

**EFFECT OF FOLKLORIC STORYBOOKS ON ATTITUDE TOWARDS READING AMONG
PUPILS IN IBADAN METROPOLIS, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of folkloric storybooks on attitude towards storybooks by pupils in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopted the quasi-experimental design. A total of 119 pupils comprising 73 (Experimental Group) and 46 (Control Group) participated in the study. The intervention section covered 11 weeks and duration of 45 minutes in each of the session. There were four phases, the pre-session, pre-test, treatment and post-test. In each of the weeks, the researcher visited the group for 3 days to have 45 minutes of reading and discussion. These treatment groups were exposed to a folklore storybook while the control group was exposed to placebo treatment. Findings from the study revealed significant main effect of folklore on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils. The folklore treatment group (FG) had the highest estimated marginal means score of (55.52). Also, a significant interaction main effect was established between Treatment and Text possession and pupils with text possession have higher estimated marginal mean score as compared with their counterparts in the non-possession of tex. The study concluded that intervention such as folklore can be employed by librarians, teachers, and parents can be used to address the problem of poor attitudes towards and use of storybooks by pupils in Nigerian schools. The study recommended that primary school pupils should be exposed to folklore storybooks to improve their attitude towards as well as developed positive attitude towards storybooks in the pupils.

Keywords: *Attitude towards reading, Pupils, Folklore, Ibadan metropolis, Text possession*

Introduction

Storybooks are important for the development of reading culture of children. Meanwhile, the apathetical attitude of children towards storybooks has been a source of concern to stakeholders in education. Also, teachers, parents, school librarians, curriculum planners and ministries of education are making efforts at reversing this trend of declining reading culture which is equally affecting the academic performance of these children. The storybooks children read and the characters they come across while reading them sometimes become imaginative friends to them for the better part of their developmental years. When children frequently and effectively use storybooks, they tend to develop a passion for creativity and proficiency in both written and spoken languages just as the use of storybooks provides the children an entertaining platform and a relaxing escape from daily pressures. According to Akanwa (2017), making time for the recreational use of high-quality storybooks helps to develop enthusiastic readers and improve academic achievement. In general, the more a pupil uses storybooks, the more background knowledge the child acquires about other cultures and forms of thought. Therefore, children's storybooks include books and other forms of reading materials written, produced and published for children whether for academic,

social, educational, or leisure reading. Children who are exposed to storybooks are capable of developing a strong emotional, intelligent, and social quotient compared to their peers who do not use storybooks.

However, attitudes towards storybooks are critical in promoting reading of storybooks among children. This is based on the fact that children's attitude towards storybooks can be one of the forces that propel them towards reading. According to Glover (2012), attitudes are learned behaviours, perceptions, habits which predispose a person to respond positively or negatively to a phenomenon, idea, object, person, or situation. Children's attitudes towards storybooks are crucial to their academic outcomes and development which could affect them positively or negatively. Storybooks are considered as very important information resource in the overall development of children as it ultimately determines their functionality and social development. Scholars such as Dike (2015), Aramide (2015), and Babarinde and Babarinde (2017) opine that children's exposure to storybooks should be infinite, hence It can be deduced that introducing storybooks to children from a very tender age could help in developing receptive attitude towards storybooks. Children's receptive attitude towards storybooks could also be linked to the contents, storyline, narratives, theme, plot or physical ambience of a book. However, the declining interests towards storybooks among children could be the cause of poor academic achievement, examination malpractice, moral decadence and a host of other vices amongst the children in Nigerian society today.

On the other hand, some researchers believe that developing a positive attitude towards storybooks is capable of transforming the minds and lives of those who use them (Glover, 2012; Echedom and Nwankwo, 2017). And it appears that developing positive attitudes towards storybooks could be a panacea to societal ills. Similarly, when children are exposed to more words through reading, it could increase their brainpower, make them more empathetic, relax the nerves, ease tension, and entertains the soul (Babarinde, Babarinde and Dike 2018). However, it is not just a matter of attitude towards storybooks but also a matter of the efficient and effective use of these storybooks by children. It is likely however, that positive attitude towards storybooks could bring about effective use of it.

