

**IMPROVED ADOLESCENT READING CULTURE THROUGH EDUTAINMENT: AN  
ACADEMIC EVALUATION OF LAMECON INTERVENTION IN LAFIA, NASARAWA  
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## **Introduction**

This Evaluation presented data, analysis, and findings. It started by providing basic information on the LAMECON Reading Club (LRC), including sample size distribution, data collected, and response rate. It then examined the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, analysed data based on the study objectives at univariate and bivariate stages, and discussed the findings.

### **Background on LAMECON Reading Club (LRC).**

The LAMECON Reading Club was established in 2022 as an offshoot of the Basic ICT project. During this period, facilitators discovered participants have reading deficiencies because many struggle to keep up pace when words are being dictated to them which they found was borne out of poor reading culture, because majority of them do not find reading interesting, so there it was decided that after the ICT, a reading club be set up to help improve the reading habit of students in Public Secondary School during the long term break (a month) within Lafia using edutainment. The Club primarily focuses on AYPs (10-17) because they believe it is an ideal age to instil a reading culture in people, and as they grow, it becomes an integral part of their daily lives. To achieve this, the Club employed many edutainment methods; while some are specifically chosen to boost their reading and imaginative skills directly, some are chosen to grasp their interest because they know AYPs love them. These include Scrabble, Chess, Movie Method, Spelling Bee, Storytelling, Creative Dramatics, etc. During this period, each participant is expected to read at least four books, and at the end of the session, a final day programme is done to showcase what participants have learnt and an artistic expression based on the identified theme during the session.

### **Distribution of the table by Reading Club session and number of participants.**

*Table 4.1: Reading Club Sessions and Participants*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
2022	22	29%
2023	32	42%
2024	22	29%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: LAMECON (2024)

This table presents the study population from which a sample size of 64 was determined using Taro Yamane's statistical formula for determining sample size. A proportionate sampling method was adopted to determine the number of instruments to give to the study years. Thus, 18(29%), 28(42%) and 18(29%) were allocated to year 2022, 2023 and 2024, respectively, based on their contribution to the total population of the study. This data was collected using KoboCollect to help bridge physical distance for those participants (especially the 2022 session) who have left Lafia or are studying in other places. Additionally, six qualitative interviews were conducted: 2 student-facilitators (former participants who are not trained as peer educators), 2 LAMECON facilitators, and 2 parents/guardians.

### **Distribution of the table by completed questionnaire across the sessions.**

*Table 4.2: Completed Questionnaire across sessions*

<b>Sessions</b>	<b>Total Number of Participants</b>	<b>Administered</b>	<b>Returned</b>	<b>Return Yield (%)</b>
<b>2022</b>	22	18	17	94%
<b>2023</b>	32	28	27	96%
<b>2024</b>	22	18	16	89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>94%</b>

Source: (Fieldwork, 2025)

From the above table, a total of sixty-four (64) respondents were reached with the questionnaire across three different sessions, and only sixty (60) questionnaires were returned. The remaining four questionnaires were not returned by respondents after parental consent was obtained. The use of an electronic data collection tool (KoboCollect) was effective in eliminating incomplete forms, loss of forms, untidy documentation, and it provided real-time geographic locations of respondents as well as the start and end times of providing responses to the questionnaire.

### **Presentation of the Characteristics of the Sample Size/Data**

As established, a total of sixty-four (64) respondents were reached with the questionnaire (quantitative), and only sixty (60) questionnaires administered to the respondents were completed, returned and used for the analysis. For the qualitative interview, an interview guide was administered to 2 student facilitators (KII 2 and 3), which helped to get insights from the participants' point of view and their transition as facilitators, 2 LAMECON facilitators (KII 1 and 4) were also interviewed to provide background of the Club and observations across years of facilitating in the Club, and 2 parents/guardians (KII 5 and 6) were also interviewed to understand their perspective on the Club and the potential impacts/changes they have observed in their wards since joining the Club.

### **Demographic characteristics of respondents**

This section aggregates respondents based on their age, the LAMECON Reading Club Session they attended, their sex, the kind of ownership of the school they attended, their school level, the religion they practice, their family size, their parents' occupation, and the family income. All these are important to have a clue about each of the participants' backgrounds.

*Table 4.3: Socio-demographic characteristics of participants of the LAMECON Reading Club*

	Age	Frequency	Percent
	8-10	11	18
	11-14	24	40
	15+	25	42
	<b>Reading Club Session</b>		
	2022	17	28
	2023	27	45
	2024	16	27
	<b>Sex</b>		
	Female	39	65
	Male	21	35
	<b>School Category</b>		
	Government	18	30
	Private	42	70
	<b>School Level</b>		
	Junior secondary	25	42
	Senior secondary	35	58
	<b>Religion</b>		
	Christianity	34	57
	Islam	26	43
	<b>Family Size</b>		
	1-4	12	20
	5-8	46	76
	9-12	1	2
	13+	1	2
	<b>Father's Occupation</b>		
	Business	6	10
	Employed	40	67
	Farming	1	2
	Self-employed	11	18
	Unemployed	2	3
	<b>Mother's Occupation</b>		
	Business	16	27
	Employed	25	42
	Farming	2	3
	Self-employed	11	18
	Unemployed	6	10
	<b>Family Income</b>		
	Less than 70,000	9	15
	70,000-100,000	22	37
	101,000+	29	48
	<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Fieldwork, 2025)

From the table, at least four in five respondents (82%) were above the age of 10, representing a significant portion of the targeted study population, while about one-fifth (18%) fell within the age category of 8-10. The data shows that respondents are within the adolescent age group with a mean age of 13, which speaks to the Reading Club's vision of inculcating reading habits in the young ones early enough, at a period when they already have basic comprehension skills. This age is characterised by abstract thinking, problem-solving, and hypothetical reasoning. This is the stage where a young person uses their experiences and patterns to develop logical thinking. Understanding age dynamics is crucial to knowing the types of books they engage with, the games that strike and keep their interest, and how they spend their leisure time.

About half of the respondents (45%) were from the 2023 session, while the others were from 2022 (28%) and 2024 (27%). More females (65%) are participants at the LAMECON Reading Club, which the study finds that because females are considered a little bit at educational disadvantage to males, the Club serves to bridge that existing educational gap. More than two-thirds (70%) of the respondents attended privately owned institutions, which detracts from the objective of the LAMECON Reading Club to promote reading culture among public secondary school students. Participants' school categories do not differ that much, as Senior Secondary (58%) blends in with Junior Secondary (42%) to provide a balance in interaction of participants and promote shared learning. There is a fair representation of Christians (57%) and Muslims (43%) in the study, which highlights the inclusive nature of the Club.

One-fifth of respondents came from a family where they are either a lone child or have just a sibling, the majority of participants (76%) are from large families with a person as low as 5 and high as 8, and 4% from families with not less than 9 persons. Examining family size is important

in determining its effect on reading time, concentration, and the creation of a peaceful environment for reading, as well as the economic implications for the parents and the impact on the respondents. More than half of the respondents (54%) came from homes where at least one parent is gainfully employed, while over one-fourth (28%) had either a parent who is farming, unemployed, or self-employed. More than one-third (37%) of respondents belonged to families with an income between the minimum wage and 100,000 naira, while about half (48%) earned more than 100,000 naira, and a substantial 15% earned below the minimum wage. Based on the data, the large-sized family, however, do not match up with the employment rate as data shows that 28% of respondents had either a parent that are farming, unemployed or self-employed, and 15% of these families earn below the minimum wage. Understanding parents' occupations and family size aids in comprehending how supportive parents can be as enabling figures in fostering a reading culture in their children and promoting the same. It also underscores the resources available to parents for providing non-school-related books to nurture their children's love for reading or for supplying other means to enhance their reading culture. Additionally, family size, employment rate and family income were explored for bivariate analysis.

### **Respondent's perception of determinants of reading culture**

Univariate analysis of respondents' perception of determinants of their reading culture was assessed. These included the duration they spent watching movies daily, the availability and accessibility of public libraries, the availability of books, household chores and the effect on reading, preferred activities, whether they see value in reading, the economic implications of developing a reading culture and their opinion on whether encouragement from families can help improve reading culture.

Table 4.4: Respondents' perception of determinants of reading culture.

