

# Reading Attitude of Students of a Middle School and Effects of a Two-year In-class Reading Intervention on Them

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## **Abstract**

This study investigated the attitude of the students of a middle school towards reading and examined the effects of a two-year in-class reading program on them. Adopting a mixed-method research design, this study involved a class of students of a middle school in Bhutan. Data were collected by means of Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) and semi-structured interviews. While the ERAS revealed positive attitude towards reading, there was not statistically significant relationship between gender and attitude towards reading. The qualitative data revealed four positive effects of the two-year in-class reading on them, however. The two-year in-class reading has seemingly improved participants' speaking and writing skills, enhanced their learning of subjects studied in English, broadened their minds, and assisted their character and personality developments. These findings strongly suggest teachers and parents to institute reading programs both at schools and at homes so that the reading habits contribute to learning of academic subjects and their academic achievements. The habit also expects acceleration of acquisition of English language skills, both productive and receptive skills.

**Keywords:** Reading attitude, Bhutanese students' attitudes towards reading, impacts of reading

## **Introduction**

English language teaching primarily focuses on reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Of these skills, scholars consider reading as the most important skill (Chettri & Rout, 2013; Farzaneh & Nejadansari, 2014; Guvenc, 2017; Harmer, 2001; Huang, 2015; Yusof, 2010) because of positive effects it has on students'

academic achievement (Chotitham & Wongwanich, 2014; Egong, 2014; Issa et al., 2012; Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2014; Senturk, 2015), writing style (Krashen, 1993, as cited in Annamalai & Muniandy, 2013), and communicative competence (Baruah, 2006). In line with these benefits, Bhutan's English curricula also regard reading as key to ". . . unlocking the vault of the wisdom of the race" (Royal Education Council [REC], 2020, p. xxi) from pre-primary through grade twelve. Accordingly, they mandate both teachers and students to fulfill the prescribed standards for reading.

Despite such requirements, the Bhutanese high school students were found to be performing poorly in English. For example, both Royal Education Council [REC] and Education Initiatives Private Limited [EIPL] (2011) and Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment [BCSEA] (2015) reported low performances among Bhutanese students in English. Similarly, according to BCSEA (2019), the average literacy among Bhutanese students in the PISA-D was reported at 45.34%. Although it was 4.08% higher than the averaged PISA-D solution rates (41.26%) of other participating countries, her average was found below the average of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD]. The report attributed it to Bhutanese students' inability to perform tasks that demanded higher cognitive skills. Other reasons may include poor comprehension ability (BCSEA, 2013), reading difficulties (Rasinski et al., 2005), and negative attitude towards reading (Senturk, 2015; Worthy & Broaddus, 2001/2002). Decline in reading culture with maturity (Choezom, 2013; McKenna et al., 1995; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004), watching home videos (Adetunji, 2007), poor parental role in children's education (Wangchuk & Zangmo, 2019), and wasting time on internet and social media may be other contributing factors.

With reference to students' attitude towards reading, previous studies show some inconsistencies in their findings. For example, McKenna et al. (1995) and Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) found their respondents' attitude towards reading declining as they progressed from low to higher grades. No or little guided reading practice during formative ages of these respondents could have caused this decline. Finding reading a difficult activity and availability of other learning avenues

such as internet, computer, mobile games, and music may be its other possible causes (Annamalai & Muniandy, 2013).

Some studies, however, reported otherwise. A study by McQuillan (2013) found no evidence of decline in students' attitude towards reading with age, for instance. Instead, it found students' attitude positive towards reading. As in it, some studies also found reading attitude of females more positive than their male counterparts (e.g., Mohd-Asraf & Abdullah, 2016; Wangchuk et al., 2020), implying that reading was more a habit among females than males. While in some studies, interventions appeared to have influenced students' attitudinal inclination towards reading. Hurst et al. (2010), Lee (2014), and Sheu (2004), for instance, observed significant increase in their subjects' attitude towards reading after the administration of reading graded readers and books for native English-speaking children, freedom to choose books and availability of dictionaries, attendance in a qualified reading-teacher's class, and peer-assisted learning strategies, respectively.

