



Factors Influencing the Attitude of Undergraduate English Language Students towards the Study of Literature

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Abstract: This research looked at the factors influencing undergraduate English language students' attitudes toward the study of literature in order to better understand how to teach literature in ESL classes. All university undergraduate English students made up the study's population. For the quantitative parts of the study, a simple random sampling procedure was used to pick 10 undergraduate students from each of the year groups, yielding a total of 40 respondents. Eight students from the population and two university language teachers were chosen for the study's quantitative component. As the research tools, a Likert-type questionnaire and an interview were used to collect data in both qualitative and quantitative ways. The researcher validated the instrument's face and content to make sure it meets the necessary standards for accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness. The results showed that the majority of the University's undergraduate students had a bad opinion of the study of literature. This was a result of their familial history, issues relating to teaching or teachers, or preexisting school-related circumstances. The majority of the students had a bad opinion of studying literature as a result of the aforementioned problems. Numerous students did not use the SHS libraries, according to the data. It was also discovered that many students disliked their literature classes since they thought the topic was tough. The results also showed that students' attitudes about the study of literature had an impact on how well their English language skills developed.

Keywords: English, students, language students, undergraduate

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of education according to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2004), "is to ensure that all pupils acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for the cognitive development of learners, to nurture the creative and emotional growth of learners, to oppose discrimination against any particular group in any manner, or, in other words, leads towards an equitable society." In this post-modern world, English has already obtained

the status of international lingua franca (Graddol, 2010; Jenkins, 2006). Crystal and others (2003) argue "English is the global language". According to Keshta (2000), it is a worldwide language, the language of communication among countries in the international sphere of trade, business, communications, air transportation, and technology.

English is the official language of Ghana. It is commonly known as the Queen's language. Ghana, a former British colony, recognizes the

value of English Language education in her educational system. The language is widely utilized in education as almost everything in the country's educational sector is documented in the language. The laws and statutes of the country are all written in English Language. It is also the main language used in the country's parliament, government, ministries, and departments at the national level and local levels.

All schools in Ghana use English as the medium of instruction. It is taught from the kindergarten through to the tertiary as a language and studied as a course or programme. Examinations for the various levels of education are usually in English except for Ghanaian Language subjects. At both the Junior High School and Senior High School levels, English Language is taught as a core subject making it compulsory for all students at these levels. Requirements for tertiary admissions usually include a pass in English Language. Therefore, one is handicapped if he/she cannot use the language appropriately in Ghana. The four components of the English language are speaking (oral), hearing (oval), reading and writing abilities, and literature. According to language theorists, these abilities should be taught in the following order: listening, speaking, reading, literature, and finally writing. This research focuses on one of the aspects of English Language – literature, which is considered to be one of the most difficult aspects of English Language by students.

Literature as an aspect of English, in its broadest sense, is an art genre, or any single written work regarded to have lasting creative or intellectual quality, owing to the use of words in unusual ways. Literature is considered as a reflection of humanity's customs, beliefs, and traditions because every aspect of life may be documented, recorded, and taught from a piece of writing (Finnegan, 2018). Literature has the ability to improve students' language learning skills. Literary works can be thought of as supportive medium in the learning of a language. According to

Langer (2004), literature can prompt students to interpret and develop their knowledge on languages in addition to broadening their understanding. Through the teaching of literature in English, students might be motivated to improve their vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, critical thinking, analytic abilities, and other cultural skills (Alim & Pennycook, 2008).

English literature is seen to be extremely advantageous to those who study it. Sanoto (2017) avers that studying literature improves learners' fluency in language usage and boosts vocabulary in addition to increasing their English language acquisition. According to Brumfit and Carter (1986), referenced in Shazu (2014), literature is a skills topic since it focuses on the abilities that students learn rather than the content. This means that learners can develop a variety of skills and competencies by studying various books. El-Helou (2010) also states that literature students are capable of developing insightful replies, literal understanding, personal connection, cross-cultural themes, interpretations, and text assessment. Sanoto (2017) goes on to say that literature's importance in society cannot be overstated. This is due to the fact that literature provides the student with a variety of advantages and opportunities for growth. Literature is comprehensive in scope, including all aspects of human activity. There's not even a single aspect of human existence that has not yet been mirrored in literary works. Aside from that, learners have unique opportunity to strengthen their intellectual or cognitive skills through the study of literary works.

