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**A Study of English Major Students' Reading**  
**Preferences: the case of Samara University**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The main objective of this survey study was to study English major university students' reading preferences at Samara University in the Afar Regional State. It was also to identify the reading materials they prefer to read other than their academic requirements, to identify the standards that students use to choose books of their preferences and at the end to identify the factors that hinders their reading preferences as specific-objectives. The populations of the target group were all 72 second and third year English major students. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaire and was analyzed using number and percentage in easy table. Then qualitative data was collected using interviews and were analyzed and transcribed thematically and integrated with the results obtained through questionnaire. The data were integrated and comparatively analyzed. As a result, the findings depicted that, students mostly preferred to read academic then nonacademic materials such as: politics and sport followed by literary works and religious books. Price author, academic and exam were the major motives that students used to choose books of their preferences. Attitude, availability, accessibility, language and personal background were found out to be the impediments that resulted them not to read as they preferred. To that end, academic institutions are better if they abundantly access the libraries with the fitting materials that students get motivated to read. Then it will be rousing if parents and teachers support students to develop, be inspired to reading materials and develop a habit of reading with preference. This research provided further recommendation that could bring a change in the improvements of students reading practice.*

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Back Ground of the Study**

English is taught as a subject from grade one and is a medium of instruction from grade nine through colleges and universities nation-wide. All universities in the country are supposed to use English as their working language; they ought to produce documents, hold meetings, write minutes and reports, etc. in English. Apart from these nationally consistent practices, different regions have adopted different regional policies and attitudes towards English in their education system; some of the regions have made English to be a medium of instruction from grade 7, some from grade 8 and some from grade 9 (Heugh et al, 2006).

English is a determining language in Ethiopia if the country is to advance forward and develop in all sectors. MoE (2010) notes that English has become increasingly important as the language of instruction, business, communication, science and technology around the world. It is playing a pivotal role in the acquisition of knowledge and skills in Ethiopian education system. English language in Ethiopia plays both to its economic development and to individual students' future educational and life careers. These again indicate that excellent command in English has become an agent of social differentiation that, in turn, leads to increase the demand for quality English Education. The role of English language in the Ethiopian Education system is thus indispensable and students' failure in it may signal failure in other subjects too at various levels.

However, the level of English is so low that it is becoming difficult to use the language for its intended purposes. Specially, anecdotal evidences show that the English language proficiency of graduates from Ethiopian universities has emerged as a critical factor in graduate unemployment. All of international organizations, some of the non-government organizations and most of the well-paying governmental organizations such as Ethiopian Airlines, Ethiopian Telecommunications, Commercial Banks of Ethiopia, Ethiopian Insurance Corporations demand candidate's with good mastery of English.

Atkins et al (1996) underline, in high school and tertiary levels in Ethiopia, reading is by far the most important of the four skills. It plays indispensable role for students' academic accomplishments. Similarly, Ögeyik and Akyay (2009) viewed reading as a significant process in one's academic life leading towards knowledge. Reading helps readers satisfy their personal needs, enhance level of maturity, and ensure freedom of opinion formation and

reflection. In addition, Williams and Burden, (1997) contend that reading increases students' creative and free-thinking abilities with tolerant perspective towards other people.

It seems useful to address students reading needs and material preferences that engage themselves and develop their reading habits. Reading with preference makes the reader a very good reader because it is taking place with awareness. Reading with self-interest will make the reader more fruitful and academically successful. The reader will also understand the material without additional effort and time.

Abdu (1993) argues that one of the ways that could help students to improve their reading is by making them develop a good habit for reading. To improve students' reading interest, there is a need to provide them with reading materials and texts that fit their reading preferences and interests. It is only when they are provided with enjoyable reading texts that they will have the want to read which will directly or indirectly enhance their reading abilities and habits.

Examining and addressing students' reading preferences may not be an easy job for a country like Ethiopia due to various reasons. For example, Clark and Akerman (2006) states that children from lower socio-economic background read less for enjoyment than children from more privileged social classes. On the other hand, individuals' interest, culture, gender, and occupation all determine their preferences of reading (Ayyıldız et al, 2006). Reading preferences of all individuals may be different according to their age group(s) and need(s) of information.

Researches on students reading preferences conducted in Ethiopia are not worth satisfying compared with foreign studies. Therefore, the researcher becomes more interested in studying University students' reading preferences.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

English is spoken as a foreign language in Ethiopia and is a medium of instruction in the education system from grade seven to tertiary level. The bulk of the teaching and learning materials used in different levels are written in English. As a result, reading plays crucial role in promoting learning and serving as an instrument by which students could study subjects in the curriculum. It constitutes much of the work at universities; a high degree of demand is placed on students to read academic texts. They, for example, read to do assignments, to pass

tests and examinations, and to write term papers. Efficient reading is, therefore, an instrument, without which success in university study is not possible.

Reading is essential to succeed in every society. Students' general educational achievement depends mainly on their ability to read (Wells, 2007). Moreover, the ability to read is highly valued and important for social and economic advancement (RTI, 2009).

However, local research studies by Hailemichal (1984); Molla (1987); Mendida, (1988); Gebremedhin, (1993), pointed out that the students reading ability has always been below what is expected of them.

There are many reasons why students reading skills are deficient. Researchers ought to investigate what the precise causes are in a given context and should be encouraged to conduct further studies and find best way to correct weaknesses.

As Hedge, (2000) states the level of reader comprehension of the text is determined by how well the reader variables (interest level in the text, purpose for reading the text, knowledge of the topic, knowledge of the genre, foreign language abilities, awareness of socio-cultural context, and prior knowledge) interact with the text variables (text type, structure, syntax, and vocabulary).

Among these and many other reasons, students' poor reading performance might be attributed to the mismatch between their reading preference and the reading materials available at university libraries. Significant number of students and teachers, particularly at the newly established universities in Ethiopia, are heard complaining about the absence of materials they prefer to read at their libraries. The researcher has also observed students having wide varieties of reading interests and preferences while teaching Reading Skills Course for English majoring students at Samara University.

As Yamina et al, (2013) cited Logan and Medford, (2011) and Davila and Patrick, (2010) allowing student to read according to their interests and preferences motivates them to learn to read and have more positive attitude. Consequently, they will be more likely to perform better in reading (Bozack, 2011). In other words, students' reading habit cannot develop without matching the needs and preferences of students with the reading materials available at the libraries. Therefore, it is worth conducting research in area of students' reading preference to improve their reading practice and performance.

Both foreign and local researchers have conducted researches on students' reading interest and preference. For example, studies by Noa and Judit (2015), and Tim and Karen (2014) showed that students prefer to read paper base [printed] materials.

Local researchers, such as Martz (1971) and Tamene (1992) conducted studies on reading interest of secondary school students in Addis Ababa and reading interest of Addis Ababa university students respectively. They both found that most of the students read English materials outside their academic reading requirement such as magazine and newspapers. Furthermore, Abdu (1993) studied students' reading preference of 11<sup>th</sup> graders and concluded that most of the students prefer to read informational and literary texts.

As to the researcher's knowledge, there are no adequate researches conducted to survey students' reading material preferences, especially at university, and did not closely reveal the availability and relevance of library reading materials to satisfy ever growing needs and interests of learners. Hence, this study differs from the previous scholars' work in some points. The above researchers studied students' reading interest which is a leisure reading but this study deals with students' reading materials preferences that is most likely goes with their choices. Coming to the last study conducted by Abdu, he studied 11<sup>th</sup> graders' reading preferences only with questionnaire but this study used both questionnaire and interview for better triangulation.

This study, therefore, attempted to assess English language majoring University students' reading materials preferences. It also investigated factors that affect students' reading preferences. Based on this, leading questions were formulated to be answered at the end of the study. To this end, the study was guided by the following three basic questions.

- How frequently do they read materials other than their academic texts?
- How do students choose books of their preference?
- What are the factors that hinder students' reading preferences?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study was to find out English major University students' reading materials preferences.

### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

More specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives;

- ✓ To detect how frequently students read materials that are not related to their courses,
- ✓ To find out how students choose books of their preferences.
- ✓ To identify factors that hinder students' reading preference.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

Identifying students' reading preference is not a matter of students' advantage but also all the stakeholders who are included in the teaching learning system are also beneficiary. It could be an easy job to give titles or genres of reading materials to be purchased and narrow the scope when the department is requested the need to be bought. Studying students' reading preference would help to identify what type of reading materials students want to read. Moreover, teachers may also be beneficiary from this study in order to give the fitting materials for their students. Even though it is impossible to satisfy each and every students desire, this study has tried to give some guide lines to some extent. At the same time students will enjoy the session and would be attracted for reading consequently. Therefore, it would become more convenient to create a reading interested generation.

### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study is restricted at Samara university English major 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. The university is found in Afar Regional State of Samara city. Samara university is therefore, found in the capital city of the region Samara. This university is among the second-generation universities in Ethiopia.

The motive that Samara University was preferred is that, it is where the researcher has observed the problem. Therefore, it became more convenient to conduct the study in this specific area. The purpose that all English major students from 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year were chosen was because, these students are more responsible for reading different materials as they are language major students. The fact that all students second to third were nominated was due to their smallness to take them separately. Other stakeholders like teachers and department heads were not included in this study because the researcher's intention was only to find out the students' reading preferences.

## **1.6 Limitation**

One comes to encounter a certain-constraints while doing a certain work. Similarly, this study is a survey study; it is limited only at Samara university second and third year English major students. This might bring problems on the generalizability of the study in all universities of Ethiopia. It is true that a larger sample from different university would definitely yield more comprehensive findings. As a result, conclusions deduced or generalized from such a narrow context and recommendations which had been provided might not serve definitely as the case of all Ethiopian universities. The study did not offer all conclusive findings about reading preferences and its positive or negative effects on students' reading and comprehension skills.

## **1.7. Operational Definitions of Terms**

Words are subjected to have various meanings, hence certain words, or phrases are operationally defined so as to avoid ambiguity.

*Reading preference:* is the students' most chosen or favorite reading texts or materials that students like to read when they are engaged with reading.

*Interest:* is the ambition or learners' illustration when they are involved with reading texts.

*Attitude:* discusses students' mind set towards reading practice, experience and culture.

*Reading habit:* refers to the custom students developed through time of their experience and which became their daily practice that they cannot stop and do unconditionally.

*Experience:* is the knowledge or skill they have developed through reading and education.

*Motivation:* goes with the inspiration they have got to read a certain reading material.

## **1.8. Organization of the Study**

The work of this Master thesis is organized under five chapters. The first chapter is the introductory part which includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective, significance, scope, limitation and operational definitions of key terms. The second chapter presented the review of literature that are relevant to the research. The third chapter discussed research methodology and chapter four dealt with results of the study and presented discussion on major findings of the study. The last chapter has presented summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This part of the study discussed literature reviews that has clarified the research topic and observed different scholars' viewpoints. First, the definitions of reading and reading preferences is discussed briefly. Second, the significances of reading preferences are presented. Then, development of reading preference and natures of reading materials are discussed. Finally, factors affecting reading preferences, such as reasons for reading, learners' social-background, gender differences, age groups, reading interest and motivation, attitude, availability, content and format of the reading material, and the assessment system and achievement are discussed in some details.

