



# Nurturing reading cultures and literacies in post-pandemic ecosystems

29 - 31 MARCH 2023 • UNISA

HYBRID SUMMIT 2023



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***Flight or Fright: An Explorative View of The Traits Needed to Sustain Reading Cultures at Individual and Communal Levels Across the African Landscape***



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## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

- The United Nations (UN) 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals and the African Agenda 2063 propels a nation toward goals of quality education, gender equality, decent work, economic growth, reduced inequalities, and strong institutions.
- Asserting that positive reading habits is *sine qua non* for achieving the proposed goals.
- The journey towards aspirations of Pan-Africanism will also be embraced. This supports cultural identity building, thus motivating Africa as a competitive international contributor.
- The often wounded beginning of Africa's place in a global society now provides a landscape for global *Afri-resurgo*.



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## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

- The moment of fledging- an apt analogy featuring the reader as the sparrow preparing for flight
- Goals are anticipated establishments of features, structures, and theoretical possibilities rather than a moment of reaching what is a transitory perfectionism.
- Goals serve as a flight forward where reading incorporates a simultaneous journey between the individual and community.
- The paper will address reading in a concurrent manner, where it is accepted as an isolated experience that is meant to survive in a communal form.
- Social paradox: what allows the unassuming sparrow to exist in urbanised continents where the natural or innate is sometimes left dormant for various reasons, often associated with modernisation. Literature will be a source of insight into the effects of modernisation.



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## Research objectives

Through this research paper, we aim to achieve a better understanding of the nature of current post-pandemic reading ecosystems by:

- Identifying inhibiting factors of reading practice using theory
- Recommending a way forward to improve meaning creation for more positive reading practices.
- Incorporate prior and current literature in providing a deeper engagement in the area of sustainable reading cultures.



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### Research Questions

Adhering to the research objectives, the following primary concerns will be addressed:

- What dissipates the reading habits of tertiary students?
- What challenges impact a continued reading culture?
- What are the dominant features that are needed to sustain the reading experience of reading communities?



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## Theoretical Frameworks

- Social cognitive learning theory posed by Bandura (1986): the individualistic nature of self, the person with active agency. Lending well to the constituents of the self, self-efficacy, self-determination and self-regulated learning.
- Self-regulated learning: Inner competence, self-efficacy provides a driving force to propel the person attitude that they have authority over determining outcomes, self-determination, by choosing actions they deem as necessary and valuable.
- Powered by competence and motivation. Learning is not restricted to age or space.
- Changes in behaviour and knowledge occurs when there is interaction with the environment.
- Developmentally we are prone to learn by observing others.
- Our actions are more often than not goal-directed, no matter how superficial those goals may be.
- Learning is essentially an intrinsic motion that sometimes propels behaviour, and that eventually behaviour or habits become self-regulated (Nabavi & Bijandi, 2012).



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## Theoretical Framework

- Ballings (2016): the aesthetic experience as essential to the action of reading where the text is viewed as a form of art.
- This notion stems from Gadamer's (1989) philosophical approach to human understanding.
- Balling (2016): reading requires at first a detachment from the physical reality and later, a reintegration of meaning into the physical reality.
- Balling (2016) then suggests that the challenge or disconnect from the reading experience, which breaks down the culture of reading in increments, is due to the inability of meaning creation.
- To sustain the creation of meaning and connections to texts, Rothbauer (2006) promotes three types of reading communities:
- The local community is one which involves a form of membership with other individuals in the physical reality. The textual community addresses the connection of the reader with the characters of a particular text, and the virtual community is associated to forms of digital mediation of reading and social connections that exist in the virtual world.
- If Bandura (1986) suggests 'learning' as that which propels behaviour, we can understand the creation of meaning as 'learning'.



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## Methodology

- Since reading truths are often context dependent the qualitative study will adopt the interpretivist paradigm.
- Inductive analysis: where raw data is used to categorize.
- Semi-structured interviews, according to Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012), allow for a deeper probing of data. It is often through the use of an interview schedule that an entry point for probing, relevant to the particular subject area, emerges.
- According to Kawulich and Holland (2012) interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) aims at making sense of the lived experience.
- Questions focus on habit formation and reading communities/experience as two main areas for prompting responses

## Limitations

- Reactivity of participants- awareness of responses being studied- can be controlled by adopting non-judgemental phrasing of questions and providing research background in information letter/consent form
- Lack of theory around reading communities especially in South African context





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## Sample details

It is envisioned that the lived reading experience of EHL100 students will speak to the theoretical framework:

Sample group	Further details
EHL100	English Home Language
Year of study	First year
Prescribed reading genre	The novel
Institution	Stadio SOE
Size	8-12 participants
Student status	Course completed

Example questions:

- Habit formation: At any point in your life thus far, can you recall having a reading routine?
- Reading communities/experience: How do you think a reading group would benefit your experience of the text in any way?



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## Recommendations

Data and literature will provide basis for suggesting:

- Learning environments and classrooms should be viewed as communities. Lending to the idea that education is primarily a social experience and reading communities require social habits.
- Post-pandemic society demands a move to a more accessible and digital space.
- According to Professor Ng'ambi (UCT), these spaces require a decolonization to better impart knowledge to the African student.
- Professor Ng'ambi states that game-based learning contains pedagogical value. Using indigenous games that students can relate to allows for the formulation of meaning around a text.
- OERiGA ( Open Educational Resources of indigenous Games in Africa) project is one initiative that promotes the creation of African game-based learning.



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Thank you for your time  
We welcome any questions and/or suggestions via email

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