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# TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>ARTICLES</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Angeline M. POGOY, Lelani C. DAPAT, Jessica N. MOROSCALLO  <b>Empowering Out-of-School Youth in the Outskirt</b>	5
Remedios C. BACUS, Ethel L. ABAO, Filomena T. DAYAGBIL  <b>Sustained Silent Reading: Pleasure To Treasure</b>	11
John Charles RYAN, Edith Cowan  <b>Conserving The Environment Through Memory</b>	19
Adel OUERTANI  <b>The Halal Label And Consumer Behavior: Proposal Of A Conceptual Framework</b>  <b>Le label halal et le comportement du consommateur : proposition d'un cadre conceptuel</b>	29



## **Empowering Out-of-School Youth in the Outskirt**

Angeline M. POGOY, Cebu Normal University, [gelinempogoy@gmail.com](mailto:gelinempogoy@gmail.com),

Lelani C. DAPAT, Cebu Normal University, [lcdapat.cnu@gmail.com](mailto:lcdapat.cnu@gmail.com)

Jessica N. MOROSCALLO, Cebu Normal University, [Jess2boy@yahoo.com](mailto:Jess2boy@yahoo.com)

### **ABSTRACT**

This study attempts to examine the personal empowerment of the Out-of-School Youths (OSY) who were the tapaseros (sugar cane laborers) exposed to the Caputatan Instructional Intervention Program (CIIP) provided by the CNU-ILS faculty members. It also looked into how the instructional intervention program complements the formal education. The naturalistic paradigm was used to cross-check the results and facilitate the understanding of the OSYs' self-concept and sense of self and performance in the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) test from which a passing score entitles a taker to a regular High School Certificate and a chance to pursue college studies, technical-vocational skills or possible employment. Results show that the CIIP gives personal empowerment to the OSYs by providing them the functional knowledge and skills and the power to take control of their own lives, initiate change in themselves to improve their quality of life and influence others to become useful and productive members of the community.

**KEYWORDS:** personal empowerment, instructional intervention, tapaseros, and naturalistic paradigm

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The central goal of the Philippine Education for All (EFA) 2015 –National Action Plan (prepared in 2006) cascaded from the Millennium Development Goal which is to eradicate poverty all over the world. One way of reducing the poverty rate is promote literacy through the program Education for All. Its aim is to provide basic competencies among school and out-of-school youth that will bring about functional literacy for all. Ensuring that every Filipino has the basic competencies is equivalent to enabling all Filipinos to be functional literate means having the complete range of skills- cognitive, affective and behavioral that would enable the individual to live and work as human persons, develop their potential, make critical decisions and function effectively in society within the context of the environment, to improve their quality of life and society. Literacy is the entry point to basic education and the most important passport to lifelong learning (Torres, 2005). Being able to read and write marks people's lives. It improves the quality of life of people in many and most profound ways, not necessarily economic in nature.

Becoming literate is related to human dignity, self-esteem, liberty, identity, autonomy, critical thinking, knowledge, creativity, participation, empowerment, social awareness and social transformation which are important human satisfying factors beyond material conditions. Studies indicate that Asia-Pacific region harbors the largest number of child workers in the 5 -14 age category with a total of 127.3 million (ILO, 2004). The Philippines is likewise faced with the problem of a large and rapidly growing out-of-school youth especially in the rural and outskirts of the Philippine provinces and cities. In 1999 the numbers of Philippine out-of-school children and youth was estimated to have reached 8.9 million mainly as a result of family poverty, lack of interest and motivation to study and the high cost of schooling. The Visayas region has the largest numbers of out-of-school youth in the 7 -14 age group. Region VII, in particular has 8.9 percent out-of-school youth and 15.4 percent families with working children (OSCY, 1999).

These data indicate that the youth sector is most at risk (ADB, 2002) because they have become hopeless and have remained trapped in poverty for their chance to improve their quality of life has become elusive. This pressing scenario of the condition of the youth yielded different cause-oriented groups to develop programs and projects to revive their interest and motivation of lifting themselves out from poverty and build their capacity to provide for themselves through education. Designing an Alternative Learning System that focuses on the needs of the out-of-school youth is a response to encourage them to return to formal school system and become productive members of the society as cited by Pogoy, et al. (2007). Pursuant to RA No. 7722, otherwise known as Higher Education Act of 1994, for the purpose of promoting and enhancing the extension function of Higher Education institutions in accordance to Resolution No. 534-2007, the state university takes part in contributing to the country's development goals through research and extension projects particularly the application of technology and knowledge.

In response to the needs of the community identified as Caputatan Norte, Cebu Normal University (CNU) implemented the project E-HELP (Education, Health, Environment, livelihood and Peace) in lined with the vision for human transformation. In terms of education, Caputatan Norte has 55.1% of the population who had accomplished elementary education only. The 31.18 % of the school children stopped studying for the inability of the parents to support them financially and 30.11% were paid to work to augment the family income. Other reasons were early marriage which was 6.45%, 22.58% had no interest in their study, 5.02% were attending domestic chores and 3.58% of them stopped because of distance and accessibility of the school. The Caputatan Instructional Intervention Program (CIIP) is a counterpart of the Alternative Learning System of the Department of Education. It is one of the projects for the literacy program of the College of Teacher of the university that implements the E-HELP, a university extension program from which all projects are based on the program's priority goals.