Findings of these studies reveal attitudinal variations between primary and university students. However, little is known about middle school students' attitude towards reading. Neither is there an evidence of a study that investigated the impacts of reading on Bhutanese students. This study, therefore, investigated the Bhutanese students' attitude towards reading as "emotional response to reading . . . is the primary reason most readers read, and probably the primary reason most nonreaders do not read" (Smith, 1988, p. 177). Learners' attitude also influences learning a second language (Savignon, 1997) and determines positive reading experiences (Annamalai & Muniandy, 2013). Such attitudinal evaluation may, therefore, offer insights into whether or not Bhutanese learners' attitude hinder or facilitate learning (Farzaneh & Nejadansari, 2014) English through reading. Besides developing life-long readers (Lee, 2014; McKenna et al., 1995), positive attitude towards reading can enhance students' academic potential (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2014). Therefore, unless reading is developed and sustained in students as a lifelong habit, they may neither be able to ". . . participate meaningfully in a knowledge-based society" (REC, 2012, p.38) nor can the schools

raise their learning outcomes (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2014). Hence, this study investigated the Bhutanese high school students' attitude towards reading and examined the impacts of scheduled in-class reading on them.

The findings of this study would inform both teachers and parents the importance of instituting reading program and the positive effects it would have on students' academic achievements in English and other English-medium subjects and in accelerating acquisition of English language skills.

## **Research Questions**

What is the general attitude of students of a middle school towards reading?

What is the relationship between participants' attitude towards reading and their gender?

What are the effects of a two-year in-class reading program on students?

## **Methods**

This study employed a mixed-methods research design. It is a design that employs both quantitative and qualitative approaches in understanding a phenomenon in a single study (Creswell, 2003; Fraenkel et al., 2012), that is the reading attitude of students studying in a middle school and the effects of a two-year in-class reading program on them. The combination of these methods expected the study to provide a complete understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012; Fraenkel et al., 2012; Racco et al., 2003). Moreover, as the strengths of one approach compensate the weaknesses of the other (McDowell & MacLean, 1998), this design reduces biases but increases reliability and trustworthiness.

## **Participants**

Thirty-one (12 males and 19 females) students studying in grade 10 in a middle school participated in this study. While all these students responded to the survey questionnaire, only six of them (three males and three females) participated in the semi-structured interview. They are named as I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, and I6.

As the researchers taught these students English as a second language in their ninth and tenth grades respectively, they were aware of their strengths and weaknesses in English language. Due to this awareness, the researchers could easily employ different reading strategies such as reading aloud, guided reading, structured independent reading, wide reading, assisted reading, and deep reading (MoE, 2005; Paige et al., 2012; Rasinski et al., 2005; Worthy & Broaddus, 2001/2002) within that 15-minute in-class reading schedules. To ensure seriousness during reading classes, timely interventions such as written and oral reviews and in-class book-talks were also inserted as part of formative assessment.

### **Instruments**

McKenna and Kear (1990)'s Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) which consists of 20 items catering to recreational and academic reading was administered to collect quantitative data. It investigated the participants' attitude towards reading. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, and they examined the effects of in-class reading program on them. Further, in order to confirm the observable effects of in-class reading on them, the analyses of interviews were later crosschecked with their three-year examination results.

To validate and contextualize the survey questionnaire and interview questions, the researchers requested three English language lecturers, who have knowledge about research, to provide suggestions regarding their content relevancy, contextual appropriateness, and linguistic ambiguity. Neither did they suggest any changes in the ERAS nor did it need pilot-testing. According to McKenna and Kear (1990), the reliability coefficients of the two subscales ranged from .74 to .89. However, some changes were made in the interview questions as per their advice.

## Data Collection Procedures

Prior to the data collection, the researchers sought permission from the participating students. The main aim of it was to strictly monitor the scheduled 15-minute in-class reading program and to provide necessary assistance throughout the two-year period. Next, the researchers distributed each interested student a participant information sheet and an informed consent sheet to be read, signed, and returned to them prior to their participation in this study. All participants were given freedom to withdraw their participation at any moment.