<b>How many hours do you usually spend watching movies daily?</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Less than an hour	27	45
1-3 hours	18	30
4- 6 hours	13	22
7 hours	2	3
<b>I have easy access to a public or community Library?</b>		
Strongly Agree	0	0
Agree	3	5
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	20	33
Strongly Disagree	37	62
<b>I have access to books whenever I want to read?</b>		
Strongly Agree	3	5
Agree	6	10
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	28	47
Strongly Disagree	23	38
<b>How difficult is it for you to settle down to read due to household chores?</b>		
Very Difficult	22	37
Difficult	3	5
Neutral	1	1
Slightly Difficult	3	5
Not Difficult at All	31	52
<b>Which do you prefer?</b>		
Playing game	9	15
Playing with friends	1	2
Reading	43	71
Watching movies	7	12
<b>I have wanted to buy a book to read, but could not afford it?</b>		
Strongly Agree	47	78
Agree	4	7
Neutral	3	5
Disagree	4	7
Strongly Disagree	2	3
<b>I see reading as a difficult thing to do?</b>		
Strongly Agree	7	12
Agree	4	7
Neutral	2	3
Disagree	35	58
Strongly Disagree	12	20
<b>How valuable do you consider reading for personal or academic development?</b>		
Extremely Valuable	58	97
Very Valuable	2	3
Moderately Valuable	0	0
Slightly Valuable	0	0
Not Valuable at All	0	0
<b>To what extent do you agree that encouragement from family/peers to read can promote a reading culture?</b>		
Strongly Agree	54	90
Agree	6	10
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Fieldwork, 2025)

Table 4.4 presents the perception of respondents on the determinants of their reading culture. The data shows that 55% of participants at the Club spent nothing less than an hour daily watching movies, with one-fourth of them spending 4-7 hours. This significant amount of time spent on movies daily has a direct bearing on their reading culture. This daily habit, factoring in at least 6 hours spent in school, shows what participants spent the remainder of the day doing (watching movies), which affects their ability to spend their leisure in building their reading culture. With little leisure time at their disposal, they spend a significant amount of that time watching movies instead of developing a reading culture. The various respondents gave insight into this perspective:

Yes, like watching of movies. Like my elder sister, she spends a lot of time watching movies, and that takes people's minds away from reading. (*KII, 2*).

In this age of the internet, where people are creating a lot of audio-visual content. People want to watch more than read. So reading is very, very poor. (*KII, 4*).

Instead of using your book to read, you will say since I have maybe 3 hours to read, let me use 2 hours to go online or watch movies, then I can now use the 1 hour to read so it has also reduced the time you're supposed to use in reading. And you now don't have that broader knowledge that you needed, so you get small of it. (*KII, 3*).

Knowledge of the existence of Library and access to such also contribute major constraints to developing reading culture among participants. 95% of respondents disagree (33%) or strongly disagree (62%) on the notion that they have access to a public or community Library. This goes a long way to show that access to the Library is a major problem among respondents, and if these respondents are from economically disadvantaged homes, a public Library that could have helped in promoting their reading culture is not accessible or found. This issue of Library existence and

access was cited as a major reason by a parent whose children love reading but have no access to a Library, she lamented:

One of the factors that I can say has affected them so far is access to library. Like you will rarely..., yeah, currently in Akwanga we have an E-library but I don't even think it's functional because there was the day I went there by around after 3 and it was already closed. I'm not even sure if they open on Saturdays and considering the fact that these children will go to school on Monday till Friday...I don't even think they have books. I've entered that place, although it's an E-library, so I don't know if they are expected to have books or not. But if I'm to say, that access to library has been one of the factors that has affected them. (*KII, 5*).

She went further to say that libraries and physical book reading have more impact in sustaining interest and building reading culture than contemporary reading materials, where they can easily get distracted by other things on the internet or on the phone. She highlighted:

You know, sometimes children might collect the phone and say let me check this topic and before you know, you see them on Facebook. So you cannot actually compare it with the traditional reading where you carry your book, you have a library. And some people say E-book. E-book to me is not as efficient as the hard copy...even when they made up their mind that it's studying they want to do, sometimes you see them on TikTok, Instagram. (*KII, 5*).

While stressing the pros and cons of the rise of E-book, access to the Library and physical books, some of the facilitators stated:

Reading is now easier in the sense that we now have E-books online. Books that we cannot have in the library around us, around our locality, around our community... We will be looking at the distractions in-between reading and being able to navigate other aspects of social media. Traditionally, of you reading, open one page per time but if you have something like the audio book for instance, you can be able to listen to the book while you navigate other apps and the distractions might come in there. You are easily not focused. Also, you cannot be able to manage your time, you know while you are doing other things online, you are trying to read E-book as well, you have divided attention. So it affects a lot of persons that want to read, especially young persons. They get distracted a lot, as they would end up spending a lot of time focusing on social media, internet than on books. You know they can be navigating one thing and then it brings you to another, and another before it brings you to content that you were watching or you're trying to follow up with. It disturbs that thought process that you had in reading the books. So the imaginative aspect of reading the book and building your imaginative aspect is distracted which are minimal in physical reading. *(KII, 4)*.

If you ask me, once all these young guys have phone, just ask any question, they easily go to the internet or ChatGPT or AI to actually ask question and then read. So, I will say it is actually high, the rate has gone up because people are now reading and developing new ideas using those channels, those AI, internet and the rest of them... ChatGPT actually gives you that opportunity to read more by citing sources for you to check for more information. *(KII, 1)*.

The majority of respondents (85%) disagree (47%) or strongly disagree (38%) that they have easy access to books where they have made up their minds to read, but no books to read. Similarly, 85% of the respondents also strongly agree (78%) or agree (7%) that they have ever wanted to buy a book to read but could not afford it. If one cannot access books, what would one read? And of course, developing reading culture is not just about reading a single book or one-off reading, but habitual or regular reading, which requires access to a variety of books. Lack of access to books is further exacerbated by lack of access to Libraries or knowledge of the existence of such, because if Libraries are readily available and equipped, readers can go, read books of choice at their leisure or convenience and not necessarily purchase them. Economic status is another major factor that affects access to book, which in turn affect reading culture. Respondents at different points have opinions on this:

The thing is, reading and feeding actually go hand in hand. If somebody does not have money to actually feed properly, the mental strength will not be there for the person to read at that moment...people need money to buy those books, those articles to access them...So if my family is not buoyant enough to afford books for me, I don't think that will influence me to read (*KII, 1*).

For some is a lack of money. For example, maybe their parents don't have enough money to buy them books. (*KII, 3*).

The economic situation of the state is affecting us 99%. Because to feed alone is a problem in society, talk more of a parent getting reading materials for their children. So it's a very big problem. (*KII, 6*).

However, a significant 15% of respondents affirmed that they do not have these challenges due to advancements in technological inventions that have helped in curtailing the lack of access to books, as many books are now available in E-copies where readers can easily access them. Emphasising on the existence of this and how it has helped bridge physical reading, a facilitator and a parent stated:

Again, you can be able to read a lot of things now, we have audio books and you can be able to get audio books via social media. You can have E-books online and then; it makes it easier for people to get those materials online. (*KII, 4*).

They use the phone to check YouTube. Like when they were actually preparing for their JAMB, they were actually using my phone or sometimes their sister's phone to check for their topics and read. (*KII, 5*).

Another respondent, while moving away from technological intervention to other methods that can help and have helped bridge this gap at the personal level, stated that:

If I don't have money to buy book to read, I go to my aunt's shop because she sells books. I go there and pick books and read it in her shop cause if you're taking it out, you have to pay for it. So like, if you cannot go to cafe or shop then tell the owner that they should please that you find interest in this book, so you can stay there, go through the book and read it there. (*KII, 2*).

About half of the respondents (47%) cited household chores as an impediment to their reading culture, while some of these respondents, view household chores as a very difficult factor in settling down to read, (37%), some see it as just difficult (5%) while others see it as slightly difficult (5%). Reading in itself it a psychological process that requires dedication and attention

for maximum efficiency and when household chores are overwhelming or when reading time is time to run errand for the house, it can inhibit the interest in reading. This goes a long way to show that parents have important roles to play in promoting reading culture among their kids. The student-facilitators affirmed:

Yes, sir, there are sometimes I would want to read for leisure, my sister or my mother will just call me to go and buy something, do this one or do that one. By the time I come back, I am either exhausted to go back to what I wanted to do before (reading) or I would have lost interest. (*KII, 2*).

Some also is maybe household chores. Let me say their parents don't give them enough time to read. Instead, they'll give them house chores, do this one, do that one, so they will not find time to read. (*KII, 3*).

Reading is an activity that majority of the participants engaged in. We could infer that having gone through the Reading Club, it's edutainment and objective of promoting reading culture among participants, this response is not too surprising. However, 29% of participants who have gone through the Club prefer to watch movies (as cited earlier on the duration they spent watching movies daily), play video games or spend time with their peers. This highlights that AYPs still find interest in playing with peers or video games, especially as some find reading boring and uninteresting, and some only read when they have a test or an examination. Some of the respondents stated:

You know, reading is generally not something exciting to do. You have to be focused, sit down, and have to put your head in one place for you to concentrate, read and

understand. So it takes a lot...and you know adolescence is a very delicate age. They want to do things; they want to explore. (*KII, 4*).

The only reason young persons are reading is just for them to pass exams not even to know that thing. It's just for he/she to pass and then the motivation there is to pass exam. (*KII, 1*).

Most at times now, they don't use to read again. It's only for test or exams...they will prefer opening their notebooks in class then copy the answer, submit it than going home, read, prepare for the test. (*KII, 3*).

We choose them because reading alone is boring...Yes, like watching of movies...Internet too, like my other sister. And sometimes games, that is me, I like playing games. Like today now, I'm going to stadium to go and play games. (*KII, 2*).

Reading culture in Nigeria is actually on a declining state because many young people will spend time on the social media than reading. They spend more time on entertainments, watching sport, more than reading. (*KII, 5*).

