this article, investigate the holiday reading behavior of some junior secondary school students in the country to ascertain the extent to which the label applies to them.

As school holidays are typically periods when leisure reading, also described as “voluntary reading, spare time reading, recreational reading, independent reading, reading outside of school, and self-selected reading” (Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007, p. 22) takes place, the researchers expect the students in this study to read for leisure during the holidays.

## Literature Review

Considerable attention, even if impressionistic, has been paid to the lack of a reading culture in Africa. Many leaders and opinion pieces have been devoted to the subject in prominent dailies and news blogs in different countries of the continent (see Glogowski, 2008; Jimoh, 2009). The concerns of the reports are usually the same, which are that many people, irrespective of their age, gender, and education, do not read; the enabling environment for the development of a reading culture does not exist, as books are scarce and unaffordable or unsuitable for the diverse groups that need them; and government hardly ever ensures that reading materials are available. It is in this context that the report of an initiative by a youth group to provide 10,000 leisure reading materials to rural areas thought to be most acutely affected by the lack

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of such materials (Baputaki, 2006) can be understood. Many other initiatives follow a similar trend.

The literature on reading culture from some parts of Africa mirrors the aforementioned concerns. In South Africa, a large population is either illiterate or aliterate, partly because of the country's unsavory historical antecedents (Sisulu, 2004). Maseko and Thumbadoo (2003) noted the declining number of readers in South Africa and attributed it to "the dwindling book buying culture and culture of reading generally" (p. 41).

In Swaziland, one of South Africa's neighbors, Dlamini (2003) attributed the lack of a reading culture to the fact that "students come from a non-reading culture both at home and at the primary school" (pp. 31-32). Scholars in the East African country of Kenya do not understand why their country, arguably the most educationally advanced in the region, does not have a good reading culture (Mbae, 2002).

In Nigeria, Marinho (2003) cited numerous factors that contribute to the problem of reading failure, including an unhealthy learning environment, excessive reliance on government, poor quality of educational input, and "unavailability of books for reading widely and for pleasure" (p. 8). Olaofe (2003) also mentioned book poverty as one of the factors responsible for the lack of a reading culture in Nigeria.

The research on reading culture in Botswana is not different from that of the rest of Africa. Molosiwa (2004, 2007), citing Botswana's oral culture, presented the view that a reading culture does not exist in the country. Kgosidintsi and Parsons (1989) cited expensive books and the lack of new and interesting books, especially in Setswana, Botswana's national language, as two of the reasons why readers have lost interest in reading. Additionally, these researchers indicated that a low level of literacy (see Sisulu, 2004) and the lack of electricity, presumably in the rural areas, also contribute to the problem.

However, Jongman's (1993) case study showed that although there was an excellent collection of fiction materials in the Marang Community Junior Secondary School library, the students were reluctant

to read them. This reluctance to read fiction has been attributed to the finding that reading is not for "recreation but for concrete achievement in the academic or material sphere" (Kotei & Milazi, 1984, p. 3). More than two decades later, the finding that secondary school students, in this instance, read to pass their exams rather than for pleasure has been reiterated (Arua & Lederer, 2003; Arua, Moanakwena, Rogers, Tierney, & Lenters, 2005).

Like Jongman (1993), some researchers have noted the diminished role of the library in promoting a culture of reading in Botswana. Many people, even those who can read (see Sisulu, 2004), do not use the library (Ntamelang, 1982). A recent situational analysis of secondary-level education in Botswana supports this finding (Arua et al., 2005), which may be because the libraries are inaccessible (Kamberelis & Albert, 2007). They contain very few books, lack trained librarians and modern equipment, and have few aesthetic features to make them attractive to readers (Arua et al., 2005).

In view of these factors, this study addresses the pertinent question, What can be learned about the reading behavior of junior secondary school students (ages 12-15) during the second-term holiday (August 12 to September 4) of 2006? We attempt to answer this question against the background of the perception of the poor reading culture described previously.