Both the survey and the semi-structured interview were administered on three Saturdays to avoid regular classroom-teaching disruptions. Regarding the reading attitude survey questionnaire, the researchers surveyed it only once at the beginning of the academic year in February 2019 soon after their return from the winter vacation. Then, the researchers initiated a 15-minute in-class reading everyday during their English language periods for two years until their graduation from that middle school in December 2020. The interviews were conducted at the end of the academic sessions, but before their examinations, in November of 2020.

## Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics: mean scores and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics computed for the participants' ratings on each item were interpreted as per the following interpretation scale values.

**Table 1** Interpretation of the Scale Values

Scale	Range	Attitude
4	3.26-4.00	Very Positive
3	2.51-3.25	Positive
2	1.76-2.50	Negative
1	1.00-1.75	Very Negative

Interview transcriptions were analysed using content analysis technique. Content analysis, according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), is “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (p. 1278). From the three approaches they discuss in their paper, this study adopted the conventional approach because it allows the categories to emerge from the text data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Following this definition and, as stated by Fraenkel et al. (2012), the researchers coded the descriptive information into categories. Then, the researchers used students’ examinations scores to crosscheck and confirm whether the two-year in-class reading has impacted the participants.

## **Results**

This section is divided into two sections. The first section presents the results of the survey questionnaire while the following section discusses the results of the interviews.

### **Result I: Survey Questionnaire**

This section presents the numeric data obtained from the ERAS questionnaire. First part of it discusses the participants’ general attitude towards reading followed by their attitude towards recreational and academic reading. The final part of it examines the relationship between participants’ gender and their attitude towards reading.

### **The Participants’ Attitude Towards Reading**

This section reports the overall ratings of the students’ attitude towards reading, and it answers the first research question: *What is the general attitude of students of a middle school towards reading?* As shown in Table 2, from the two reading types, the students’ reading attitude was positively inclined towards recreational reading (mean = 3.20, SD=.86) than academic reading (mean = 3.11, SD=.88). From this it could be understood that the participants were interested more in extensive than intensive reading.

**Table 2** Participants' Overall Attitude Towards Reading Dimensions

Reading Attitude	M	SD
Recreational	3.20	0.86
Academic	3.11	0.88
Total	3.15	0.87

Still, if interpreted as per the scale values given in Table 1, the participants' attitude (mean = 3.15, SD=.87) was *positive* towards reading.

### The Participants' Attitude Towards Recreational Reading

As can be seen in Table 3, all items of recreational reading received good attitudinal ratings ranging from 2.77 to 3.55, indicating *very positive* and *positive* attitude towards recreational reading.

**Table 3** Participants' Recreational Reading Attitude

Items of Recreational Reading	N	M	SD
How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?	31	3.55	.72
How do you feel about getting a book for a present?	31	3.55	.81
How do you feel about reading for fun at home?	31	3.48	1.00
How do you feel about starting a new book?	31	3.42	.85
How do you feel about going to a bookstore?	31	3.23	.96
How do you feel about spending free time reading a book?	31	3.16	.86
How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?	31	3.03	.60
How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?	31	3.00	1.00
How do you feel reading during summer vacation?	31	2.81	.95
How do you feel about reading instead of playing?	31	2.77	.84
Total	31	3.20	.86



Further, from the ten items under recreational reading, *How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?* and *How do you feel about getting a book for a present?* received the highest ratings while *How do you feel about reading instead of playing?* the lowest (mean = 2.77, SD=.84) rating. This means, according to the scale values shown in Table 1, the participants displayed *very positive* and *positive* attitude towards four and six items, respectively. However, the differences in SD levels among the items indicate differing attitudes among the participants. For example, although *How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?* (SD=.72) and *How do you feel about getting a book for a present?* (SD=.81) were rated the highest, their SDs were higher than the SD of the item *How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?* (SD=.60). From this, it must be noted that the participants agreed more on reading a book in school during free time than reading different kinds of books and getting books as presents.

### The Participants' Attitude Towards Academic Reading

Table 4 discusses the participants' attitude towards academic reading. The overall attitude of the participants towards academic reading is *positive* (mean=3.11) as the average of the ten academic reading items fall between 2.51-3.25.