The faculty of the Integrated Laboratory School (ILS) of Cebu Normal University viewed this pressing need to alleviate poverty through education empowerment of the out of school youths in Caputatan Norte as an opportunity to create the CIIP using the modular approach of instructional intervention believing that education empowers and individual where one can take control of himself and influence others because one develops positive self- concept characterized by how one thinks about and perceives himself. When an individual has been equipped with the basic functional knowledge and competencies, that individual can create a change in his life and can become an influential member of the community. Empowerment of the Out of School Youth (OSY) would mean awareness of the youth's individual value or contribution as a member in a society. The CIIP provides instructional intervention among the out-of-school youth (OSY), ages 12-16 years old that are either children of "tapaseros" or are "tapaseros" themselves at their age.

These tapaseros are laborers of the sugar cane plantation in the area who received 60 pesos for every one (1) thousand shafts cut during the day. An OSY who is interested to receive formal education without attending regular classes is exposed to instructional intervention and is provided with the basic literacy skills to equip them with the necessary competencies to go through life's challenges and prepare them for the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Test which will eventually give this OSY a chance to apply for college or for work right out of the Caputatan Instructional Intervention Program because the program also aimed at preparing the out-of school youth for work by introducing them to different livelihood opportunities. This study looked at how the CIIP program empowered the out-of-school youth to become functional in the society through the instructional intervention program that will promote literacy and serve as powerful motivator for the tapaseros (sugar cane laborers) to build their sense of self and worth and view themselves as useful members of the society.

## **2. SHORT REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Education is the primary weapon, a powerful driver of development and strong instrument for reducing poverty (World Bank, 2008). On April 2011, World Bank launched its Education Strategy 2020, Learning for All: Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development, a road map for the next 10 years that focused on increasing learning for all by investing early, smartly and investing for all. Learning for all means giving all people equitable opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to have healthy and satisfying lives, to be good citizens, and to be productive contributors to their countries' economic development hence it becomes a tool in empowering individual to contribute change and improve their way of living and their personal successes (Pogoy and Montalbo, 2012). Educational quality contributes to greater productivity and competitiveness, leading to greater economic growth (Committee for Economic Development, 2005; Moretti, 2004; National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2008; Shapiro, 2006).

According to Guevarra (2007) as cited by ADB (2010), low educational attainment deters one from finding a job, if not at all, unavailability, insufficiency or insecurity of employment. Research and Development or RAND, (2008) a non-profit research organization cited that people who are better educated, tend to have a much higher likelihood of employment and, when employed, much higher wages (Card, 1999; Ashenfelter, Harmon, and Oosterbeek, 1999; Krueger and Lindahl, 2001; Rouse, 2005). Education opens a lot of opportunities for an individual in making its way through life and situating himself in the society. Participation in after school programs creates a positive effect on a youth's self-esteem. On the side it also develops their social skills, cooperation and leadership skills, manifests adequate behavior in demanding social contexts, and enhances academic performance and achievements (Durlak

and Weissberg 2007; Granger 2008; Fredriks and Eccles 2006). To wit, increased self-efficacy and personal growth were among the most notable outcomes of youth work participation as cited by Dworkin et al. (2003).

Further, a positive impact on employment relationships and earning income, being healthy, local community engagement and contributing to environmental protection have also been documented to justify the importance of school participation among the youth (NYA 2008; Feinstein et al. 2008; Feinstein et al. (2006). Educational quality contributes to greater productivity and competitiveness, leading to greater economic growth (Committee for Economic Development, 2005; Moretti, 2004; National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2008; Shapiro, 2006). According to Guevarra (2007) as cited by ADB (2010), low educational attainment deters one from finding a job, if not at all, unavailability, insufficiency or insecurity of employment. Non-formal education as defined by Smith (2005) is any organized educational activity outside the established formal system, whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity, that is intended to serve identifiable learning clients and objectives.

The council of Europe in the year 2000 as cited by Rogers (2004) recommended that non-formal education be recognized as a de facto partner in the life-long learning process and make it accessible to all. According to Abadzi (2004), the dictum of cognitive psychology has that, unless something makes sense to a learner, it will not be remembered or used when the need arises. The youth can be shown how the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and attitudes can be used to solve their problems in life. This dictum provides the idea that an empowered person is able to take control of their lives by making positive choices and setting goals. It would mean developing self-awareness, an understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses and in the end knowing your own limitations thereby it is important that the youth is trained to be self-reliant and knowledgeable to survive the different challenges in life and make them strong and powerful individual who has the ability to become catalyst of change, make wise decisions and deal with people in the community honestly and truthfully.

### 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study examined how literacy through instructional intervention program can become a powerful motivator for the forty-seven (47) out of school youths in building their sense of self - concept and looked at how the CIIP program can complement formal school by providing new learning opportunities to these out-of-school youth to make them pass the Alternative and Equivalency test and somehow earn a high school certificate without attending regular formal class from therefrom which designed for those who have started work earlier than 10 years old and had experienced difficulty continuing the regular school. This study involved forty-seven (47) out-of-school youths of Caputatan Norte, thirty-two (32) of them were male and fifteen (15) were female. They were 13 to 27 years old with an average of 18 years of age. They were the *tapaseros* (sugar cane laborers) in the hacienda who worked an average of fifty pesos (P50.00) per 2000 shafts of the sugar cane they cut for a day.

