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Attitude of School Children to Storytelling and Reading of Textbooks in Selected Private Schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Ibadan, Oyo State

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Abstract:

This study focuses on attitude of school children to storytelling and reading of textbooks in the school setting, with the objective of examining the attitude of school children to storytelling and reading of textbooks in selected private Primary and Junior Secondary schools in Ibadan North local Government, Ibadan, Oyo State. Survey method was adopted for this study and simple random sampling method was used to select sample size of 300 private primary and Secondary School students and data was collected through a questionnaire. The findings suggested that storytelling exercise catches the attention of school children and they are happy when listening to stories and most of them always look forward to storytelling time each week. Also, students love reading textbooks. Students also understand better the topic taught when they read textbooks. On basis of the findings, it was recommended that teachers should develop the attitude of storytelling as this will help to develop the attitude of the pupils towards teaching and learning. Necessary textbooks that will develop reading habit of children should be provided by the school management and school children should be given access to the books through the school library.

Keywords: Attitude, school children, storytelling, textbooks

1. Introduction

Attitude is considered as a learned temperament of individuals towards objects, happenings, events and fellow beings positively or negatively. According to Hogg & Vaughan (2005) an attitude is "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols". This disposition is developed with the passage of time through formal and informal learning. The basic training of teachers and schools to primary and secondary school pupils effect a lot in the coming years of life of children. This early training in confidence building of school children serves as an asset in higher levels (Akey, 2006).

Stories are the essence of a culture. Whether they teach how to live in a hostile or fragile environment, represent the collective memory of people, encapsulate the values or promote a hero, storytelling is always at the heart of cultural identity and social life (koki, 1992 cited in Scroggie, 2010).

According to Thirumalai et al. (2013) Storytelling is one of the most studied formats for increasing reading comprehension ability among learners. When a story is read, the primary reference for the communication event is the text, as fixed upon the page. In a storytelling event, the words are not memorized, but are recreated through spontaneous, energetic performance, assisted by audience participation and interaction. In the oral tradition, storytelling includes the teller and the audience. The storyteller creates the experience, while the audience perceives the message and creates personal mental images from the words heard and the gestures seen. Storytelling serves many purposes, including increased vocabulary and concentration. Malo and Bullard (2000) said that storytelling might be more powerful than other mediums at developing skills that prepare children for reading. It promotes reading comprehension in ways that build the capacity of all learners to academically succeed. This teaching approach promotes a vision of diversity as a resource, by encouraging learners to make selections of narrative form based on the anticipated audience, rather than reducing all experiences to the school-story format that educators so often use. Engaging in storytelling activities is a way to motivate even the most reluctant reader or writer.

Gere (2002) notes that storytelling involves imagination combined with the use of language and gestures to create scenes in the listener's mind. Through visualisation, the teller and the listener come together to create the scenes of the tale. Storytelling can be used to bring up school children as an effective means to increase early literacy and promote reading comprehension skills in their life. Through active engagement, storytelling as a means of pedagogical strategy can strengthen reading comprehension by helping students develop a sense of story whenever they tell them story or they read it by themselves. More so, School children make use of the story hour to learn the social aspects of language through observation and participation in storytelling. Through participation in

storytelling experiences, students learn to build a sense of story by anticipating features of the genre, including how a story may begin and end (Craig et al, 2001).

According to Wikipedia (2007) textbook is a manual of instruction or a standard book in any branch of study. They are produced according to the demand of the educational institutions. Textbooks are usually published by one of the four major publishing companies. Although most textbooks are only published in printed format, some can now be viewed online. Textbook is a teaching tool (material) which presents the subject matter defined by the curriculum. Textbooks are a key component in most language programs. In some situations they serve as the basis for much of the language input learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom. They may provide the basis for the content of the lessons, the balance of skills taught and the kinds of language practice the students take part in. In other situations, the textbook may serve primarily to supplement the teacher's instruction. For learners, the textbook may provide the major source of contact they have with the language apart from input provided by the teacher. In the case of inexperienced teachers textbooks may also serve as a form of teacher training - they provide ideas on how to plan and teach lessons as well as formats that teachers can use. Much of the language teaching that occurs throughout the world today could not take place without the extensive use of commercial textbooks. Learning how to use and adapt textbooks is hence an important part of a teacher's professional knowledge (Richards, 2014).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, it has been observed that storytelling and reading textbooks have not been frequently use as a way of imparting knowledge to the children in most schools, despite the fact that they seem ways of fostering quick understanding and retention of the lesson being taught. If storytelling and reading of textbooks are not properly focused on in schools the way they ought to be focused on, children are not likely to develop the right perspective towards reading and understanding of the elements of their culture even at the secondary and tertiary levels. This would further affect their ways of life and invariably affect the national growth and development of the country. Due to lack of storytelling and not reading textbooks in schools, children may find it difficult to easily remember previous lessons because they aid in memorisation. Storytelling and reading textbooks ought to be a frequent teaching method use in schools to aid learning process in educational system. The study however, intends to find out the attitude of school children to storytelling and reading textbooks in selected schools and in Ibadan.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The main of this study is to investigate the attitude of school children to storytelling and reading of textbooks. Other specific objections are to:

1. investigate the attitude of school children to storytelling in selected private school in Ibadan;
2. examine the attitude of school children to reading textbooks in selected private schools in Ibadan;
3. assess the attitude of school children towards the use of textbooks in selected private schools in Ibadan;
4. find out the extent of use of storytelling as a teaching method in private schools in Ibadan and;
5. find out the challenges faced by school children in reading textbooks and in listening to storytelling in selected private schools in Ibadan.

1.3. Research Questions

The following are the research questions for the study:

1. What is the attitude of school children to storytelling in selected private school in Ibadan?
2. What is the attitude of school children to reading textbooks in selected private schools in Ibadan?
3. What is the attitude of school children towards the use of textbooks in selected private schools in Ibadan?
4. What is the extent of use of storytelling as a teaching method in selected private schools in Ibadan?
5. What are the challenges faced by school children in reading textbooks and listening to storytelling in the selected private schools in Ibadan?

2. Methodology

The survey method was used to carry out this research and the target population was 355 pupils of Primary 4 to Primary 6 in five private Primary Schools and 347 students of Junior Secondary classes (JSS) 1 to 3 of five private Junior Secondary Schools, making ten private schools all together in Ibadan North local Government Area, Oyo State. The simple random sampling technique was adopted to select a sample size of 300 comprised of 150 Primary school pupils and 150 Junior Secondary School students. The questionnaire was the major instrument used for the data collection. Data collected was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics such as tables, frequencies, and percentages.

3. Results

A total of 300 copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents; 150 to Primary School Pupils and 150 to Junior Secondary Schools and all the copies of the questionnaire were duly filled and returned giving a response rate of 100%.

3.1. Research Question 1: What is the attitude of school children to storytelling in selected schools in Ibadan?

S/N	Items	Yes	No
1	The story telling exercise catches my complete attention	105(70%)	45(30%)
2	Listening to storytelling makes me happy	136(90.7%)	14(9.3%)
3	Without storytelling my study is not complete per day	74(49.3%)	76(50.7%)
4	During storytelling I listen well than in normal subject class	76(50.7%)	74(49.3%)
5	I always look forward to storytelling time each week	91(60.7%)	59(39.3%)

Table 1: Attitude of school children to storytelling in selected Primary Schools in Ibadan

The result of the finding showed that the respondents enjoys listening to storytelling as this gives them real joy, this was confirmed by a whopping 136 representing 90.7%. 105(90%) of the respondents affirmed that storytelling exercises completely attract their attention and with that, 91 representing 60% of the respondent said they always look forward to storytelling time each week.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	The storytelling exercise catches my complete attention	57(38%)	73(48.7%)	18(12%)	2(1.3%)
2	Listening to storytelling makes me happy	57(38%)	75(50%)	18(12%)	0(0%)
3	Without storytelling my study is not complete per day	0(0%)	19(12.7%)	94(62.7%)	37(24.7%)
4	During storytelling I listen well than in normal subject class	0(0%)	75(50%)	56(37.3%)	19(12.7%)
5	I always look forward to storytelling time each week	38(25.3%)	73(48.7%)	39(26%)	0(0%)

Table 2: Attitude of school children to storytelling in selected Junior Secondary Schools in Ibadan

The table showed that 130(86.7%) agreed, 20(13.3%) disagreed that storytelling exercise catches their complete attention, 132(88%) agree, 18(12%) disagreed that listening to storytelling makes them happy, 19(12.7%) agreed, 131(87.4%) disagreed that without storytelling their study is not complete per day, 75(50%) agreed, 75(50%) disagreed that during storytelling the listening well than normal class and 111(74%) agreed, 39(26%) disagreed that they always look forward to storytelling time each week.