Emphasising on the 29% that prefers to play with friends, play games or watch movies, and the long-term effect on the reading ability and habits of AYPs, one of the student-facilitator stated:

If you always find yourself on the internet, playing games, watching movies and one day you find yourself in a congregation that you are meant to read, you will find it difficult to read. (*KII, 2*).

A significant majority (85%) strongly agree (78%) or agree (8%) that finance has been a major impediment to fostering reading culture, as at a point in time, they have wanted to read a book badly but could not afford it.

About one-fifth (19%) of respondents strongly agree (12%) or agree (7%) that reading is a difficult adventure as some see it as boring, uninteresting, and a stressful thing to do. Therefore, teachers, parents, guidance, and enabling adults need to find a way to make reading engaging and simplified for AYPs so they do not see it as a daunting task. A facilitator based on observation stated:

Students now don't find time in reading as some see it as a difficult thing to do. They can just be like instead of reading, make I just Google the question, the answer will just come out. (*KII, 3*).

This therefore points to the need to reaffirm AYPs that there is value in reading, especially as all the participants also believe this, as 97% of them believe it is extremely valuable and 3% say it is valuable. A respondent, however, stated the issue of piracy as a case to this. The respondent said:

You know the issue of piracy where authors' books are all over and they in turn do not make anything of out of their publication. Majorly, some people are avid readers, so they can master the art of writing and publish their own books. But when they see the height of piracy of books and that authors do not make anything, it would discourage them. (*KII, 4*).

Additionally, all participants strongly agree (90%) or agree (10%) that encouragement/motivation from family and peers can help in promoting reading culture, especially as participants have established that reading is an uninteresting adventure. Some respondents affirmed:

Okay, they say that everything starts from the home, right? So I think parents have a very key role to play in improving the reading culture in adolescents. One of these is at the early stage in the kids' lives, laptops or phones should be replaced with giving them books. Introduce them to books early enough that are adolescent-friendly, that are enticing, and relate to their social consciousness and are appropriate for their age. So it's a very, very important thing for parents to buy books for their kids at home to encourage them in reading. And also, if they necessarily need to balance it up with the gadgets they buy, they should have a timetable for it. Do not give your child the gadgets from morning to night. They should be able to give their child two hours of the day, and they can have the books all the hours of the day and be able to do other things too. (KII, 4).

The respondent went further to say:

And then, you provide not just books, very importantly, books that surround their interest. For instance, if you find an adolescent that is interested in Fashion or Modelling or Music, get them books that are in that line. You don't get an adolescent that wants to read Music, books that are in Physics. The correlation is not there; the interest is already distorted. So understanding adolescent or children or young people's interests also helps in the kind of books you provide for them...It will help reduce the stress of someone who wants to do Fashion, going to read Physics, going to read Biology, or this one. Since you want to do Fashion, provide them with books in Fashion, provide them with modules or templates that they can be able to follow in those Fashion fields as early as possible. So you see that kids at the age of ten, eleven, already know what they want, and they are provided with books in those dimensions

to be able to read and follow through. (KII, 4).

They feel reading is important, because sometimes we bring medals. So they will feel reading is important because if not for reading, I would not have got my medal or things like that, so they find reading very important. (KII, 2).

Another facilitator drawing from personal life cited lack of parental support and poor book-reading culture in the family as one of the reasons for poor reading culture among AYPs:

And again, it depends on the people we associate ourselves with, like our parents. Some of our parents don't fancy reading at all. But while for other people, it is a core thing for them that in a day, you must read at least 2 pages or 1 book in a day. So some, it depends on the family background. (KII, 1).

Based on this, the respondent therefore cited parents as important figures in promoting reading in which if they do not take on these roles can have drastic effects on their kids reading culture:

I will say they should make hard copy of reading materials available. Because most at times, for example, at home if you want to read, my dad will say we should go online and read those things. So if you tell me to go online and read, I don't necessarily have to go and read everything. What I just need is those key things and all I have to do is just ask ChatGPT or any AI, what is this. It will go straight to the answer and I will just get what I want and go back without reading per say. (KII, 1).

The respondent went further to highlight that AYPs can be made to appreciate the value of reading by motivation and promoting healthy competitions:

They should bring out competitions that is going to trigger young and adolescent persons to read. Because I think, everything now, omor if things are not being

motivated, if there is no motivation or motives for reading now, I don't think young people are ready to read. (*KII, 1*).

Parents also feel they have important roles to play in building their children's reading culture.

Some of these parents shared what they do to motivate their kids:

My own system is that I encourage them, and I promise them to do well in their studies, promising to gift them if he or she come out well and once I make such promises, I try to fulfil them...Personally, I think by encouraging them. That gift that I promised him or her, I must present that gift to such child. Yes, I believe it will motivate him or her to do more or develop an interest. And not just that, by also providing the materials for them because they can't just close their eyes reading off head, they need to have the materials around them will also help them in a long way to read very well and comfortably, and it will also motivate them to do more to read. (*KII, 6*).

Whenever I read interesting things online, sometimes I call them and I say oh, come and see this. And I give it to them to read. Or sometimes, whenever I see an article that bless me so much or I send it and I find it impactful or useful for their age. I send it to their sister's phone. Okay can you check, make sure you read it out, we will find a time to discuss it, it makes it a little bit fun when you have time to discuss the story together. Once you enter my sitting room, there is a bookshelf, so sometimes I'll tell them that have you read this book on this bookshelf, I've read it and it's nice, you can pick it up. This is a book on communication, you can pick it up, and that has really helped them...One thing I have done is to expose them to the idea that if you are not learning, you'll become obsolete. Knowledge is power. So I've made them see that if you truly want to grow in any aspect of your life, you must be deliberate to put in efforts in

learning in that area and part of learning is by actually reading. You read about it. If you want to improve on your communication, pick books on communication. If you want to improve on your Biology, read Biology textbooks or check Biology videos and watch. So that is the way I have actually made them appreciate reading. And also sometimes, reading biographies of people who are top of their careers. And ask them why do you think people have gotten to this place, they got there by deliberately putting efforts into their career, which learning is part of it, and you can't learn without reading...I think another way we can make AYPs appreciate the value of reading is by making it fun, like book clubs, reading competitions. (*KII, 5*).

The student-facilitators shared what their parent do to help them at home and what they think other parents can also adopt:

Sometimes putting their children through. Like, my mum, even if I'm in school, there's a book I have to read, even if she doesn't have money, she'll borrow just to get that book for me. So sometimes parents or guidance can help their children, even if there's no money, you can give them your phone to get the book online or if they have money, they can help the children with the money. (*KII, 2*).

They can create a timetable for their children. Then, the timetable will show them this is the time you're supposed to read. I think they can seize their phone. When you're done reading, I will release your phone... Some people don't believe in reading. Maybe you can show them, these are people who read, and this is where they are now in life. So if you want to be in that same position, you can now be like, he is reading, you have to read, so that you can be able to get there. (*KII, 3*).

## **Edutainment methods used in the LAMECON Reading Club**

The LAMECON Reading Club started in the year 2022 and was an offshoot of another project: Basic ICT. During this period, facilitators discovered participants have reading deficiencies because many struggle to keep up pace when words are being dictated to them, which is borne out of poor reading culture because the majority of them do not find reading interesting, so it was decided that after the ICT, a reading club would be set up to help promote reading culture. Buttressing how the Club came about, one of the facilitators stated:

We discover that in as much as these kids are involved in the practical aspect of the ICT, some of them have deficiencies in understanding the basic grammatical construction. That was how it was birthed, and we came around and discussed and drafted out the module of how it is to be done. But very importantly, not the traditional way it is done. We wanted to make it a very interesting adventure for kids that are going to come around. Because we understand that most of them have been reading in their schools and doing things, they have been given opportunity to go to libraries but what we want to do for them is different by making it an exciting event for them. So that was just the idea and how it has been done. *(KII, 4)*.

The Club basically centres on AYPs because they believed it is a great age to inculcate reading culture in people and as they grow it becomes part of their normal lives. The Club as stated above wanted to be different from the reading the kids do in school, they wanted to make reading fun and interesting by taking kids away from the classroom setting into an atmosphere of fun and entertainment. To achieve this, the Club employed many edutainment methods, while some are specifically chosen to boost their reading and imaginative skills directly, some are chosen to grasp their interest because they know AYPs love them. One of the facilitators highlighted that:

Some of the games were picked for specific reasons...Scrabble was picked for a specific reason and if you itemize all of the games that we have, some of them can be able to help to boost imagination, while some are concentration games that help the adolescents to focus while they are reading. Some are vocabulary building games. So while they are reading, it helps in building their vocabularies. So they cut across all of these reasons for us to be able to choose. And some of them are just choosing because we noticed that the young people will be interested in them. For example, the Play Station, Tennis, Badminton, Darts, etc. There is no any correlation with it precisely but because we want to grasp their interest, these are the games them come to play. Then we make them to read before they play the games. (*KII, 4*).