Twenty-five (25) or 53 % of them were elementary graduates, fourteen (14) or 30% of them were first year high school and eight (8) or 17% of them were second year high school. The study was conducted in four phases namely: Phase 1 was the orientation of the out of school youths, barangay officials, community workers and volunteers about the conduct of the program. Phase 2 was the loading of instructional information to those who were involved in the project and in making the modules to be used for the instructional activities. Phase 3 was the pre-assessment and learning engagement of the OSYs. A 40-item pre-test was administered and validated to assess the OSYs competencies in Numerasi at Agham, Araling Panlipunan, Filipino, Kabuhayan at Likas ng Yaman and Pagpalawak sa Pananaw. In this phase, the volunteer teachers conducted classes and review sessions for the OSYs. Lastly, Phase 4 was the learning verification of the OSYs in which they were assessed and evaluated for their readiness to take the A&E test through post- test in different areas mentioned.

The American Heritage Stedman's Medical Dictionary (2002), defined self-concept as the idea or mental image one has of oneself and one's strengths, weaknesses, status etc. Self-concept refers to the way a person thinks about their abilities in a variety of facets of life, including [academics](#), [athletics](#) and [social interactions](#) (Manning, 2007). Formal education refers to the structured educational system that corresponds to a systematic, organized education model, structured and administered according to a given set of laws and norms, presenting a rather rigid curriculum. As cited by Smith (2012), it is the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded 'education system', running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialized

programs and institutions for full-time technical and professional training. When an individual has a strong self-concept, he becomes aware of his limitations and associates himself with other people effectively and works his way better in the society.

*This study also used the demographic profile of the respondents to get some important personal information about them. The interview conducted to the tapaseros (sugar cane laborers), parents and community leaders and volunteers provided some results that help the researchers gain important personal information about them, discover the painful moments of the respondents and gain insights on the conditions and situations of the out-of-school youth in Barangay Caputatan Norte, Medellin, Cebu, Philippines that eventually led the researchers to identify and assess the unmet needs of the youth while on the side, the results of the achievement test given to these OSYs and the performance summary of the Accreditation and Equivalency test (A&E) conducted by the Department of Education were also gathered to assess their basic literacy skills and life competencies. These multiple data sources make up triangulation method used in the study to produce understanding of the data gathered and to further ensure validity and reliability of the result.*

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Personal and Demographic Profile**

The data gathered revealed that the respondents were mostly out-of-school youth whose parents had not enough to money to support their school expenses. Their parents who were school dropouts were also tapaseros and planters working in the hacienda or sugarcane plantation. Some of the respondents lacked the interest and motivation to study because they had to help the family earn more money to sustain their daily needs and schooling would not help them much. Some respondents who have been away from school for too long were ashamed to continue their formal schooling due to their age and pressure from peers. They worked as tapaseros to augment their family income but most often their source of income was not enough for a family with an average of seven (7) siblings. They were pushed to work due to difficult family situations. Commonly, they were not currently in school because they cannot afford to lose an earning but a majority expressed desires of going back to school if only life had been easier and fate will be kind to them.

Before the Instructional Intervention program, these OSYs had low self-confidence and self-concept, lacked the communication and problem-solving skills. They came from large and poor families with poor family values and their parents had low parental skills. The interview results revealed that like any ordinary youth, the out of school youths had simple aspirations in life: to finish schooling, pass the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) test, have a decent job, and become professionals someday. They viewed education as a tool to attain their dreams to become professionals and earn decent jobs in the future. Consequently, they considered education as a passport to white-collar jobs, which are seen as better paying compared with manual jobs that they had. They had a strong desire to be needed and to feel useful, and many aspire to have a better quality life. In general, these youth were engaged into forced labor and stopped studying in a formal school because of their economic situation. Because of poverty they have to supplement an inadequate family income, for their parents cannot provide for their own education.

### **4.2 Self – Concept and Aspirations of the Out of School Youths**

Most of these youth shared that the program enhances and develops their sense of pride, responsibility and self-esteem manifested by an increased self-confidence, self-worth, and optimism. These OSY testified that the program helped them develop and achieve their sense of pride that they begin to feel proud of themselves because they have acquired the functional knowledge which made them useful members of the community. This evidence is manifested when OSY<sub>1</sub> said "...Nakahibawo na ko moatubang ug tawo, kahibawo na pud ko mospeak English and kasabot English di pareha sa una. Gamit kaayo ni nako pag atubang ug pag-abiabi sa mga bisita labi daghan na moanhi sa amo zip line". ("I know how to relate and mingle with people for I know how to speak and understand English now. This is very useful in my job as a part time worker in the zipline.") Majority of the OSYs manifested an increased self-esteem characterized by an increased self-confidence and optimism in these youth who used to believe that they are lower than most people in terms of education and social status.

These Out of School Youth learned to look at themselves as valuable members of the community, and see their role (big or small) as important as the roles of other members in the community. These youths do not only think of helping their family economically. They also see themselves responsible for the kind of life they will lead and live in

the future. OSY<sub>5</sub> said "... ako mam, tungod sa kalisod sa panahon karon, moeskwela gyud ko aron makab-ot nako ang akong mga pangandoy nga makatrabaho sa Cebu ug mahimong usa ka propesyonal aron makatatabang sa akong pamilya. Magmaestro ko aron makatabang sab ko sa akong mga igsoon. Maningkamot gyud ko aron maasinso kay ako ra man pud ang manubag kun unsay dagan sa akong kinabuhi ugma damlag. Nagpasalamat gyud ko ani CIIP mam kay tungod ini nga programa nagtuo gyud ko nga maasenso pud ko ug ang uban namo. Dako ang kahigayunan nga mausab ra ang dagan sa among kinabubhi karon. Naa naman mi kahibawo ug dili na pud uwaw adto eskwelahan. Dali ra unya namo ang pagpangita ug trabaho"

("Because of our difficult economic situation, I have to study so that I can realize my dream to become a professional and to find a job in Cebu in order to uplift my family from the grips of poverty. I will be a teacher so that I can send my siblings to school. I will try my very best to improve the quality of life that I have for I am accountable for my future. I am very thankful to the CIIP Mam, because through this program I strongly believe that we will be empowered. There is a greater opportunity that our life would be transformed. We have gained knowledge and we have the confidence to go back to formal schooling.") The OSYs had developed a positive outlook in life and believed that through the instructional intervention program, they can improve their quality of life. They could get a decent job and receive enough salary to address their basic needs and that of their family. They see the program as a realization of their dreams in life as they build a future for themselves and for the kind of family they wish to have and eventually contribute to the progress of their community.