3.2. Research question 2: What is the attitude of school children to reading textbooks in selected private schools in Ibadan?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	I love reading textbooks	77(51.3%)	55(36.7%)	18(12%)	0(0%)
2	I like reading textbooks only when preparing for examination	0(0%)	56(37.3%)	75(50%)	19(12.7%)
3	I understand better when I read textbooks	38(25.3%)	56(37.3%)	56(37.3%)	0(0%)
4	I only read my notebooks for test and examination	57(38%)	18(12%)	56(37.3%)	19(12.7%)
5	I only make use of textbooks when I'm given assignment	19(12.7%)	36(24%)	76(50.7%)	19(12.7%)

Table 3: Attitude of school children to reading textbooks in selected Private Junior Secondary Schools in Ibadan

For the purpose of explanation the frequencies of strongly agree and agree were summed to be positive while strongly disagreed and disagreed were also summed as negative. The result of the findings showed that most of the students loved reading textbook 132(88%) and not only when preparing for examinations 94(62.6%). Students affirmed that they understood better when they read textbooks 75(50%), the result also showed that the students were really motivated to read textbook and only for test or examinations and not only to solve their assignments 75(50%) and 95(63.4%) respectively.

3.3. Research question 3: What is the attitude of school children towards the use of textbooks in selected private junior secondary schools in Ibadan?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	I love using textbooks when I'm less busy	59(39.3%)	91(60.7%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
2	I study my textbooks everyday	0(0%)	74(49.3%)	76(50.7%)	0(0%)
3	I only work on textbooks at home	0(0%)	36(24%)	114(76%)	0(0%)
4	My teacher doesn't use textbooks when he is teaching us	0(0%)	55(36.7%)	95(63.3%)	0(0%)
5	Our teacher doesn't encourage us to be making use of textbooks during and after the class	36(24%)	77(51.3%)	37(24.7%)	0(0%)

Table 4: Attitude of school children towards the use of textbooks in selected private Junior Secondary Schools in Ibadan.

For the purpose of explanation the frequencies of strongly agree and agree were summed to be positive while strongly disagree and disagree were also summed as negative. Thus, it was found that 150(100%) said they love using textbooks when they were less busy, 74(49.3%), 76(50.7%) a little above 74(49%) disagreed that they study their textbooks every day, which still shows that many choose to read their textbooks daily. It was also revealed the study that teachers use textbooks while teaching, with this however, many students 113(75.3%) claimed that teachers did not encourage them to use textbooks during and after school.

3.4. Research question 4: What is the extent of use of storytelling as a teaching method in the selected private schools in Ibadan?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	They always tell us stories in my school	76(50.7%)	45(30%)	15(10%)	14(9.3%)
2	There is time for storytelling in my school	31(20.7%)	45(30%)	74(49.3%)	0(0%)
3	My school value storytelling very well	46(30.7%)	75(50%)	14(9.3%)	15(10%)
4	Storytelling in classroom is allowed in my school	46(30.7%)	44(29.3%)	45(30%)	15(10%)
5	We listen to storytelling all through the term	31(20.7%)	30(20%)	59(39.3%)	30(20%)

Table 5: Extent of use of storytelling as a teaching method in the selected private Primary Schools in Ibadan

For the purpose of explanation, the frequencies of strongly agree and agree were summed to be positive while strongly disagree and disagree were also summed as negative. Thus the table showed 121(80.7%) and 121(80.7%) agreement to the fact that their school value storytelling very well and that teachers always tell them stories in their school. Seventy-six representing (50.7%) of the respondents said their schools have time for storytelling, with 90(60%) agreement that storytelling in classroom is allowed in their school. It was also discovered by 89(59.3) that students did not listen to storytelling all through the school term which could as a result of some school factors.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	They always tell us stories in my school	59(39.3%)	91(60.75)	0(0%)	0(0%)
2	There is time for storytelling in my school	0(0%)	74(49.3%)	76(50.7%)	0(0%)
3	My school value storytelling very well	0(0%)	36(24%)	114(76%)	0(0%)
4	Storytelling in classroom is allowed in my school	0(0%)	55(36.7%)	95(63.3%)	0(0%)
5	We listen to storytelling all through the term	0(0%)	55(36.7%)	36(24%)	59(39.3%)

