

Leisure Reading And Readership Of Books: With Reference To Some Literate Groups In Bahir Dar*

Birhanu Teferra

I. Introduction: Reading and Reading Research

Interest in reading research is attributed to the growth of the mass reading public in Europe and America of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Reading research in Ethiopia and in some other not highly literate societies is largely a recent phenomenon. Some studies on books, book development or reading promotions have been conducted in some African countries. These are largely documented in the form of reports initiated, or possibly commissioned, by UNESCO. Strictly speaking, these reports are not on reading interests, but rather focus on the state of books and the publishing industries. Although these reports are somewhat old, they may shed some light on the potentials and limitations of indigenous book production and supply. Research on reading has benefits, in that it can help policy makers, educators, librarians, publishers, authors, mass communication experts, and the community at large in facilitating the production, distribution and utilization of knowledge and provision of better services to the public.

Reading serves a variety of purposes, but it is, above all, beneficial to literacy in general. The aim of reading may be to seek information that facilitates performance of some functions, for self-improvement with no particular utility in immediate sight, or for recreation. But the latter two aims - self-improvement

* A slightly related version of this paper was presented at an interdisciplinary seminar organized by the IES from 6-7 June 1998, in Nazareth, Ethiopia.

and recreation - can be inter-related, for some people may read for the explicit intent of recreation while some benefits from such reading experience may be utilized for self-improvement. Generally though, reading has different but apparent functions for different people.

Commonly leisure** time is occupied in different ways, including reading which takes up a significant portion of one's free time. On a different plane, though, a pedantic may have some difficulty associating reading with leisure, while for others the idea of leisure has nothing whatsoever to do with reading.

Apparent as it is, professional reading is different from leisure reading or reading for relaxation. And not all readers all the time have educational or informational endeavors. Studies indicate that a significant proportion of a literate society has readers essentially interested in recreational reading. For some people, evening- and weekend-reading of books which have nothing at all to do with their work is a favorite pastime.

One of the most read format of printed matters is the book. According to August Heckscher, a noted scholar and educator who sees a book as a "creation" that is "designed to have a life beyond the season or year in which it is published" and that has "potential audience that is wider than any particular group in society," reading can be a habit and, in like manner is thus long-lasting and gripping like addiction (Heckscher, 1968, pp.65-66).

Works of fiction imaginatively deal with personal problems of characters in special social situations; they are considered as commentaries on contemporary or historical society. Peter F. Mann, who has for a long time studied readership in Britain and is a keen observer of the European scene, notes that, although the

** "Leisure is defined as the use of time which is free of obligations, time in which a person can choose what to do." It is the time in which an individual voluntarily decides to engage in any activity, from innumerable possibilities, to develop physical or mental skills.

story may be fiction, "the problems, the emotions, the values and the relationships are derived from reality and are used deliberately to comment on that reality." The reading of fiction, besides being educational in the very broadest sense, it is assumed, helps "extend understanding of human life and its problems." On the other hand it gives pleasure and satisfaction of an intrinsic nature, and can also be "status conferring to let it be known in social conversation that one has read a certain popular or noted work" (Mann, 1982). 'Literary novels' or serious works of fiction are believed by many to be nourishing to the mind, beside the relaxation one gets from them. Furthermore, the 'literary novels', especially the heavily psychological literary novels, seem to bestow a high status on their reader for they are reviewed in newspapers and journals by literary critics and discussed amongst the readers and are expected to have some effect upon the readers' ways of thinking. Thus serious works of imagination are believed 'to contribute to thought and culture'. On the other hand, 'light fiction' is generally meant for entertainment and little else, and for some it is a way of 'getting away' from the people around them, creating 'psychological privacy'. Some even claim, specially about Romantic fiction, that it is a 'form of escape from the world of reality', hence the escape into the world of imagination. On the other hand, Steinberg (1972) contends that "escapist reading is only marginal," emphasizing that what he refers to as 'modern readers' actually "do not read to escape from the world, but to live in it better."

Leisure reading has been of interest to researchers since the early part of this century. The methods of investigation employed to identify reading interest included: personal interview; written logs, diaries and inventories; records of library books chosen; children's recollections over longer time periods, and parents' recollections; asking for favorite books, magazines, authors, etc.; asking for reasons for choices; and, asking for most interesting episodes or characters. Some of the methods required, keeping diary, recording use of time for a specified amount of time (Asheim, 1968; Steinberg, 1972; Waples, cited in Robinson and Weintraub, 1973; Chandler, 1973; Mann, 1982, 1991;

Menhert, 1983; Dixon, 1986; Lau and Chueng, 1988; Nelson, 1989; Guthrie and Greaney, 1991).

The methods of research on reading interests benefited from the various academic disciplines and professions that have been studying reading interests and habits from different perspectives - sociology, psychology, librarianship, education, language and communication studies. Some of the findings of these studies have shed light on the reading interests, the social behavior of the readers, the amount of reading done, the contents of the materials read, the production, distribution and utilization of books, the methods of obtaining materials, and the relationships among some of these factors.

Reading has been conceptualized as a literacy activity from the early decades of this century when reading began to be studied as a literacy activity; so has leisure reading that has also been an object of research. Leisure reading, like 'occupational reading' has established itself as a distinct literacy activity.

The theoretical frame for leisure reading as a distinct literacy activity was first clearly enunciated by Guthrie and Greaney (1991) who state that different social contexts give rise to qualitatively different literacy activities. In the distinct "situation leads to the development of a purpose for reading that "this purpose or goal dictates a selection of content and subject matter.

Accordingly, they identify three types of situations; namely, occupational, and community. Leisure, which is the concern of this study, has been dealt with at some length here; the other two, occupational and community, will only be briefly described. Occupational reading involves reading at work, and is usually "embedded within the structure of most occupations." On the other hand, community literacy or reading refers to reading that "is associated with participation in neighborhood activities and in government, church, and social organizations. Reading may take place outside the site of the organization . . ." This reading activity is distinguished from leisure reading "because it is generated by a specific organization of interest to

the reader and is likely to implicate relationships and obligations with regard to the organization," while it is distinguished from the occupational "in the obvious sense that it does not entail economic benefits as a primary consequence of reading activity" (Guthrie and Greaney, 1991).

Research indicates that essentially "Adult literacy activity is characterized by the (a) time spent, or volume; (b) content, or subject matter; (c) form, or genre; (d) use, or function; and (e) situation, or social context." (Guthrie and Greaney, 1991). Many studies on leisure reading have taken into account a combination of these factors as their focus (for example, McElroy, 1968; Kelly 1977; Mann, 1982, 1991; Menhert, 1983; Kirsch and Guthrie 1984).