A holiday is a leisure period that has to do with achieving varied forms of emotional satisfaction: pleasure, release or escape, self-discovery, excitement, mastery, or challenge (Kraus, 2000). It thus involves freedom in choosing what one wants to read, and reading widely from a variety of sources, not just books (Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007; Mellon, 1990). We discuss the kind of reading the students engaged in during the holiday period.

## Data Collection

Data for the study were collected by means of a questionnaire administered to 121 junior students in four junior secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana's capital city. The questionnaire is useful for collecting data very quickly (Kumar, 1999). For this study, the data had to be collected immediately after the holiday period; otherwise, the reading events that occurred during this period would become hazy in the

students' minds. Additionally, the questionnaire was a useful means of getting a broad and representative view of early adolescents' reading behavior in junior schools in Botswana.

Four junior schools (designated LPEC, LKC, MJSS, and GJSS to preserve their anonymity) were selected for study. Two of them (LPEC and LKC) are private, whereas the other two (MJSS and GJSS) are public. Generally, private schools are expensive day schools, and the fees they charge are beyond the reach of most low- and middle-income earners in Botswana.

Public schools are built, funded, and run as day schools established within reach of students in a particular location; the government charges very low fees for locals and waives the fees for those who cannot afford them. The government also provides all the materials and facilities for all the students. The schools used in the study are thus representative of all the junior schools of Gaborone (and other parts of Botswana).

It is usually difficult to collect data from schools in Gaborone, which is the site of Botswana's sole university, because they are overused for research. The schools from which data were collected were those whose principals were agreeable to the research study. The classes from which the data were collected were selected in a similar fashion. The classes that could afford to expend approximately 45 minutes to fill out the questionnaire were used.

Accordingly, data were collected from form 3 (the equivalent of U.S. grade 10) of LPEC (27 students), form 2 (U.S. grade 9) of LKC (19), form 3 of MJSS (35), and form 1 (U.S. grade 8) of GJSS (40). As is evident from the figures, class sizes are considerably higher in the public schools (i.e., MJSS, GJSS).

The questionnaire contained the following questions:

1. (a) Did you read during the last holiday? (b) If you did, did you enjoy it? (c) If you did not read, why not?
2. (a) If you read, what materials did you read? (b) Where did you do the reading?
3. Did your parents/siblings read during the holiday period?
4. Did your parents/siblings buy reading materials for you?

5. Is there anything about reading that you wish to say?

The questions, which are generally open ended, allowed the students to express themselves freely and thus mitigated any disadvantage of using the questionnaire to collect data. As Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2003) noted, open-ended questions may elicit "gems" of information" (p. 255) that could make the data richer.

The questionnaire was administered to the students by one of the researchers. In all of the schools, both the researcher and the class teachers were present while the students filled out copies of the questionnaire. The researcher immediately collected the questionnaires after each session. In one school (LPEC), however, some of the students did not understand what some of the questions entailed, and the teacher, who could speak Setswana, the local language, explained the task to them. Although a limitation, such explanations are necessary, as Condy (2006) has shown, when language difficulties arise during questionnaire administration.

Finally, as already indicated, the data elicited relate to students' reading activities and behavior during the second-term holiday of 2006, which was of three weeks' duration. The findings as they relate to students are not demarcated along gender lines, because the authors are interested only in the general patterns of behavior for all students. However, Moffitt and Wartella (1992), Simpson (1996), and Tatum (2005) have rightly shown that gender considerations in adolescent reading can be independently pursued.

## Findings

### *Holiday Reading and Enjoyment*

An overwhelming majority of the students sampled (87%) read during the three-week holiday under review (question 1a). This high percentage was replicated in all the schools used in the study: 89% for LPEC, 74% for LKC, 86% for MJSS, and 92% for GJSS. Almost all the students who indicated that they read also indicated that they enjoyed reading (question 1b) (100% in LPEC, LKC, and GJSS, and 93% in MJSS).

Sixteen of the students did not read (question 1c; 13%), and they cited various reasons for not doing so.

Five of these students went to the cattle post (equivalent to a cattle ranch) to look after their fathers' cattle, one helped out in the parents' shop, and four said they were watching television, playing, or entertaining friends. Another four, who did not specify any activity, said they either had no time or had too many distractions.