Creative dramatics, also referred as educational drama, is a method that employs improvisation, role-playing and other creative activities to engage students and aid learning. The implementation of creative dramatics into learning is to be able to move from a teacher-centred system to a more flexible and creative system of teaching and learning, a learning that does not just involve talking and writing or just memorising, but also an interactive experience for learning and a child-centred system of learning. This is one of the methods employed at the club to make participants enjoy the Club and look forward to every session. Through this method, participants are tasked to assume roles in books they read, to create better characters from the book and often suggest alternate endings to some of these books. The essence of this is to engage their mental and creative capacity so they can think beyond the surface level. One of the facilitators stated:

We incorporate drama and other things that are interesting, pick any of the play, let them script the scenes from any of the plays or any of the books, develop around it and then act it out. It brings more to the visual aspect of those books, more than just reading

imaginatively all day long, and then it also good for young persons...If they were the authors to write these books, how would they have put these books in a way that would suite their own taste. So you can see that from that perspective, young people are able to think and carve out a perspective of how they would have want books to come to a conclusion, other than what the author has done. (*KII, 4*).

Digital/Video game is also another method utilised at the club. Participants are provided with PlayStation, comprising games such as Pro Evolution Soccer (PES), Bicycle and Car Racing, Mortal Kombat, etc. The digital games are used for two basic purposes in the club. The first is to get their interest and attention, as the majority of them like these games, including the females, the second is to allow them to interact with the on-screen words/instructions in the game, like start, go, play, pause, end, etc. Through this means, they learn to pronounce these words and familiarise themselves with them.

Cognitive development games are also another significant part of the Club. These games are directly related to building reading culture, vocabulary and learning. These are games that simulate thoughts and require thinking, concentration and reading. These cognitive development games include traditional ones like Chess, Scrabble, Treasure Hunt, Spelling Bee, Riddles, Puzzles, etc., that enhance critical and creative thinking. Some other kinds of games are also used to sustain the interest of students. Some of these include: **A.** the letter game where students are expected to mention a word that starts with the last letter in the previous word, e.g. meat...teacher...reading...guild...dream... etc. **B.** the backward game that requires words to be spelt from backward, e.g. Nigeria as Airegin, House as Esuoh. **C.** Another of great importance is the sentence game where they are expected to build up on the last person's word to form a continuum of meaningful sentences. **D.** There is also the concentration game, which is used to

develop cognitive skills of participants and mental alertness. Participants are required to do number counting at a fast pace and at multiples of 5; the person in line says 'gbosa'. **E.** Treasure Hunt is another great game where participants are divided into groups and are given hints to where their treasures are. The first group to collate all the treasure and make a sentence with such wins. The game helps develop intellectual capacity, time management and team bonding. **F.** I am X, and I am from the Z game, where a student introduces his/herself to another student, who promptly responds, and it continues serially to the last student. For example, the first participant starts by saying, I am Ejike and I am from Anambra, then the next participant responds by saying, "You are Ejike and you are from Anambra. I am Asheazi, and I am from Lafia. Then the next participants repeat the cycle of the two, adds his/her own, and it continues until the last participant has successfully repeated everyone's statement in the group. Citing the importance of choosing some of these games, some of the facilitators highlighted:

Scrabble is also for fun, but it also helps our brain in thinking, and then all this intellectual stuff. That was why we specifically chose the game. If you play those games, you can also learn something from the game, because there are games that you will play that you will not learn anything, just for fun. So we pick those games specifically for intellectual reasons. (*KII, 3*).

For me, I think they are more interested in playing Scrabble. Yeah, the Scrabble. Apart from Scrabble, they do the concentration games. So those are the games they want to often participate in. And one of the reasons I think they want to participate in Scrabble is because it is not a one-man's game, it is competitive, it is engaging. So it engages them with their peers. You know, from there they are able to build words with their

peers, they learn more with their peers. So that is one of the reasons why Scrabble tops the chart in the games that I feel they choose. (*KII, 4*).

The movie method is another significant method used in the Club. As earlier established, books that have movie forms are usually played for the participants, and when these films get interesting and have their attention hooked, they are usually turned off. Participants are then encouraged to read the books on their own.

Cluster reading is another method used in the Club where participants are formed into groups, they share ideas and knowledge about books they picked or were assigned, and this helps to build confidence and communicative skills of participants as they discuss with their peers. Another great benefit of this is that participants develop an interest in the stories of books shared by others and therefore look forward to reading the books. One of the facilitators, highlighting its importance, said:

the cluster reading is also good for young people. They share ideas together, they also share, for some of them, who are a little bit slow in understanding, you see that others push themselves to be able to understand what they are reading. (*KII, 4*).

Another major method utilised in the Club from the 2023 session till-date which to an extent differentiates the Club from other Reading Clubs, is the Peer-to-Peer learning method approach. The students from the first session were trained as AYP facilitators to take charge of activities in the subsequent Club, and this has been cascaded across every session, where previous participants are now facilitators. Citing why this method is utilised in the club, one of the facilitators said:

And peer-to-peer education is also one of the things that we use in the LAMECON Reading Club because young people learn more often from themselves than from their tutors, so when you bring

them together, and because some of them are good, they can be able to explain these concepts in a way they understand. They can be able to speak to themselves in that direction, and then you monitor them. (*KII, 4*).

### **Respondent's perception of how edutainment improves reading habits**

Participants at the Club are at the point of entry, engaged to know why they enrol for the Reading Club against Basic ICT. These two programmes are usually advertised to students when the Project Officers do outreaches to these schools to canvass participants. From these inquiries, participants revealed that the promise of a conducive atmosphere away from the classroom setting, edutainment, games and other fun activities are standout reasons why they join the Club. This section, therefore, analyses the respondents' perception of how the edutainment methods employed at the LAMECON Reading Club helped improve their reading habits. It seeks to measure the level of ranking and interaction with these activities from **Strongly Agree** to **Strongly Disagree**. It measures the level of agreement if the games played at the Club are fun and interesting, level of agreement if the games encouraged them to read more books and find more words, level of agreement if it the movie method employed at the Club motivates them to find the books and finish reading them, the level of agreement if the drama and other creative processes used in the Club motivates them to read, level of agreement if their concentration level has improved since joining the Club and level of agreement if they have ever looked forward to reading a book due to story shared by their peers/facilitators in the Club.

*Table 4.5: Respondents' perception of how edutainment improves reading habits.*

<b>Do you find the games played at the club fun and interesting?</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	51	85
Agree	7	11
Neutral	1	2
Disagree	1	2
Strongly Disagree	0	0
<b>Do the games played encourage you to find more words?</b>		
Strongly Agree	48	80
Agree	11	18
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	1	2
Strongly Disagree	0	0
<b>Does the movie method employed encourage you to find the books and finish reading them?</b>		
Strongly Agree	40	67
Agree	14	23
Neutral	1	2
Disagree	5	8
Strongly Disagree	0	0
<b>Do the drama and other creative processes motivate you to read your books so you can participate?</b>		
Strongly Agree	51	85
Agree	7	11
Neutral	1	2
Disagree	1	2
Strongly Disagree	0	0
<b>Do you think your concentration level has improved during reading?</b>		
Strongly Agree	47	78
Agree	12	20
Neutral	1	2
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
<b>Have you ever looked forward to reading a book due to the story your peer/facilitator shared?</b>		
Strongly Agree	18	30
Agree	37	62
Neutral	2	3
Disagree	2	3
Strongly Disagree	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: (Fieldwork, 2025)

From the above table, almost all the respondents (96%) strongly agree (85%) or agree (11%) that the games played at the Club are fun and interesting, while 4% are undecided or disagree and feel the games do not appear fun or interesting to them. 98% of respondent strongly agree (80%) or agree (18%) that games employed at the Club help to build their vocabulary as they encourage them to find more words, as 2% disagree. These games are specifically chosen by the facilitators from observation and presume that they can simulate AYPs' interest and, in the process, get them to read (a bait to play those games) as failure to read means no access to the games. The facilitators stated:

We have a variety of in-house and outdoor games that we incorporate, so that every child who wants to play a game must be able to read a certain number of books before being allowed to play. These are games that they are not used to but see them on television or internet. So they are eager to play those games, and because they are eager to play those games, they come and read a certain number of books and in the process found new words to build their vocabulary...Scrabble for instance is a game that they love to engage with especially with their peers from other schools. It makes it competitive, you know healthy competition. So they want to play against each other, play against the tutors, they want to engage and as more and read as well. (*KII, 4*).

So, one thing the game makes them do is that they really want to come back to play the game but they have it in back of their mind that whenever they want to play this game, they must read this particular book. These things that motivate people, like I said earlier, they are things that motivate them to come back to read. (*KII, 1*).

Sometimes when we read, we have to like add somethings that requires reading too but entertaining so that it will not look boring to them. Because some people, when

there were no games, they left. But when we added games, most people found it interesting...Chess is one of the games that help to sharpen people's mind. Scrabble also, it helps us, because you get to calm down and find words that will match. It equally requires calculation and reading because if you read, you will know words that fit in the table. (*KII, 2*).

Okay, like, we do play Scrabble. Scrabble is also an intellectual game that boost their sense of spelling and all those stuffs and then we also do play this thing...Treasure Hunt, we also find words...Like spelling bee, we can call a word, ask them to spell the word and then it also boost their spelling skills. (*KII, 3*).