Studies of the purposes for leisure reading indicate that the predominant purposes for leisure reading were relaxation, keeping abreast and knowledge acquisition, and the main purpose of reading fiction was found to be relaxation (McElroy, 1968; Kelly 1977; Mann, 1982, 1991; Menhert, 1983; Kirsch and Guthrie 1984; Delin. 1995).

The various surveys cited by Mann (1982, 1991) are of particular relevance to the current study in terms of the aspects of reading activity investigated, such as situation, form or genre, function or purpose, sources, buying habits and favorite titles and/or authors.

What people read, why people read, and the effects of reading are conceptualized in a social context and, hence, their investigation calls for social surveys targeting socioeconomic, literary, and psychological aspects of reading. In line with this some large scale surveys of reading in Europe, especially in the UK, have been conducted for some time. Mann cites the report of the General Household Survey [of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, "the government's own social survey organization"] of 1987, which found that 60% of the respondents aged 16 and over had read books, showing slight increase over the 1977 rate of 54%. The same survey, of 1987 revealed that 80% of professionals read books. Similarly, the Euromonitor

Book Readership Survey, a regular national survey of book reading which covers all the population aged 16 and over and with a sample of 2000 people from Britain, showed that 45% were reading books at the time of the survey, in 1988. According to this survey, more than two thirds, or 69%, of books read in 1988 were fiction. With regard to sources of books, the survey indicated that 38% of sampled population bought books, 33% borrowed from libraries, 17% borrowed from acquaintances or received them through gift. Results of the MORI poll, a market research firm, also concur with these findings (Mann, 1991).

The conclusion drawn from these surveys must be that reading fiction, as well as leisure reading, is significant. Besides, the regular social survey that took a national (UK) sample of 2000 men and women over the age of 16 was used as an indicator (national picture) of book reading. Accordingly, data from a sample of 215 in a town of about 50,000 like Bahir Dar seems representative enough.

Ethiopia: literacy and literacy background

Of the many Ethiopian languages, Geez, Amharic and Tigrinya are the only languages (besides Arabic) which have existed in written form in Africa for a period going back many hundreds of years (Conacher, J.R.H., 1970). The earliest translation of the Bible into Geez was before the 7th century (Ullendorff, 1965). Subsequently many scriptural manuscripts were produced in Geez. And when Amharic evolved as the 'language of the court', scriptures, and, later, secular themes, began to be produced in Amharic in the 14th century (Ullendorff, 1965, p.123). The translated materials were books of religious and secular themes produced to reach 'ordinary Ethiopians' in their language of everyday use.

The era of machine printing having been ushered in Europe, these Ethiopian languages also saw the light of day. Though the language was not indigenous to Europe, printing of Geez language religious texts and also of Geez and

Amharic dictionaries and grammars had their beginnings in the 16th century in Europe (Ullendorff, 1965, p.9-11). In addition to Geez, Amharic and Tigrinya languages, it has been recorded that religious texts and other pieces were printed in about ten other Ethiopian languages (Conacher, p.53).

Printing was essentially and exclusively carried out outside Ethiopia. Thus printing was rather disjointed and also insignificant in terms of permeating the local written culture and holding sway of the volume of production of literature.

Until the latter part of the 19th century the body of Ethiopian literature, both original and in translation, was mainly produced under the auspices of the Church, and the producers alighted from church schools in which a plethora of subjects were treated and enunciated. A perusal of the documents on the historical development of Ethiopian literature indicates that law, poetry, grammar, history, astronomy, philosophy, medicine, etc., were the realms of the clergy and the responsibilities of the Church. Hence, the Church was considered as the 'store house of knowledge' and the "nerve center of knowledge" (Amsalu Aklilu, 1960 E.C.). This fact was not an unusual phenomenon or unique to Ethiopia, for the Church has been not only the precursor but also the purveyor and promoter of education throughout the Middle Ages in Europe.

The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had been marked by the introduction of some modern developments, such as the establishment of printing presses, launching of creative writing (novels and plays), and publication of newspapers at different times between 1863 and 1906 (Yonas Admassu, *et al.*, 1966 E.C.; Conacher; Amsalu Aklilu, 1960 E.C.). These were followed by the opening of modern formal education schools, though, of course, Church and Koranic schools existed for hundreds of years prior to that.

With the relative increase of publications, the need for a law regulating publishing of books and periodicals was felt and thus, in 1934, a law with a

regulatory and censorial overtone was promulgated (Mahiteme-Selassie Welde-Mesqel, 1942 E.C., pp. 698-703). Regulatory it was, but by no means censorial to the Ethiopia of that time, for in Europe and the USA it was common for many a work of fiction was to be banned at the time.

In terms of volume, however, books began to be published in large quantity only since 1940s. Amharic was the language in which almost all works of fiction were produced.

Readership and literary appreciation can be boosted by the availability of incentives for writers. Beside the benefits of securing readership for their books, other incentives such as receiving awards, literary prizes, national or international recognition of one form or another encouraged writers to keep on producing. One learned society of significance which promoted literary and other literate endeavors was the Haile Selassie I Prize Trust. The Prize Trust was established in 1963 to bestow recognition, or to honor, and offer prizes to, persons and organizations that contributed to the development of literature and the arts (included were sculpture, painting, music, architecture, theater), and other endeavors, such as research, teaching, welfare or philanthropy, and business and industry. And in literature, some of the noted writers of verse and prose so recognized included Kebede Michael, Mengistu Lemma, Mahiteme-Selassie Welde-Mesqel, Tsegaye Gebre-Medhin, Mersie-Hazen Welde-Qirqos, Hadis Alemayehu. (Haile Selassie I Prize Trust, 1966 E.C.).

Unfortunately, this organization for learned pursuits has been one of earliest casualties of the military coup of 1974. No similar agency of a similar stature fostering scholarly endeavors had evolved to date.

Book production and distribution

Book production in Ethiopia has been limited, or rather low. One of the possible factors contributing to the low output, other than the ubiquitous underdevelopment of capital, was the low literacy rate. Book production,

especially that of books for popular reading, was meager. Some publishers of note who did any publishing at all were largely into technical books. The Christian Literature Development Project (CLDP) survey (Conacher 1970) cited above, established that the Oxford University Press, through its local branch in Addis Ababa, opened in 1965, had published up to 1970 "over half a million copies of their books, mostly school textbooks and other educational material" (Conacher). In the 1960s and early 1970s, the Oxford University Press had a branch office that promoted OUP publications; it also published locally produced books, mainly textbooks and technical books as well as some literary ones. The OUP closed its business in Addis Ababa after the military takeover of power in 1974, which made it difficult for such businesses to operate in Ethiopia.

According to some pertinent data on the publishing of literature in Ethiopia in the period between 1957-1993, the number of fiction books published between 1957-1967 was about 180 (Zerihun Asfaw, 1985 E.C.).