The study of literature may go a long way toward assisting individuals in developing skills and competencies that will enable them to become productive citizens in modern society, contributing not only to human growth at many levels but also to the settlement of societal disputes. According to Katerega (2014), literature may be utilized as a weapon in the resolution of disputes between individuals and nations because it is a part of

society. This is particularly true in the contemporary day, when social and political conflicts appear to be the norm in communities, nations, and the world at large. Without a doubt, having interpersonal and other social skills that serve to allow peaceful coexistence in society is a valuable asset.

Rashid et al. (2010) argue that literature plays an important role in instilling aesthetic sensibility. Many previous studies (e.g., Vethamani (2004) have suggested that including literature in English as a component should help learners improve their language skills, particularly reading, while also meeting educational needs and providing enjoyment when exploring literary texts. According to Gurnam (2003), knowing English can lead to a stronger desire among students to participate in different types of resources while learning a second language. Learning literature as part of the English Language syllabus is also thought to be able to give a better and broader view on educational function, triggering critical thinking while boosting emotional awareness, which aids in the overall education of a student (Lazar, 1993). The use of literature in ELT not only makes pedagogic exchanges more engaging and opens up chances for language learning, but it also encourages real resources that help students improve their language abilities and expand their linguistic knowledge (Arafah et al., 2021; Khan & Alasmari, 2018).

Many countries throughout the world use literature as part of their English language programmes in schools and universities. For Ghanaian schools, literature is one of the components of the English language curriculum. It is one of the most hated sections of the English curriculum. The researcher's brief observation before this study revealed that most students have a low desire for literature and are hence uninterested in it due to several reasons not limited to their backgrounds, teaching methodologies and their perception.

Literature is used as a component and an authentic manner of learning English Language in Ghana public and private universities.

Among these universities is Catholic University which hopes to help students acquire the desired language skills. To support English education, the Catholic University of Ghana's English Department focuses on teaching and learning literature as a key component for its English Programme. All students studying the English Language programme are mandated to take up courses in literature as part of the requirements for the completion of the programme. Literature is viewed as difficult to learn in Ghanaian schools. This is due to poor opinions and attitudes toward the subject or course among Ghanaian teachers and students. Also, the perception of teachers coupled with a lack of sufficient materials contribute to the poor attitudes that students develop towards the study of poetry. According to Lynch (2008), the students' difficulties in learning poetry are influenced by many factors, such as: lecturer's strategies and methods in managing class, lack of facilities, insufficient use of references and materials, etc.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Type and Design

The current study used a mixed method approach to evaluate undergraduate students' attitude towards the study of literature. Mixed methods research involves the collection or analysis of quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially and only the data is integrated at one or more stages in the process of the research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). This design of the study fits under the convergent parallel mixed method category, as defined by Creswell and Clark (2017), in which two distinct techniques are used simultaneously to explore a phenomenon. Using a mixed method approach generates a wide understanding of the phenomenon and gives a reliable conclusion. Greene et al. (1989) argue that in a given research, both techniques can be employed concurrently or sequentially. The researcher used a convergent parallel mixed method technique in this study, which collected both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time but analysed them

independently. The researcher then examines the findings to determine if they support or contradict each other. The most essential aspect in convergent parallel mixed method, according to Greene et al. (1989), is the necessity to integrate both qualitative and quantitative data at any step of the investigation, particularly during data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Triangulation is a term used by Cohen and Manion (1994) to characterize the study's technique. It refers to the process of performing a study in which data is collected through several methods. Triangulation is important in doing research, according to Flick (2018) and Data and Silverman (2011), since it promotes clarity of meaning by presenting multiple ways in which the researcher analyses the phenomena. According to Bryman (1998), a researcher's use of triangulation can help to reduce mistakes that might occur as a result of incorrect conclusions drawn from data. This, in turn, contributes to the study's increased validity. At the discussion stage, where the results were analysed, this study included quantitative and qualitative data.