### **2.1. Definition of Reading**

Scholars have given their definition for reading with their particular justification so far. For example, Nunan (1989) defines reading as the process of decoding written symbols working from smaller unit to larger one in order to arrive at meaning. In this process the readers try to look at and understand the idea of graphic scripts in the absence of writing. He describes reading as bottom up approach; starting from the minimum to the maximum part that is handling the information and internalizing the writer's idea. As Dereje named Wells, (2007) students' general educational achievement depends mainly on their ability to read. Learning to read is considered to be one of the most significant skills in children as it enables them to achieve their goals, develop their knowledge and reach their potential so as to take their rightful place in society (Statistique Canada, 2010). Therefore, the above definitions showed that reading practice and experience has a direct relation with future achievement of the students. Therefore, improving students reading skill is mandatory for all responsible bodies because, it is directly connected to their future achievement.

Goodman, (1967) argues that syntactic, semantic and pragmatic knowledge are involved in the reading process and reading is also defined as a psycholinguistic guessing game that involves an interaction between taught and language. What he states about reading is more like entertainment, which is about getting the expected information from the given text. Nation, (2005) described reading as a foundation of wisdom and pleasure through academic skills. This indicates that reading is a means of excitement in educated way. Likewise, Nuttall (1982) and Wallace (1992) defined reading in terms of ability to identify words from a page as the ability to read aloud can also be the definition of reading.

According to Grellet, (1996) reading constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking and asking oneself questions. Similarly, Urquhart and Weir, (1998) argue that reading is a language activity, and it involves, at some time or another, inference, memory, relating text to background knowledge, as well as decoding, and obvious language aspects as syntax and lexical knowledge.

Furthermore, Nuttall, (1996) states that effective reading involves word attack skill, sentence attack skill and text attack skill. According to the scholar, reading involves not only looking at sentences and words and going through them at random but also recognizing and understanding them intellectually. From the above discussion, one can conclude that there is no single comprehensive definition of reading.

Therefore, according to intellectual's explanation reading is forming meaning from the given reading text or material. This meaning formation will drive the reader to gain wisdom and pleasure through acquiring knowledge. If the reader phantasies the reading material it will be enjoyable and word attacking process. All the acquired knowledge and entertainment will bring wealth in experience. Therefore, reading and reading experience has a lot merit for students and for overall society. In order to gain all the above benefits, students must be provided with reading materials that interests and motivate them to read more. Therefore, studying students reading preference will help to identify and serve the materials that best interest them. Unless their interest is discovered it might be a west of time and budget to serve what is all over in the library or book store.

## **2.2. Reading Preference**

As reading is a passing code for success, it is very crucial to study students reading preference that fits their interest. When we talk about reading preference, it is to say that the type of reading materials that best interest them to read more and more for their life long experience. Reading is generally accepted as a way for reaching new information and assumed to be consistent with the comprehension capabilities of individuals (Özbay, 2006). In addition, to the purpose, reading is also consistent with individual preferences. Even the purpose of reading the same text may vary in accordance with individual preferences. A reader can read merely for having pleasure, while another can read for getting information (Ögeyik, 2008).

Hussain and Munshi(2011), conducted their study on identifying reading preferences of secondary school students on 387 students in Turkey. They state that, reading preferences of

all individuals may be different according to their specific age group(s) and need(s) of information. Apparently, they need someone to help in selecting book(s) to read according to their age, interest and intellectual capability. They also comment teachers to help young children and adolescents to select appropriate book(s) by knowing their reading preferences, maturity level and mindset, socio-cultural and family background. Teachers can motivate and guide them to select and read books that best meet their academic and emotional needs.

While choosing reading materials, gender, cultural, background and the like differences have to be in mind. The reading interests of girls differ from those of boys. In fact, it appears that certain types of reading material correspond better to interests specific to each sex (Moeller, 2011; Davila and Patrick, 2010; Below et al., 2010). Allowing children to read according to their likes and interests motivates them to learn to read, have more positive attitude (Logan and Medford, 2011; Davila and Patrick, 2010), and consequently, be more likely to perform better in reading (Bozack, 2011). Moreover, some common factors such as individuals' interests, culture, gender and occupation all determine [readers] preferences of reading (Ayyıldız et al., 2006). Various studies carried out for determining reading habits of individuals report that a growing number of young people do not read for pleasure; boys enjoy reading less than girls (Clark and Foster, 2005); children from lower socio-economic backgrounds read less for enjoyment than children from more privileged social classes (Clark and Akerman, 2006). Additionally, some findings show that learners seldom go to libraries (Özbay, 2006; Phillip, 1990).

S. Nagaraja, and Jesudoss, (2016) conducted a survey study on secondary school students reading habits and reading preferences. According to their findings, majority of the secondary school students read regularly and some of them read sometime. The students prefer to read different reading materials in different languages according to their preference some of them are: books both fiction and nonfiction, Newspaper and magazines in English, Kannada and Hindi languages. As the result of their study shows, the average time spent by the students for reading is less than an hour to 3 hours per day. The convenient and preferred time for students to reading is 'early morning', 'before going to bed' and 'evening time' home, the school library and school are places where students preferred to read regularly. There are some motives that pushes students to read the above-mentioned reading materials among the motives 'to get better job in life', 'to become good public speaker' and 'to get better grades in tests and examinations' are some of them that are mentioned by most of the respondents.

Majority of the students get encouragement and suggestions for reading from their mothers, friends, father and teachers. Students prefer to read both print and digital format.

Different motives promote reading preference and reading habits among young children and adolescents. Their interests and context should be considered to be the basic motives which urge them to acquire information and knowledge. The urge for acquiring information and knowledge leads them to read books, newspapers, novels, research papers and articles etc. It indicates their reading preferences. Identifying a reading preference is helpful in order to develop reading habit. Even though, it is crucial to identify reading preference; it is not an easy job to choose among the given alternative like content or subject matter, language, culture, availability and so on. Therefore, students may need their parents, teachers or friends support in order to come with the right preference.

### **2.3. Significances of Reading Preference**

Identifying students reading preference and specific choice has lots of benefits, especially for the students. Lindsey (2005), conducted a study on student attitudes toward reading in Buffalo State College New York teaching college. The study concluded that choice allows students to select tasks and texts that they are interested in or they find personally relevant. This encourages students to set goals and take responsibility for their own literacy development (Powell et.al., 2006). Additionally, Hidi and Harackiewicz (2000) investigations focusing on individual interest have shown that children as well as adults who are interested in particular activities or topics pay closer attention, persist for longer periods of time, learn more and enjoy their involvement to a greater degree than individuals without such interest.

One of the benefits of developing a reading preference is making student a high achiever on their academic journey or life long experience. Ögeyikand Akyay (2009), studied on the reading habits and preferences of 187 student teachers at foreign language departments. The finding of their study showed that, most of the students prefer reading the books of Turkish and foreign authors and they mostly like reading in foreign language which makes them high achievers on their academic success.

By the time students develop reading preference indirectly they will develop a reading habit. The benefits from reading habits reveal through the child's mental growth. The habit of reading improved children's reading skills (Bignold, 2003); and reading habit for pleasure improve their language skills (Reyhene, 1998). Hence, reading habits whether for learning or leisure helps broaden young people's experiences and knowledge (Green, 2002). Due to the

fact that student reading preferences play a significant role in the teaching of reading, many researchers, for instance, (Elliott and Kellner 1979, Stevens 1980, Tuttle et al 1979, Anderson and Barnitz 1984, Chiu 1973) are attracted towards this field.

#### **2.4. Development of Reading Preference**

Researchers contend that, early age is the crucial stage for the development of reading interest. Children at early age are curious to listen to amusing stories that they are told at home. Curiosity for listening to stories at an early age is fundamental sign of interest in reading in later life (Martz, 1971). By the time children develop interest for listening stories they unconsciously start to develop a story that interests them.

The family background and school context can influence students' preferences and contribute to shaping students' reading attitudes and preferences.(Eleni, Anastasia and Klio). The importance of parent/family involvement has been highlighted as a basic factor that can help children improve reading by providing motivating and pleasurable experiences with books and literacy (Ellen, 1994). Research data have shown that parental involvement with reading activities at home has significant positive influences on students' interest in reading, and their attitudes towards reading classroom (Rowe,1991). Especially, mothers become systematically responsible for the literary socialization of their children.

Undoubtedly people who make frequent contact with young children, particularly mothers in Ethiopia, have big responsibility for establishing reading interest for their children. In this regard it is needless to emphasize the unique role of reading parents. As Tamen, (1992) refer to Martz, (1971) as more educated young people establish homes for reading children; reading interest will change. Not only reading interest but also every interest has a direct or indirect linkage with childhood.

Most Ethiopian parents, especially mothers are not educated. Martz, (1971), again discusses that, in fact, mothers and grandmothers tell amusing stories by the fireside what is missing is the link between oral and written literature. Consequently, young children in Ethiopia develop a strong oral tradition in literature and story-telling that could provide a strong base for reading. Unfortunately, no link is created between the spoken custom at home and the reading practice at school.

On the other hand, besides creating reading culture for students, the language they are engaged with matters a lot. Hedge, (1985) and Williams, (1984) strongly discuss about the link between reading in the mother tongue and in foreign language. Wallace, (1992) stresses

the importance of the link between the students reading for pleasure in their mother tongue and in the foreign language they learn. He writes:

*... and if readers do not read for pleasure in their mother tongue, they are unlikely to do so in a second or foreign language. An important product of reading for pleasure in any language is fluency. This can create a vicious circle. Unless a reader get fluency that is speed and ease of reading, the reading of any material for whatever purpose is likely to be tedious. This, in turn, decreases motivation to read anything other than essential 'survival materials' the minimum required to function in school or to work place and fluency never get a chance to develop.*

Therefore, developing fluency in mother tongue also has a direct relation with developing fluency in second language. This will lead to developing good reading practice that indirectly influence the preference.

## **2.5. Natures of Reading Materials**

When teaching reading and identifying reading preference, it directly depends on the reading materials that students are involved with. These reading materials are divided into two main categories that are authentic and nonauthentic materials.

Authentic materials are known as real-life or genuine materials. Martinez (2002) as cited in Al-Azri and Al-Rashdi (2014) defines authentic materials as materials which are aimed at native speakers' daily life and not for teaching purposes. Meanwhile, Klickaya (2004) characterizes authentic materials as materials which expose the real world and how it is used in the target language. These materials exist in the country target language, used by the people of that country and exist in the current situation. Generally, it can be concluded that authentic materials are real materials which exist in the real world of the target language, used in their daily life and are not produced for teaching purposes. Furthermore, Gerbhard (1996) informs that authentic materials vary into several types. They can be in the form of listening materials such as radio program and songs, visual materials like the TV show and movies, printed materials such as a magazine, poster and map.

Many authors have examined the use of authentic materials in the classroom practice. They agree that the use of the materials is very prominent for the students. Nunan, (1999) defined authentic materials as texts that comprise language produced in real-life communication. According to, Huang (year not identified) several characteristics that distinguish authentic materials from non-authentic materials are summarized below:

- Authentic materials are produced for real life communication purposes,
- they reflect appropriateness of cultural and situational contexts,
- they often contain colloquialisms, idioms, jargon, collocations and specific terminology and
- they often contain features in spoken discourse such as ellipsis or “slot” at the beginning or end of the clauses for speaker orientation or evaluation.