Like in many other countries where publishing on a mass scale is at a modest, if not rudimentary, stage until the late seventies, publishing was the domain of authors, with some input by the printing presses which provided some services like credit options. The predominant option was self-publishing, which meant total reliance on one's own resources and capabilities not only for the expenses incurred and the editorial expertise, but also the distribution of the books.

Whether the literate population is small or large, and as long as multiple copies of a book or any document can be produced for readership, it may be assumed that a book market is created. But book production and its subsequent distribution have indubitable bearing on readership. The situation has not been any better in the late seventies either. Based on the statistical yearbooks of the UN, the annual average number of books and pamphlets produced between 1978 and 1988 was around 311 titles, of which literature/fiction accounted less than 8% , or about 17 titles (UN Statistical Yearbook, 1981, table 63, p. 411; 1982, table 61, p.435; 1983/84 , table 61, p. 441; 1985/86, table 54, p.303;

1987, table 43, p.269; 1990/91, table 24, p.195). The statistical breakdown for these years is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Book Production in Ethiopia from 1978 - 1988

Year	Titles (all)	Titles (Literature)	% of Literature titles
1978	353	9	2.55
1979	225	36	16
1981	150	21	14
1984	349	14	4
1985	227	9	3.96
1988	560	17	3
Average	311	17	7.25

Other sources indicate that in a sixteen-year period between 1977 and 1992 two of the publishing firms that became operational in the 1970s (Ethiopia Book Center and Kuraz Publishing Agency) have between them published about seventy titles of novels, short stories and plays amounting to around two million copies (Zerihun Asfaw, p. 20-21).

Essentially, book production remained low throughout, the output decreasing in the nineties. It should thus be frankly pointed out that compared with the major publishing countries, or by any standards at all, publishing only a few hundred titles in over a decade is by far low.

One may conjecture that the leisure reader does not consider it a must to buy a copy of a novel and that personal possession of a book by an individual is not a necessity, for a book is frequently only needed for a restricted period of time. On the other hand, books are not always available to all readers (actual and potential) through borrowing all the time. For many a reader who might

consider buying books, the urge to buy remains an unsatiated need due to limitations in the general buying capability of the populace. Moreover, with increase in the prices of other amenities, the purchasing power of potential readers diminishes.

Readership research and the Ethiopian scene

Readership evidently requires a "certain standard of literacy." Ideally, then, a survey of readership of creative works should be conducted, according to Escarpit (1973), of the 'literary milieu' made up of the 'literati' of each community which is believed to share 'group consciousness'. 'The literati', which comprises the learned, the educated, or the schooled has, according to Escarpit, "at its disposal the mental and verbal equipment, as well as the means of communication and expression, indispensable for fruitful and articulate intercourse".

The literary milieu is endowed with the cultural sophistication in which "ideas are exchanged, judgments passed, and values discussed". Not all societies have all the time such a group with marked taste. Where situations have not permitted the development of such a minority trend-setting group, or where their collective voice or impressions are not felt due to various limiting factors, (but where readership is perceived to exist) it is only logical to conduct readership survey among those likely to read. Above all, in the context of a country with an indistinct literary milieu (for it has hardly formed a group, or readers are diffused into the broader society) the study of reading interest by necessity becomes restricted to that segment of society, which is literate and shares 'group consciousness', but as yet has not molded a culture unto itself.

Leisure reading in the main means the reading of fiction, as studies have established. A number of studies indicate that reading of works of fiction for leisure has been found to be prominent, excelling engagement with any other

types of books (Asheim, 1968; Menhert, 1983; Dixon, 1986; Lau & Chueng, 1988; Mann, 1991).

The pre-1960 readership profile of Ethiopia has not been studied in a substantive manner, though some newspaper articles enunciating the benefits of reading used to appear occasionally. As noted in the preceding pages, the earliest reading interest survey conducted in Ethiopia was the CLDP survey of the late 1960s. According to the survey, fiction had been the most read among all categories of readable materials (excluding textbooks) (Conacher). That survey thus established that reading for pleasure was the main incentive for reading, and it made up almost 80% of total books read in Amharic and about 65% of books read in English, and at the time, the literacy rate was estimated variously between 7.2% (official) and 12-13% (Conacher, p.186, 198). Though there was no ground to assume that potential readers had enough to invest in books and periodicals, the average household was estimated to have invested "about one dollar a year on literature, of which one third was imported and in foreign languages." But it was hardly adequate, and coupled with the lack of sufficient libraries, the low buying capacity limited readership (Conacher, p. 197, 228).

This same survey found that as far back as the early 1960s news magazines such as *Newsweek*, *Time*, and *The Economist* had readership in the country, and were sold in book-shops, by vendors in the streets, and also by direct subscriptions (Conacher, 1970; Fanouris and Fanouris, 1995). Foreign-published newspapers, journals and magazines imported into the country in 1968 were worth over 258,715 birr, or at the exchange rate of the time, over US dollars 120,000 (Conacher, pp. 148-149,315). The survey thus confirmed one thing, that fiction featured prominently in the staple of books read in Ethiopia.

That was over two decades ago. No other study has recorded the reading profile in the subsequent years. The present study, which concerns the use of books outside work, in people's leisure time, thus has significance. But what exactly has been the overall recent picture of leisure reading in the immediate

past in Ethiopia? It is a truism that in countries with high illiteracy rate, the favored communication medium is the spoken rather than the written word. And in Ethiopia, with literacy apparently at a modest level, one may fairly assume that books, or periodicals, have limited readership, and even less readership may be assumed for fiction.

Is reading interest manifest or not? Do people read in their leisure time? If so, what do they read? How do they obtain the books they read? What are their purposes in reading? The study addresses these and the cursorily assumed 'limited' readership. Since this study obviously is on readership, it takes into consideration only the reading or potentially-reading segment of the population.

With this theoretical and historical review as a background, the remaining part of the paper is organized as follows: methodology and procedure; survey results; discussions of the findings; and conclusions and recommendations.

II. Methodology and Procedure

The reading survey was carried out to investigate the extent and characteristics of leisure reading and reading interest in Bahir Dar. The survey was conducted in late 1992.

Subjects of the study

The subjects for the research were drawn from twenty seven organizations in the town of Bahir Dar. Out of a population with at least a high school education, a proportional number of the population was determined based on the potential candidate population in each establishment. The proportional number of population to be polled from each agency was then randomly sampled.

Accordingly, the polled establishments, 27 in all, included government offices (at various levels of jurisdictions), public service agencies (educational, health, catering, etc.), and other quasi-public agencies. Attempts were made to include in the survey all organizations in the town, using official staff lists and, sometimes, unofficial staff lists. Some agencies could not supply data, while in few cases some staff in branch sites or on field work or at out-posts could not be polled. The total number of population surveyed was thus 764, which could otherwise have been slightly higher.