### Materials Read and Location of Reading

Regarding responses to question 2a, Table 1 and Figure 1 show that notebooks of class notes were the

most widely read material during the holiday period (74.3% of 105 students). This was followed by novels (47.6%), textbooks (i.e., prescribed subject texts; 37.1%), storybooks (i.e., short stories; 27.6%), newspapers (23.8%), and question papers (i.e., previous exams and test questions; 5.7%).

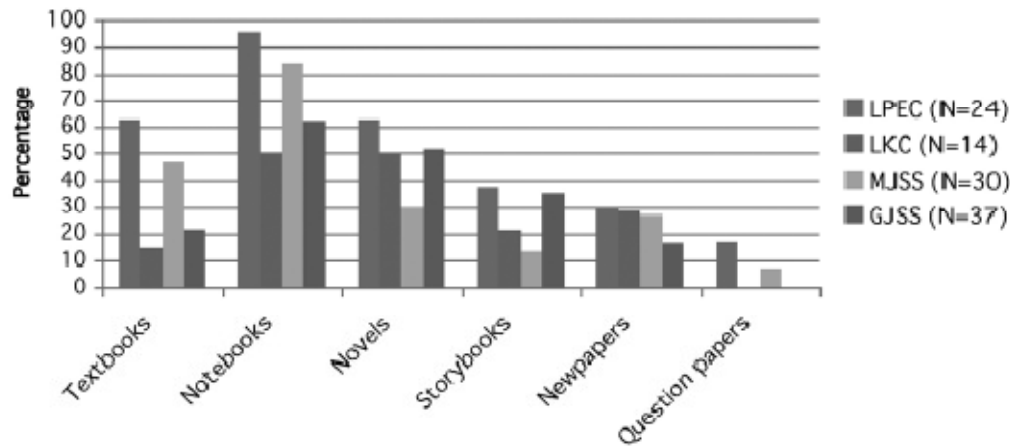
A close look at Table 1 and Figure 1 shows that the pattern already indicated is replicated in each school. Notebooks are the most widely read materials in all of the schools, except that at LKC, they have the same rating as novels. At LPEC, textbooks and

**Table 1** Number (and Percentage) of Junior Students in Gaborone, Botswana, Who Read During the Second-Term Holiday of 2006

Text read	Private schools		Public schools		Total (N = 105)
	LPEC (n = 24)	LKC (n = 14)	MJSS (n = 30)	GJSS (n = 37)	
Textbooks	15 (62.5)	2 (14.2)	14 (46.7)	8 (21.6)	39 (37.1)
Notebooks	23 (95.8)	7 (50.0)	25 (83.3)	23 (62.2)	78 (74.3)
Novels	15 (62.5)	7 (50.0)	9 (30.0)	19 (51.4)	50 (47.6)
Storybooks	9 (37.5)	3 (21.4)	4 (13.3)	13 (35.1)	29 (27.6)
Newspapers	7 (29.1)	4 (28.6)	8 (26.7)	6 (16.2)	25 (23.8)
Question papers	4 (16.7)	0 (0.00)	2 (6.7)	0 (0.00)	6 (5.7)

Note. LPEC, LKC, MJSS, and GJSS are pseudonyms for the four schools in the study. Question papers are previous exam and test questions.

**Figure 1** Percentage of Materials Read by Junior Students in Gaborone, Botswana, During the Second-Term Holiday of 2006



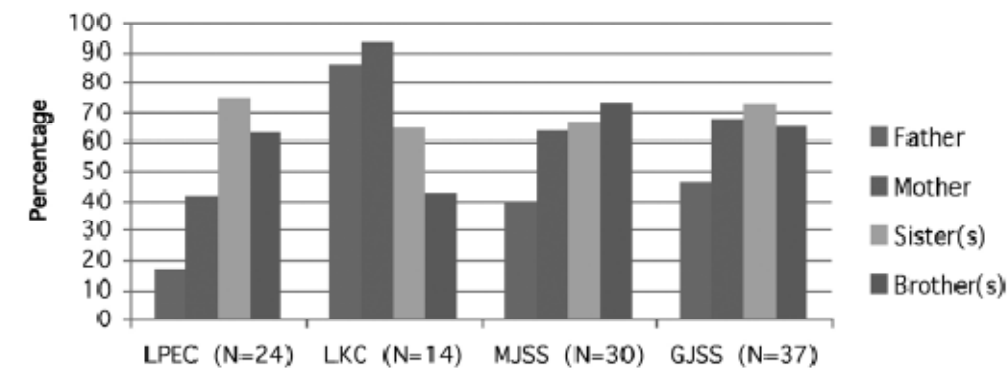
Note. LPEC, LKC, MJSS, and GJSS are pseudonyms for the four schools in the study. Question papers are previous exam and test questions.