The qualitative design was based on an explanatory phenomenology approach. This was suitable since the researcher was interested in learning about students' attitudes regarding literature as a result of their home background experience, teacher experiences and previous school experience. The researcher wanted to learn about the many ways that students' perception about literature has influenced their learning of English Language. The goal of employing qualitative research methods in a study of a certain social condition is not only to get a better knowledge and publish the findings, but also to make certain modifications (Qu & Dumay, 2011). As a result, the qualitative approach used in this study aimed to offer a wealth of descriptive data on participants' surroundings, behaviours, and attitudes in relation to literature in educational settings and practices. The mixed approach becomes necessary, according to Tellis (1997), because of the ethical

requirement to "affirm the validity and dependability of the process." "Multiple approaches in a research design would also assist to offer a wider picture and address many various elements of the phenomena," Data and Silverman (2011 p. 50) say. According to Stake (1995), a case study entails an in-depth examination of a case or a series of instances, each of which is examined in its own context for a comprehensive understanding. According to Burns and Grove (2010), a case study ensures an in-depth, comprehensive, and descriptive investigation of the phenomena a researcher wishes to investigate.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

In statistics, some scholars like Creswell and Clark (2017) explain the sampling plan as a term used in research studies which outlines how research is conducted. They explained further that, it tells what category to be surveyed, what the sample size should be, and how to choose the respondents from the population. A sample of about forty (40) people from the target population was selected for the quantitative study. The sampling was done using random sampling method. That is, the researcher went into each of the classes (i.e. year one, year two, year three and year four) with as many pieces of paper for all students in each class. Ten (10) of the papers had 'yes' written on them, two (2) had 'interview' and the remaining had No written on them. Students who picked YES were made to answer the questionnaire for the study while those who picked the interview were scheduled for an interview after the quantitative data was collected.

For the qualitative data collection, two (2) language lecturers were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study. These language lecturers were thus added to the and eight (8) students selected in the various levels to make up the sample for the qualitative aspect of the study. The students were then interviewed first before the lecturers.

Instrumentation

The data was collected using a two of approaches, which, according to Nunan (2012), ensured the validity of the study's conclusions. Likert type questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data for the study. The use of a questionnaire, according to Sarantakos (2012), is beneficial since it standardizes data collecting and maintains high confidentiality of respondents, eliciting genuine information from respondents. Using a structured interview is a way of trying to ensure comparability across the sample selected for data collection (Fox, 2009).

Questionnaire for students

The self-constructed questionnaire sought to elicit responses from students concerning their attitude towards Literature. The questionnaire had two (2) sections – Section A and Section B. Section A consisted of demographic information such as gender, age range, and level of student, residential status, and socio-economic conditions of parents and parents' educational level. While Section B contained thirty-two (32) items that measured the factors that contributed to the development of students' attitudes towards the study of literature, the perception of students towards the study of literature and the effects of their attitudes on their ability to acquire English Language which were placed on a five-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Students were instructed to select one answer for each item in each section.

Interviews

In terms of qualitative data, respondents were questioned about their perceptions regarding literature. The use of open-ended questions allowed for guided interview sessions between the researcher and the research participants. Through the analysis of the recorded interviews of the research participants, the qualitative study attempted to address some of the research questions. The interviews were

based on short open-ended questions that asked students and lecturers to express their thoughts regarding the study of literature, which is a component of the English language. The interviews were done in an open-ended way, allowing participants to freely express their thoughts.

Data Collection

The study employed different methods to gather the data; this, according to the argument of Nunan (1992), ensured the validity of the findings of the study. The data for the study were gathered through questionnaire and interview. With regard to the questionnaire, the researcher presented Likert-type questionnaires to the respondents to answer. The questions on the questionnaire measured the factors that influence their attitudes, the perception of the students concerning the learning of literature and the effects of their attitude on their ability to acquire English Language. Data was collected in lecture hall right after lectures. This approach was used because it was difficult to get all students in class at the same time to administer the questionnaire. Data was first gathered from the level 400 group and later to the other levels.