Thus it can be assumed that all staff of the polled organizations with an education level of a minimum of high school had equal chance of being selected for the survey, save for those unavailable or for the lack of data.

Subjects for the research thus secured totaled 215, that is 28% of the total population. Of the groups that returned usable questionnaire papers, 9% had a high school education; 10%, 12+1; 27%, 12+2; 3%, 12+3; 32%, BA/B.Sc.; 14%, MA/MSc.; 2%, M.D.; 3%, DVM. The usable returns were 93%, and the total non-response (i.e., unusable returns) was 5%.

Procedure

The steps in this study were: reviewing literature; planning and designing a questionnaire; conducting a three-phase pilot study; editing and developing the final questionnaire; conducting the survey and collecting the data; organizing and interpreting the data; and reporting the findings.

The list of organizations in the town was secured from the Municipality, and the next stage in this part of the process was acquiring lists of staff with a minimum of 12th grade education by approaching heads of agencies, personnel offices, or other well-placed individuals.

Instrument

Based on the literature, a feasible data gathering instrument was developed, taking into consideration the aspects of reading in line with the Euromonitor surveys and other studies of leisure reading (McElroy, 1968; Mann 1991). The questionnaire was thus developed, pretested and revised and, then, given to the 215 sample population.

The instrument used for data gathering on leisure reading, a questionnaire with about ten items, contained open-ended questions. The main questions for which responses were solicited include: Leisure (free time) reading; Genre of books read; Purpose of reading; Sources of books; Book-buying habits; Three best books (original by local authors in rank order); All time best book (by local or foreign author); and, Demographic data, such as educational qualifications, profession or occupation.

As pointed out above, the questionnaire was tested in a three-phase pilot survey and then reviewed. In the pilot study the questionnaire was tested at different times and intervals in three organizations - a college, a planning office and a primary school - with 30 randomly selected individuals.

With respect to validity-reliability testing, at each subsequent stage of the pilot study, phrasings were refined, questions that were found irrelevant or confusing dropped, and the ones that elicited the expected data consistently were incorporated into the revised and final questionnaire.

By way of validity-reliability assurance, the questionnaire was adapted from established survey instruments (McElroy; Euromonitor, in Mann, 1991), and the final questions retained were the ones that consistently generated expected outcome (data) during testing and retesting conducted at intervals of one week. Apart from these, the instrument did not undergo any other statistical validity-reliability test.

Delimitations

Literary evaluation of the read materials, if at all, has been minimal because the study has not been intended as a literary esquire, but to shed light on leisure reading. The possible role of demographic variables in reading, such as gender, were not the object of the investigation.

Limitations

There were some limitations. First, it was impossible to include about four elementary schools, not by design but for lack of data within the time frame available, whereas it was possible to include four larger schools. Second, it was impractical to include staff in branch sites or on field work, or at out-posts of some of the polled agencies. And third, in some firms, such as the Textile Factory, it became practical and convenient to include in the study only employees in the main offices, excluding production line staff for lack of data. Due to such practical reasons, the total number of population surveyed was 764, which, otherwise, could have been slightly higher. Some organizations unfortunately were not on the list of establishments secured from the Municipality.

Except where data on staff profile, particularly data on educational qualifications, were not available to the researcher, the rest of the agencies have been polled.

III. Results

Of the 215 sampled population, 205 or 93% completed and returned usable questionnaires. To the key question of whether they read books in their free time and as leisure activity, 93% of the respondents said they read books while 3% reported they did not. The regular readers (out of the reader

population) were 30%, while the occasional readers were 67%, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Reading Interest of Respondents Based on Educational Qualifications

Educational Qualification	RESPONSES		
	Read Usually	Read Sometimes	Do Not Read
MA/M.Sc.	5	21	2
BA/B.Sc.	17	45	3
MD	1	3	-
DVM	4	3	-
12 + 3	3	4	-
12 + 2	20	36	1
12 + 1	7	13	-
12	5	12	-
Total & Percent	62 or 30%	137 or 67%	6 or 3%

The proportion of readers among those with at least a first college degree, (hereafter referred to as Group A readers) was 95% (regular readers being 26% and occasional readers 69%), while 5% were non-readers. Among those with at least a high school education and some with some years in college (hereafter referred to as Group B readers) the proportion of readers was 99%, 35% regular and 64% occasional readers. Of all reader groups only veterinarians had amongst them more regular readers (57%) than occasional readers (See Table 3). Similarly this table presents the proportion of regular and occasional readers of each educational qualification category. But in general, a very large majority of the surveyed population were readers.

Table 3. Reading Interest and Educational Qualification

GROUP A (BA & >)

Educational Qualification	Read Usually		Read Sometimes		Sum & %		Non-Readers Total & %	
		%		%		%		%
MA/MSc.	5	18	21	75	26	93	2	7
BA/B.Sc.	17	26	45	69	62	95	3	5
MD	1	25	3	75	4	100	-	0
DVM	4	57	3	43	7	100	-	0
	27	26	72	69	99	95	5	5

GROUP B (12 - 12 + 3)

Educational Qualification	Read Usually		Read Sometimes		Readers Sum & %		Non-Readers Total & %	
		%		%		%		%
12 + 3	3	43	4	57	7	100	-	0
12 + 2	20	35	36	63	56	98	1	2
12 + 1	7	33	13	62	20	100	-	0
12	5	29	12	71	17	100	-	0
Total	35	35	65	64	100	99	1	1

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES OF GROUPS A & B

Responses	Read Usually		Read Sometimes		Readers Sum & %		Non-Readers Total & %	
		%		%		%		%
Total & %	62	29	137	68	199	97	6	3

Sources of books

The sources of books read were of three types: purchasing, libraries, and individuals (individuals included: friends, acquaintances, anybody willing to lend books). Fifty one per cent of the readers relied on individuals as a primary source for books to read. Libraries were primary sources of books for 30% of the readers. Buying was a primary source for 18% of the readers; and one per cent resorted to other means as primary source. (See Table 4 below).

TABLE 4. SOURCES OF BOOKS (MECHANISMS OF ACQUIRING BOOKS) - RANKINGS

Educational Qualification	Individuals 1 st Choice	Libraries 1 st	Buying 1 st	Others 1 st
MA/MSc.	11	14	1	-
BA/B.Sc.	30	18	15	1
MD	3	-	-	-
DVM.	6	-	1	-
12 + 3	1	2	4	-
12 + 2	30	19	5	1
12 + 1	11	2	4	-
12	8	5	6	-
TOTAL	100	60	36	2
Percent of 1 st Choice Source	51%	30%	18%	1%

As a secondary source, individuals were used by 36% of readers, libraries by 33%, and buying own copies by 31%. Individuals were used by 15% as tertiary sources, libraries by 20%, buying by a significant 56%, and other means by around 9%.