90% of respondents strongly agree (67%) or agree (23%) that the movie method encouraged them to find the books and finish the story, as 10% are undecided (2%) or disagree (8%) with the notion. So, in using the movie method, participants are introduced to a movie, and at the climax, the movie is stopped, so on their own, they would look forward to reading the book so they can know the end. Citing the importance of this, one of the facilitators affirmed:

Sometimes, we do watch, like let me say a particular book, if there is a movie for the book. So some people don't like reading, but they do prefer watching the movie of that book than reading. They find it more interesting than reading the book. So sometimes we do play the movie of the book for them so they can watch and also get entertained, but stop it halfway and encourage them to read the book to get the full story. (*KII, 3*).

Almost all the respondents (96%) strongly agree (85%) or agree (11%) that the that drama and other creative dramatics used in the Club encouraged them to finish their assigned books on time

so they can participate in the fun and not miss out as a result of not reading the assigned books, while 4% are undecided or disagree. Some of the facilitators sharing how this has helped stated:

Drama, something like creativity. Because sometimes, if you do not find reading interesting but when act what is on the book, people like it and they read so they can participate... (KII, 2).

The dramas are written by them so it is also a part of fun but it's also a way to make them to read and so if you read, you can know what to write. If yours is good, we use your drama...Most of them are interested in drama because they feel you will not sit and read, they will just give you a part to play. And then most of them want to be among people that are acting. So most of them find it interesting than sitting down and reading but they have to read to be considered. (KII, 3).

So what we normally do is, they come around, they play games. But before they play those games, we will make sure that they must have read a certain book and number of pages before they go into any entertainment sector. (KII, 1).

98% of respondent strongly agree (78%) or agree (20%) that their concentration level has improved significantly during reading since attending the Club due to the activities they were engaged in, while 2% is undecided. Concentration games aimed at developing mental alertness and sharpness are another kind of games used in the Club, which is significantly responsible for this improvement. One of the facilitators stated:

The concentration games help adolescents to focus while they are reading...It helps them to pay attention, diligent in listening. It helps them to be able to think on the spot and the imaginative games as well, it helps them in that aspect. (KII, 4).

92% of respondents strongly agree (30%) or agree (62%) that they have looked forward to reading a book due to the story shared by the facilitator or their peers, 3% are neutral, 3% disagree, and 2% strongly disagree. One of the facilitators shared that this is achieved through cluster reading:

We do cluster reading among these people, such that they can be able to learn from themselves, and through this cluster reading, many participants develop an immediate interest in reading books shared by others. (*KII, 4*).

Edutainment methods employed at the Reading Club have helped to improve the reading habits of participants through word searches and curiosity. The interview conducted with facilitators and parents exemplified how significant edutainment is in improving reading culture. Facilitators believe that the Club and the games have played significant roles in helping to improve the reading culture of participants across time. Some of them stated:

Some of them came in and they cannot be able to even read a particular book. Let me say we gave them a way to read. So most of them cannot even read, let me say 3 or 4 pages in a day, but due to the process we enrol them in, now there are changes, they can read 4 books or more than in a week. So for me it's an improvement. (*KII, 3*).

This is how we've been able to use these games to hold them down together and of course, it boosts their reading culture because if you don't read these books in the LAMECON reading club, you cannot be able to play these games. So as long as you will be able to read, you will participate in the playing of these games, which is very important for them. So we use these games generally as a bait to be able to get them

focused, to be able to get them to read more. So is how we have been able to tie these things to them. (KII, 4).

Parents also highlighted that the Club has help considerably to improve not just the reading culture of their kids but their vocabulary, concentration level, and academic performance:

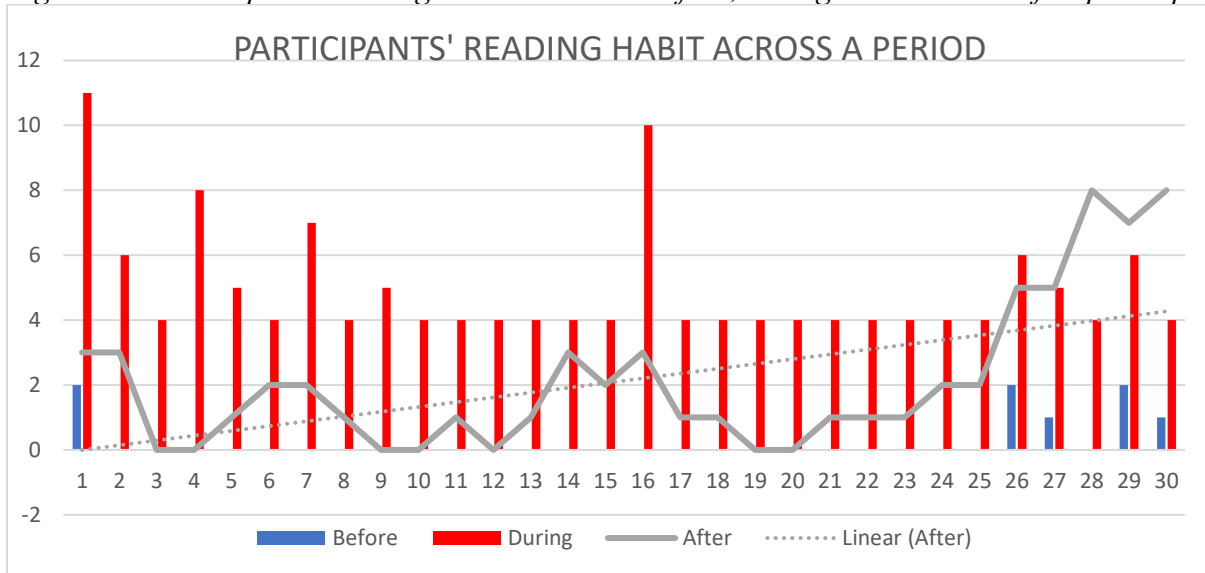
There has been a lot of changes, since Marvelous and Favour joined the Reading Club, they have actually loved reading from the beginning but there were more positive changes, like I could see more interest in reading and it have also helped them in their academic...Marvelous is always the first in her class, Favour is always the second, sometimes vice-versa. It has also improved their vocabulary. Sometimes when we are talking, they might say some certain type of English and I will be like where did you hear this English from and they will be like it was from this book...So in essence it has improved their vocabulary, their reading culture which has in return affect positively their academic. (KII, 5).

I think there is this positive change that I see. I use my kids as an example, there is this fluency in pronunciation when communicating with their fellow students, they communicate very fluently. And again, in terms of reading, they read very faster more than others because in our society, even in higher institutions, you will see some students there that cannot even read. One novel will take them one month to read, but when you encourage them and they go through it, you will see a child going through a novel that someone will use one month to read, that child will take one or two weeks to read. That is the effect of reading club, yes, it does them a lot of good. (KII, 6).

As part of measuring how edutainment helps improve reading culture, the researcher measures how the reading culture of participants has developed after six months of participation in the Club,

the researcher collected quantitative data of the number of books read 6 months before joining the Reading Club, number read during the Club and number read 6 months after the Club. This data is presented below;

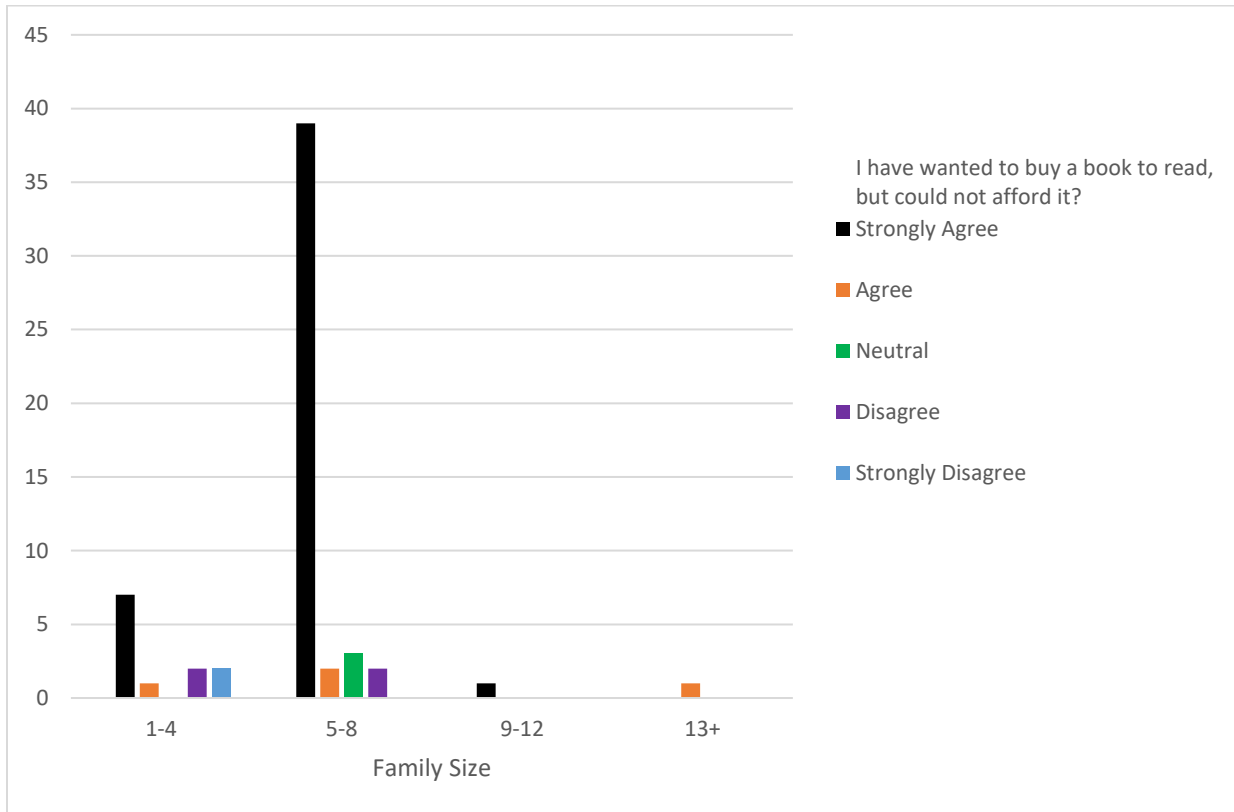
*Figure 4.1: Participants' reading habits 6 months before, during and 6 months after participation*