Table 6: Extent of use of storytelling as a teaching method in the selected private Junior Secondary Schools in Ibadan

For the purpose of explanation the frequencies of strongly agree and agree were summed to be positive while strongly disagree and disagree were also summed as negative. The findings showed that 150(100%) affirmed that they were always told stories in their schools, many students disagreed that there was time for storytelling in their school, that their school valued storytelling very well, that storytelling in classroom is allowed in their school and that they listened to storytelling all through the term with 76(50.7%), 114(76%), 95(63.3%), 95(63.3%) respectively.

3.5. Research question 5: What are the challenges faced by school children in reading textbooks and listening to storytelling in selected private schools in Ibadan?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	There is no story hour/period in my school	0(0%)	61(40.7%)	74(49.3%)	15(10%)
2	Our teacher don't allow us to participate doing storytelling	15(10%)	46(30.7%)	89(59.3%)	0(0%)
3	My notebooks are more comprehensive than textbooks	15(10%)	44(29.3%)	45(30%)	46(30.7%)
4	Reading of textbooks is not allowed in my school	0(0%)	0(0%)	76(50.7%)	74(20%)
5	My parents did not buy me textbooks because they are expensive	0(0%)	61(40.7%)	29(19.3%)	60(40%)

Table 7: Challenges faced by school children in reading textbooks and listening to storytelling in selected private Primary Schools in Ibadan

For the purpose of explanation the frequencies of strongly agree and agree were summed to be positive while strongly disagree and disagree were also summed as negative. The findings showed that none of the items listed was a challenge to reading of textbooks and listening to storytelling in the selected private schools, as the schools had storytelling periods in their school, that teachers allow participation doing storytelling hours 89(59.3%), that students valued their textbooks because they were more comprehensive than notebooks 91(60.7%), it was also confirmed that parents buy students textbooks 89(59.3%).

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	There is no story hour/period in my school	37(24.7%)	19(12.7%)	58(38.7%)	36(24%)
2	Our teacher don't allow us to participate doing storytelling	0(0%)	18(12%)	94(62.7%)	38(25.3%)
3	My notebooks are more comprehensive than textbooks	0(0%)	20(13.3%)	92(61.3%)	38(25.3%)
4	Reading of textbooks is not allowed in my school	38(25.3%)	18(12%)	56(37.3%)	38(25.3%)
5	My parents did not buy me textbooks because they are expensive	0(0%)	56(37.3%)	56(37.3%)	38(25.3%)

Table 8: Challenges faced by school children in reading textbooks and listening to storytelling in selected private Junior Secondary Schools in Ibadan

For the purpose of explanation the frequencies of strongly agreed and agreed were summed to be positive while strongly disagreed and disagreed were also summed as negative. The findings showed that none of the items listed was a challenge to reading of textbooks and listening to storytelling in the selected private Junior Secondary Schools, as the schools have storytelling periods in their school, that teachers allowed participation doing storytelling hours 94(62.7%), that students valued their textbooks because they are more comprehensive than notebooks 130(86.6%), it was also confirmed that parents buy students textbooks 94(62.6%).

4. Discussion of Findings

In table 1, the result revealed that larger proportion of the pupils agreed that storytelling exercise catch their complete attention and listening to storytelling makes them happy. This supports the findings of López, (2003) who found out that listening to stories develops the child's listening and concentration skills via: visual clues (pictures) or general knowledge. In this way school kids understand the story and they are motivated for language learning. The teacher can sustain their attention, for example, by asking them to listen for the gist that is, looking for the plot of the story. So the pupils get the idea and understand the text without knowing the meaning of every word.

In Table 2, the result on the attitude to storytelling among Junior Secondary School students revealed a larger proportion of the students agreed that storytelling catches their complete attention and listening to it makes them happy. Also, larger proportion agreed that without storytelling their studies were incomplete per day. Moreover, neither of the students agreed nor disagreed that during storytelling they listened more than normal subject class and larger proportion of the students agreed that they always looked forward to storytelling time each week. This study supports the findings of Gómez (2010) who found out that School children develop positive attitudes to storytelling and help them to keep on learning.