**Table 2** Number (and Percentage) of Parents and Siblings (of Junior Students in Gaborone, Botswana) Who Read During the Second-Term Holiday of 2006

Family member	Private schools		Public schools		Total (N= 105)
	LPEC (n = 24)	LKC (n = 14)	MJSS (n = 30)	GJSS (n = 37)	
Father	4 (16.7)	12 (85.7)	12 (40.0)	17 (45.9)	45 (42.9)
Mother	10 (41.7)	13 (92.9)	19 (63.3)	25 (67.6)	67 (63.3)
Sister(s)	18 (75.0)	9 (64.3)	20 (66.6)	27 (72.9)	74 (70.5)
Brother(s)	15 (62.5)	6 (42.9)	22 (73.3)	24 (64.9)	77 (73.3)

Note. LPEC, LKC, MJSS, and GJSS are pseudonyms for the four schools in the study.

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Note. LPEC, LKC, MJSS, and GJSS are pseudonyms for the four schools in the study.

novels are rated equally. At MJSS, students read more textbooks than novels, and at GJSS, storybooks were read more than textbooks. Finally, in all the schools, question papers were the least read material.

With respect to question 2b, all the students at MJSS who indicated that they read did so at home, as did an overwhelming majority of those in the other schools (91% for LPEC, 78% for LKC, and 95% for GJSS). Only LKC had a substantial number of students who indicated that they read in the library.

#### **Parents and Siblings Who Read During the Holiday Period**

All the students who indicated that they read (87%) also indicated that their parents and siblings read

during the holiday period. Table 2 and Figure 2 show that more students indicated that their siblings (sisters = 70.5%, brothers = 73.3%) read than did their mothers (63.8%) and fathers (42.9%). This pattern of responses is replicated in each of the schools, except that in three of them (LPEC, LKC, and GJSS), more sisters were indicated as having read during the holiday period than brothers. Also, in all schools but one (LKC), more mothers, sisters, and brothers were indicated as having read than fathers.

#### **Procurement of Reading Materials for the Students**

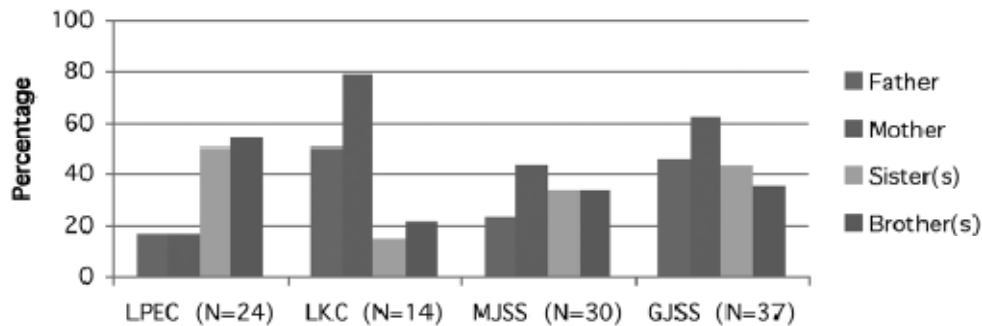
Table 3 and Figure 3 contain the findings of question 4 of the questionnaire administered to students. The

**Table 3** Number (and Percentage) of Parents and Siblings Who Procured Reading Materials for Junior Students in Gaborone, Botswana