The chart shows that participants generally had poor reading habits before joining the club, as represented by the blue line, which is absent in many cases. This was noted to be related to lack of access to books and majorly to lack of interest in reading. The visible bar of red indicates participants' reading habits during the Club. Here, none of the participants read fewer than four books, which is the mandatory number of books across the four weeks of the Club session, so as to participate in all the activities. There is, however, a significant improvement 6 months after the Club, as many participants started reading habitually. Many of them read as many as 8 books within this period. This is linked to the fact that the Club opened its arms to participants to always come around and borrow books at will, which helped increase their access to books. However, a handful of them did not read anything, which is also linked to a lack of access to books, and the distance to the Club prevents them from going to borrow books. From this, we can safely draw an inference that edutainment can be used to improve reading culture.

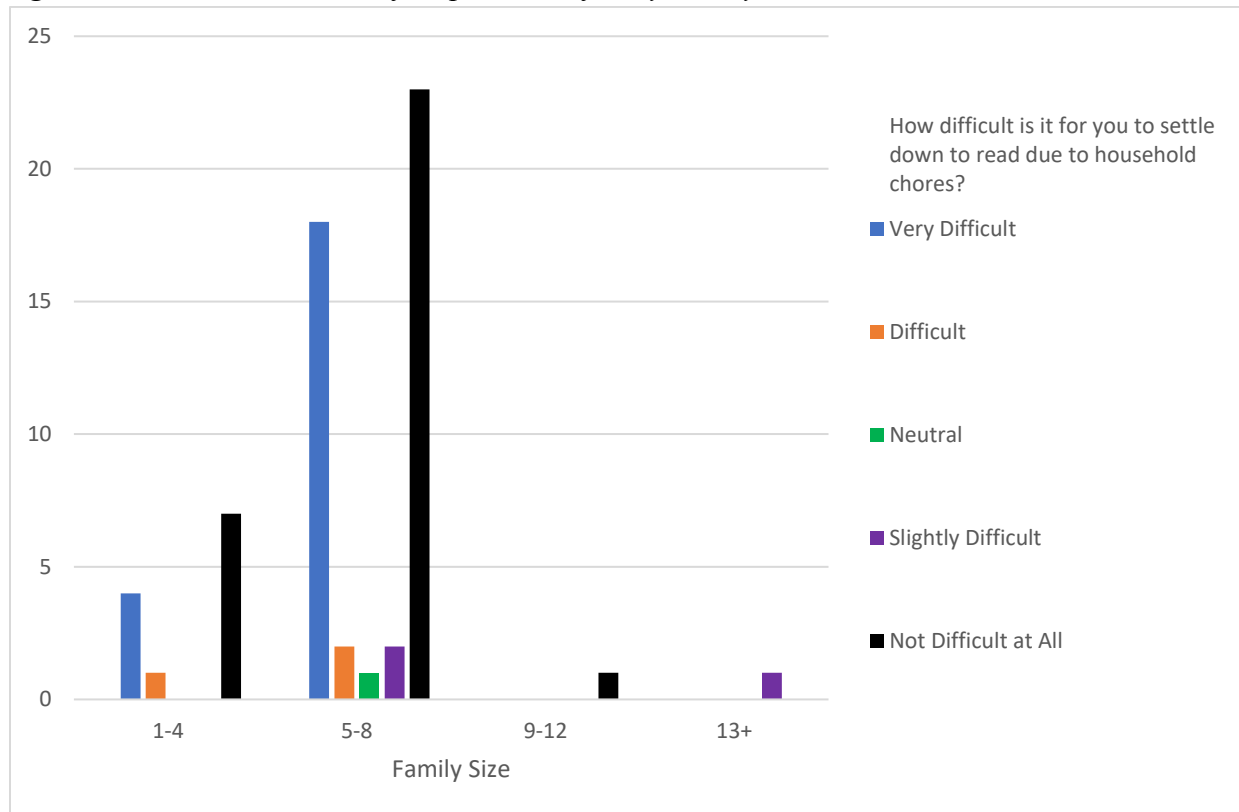
## Bivariate Analysis

Figure 4.2: Cross-tabulation of respondents' family size and affordability of books



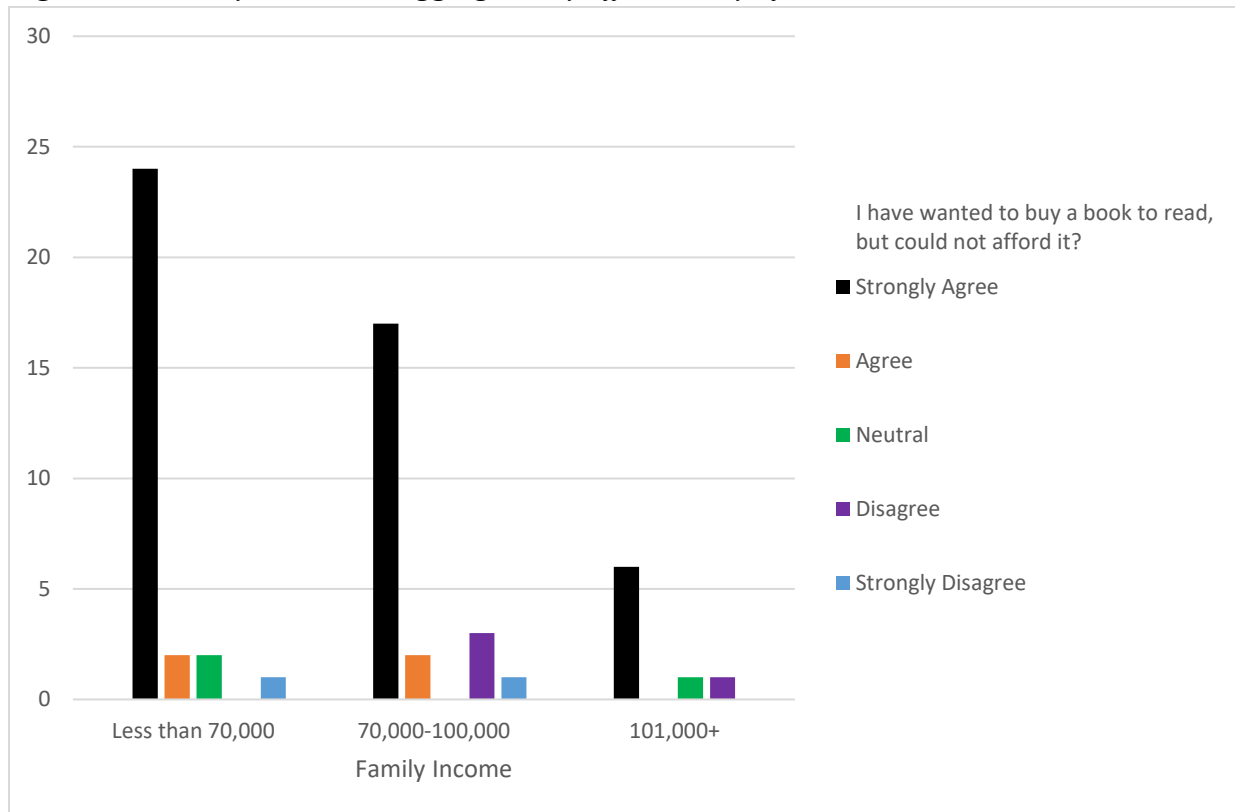
From figure 4.2, two-third of persons from family size of 1-4 have affirmed that they ever wanted to buy a book to read but could not afford it, 89% of those from family size of 5-8 strongly agree or agree that they have ever wanted to buy a book to read but could not afford it, and 100% of those from families with 9+ persons strongly agree or agree that they have ever wanted to buy a book to read but could not afford it. Family size, therefore, has a great impact on the affordability of books. The chart shows that the more the number of persons in the family, the more difficult it is to have money to buy books. This is tied to the presumption that the larger the family size, the more the family income would be used to cater for large numbers of people on different things and books might not be a priority, especially for low-income households.