The overall importance of each of the sources (i.e. as primary, secondary, and tertiary, etc. means) has been as follows: individuals made up 37%; purchasing 31%; libraries 29%; and other sources 3%. The other sources - renting and exchange pooling - are pre-arranged mechanisms developed by reader groups or clubs.

Proportion of book buyers

The proportion of readers who purchase fiction books was found to be 81% as opposed to 19% that did not buy at all. Of the buyers of fiction books, 20% bought over six titles annually, 31% bought 3-5 titles annually, and 26% bought from 1-2 titles annually, (See Table 5 below).

Table 5: Book-buying Habits and Educational Qualifications of Respondents

Education Qualification	No. of Books Bought Annually						Total Buyers	%	Total Non-Buyers	%
	6 >	3-5	1-2	%	%	%				
MA %	2	11	6	33	10	56	18	72	7	28
B.A/B.Sc. %	5	9	23	40	22	39	50	88	7	12
MD %	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	4	100
DVM %	3	43	2	28.5	2	28.5	7	100	0	0
GROUP A %	10	11	31	33	34	37	75	81	18	19
12+3 %	2	28.5	3	43	2	28.5	7	100	0	0
12+2 %	7	16	14	33	22	51	43	83	9	17
12+1 %	5	42	5	42	2	16	12	75	4	25
12 %	7	50	4	29	3	21	14	74	5	26
GROUP B %	21	22	26	28	29	31	76	81	36	19
Grand Total %	31	25%	57	31%	63	30%	151	81%	36	19%

In terms of proportion of book buyers, the two groups fared the same: 81% of Group A readers and the same percentage of Group B readers bought books. MD's were all non-buyers while the DVM's and the 12+3 were all buyers.

Reasons for, or benefits of, reading

Respondents were asked to identify what motivated them to engage in leisure reading, and the results were that 53% of the respondents stated that they read fiction for cultural enrichment, and 43% said that they read solely for relaxation, while 4% had specific benefits in mind, usually job-related, (See Table 6 below)

There was only a slight difference between the two groups in their motivation for reading. Leisure was the motivation for 42%, and cultural enrichment for 52% of Group A readers. The percentages for Group B were 43% and 54%, respectively. Job-related motivations for reading fiction fared 6% for Group A readers and 3% for Group B readers.

Table 6: Reasons For or Benefits of Reading

Motivation	Reasons for* or benefits of reading					
	Recreation (pastime) %		Cultural enrichment** %		Others*** %	
Sc.	24	47	24	47	3	6
Sc.	45	41	58	52	6	17
	2	29	4	57	1	14
	3	30	7	70	-	0
L A	74	42	93	52	10	6

25% of total
readers and 3%
respectively.

Table 6 cont'd.

Educational Qualification	Reasons for* or benefits of reading					
	Recreation (pastime) %		Cultural enrichment** %		Others*** %	
12+3	9	56	7	44	-	0
12+2	33	43	44	51	2	6
12+1	16	47	17	50	1	3
12	11	37	18	60	1	3
TOTAL GROUP B	69	43	86	54	4	3
SUMMARY OF GROUPS A & B %	74+69 = 143 43%		93+86 = 179 53%		10+4 =14 4%	

*Multiple responses were possible.

**Gain experience, social awareness, knowledge, etc.

***Others benefits or reasons stated by the respondents include : to improve language proficiency; because specific job of respondent requires enriching through general reading, etc.

Favorite books, preferences

The questionnaire also elicited responses with respect to the favorites of the readers. Accordingly, readers identified all-time favorite (best-read) books in any language (See Table 7 below). The findings show the most favorite all-time (best-read book) to be *Fiqr Iska Meqabr*, a novel in Amharic language by Hadis Alemayehu, which came out as the favorite of 43 readers, 29% of the ratings, and about 21% of all the population, with others following suit in the order of their appearance in Table.

Table 7: The All-Time Favorite Books (Most Appreciated Books)

R A N K	Book Title, Author and/or Translator	No. of Respondents & Educational Qualification												Gr. Tot
		12 12 12 12												
		MA	BA	MD	DVM	Tot.	%	3	2	1	Tot.	%		
1	<i>Fiqr Iska Meqabr</i> by Hadis Alemayehu	6	13	1	2	22	51	1	14	5	1	21	49	43
2	<i>Oromay</i> by Bealu Girma	3	3	-	-	6	40	-	6	1	2	9	60	15
3	<i>Shotelay Selay</i> (Ken Follett's <i>Eye of The Needle</i>) by Mammo Wudineh	-	2	-	-	2	33	-	1	2	1	4	67	6
4	<i>Ke'admas Bashager</i> by Bealu Girma	1	3	-	-	4	80	-	1	-	-	1	20	5
5	<i>Sabella</i> (Mrs. Henry Wood's <i>East Lynne</i>) by Haile-Selasé Mehari	-	1	-	-	1	20	-	4	-	-	4	80	5
6	<i>The Other Side of Midnight</i> by Sidney Sheldon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4	100	4
7	<i>Ifoyta</i> (Alexander Dumas's <i>The Count of Monte Cristo</i>) by Teshome Damtew	-	2	-	-	2	50	-	1	-	1	2	50	4
8	<i>Adefris</i> by Dañiachew Werqu	1	2	-	-	3	100	-	-	-	-	-	0.00	3
9	<i>Derasiew</i> by Bealu Girma	-	1	-	-	1	50	-	1	-	-	2	67	3
10	<i>War and Peace</i> by Leo Tolstoy	1	1	1	-	3	100	-	-	-	-	-	0.00	3
11	<i>Anna Karannina</i> by Leo Tolstoy	1	-	1	1	3	100	-	-	-	-	-	0.00	3
TOTAL OF B. A. & >		45										TOTAL OF 12+3 & < 48		

A distant second selected by 15 respondents (10%) was *Oromay*, a novel by Bealu Girma. None of the other books were chosen by more than six persons. Further analysis of the ratings based on the educational backgrounds of the respondents was done to get an impression of their reading preferences, which

is presented in this same table. Similarly, the three most read recent titles (published between 1985-1992) were identified by readers in rank order (See Table 8 below).