With regards to the qualitative data, the sample was interviewed after the quantitative data was collected. The respondents were interviewed about their attitudes towards learning of literature. The guided interview sessions between the researcher and the research participants were made possible through the use of open-ended questions. The qualitative study sought to answer the research questions through the analysis of the recorded interviews of the research participants. The interviews were based on a short open-ended questionnaire which invited students and lecturers to voice their feelings about students' attitudes towards the study of literature. The interviews were conducted in a non-restrictive manner, allowing participants to share their opinions freely. As the study aimed at discussing how students feel about the learning of literature, as reflected in the attitudes for it, the researcher's consideration of qualitative phenomenological approach

aided in understanding the phenomenon from different perspectives. The researcher interviewed the lecturers after interviewing the students. The questions were open-ended and un-restrictive allowing more detailed explanations to questions asked. The responses were recorded and clarity sought to confirm the responses that were given.

Data Analysis

Data obtained qualitatively is often non-numeric and less organized than data gathered statistically. This is because the data is generally created in an unstructured, flexible, and inductive manner. The qualitative data for this study was gathered through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are different from structured interviews in that they are more open, allowing for debate diversion and the addition of new ideas as the conversation progresses. The researcher employed thematic analysis to organize the data by classifying the responses of the participants into themes that guided the interview sessions. The researcher then went over the transcribed material again,

highlighting key elements that related to the research questions. The researcher organized and analysed the participants' responses to each question thematically and by relevance to the study issue. The qualitative data analysis method required the researcher to categorize the replies of the research participants into themes that represented the study's goals. The responses were then incorporated in the study. The quantitative data collected in the field was first cross-checked to ensure that it was error-free. The data from the completed questionnaires was then coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 26 for analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to compare means of the items on the questions. The means of the items that sought to identify the factors that contributed to students' attitudes towards the study of literature were added to know the factor that contributed the most to the development of students' attitude towards the study of literature. The results were presented using tables.

3. RESULTS

The demographic data focused on variables like gender, age range, and level of students, programme of study, socioeconomic background of students' parents and educational background of students' parents.

Table 1: Gender of Students (N=40)

Level	Frequency	Percent
Level 100	10	25
Level 200	10	25
Level 300	10	25
Level 400	10	25
Total	40	100

Data was collected on students' gender to find out the number of males and females involved in the study. Table 1 depicts that a total of sixteen (16) males representing (40 %) participated in the study while (24) females representing (60%) took part in the study. More female English students participated in the study. This is a credible reflection of the general dominance of females in the language classrooms of tertiary institutions in Ghana.

Table 2: Age Range of Respondents (N=40)

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	16	40
Female	24	60
Total	40	100

The researcher collected data on the age range of participants who were selected for the study. Information on participants' age range is provided in Table 2, the range of 21-25 years formed the dominant group making up 50%. This was followed by 26-30 years which had 25%. The least percentage age groups were 17-20 and 30 plus years that were 5%. Thus, majority of the respondents of this study were between the ages of 21 and 25.

Table 3: Level of Respondents (N=40)

	Frequency	Percent
Low	12	30
Moderate	22	55
High	6	15
Total	40	100

Data was collected on the level of students to find out how many students from each level were involved in the study. From Table 3, 25% of students from each level, i.e. from level 100 to level 400 were selected for the study.

Table 4: Educational Level of Mothers (N=40)

Educational level	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Master's Degree	2	5	5
Bachelor's Degree	3	7.5	12.5
HND	7	17.5	30
Diploma	8	20	50
A Level & O Level	12	30	80
Middle School	4	10	90
None	4	10	100
Total	40	100	

The educational level of the mothers of the respondents was equally a major concern in the data collection. Table 4 depicts information on the educational level of the mothers of the students who participated in the study. From Table 4, mothers of respondents with their educational level of A' level and O' level had the highest responses with 30% of responses while those with diploma closely followed with 20% of the total responses. Mothers with Higher National Diploma (HND) also had 17.5% of responses while those who had no form of formal education and those who have middle school leaver's certificate had 10% each of the total responses. 7.5% of the mothers had a bachelor's degree while 5% had a master's degree. However, none of the mothers of the students had a PhD degree.