Figure 4.3: Cross-tabulation of respondents' family size by household chores



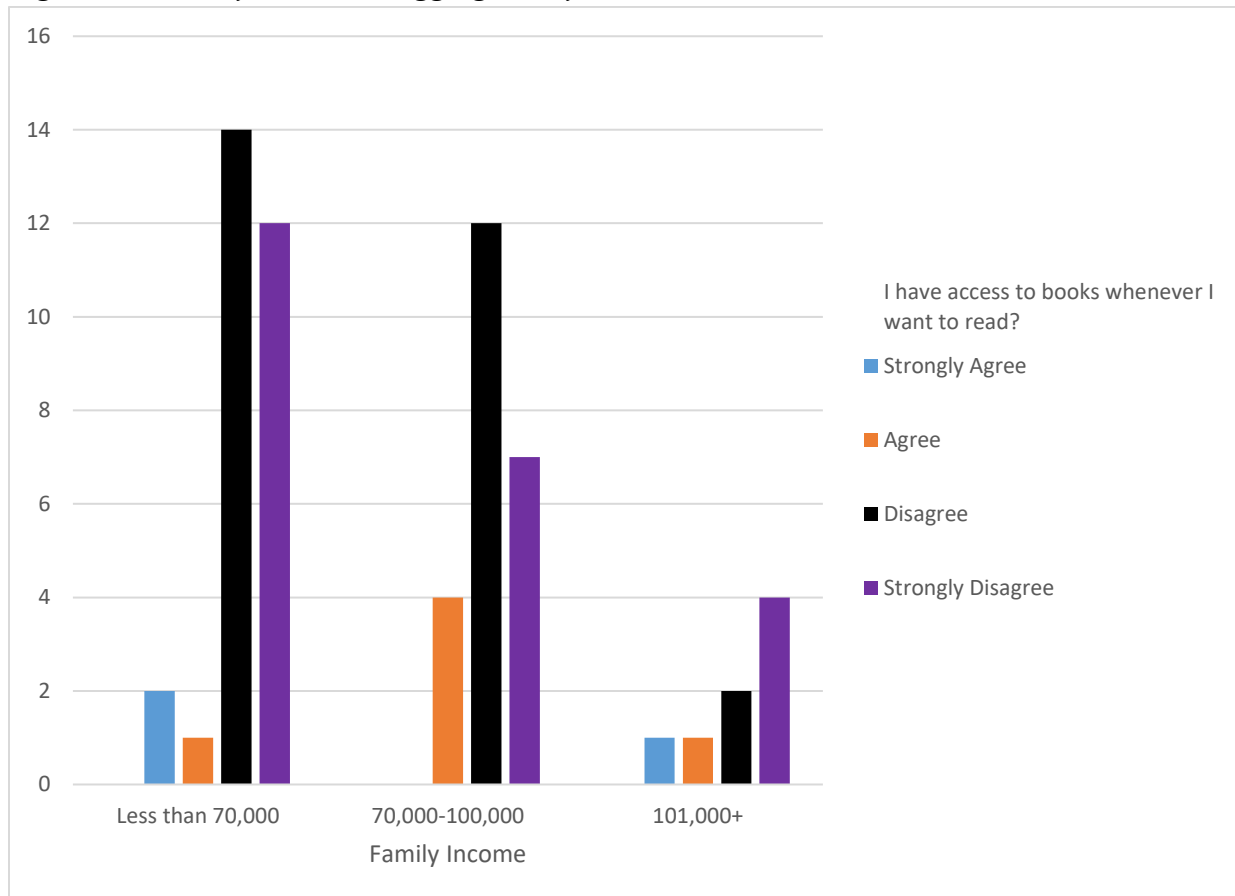
In figure 4.3, 58% of respondents from family size of 1-4 stated that household chores do not make it difficult for them to read, half of respondents from family size of 5-8 also affirmed that household chores do not affect their reading schedule, while 100% of respondents from families with 9+ persons strongly affirmed that household makes it slightly difficult or not difficult at all for them to read. From this chart, one can deduce that family size has effect on household chores which in turn affects time reading schedule; the presumption is that, the smaller the family size, the more the household chores and the larger the family size, the lesser the household chores and thus more time dedicated to reading.

Figure 4.4: Family Income disaggregated by affordability of books



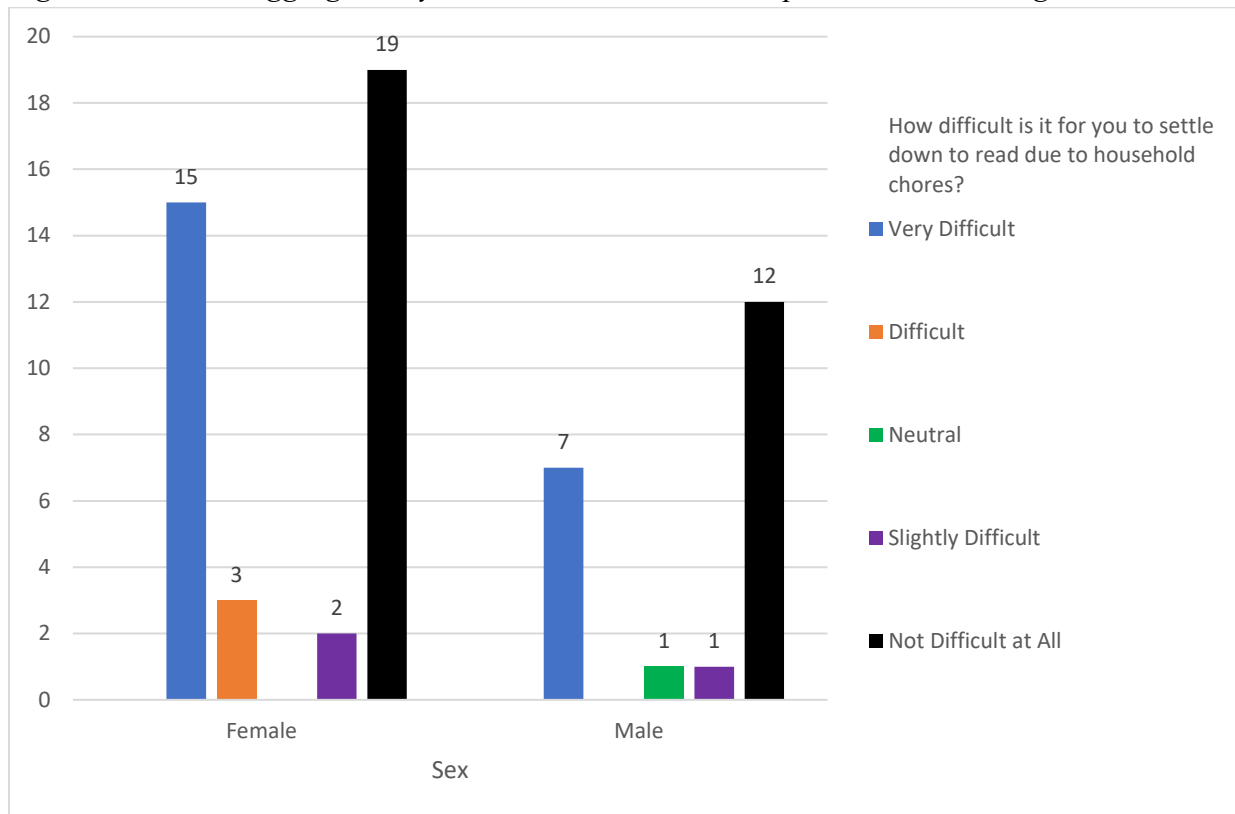
From figure 4.4, 3% of respondents from families who earn below the minimum wage have no issues in buying books whenever they feel like reading, 17% of respondents from families who earn between minimum wage and ₦100,000 face no difficulties in purchasing book to read when they feel like to read, and 25% of respondents from families earning above ₦100,000 are either neutral or face no difficulties in purchasing books to read at leisure. It is therefore evident that family income has an impact on the affordability of books, as one can assume from the chart that the higher the family income, the lower the difficulty of not having money to purchase books.

Figure 4.5: Family income disaggregated by access to books



From figure 4.5, 90%, 83%, and 75% of respondents from families earning below minimum wage, families who earn between minimum wage to ₦100,000, and those earning above ₦100,000 respectively have ever wanted to read a book but have no access to such. Family income therefore has a correlation with reading habit and access to books. This is from the presumption that the lower the income of the family, the lesser the resources the family has to spare to get books for the house and this in turn constitute impediment to developing reading habits among the children. From the chart, one can deduce that the larger the family income, the lesser the problem of not having books to read.

Figure 4.6: Sex disaggregated by household chores as an impediment on reading schedule



From Figure 4.6, 46% of females in the study affirmed that they find it very difficult or difficult to settle down to read due to household chores, as opposed to one-third of males in the study who affirmed this. This simply goes to show that expectations and gender roles significantly impact reading schedules, and since household chores are gendered to females, they are at a significant disadvantage to their male counterparts in reading time.