An OSY<sub>8</sub> said "... Sure ko nga mauswagon ang akong ugma kung makahuman ko kay lahi ra gyud ug naa tay grado ug kahibalo. Makatrabaho ta dayon, may sueldo ug arang-arang ang atong kahimtang. Dili ubos ug luoy ang tan-aw sa tawo namo. ("I am very sure that I will have a better future if I can earn a degree because it's really an advantage. We can find a job, have a salary and better economic situation. People will have high regard on us.") The CIIP looks at the aspect of functional knowledge which an individual in a community must possess. It teaches the OSYs the basic competencies and literacy skills needed for them to function in the community which in turn develop their self-concept: the way they look and value themselves. The need to be accepted by the community and to be regarded and treated with respect by its member is the cry of these youth and with the CIIP helping and guiding they have seen light and hope. Society has started to hope for them and see them as the key to the betterment of their family and the community which will eventually cascade in the whole country.

### 4.3. Caputatan Instructional Intervention Program (CIIP) and Formal Education

The table presented how CIIP complemented the formal education for the out of school youths through the competency skills identified in the program.

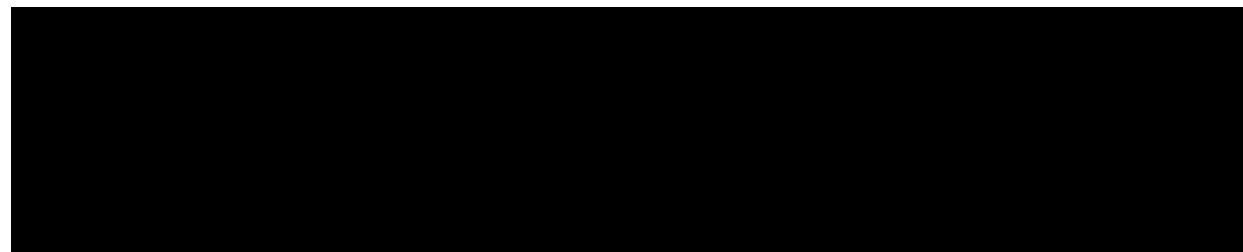


TABLE 1. Competency Skills of the CIIP and Formal Education

One could lift himself to a higher state of character and general value as a citizen by gaining a broad education and then delve deeply into a particular field. It is the premise of the instructional intervention. It provided the OSYs the basic functional knowledge and skills they needed to prepare them for formal education. The skills and competencies offered under CIIP targeted the basic competencies and skills needed in the five (5) subject areas of the formal education curriculum. Caputatan Instructional Intervention Program became a feasible alternative to formal education providing an opportunity for the out-of-school youths to attend formal education without attending regular classes. The basic functional knowledge, competencies, and skills that the OSYs acquired prepared in pursuing higher formal education to a more formal process of learning. To wit, seventy-one percent (71%) of the out of school youths who took the A & E test successfully passed the examination and they are now mainstreamed in the formal education possessing the right self-concept, functional knowledge, competencies and life skills.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The Out of School youths' self - concept and aspirations played a potent role in their decision to join the program because their unmet needs to be self-reliant and productive members of the society were addressed while their sense of self was also developed that made them to believe that to gain knowledge is to obtain the power to take control of their own lives, initiate change in themselves and influence others to become useful members of the community and contribute to the empowerment of their fellow youth in the society thus motivated them to take steps at improving their own lives and make them become empowered in their journey in life. Further, they looked at education as the key for personal empowerment and a tool for success in both personal, social and economic aspects and CIIP provided them an opportunity to create a positive change in their life and alleviate themselves from poverty, take charge of their own lives, make sound decision, plan for the future, owe responsibility for their actions and eventually be of help to other people in the community and in the society.

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## **SUSTAINED SILENT READING: PLEASURE TO TREASURE**

Remedios C. BACUS, Ethel L. ABAO, Filomena T. DAYAGBIL

Cebu Normal University-College of Teacher Education

[mhedybacus@yahoo.com](mailto:mhedybacus@yahoo.com), [etheldlabao@yahoo.com](mailto:etheldlabao@yahoo.com), [ftdayagbil@yahoo.com](mailto:ftdayagbil@yahoo.com),

### **ABSTRACT**

Recognizing reading as an indispensable tool for learning, students need to be adept either in oral or silent reading activity. This study explored the influence of sustained silent reading (SSR) to the students' leisure time activities, reading motivations and reading attitude. The study utilized the experimental design along with the descriptive survey method and focus group discussion. Findings revealed that after the eight weeks of SSR engagements, the students, showed desirable change in their preferred leisure-time activities, reading motivation and reading attitude. Of the many motivations to read, students had placed high regard on the importance of pleasure reading as evidenced by their positive attitude towards reading after the SSR sessions. Factors like intrinsic motivation and choice of leisure time activities are contributory to the quality and quantity of SSR engagements. Since SSR is effective, it is highly recommended that SSR and other pleasure reading activities be made part in the developmental reading program.