Table 5: Home Background factor

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
My parents encouraged me to study literature	2.50	1.13
My parents or siblings helped me to understand literature	2.45	1.17
My parents bought literary materials for me to read at home	2.40	1.17
My parents read literary materials at home	2.25	1.14

From Table 5, the item “my parents encouraged me to study literature” has the highest mean (M=2.5, Std. D=1.132). This is followed by the statement “my parents or siblings helped me to understand literature” with a mean of 2.45 (M=2.45, Std. D=1.175). “My parents bought literary materials for me to read at home” followed with a mean of 2.40 (M=2.40, Std. D=1.172). Finally, the item “my parents read literary materials at home” was the least with a mean of 2.25 (M=2.25, Std. D=1.149).

Table 6: Teacher related factors

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lecturers provide background information on selected texts for study	3.92	1.05
Texts used by lecturers are readily available to students	3.47	0.90
Lecturers often asks us to express our personal interpretation of texts	3.47	0.98
My lecturers consider students diversity during teaching of literature	2.87	1.13
Lecturers stress the importance of literature on learning English	2.55	0.87
I like my lecturers' response to my personal interpretation of texts	2.50	1.09
I like the teaching strategies used in the literature classes by my lecturers	2.35	0.97
Lecturers involve students in the selection of texts for study	1.95	0.71

From Table 6, the statement “lecturers provide background information on selected texts for study” has the highest mean of 3.925 (M=3.925, Std.D=1.047). This was followed by the items “texts used by lecturers are readily available to students” and “lecturers often ask us to express our personal interpretation of texts” with a mean of 3.475 each. “My lecturers consider students diversity during teaching of literature” had a mean of 2.875 (M=2.875, Std. D=1.136). This was followed by “I like my lecturers' response to my personal interpretation of texts” with a mean of 2.55 (M=2.55, Std.D=0.8756) and closely followed by the statement “I like my lecturers' response to my personal interpretation of texts” with a mean of 2.5 (M=2.5, Std.D=1.0864). The statement “I like the teaching strategies used in the literature classed by my lecturers” had a mean of 2.35 (M=2.35, Std. D=0.9753). “Lectures involve students in the selection of texts for study has the least mean of 1.95 (M=1.95, Std.D=0.7143).

Table 7: Previous school factors

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
I patronized the library frequently	2.45	1.15
My SHS library was well resourced with literary materials	2.42	1.17
I joined literature clubs in my SHS	2.37	1.17
Library time in SHS was compulsory for all students	2.37	1.19

From Table 7, the statement “I patronized the library frequently” had a mean of 2.45 (M=2.45, Std.D=1.1535) and followed by the statement “my SHS library was well resourced with literary materials” with a mean of 2.425 (M=2.425, Std.D=1.1742). “I joined literature clubs in my SHS” had a mean of 2.375 (M=2.375, Std. D=1.1698). The statement “library time in SHS was compulsory also had a mean of 2.375 (M=2.375, Std. D=1.191).

Table 8: Factors that contribute to the development of students' attitudes

Factor	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teacher related	18	31	23.10	2.86
Home Background	5	17	11.72	2.97
Previous School	6	20	9.62	3.02

Table 8 shows the sum of the means and standard deviation of all the items measuring each of the three factors that contribute to the development of attitudes towards the study of literature. The Table reveals that teacher related factor has the highest (M=23.1, SD=2.86) which makes it the highest factor. This is followed by Home Background of students with (M=11.725, SD=2.969) and Previous School with the least mean (M=9.625, SD=3.018).