Therefore, if authentic materials are produced for the purpose of real-life communication it may also help learners have exposure to real life conversation and use the language as per its nature.

On the other side, non-authentic materials are teaching materials which are made and designed for teaching purposes only. These materials are planned, designed, and produced based on the curriculum and policy in each country. The materials are usually in the form of textbooks. These textbooks are also built upon the learner's needs and ability. According to, Widya and Monashuniversity (2017), non-authentic text in language teaching terms is one that has been written especially for language students. Such texts sometimes concentrate on the language we wish to teach. Therefore, they argue that, nonauthentic materials are fake to use in class because:

- both speakers use perfectly formed sentences all the time. Yet, conversation between people is just not like that,
- the language is extremely un varied and
- their aim is to isolate bits of language so that students can concentrate on it.

Therefore, they conclude that, such material should not be used, however, to help students become better listeners or readers. The obviously artificial nature of the language makes it very unlike anything that they are likely to encounter in real life. Whilst some may claim that it is useful for teaching structures, it cannot be used to teach reading or listening skills.

### **2.5.1. Selecting Reading Material**

There are many reading materials out there for students to choose among and read. Students may use their own measure or criteria to select according to their preferences. They could use external measures like price, title, volume, author, popularity, or year of publications to choose books of their preference. on the other hand, students may use their purpose of reading as a choosing system or the genre that the reading materials have. All the above-mentioned characters are used by students depending on their motives.

The content that the reading material includes is one push factor that make them read the text. As Ivannia mentioned Fox and others (2007) agree that the most important criterion for selecting reading material for the ESL class is content. On the other hand, monetary considerations motivate students to share or hold off buying textbooks (Ivannia, 2007). The price or the cost that the material hold also could be a criterion for them to choose one form the other. Scholars also suggested that, selecting books according to its cover, first page, title, length/volume has a significant effect on students (Burges 1985).

Students read and choose reading materials as per their specific purpose. Some may read for pleasure some for academic requirement. Researchers also suggest that, A reader can merely read for having pleasure, while another can read for information (Ögeyik 2008). Similarly, Irshad and Parveen (2011) state that majority of the students read for academic purpose, specially focusing on the exam result, assignment, homework and the like. Therefore, their purpose makes them choose those materials.

Developing a particular test for a reading material may led to develop a test for some genres and that will move to a selection of reading materials according to their genre. Researchers also found out that students have their own test for some king of reading materials. Different readers have evidenced preferences for particular genres (Kathleen, 2006). If readers have such a test, they will use their choice as a criterion to choose reading materials.

## **2.6. Factors Affecting Reading Preferences**

Different factors affect students' reading preference and reading habits among young children and adolescents, such as reasons for reading, learners' socio-economic background, gender differences, age groups, reading interest and motivation, availability, attitude, content and format of the reading material, and the assessment system and achievement are discussed in some ditails.

### **2.6.1. Reason for Reading**

The reasons for reading determine students' reading material preferences. Students may prefer to read different materials for many reasons. For example, some of the reasons are to acquire knowledge and skills, to get information and to save life.

McMillan, (1977) have conducted research to identify the reasons why students can't read well. At the end of the study, by the time many students reach high school, they sometimes equate reading with ridicule, failure or exclusively school-related tasks ... often these

youngsters have never experienced joy in reading. Furthermore, lots of these students are pressured at home as well as in school to read! read! read! Persistent stress proves counterproductive. Pressuring anyone to read can lead to loosen inclination...

Students may have different motives to read materials. According to Rossana, (2006) students read for different purposes and the respondents justified their reasons for reading as follows. Most of the respondents said that they want to read in English language because: they want to improve and understand the language', it is important and an international language', 'they liked English and wanted to gain knowledge', 'most interesting books are written in English', they also reported that it is due to they wanted 'to get jobs and better status'.

### **2.6.2. Availability**

Just like socio economic, gender difference, attitude and motivation have impact over students reading preference availability of books have also its own contribution for their reading development. The availability or the scarcity of reading materials affect students' performance. Rossana, (2006) surveyed reading material preferences of South African 11<sup>th</sup> graders. Her findings showed that, when students were asked to indicate which books they would choose as set works, respondents did not introduce any new texts but simply repeating the existing ones. This finding indicates that, how limited exposure affects the respondents' reading material preference, since it suggests that they do not know any other books than the prescribed set works they read at school. The point underlines the fact that these students, in effect, have no choice in their reading, for one has to be informed in order to make choices.

Findings show that, there is an ever-increasing gap between learners' preferences and the reading materials that schools provide and recommend. Limited availability of preferred materials in school leaves learners with three choices: reading something outside of their interests, obtaining their preferred materials themselves, or not reading at all. As Rossana cited Worthy et al., (1999) learners who cannot afford to buy the preferred materials are more dependent on school sources and, thus, their choices are more limited.

What has emerged from this study is that learners have little exposure to a range of literature of reasonable quality, suggesting that teachers, school libraries, and local libraries have failed to play their role in promoting reading. The research also shows that learners are most interested in magazines and newspapers and in reading about topics related to love, sport and politics. Teachers need to recognize such preferences when they select reading material.

Learners should be allowed to make their own choices and read anything which interests them.

Students may collect reading materials from different sources as per their preferences. According to Rossana's finding, half of the respondents purchased their reading material. A similar proportion also claimed that they sourced it from a public library, while a slightly smaller number reported that they sourced the materials from the school library, home, and from friends. A much smaller number reported obtaining it from other places.

It is obvious that most of the schools have library in the compound. As Rossana reported in her study some of the students claimed that their school library won't let them to borrow books. At the same time students reported that the school libraries were also not always open for students to use them indeed. The good news that students reported was that the school has set them a reading program each day though it lacks consistency. In this study some of the students responded that they are members of public library only half of them replied that they borrow books from the library. Even though most respondents claimed to own books besides their school books, only a small percentage had more than ten, suggesting that they are not socialized into a reading culture. On the other hand, most of the respondents claimed that they read newspapers at home, and around half claimed that they bought their newspapers. However, a very small proportion of respondents responded that they read newspapers every day, while some reported reading them twice a week.

It is common that students collect books from school and public libraries or from book stores. Sometimes students may get books from their close people. Rossana again reported that half of the students found it strange that receiving a book as a present from parents. Only a minimum proportion did claim that they have been given books from different members of the family rather than from teachers or schools. Mothers of the respondents were the one who has been encouraging them to read the most.

### **2.6.3. Learners' Socio-economic Background**

When students' background is reached with practical and interesting experience they will not be challenged to be engaged when they are grown up. Therefore, their selection of books for reading to learn seems to be contextual associated with socio-cultural and geo-political conditions (Ayyıldız, Bozkurt, and Canlı, 2006) arising from some uncertain events. The current situation of the country will make readers to choose some kind of specific reading materials. For example, Sila and Özgür (2012) discuss the context of socio-cultural and geo-

political circumstances of Pakistanis. According to the researcher's suggestion, all age groups in Pakistan appeared to be interested in reading books on former president of Iraq Saddam Hussain during America's attack on Iraq in 1990s is a very good example for Geopolitical reading preference.

On the other hand, the scandal book on secret romance of Monica Lewinsky with Clinton (Monica Story) appeared to be an open romantic book which attracted the adolescents and young adults' at large scale (Sila and Özgür 2012). Therefore, "Monica Story" is an indicator that readers' choice can be forced by socio-economic factor. These are few examples which indicate context of reading preferences and information acquiring attitude of students and older people. Environmental and cultural factors such as family support and socio-economic status also appear to influence reading preferences (Below et al., 2010).

These ongoing situations could be push factors that motivate students to read because, it is where they listen and talk about all the time. These social engagements will make students to read and understand the overall circumstance about their society.

#### **2.6.4. Students' Gender difference**

Gender difference is one of the main categories that impact reading preference. Scholars of the following argue that female students are better readers than that of their male friends. They say generally speaking, girls are better readers and consequently are more likely to score higher on reading tests compared to their male peers (Bozack, 2011; Logan and Johnston, 2009, 2010; Lai, 2010; Watson et al., 2010; Below et al., 2010; Statuesque Canada, 2010).

Furthermore, girls use the various reading strategies differently and more effectively than boys do (Logan and Johnston, 2009, 2010). Not only are their cognitive abilities differences, girls are more motivated and have more positive attitude toward reading compared to the opposite sex (Logan and Johnston, 2009, 2010; Below et al., 2010; Codington and Guthrie, 2009). These studies indicate how female students are motivated in reading practice and use different strategies. Due to this, female students will engage more in reading practice and create a reading habit with better achievement.

In addition to the above studies, Mondal (2008) revealed that girls are engaged in reading more than boys and boys spend more time than girls in reading other than text books. The reading interests of girls also differ from those of boys. In fact, it appears that certain types of

reading material correspond better to interests specific to each sex (Moeller, 2011; Davila and Patrick, 2010; Below et al.,2010).

Coming to technological issues gender might be an important aspect because of the prejudice that men are keener on cutting-edge electronic devices. Due to this assumption, Zekeriya, (2015) expected that male students will constitute the majority of the students that prefer digital screen instead of printed paper. Although he has expected that male students would prefer screen more than female students, the study revealed that there is no significant difference between the preferences of male and female students.

Lynn and Mikk (2009), made a contribution to the study of international gender differences in reading ability by examining gender differences in means and variances in the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) and the PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study). In the study, the reading-test scores of females in all the countries were significantly higher than that of males. They also correlated this difference with the living conditions and activities of males and females. For instance, females were reading more at home and school, while males were busy with computers and DVD players.

Maletsha and Aaron (1982) claimed that more male brains are prone to excessive balance in information processing strategies than female brains. At the same time, Wanjiku cited Runo's (2010), findings indicate that there were more boys than girls who could not read in her study.

To sum up, all the above studies finding indicated that male students are less competent than female students.

#### **2.6.5. Learners' Age Group**

Physiologically and psychologically human life is divided into different developmental stages each corresponding to specific age group from infancy to older adult age groups. Hussain and Munshi, (2011) conducted a study on identifying secondary school students reading preference. According to their finding, students seem to be imaginary having idealistic approach with a little perception of the real world. They tend to seek ideals and show their interest in opposite gender. Adolescence appears to be volatile period of one's life which may mislead youngsters in blossoming emotions.

On their study, they have observed that different tendencies on students even in the same class and school. Therefore, they need guidance and counseling to divert their emotions in the right direction at the right time. Their reading preferences and selection of books may be set

according to their aptitude and needs through mutual negotiation. As books choice differ according to many aspects, age level of students will also affect their level of preference too. Boys enjoy the freedom to choose which books to read more than girls do and feel more motivated to read than in an imposed reading activity (Bozack, 2011; Jenkins, 2009; Nichols and Cormack, 2009). Boys also appreciate a variety of books, articles, or texts on one same subject so as to better grasp what this reading may have to offer (Jenkins, 2009). The same holds true for girls who also think being allowed to choose their reading material is important; however, contrary to boys, this is less likely to negatively affect their level of achievement in reading (Bozack, 2011). According to Lynn and Mikk (2009), females' superiority in reading comprehension grows with age and practicing the language.