**KEYWORDS:** Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), pleasure reading, leisure time activity, reading motivation, reading attitude

### **INTRODUCTION**

Reading is an important survival skill. The success in school and beyond greatly depends in a person's ability to understand what has been read. Exposure to reading enriches a person's word schema making him/her relate better to any text. Like any other skill, reading competence is developed through constant practice. Such skill development is affected by a number of factors. When children read for pleasure and when they get hooked on books, they involuntarily and without conscious effort, acquire nearly all of the so-called "language skills." They will become adequate readers, acquire a large vocabulary, develop the ability to understand and use complex grammatical constructions, develop a good writing style, and become good (but not necessarily perfect) spellers. Although free voluntary reading alone will not ensure attainment of the highest levels of literacy, it will at least ensure an acceptable level. Through reading, the students' vocabulary is increased and fluency and background schema are built (Krashen, 2010). It has been noted in the study that reading for pleasure has become the major source of reading competence, vocabulary and the ability to handle complex grammatical constructions. Satija (2002) as cited by Lone (2011) appended that regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one's living; thereby prepares a person for an effective participation in the social, religious, cultural and political life. Reading loads the mind with new software.

As students read, they become better readers; acquire greater content knowledge which will aid them to perform better across disciplines (Stanovich, 1986) Observations are noted on the discrepancy the way college students approach assigned academic reading and pleasure reading. Students find pleasure reading more engaging because there is no monitoring from the teachers, that is, no assessment of any kind and no reaction or summary is required. In most SSR studies reported, no accountability was used; subjects simply read for pleasure and were not required to do any sort of book report. Even if the students are not assessed, independent reading shows positive effect on their reading interest which cuts across other disciplines. It has been proven to be superior to traditional approaches on measures of reading comprehension as well as measures of writing and reading (Mason and Krashen, 1997). Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) stressed that individuals who read frequently also participate more in their community. Using a national database, he added that the amount of reading predicted participation in community organizations, after home background and level of schooling were controlled. It is axiomatic that all formal education involves reading as a communicative act. Success in schooling is heavily dependent on a student's facility and command of the language across the spectrum of modes. Like other age groups, teenagers read for a wide variety of purposes with personal "tastes" in reading (Manuel, 2012). They may for instance read for pleasure, escape, relaxation, affirmation, comfort, discovery, and fun, information, to connect with others and to complete required school-based tasks.

Reading independently for sustained periods helps students become self-reliant readers. Researches show that the more time spent in reading the more it increases achievement compared to a control condition (Samuels and Wu, 2004). In this information revolution age, students are constantly challenged how to productively use their time in and out of school. With enormous workloads, students, during their free time, must not disregard looking for adequate means to improve their critical thinking skills, analytical reasoning and written communication skills. Studies have shown that reading outside of typical class work, reading a novel or general non-fiction for pleasure, has been associated with heightened creativity and with improved academic success. Reading researchers have looked primarily at two motivation-related constructs. Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) cited these constructs. The first is one's attitude towards reading, which is defined generally as individual's feelings about reading. Alexander and Filler (1976) in Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) stated that these feelings about reading influence how much individuals involve themselves in reading, thus attitudes about reading should relate to individuals' motivation for reading. A second construct is the interest in reading. This construct is related to the work on intrinsic value and motivation. Schiefele (1996) in Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) found that college students interested in the text materials used in the study understood those materials more deeply than did students less interested in the materials, even when the students' prior knowledge of the materials and general intelligence were controlled.

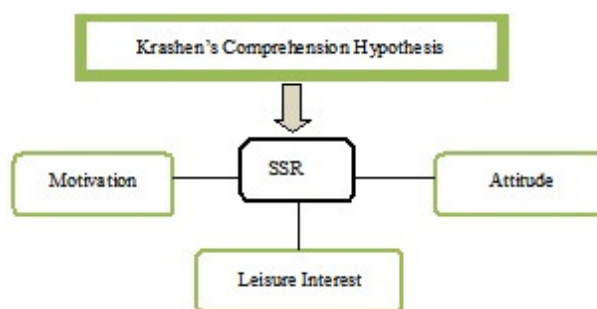


FIGURE 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Krashen (2004) underscored that the success of in-school free reading is consistent with the more general Comprehension Hypothesis, the hypothesis that one acquires language when he/she understands messages. The large quantities of meaningful and comprehensible input provided by SSR activate that potential, thereby fostering language acquisition, as learners induce the rules of grammar and other language elements, such as spelling, from the data they receive in their environment. Hence, school performance is affected by one's exposure to language in education. On the other hand, several factors can also become contributive to performance, like students' motivation and attitude towards learning. In the same vein, the quality and quantity of pleasure reading greatly depend on a student's reading motivation, reading attitude and preferred leisure time activities. Influence of peers and modern technology shape the way how students spend their leisure time. It is their interest that heightens their engagement to sustained silent reading.

Pilgreen and Krashen (1993) in Krashen (2004) observing SSR classes concluded that it is more effective to do a little each day than to devote large segments of time once or twice a week to free reading. The goal of SSR is to develop a taste for reading, to stimulate the once-reluctant reader to read more outside of school. Rather than forcing reading, and possibly making it distasteful, small doses are much more likely to work. It is not the actual time reading during SSR that counts, it is the desire to read more than counts. Thus SSR is not for very advanced readers. Studies confirm that those who participate in SSR programs read more on their own when the program is over. The key belief underlying SSR implementation is that students can best learn the parts of a language indirectly by reading whole text, whole-to-part, supplemented by some instruction (Anderson, 1996, Yu, 1993 in Lituanas, 1999). SSR provides one mean of supporting the efficacy of instruction focused in whole texts (Mason and Krashen, 1997, Elley, 1996 in Lituanas, 1999). Rationales for the advantages of pleasure reading range from the common sense - one learn to X (in this case, read) by doing X (in this case, reading) - to the currently more esoteric - e.g., chaos theory (Larsen-Freeman, 1997 in Lituanas, 1999) which postulates that dynamic, complex non-linear systems such as human language are self-organizing, given sufficient input and feedback, and reading provides one source of such input and feedback. Pleasure reading is comprehensible input and students make better in classes that supply more "comprehensible input.