Research question 2 investigated the attitude of school children to reading textbook in the selected private Junior Secondary Schools. In table 3, the result revealed that the larger proportion of the students agreed that, they love reading textbooks. Also, larger proportion of the students disagreed that they read textbook only when preparing for examination. This is in line with the findings of Johnson (1995) & Meyer (1995) that whether children read or not is determined by their attitudes toward reading of textbooks. If children do not like reading textbooks or they think that reading is boring, their negative attitude toward reading will hinder their reading improvement.

Research question 3 sought information on the attitude of the school children towards the use of textbook in selected private Junior Secondary School. In table 4, it was revealed that larger proportion of the students agreed that they loved reading textbooks when less busy. Also larger proportion of students disagreed that they studied their textbook every day. This corroborated what Merisuo-Storm (2006) said, that a pupil who reads fluently is likely to be an eager reader, who also reads outside school. As a consequence, his or her reading skills continue to improve. The research question 4 investigated the extent of use of storytelling in the selected private primary schools. In table 5, larger proportions of the pupils agreed that stories were told in their schools. Also, larger proportions of the pupils agreed that there was no time for storytelling in their schools. More so, larger proportions of the pupils agreed that storytelling was allowed in their school and larger proportion disagreed that they listened to storytelling all through the term.

In Junior Secondary School, table 6, larger proportion agreed that their teachers always tell them stories in their schools, also larger proportion disagreed that there was no time for storytelling in their schools. Furthermore, overwhelming proportion disagreed that they did not value storytelling. Larger proportion of the students disagreed that storytelling in classroom was not allowed in their schools and larger proportion of the students disagreed that they listened to storytelling all through the term.

Finally, research question 5 sought information on the challenges faced by school children in reading textbooks and listening to storytelling in selected private primary schools. In table 7, the result revealed that larger proportion of the pupils disagreed that there was no story hour/ period in their school, also larger proportion of the pupils disagree that their teachers did allow them to participate during storytelling. This study supports the findings of Prokerala kids (2014) which found out that Kids love to talk instead of listening to anything. But this is not acceptable in the classrooms, thus storytelling gives them the necessary training to listen and understand instead of talking. Also, most of the students agreed that reading of textbooks is not allowed in their school but disagreed that their parents didn't buy them textbooks because textbooks are expensive. This is in support with the findings of Morrow (1983) cited in Yuxiang (2000) who found out that parents' attitudes toward reading influence their children's positive attitudes toward reading textbooks. Children whose parents received a good education were interested in books and had many books at home. If parents do not like reading, it is hard to imagine that they will buy books for their children, so children have nothing to read at home. Children may have no idea about getting pleasure, information, and ideas from reading, which may have bad effects on children's attitudes toward the reading of textbooks.

In Junior Secondary School, table 8, the result revealed that most of the students disagreed that there was no story hour/period in their school. Also most of the students disagreed that their teachers did not allow them to participate during storytelling. More so, most of the students disagreed that their notebooks were not more comprehensive than textbooks. The study also revealed that, most of the students disagreed that reading of textbooks was not allowed in their school and most of the students said that their parents did not buy them textbooks because they were expensive. This is in line with Feitelson & Goldstein (1986), they found out that 61% of low-income families have no books at all in their home. On the other hand, the standardised reading tests may make children suffer stress, illness, and long-term test anxiety (Smith, et al, 1991 cited in Yuxiang, 2000), which greatly frustrate children's interest in reading.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the following recommendations are made to make sure that storytelling and reading of textbooks is implemented.

1. Teachers should develop the attitude of storytelling as this will help to develop the attitude of the pupils towards teaching and learning.
2. Necessary textbooks that will develop reading habit of children should be provided by the school management and school children should be given access to the books through the school library.
3. Teachers should encourage the children to read their textbooks during free periods and after classes. Teachers should be available to guide pupils through the use of their textbooks.
4. Teachers should sustain the habit of storytelling and be creative, in other to enhance the method of teaching and increase assimilation in pupils and students should be encouraged to tell the stories that interest them to rekindle their love for storytelling.
5. Much time should be allocated to storytelling during school hours, in as much as storytelling is a method of teaching used to develop reading skills of school children. Also, parents should develop the attitude of buying textbooks for their wards.

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