**Table 4** Participants' Academic Reading Attitude

Items of Academic Reading	N	M	SD
How do you feel about stories you read in reading class?	31	3.58	.67
How do you feel about learning from a book?	31	3.52	.89
How do you feel when it is time for reading in class?	31	3.39	.95
How do you feel about using a dictionary?	31	3.32	.75
How do you feel about reading your schoolbook?	31	3.06	.89
How do you feel when you read out loud in class?	31	3.00	.97
How do you feel about reading in school?	31	3.00	.73
How do you feel about taking a reading test?	31	2.90	1.2
How do you feel when a teacher asks you questions about what you read?	31	2.87	.92
How do you feel reading workbook pages and worksheets?	31	2.45	.85
Total	31	3.11	.88

However, if interpreted as per Table 1, first four items received high ratings between 3.26 – 4.00, indicating *very positive* attitude towards them while the ratings of five other items fell between 2.51 – 3.25. This result indicated a *positive* attitude towards them. However, as *How do you feel reading workbook pages and worksheets?* received the lowest rating (mean = 2.45, SD=.85), the participants' attitude towards it was *negative*. This means the participants were *little upset* when it came to reading workbook pages and worksheet while they were *very happy* and *little happy* doing other activities in four and five items, respectively.

However, as SD differs from one item to another, there are differences in attitude towards academic reading as well. For example, the participants' attitudinal deviation is more on items *How do you feel about learning from a book?* (SD = .89) and *How do you feel when it is time for reading in class?* (SD = .95) than on *How do you feel about using a dictionary?* (SD = .75) although the former two items received higher average ratings. Similarly, although the average rating of *How do you feel about taking a reading test?* (mean = 2.90, SD=1.2) is higher than the mean of *How do you feel reading workbook pages and worksheets?* (mean = 2.45, SD=.85), the participants' attitudinal deviation is more on the former item than the latter. These differences indicate differing attitudes among participants when it came to reading academic materials.

### **Relationship Between Participants' Gender and Their Attitude Towards Reading**

Tables 5(a) and (b) display the results of independent *t*-tests, and they answer the second question: *What is the relationship between students' gender and their attitude towards reading?*

**Table 5 (a)** Relationship Between Gender and Participants' Attitude Towards Reading

Group Statistics						
Gender			N	M	SD	Std. Error Mean
Recreational _Score	Reading	Male	12	2.98	0.65	0.19
		Female	19	3.34	0.58	0.13
Academic Reading _Score		Male	12	3.00	0.56	0.16
		Female	19	3.18	0.58	0.13

With regard to participants' attitude towards recreational reading, the independent *t*-test result showed no significant statistical difference ( $p .113 > p .05$ ) in mean recreational scores between the two groups. This indicates that neither the females nor the males showed more positive attitude towards recreational reading.

A similar independent *t*-test was also performed to confirm statistical difference between participants' attitude towards academic reading and gender. As in the former, this test result also observed no significant difference ( $p .402 > p 0.05$ ) in mean academic scores between males and females, suggesting that neither of the groups possessed more positive towards academic reading.

**Table 5(b)** Relationship Between Gender and Participants' Attitude Towards Reading

Independent Samples Test		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Recreational Reading _ Score	Equal variances assumed	.459	.503	-1.634	29	.113	-.367	.225	-.827	.092
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.589	21.434	.127	-.367	.231	-.847	.113
Academic Reading _ Score	Equal variances assumed	.014	.906	-.851	29	.402	-.179	.210	-.609	.251
	Equal variances not assumed			-.855	23.940	.401	-.179	.209	-.611	.253

Generally, independent *t*-test results showed no significant difference in scores between respondents' gender and their attitude towards both recreational and academic reading. Because the *p*-values in both the reading scores were above the cutoff of .05, there was no statistically significant relationship between gender and attitude towards reading.

## **Result II: Findings from the Interview Transcriptions**

This section presents the findings of the semi-structured interviews, and it answers the third question: *What are the effects of a two-year in-class reading program on students?* Conventional content analysis of the six interview transcriptions revealed four broad benefits of in-class reading program.