## Objectives of the Study

This paper investigated the influence of SSR time to the students' leisure time activities, reading motivations and reading attitude.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study made use of an experimental design with descriptive survey using the questionnaire and a focus group discussion. Purposive sampling was used to compose the 55 students who were in the second year of teacher-preparation. They were made to bring any material they love to read within the first ten minutes of the 90-minute class for eight weeks. To find out the preferred leisure time activities and the reasons of SSR engagements, the researchers-made and student-completed checklists were used. To ensure validity and reliability, the same test was pilot-tested to the other Second Year students of the BEED and the BSED Programs. Revisions on the instructions and inclusion of "others" in the Options were among the changes made. Responses were tallied using frequency and percentages.

To find out the students' motivations for reading, the Motivations for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) by Wigfield and Guthrie in 1997 was utilized. The original scale contained 82 items (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1995), but was revised by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) and now only contains 53 items. It is a student rated assessment of the extent to which each is motivated to read. Quantitative data were analyzed. The students' scores in MRQ, and preferred leisure time activities were tallied following frequency analyses. Subsequently, to determine the students' reading attitude before and after the SSR, a focus group discussions and individual random interview were conducted.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### SSR and Leisure Time Activities

With the advent of technological advancements, students are always in dilemma between reading and doing something else during their free time. Table 1 presents the students' preferred leisure time interests before and after they were exposed to SSR sessions.

As seen in the table, before SSR sessions, the largest percentage of the total number of students ( $p=36\%$ ) chose to spend their leisure time in watching a television program. This was followed by checking their facebook accounts with 31%. Thirteen (21%) of the students preferred reading e-books or novels. Only 4% indicated that they used their free time in researching a topic in Google. Making school projects, viewing clips in Youtube and visiting a friend were the least preferred leisure time activities, each with 2% respectively. Nobody wanted to spend leisure time in a mall. After SSR sessions, a considerable shift of leisure preference was noted. A slight decrease of TV program viewing, 36% to 27% and an increase in reading e-books or novels, 24% to 33% were observed. Reading was identified as the most preferred activity after SSR sessions while facebook remained to be the second preference. On the other hand, researching a topic, making school projects, viewing clips, visiting friends and going to malls remained an unpopular choice. The preference of leisure time activities before SSR sessions corroborated the findings of the study of Cato and Kunstler (2008) where the use of media in the home accounted for about one-third of all the free time of each of three groups in French, Americans and Russians. Pratt (1983) in Cato and Kunstler (1988) mentioned also that Americans found their leading daily activities to be watching television (72%) and reading newspaper (70%). The offshoot of technological advancement has brought changes in family, social and economic conditions. Generally, poor reading

Preferred Leisure Time Activities	Before SSR Sessions	After SSR Sessions
	n=55	
watching a tv program	36%	31%
checking my facebook account to read friend's shout outs and news feeds	31%	27%
reading e-books or novels	24%	33%
researching a topic in google	4%	0%
making school projects	2%	5%
viewing clips in Youtube	2%	4%
Others: visiting a friend (to chitchat)	2%	0%
going to a mall	0%	0%

TABLE 1. Students' Preferred Leisure Time Activities

habit occur in children and young people because: reading is not considered a relevant leisure activity as it does not form part of children's social interaction; reading is considered a solitary pursuit and is not preferred in comparison with interactive chats on the internet. Adults and children alike glue more to televisions watching drama or home videos as a way of enjoying their leisure instead of reading (Aina, et.al., 2011).

Indeed, the place of SSR in the students' use of their free time has considerably been worth an investigation. In the co relational study of Sullivan and Brown as cited by Krashen in 2013, the students' pleasure reading during their free time correlated significantly with vocabulary test results. Self-selected pleasure reading has spawned the students' interest in reading and drove them to engage in it even beyond the SSR sessions in school. The practice of bringing any material they love to read inside the classroom stirred the students' love for reading as they, without the teacher telling them, gladly shared through Bluetooth their e-books and exchanged their materials (books, magazines and novels), to be brought home. Face booking has always been part of the students' lives. Aside from the excitement they get, they are made aware of the many events taking place around the people they hold dear. Like free voluntary reading, it does not require heavy cognitive undertaking. Since most of the students' time is spent in school, various forms of activities which are highly academic were unpopular during their free time.

The data provided the teachers with a snapshot of the students' reading lives. To address these demands, teachers need to recalibrate their approaches to teaching in the digital age- while at the same time nurturing student's intrinsic purposeful engagement in learning. It is imperative that teachers deepen their understanding of the forces that can motivate them to shape their preferences in reading in-school and off-school. With this, teachers should create ways and retool their classes to introduce to their students good literature and to encourage discussions which are geared toward group dynamics. They have to constantly put an effort to provide and influence literature-based classroom tasks. The result also provides the parents a pragmatic view to promote literary activities to deepen their children's interests in books.