The use of storybooks offers entertainment and recreation to Nigerian children. Angleton (2018) asserts that the amount of time children invest in the use of storybooks usually tells positively on their psycho-social maturity, hence developing a love for storybooks as a recreational activity is possibly the most important outcome of literacy. Decades ago, in most Nigerian schools, children were frequently engaged in neck-deep socio-educational activities such as inter-class and inter-school debates, quizzes and competitions such as drama from storybooks and novels. Dike (2015) asserts that these activities nurture, entertain, inform, and educate children towards developing the right attitude in the society through storybooks and their use. However, this practice is declining as evident in the non-reading of storybooks. Abati (2016) reports that decades ago curriculum texts and storybooks were common materials which children and young adults usually read. But from the early 2000 the desire to pass examinations, the yearning to attend and do well in interviews, incessant pressure and threats by parents, teachers, and caregivers now determines the disposition of children towards the use of storybooks. Similarly, Olayebi (2015) also expresses worries that children are more occupied with unprofitable leisure engagements rather than reading of storybooks. Aside over-dependence on technological devices, Nwabuan (2015) also shares the view that students' involvement in more of social activities than pleasure reading could be responsible for their poor engagement in storybooks reading.

In many Nigerian cultures, the history, customs, and other values of the society are conveyed to children amidst entertainment through folkloric storybooks. Researchers such as Wise (2018), Babarinde, Babarinde, and Dike (2018); Echedom and Nwankwo (2017); Tunde-Awe (2016); Aramide (2015); Dike (2015); Sullivan (2013); Igbokwe, Obidike, and Ezeji (2012) have attempted to address the issues affecting children's disposition to storybooks of folktales, but despite these attempts, children's attitude and disposition towards storybooks remains poor likewise their disposition towards the use of storybooks. Researches have it that Nigerian children show apathy towards storybooks. This apathy can be as a result

of unfamiliar contents of storybooks available to them which they find uninteresting, lack of text possession as well as problem of distraction due to overdependence on technological applications and devices.

Text possession or availability is another key factor that could affect children's attitude towards and use of storybooks. Children who lack access to storybooks by whatever means could easily be distracted and discouraged from use of storybooks (Nwabuisi, 2015; Tella and Akande, 2007).

It is also likely that children would prefer to obtain other items than acquire books even when funds are made available to them. Sometimes, the social stigma of inequality and overdependence on peers in order to have access to storybooks could also be a discouraging factor that affect children's attitude towards storybooks and which consequently could impede use. Children from low socioeconomic backgrounds could go through struggles of owning their own text and as a result could have negative effect on their attitude towards use of books even when ordinarily they have interest to read. According to Akpokodje and Ukwuoma (2016); Echedom and Nwankwo (2017), insufficient and unavailable literature books at home could be hurting to children from low-income households. In an attempt to address the foregoing identified problem, this study was designed to investigate the effect of intervention of the use of folkloric storybooks in addressing the apathy demonstrated by Nigerian pupils towards storybooks

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to determine the effect of use of folkloric storybooks on attitude towards storybooks by primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

In addressing the objective of the study, the following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance; determine the;

1. main effect of folklore on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria;
2. main effect of text-possession on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria; and
3. interaction effect of treatment of folklore and text possession on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

Literature Review

Children's attitude towards storybooks in Nigeria has not been encouraging as more writers of children's literatures keeps emerging with compelling and captivating stories with multi-cultural settings and characters. The concept of attitude can be examined in a variety of ways. According to Sainsbury and Rebecca (2009) attitude can be borne out of a desire and tendency to read and a reported enjoyment or interest in reading; and its opposite, a negative self-concept as a reader, a desire and tendency to avoid reading and a reported dislike of the activity. Okeke (2004) refers to attitude as consistent reactionary positions directed towards a person, an idea, an object, event or a concept and that these reactionary positions can either be positive or negative. Storybooks include are mainly fiction books which is used to cater for learners, those who struggle to read and those who read for pleasure. The messages that young children absorb from storybooks can heavily influence their attitudes and ideas about themselves as well as towards storybooks (Dowker, Bennett and Smith, 2012). However, concerns have been expressed amongst researchers as regards the decline in children's attitude towards storybooks (Tunde-Awe 2014; Babarinde, Babarinde and Dike, 2018; Popoola, Ajibade, Etim, Oloyede and Adeleke, 2010). The apathetical attitude of children towards storybooks in Nigeria has been a perennial discourse. Observation has shown that attitude towards storybooks among Nigerian children is tragically deficient (Echedom and Nwankwo, 2017). Attitude, as it relates to storybooks is a state of mind accompanied by feelings and emotions which makes reading more or less probable (Tunde-Awe, 2014).