Generally speaking, adolescents love to read books for pleasure and edutainment education through fun. This edutainment blended with wittiness may influence their reading preferences. More or less, all individuals are likely to have the sense of humor and wittiness. Therefore, the books on humor appeal to the people irrespective of their age groups but adolescents seem to be more inclined toward them (Greenlaw and Wielan, 1979). They love reading poetry, adventurous and mysterious novels and comic books. But in schools, students were advised to read textbooks with wishful choice of other books. As a result, the studies of Bundy and Hawkins (1983) revealed that intermediate students showed their interest in reading books on history and science, however, some of them enjoyed reading mysterious and adventurous books and autobiographies of great people. Generally, young children are likely to take interest in comic books, and adventure and mystery novels.

#### **2.6.6. Learners' Personal Interest and Motivation**

Learners reading interest and motivation will move them for better reading preference. Unless they are motivated to read, they cannot be fruitful on their achievement. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) said, [...] before anyone builds a road, crosses a river, or climbs a mountain, he/she must have some kind of motivation [...]. The same is true when we come to reading. As Ögeyik and Akyay, (2009) Guthrie and his colleagues (2000), it has been stated that one of the major contributions to reading is motivation of learners for text comprehension. In the mentioned study, it was also reported that motivation increases reading amount and respectively increases both intrinsic and extrinsic reading amount. In this context, motivation can be acknowledged as an important factor for prompting reading habits, reading preferences and the nature of reading learners engage in (Baker and Wigfield, 1999; Guthrie,

et al. 2000; Gambrel, 1996). Also, Bouchamma, Poulin, Basque, Ruel (2013), argue that book choice should come from the student rather than be imposed by the teacher. Choosing books according to personal interests raises students' level of motivation, encourages them to adopt a positive attitude, and perform better.

Alexander and Jetton (2000) introduced two main dimensions of interest involved in the reading process: situational and individual. Individual interest subsumes the readers' preferences for certain text topics or subject matter, and this interest exists before reading a particular text (Hidi, 1990; Schiefele, 1992). Situational interest refers to interest caused by situational factors, such as the text and test; a particular situation can influence situational interest, and is therefore not lasting (Wade, 1992). Most of what we usually read is what we want to read, and being motivated means that we start reading the text prepared to find a number of things in it and expecting to find answers to a number of questions and specific information or idea we are interested in. By the time students read materials that interest them sooner or later they will develop interest to discuss about what they are reading. Therefore, it will indirectly develop their comprehension and conversation or communication skill. To choose interesting reading materials for students, it indirectly will develop the skill.

Harmer, (1983) in his explanation about motivation states that, 'complete success' and 'complete failure' have a de-motivating factor over the learner. That is to say, if learners are provided with some tasks which are above or below their level, they will develop low interest for the activities. This implies the importance of providing 'reasonable balanced challenging tasks' (Prabhu, 1987).

To sum up, in order to help students to be good readers and develop their reading skills and habits, it seems essential to provide them with appropriate reading texts which fit their interests; otherwise, ill-fitting books can be as useless as ill-fitting shoes (Hildreth, 1961). It should also be noted that motivation and appropriateness are inseparable. Appropriateness plays a significant role in making someone develop a positive or negative attitude towards a given reading text. Motivation in reading is influenced by factors like level of language, concept difficulty, background knowledge, etc. Unless the reading texts are appropriate to the level of the students in terms of the above mentioned and similar factors, they won't have the appetite to read them.

### **2.6.7. Students' Attitude Towards Reading**

Attitude is the initial and main factor that comes first when we talk about reading preferences. When students have a positive attitude towards reading, it will be an easy job for preference creation. On the other hand, if students' attitude is affected negatively it will be a very hard work for them to identify their preference.

There are numbers of factors believed to have an influence on attitude toward reading which directly or indirectly affect students reading preference. The involvement of parents, cultural background, economy and the like may have an influence on students reading practice that has a direct relation with their attitude.

Elliott, (2006) has conducted a meta-analysis study on reading and found attitude of adolescents toward new information to be on a continuum with childhood, and varied progress exclusive of specific age group. Adolescents have a natural tendency to idealize and fantasize characters and personalities. Negative attitude creates a psychological distance between the reader and the subject matter (Dubin and Olshtain 1986). It is when one develops a negative attitude towards something that one is inclined to alienate oneself from the society in general.

Gebremedhin (2018), conducted his study on the impacts of family and student factors on student attitude towards reading in governmental and non-governmental high school of DebreBirhan city. According to his study, students negative and positive attitude towards reading was almost similar. Among the factors that students showed up as a reason were, place of coming, grade level, both mother and father education level and participation of the student in group discussion which actually showed statistically significant association with reading attitude of students. Whereas gender, school type and economic status of the family did not show up significant effect on reading attitude and preference. The general concept that students have about reading can be taken as both internal and external factor that hinders their reading attitude and preference.

Nadine (2005), directed a study on, the impact of student attitudes about reading on reading progress in New York elementary school and finalized that attitudes toward reading impacted the progress of students in his study. Therefore, students' attitude should be shaped positively by the responsible stakeholders.

Moreover, Tveit, Å. K., and Mangen, (2014) conducted an article on 143 students to investigate teenage readers' attitudes and reading preferences on different devices. According

to the researchers result, students answered concerning views on reading in the future reveal, in general, a relatively e-book-friendly attitude. Among participants most of the boys agreed to the statement “in the future, I think it will be more common to read on an e-book device than in a paper book”. On the other hand, girls were a little hesitant. At the end of this study gender difference on students’ attitude was observed. As the above study discussed, one way or the other students are motivated to read with any device that they are interested with. The basic thing is that student’s development on their reading.

Moreover, students reading attitude and preferences could be affected or shaped by their parent’s educational and professional background. Eleni, Anastasia and Klio, (year not stated) conducted a study on 405 students reading preference and attitude and analyzed that, the interaction between mothers’ occupation and education with children’s leisure reading was significant. Children whose mothers have a “high autonomy profession” and a university degree showed a higher preference for leisure reading. Moreover, the fathers’ education background as well as the fathers’ occupation proved to be significant: the higher the parents’ education and occupation, the greater the children’s reading preference. In relation to going to the lending library, their mothers’ occupational background as well as their fathers’ occupational background proved to be significant. Therefore, this study showed that, the higher the parents’ education and occupation, the more positive was the children’s attitudes to buying books. Besides, the students’ attitudes to buying books were influenced by their mothers’ occupational and educational background. Also, their fathers’ educational background proved to be significant: the higher the parents’ education and occupation, the more positive was the children’s attitudes to buying books.

It is obvious that attitude will not come all of a sudden, rather it is an outcome of many social and personal background interactions. According to the above study students reading materials preference and reading attitude was affected by their parent’s educational and professional background. Therefor this study will try to see if the above variables have a significant effect over students reading materials preferences in Ethiopian context.

#### **2.6.8. The Content and Format of the Reading Material**

The subject matter of the reading material, length, format and genre of the text can be mentioned as factors that affect students reading preferences. The subject matter and content of the reading materials has a great impact over motivation and for better engagement with the reading. As Picton, (2014) cited the conclusion reached by the OECD analysis of PISA

2009: “There has been considerable debate as to what type of reading may be most effective in fostering reading skills and improving reading performance. The results from PISA suggest that, although students who read fiction are more likely to achieve high scores, it is students who read a wide variety of material who perform particularly well in reading. Also, students who are extensively engaged in online reading activities, such as reading e-mails, chatting online, reading news online, using an online dictionary or encyclopedia, participating in online group discussions and searching for information online, are generally more proficient readers than students who do little online reading.”

Similarly, according to Alexander and Filler’s, (1976) study, the correlation between the students' attitudes toward specific content areas and their reading score in that specific content area was significant. They concluded that, the reading comprehension of an individual child as he/she reads is influenced to a degree by his attitude toward content type of material being read. Although this study was done some time ago, it is still believed that excitement and student interest do play an important role in the development of a positive attitude (Alexander and Filler, 1976; Laurice, 2004; Wang, 2000). Due to this the subject matter presented for students has to be given an attention for the content.

Format preference is also another preference that has to be seen when conducting a study on reading preference. Therefore, Mizrachi, Salaz, Kurbanoglu and Boustany, (2018) conducted a study on academic reading format preferences and behaviors among university students worldwide, surveying from 10,293 college and university students and found that majorities of university students surveyed prefer to read their academic materials in print format, and believe that they learn better and focus better on material presented in print.

The purpose and nature of a reading task, whether academic or otherwise; the length of the material; characteristics of the environment, such as costs and convenience; and to some extent the characteristics of a reader, such as academic seniority or presence of visual limitations; all interact together to influence a user’s preference for reading format.

Similarly, Aharony and Judit(2015) conducted an exploratory study on students' reading preferences from Bar-Ilan University encompassing 177 students in the information science department in Israel. Their findings showed that students prefer printed materials over electronic ones. They perceive the relative advantage of the electronic or print the quicker

adopters they will be and students that understand better printed materials prefer this kind of reading and vice versa. Lastly, they hypothesized that deep learners would like to use both printed and electronic materials to deepen their understanding. However, they found no correlation between learning strategies and reading preferences. The researchers therefore summed up, their study that students' preferences of printed materials.

In addition, Podolsky and Soiferman, (2014) also conducted a study on student academic reading preferences. This study found that despite the students having access to numerous electronic devices (e.g., iPads, smart phones, laptops) most of them prefer to read information from paper sources as opposed to online in academic contexts. The reasons cited for their preference for a paper copy was that it was easier to take notes, it leads to less eye strain and headaches, it was simply a habit that was hard to break, it was easier for spatial understanding, and there were less distractions when reading from a paper source. On the other hand, the reasons for choosing an electronic version was that, the document could be more easily stored and carried, electronic texts were more environmentally friendly, and the search function made it easier to locate information. Even though, McFall, (2005) proposed that one of the benefits of using electronic e-books was to make taking notes easier and more efficient; Podolsky and Soiferman has falsified that most the participants in their study said that, they took notes on a separate piece of paper when reading electronically which seems less efficient than using one of the software packages that are available.

One of the reasons that students choose printed materials than that of electronic is due to the physical contact culture with the materials and the note taking and highlighting processes. Just like the other previous researches, Podolsky and Soiferman has appeared that many students did not change their reading preference and continued to use traditional and familiar techniques while reading electronically. Students listed taking notes, underlining or highlighting, and writing notes in the margins. However, only few of the respondents were likely to use electronic features to highlight or take notes while reading electronically. One another interesting finding was that, when it comes to reading electronically, students were more likely to choose the strategy of “taking notes on a separate piece of paper” although this did not necessarily appear to be a primary strategy when reading paper documents. The findings of this study are similar to the findings from other studies on the use of online texts and the reasons why students have not embraced online texts in their courses (Howard, 2004; McFall, 2005; Vernon, 2006; Woody, Daniel and Baker, 2010). It appears that university

students used reading textbooks in a certain way and see no reason to change since what they have been doing has proven to be successful. They are also comfortable with the process of interacting with the physical text. Consequently, the participants in this study listed the factors that made reading online difficult for them and these reasons are similar to previously reported findings (McFall, 2005; Vernon, 2006). However, these concerns do not seem to be a factor when it comes to the personal use of electronic devices (Joliffe and Harl, 2008).

On the other hand, Cecilia (2015) conducted study on hospitality management students reading preference discovered different finding that, most of the students preferred online materials over print materials. This study also showed gender difference that, male students generally spend more time reading print and online news articles than female students, and this finding is significant at a 95% confidence level.