### Discussion of Findings

In terms of socio-demographic characteristics, the study finds that the age distribution of the majority of participants (82%) falls within the adolescent age range of 11–17 years, which aligns with Bandura’s theorisation of interest and curiosity development, as this age is characterised by logical reasoning, abstract thinking, and problem-solving. The mean age of 13 years marks a

critical developmental stage for cognitive stimulation and learning through literacy programmes. This confirms the suitability of this age group for targeted interventions aimed at fostering reading habits. Female participation (65%) was significantly higher than that of males (35%), indicating that the Club effectively reaches girls and addresses existing educational disparities. This aligns with findings by UNESCO (2023), which underscore the importance of gender-targeted interventions in promoting literacy among girls, particularly in low-resource settings. However, gender roles still significantly influence reading time, as shown that 46% of female respondents faced challenges in dedicating time to reading due to household responsibilities, compared to one-third of male respondents. This supports the work by UNICEF (2018), which identifies domestic duties as a barrier to girls' education and literacy.

While the Club was initially designed to target public school students, 70% of participants came from private institutions, raising concerns about equity and inclusiveness. This discrepancy may indicate inequalities in outreach, awareness, or access, underscoring the need for targeted outreach to underrepresented groups, particularly public school students in rural or economically disadvantaged areas. Additionally, domestic labour done by children from public schools and low-income families is used to sustain the family further widens this gap.

Screen time and distraction are other findings of this study, as 55% of respondents reported spending significant hours (1–7) daily watching movies, with a significant number spending as much as 4–6 hours, and some spending more time on screens than on reading. This finding echoes results from Onukaogu & Moh (2008), who warned that Nigeria's reading culture is on the decline due to the growing influence of digital and audio-visual entertainment. The qualitative data further validates this, with respondents and facilitators pointing out that young people increasingly

substitute reading with passive consumption of visual media. The implication is clear: media consumption competes directly with reading for adolescents' limited discretionary time.

An overwhelming 95% of respondents, similar to 93% in the study of Isang (2019), had no access to public libraries, which talk about both the reading environment and access to a variety of books. 85% reported inability to afford books either to buy or borrow. This mirrors national literacy challenges noted by Lockwood (2008) and Isang (2019), who found library access and book availability to be among the top barriers to reading engagement, especially in public and rural contexts. Despite technological alternatives like e-books and audiobooks, participants and parents agreed that physical books provide a deeper focus and less distraction, as they lament the decay or non-functionality of local libraries and the distractions posed by digital reading devices. The preference for traditional books due to reduced distractions and deeper concentration reaffirms the enduring value of physical reading environments despite the rise of e-books.

A major theme was the economic inability to purchase reading materials. Respondents from lower-income families and larger households were significantly more likely to have experienced difficulty obtaining books. This is supported by bivariate analysis and aligns with Oyitso & Olomukoro (2015), which shows that poverty correlates strongly with low literacy levels, as economic survival takes precedence over intellectual development, thus suppressing literacy development. While 71% of respondents still prefer reading, and 100% acknowledging the value of reading, 19% still found reading boring or difficult, similar to the finding of Sotiloye & Bodunde (2018), where 59% and 16% of Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), prefer reading to other language skills and have fairly enjoyed reading, respectively. This underscores the importance of framing reading as an enjoyable and meaningful activity. Reading solely for academic success (e.g., passing exams) rather than pleasure or personal growth diminishes long-

term interest and internal motivation. This perception supports Ilogho & Nkiko's (2014) assertion that reading is often seen as an academic chore in Nigeria rather than a recreational activity, thereby reducing motivation outside of school contexts. However, parental support, provision of reading materials, and creating a reading-friendly environment were highlighted as strong enablers of reading interest, echoing Bandura's concept of "motivation", where social interaction and guided support scaffold learning and skill-building. This corroborates the findings of (Westbrook, 2013; Cremin et al., 2014) that successful literacy achievement often appears to feature either a teacher or a parent

The use of edutainment methods like Scrabble, Chess, Treasure Hunt, storytelling, movie methods, creative dramatics, peer-to-peer learning, etc., proved to be a game-changer, as over 96% of participants reported that these activities were both fun and vocabulary-enhancing. This is in accordance with Gordon (2013), who stated that songs are an effective and fun way to present educational concepts. Scrabble and spelling bees were particularly effective in this regard. The finding also corroborates that of Arroyo & Cashman (2023), who found that edutainment promotes critical thinking, due to high interaction in class and fun enjoyed in learning. Games were intentionally tied to reading performance as participants were required to read a set number of books before participating. This gamification technique aligns with Garris, Ahlers, & Driskell (2002), who demonstrated that play-based learning enhances motivation, word retention, and critical thinking. 90% of respondents stated that the use of movies motivated them to read the corresponding books. By pausing the movie at a climactic moment, curiosity was strategically piqued. This technique resonates with Dale's Cone of Experience, which advocates combining audio-visual and textual formats for optimal retention and engagement. 96% found that drama-based activities encouraged them to read more actively.

Participants were tasked with scripting and performing scenes based on their reading, a form of experiential learning that supports Bandura's concept of reproduction. To him, active participation leads to deeper learning, especially when learners creatively reconstruct narratives. Peer motivation and social learning proved highly effective in the Club as participants reported being inspired by stories shared by their peers and facilitators, creating a socially contagious reading culture. This is supported by Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasises modelling and peer influence as critical to behaviour adoption. This finding resonates with Zhao & Linaza's (2015) experimental study that the kids very actively participated in the collaborative creation of game meaning.

The study also underlines the importance of providing books that match AYPs' interests. Facilitators and parents emphasised aligning books with learners' passions, be it fashion, music, or sports, to stimulate voluntary reading. The study further explored participants' reading habits six months before, during, and after their engagement with the Club. Before joining, most had read little or nothing. During the Club, a minimum of four books was mandated. Notably, six months later, many continued to read independently, some as many as eight books, although others relapsed due to distance or access issues. This suggests a sustained behavioural shift and supports the idea that structured, fun-based reading interventions can lead to long-term habit formation when follow-up support (e.g., book access, club lending) is available, as discussed in studies by Picton & Christina (2020) and Gambrell (2011).

effectiveness.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the objectives and outcomes of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Efforts should be intensified by the LRC team to recruit more students from public schools. Therefore, partnerships with public education authorities and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) can help increase awareness and involvement of public school learners who are often underserved. Additionally, the organisers should provide reading schedules and club activities that accommodate girls' domestic workloads. Introducing flexible session timings or support groups for girls can increase their ability to participate actively without conflict with home responsibilities.
2. There is a critical need for the establishment of well-resourced community reading centres. Government agencies, in partnership with NGOs, should set up mobile libraries and book swap stations in schools and neighbourhoods. Parents and guardians should be educated on the importance of reading at home. Literacy support initiatives such as home reading challenges and family storytelling nights can improve domestic reading culture. Parents, policymakers and schools should promote regulated screen use and introduce educational reading apps that combine digital engagement with meaningful learning.
3. Edutainment strategies should be integrated into the school system. Language and literature classes should adopt storytelling, games, dramatisation, and multimedia tools to encourage participatory learning. Ongoing training should be provided to educators to equip them with skills in creative teaching, drama-in-education, and student-centred learning methods. Schools and reading clubs should institutionalise reading contests, quizzes, and recognition awards to keep wards and learners motivated and invested in reading.
4. Create structures for older or more engaged readers to mentor their peers. This approach enhances leadership and reinforces reading as a social norm. The success of LAMECON Reading Club should be scaled to other Local Government Areas and states. A replicable

model can be adopted by other educational and literacy-based organisations. Follow-up mechanisms should be developed to track participants' progress in reading habits post-program and assess the long-term impact on academic and personal development.

## **Conclusion**

The study concludes that edutainment, when intentionally designed and implemented, is a powerful tool for promoting reading culture among adolescents. By making reading fun, interactive, and socially engaging, edutainment transforms reading from a passive academic duty to an enjoyable and self-driven activity. Through structured activities such as literary games, storytelling, movie-based learning, and peer engagement, the LAMECON Reading Club successfully created a model where participants could connect emotionally, cognitively, and socially with books and stories, resulting in increased motivation and literacy engagement. While socio-economic and environmental factors like lack of access to books, poor infrastructure, digital distractions, and low family income play a critical role in undermining reading culture, the research shows that they can be effectively countered through strategic programming that incorporates cultural relevance, creative expression, and community involvement. The study reinforces that literacy development among youths should move beyond access to books and include innovative, participatory methods that align with the interests and developmental needs of the learners. Importantly, the study highlights that reading culture is not merely a function of literacy skills but of environment, motivation, and accessibility. Programs like LAMECON demonstrate the power of community-based, culturally sensitive interventions in revitalising the joy of reading among Nigeria's youth. However, edutainment should not be used as a substitute for traditional education. While it has its benefits, edutainment should be used as a supplementary tool to enhance traditional classroom teaching. It should be integrated into the curriculum in a strategic and meaningful way,

aligning with the learning objectives and outcomes. These contents should be age-appropriate and should be tailored in a way that addresses the specific needs and interests of the students.