However, Otitiegbe (2015) survey the extent to which storybooks are used by Nigerian children. The researcher drew the sample from four schools with over 1000 population of which 250 participants were selected via a random sampling technique. A questionnaire was used for data collection from the participants who were mainly of the senior intermediary class. About 98.0% of the participants agreed that storybooks were very important to academic success and reading proficiency, while 78.0% of the participants agreed that they are poor in storybook use. Most of the participants blamed their apathy for books use on non-functional libraries and lack of qualified school librarians to guide them. In the same vein, Anyanwu, Obichere, and Ossai (2012) examine children's use of storybooks amongst secondary school students in Owerri Imo state and findings revealed that students were not using books due to poor motivation, promotion, and encouragement by the librarians and libraries. It was also reported that Nigeria has been rated by the World Culture Score Index as one of the countries in the world with the lowest reading culture, while available statistics from National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education shows that 38.0% of Nigerians are non-literate as four in ten primary school children cannot read for comprehension (Akinfenwa 2019). Nevertheless, some genres of storybooks were established to help stimulate children's attitude towards storybooks and folklores (Akachi, 2015). Consequently, scholars have approached folklores as a source of interventions to attitudinal change, knowledge, and understanding of different cultures (Oha, 1992, Akachi, 2015, Dike, 2017, Buruji, 2019). However, between the years 2013-2014 an intervention using folklore was carried out by De – Buruji (2019) to determine the extent to which folktales could stimulate positive attitudes towards storybooks in children and the findings revealed that children who used folklores are more confident and encouraged in reading storybooks which ultimately led to the development of positive attitudes towards storybooks. Ismail (2017) asserts that storybooks of folklores offer authentic reading resources which give the students a chance to develop positive attitude and also intermingle with the text emotionally and involve themselves personally.

Moreover, Ahi, Yaya, and Ozsoy (2014) attempt to determine how storybooks of folklores could handle negative attitude; nature, and environment. Their result revealed that storybooks of folklores is capable of improving attitude and nature as well as environments. Similarly, Yusuf (2016) experiments with the use of storybooks of folklore in the teaching of primary school pupils in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Participants were tested using the retelling test; result showed that use of storybooks of folklore for teaching primary school pupils was more effective and significant on pupil's comprehension. Also, Sultan, Nafi, Qabaja, and Al-Abed (2018), assert that folklores had a positive effect on children's ability to use storybooks and enhance their mental reactivity in comprehending written text. Also, Al-Somadi (2012) carry out a study on the use of folkloric storybooks to improve children's moral values. The instrument for data collection was an observational checklist for measuring the development of moral values. In effect, the study showed that storybooks of folklores had significant positive influence on the moral values in children.

Theoretical framework

This research was anchored on two theories: the reading attitude also known as the Reasoned Action theory by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) and social learning theory by Albert Bandura (1977). The reading attitude theory also known as the theory of reasoned action was developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (1975). This theory is relevant to this study because it explicitly discusses how important the use of an intervention or treatments towards reading and books can bring about positive outcomes in the attitudes and behaviours of the participants. Another aspect of this theory is that reasoned action theory uses two elements: attitudes and norms (or the expectations of other people such as parents, teachers, and caregivers), to predict behavioural intent. This implies that a child's attitude towards reading could also be determined by parents, teachers, caregivers, book publishers, and the government.

The social learning theory was propounded by Albert Bandura (1977). The theory posits that learning occurs through observations, imitations, and modeling learning. This theory posits that when an activity is closely monitored by an observer, a positive regurgitation or imitation of what has been observed by the

third party occurs. This theory is perceived as relevant to this work in that, children have tendencies of achieving a positive attitude towards books and reading when exposed by their parents and peers to reading activity. This theory helps people especially children to succeed in any area of life because its components are crucial to human survival.

Research Methodology

This study adopted a pre-test, posttest, control group and quasi-experimental design while the population of this study comprised primary 4 pupils in Ibadan North West Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. The population of this study comprised primary 4 pupils in Ibadan North West Local Government Area (IBNWLGA), Onireke, Ibadan Oyo State. The choice of private schools is because children who attend private schools could have the privilege of exposure to and possession of books. An intact class of pupils was used because private schools usually have few pupils in a class. The participants were divided into two groups of experimental and control groups respectively. To achieve this, the 4 educational zones of the selected LGA viz: Dugbe, Eleyele, Jericho and Onireke were put into consideration. A simple random sampling technique using secret balloting procedure was adopted in selecting 2 zones that were used for this study. Hence Jericho and Eleyele educational zones were selected for the study. Also, the simple random sampling technique was used in selecting one school from each of the educational zones selected for the study. The schools selected were, Tobi International Group of Schools from Jericho zone and St. Isabel Group of Schools from Eleyele zone. This was done in order to stagger the participant’s location and also to prevent contamination of the results (See Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Participants

No	Name of school	No of pupils	Research Group	Sample size	Total
1	St. Isabel school Group of schools Eleyele	73	Experimental	Intact class	73
2	Tobi International Group of Schools, Jericho	46	Control	Intact class	46
TOTAL		119		Intact class	119

Inclusion criteria

The study’s inclusion criteria were as follows:

1. Participants should be primary school pupils schooling in IBNWLGA, Oyo State
2. Participants should be in primary 4 classes in the selected schools in IBNWLGA, Oyo State.
3. Participants should be willing and ready to participate in the experiment without coercion.
4. Participants should attain an average literacy requirement; they should be able to read and write and
5. Participants should be ready to attend and actively participate in the treatment sessions.