## **SSR and Reading Motivations**

### **Students' Motivations for Reading**

At the inception of the study, it was found out that, of the 11 motivational constructs, the students were motivated to read because they had placed highest regard on the importance of reading. Reading for curiosity and reading for involvement come second and third respectively. Reading for social reasons, for grades and for competition were least of their motivations to read. After exposure to SSR sessions, importance of reading and reading involvement propelled them to read. Reading for curiosity remained one of the three reasons for reading. Reading for competition, reading efficacy, and social reasons for reading were the least identified motivations. Due to the demands of their course, the students acknowledged that reading can improve their grades. Consequently, reading for grades was not anymore seen as among the least of the motivations to read. Comparing the results of reading motivations before and after SSR engagements, it is apparent that the students had clearly identified and placed greater emphasis on intrinsic than extrinsic motivations. How they felt about reading changed after SSR sessions. Out of 11 constructs, only two motivations-reading efficacy and reading for curiosity had decreased its means. Table 2 presents the data gathered on students' considered reasons for reading before and after SSR sessions

MOTIVATIONS		BEFORE		AFTER	
Importance	3.18	Highly considered	3.19	Highly considered	
Involvement	2.98	Considered	3.19	Highly considered	
Curiosity	3.06	Highly Considered	2.98	Considered	
Challenge	2.82	Considered	2.84	Considered	
Compliance	2.58	Considered	2.8	Considered	
Work Avoidance	2.48	Considered	2.71	Considered	
Recognition	2.45	Considered	2.69	Considered	
Grades	2.44	Considered	2.57	Considered	
Social Reasons	2.44	Considered	2.55	Considered	
Efficacy	2.67	Considered	2.53	Considered	
Competition	2.32	Considered	2.37	Considered	

Legend:

1-Less Considered 2-Considered 3-Highly Considered 4-Very Highly Considered

**TABLE 2. Motivations for Reading**

They acknowledged that reading skills are vital to their success in school and in work. As future teachers, they are fully aware of the immensity of the possibilities to be successful when one regularly reads. Reading does not occur merely because of compliance, hence, it ranked 6<sup>th</sup> before SSR and 5<sup>th</sup> after SSR sessions. Moreover, students don't read much for grades and for competition. It was out of fun and imaginative activity that they engaged in pleasure reading. Considering the subjects they have coupled with numerous workloads, the students desire to find some sort of a breather and there is no better way to do that than to indulge in free voluntary reading. Although they are much motivated to get good grades but competition (lowest for both before and after SSR sessions) is farfetched. They even shared their materials to others and find joy in sharing their books.

The result partly confirmed the findings of Guthrie and Wigfield(1997) when they assessed the levels of reading motivation of children in a school in mid-Atlantic state where the children's mean scores were highest on the aspects of reading importance and grades and lowest on the competition, social and work avoidance aspects. The result of their study showed that the students rated both intrinsic motivation- importance of reading, high and extrinsic motivations- competition, relatively low. It can be deduced that although students are intrinsically motivated to read, still, they driven to improve themselves in whatever endeavor they have. It has been noted that most of a person's activities are reading- related and one cannot do away with life without involving the skills in reading. Overall, the result of the study confirmed that Education students are intrinsically motivated to read and the availability of academically challenging books and favorable environment spawn their interest to read.

## **SSR and Reading Attitude**

### **Influences of SSR to Students' Attitude towards Reading**

Through a focus group discussion, 70% of the students revealed that they love and enjoy reading even more after they were exposed to the 10-minute SSR for two months. Here are vignettes of their experiences after the period of SSR in the class. Three students or 5% mentioned:

"I always looked forward to buying a second hand book at Booksale." I enjoy reading as much as watching my favorite teleserye." Six students or 11% expressed: "My friend and I used to exchange our reading material. I could not forget how much she loved my book." On the other hand, twelve students (22%) mentioned, "Mas daghan nako'g nakat-unan nga bag –o nga mga words.( I learn more new words.)" Nine students or 16% stated:"Before, I don't like to read during my free time pero karon ganahan nko ( but now but now I enjoy reading.) It makes me more participative in the class because I have something to share from what I have read. " Consequently, one or 2% said:"One time I was waiting for my friend. Gasabot mi magkita para magpraktis mi sa among epresent. Dugay kayo siya naabot. Maayo nalang gani naa koy nadada nga pocket book. Nalingaw ra sad ko ug basa. Mao na pirme nako nay dad on nga book sa akong bag. (Once, I waited for a friend. We agreed to meet to rehearse for our presentation. She did not come on time. Lucky enough I have brought a pocket book. I enjoyed reading while waiting for her. That's why I always make sure I have a book in my bag.)

Generally, majority of the students felt that SSR is valuable. Although it does not guarantee them to become exceedingly better than those who did not engage in SSR sessions, the acquisition of positive attitude towards reading spells a great impact in their lives as future educators. It opens an array of benefits. One of which is the development of reading habits that will make them lifelong readers. In so doing, their level of participation in social and other civic-related affairs increases. Indeed, reading during one's free time provides an avenue to see how words are stringed together to form one coherent thought. Unconsciously, a student who engaged in sustained silent reading has for himself an opportunity to widen his imagination. When asked what made her read during her free time, a student stressed that it was the only time she was made to read a material she liked not to mention the absence of pressure since there were no questions asked after reading. She added that anytime she could drop the book if she did not like it anymore and grabbed a new one. A study of Chow and Chou (2000) in Birmingham (2001) indicated that students enjoyed SSR because of its relaxed environment. The students not only had a quiet time during the day to read but also a non-threatening reading atmosphere for struggling readers. They read because it is not "work." Table 3 presents the vignettes of students as they recounted the influences of SSR to their attitude towards reading.