Family member	Private schools		Public schools		Total (N=105)
	LPEC (n=24)	LKC (n=14)	MJSS (n=30)	GJSS (n=37)	
Father	4 (16.7)	7 (50.0)	7 (23.3)	17 (45.9)	35 (33.3)
Mother	4 (16.7)	11 (78.6)	13 (43.3)	23 (62.2)	51 (48.6)
Sister(s)	12 (50.0)	2 (14.3)	10 (33.3)	16 (43.2)	40 (38.1)
Brother(s)	13 (54.2)	3 (21.4)	10 (33.3)	13 (35.1)	39 (37.1)

Note. LPEC, LKC, MJSS, and GJSS are pseudonyms for the four schools in the study.

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table and figure show that students' parents and siblings bought reading materials for them. However, more students indicated that their mothers (48.6%) were involved in buying the books than were their fathers (33.3%), sisters (38.1%), or brothers (37.1%). Again, this pattern is replicated in all but one school (LPEC), where the students reported that the contributions of their siblings far outweighed those of their parents.

#### **Junior Students' Views About Reading**

Many of the students (25.9% at LPEC, 94.7 at LKC, 62.9% at MJSS, and 87.5% at GJSS) made comments about their reading, of which the majority were positive. The students said that reading was good and that they enjoyed it. About 10% of the students had either negative views on reading or problems with reading itself.

Students who had reading problems characterized reading as boring or difficult. The reasons for

this negative characterization included physical discomforts (e.g., headaches, sore eyes) and an inability to concentrate when reading. The following are other comments and questions by the students, as written on their questionnaires:

- I do not understand when I read.
- I want to learn more about reading.
- Reading takes too long.
- Can you help me to understand when reading or focus on the thing I am reading not thinking about others?
- Why do we read?

Additionally, some students took on the role of parents or teachers, as a couple of their responses show:

- I would like to encourage people to read a lot.

- I would advise all students to read their books as it would help them to achieve what they want in the end.

## Discussion

The finding that an overwhelming number of students read during the holiday period and enjoyed it is contrary to the impressionistic belief (Baputaki, 2006; Hosia, 2007) that Botswana does not have a reading culture. The finding is also contrary to those in the literature on the reading culture of Botswana and other countries (see Dlamini, 2003; Jongman, 1993; Marinho, 2003; Mbae, 2002; Molosiwa, 2004, 2007). Indeed, the students' enjoyment of reading points to the fact that it is one of their principal leisure activities. The label "lack of a reading culture" does not seem, even from this preliminary discussion, to apply to the group of junior students who participated in this study.

The findings do not sufficiently reveal the reasons behind the activities of students who did not read during the holiday period. If the reason were unavailability of books, as Marinho (2003) and Olaofe (2003) have suggested, then the students should have said so. Looking after cattle, which in Botswana represents wealth, is one activity that many Botswana love to engage in during their spare or leisure time. The other activities that some of the students engaged in, such as playing, watching television, and helping out in the family store, are also legitimate leisure or holiday activities (see Kelly, 1996; Kraus, 2000).

In any case, Mathangwane and Arua (2006) have shown that a substantial part of students' after-school time is spent helping parents with chores at home. Further research into this area is needed to show whether students who do not read during the holiday period are readers who prefer to engage in other activities. It should also be possible to investigate the extent to which those who read engage in other activities and the time they allocate to reading.

Contrary to the expectation that they will read only leisure materials during the holidays, the students also read academic materials. The materials read most, however, were notebooks. The fact that notebooks and textbooks ranked high on the students' reading list seems to support the view that they read

only to pass their examinations (Gaselathale, 1995; Kotei & Milazi, 1984).

However, novels also ranked high; in fact, they were second to notebooks on the list of materials that junior students read. Storybooks also ranked high, whereas newspapers, generally considered the most popular materials read by students (see Blackwood, Flowers, Rogers, & Staik, 1991; Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007), ranked low on the students' list. It is now clear from the findings that students read different kinds of material, and there is rough equivalence in the numbers of those citing academic and leisure texts as constituting their reading. It is necessary to reexamine students' reading culture in this light.