4. DISCUSSION

The findings sought to find the factors that contribute to the development of undergraduate English students' attitudes towards literature. The researcher identified three factors that contributed to the negative attitudes of undergraduate students towards the study of literature, i.e. school/teacher factor, home background factor and previous School factor. The sum of the means of these factors showed that school or teacher factor contributed most to the development of negative attitudes towards the study of literature. This is followed by home background factor with previous school factor been the least of the factors that contributed to the development of attitudes towards the study of literature.

The researcher then took the specific items in the sub-scales to find out what respondents said about them. The first was the home

background factor which had four statements that were used to measure home background as a contributing factor to the development of students' attitudes towards the study of literature. The statement “my parents encourage me to study literature” had a mean of 2.5 which means they disagreed with the statement. Similarly, respondents disagreed with the statement “my parents or siblings help me understand literature at home with the statement getting a mean of 2.45 on the mean table. Also, respondents disagreed with the statement “my parents bought literary materials for me to read at home” that had a mean of 2.4. The last statement “my parents read literary materials at home” had a mean of 2.25 meaning respondents equally disagreed with that statement. All four statements had a mean of 2.25 to 2.5 which means the respondents disagreed with the statements. This means the home background of students is a major contributing factor to the

development of negative attitudes towards the study of literature.

The findings are corroborated by one of the lecturers who had this to say about the home background of students.

I think students' negative attitude towards literature comes from most of their backgrounds. If they do not build the habit of reading literature books at home, then they become scared of literature because it is a reading subject and they do not like to read. Sorry to say that most of our young people do not have the habit of reading and that causes all these negative attitudes they have for literature.

A student in level 100 also commented on their home backgrounds as:

I don't even think my father or mother knows what literature is. All they do is they will pay the fees, provide some of your needs and ask you to learn hard. None of them have ever asked me to take literature seriously. For them, going to school is enough.

One of the reasons why such students may not have a positive attitude toward studying literature materials could be due to a lack of reading culture in their family. Hanscombe et al. (2011), discovered that students whose parents read more, spent more time being read to, and had a greater range of books at home had higher attitudes toward literary studies.

A level 400 student also had this to say:

My father is educated but he does not read literary materials at home. He only spends times to read things about his work. As for my mother, she only reads her Twi Bible once in a while.

Another level 400 student had this to say about his parents:

My parents always read at home. They buy books for us to read and sometimes ask us to go to the library. They are particular about my results and so if I

ask them to buy any book, they readily do. I think it is probably because my mother is a teacher.

This falls in line with the findings of Siti (2008) that learners whose parents are educated and they make reading a habit in their homes also grow up developing interest in reading of literature materials. The findings are in tandem with Ghazali (2016) who found in their studies that students with negative attitudes share similarities especially concerning their limited exposure to English at home. Most of these students do not have parents or siblings who speak or read English at home and are exposed to English mainly through television and academic reading.

The results from the demographic data gathered on the respondents show that about 55% of respondents come from a moderate socioeconomic background, while 30% come from a low socioeconomic background with only 15% coming from a high socio-economic background. It can be inferred that the low socio-economic background contributes to the development of negative attitudes towards the study of literature. These findings are in tandem with Tan et al. (2016) who found that students in Malaysia who have a larger choice of reading resources at home have a better attitude about reading. They also have favourable impacts at home, such as reading parents and siblings, as well as a larger reading area however, the aforesaid characteristics have a strong relationship with socioeconomic position. Those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds have more reading materials at home than students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Tan et al., 2016). Also, according to Lareau (1987) academic standards, school resources, and cultural prejudices can all be influenced by socioeconomic class. Higher-income families have higher academic expectations for their children in terms of college and university, which might alter students' perceptions of their own talents and future prospects.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that the socioeconomic status of parents of the respondents is one of the reasons why the home background of students is causing a negative attitude towards the study of literature. The second factor that contributes to the development of negative attitudes towards the study of literature was the teacher factor. The statement "lecturers provide background information on selected text was agreed by respondents with a mean of 3.925. Similarly, "texts used by lecturers are readily available and "lecturers ask students to express our own interpretation" were both agreed to with a mean of 3.475. Respondents were undecided or neutral on the statement "lecturers consider students diversity" with a mean of 2.875. However, respondents disagreed with the statement "lecturers stress the importance of literature" with a mean of 2.55. Similarly, the respondents disagreed with the statement "I like my lecturers' response to my personal interpretation of texts with a mean of 2.5. "I like the teaching strategies used in the literature classes by my lecturers" was also disagreed on by the respondents with a mean of 2.35. The respondents further disagree on the statement "Lecturers involve students in the selection of texts for study" with a mean of 1.95.