The treatment package that was used for this study is a fictional storybook titled ‘The Greedy Tortoise and Other Stories/by Ore Olunloyo published by Lantern Books. Ibadan; 2014, 54p; ill., 978-142-994-1. Also, a questionnaire was used to collect data on the attitude of the pupils towards storybooks. The questionnaire was administered before (pre-test) and after (posttest) the treatment. The content validity of the questionnaire was also carried out on 30 pupils of Glory Academy International School in Akinyele Local Government Area, Ibadan, Oyo State. The items on the questionnaire were subjected to test-retest reliability to determine the reliability coefficient. The data collected were subjected to Cronbach Alpha Coefficient which yielded the result of 0.86, ($\alpha=0.86$). The intervention section covered 11 weeks and duration of 45 minutes in each of the session. There were four phases, the pre-session, pre-test, treatment

and post-test. In each of the weeks, the researcher visited the group for 3 days to have 45 minutes of reading and discussion. These treatment groups were exposed to a folktale storybook in order to determine its effects on attitude towards and use of storybooks.

Interpretation of Results

Background Information of Participants

Tables 2 to 4 present background information of the participants including gender, age and family type.

Table 2 Frequency distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	62	57.4
Female	46	42.6
Total	108	100.0

Table 2 shows that 62 (57.4%) of the participants were male while only 46(42.6%) were female. This implies that there are more male pupils among the participants among than the females

Table 3: Frequency distribution of respondents by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
7-9 years	47	43.5
10-13 years	59	54.6
Above 13 years	3	1.9
Total	108 respondents	100.0

In table 3, the distribution of participants across age range shows that 47(43.5%) were within 7-9 years, 59(54.6%) were within 10-13 years and 3(1.9%) were above 13 years of age respectively. This implies that majority of the participants are within 7-13 years of age.

Table 4: Frequency distribution of respondents by family type

Parent/guardian occupation status	Frequency	Percentage
Both parents	81	75.0
One parent	27	25.0
Total	108 respondents	100.0

Table 4: shows that 81(75.0%) participants had both parents while 27(25.0%) had single parents. It can therefore be deduced that majority of the respondents are under the care of both parents.

Testing of Hypotheses

1. There is no significant main effect of folklore on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

Table 5: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) showing the effect of folktale on Attitude of primary school pupils towards storybooks

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta. Sq
Corrected Model	2220.348	12	185.029	4.352	.000	.355
Intercept	7008.746	1	7008.746	164.868	.000	.634
Pretest Attitude	34.591	1	34.591	.814	.369	.008
<u>Main effect:</u>						
Treatment	933.462	2	466.731	10.979	.000	.188
Text possession	223.803	1	223.803	5.265	.024	.053
<u>2-way Interactions:</u>						
Treatment x Text possession	24.046	2	12.023	.283	.754	.006
Error	4038.569	95	42.511			
Corrected Total	6258.917	108				

R Squared= .355 (Adjusted R Squared = .273)

Table 5 shows that there is a significant main effect of folklore on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan North West LGA ($F_{(2,95)} = 10.979, p < .05, \eta^2 = .188$). The result also revealed the contributing effect size of folkloric treatment of 18.8% and a variance of 27.3% (Adjusted $R^2 = .273$). Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. In order to determine the magnitude of the significant main effect treatment and control groups, the estimated marginal means of the treatment group was carried out and the result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Estimated marginal means on Attitude of primary school pupils towards storybooks by treatment and control group

Treatment Groups	Mean (\bar{X})	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Folktale (FG)	55.52	1.393	52.752	58.284
Control (CG)	49.26	1.498	46.282	52.232

Table 6 shows that children in folklore treatment group (FG) had the highest estimated marginal means score of (55.52) for attitude towards storybooks, followed by the Control Group (CG) with a mean score of (49.26). This order can be represented as $FG > CG$.