The finding that almost all the students in three of the schools used in this study read at home is not surprising, for as Pennac (1994) has noted, they have the right to read anywhere. Nevertheless, it supports Ntlamelang's (1982) view that many of those who can read do not use the library. Research by Arua et al. (2005) and Jongman (1993) also supports this view, as both have shown that school libraries are not patronized by students in some rural and urban areas of Botswana during school sessions. According to Arua et al., libraries have become places where silence reigns. In more graphic terms, the lack of patronage makes each of the libraries in the secondary schools "a white elephant" that is "not taken advantage of" (Hosia, 2007, p. 34). The same comment applies to public libraries in view of the findings of this study.

It may be argued that accessibility (i.e., content, distance, outreach), as deemed by Waples (see Kamberelis & Albert, 2007), is one of the reasons why students do not read in libraries during school holidays. In fact, Marshall (1975) has observed that some school libraries are architecturally inaccessible because they are placed in remote parts of campuses, "necessitating a lengthy walk often between buildings" (p. 75). For instance, the National Library in Gaborone is difficult to access, as getting to the library requires some students to travel from the outskirts of the city into the city center. Also, working parents do not have the time to take their children to and from the library, especially on weekdays.

However, it should be noted that Botswana has an elaborate library system, which consists of public

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libraries and village reading rooms. "The Village Reading Rooms project...serves as an outreach service for communities far away from the major centres where public libraries are located" (Baffour-Awuah & Pilane, 2001, p. 65). Nevertheless, the National Library needs to build more branches in the cities and increase the number of village reading rooms in rural areas. In addition, relevant and interesting books that have been shown to be lacking in some public

and school libraries (Arua et al., 2005) should be purchased, and computers and other equipment should be installed in them. This would increase accessibility at all levels.

The findings related to question 3 of the questionnaire show that parents and siblings model reading behavior for the students. As Hall and Coles (1999) have observed, this behavior is not confined to Botswana, for there is "a significant positive relationship between children's enthusiasm for reading, the amount of reading they do and living with a sibling who reads a lot" (p. 108). Pitcher et al. (2007) are even more inclusive: "Family members, including mothers, grandmothers, aunts, uncles, and siblings, are influential forces" in students' reading lives (p. 392).

The more specific finding that mothers model reading more than fathers do in Botswana can be explained by the fact that the literacy rate of women has been consistently higher than that of men over the last 15 years (Botswana Central Statistics Office & Department of Non-Formal Education, 1997; Youngman, 2002). The finding is also supported by a study of two rural areas that found that women were more involved in their children's reading than the men were (Mathangwane & Arua, 2006).

There is also the issue of the large number of female-headed families, which necessitates women playing a dominant role in the lives of their children. All of these tie in with Hall and Coles's (1999) survey finding that female adults (56.8%), usually the mothers in the lives of the children, read more than male adults (38.2%; p. 96). Finally, the amount of reading

of the students' siblings appears to have a greater influence on the students than that of the mothers.

The next finding to be discussed is the procurement of reading materials for the students by their parents and siblings (question 4). To promote the love of reading, reading materials should be available (Ike, 1998). Some parents, according to Collins, Hunt, and Nunn (1997), encourage their children to read by buying books for them or taking the children to a bookstore to select books to purchase. This supports the finding of this study that many of the students' parents and siblings buy reading materials for them.

As in the case of the modeling of reading, more women are involved in the procurement of reading materials for the students than the fathers. Indeed, mothers' book recommendations are more likely to find favor than those of fathers (Hall & Coles, 1999), which may be because of women's higher literacy rate and other factors previously discussed. A related finding is that siblings also recommend and buy books for the students. The higher literacy rate of females may also account for the greater involvement of the students' sisters than brothers in buying the reading materials.

The discussion has shown that parents and siblings are an indispensable part of the reading development process within the family. It is necessary to research the reasons for the apparently diminished influence of fathers to see whether a clearer trend can be gleaned. Similarly, it is necessary to acknowledge the increasingly enhanced roles that mothers and siblings play in fostering students' good reading behavior and examine how these can be exploited to encourage them to enjoy reading and to read more.