TABLE 8. PREFERENCES OF READERS OF RECENT ORIGINAL BOOKS OF FICTION BY LOCAL AUTHORS, PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1985 AND 1992

R A N K	Book Title & Author	No. of Respondents & Educational Qualification												
		MA	BA	MD	DVM	Tot.	%	12	12	12	12	Tot.	%	Gr. Tot
1	<i>Oromay**</i> by Bealu Girma	8	22	-	2	32	43	3	23	7	9	42	57	74
2	<i>Sememen</i> by Sisay Nigusu	7	14	1	3	25	50	-	15	7	3	25	50	50
3	<i>Ye'hilm Ijzat</i> by Hadis Alemayehu	2	10	2	2	16	36	4	12	5	8	29	64	45
4	<i>Ye'tangut Misttir</i> by Birhanu Zerihun	6	8	-	3	17	63	-	6	3	1	10	27	27
5	<i>Girdosh</i> by Sisay Nigusu	-	7	1	-	8	38	3	7	1	2	13	62	21
6	<i>Tiqur Dem</i> by Andargé Mesfin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	2	8	100	8
7	<i>Qal Kidan</i> by Getachew Ayalqé	-	3	-	-	3	37	-	4	1	-	5	63	8
8	<i>Dosehaw</i> by Yeshitila Kokeb	1	1	-	-	2	29	1	3	1	-	5	71	7
9	<i>Inbana Saq</i> by Gebeyehu Ayele	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	2	7	100	7
10	<i>Sidetehaw</i> by Gebeyehu Ayele	-	2	-	1	3	50	-	2	1	-	3	50	6
11	<i>Hadis</i> by Bealu Girma	-	1	-	-	1	17	-	3	1	1	5	83	6
12	<i>Wenjelehaw Daña</i> by Hadis Alemayehu	2	1	-	-	3	60	-	-	1	1	2	40	5
13	<i>Gungun</i> by Haile-Melekot Mewael	2	2	-	-	4	80	-	-	1	-	1	20	5
14	<i>Wegeeta</i> by Yeshitila Kokeb	-	2	-	-	2	50	-	2	-	-	2	50	5
15	<i>Amest, Sidist, Sebat</i> by Sibhat Gebre-Igziabher	-	2	-	-	2	50	-	2	-	-	2	50	4

Total selected titles :- 39; Total ratings (selections) :- 318

IV. DISCUSSION

Ninety seven per cent of the respondents read books either regularly or occasionally. Leisure reading habit was found to be very high for both groups, slightly in favor of those without a college degree (Group B with 99%) as opposed to the ones with a college degree (95%).

Sources of books: Individuals constituted a primary source for books, while libraries, buying own copy, and 'other means' were also used. The 'other means' as a source included exchange, renting, pooling, i.e. buying books through token contributions and taking turns to read. All these were pre-arranged mechanisms developed by reader groups or clubs. That readers were devising means of securing books is revealing in that it is a good indication of the prevalence of reading interest. It is also a positive phenomenon worth investigating. This researcher has observed one or two such ventures in Addis Ababa as well.

Book buying: The fact that 81% of readers were book buyers was an indication of strong reading interest which served as impetus for acquiring books. The surveyed population are mainly civil service employees. As confirmed by an ILO study, salary scales have not been revised since 1972 and higher grades have been denied salary increments (Robinson, 1990). In spite of this impediment, however, allotting some portion of their meager income on books to be read largely for relaxation, and only peripherally to facilitate performance of some functions, is quite a feat and a strong indication of the manifest interest in reading.

The fact that about 81% of the surveyed population buys one or more titles of books for leisure reading is a significant phenomenon in Ethiopia, where the capability to set aside expenses for books for leisure reading can only be minimal, if not altogether nil. Purchasing, though not a primary source, still was a prominent means of securing books. [A survey recently conducted in

Britain on reading interests and mechanisms of obtaining books (sources of books) gives buying an edge over both libraries and borrowing from individuals (Mann, 1991).]

Motivation for reading: It is a commonly held belief that the written word, and generally 'the book', has had a special, almost magical charm for Ethiopians throughout the ages, even at a time when few people could read. But the number of 'the literate' is rapidly increasing, at least taking the growing high school leavers and college graduates into account. The habit of reading as found by this study has expanded with the increase in literacy, among other contributing factors (an increase of 20% over the CLDP findings, albeit the fact that the CLDP survey was national in scope).

It was found that readers generally had some benefits - usually educational - in mind in their declared leisure reading taken up in their free time. The reader expectation that in Ethiopia free time reading should also have "educational value and relationship to daily life" and the reported manifest prevalence of "high regard for the didactic, even in leisure reading," as earlier indicated by the CLDP survey (Conacher, p.172), has been confirmed by this study too. In this instance readers cited as their main motivation in leisure reading 'education', 'social experience', or 'gaining knowledge', which have been, for processing purposes, grouped under the broader category of "cultural enrichment" (52%). On the other hand, about 48% had purely relaxation or motivation, expressed by respondents in the forms of 'spending' or 'killing time', or just because they 'have no other means' of recreation.

Favorite books: The prominence of Hadis Alemayehu as the author of the all time favorite book among the reading community has been tested over time and is still on high footing. The recognized survival of his famous novel, *Fiqr Isl Meqabr*, as the best read has withstood the test of time, especially given that, studies indicate, the rate of elimination of literary books from the list of still recognized body of works is severe, and that "90 per cent of the books are

eliminated after 1 year and 99 per cent after 20 years" (Escarpit, pp.420-421). *Fiqr Iska Meqabr*, first published in 1966, has had solid readership throughout and had, after 33 years, topped the list, in 1992.

Probably one of the elements contributing to its popularity could be the fact that the book is a severe commentary (at times parodically rendered) on the anachronism of feudalism and thus a critique, in a style of its own, of the predominant features of the society and its institutions. Besides, the book has literary merits, for which Hadis won the coveted literary prize of the Haile Selassie I Prize Trust. The book's literary merit appears to have influenced the decision to award the prize as attested by the following words among the citations during the award ceremony in 1969: "imbued as he is with deep understanding of the Ethiopian way of life and a great sympathy for some cultural and social figures of our people . . ." (Haile Selassie I Prize Trust, 1973). The subject matter of the book, which is an exposé of the anachronism of feudalism, was not referred to at the time. Highlighting the literary quality of the book seems to have warded off its possible rejection as a candidate, which could otherwise accrued from the critical stance it assumed.

It seems that a persuasive style could possibly shield against, and serve to placate, the censor's wrath. A parallel can be sought in the experiences of Russian writers. It was observed that a writer who somewhat finds the right style for transmitting his ideas and who shows that, whenever he criticizes "he does so not out of spite but out of patriotic concern," can almost be a law unto himself (Menhert, 1983 p.42,239).

The popularity of native works of fiction is slightly greater than foreign works. Apart from some translations, no single foreign title has received more than three readers that rated it as 'the all-time favorite'. However, even though no single foreign title fared as one of the top on the list, the total number of foreign titles (including translations) rated most favorite books is significant in that no less than 45 titles have been cited. Thus the level of popularity of foreign fiction, specially from the West, and more specifically by American

authors, roughly corresponds to the interest they arouse in their own country. Sidney Sheldon seems to fare well on top. Universality of the themes of good fiction may be a possible explanation, beside other influences.