### Improving Speaking and Writing Skills

According to the participants, the 15-minute in-class reading and practice of numerous reading techniques assisted them in developing their speaking and writing skills. All six participants were grateful to the teachers for sacrificing their teaching time for this initiative. For example, I1, in his interview, shared,

. . . I am grateful to my English language teachers of both grades nine and ten for initiating a 15-minute in-class reading every day during their periods. Honestly, they have lost their teaching and syllabus coverage time, but me [I] have benefited a lot from that initiative. I can now speak fluently, confidently as compared to my previous years' experiences. . . . My English writing style and standard has also improved a lot . . . other teachers compliment me. (November 7)

A similar view was also shared by another participant:

Comparatively, I can now speak fluently in a confident manner in morning assemblies and classroom discussions and presentations. Initially, I could never do these things. I have now reduced the use of *ahhs*, *hums*, *such stuff* [fillers] when speaking because my vocabulary has become rich due to reading. I also feel proud of [being] able to write better essays than before,

for instance. Reading made a high [huge] difference in both my speaking and writing skills. (I4, November 15)

Drastic improvements in the three-year comparison results of this group of students strongly approve of improvements in their speaking and writing skills are also evident. In other words, as extensive reading was believed to be the foundation for building and strengthening language skills, this finding strongly suggests both schools and homes to create environments that could develop and promote a culture of reading.

### **Enhancing Learning of other Subjects**

The participants suggested the in-class reading be instituted as an in-school reading program in all schools. Reasons for this suggestion was based on their ability to “. . . understand subject-related concepts quicker” (I5), “. . . explain the concepts in my own words, not needing to retell an idea through rote learning” (I2), and “. . . easily score comparatively higher marks in tests or exams in all subjects” (I3). One participant proudly exclaimed,

I am now better off with this habit [reading]. I have no worries of failing in any subject because I just have to read them as I do other books. In two years, I have read over 40 books from our library in addition to reading for my academic subjects. (I5, November 15)

The participants have also experienced learning of other subjects such as sciences, economics and geography, for instance, easier due to improved comprehension ability after acquiring the habit of reading. One of them recalled,

Previously, I had difficulty learning other subjects because I had difficulty reading and understanding them. Now, learning them has become a little easier. I am happy that I can score a little more in the subjects studied in English. (I6, November 21)

As claimed by all the participants, the scheduled in-class reading has enhanced their academic learning and progress as evident in the means of examination results of the three consecutive years.

### **Broadening Mind**

As opined by some participants, reading has engaged them in productive activities during leisure time. In fact, the participants acknowledged those positive changes in their feelings, thinking and behaviors after reading books. I2 put it succinctly:

Books have changed my outlook. I see myself think, feel and behave differently considering the experiences shared by the authors. In fact, whenever the teachers give us group assignments or presentation topic[s], I can have multiple [referenced] ideas that effectively strengthen our learning beyond whatever information was available in the textbooks. (November 7)

Similarly, another female participant observed a change in herself:

Authors have nourished both my thinking and feelings. Books have restructured my 3H's – head, heart and hands. Experiences I have witnessed in the books often have remind[ed] me to relook into a situation whenever I was required to make decisions. (I4, November 15)

In brief, the participants, as they claimed in the interviews, expressed their ability to think, feel and do certain activities differently after learning new experiences from the books. As a result, they strongly believed in sustaining the habits through planned reading activities.

### **Developing Personality and Character**

Books, according to some participants, have also nurtured and strengthened good personalities and characters and corrected their flawed characters.

. . . books that cater to personal development or, in other words self-help books change the outlook of a reader. I have personally become considerate. For example, Robin Sharma's book titled *The monk who sold his Ferrari* taught me lessons which I would not have learned from any academic subjects. Thus, after see [-ing] books improve my effective [affective] state; I

decided to spend my time reading books whenever I am free. (15, November 15)

In addition, I1 noted how engaging reading was,

Books have kept me focused on gathering information that helps me to grow personally through learning of good behaviors and characters. In fact, they did not offer me a single opportunity to engage in unsocial practices such as doing drugs or drinking alcohol, for instance. Instead, they simply encouraged me to discuss ideas and share knowledge. (November 7)