On text selection, a level 200 student explained some of the reasons why the teacher factor affected their attitude said;

The lecturers have their own literary texts they have been using to teach literature for years and do not want to change them. So as a student, you are forced to study the text even if you do not find it interesting. Sometimes too, they teach like everyone understands literature and as soon as some students understand what they are teaching; they assume everyone is good to go.

Another student in level 300 intimated that:

Some of the texts the lecturers select in teaching literature are sometimes difficult to understand. They even struggle to read some of the texts

themselves but we still have to learn them else you will get poor grades which will affect your GPA.

A lecturer also said:

I believe sometimes when the text is difficult to understand, it make the students lose interest. So, for example, we are studying Oedipus Rex and I have decided to select a version of the text that will be easy for them to understand. And their participation is encouraging.

The findings on text selection are consistent with Ghazali (2016) who found that better text selection is one strategy to encourage pupils to read more literature. The pupils' interest is arguably the most crucial consideration in text selection. This does not imply that the texts must solely deal with issues affecting youth. According to the students' responses, they want to read about adventure, mystery, and life experiences. Because the students have diverse backgrounds, interests, and skills, the ideal choice is to select books that are diverse in terms of genres, topics, and language level. In McRae's (1991) point of view, he believes that "careful text selection is important to the successful use of any form of representational materials" as quoted in Shazu (2014). This means that literature teachers must be meticulous in selecting appropriate resources in order for pupils to approach literature with confidence.

On the teaching strategies used by lecturers, a student in level 400 said:

I like the strategy of some few lecturers because they make their class interesting and everyone is involved one way or the other. However, some too just give you the text to read or mention the books you are to read to you and that are it. So, if you don't go out to find the books or find summaries of them, then you will fail the exams.

A level 100 student had this to say:

I struggled during my first few lectures because the lecturer was moving too fast

because he has a target to reach each week. At a point, I lost track of what he was teaching and that made me struggle with the course.

Another student in level 200 said:

For me, I like the strategy the lecturers use to teach. They sometimes put us into groups for us to share our opinions about some texts and make presentations in class. This makes us do a lot of research for the presentation and I like that.

These findings affirm the study of Mubita (2020) which established that though some teachers included some learner-centred activities on their lesson plans, the lessons still remained chiefly teacher-centred as teachers still exerted control on the interaction in the lessons. The study further established that negative attitudes to literature can be linked to the use of inappropriate teaching and learning strategies and that the use of more interactive techniques could improve learner motivation towards the study of the subject or course. On whether lecturers gave background information about the texts they selected for literature classes the respondents agreed that the lecturers provided them with background information about the texts.

In response to this statement, a level 400 student said:

The lecturers usually give some background information about the some of the texts we use in class. The background information on Ayi Kwei Armah's "The Beautiful Ones are not yet born" gave me the interest to read it.

A female student in level 300 also had this to say:

I read the background information about Mariama Ba and her book "So Long a Letter" from one of our lecture notes and I got interested to read the book because I believe in feminism. So, I will say our lecturers give us background information about the texts. It actually

wets your appetite to read the text or book.

This outcome is in agreement with the findings of Parkinson & Thomas (2022) who realized that the environment and culture information are important for the interest and understanding of students during literature classes. It is also in congruence with Can (2014) who found that historical background of the literary pieces chosen by the teacher must be given to students, as this initially introduces the class to the society of the language being taught. Using literature for English teaching provides the students a sort of access to different societies that come to existence through reading the literature of that language. Language, literature, and culture are all intertwined and play a role in shaping one another. These findings are consistent with that of Tutacs (2006), who performed study on literature instruction and response. He discovered that how literature is taught has an impact on students' attitudes toward texts as well as works they read afterwards.