The reader distribution in the two educational levels indicates (Table 7 above) that some books are favored by college graduates more often, while others are preferred more by those with high school education; still other titles are favorites of both groups, while few titles are exclusively read by one group.

Accordingly, out of the respondents who rated Hadis Alemayehu's *Fiqr Iska Meqabr* an all-time favorite, 51% were Group A readers and 49% group B, the closeness of the percentages indicating the overall popularity of the book. Alexander Dumas's translated novel *The Count of Monte Cristo* (*Ifoyta* in its translation) also had the same percentage of reader-raters from both groups. Group B favorites were Bealu Girma's *Oromay* and *Shotelay Selay* (*Eye of the Needle* by Ken Follet, translated by Mammo Wudineh), indicating that these two books had more appeal to those with no college qualification, Group B. Similarly, the translated version of Mrs. Henry Wood's novel *East Lynne* (*Sabella*) was a favorite of Group B reader-raters. Though an isolated instance and a very limited sample, the preferences go in style with the findings of another study of readership profiles of romance novels (Mann, 1982 pp.167-170). Furthermore, it seems appropriate to note that this book's popularity has not faded for around a century. Based on a readership survey carried out in Britain in 1897, Mrs. Henry Wood was the most favorite writer in the UK, ahead of Marie Corellie and Charles Dickens (Kelly, 1977). In the same league, Group B favorites also were *Derasiw*, and Sidney Sheldon's *The Other Side of Midnight*.

On the other hand, *Ke'admas Bashager* by Bealu Girma was a favorite of 80% of Group A readers. A class in its own, and in keeping with its reputation of being a singularly serious psychological novel and, probably for that same reason difficult to fully appreciate, Dañiachew Werqu's *Adefris* were exclusively selected favorites by college graduates. The two classics by Leo

Tolstoy, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* were favorites of college graduates only, a result which may partly be explained by the language barrier, the sheer bulk of the novels, and the relative scarcity of copies of the books.

Favorite recent titles: Of the titles published or released for marketing from 1985-1992, except for Birhanu Zerihun's *Ye'tangut Misttir*, and *Sememen* which had more of Group A readers (degree holders), the rest were mainly preferred by Group B readers (Table 8 above). The Group B preferences included the most favored recent novels, *Oromay*, *Ye'hilm Izjat*, and *Girdosh*.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was found out that there was interest in [leisure] reading among 97% of the sampled adults (those with at least a high school education). Besides, the most read titles and the all-time favorite books have been identified. A considerable proportion of the readers were also book buyers. Overall there seems to be a distinct readership of fiction both in Amharic and in translation from other languages into Amharic. Furthermore it was found that books by foreign authors, be they in the original language or their translated version are also quite popular.

Although the survey attempted to demonstrate the relative popularity of books, the overall intention of the study has not been intended as a literary evaluation of the books read, but rather to shed light on their readership. The motive of "self-advancement and education" was strong as was that of leisure per se. The manifest motivations of the typical professional and clerk for reading are cultural enrichment and relaxation. But this need has not been met due to a number of causes. All the more this is an indication of the need for enhancement of conditions for authorship and creativity to thrive. The findings reflect essentially only general preferences. In order to get a better understanding of reading habits and needs, research on reading in general, and

on reading for pleasure in particular has to be conducted widely. Further study of this nature may benefit from the analysis of the time allotted to the study of literature in the curricula of the school programs at various stages. Although it has not been the immediate concern of this survey, the investigation of the kind of titles recommended by schools as assignments for home reading and also for class discussions, if there are any, may be of merit to a study that intends to compare readership preferences with prior exposure or familiarity, besides taking into consideration other demographic factors and personal values.

This researcher has not come across any significant study that has been conducted on reading interests, but particularly leisure reading, in Ethiopia recently. Thus the findings of this study, it is believed, will have relevance to planning further research on readership studies and working towards the development of reading habits.

Based on the findings and related studies some viable readership promotions strategies are suggested:

1. *Book clubs and readers' groups*: The apparent reading interest found by the study, can be maintained or improved by the establishment of book clubs and assisting formation of readers' groups which could help in the development of reading habits. Members could be book lovers' group or club-read books, discuss about the titles, exchange titles. An arrangement of this nature has been found in the study to be an important recourse initiated and sustained by members even without any external assistance. Such initiatives could be popularized and stimulated, for example by creating the opportunity for such readers to buy books at wholesale prices for group distribution or sale to members at prices lower than market or retail prices.
2. *Book development council*: A book development and promotion effort can take a form of a council that acts as a "national agency for the

planning, coordination and management" of pertinent issues regarding reading and book production. It usually will have responsibilities of developing and facilitating the adoption of policies that nurture authorship and readership, enhance the implementation of copyright protection laws, and improve production, importation and distribution of papers, magazines and books efficiently and at affordable prices. A Book Development Council, such as those in some countries in Asia and Africa, could help bring together concerned pertinent ministries, universities, publishing firms, printing presses, book sellers, writers associations, and librarians to study and develop appropriate policies and programs for the enhancement of reading.

3. *Development of libraries:* For reading to take place and for readers to evolve, and thus for readership to develop, reading materials have to be available. Libraries increase readership or reading interests by providing books and introducing borrowers to authors who may be unfamiliar to potential readers. A library especially has a major role in the mass distribution of books or facilitating access to them. In addition to the authors who produce books, and who have to be nurtured and promoted, sources of books such as libraries are requisites that need to be engendered and sustained - staffed, funded, refurbished, etc. In short, libraries have of necessity to flourish by vigilant input of resources by society. As Wegman suggests, "Unless the skill and motivation to read is sustained by . . . most specially the availability of books, reading will decline and wither," and thus, "people read books that are readily available, and when books they want are not there, they sometimes do not read at all." So promotions through encouragement of publishing is essential to maintain or develop the strong reading interest. (Wegman, cited in Mathews, 1973).
4. The findings of this study, it is believed, will have relevance to plan further research in readership -- research that will eventually have

implications for endeavors towards improved reading habits in this country.