2. There is no significant main effect of text possession on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

Table 2 reveals that there is a significant main effect of text possession (TP) on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan ($F_{(1,95)} = 5.265, p < .05, \eta^2 = .053$). Therefore, the null hypothesis 2 is rejected. The table also shows the contributing effect size of 5.3% by text possession. In order to determine the magnitude of the significant main effect text possession on attitude of the primary school pupils towards storybooks, the estimated marginal means of the text possession category was carried out and the result is presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Estimated marginal means of Text Possession on Attitude of primary school pupils towards storybooks

Text possession	Mean (\bar{X})	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Non-possessed	48.653	.954	46.760	50.546
Possessed	52.311	1.277	49.776	54.845

Table 7 shows that pupils' group with text possession had the highest estimated marginal means score of (52.31) while pupils' group with non-text possession had estimated marginal means score (48.65). This implies that the pupils with text possession had a better attitude towards storybooks compared to their counterparts who are not in possession of text in this study.

3. There is no significant interaction effect of folklore treatment and text possession on pupils' attitude towards storybooks in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

Table 5 shows that there is no significant interaction effect of folklore treatment and text possession on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan North West LGA, Oyo State, Nigeria ($F_{(2,95)} = 0.283$ $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .006$). Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. This implies that folklore treatment and text possession when combined together do not positively affect the pupils attitude towards storybooks.

Discussion of Findings

The study was carried out to determine the effect of folklore treatment on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo state. The results obtained from the study showed that folklore treatment had significant main effect on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo state. This implies that pupils exposed to folklore treatment were more willing to put off complacency and apathy towards storybooks and develop positive attitude towards storybooks. Thus, folklore was found to be potent in dealing with poor attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils. This finding affirms Okebukola, Owolabi and Onafowokan (2013) result which established that interest and motivation links the affective aspects of attitude to storybooks and that storybooks of folktale genre, with themes such as hard work, perseverance, resilience, courage, zeal, focus, excellence, patience, tolerance humility, honesty and respect among others could help children to develop a more beneficial positive attitude towards storybooks and outlook to life. Albers (2016), also found that stories have a strong influence on children's general attitude and understanding and according to him, stories do not just develop children's literacy; they convey values, beliefs, attitudes and social norms which, in turn, shape children's perceptions of reality and attitude towards literary appreciation. Folklores are stories most African children get exposed to from very early in life and contain ancient stories which tells about traditions and virtues of which evokes deep interest in children. Folklore stories presented in storybooks could help children abate attitudinal apathy towards storybooks. Pupils exposed to folklore showed a significant shift from exhibiting poor attitude towards storybooks which implies that poor attitude among primary school pupils can be abated by introducing folklore stories. It can be deduced from the findings of the study that folklore stories significantly aided the pupils to make informed decisions that led to regaining of lost interest in reading. Therefore, exposing children to folklore stories exposed them to the fact that poor attitude is not unique to them. This study further agrees with Gray (2010) who is of the opinion that folklore storybooks with things that children have prior experiences or interests about could make them discuss meaningfully while using storybooks which can get them thinking about the ideas, character or storyline.

Findings on text possession as a moderator variable in this study established significant main effect of text possession on attitude towards storybooks among primary school pupils in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. Text possession in this study implies that book ownership, book accessibility, book availability is positively

effective in the development and sustainability of positive attitude towards storybook among pupils. The findings further revealed that, pupils who possessed text had developed a better attitude towards storybooks compared to their counterparts who do not have books or are not in possession of text. This finding agrees with Lindsay (2010), who asserts that access and ownership of storybooks improves children's over all attitudinal performance, encourages children to read more and for longer lengths of time and produces improved attitudes towards storybooks among children. Also, findings from this study also validates the result of Akpoje and Ukwuoma (2016) study which reveals that text possession by children have a positive impact on children's attitude towards storybooks. On the other than hand findings from this study is at variance with Ludvigsen (2014) result that book ownership in itself is no guarantee that children could develop positive attitudes towards storybooks.

Conclusion

Poor attitude towards use of storybooks among children has been a source of concern to stakeholders. The implication of sustained attitudinal apathy towards storybooks is too critical to overlook in Nigeria. However, the findings of this study revealed that intervention such as folklore can be employed by librarians, teachers, and even relevant government agencies to combat poor attitudes towards and use of books. Possession of storybooks by pupils is also very important in determining the disposition of pupils towards storybooks.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Primary school pupils should be exposed to folklore storybooks that will help in boosting their positive attitude towards storybooks.
2. To reduce apathy and spurn of knowledge, it is recommended that pupils should be introduced to storybooks from very early in their lives, especially during their preschool year
3. Authors and publishers should publish and write folklores storybooks that are aesthetically balanced which will attract the pupils and sustain their interest in storybooks.
4. The government through the ministry of education and other relevant stakeholders including school libraries and school librarians should make policies and ensure the use of folkloric storybooks in schools across the nation.

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