Similarly, Picton, (2015) conducted a study on the impact of ebooks on the reading motivation and reading skills of children and young People. Picton found that, almost all children said they had access to electronic devices with internet access at home. Most of them also responded that they are more motivated to read with electronic materials than in print. Even though most of the students prefer to read from screen, one third of them replied that they still enjoy reading in print. According to the study, the proportion of children who had read an ebook rose from with 21 per cent between 2010 and 2012.

#### **2.6.9. Assessment System and Performance**

Irshad and Parveen(2011), conducted their study on identifying reading preferences of secondary school students. In Pakistan, assessment system consists of paper pencil tests which compel students to study their textbooks for higher grades. Moreover, they are advised to do homework (course assignments) and prepare for the examinations. According to their result, school's students have to study different courses textbooks according to academic calendar. Furthermore, they have to go for home tuition and prepare for the annual and or final examination to get high marks. Irshad and Parveen also criticize the teaching learning system, in such circumstances students have less time for reading other than their textbooks or notes prepared for getting through the examination. Due to this, their reading and reading preferences is affected. Most of the respondents explained as, "We have to cover the courses and complete home work of almost all subjects. Therefore, it takes too much time to read a book other than a textbook or course book. Similarly, we have to go for home tuition and

prepare for getting through final examination thinking scarcely about extra reading novel, poetry, history, magazine and or newspaper. It limits their extensive reading (Todd, 2003).

If the assessment system has this influence over their reading, they may not become good readers and wish for worldly knowledge. At the same time, inadequate or less reading may lower the performance and grades of students in schools. The study conducted by Nielsen, (2005) argue that, an inadequate reading skill is one of the factors responsible for teens' poor performance.

Correspondingly, other factor like students' performance can also be the factor for their selection of books. Burgess (1985) cited in Irshad and Parveen (2011) found that young and adolescent students tend to select books according to their favorite authors. Appearance of the book-cover and title, page, illustrations, content of the first page, and its length has a significant effect on such students. However, Burgess (1985) linked these factors with lower achieving students and asserted that they preferred romantic, original, brave, funny, bold and adventurous characters. Subject matter of the book, its cover page and outlines apparently has significantly signify their choice of reading material. This might be due to those low achieving students does not want to be challenged on their reading and wish only for enjoyment.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This study is designed to study Samara university English major students' reading preference. In this section, the research design, sample and sampling technique, instrument, data collection procedure, and method of data analysis are discussed as follow.

### **3.1. Research Design**

Descriptive research method is used in this study. The study has also followed mixed research design using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The mixed nature enabled the researcher to get reliable and valid qualitative and quantitative data, by taking individual students as units of study on sample basis. The quantitative design captured measurable characteristics such as, how frequently students use measures to choose books of their preference, their materials preference, factors that hinder their preference and frequency of reading. The qualitative aspect has captured perceptions, suggestions and further elaborations.

To achieve its intended objectives, this study has designed two major tools to have a profound and thorough understanding of the research questions by combining both perspectives. Thus, questionnaire, and interview were used as the main data gathering tools. Seliger and Shahomy, (1989) believe that questionnaire is suitable to collect data on phenomena or behaviors which are not easily observed.

### **3.2. Samples and Sampling Techniques**

Due to the new curriculum which is implemented this year only 2<sup>nd</sup> year English major students and 3<sup>rd</sup> year English major students were selected purposively for the study, therefore, first year English major students were not included in this study. The students are divided only in to two clusters that is social science stream and natural science stream. There are no any major students attending as fresh university student. Therefore, second year- and third year students were **scheduled** for this research to study English major students reading preferences.

There were 72 second- and third-year students attending in Samara university in 2012 E.C academic calendar under English department. Among the 72 students 40 of them were second year English major students and the rest 32 were third year English major students. All these students were selected for this study with available sampling because the number is manageable.

### **3.3. Tools of Data collection**

For this study questionnaire and interview were used.

#### **3.3.1. Questionnaire**

Questionnaire (close ended and open ended) was used as the major data collection tool for the study. It was self-administered questionnaire. Before practicing the self-administered questionnaire for the target group, pilot study was conducted to keep the validity and reliability of the instrument. The pilot study was conducted at DebreBirehanuniversity on 20 second- and third-year students. Some changes were made after the pilot study **has** been conducted. The table become more clearer for the respondents and some open-ended questions were left out in order to reduce repetition.

The questionnaire was both close ended and open ended with two parts that included students' demographic information;gender, age, family status, and the like. Students' demographic information was not included to compare and see if there **were** a significance difference between age, gender, family background and the like on their reading preferences but just to see the information. The main part of the questionnaire showed students reading preference and interest, factors that hinders their reading preferences, frequency of reading nonacademic materials and the frequency of criteria they used to select books of their preferences.

The questionnaire was designed in the form of tables. There were four different tables that encompassed three different objectives. Students were directed to mark on the type of reading materials that they preferred to read. After they indicated their preferred materials, they also rated the frequency of time they read those materials. At the end of each table there were open-ended questions that were intended to reduce the gap of the close-ended questionnaire. These questions were included if there are unmentioned reading materials or factors in the table and or if students practiced different experiences, therefore, they were given a chance to minimize the gap.

#### **3.3.2. Interview**

The purpose of using interview was to verify whether or not some of the information obtained from the questionnaires was accurate. Therefore, it elicited more reliable information from the interviewee. The interview has helped the researcher to triangulate the

information that were found from the questionnaire. Triangulation of data permits the verification and validation of qualitative data (Khan, 1995) 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

A semi-structured interview **is** chosen due to the fact that the questions **are** prepared to get relatively relaxed freedom to ask, in case of need, supplement questions or at times the researcher omits some questions (Kothari, 2004). More importantly, a semi-structured interview is useful in descriptive studies because it is economical, providing a set of bases for generalization and requiring lesser interview skills and unstructured interview providing freedom (Kothari, 2004). Depending on the discussion some questions might be removed or added through interview. The interview with students was transcribed and analyzed qualitatively. Students were selected randomly with lottery method for the interview. The interview was conducted by an experienced and skilled teacher who is a friend of the researcher.

#### **3.4. Techniques of Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The gathered data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. **The data which were obtained through close-ended questionnaire from the respondents were analyzed quantitatively and presented and discussed in number and percentage in the form of table and thematically explained and described whereas the open-ended was transcribed thematically following the concept.** The researcher systematically worked through each transcription by assigning numbers and percentages to the problems within the findings. The findings in each data tool were categorized across similarities of topics thematically. Then, they were interpreted, described and narrated accordingly.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis and discussion part deeply encircled the information that were found from the close-ended and open-ended questionnaires. The analysis part will concentrate on analyzing students' response depending on the highest frequency and percentage.

The discussion on the other hand alsodiscussed the result incorporating with the previous studies and the present result. The researcher looked at how similar and different this study is with other findings. Before going to the analysis students' demographic information is presented in the form of tables.

Percentage	Gender		Age			Academic year		Economic status			Location/resides		
	Male	Female	18-20	21-23	24-26	Second	Third	High	Medium	Low	Urban	Sub-urban	Rural
%	32	40	18	50	4	40	32	2	56	14	32	20	20
	44.4	55.6	25	69.4	5.6	55.6	44.4	2.8	77.8	19.4	44.4	27.8	27.8
	100		100			100		100			100		

Students Demographic Information

Items	No formal education		Elementary		High school		diploma		Degree		Masters	
Mothers education level	24	33.3	12	16.7	14	19.4	2	2.8	18	25	2	2.8
Fathers education level	16	22.2	10	13.9	10	13.9	10	13.9	22	30.6	4	5.6
Percentage	100		100		100		100		100		100	

Students' Parents Educational Status

#### 4.1.English Major UniversityStudents’ Reading Materials Preferences.

Table 1:Students’ Reading Materials Preferences.

Item No	Items	Students Reading Materials Preferences				
		Yes	%	No	%	Percent
1	Handout	60	83.3	12	16.7	100%
2	Academic book	50	69.4	22	30.6	100%
3	Politics	50	69.4	22	30.6	100%
4	Reference	47	65.3	25	34.7	100%
5	Fiction	47	65.3	25	34.7	100%
6	Religious	46	63.9	26	36.1	100%
7	Exam questions	44	61.1	28	38.9	100%
8	Love story	43	59.7	29	40.3	100%
9	Historical	42	58.3	30	41.7	100%
10	Food recipe	42	58.3	30	41.7	100%
11	Essay	39	54.2	33	45.8	100%
12	Sport	38	52.8	34	47.2	100%
13	Note book	37	51.4	35	48.6	100%

Table (1) depicted that most (83%) of the students preferred to read handout. *Students from the interview also implied that, they give priority for they academic inputs.* Academic books and politics are the second highest frequently preferred material next to handout with (69.4%) each. Reference and fiction each are chosen by (65.3%) of students. Most of the students also preferred to read religious books with (63.9%). Exam questions are chosen by (61.1%) of students. Moreover, Students preferred love story with (59.7%). Historical reading materials are chosen by (58.3%) English major students. Similarly, (58.3%) of students selected food recipe. Essay is preferred by students with the percentage of (54.2%). Sport is also among the most preferred reading material that students gave their highest rate of frequency. It is chosen

by (52.8%) of them. The last but not the least reading materials that students preferred to read is note book with (51.4%).

#### 4.2. Students Non-Academic Reading Materials Frequency.

Table 2: The Frequency in Which Students' Read Non-Academic Materials.

Item No	Items	Frequencies of Students' Nonacademic Reading Materials Preferences										Percent
		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Usually		Always		
		Freq,	%	Freq,	%	Freq,	%	Freq,	%	Freq,	%	
1	Politics	11	15.3	9	12.5	10	13.9	34	47.2	8	11.1	100%
2	Fiction	16	22.2	22	36.6	14	19.4	10	13.9	10	13.9	100%
3	Poetry	6	8.3	28	38.9	22	30.6	6	8.3	10	13.9	100%
4	Newspaper	16	22.2	26	36.1	20	27.8	8	11.1	2	2.8	100%
5	Sport	4	5.6	18	25	6	8.3	30	41.7	14	19.4	100%
6	Magazine	20	27.8	22	30.6	14	19.4	10	13.9	6	8.3	100%
7	Religious	6	8.3	20	27.8	18	25	12	16.7	16	22.2	100%
8	Love story	5	6.9	10	13.9	22	30.6	29	40.3	6	8.3	100%
9	Psychology	24	33.3	14	19.4	16	22.2	8	11.1	10	13.9	100%
10	Historical	18	25	14	19.4	26	36.1	8	11.1	6	8.3	100%
11	Technological	16	22.2	20	27.8	14	19.4	10	13.9	12	16.7	100%
12	Biographical	14	19.4	14	19.4	20	27.8	16	22.2	8	11.1	100%
13	Traveling	22	30.6	14	19.4	14	19.4	16	22.2	6	8.3	100%
14	Food recipe	18	25	13	18.1	20	27.8	9	12.5	12	16.7	100%

Table (2) results indicated that, the highest number of students (47.2%) showed that they “usually” read politics followed by sport (41.7%) and love story (40.3%) respectively. Students highest “often” read frequency is historical with (36.1%), then biographical and food recipe (27.8%) each. Samara university English major students “sometimes” preferred to read literary materials and printed medias as follows, poetry (38.6%), fiction and newspaper (36.1%) each, magazine (30.6%) religion and technological (27.8%) each.