Therefore, it is understood that the participants, due to their engagement in reading good books, have learned to improve their personal and social wellbeing. Reading books have not only diverted them from socially unacceptable engagements, but also built and strengthened their characters that seemingly contributed to becoming good human beings.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Supporting the finding of Wangchuk et al. (2020), the participants of this study also perceived reading as an important activity through their positive attitude towards reading. Specifically, as in Wangchuk et al. (2020), the attitude of the participants of this study was slightly more inclined towards recreational than academic reading. This could be due to the perceived notion that the latter is “instrumental and pleasurable” (Harmer, 2001, p. 200) in acquiring other language skills (Harmer, 2001; Stanovich, 1986), improving comprehension skills, and advancing vocabularies (Davis, 1995; Guerrero & Rodriguez, 2009). Unlike in McKenna (1995), McQuillan (2013), Mohd-Asraf and Abdullah (2016), and Wangchuk et al. (2020), no statistically significant attitudinal difference was observed between the two groups.

They also noticed some consequential effects of in-class reading on their overall development and examination results. These findings which resulted from the 15-minute in-class reading substantiate the findings of Hurst et al. (2010), Lee (2014), and Sheu (2004). Such improvements seen in participants’ academic achievements besides their positive attitude towards reading could have resulted



from two factors. The first could be reading strategies (see MoE, 2005; Paige et al., 2012; Rasinski et al., 2005; Worthy & Broaddus, 2001/2002) that they practiced under the supervision of the researchers during the entire in-class reading duration. The other could be their engagement in extensive reading in the absence of possible distracters such as access to internet and other electronic devices during the academic sessions. As evident in the three-year comparison results, this timely “exposure, motivation and opportunities” (Harmer, 2001, p. 70) seems to have assisted the participants achieve good academic grounds (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2014). Now that they have gained a stable academic footing, the researchers expect them to continue reading as their lifelong habit.

Supporting Krashen (1993 as cited in Annamalai & Muniandy, 2013) and Baruah (2006), the participants of this study also found reading impactful in improving their speaking and writing skills. Improved production skills (Savignon, n.d.) and reduced errors in English (see Harmer, 2001) seem to have facilitated participants’ academic performances resulting in better academic achievements as evident in their three-year comparison results. Therefore, it could be concluded that in-class reading has increased their English language competency, aided decoding concepts and articulating ideas, and quickened learning of other academic subjects. This finding strongly suggests schools and homes to initiate a culture of reading among students as it accelerates acquisition of English as a second language, quickens mastery of both productive and receptive skills (Savignon, n.d.), and raises their academic standards. Consequently, this initiative may address concerns of comprehension ability of Bhutanese students (BCSEA, 2013) and their performance in English subject (BCSEA, 2015; REC & EIPL, 2011).

In-class reading, according to the participants, has also positively reshaped their personal characteristics. Though reading might not have directly affected the participants’ physical behaviors but its impacts on their psychological and emotional states could have brought changes in their behaviors as claimed by Annamalai and Muniandy (2013). For example, the participants explicitly stated how reading had positively affected their cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills. The ideas they gathered from and the experiences they witnessed in good

books have seemingly influenced their thinking, feelings and behavioral actions as it is thinking and feelings that often influence individuals' behavioral displays, either good or bad. This finding reveals how impactful reading good books were in addition to emulating and learning these skills at homes and schools. Thus, as Cook et al. (1998) and Green (2002) assert, these findings also advise parents and teachers to inspire and motivate students to read good books especially during their leisure time so that their anti-social behaviors may be reduced (see Rubin, 2002).

In summary, the participants of this study possessed positive attitude towards reading with slightly higher preference for recreational over academic reading. In addition, they also revealed four positive experiences of the two-year in-class reading. The researchers expect the participants to sustain their positive attitude towards reading and strengthen their habit of reading as it tellingly influences them. An independent *t*-test found no significant difference in scores between respondents' gender and their attitude towards both recreational and academic reading.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers offer two recommendations. First, they suggest English language teachers to promote a culture of in-class reading among students. The earlier would definitely be better in accelerating acquisition of language and behavioral skills and enhancing their academic performances. The other one is the institution of an in-school reading that gives all students equal opportunities to acquire the habit. This could be done in partnership with parents so as to ensure parental involvement in their children's reading at homes.

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