The third factor that contributes to the development of negative attitudes of students toward literature was their previous school factor. The researcher wanted to find out if the students' previous experience in their second cycle institutions had a role to play in their attitudes. This factor had a total of four statements measure on a Likert scale. Respondents disagreed with the statement "I patronized the library frequently" with a mean of 2.45. Similarly, respondents disagreed with the statement "my SHS library was well resourced" with a mean of 2.425. Again, they disagreed with "I joined literature clubs in my SHS" with a mean of 2.375.

On the last statement, "library time was compulsory for all students", respondents also disagreed with a mean of 2.375. A level 400 female student explaining why her previous SHS has a role to play in her negative attitude towards literature stated that:

I only visited my SHS library once when I was in the first year but I found that it

contained only old books and so I never went there again. Each time we had library time, it was not compulsory to go to the library. Most of us used it time to read some other subjects.

A male student in level 300 also remarked as follows;

There was a drama club and debating club in my school but I felt it was a distraction to me because they always had meetings twice in the week and I thought that was a waste of time so I decided against joining those clubs.

One of the lecturers also had this to say;

If the students do not develop reading habits from their previous schools, then they tend to see literature as a difficult subject because it involves reading. Additionally, some of the schools do not have any form of mechanism to ensure that all students go to the libraries like our time. These days, library time is just on the time table but not properly enforced. So, how will they (students) develop reading habits?

On whether the students patronized the library in their SHS, the respondents disagreed meaning that most of the students did not patronize the libraries. It can be deduced that the failure of students to patronize the library has contributed to the poor reading skills among students since libraries serve as a gateway to information, knowledge, and leisure, and so have a significant impact on a person's reading habits. It is necessary to efficiently utilize library resources in order to foster the habit of reading. The frequency of library visits has an impact on the development of reading habits, and as library visits diminish, so do reading habits. This conclusion is consistent with Onuoha et al. (2013) study of reading among students at Babcock University in Nigeria, which found that most students do not use the library. It is also in sharp contrast with Deavers et al. (2000) who found that reading is an essential tool for knowledge transfer and the habit of reading is an academic

activity that increases skills in reading strategies. To know about the world and its environment, a student helps himself through reading books, newspapers and other magazines. Once the student has been taught to read and has developed the love for books, he can explore for himself the wealth of human experiences and knowledge through reading. Children, who miss the opportunity of getting in touch with books in their early stages of life, find it hard to acquire good reading habits in their later years.

Respondents disagreed with the statement my SHS library was well resourced. This means that most of their second cycle schools did not have libraries that were well resourced. This could also be a contributing factor to why student have negative attitudes towards the study of literature. This finding is consistent with the Report of the President's Committee on Review of Education Reform in Ghana, October, 2002 which found that proper libraries are required in all schools irrespective of the location as stated in Filson & Anafo (2016).

Respondents disagreed with the statement library time was compulsory for all students. From the responses, most of the schools had library time on their time tables but the authorities of the schools did not enforce it. As such, students used that time for other activities rather than reading. It can then be established that the refusal of school authorities to ensure that all students utilized the library time on their timetables is one of the contributing factors to students developing poor reading habits thereby negative attitudes towards the study of literature.

5. CONCLUSION

The study looked into how undergraduate English language learners felt about studying literature. The study's conclusions indicate that the elements that affect students' views in literary classes include those connected to the instructor, their upbringing, and their prior educational experiences. When they discuss determining if they have, they are referring to

this. The primary goal of the study was to identify the elements that influence students' attitudes regarding the study of literature. According to research, the three aspects that affect students' attitudes in literary classes are those connected to the instructor, their upbringing, and their prior educational experiences. Teacher related factor is the factor that contributes the most to the attitude of students in literature classrooms.

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