(27.8%) of the students “sometimes” read religious materials. Students “rarely” read psychological and traveling stories (33.3 and 30.6%) respectively.

#### 4.3. Measures That Students Took to Choose Books of Their Preferences.

Table 3: Students’ “External Measures” to Choose Reading Materials

Item No	Items	Frequencies of Students External Measure to choose Books of Their Preferences										Percent
		Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always		
		Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%	
1	Price	16	22.2	12	16.9	23	31.9	11	15.3	10	13.9	100%
2	Author	13	18.1	21	29.2	24	33.3	8	11.1	6	8.3	100%
3	Content	6	8.3	18	25	21	29.2	22	31.6	5	6.9	100%
4	Popularity	11	15.3	18	25	16	22.2	15	20.8	12	16.7	100%
5	Volume	6	8.3	13	18.1	14	19.4	33	45.8	6	8.3	100%
6	Title	2	2.8	21	29.2	23	31.9	18	25	8	11.1	100%
7	Year of publication	17	23.6	18	25	19	26.4	14	19.4	4	5.6	100%

Students may establish their own criteria to choose books of their interest. Among some of the measures volume by (45.8%) is the most repeated choice that students ranked “usually” to choose books of their preferences. Next to volume, students preferred content as their criteria in second place with (31.6%). The author of the materials is students thirdly preferred measure with (33.3%). Price and title (31.9%) are also students mostly preferred procedures to select books among other criteria. Year of publication is also that students ranked “sometimes” as a criterion with (26.4%). Popularity of the material is a criterion only for 25% of the students

Table 4: Students “Purposes” Preference to Choose Books of Their Preferences

Item No	Items	Frequencies to choose Books of Their Preferences according to purpose										percent
		Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always		
		Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%	
1	Hobby	16	22.2	16	22.2	18	25.0	12	16.7	10	13.9	100%
2	Pleasure	12	16.7	10	13.9	24	33.3	22	30.6	4	5.6	100%
3	Exam	8	11.1	4	5.6	14	19.4	22	30.6	24	33.3	100%
4	General knowledge	10	13.9	4	5.6	24	33.3	22	30.3	12	16.7	100%
5	Academic	10	13.9	6	8.3	12	16.7	30	41.7	14	19.4	100%
6	Leisure time	10	13.9	16	22.2	24	33.3	18	25.0	4	5.6	100%
7	Information	2	2.8	16	22.2	26	36.1	12	16.7	16	22.2	100%

Books can be read according to the reader’s intention for different purpose. Samara university English major students also ranked different reading purposes preferences. (33.3%) of the students “always” read for exam purpose. Academic purpose is the highly dominant percentage that students ranked “usually” with (41.7%). Next to their academic purpose, students read for the purpose of getting information with (36.1%). Furthermore, student’s preference reading for leisure time, pleasure and general knowledge is (33.3%) each. The last but not the least that students preferred to read is for hobby with (25%).

Table 5: Students' "Genre" Preference to Choose Books of Their Preferences.

Item No	Items	Frequencies of Students Genre for Preferring Books of Their Preferences										Percent
		Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Usually		Always		
		Freq,	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
1	Adventure	12	16.7	12	16.7	22	30.6	14	19.4	12	16.7	100%
2	Religious	4	5.6	10	13.9	28	38.9	14	19.4	16	22.2	100%
3	Comedy	8	11.1	14	19.4	30	41.7	8	11.1	10	13.9	100%
4	Horror	26	36.1	12	16.7	18	25.0	10	13.9	6	8.3	100%
5	Romance	10	13.9	10	13.9	18	25.0	18	25.0	16	22.2	100%
6	Academic	4	5.6	6	8.3	14	19.4	32	44.4	18	25.0	100%
7	Inspirational	6	8.3	6	8.3	20	27.8	18	25.0	22	30.6	100%
8	Nature	6	8.3	20	27.8	24	33.3	16	22.2	6	8.3	100%
9	Thriller	18	25.0	12	16.7	20	27.8	16	22.2	6	8.3	100%
10	Drama	10	13.9	14	19.4	12	16.7	20	27.8	16	22.2	100%

Genre preference of students to choose books of their interest are indicated in the above table (5). (30.6%) of students preferred "always" to read inspirational genres. (41.7%) of students prefer to read for academic purpose. Moreover, Drama with (27.8%) and romance with (25%) are chosen by students to be read "usually". Comedy is the other highly preferred genre with (41.7%) of percentage. They chose this genre to read "sometimes". Then, religious (38.9%) is the second highly preferred genre of reading material under "sometimes". Moreover, most of the students showed their "sometimes" genre preference for nature, adventure and thrillers, with (33.3, 30.6 and 27.8%) respectively. On the other-hand, (36.1%) of students "never" read horror genres.

4.4. Factors That Hinder Students Preference to Choose Books of Their Preferred Materials.

Table 6: Factors That Hamper Students' Reading Preferences

No	Items	Factors Hindering Students Reading Materials Preferences				
		No	%	Yes	%	Percent
1	Attitude	16	22.2	56	77.8	100%
2	Accessibility	16	22.2	56	77.8	100%
3	Personal Background	18	25	54	75	100%
4	Economy	18	25	54	75	100%
5	Availability	21	29.2	51	70.8	100%
6	Education level	22	30.6	50	69.4	100%
7	Price	22	30.6	50	69.4	100%
8	Purpose	24	33.3	48	66.7	100%
9	Language	25	34.7	47	65.3	100%
10	Culture	28	38.9	44	61.1	100%
11	Residence	28	38.9	44	61.1	100%
12	Knowledge	30	41.7	42	58.3	100%
13	Setting	30	41.7	42	58.3	100%

Different factors may hinder students reading preferences. The above-mentioned factors are the chosen ones among many. Depending on students' gender, culture, economy, attitude and knowledge background or parental situation and residences, even materials availability, accessibility, format, volume and the like may hamper students reading materials preferences. The factors are categorized under three phases according to their percentages.

According to some of the first factor's, attitude is the most chosen factor that hinders students reading materials preferences with (77.8%). Accessibility of reading materials is also among the major hindering factors that affect students reading materials preferences by (77.8%).

Students personal background and economy also affects their preferences with (75%) each. Availability of reading materials is hindering students reading preference by (70.8%).

The other factors that hinder students reading preferences in second stage are educational level and price. These two factors distress students with (69.4%) each. Purpose or the motives that students have for reading also hinders their preference by (66.7%). Additionally, language is also hampering students reading preferences with (65.3%). Culture and residence are hindering students reading preferences with (61.1%) each. On the third stage, knowledge and setting are hampering students' reading preference with (58.3%) each.

#### **4.5. Analysis of Interview**

The participants revealed interesting facts about reading facilities and their preferences, their problems, measures they take to choose books of their preferences.

During the interview the participants explained their reading interests and motives. There were different reasons which usually made university students read different books of their interests. Majority of the respondents from both academic years asserted that, *“We read to know. Books give us new knowledge and information about cultures and countries, people and places, innovations and inventions, politics and history, religion and spirituality, and fiction and realities about life. We read for pleasure and fun. We have aesthetic sense and read poetry and books on humor and comedy, adventure, love and romantic stories, and general knowledge.”*

After graduating, the university students are expected to assume the social responsibilities of an adult. Therefore, they seem to be entering into real life perceiving its facts and realities pleasures and pains. *They need to develop positive attitude and critical thinking for living a progressive and successful life. An obvious majority of the respondents stated, “Reading books on different genres promotes rationality in our thinking.*

They further asserted that, *“Reading a new book helps us enhance our vocabulary. We come to know the meaning of new words, phrases and phrasal verbs with context of their use. It gives direction to our thinking leading to actions and resulting in our accepted attitudes and behaviors.”* They also mentioned that, *“reading any materials will help us enhance academically that is way we spend much of our time reading academic genres.”* They also indicated the reason why they read literary materials saying, *“our motive to read literary materials is due to the fact that we are English major students we are expected to read many*

*literary materials because of the courses we are taking therefore, at the same time we develop our academic inputs.”* The students also mentioned some of the measures they take in order to choose book to read; among them they state that, *“we look at the price, content, author and genre of the book before we purchase the book.”*

Naturally human being seeks guidance to live a successful and productive life and historically has been following someone as ideal. There are different great leaders, thinkers and philosophers, reformers and scholars whom people idealize and love to follow. The respondents expressed their love for their ideals and they preferred books such great personalities. They were of the view, *“Books on heroes in history inspire us not only to set high aims but also to struggle for higher achievements in life. We idealize these personalities and learn how to follow them and spread their message/ideology and/or philosophy to help people get out of their miseries.”*

At Samara university, students have scarcity of reading facilities. Different factors seem to be responsible for such deficiency and create lot of problems for students. The students articulated a number of factors which hindered their reading preference. They have voiced that, *“We do not have varieties of reading materials. Most of the books available in the library are outdated and not as per our preferences therefore, we just mostly go for academic purpose reading. Because of this scarce availability of materials, we are somehow afraid of reading new materials in case of misunderstanding and missing the key point included in the books. Beside our attitude and lack of availability the cost and the languages of the books are also demotivating to buy and read in accordance with our purchasing ability and our language proficiency level.”*

Guidance is necessary for everyone even for university students. They need proper guidance in selecting books to read. Almost all of the respondents recorded their reservations by saying, *“habitually no one guides us what to read and why. Consequently, we read what we have or come across and think better for us. But sometimes our teachers after emphasizing on completion of course and assignments they suggest us some books to read in our spare time; but our parents expect high scores and always advise us to keep on preparing ourselves for the examinations banning on extra reading even a newspaper.”*

In short, the respondents appeared to be very keen on reading and they showed their reading preferences in almost all academic areas including politics, historical and religious books. They seemed to be assertive in describing their problems and factors which hinders on their

reading and reading preferences cost of books, covering syllabi and preparing for examinations etc.

#### **4.6. Discussion**

As table (1) result displayed that students' preference to read academic materials with high frequency is handout (83.3%) and academics (69.4%). Students look interested reading for education purpose. This finding is somehow close with what Anne found out in (2010) that is, students mostly read for school purposes, either prompted by the teacher or on one's own initiative. Similarly, Muhlise and Esin's (2009) finding is comparable with the present study too. They said that, students prefer reading on all topics mainly on academic issues. Such a result may emerge due to the fact that those students are motivated towards reading on any topic relevant to their fields. Therefore, this study indicates that students give priority for their academic inputs.

On the other side, S. Nagaraja and Jesudos (2016) finalized their study that is different from the current study's finding. They discoursed that, the most preferred type of books for reading is fiction followed by nonfiction and both types. But on this study academics are the most preferred reading materials.

Next to their academic choice, students preferred to read politics with (69.4%). Every social printed, electronic, media, broad casts and also every discussion at the resent time is becoming politics. It is now on its climax stage that each and every one of the people are keen to know more about the political happenings. This is what this finding is reviling. Selection of books for reading seem to be contextual associated with socio-cultural and geo-political condition (Ayyildiz, Bozkurt and Candli 2006). This statement goes with the present finding that students look interested due to the current situation of our country Ethiopia.