References

- ማኅተመ ሥላሴ ወልደ መስቀል (1942)፥ ዝክረ ነገር፣ አዲስ አበባ፣ ነፃነት ማተሚያ ቤት ።
- ቀዳማዊ ኃይለ ሥላሴ ሽልማት ድርጅት (1966)፥ የቀዳማዊ ኃይለ ሥላሴ ድርጅት አስረኛ ዓመት፣ አዲስ አበባ።
- አምሳሉ አክሊሉ (1960)፥ "የአማርኛ ሥነጽሑፍ ልደትና በኢትዮጵያ የማተሚያ ቤት ታሪክ"፤ ውይይት/Dialogue፣ ቅጽ 1፥ ቁ.1፣ ገጽ 62-70።
- ዮናስ አድማሱ እና ሌሎችም (1966)፥ አማርኛ ለኮሌጅ ደረጃ የተዘጋጀ፣ አዲስ አበባ፥ ቀዳማዊ ኃይለ ሥላሴ ዩኒቨርሲቲ፣ አርትስ ፋኩልቲ፣ የኢትዮጵያ ቋንቋዎችና ሥነ ጽሑፍ ክፍል፣ (ያልታተመ)።
- ዘሪሁን አስፋው (1985)፥ "የኢትዮጵያ ሥነ ጽሑፍ አጭር ቅኝት (1950-1985)፣ የመጻሕፍት ኅትመት ጉባኤ ላይ የቀረበ (አዲስ አበባ፣ ያልታተመ)"።
- Asheim, Lester (1968). "A Survey of Recent Research." In Jacob M. Price, (ed.). *Reading for Life*. New York: Greenwood Press, pp.3-26.
- Chandler, G. (1973). "Research on Books and Reading Society in the United Kingdom." In *International Library Review*. 5, 4 (October). pp.277-282.
- Conacher, J.R.H. (1970). *General Survey Concerning Christian Literature in Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa: Christian Literature Development Project.

- Delin, Catherine R. (1995). "Patterns and Preferences in Recreational Reading." In *Australian Library Journal*. 44, 3 (August), pp.119-131.
- Dixon, J. (ed.) (1986). *Fiction in Libraries*. London: LA.
- Escarpit, Robert (1973). "The Sociology of Literature." In *The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*. Vol. 9, pp.417-425.
- Fanouris, Mellina, and Lukas Fanouris (1995). *Meskel: An Ethiopian Family Saga, 1926-1981*. Nairobi: Jacaranda Designs.
- Guthrie, J.T & Greaney, V. (1991). "Literacy Acts." In *Handbook of Reading Research II*. Edited by Barr, Rebecca, et al. New York, London: Longman
- Heckscher, August (1968). "Reading in America : Its Social and Cultural Background." In Jacob M. Price (ed.). *Reading for Life: Developing the College Students's Lifetime Reading Interest*. New York: Greenwood Press, pp.39-66.
- C
Kelly, Thomas (1977). *Books for the People*. London: Andre Deutch.
- Kirsch, I. & J. T. Guthrie (1984). "Adult Reading Practices for Work and Leisure." In *Adult Education Quarterly*. 34,4. pp. 213-232.
- Lau, S. and S.M. Chueng (1988). "Reading Interests of Chinese Adolescents: Effects of Personal and Social Factors." In *International Journal of Psychology*. 23, 6. pp.695-705.
- McElroy, E.W. (1968). "Subject Variety in Adult Education. I. Factors Related to Variety in Reading." In *The Library Quarterly*. 38, 2. pp. 154-167.

- _____ (1968). "Subject Variety in Adult Education. II. Characteristics of Readers of Ten Categories of Books." In *The Library Quarterly*. 38, 3. pp. 261-269.
- Mann, Peter H. (1982). *From Author to Reader: A Social Study of Books*. London: Routledge & Kegan.
- _____ (1991). "Fiction Readers: What People Want To Read." In Margaret Kinnell (ed.). *Managing Fiction in Libraries*. London: LA. pp.1-16.
- Mathews, V. H. (1973). "Adult Reading Studies: Their Implications for Private, Professional and Public Policy." In *Library Trends*. 22, 2, pp. 170-176.
- Menhert, Klaus (1983). *The Russians and Their Favorite Books*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press.
- Nelson, Robert L. (1989). "College Students' Views of Reading," presented at the Eighth Great Lakes Regional Conference, Ohio, October 26, 1989. ERIC Doc. 31573 (Unpublished).
- Robinson, Derek (1990). *Civil Service Pay in Africa*. Geneva: Labor Office.
- Robinson, H. M., and Weintraub, S. (1973). "Research Related to Children's Interests and to Development Values of Reading." In *Library Trends*. 22, 2. pp. 81-108.
- Steinberg, Heinz. (1972). "Books and Readers as a Subject of Research in Europe and America." In *International Social Science Journal*. 24, 4. pp.745-59.

Ullendorff, Edward (1965). *The Ethiopians*, 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press.

United Nations. *UN Statistical Yearbook* (1981, 1982, 1983/84, 1985/86, 1987, 1990/91).

Yarlott, G. and Harpin, W.S. (1971). "100 Responses to English Literature - (1)." In *Educational Research*. 13, 1. Pp.3-11.

_____ (1971). "100 Responses to English Literature - (2)." In *Educational Research*. 13, 2. pp.87-97.

My appreciation goes to the respondents from the various agencies who were more than willing to reply to my request to share with me their very private experience of reading. Special recognition is due to the persons that provided data on personnel of each organization, and to those who handled the distribution and collection of the questionnaires among the respondents in many offices, colleges, schools, laboratories, hospitals, etc. To all I owe special gratitude. (B. T.)

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS*

Berhanu Gebeyehu is Lecturer in the Department of Ethiopian Languages and Literature, Institute of Language Studies, Addis Ababa University.

Aklilu Yilma is Associate Professor of Linguistics, presently engaged in linguistic research at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. He is also a part-time instructor in the Department of Linguistics, Addis Ababa University.

Baye Yimam is Professor of Linguistics in the Department of Linguistics, Institute of Language Studies. He is also the current Director of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University.

Birhanu Teferra, is Assistant Librarian I and editor of publications at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. He is also serving as a part-time lecturer in the Department of Library Science, Addis Ababa University.

[* Contributors are listed in the order in which their respective articles have appeared. We should also like to take this opportunity to remind future contributors (particularly those outside the University) to send us a short bio-data describing their qualifications, rank, and institutional and/or departmental affiliation.]

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS*

Manuscripts: Materials should be typed double-spaced, on A-4 paper, with 1.25 inches on all sides, and should be submitted in two copies. Manuscripts should not exceed 30 pages in length and they should have a separate title page with thauthor's name, institution and mailing address. The first page of the manuscript should also have the title of the article and the name of the author. An abstract of not more than 300 words should also be submitted along with the manuscript.

Organization of text: Manuscripts should be divided into sections and sub-sections, each indicated by numerals as in the following:

- 1. Section
- 1.1. Sub-section
- 1.1.1. Sub-sub-section, etc.

Tables and Figures: Tables and figures should be identified by numerals, and should fit into the page in columns with plenty of space between columns.

Footnotes: Footnotes should be numbered consecutively in the order they appear in the text, and must be typed single-spaced on a separate page. They should be used sparingly for illustrating and elaborating points that are relevant, but not central, to issues discussed in the text. They should not be used for citing references.

References: References should be presented on a separate page, typed in alphabetical order, single-spaced (double space between entries) in accordance with the following format:

* *These guidellnes are subject to change as conditions may necessitate.*