Occasionally, the views of students regarding their reading are sought by researchers (question 5; e.g., Collins et al., 1997). In this study, the majority of the students who have a positive view of reading described it as good, enjoyable, or important. The reasons for the positive characterization are that it refreshes the mind and is relaxing and interesting. These descriptions are the clearest indication in this study that some of the students read for leisure. Indeed, one respondent put it this way: "I would like to have more story books to read so that I can improve my English and it is fun to read."



Many of the students stressed the utilitarian value of reading, however. As the students reported, reading improves their vocabulary or English, leads to success and a bright future, keeps them busy, enables them to retain information and learn new things, and gets them ready for their final examinations. In other words, the students' academic well-being, as noted previously, is the reason why some said that reading is good and important.

The influence of the parents is noticeable in the students' views on reading. As one of the students indicated, "Reading helps us to live our life and help your father or mother." In line with the utilitarian value, the motivation to read is extrinsic. This is again contrary to the intrinsic motivation expected when students read during the holiday period. The students form a community that is engaged in reading for their own purposes (Guthrie & Anderson, 1999), but in this case, the purpose is to please parents and engender harmony in the family.

Exhortations to read and study are certainly the province of parents and teachers (Applegate & Applegate, 2004). Indeed, parents and teachers not only encourage the students to read but also indicate the benefits (i.e., extrinsic motivation) to be derived from reading. It is not surprising, therefore, that junior students echo these same views. Having said this, there is no doubt that the students who participated in this study are very much aware of the values of reading, which they rightly express.

### **Supporting Junior Students to Read for Leisure**

From the survey of reading behavior of junior secondary school students in Botswana during one holiday period, we have learned that the majority of them enjoyed reading academic and leisure materials. The home, rather than the library, constituted the main setting in which the reading was done. Parents and siblings, especially the females, participated in the students' reading by modeling it for them, buying them books, and generally ensuring that they were engaged in reading during the holiday periods. A majority of the students sampled understood that reading is important, is enjoyable, and could be used to achieve successful academic ends. However, some of

the students found it boring and tedious, and these students should be identified and supported.

The support available for students who find reading boring or tedious is limited in the Botswana context. Obviously, teachers need to diagnose and attempt to remedy the problem, and they need to be trained to perform these tasks. Additionally, reading and language classes, which are currently combined, would need to be conducted separately. This would engender greater clarity regarding the nature and scope of reading that is done by junior students, enable teachers and literacy experts to identify students who have reading or language problems or both, and provide sufficient knowledge to enable teachers to support reluctant readers (Chance, 2008). Junior schools would also need reading programs that support students to develop the habit of reading for leisure.

We do not feel that literacy scholars in Botswana should be concerned that the majority of students read for both leisure and academic purposes during school holidays. It makes no difference what materials students read, provided they are allowed to choose the materials or are persuaded to read and enjoy texts selected by their teachers, parents, and siblings. In this light, then, both leisure and academic materials should be considered as aspects of the students' culture of reading in Botswana.

The culture of reading described in this study differs from that of junior students in other places, especially Europe and North America, where the population of immigrants from Africa and Asia is growing. Teachers in those areas would need to understand the reading cultures of the diverse groups of students in their multicultural classes to mitigate these students' initial shock of entering a different and possibly alienating culture. Immersion in fully fledged reading classes may be counterproductive.

A good way to support immigrant students would be to design individual bridging programs for them. Such programs, in the case of many immigrant African students, would wean them from a culture that includes reading academic texts for leisure to the reading cultures of the host countries without implying that the previous culture is bad or unacceptable. More important, teachers would need to be aware of and adaptable to the changing circumstances of

students, thus fulfilling the International Reading Association's call for well-rounded reading teachers who can support their students in all circumstances.

In conclusion, it is now clear that the label of poor reading culture does not apply to the group of students who participated in this study. There is a need, therefore, to research senior secondary school students, teachers, parents, and even those who assert, impressionistically, that Botswana does not have a reading culture. In other words, research on reading culture is still in its infancy in Botswana, and a concerted effort to research it further should be a priority for literacy researchers in this country.

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