References and fictions are sharing the same percentage (65.3%) each. As the matter of fact, these students are language major students, they might be interested in reading literary books. This finding has similarity with the following finding. *As interviewee (05) replied that, she prefers to read fiction which has a romantic theme.* Since literature courses are included into the curriculum in those departments, the students like reading literary texts but mostly novel and short story Muhlise and Esin's (2009).

Religious books are preferred highly with (63.9%) of the respondents. Students' preference for spiritual in puts is motivating that they are more interest on what they are worshipping.

Irshad and Parveen, (2011) also revealed that students of Pakistan were more interested reading about religious materials. Students said that, “We share information and exchange books to read in our friends’ reading circles/club. We read books on Islam to learn its basic and fundamental principles, dos’ and don’ts, life and achievements of Muslim heroes. It instills us to go ahead and lead to live a civilized life of a true Muslim citizen.” Students involvement on religious materials are motivating specially if they are practical with what they get informed with.

Students are also interested reading exam questions with (61.1%). This result showed that, students by some means are situational readers. As Krapp, Hidi, Remiriger and wade (1992) states, situational interest is caused by situational factors such as the exam and test; a particular situation can influence situational interest and it is not lasting. If these students are focusing on their academic achievement only, they will lose the interest to read for entertainment. Similarly, Todd (2013) suggested that students focus on their academic reading will limit their extensive reading skill. Unless student develop general reading for personal development they might be among the low achievers at the end of the day. As Dereje cited Walls, (2007) students’ general achievement will depend on their ability to read. According to Walls students have to be engaged with different types of reading materials in order to develop their reading ability. If their ability to read is developed their overall achievement will be improved.

Love story, historical and food recipe shares (59.7, 58.3 and 58.3) percentages respectively. These data have close percentage with one another. Students may involve with reading these materials when they are free from academic issues and other nonacademic materials. Essay, sport and notebooks are preferred by (54.2, 52.8 and 51.4) percent of the students respectively. Students preferred to read their notebooks at last, therefore, it may show that how their lecture note taking strategy is poor or low.

#### ***4.6.2. How frequently do students read materials that are not related with their courses?***

Students nonacademic reading materials preferences somehow showed the context of our country’s present political situation. (47.2%) of the students preferred to read political reading materials “usually” and (36.1%) of them also preferred historical reading materials. These students’ preferences may indicate that students now a day are becoming more interested with their countrys’ present happening. Therefore, their selection of books for reading to learn seems to be contextual associated with socio-cultural and geo-political

conditions (Ayyıldız, Bozkurt, and Canlı 2006). The current situation of the country will make readers to choose some kind of specific reading materials. For example, Sila and Özgür, (2012) discuss the context of socio-cultural and geo-political circumstances of Pakistanis. According to their justifications, all age groups in Pakistan appeared to be interested in reading books on former president of Iraq Saddam Hussain during America's attack on Iraq in 1990s is a very good example for Geo-political reading preference. Moreover, selection of books for reading seem to be contextual that is associated with socio cultural and geo political conditions (Ayyidiz, bozkurtand and Candli, 2006).

According to, Loan and Shah, (2017) research finding fiction is the most preferred type of literature, followed by non-fiction; the result of this study differs from their finding. Students showed their highest frequency of preference for nonfiction. Fiction and poetry are preferred by (36.1%) and (38.9%) of students respectively. Whereas, nonfiction such as politics and sport are highly preferred by (47.2%) and (41.7%) of students. May be, this result showed up this way it is because of the current situation of our country is mostly on some kind of political transition and it is provoking every body's interest including university students.

Students of English department also "sometimes" and "usually" like to read literary materials such as; poetry, fiction and love story with (38.9%, 36.6%, and 30.6%) percent of frequency. According to, Muhlise and Esin, (2009) conclusion, since literature courses are included into the curriculum in those departments, the students like reading literary texts but mostly novel and short story. Therefore, the department that students are engaged in will also shape their reading materials preferences.

Students nonacademic materials preferences for psychology and traveling are "rarely" with (33.3% and 30.6%) respectively. Students low reading preference for travelling stories may be due to we Ethiopians have lack of experience with vacation and picnic. On the other hand, students also preferred to read newspaper and magazine with (36.1% and 30.6%) respectively. According to S, Nagaraja and Jesudoss, (2016) study secondary school students prefer to read books, followed by Newspaper and magazines. This study also has similarity with S, Nagaraja and Jesudoss's findings because these students gave priority for books and then printed medias. As the result of this study revealed students are less engaged with printed medias but, Muhlise and Esin's, (2009) finding is different from the present study, they found out that, a large part of the students are newspaper readers. This difference may be because of newspapers that are published there may be inspiring students' interest or students

have had a very good culture on reading newspaper from their family background. Students also preferred to read “often” food recipe with (27.8 %). This result may be due to the effect of gender but, because of the purpose of this study is not to see the effect of gender over reading preference further study can be conducted on this specific area.

- **4.6.3. Students way of choosing books of their preference?**

Students may establish their own measure, purpose and genre to select books of their preference among some of the mechanisms some of them are discussed below.

*External standard:* volume, content and title are students major criterial to select books of their preference with (45.8%, 31.9% and 31.9%) respectively. Burges (1985), suggested that selecting books according to its cover, first page, title, length/volume has a significant effect on students. It is due to students are mostly choosing the materials with external measures not with the concrete idea that the book includes. The students also select books of their preference according to their favorite author with (33.3%). Irshad and Parveen (2011), finalized that students tend to select books according to their favorite author. The same is true here with this research finding. Students sometimes use the author’s name in order to choose books to read. The other criteria that students highly ranked is the price of the reading materials. They ranked (31.9%) for the price that the material cost. According to the previous table (6), economy is the highest factor that hinders students reading materials preference with (38.9%). Therefore, they also established as criteria again with (31.9%) this indicates that students face a challenge on purchasing books to read. As Rossana quoted Worthe (2009) learners who cannot afford to buy the preferred materials are more dependent on school sources and thus their choices are more limited. Due to this, students reading practice will be affected indirectly. Therefore, they may lose the habit or reading unconditionally. Children from lower socio-economic background read less for enjoyment than children from more privileged social class (Clark and Akerman, 2006). Improving each student’s economic status could be impossible but it is possible to minimize the price of the reading materials in order to develop students reading ability. Popularity of books is the other standard that students established in order to choose books among others. The popularity of the material “sometimes” is a measure for them with 22.2%. The fame that the book has is a criterion for the students but the percentage is not that much high to be afraid of being depend with the recognition that the material has. Similarly, Muhlise and Esin (2009) finding is parallel with the present study; they buy books and do not have a general tendency for reading only best

sellers. The time that the book is published is “rarely” students’ standards with (26.4%). This result may indicate that students do not care about the year of publication but the content that the material included.

*Purpose:* the other measure used to study students reading material preferences is the purpose that the students are engaged in. Readers have many possibilities to read different reading materials among some of them, students of Samara university have ranked academic and exam purpose with a very high range of frequency that is (41.7% and 33.3%) each. Even though, there are many purposes to read, these students gave priority for their educational inputs. This study’s finding has similarity with Irshad and Parveen (2011) findings. They state that majority of the students read for academic purpose, specially focusing on the exam result, assignment, homework and the like. It is positive that students give priority for their educational value but they are also expected to read for pleasure and information. According to, the definition of reading Nation, (2005) described reading as a foundation of wisdom and pleasure through academic skill. Moreover, students also ranked for pleasure, general knowledge and leisure reading (33.3%) each and information material (36.1%). They ranked these all purposes that they read “sometimes” which means, they engage themselves to read these materials only when they get free time. A reader can merely read for having pleasure, while another can read for information (Ögeyik 2008). Still, it is encouraging that student’s preference for their academic empowerment but, they may miss some skill due lack of extensive reading. Todd, (2013) students focus on their academic [read] will limit their extensive reading skills. Due to this, students reading hobby has to be developed from 22.2% to some better range.

*Genre:* selecting books with genre is the third motive that is expected to look at students reading preferences. There were ten genres that were given for students to choose among them. Still academic genre is the highest frequency that students preferred with (44.4%). They “usually” read academic genres. If students preferred academic reading materials this much, there might be a shortage of nonacademic reading materials or students are more-keen for their academic value. On the other hand, students preferred to read comedy and romance genre with (41.7% and 25.4%) respectively. They “often” read this genre next to their academic preferences. This study has possibilities to match with greenlaw and wielan (1979), they found that all individual is likely to have the sense of humor and wittiness. The outcome or the finding of this study differ from S. Nagaraja and Jesudoss (2016) investigation. Their finding states that, among the types of fictions students prefer to read the adventure stories

and horror stories followed by humor/comedy and crime-detective stories. But here it is vis versa. Students ranked “never” 36.1% for horror, “sometimes” (27.8%) for thriller genres and adventure 30.6%. This difference occurred may be due to contextual differences.

#### ***4.6.4. Factors that Hinder Students Reading Preferences***

Students reading preference hinderances could be many according to different circumstances and contexts. Here in this study some that are expected to be common for most of the students are mentioned and discussed. Among some of the factors students frequently ranked the following. Attitude and accessibility (77.8%) each ranked the highest percentage hindering students’ preferences. Individual interest subsumes the readers preference for certain text, topics, or subject matter and this interest exist before reading a particular text (Hidi 1990 and Schiefele 1992). In addition, Baker and Wigfield (1999), Gutheri et.al (2000) and Gamberl, (1996) discussed attitude as an important factor for promoting reading habit, reading preference and the nature of learners reading. Similarly, Fayaz and Refhat (2017), declared that, almost one-third of students do not have positive attitudes towards reading which is similar with the presents study’s finding. On the other hand, the finding of this study differs from what Muhlise and Esin’s (2009) found out. Their study revealed that, the students’ general attitudes towards reading activity displayed that, most of the students like reading and consider it as an indispensable part of life. But on this study attitude is one of the major hindering factors for students reading materials preferences.

Students also discussed the effect of attitude in the open-ended questionnaire too. They discoursed that, they are afraid of in case of miss understanding the material and therefore, they prefer not to be engaged in reading at all. It is obvious that if students are hampered with negative attitude it may take longer time to overcome this problem. It is true that ... before any one build a road, cross a river, or climb a mountain; he/she must have the motivation (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Similarly, Hidi, (1999) and Schiefele (1992) discussed that, individual interest subsumes the readers preference for certain text’s topic or subject matter; this exists before reading a particular text. It is better if students’ attitude and preference is shaped by their good will and the responsible stakeholders.

On the other hand, as Rosana, (2006) suggested that the availability of reading materials will limit students’ choice and awareness of different types of books. In this study students are also hampered by the availability by 70.8%. It is common that, if schools and public libraries are not full of reading materials students’ choice ability will be limited at the same time. This

finding goes with Irshad and Parveen (2011) findings they discussed that, in Pakistan secondary schools have scarce reading facilities. They also state that; different factors seem to be responsible for such deficiency and create lot of problems for students.

Students personal background and economic level hampers students' preference with (75%) each. Scholars agreed how low socio-economic background affect reading preferences (Clarck ,Akerman and Rossan 2006). In addition, environmental and cultural factors such as socio-economic and family support also appear to influence reading preferences (Below et.al 2010). Similarly, environmental and cultural factors such as family support and socio-economic status has appeared to influence students reading preferences (Below et.al 2010). On the other hand, Gebremedhin (2018) finalized his study that, economic status did not show up any significance difference on students reading preferences. This finding differ from other studies may be due to the target groups were private school students.

Results from the open-ended questionnaire indicated that, how family and friends delay their reading practice. They acknowledged that, some work load at home delayed them to read "often". Aabdalla, (2016) finding goes with the current study outcome, home factors include parents, siblings, friends, reading materials, and exposure to language hampers student reading practice. Although, these factors have no direct relation with students reading preferences they will actually have a contribution. If students do not keep reading what they have started they may lose concentration and cannot feel the test that that material has, therefore, if there is interruption, they do not recognize what the material incorporates.

Personal background also includes the role of teachers and parents too. This result is somehow similar with what Hussain and Munish recommended at the end of their work (2011). They thought that, according to their level students need guidance over their reading preferences both from parents and teachers.

Students education level showed an effect over students reading preference with 69.4%. this finding has similarity with Gebremedhin (2018). According to his study, place of coming/residence, grade level, family status showed a significant difference over students reading preferences. Additionally, Ayyildiz et.al (2006) commented that, some common factor such as individual interest, culture, gender, and occupation all determine [readers] preference. Similarly, on this study majority of the students agreed that culture and residence hinder their reading preferences with 61.1% each.

In addition, language is also hampering students reading preferences with 65.3%. Students revealed that how language complexity is hindering their reading preference and motivation. Some has mentioned that even if they want to read language complexity is killing their reading practice. Rossana (2006), recommended that students read for language development. The same is true here, if what students are reading is not helping them for betterment, they will lose concentration.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This chapter is important to summarize the procedures followed and instruments used to conduct the survey study and then to conclude the results found in brief. It also deals with what should be done and the ways followed to overcome the problems indicated.

### **5.1. Summary**

This study was conducted at Samara university on second and third year English major students. The study included 32 male and 40 females in total 72 students from second and third academic years. The study incorporates specific and major objectives to achieve; these are: the types of materials that students prefer to read, the frequency of standards that students use to choose books of their preferences, the frequency of time that students read other than their academic materials and the hampering factors that hinder students reading preference. To come up with these objectives the researcher used both open ended and close ended questionnaire followed by interview.

Frequency and percentage of the respondents are used for analysis. The highest frequency that was scored was considered to be the determining response among others.

The finding of this study finalized that most of the students give priority for their academic reading materials. Politics and sport are the highly ranked reading materials between the nonacademic materials. Among the literary materials students “sometimes” and “usually” preferred to read fiction, poetry, love story and food recipe. Due to their economic level, students are mostly hampered by the price of the reading materials. Language, attitude, personal background, setting, and the like are also the hindering factors for students reading preferences. Students also ranked some kind of motives to choose some reading materials. Price, volume, title, content, exam, academic purpose, general knowledge, pleasure, academic genre, romance, comedy drama and the like are amongst the highly ranked external standard, purpose and genre that students established to choose books of their preferences.

### **5.2. Conclusion**

Reading is inseparably linked to learning and learning leads to an overall mental, professional, and human development. Reading not only gives people new ideas, information, and insights, it also helps them to become more complete in every aspect.

This study finally concluded that, majority of the students preferred mostly to read academic materials such as handout, academic books, and also non academics like: politics, history, sport, fiction, poetry, magazine, newspaper, love story and food recipe. They preferred to read these materials “sometimes” and “usually”. Students “rarely” read traveling and psychological reading materials.

Students has ranked different measures to select books among others. Among these measures criteria for the materials, purpose for the motives, and genre for grouping that materials are some preferred measures. From these procedures, content, volume, price, title and popularity of the reading material are among the criteria that student ranked highly between others. Exam, academic, general knowledge, leisure and pleasure reading are measures set by students as the purpose of reading. The last but not the least measures for reading preferences were the genre of the materials. Academic, romantic, poetry, religious, adventure and drama are the most preferred reading genres that students ranked highly.

The factors that hinders students reading preference are also discussed on the above chapter. Some of the major factor that hinder students reading preferences are availability, attitude, price, purpose, language, setting, accessibility, personal back ground, education level and economy. According to this study all the above-mentioned factors are the major delaying factors for students reading materials preferences.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

Improving the reading preference of the students and turning them into lifelong readers is quite important for building a knowledgeable society. Reading is essential because it equips people with necessary knowledge and understanding. not only for building their own life but also for contributing positively in the socio-economic development of the nation. Based on the findings of this survey study, the following recommendations are made with a view to improving the reading preference of the younger generation.

- As majority of the students prefer to read academic materials. It will be more encouraging if students are recommended for further reading by their teacher and parents for better competitiveness.
- As per most of the students mentioned economy or price, availability of the reading materials as major hindering factor, it will be agreeable if school and public libraries have abundant reading materials that could be available and accessible for the students to read.

- If book publishers', teachers, school administrators and parents all work together the researcher is hopeful that language, setting, attitude and the like problems will be resolved with in short period of time.
- Lastly this study incorporates only small number of students reading preferences, therefore, it cannot represent larger numbers due to this, it will be much better if further studies are conducted with larger number on; the impact of students reading preference toward their achievement, the impact of gender difference towards reading preference, and also students format (digital or print) reading materials preferences.

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## **Appendix I**

Interview questions for students

1. What type of reading materials do you prefer to read?
2. Why do you read materials other than your academic genre?
3. How did those factors hinder your reading materials preferences?

## Appendix II

መምህር ራስ ሽንገል ተዋውቂልኝ

ተማሪ: ስሜሞናሊዛክብርሃይባላል።

መምህር:- እሺአመሰግናለሁ። አጠቃላይንባብንመሠረትያደረጉሦስትጥያቄዎችአሉኝ።  
የመጀመሪያውጥያቄዬየንባብምርጫሽወይም /Reading Preferences/ሽ  
ምንይመስላል?የሚለውንነገርትነግሪኛለሽ።

ብዙዓይነትየእውቀትዘርፎችአሉታሪክአለLiteratureአለሃይማኖት፣ ፓለቲካአለ....  
ብዙየእውቀትዘርፎችአሉላንቺደስየሚልስታነቢደስየሚልሽወይምደግሞአሪፍነውብለሽየምታስ  
ቢውየትኛውእንደሆነንገሪኛ።

ተማሪ:- እሺ። በመጀመሪያactually  
የሰውልጅሲያነብበሀይወቱብዙነገሮችንእያዳበረነውየሚሄደውእንዲሁምደሞበሀይወቱማወቅያለበ  
ትንገሮችያውቃል። እኔደሞማንበብከምወዳቸውነገሮችውስጥromance የሆነነገርይስበኛል።  
ለምሳሌየፍቅርመፅሀፎች፣ የሀይማኖትመፅሀፍቶችእናታሪኮችአሉ።

መምህር:- መንፈሳዊመፅሀፍት?

ተማሪ:- አዎእነሱእነሱደስይሉኛል።

መምህር:-romance ስትይfiction ማለትነው?

ተማሪ:- አዎ

መምህር:-እሺ። እንድታነቢየሚያደርግሽmotivate  
የሚያደርግሽወይምወደንባብየሚገፋፋሽነገርምንድነው?

ተማሪ:- እ.አ.ምአንደኛማለትጊዜየንአሳልፍበታለሁ።  
ሲቀጥልደሞአሁንደሞየሀይማኖትመፅሀፍት....

መምህር:-አዎ .... እንድታነቢየሚያደርግሽነገር

ተማሪ:- አዎየሚያደርግኝአንደኛሀይማኖትማወቅሁላችንምግድነው።  
ያለሀይማኖትአልተፈጠርንም። ሁላችንምየየራሳችንሀይማኖትአለን።  
ያንንሀይማኖትማዳበርአለብን።  
መፅሀፍትበማንበብስለሀይማኖታችንበጣምበጥልቀትማንበብስላለብንማለትነው።  
እኔደሞየየራሴንሀይማኖትማወቅስለምፈልገዋለሁmore  
የሀይማኖትመፅሀፍቶችንinspire ያደርጉኛል።

መምህር:- ስለዚህfiction እናመንፈሳዊመፅሀፎች

ተማሪ: አዎ

መምህር:- በጣም ሀሪፍ። Library የሞት ጠቃሚ ከሆነ ደግሞ የ Library አጠቃቀም ሽምን እንደሚመስል አበር አድርገሽት ነገሪኛለሽ።

ተማሪ:- library እ.ኤ.አ. እጠቀማለሁኝ።

መምህር:- ትጠቀሚያለሽ!!

ተማሪ: አዎ! ከትምህርት ሰዓት በኋላ ማለት ነው። ለምሳሌ አሁን assignment ሊሰጥህ ይችላል library ያሉ መጻሕፍቶች አሉ እነሱን በመጠቀም እሰራለሁኝ..... እና ደግሞ library ስገባ ስጠቀም ህጎች አሉት library የራሱ የሆኑ ህጎች አሉ እነዚህን ህጎች አክብራ የምፈልገው ንገር እክሰለ። more library ጋር የሚገኙ መጻሕፍቶች በጣም ጠቃሚ ናቸው። ማለት ቤታችን የማናገኛቸውን መጻሕፍቶች ሊሆኑ ይችላሉ ወይም ደግሞ ለመግዛት ውድ የሚሆን ብንመጻሕፍቶች ይኖራሉ።

መምህር:- ብዙ ሰዓት ትጠቀሚያለሽ?

ተማሪ:- ብዙ ሰዓት አይደለም ከ.... እስከ ካፌ ሰዓት ድረስ እጠቀማለሁ።

መምህር:- ok! በጣም አመሠግናለሁ እዚህ ድረስ መጥተሽ ሀሳብሽን ከሌሎች ስለሌላሽ።

ተማሪ:- እኔም አመሰግናለሁ።

### Appendix III

T: please introduce yourself.

S: Thank you. My name is Mona Lisa Abreha.

T: Generally, I have three questions that bases reading. My first question is; what does your reading preference look like? I mean; there are many knowledge pillars like religion, history literature, politics that makes you feel good and that you believe are great. Please tell me.

S: First of all, when someone reads, he/she develops many knowledges and knows what he/she supposed to know.in life time. I prefer to read romantic materials mostly about love religious an history.

T: Do you mean spiritual?

S: Yeah! Like that.

T: When you say romantic do you mean fiction?

S: Yeah!

T: What motivates you to read? or what is your push factor to read?

S: The first thing is to spend my time. I mean reading guides you to the right way therefore I prefer to read and it also keep you not to go unwanted places and for example religious materials

T: Oh... which makes you read!

S: Yeah, that makes me read. Knowing religion is mandatory. We are not created with out a religion we have to know more about our religion through reading materials. Also, we have to know deeply more about our religion. I also want to know more about the religion that I am worshipping.

T: Therefore, fiction and religious materials are your preferences and choices to read?

S: yeah.

T: Very well. Ok now if you read in the library please tell me your experience shortly.

S: I use the library after class. For example, if I have an assignment I use the available materials in the library. The library has its own regulations and that I respect and read attentively. Books that are available in the library are very useful some of them are expensive to purchase therefore books in the library are helpful.

T: Do you use the library for longer time?

S: No, I do not read for longer time but till café time.

T: Thank you very much for giving me this interview.

S: OK, thank you.