Vignettes of Students	
BEFORE	AFTER
"I am fond of watching tv shows rather than reading."	"I always looked forward to buying a second hand book at Booksale." I enjoy reading as much as watching my favorite teleserye."
"We actually don't have books to share with."	"My friend and I used to exchange our reading material. I could not forget how much she loved my book."
"I read but I don't mind about the words or vocabularies."	"Mas daghan nako'g nakat-unan nga bag -o nga mga words.( I learn more new words.)"
"Before, I don't like to read during my free time."	"...pero karon ganahan niko (but now I enjoy reading.) It makes me more participative in the class because I have something to share from what I have read."
"Before, if I am waiting for my friend, I'll just sit and look around the place."	"One time I was waiting for my friend. Gasabot mi magkita para magpraktis mi sa among epresent. Dugay kayo siya naabot. Maayo nalang gani naa koy nadada nga pocket book. Nalingaw ra sad ko ug basa. Mao na pirme nako nay dad on nga book sa akong bag. (Once, I waited for a friend. We agreed to meet to rehearse for our presentation. She did not come on time. Lucky enough I have brought a pocket book. I enjoyed reading while waiting for her. That's why I always make sure I have a book in my bag.)"

TABLE 3. Influences of SSR to Students' Attitude towards Reading

True enough, such SSR time among the university students is not strictly supervised as opposed to that employed in most schools as part of their institutional program to enhance the students' competence in English. Teachers' supervision among elementary and secondary school students during SSR time is evident along with other conditions affect the quality of SSR where comprehensible input is provided. Krashen (2004) mentioned in his paper that that many children do not actually read during sustained silent reading sessions, but only pretend to read. Von Sprecken and Krashen (Krashen, 2004) examined the behaviour of middle-school children in SSR classes in the middle of the academic year, and reported that 90% of the children they observed were reading, a result confirmed by Cohen (1996) in Krashen (2004), who made a special effort to make observations unobtrusive. Both concluded that children were more likely to be reading during SSR when certain conditions were met: When there was access to interesting reading in the classroom and students are not required to bring their own reading material, when teachers read while students are reading, and when teachers made efforts to promote and discuss certain books.

## CONCLUSION

Sustained silent reading is effective and has created a positive influence in guiding the students towards spending a more valuable leisure- time activities, in motivating them to continually read and in strengthening their positive attitude towards reading.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that both school and home take a conscious effort in providing a print-rich environment. To augment the quantity and quality of SSR that university students do, schools should develop reading programs and empower students to take lead in organizing reading centers or reading dens. There must be an easy access to varied materials- print or electronic, that are fascinating and appealing all ages and tastes.

To ensure success in this endeavour, all the significant adults in the lives of the students-parents, teachers, school and community officials, must collaborate in designing tasks and restructuring the entire learning milieu towards the love for SSR. An example to this is making it as well as other pleasure reading activities part in the developmental reading curriculum among students in the university.

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## **CONSERVING THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH MEMORY RESEARCH: A CASE STUDY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

John Charles RYAN, Edith Cowan University ,john.ryan@ecu.edu.au

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper develops the concept “botanical memory” through an analysis of interviews conducted with indigenous plant enthusiasts in the biodiverse Southwest of Western Australia. Focusing on the everyday practices constituting botanical memory, this paper posits a material-affective framework to foreground the dynamics between plants, people, objects, and remembrance. The writings of Henry David Thoreau and C. Nadia Seremetakis, in conjunction with affect and materiality theory, proffer conceptual anchor points for the exploration of human recollection and flora. The interviews indicate that plant-based objects and living plants deepen human memory, particularly through their appeal to touch, taste, smell, and sensation.

**KEY-WORDS:** Environment; memory; affect; plants; Australia; conservation.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

On a clear spring afternoon, the researcher follows local conservationist Ian Smith around the rocky outcrops and through the wooded gullies of Mount Matilda in Western Australia (WA). After years of farming the region’s flatlands, Ian dedicates his retirement to the promotion and protection of wildflowers—those endemic counterparts of canola and soy. Named the Wheatbelt, this six-thousand-square-mile part of the state lies between metropolitan Perth to the west and the arid Goldfields to the east. Within this predominantly agricultural landscape, locales such as Mount Matilda are ecological islands, regarded by settlers as unsuitable for pastoral activities because of rugged terrain and noxious plants. Regularly on our ascent to the hill’s highest point, Ian gestures at flowers with his walking staff—handcrafted from a local tree known as gimlet (*Eucalyptus salubris*)—as we exchange observations, ideas, and recollections.

Like Ian’s staff, the hill and its plant life bear testimony. All have survived the austerity of the environment and the infelicities of settler history. The gracefully convoluted walking stick embodies and—indeed—facilitates Ian’s attachment to this perduring sanctuary. “The wood is so strong. I’ve used this staff for years, but there is not much wear. I’ve stained it with boot polish, and varnished it. That’s my name there” (Smith, 2009). Ian’s gimlet staff further points to the material and affective dimensions of human memory, developed in this paper through the concept *botanical memory*. Previous work has defined botanical memory as a form of environmental or place-based memory focused on people’s remembrances of plants, and on individual and collective practices that instigate and sustain such recollections (Ryan, 2012, 187–212). In field interviews with Ian and other floristically-minded individuals, the interconnections between plant materiality—the spikiness, stickiness, smelliness of living plants, as well as the qualities of plant-based objects—and human memory are palpable.

A number of questions have arisen from prior research, some of which guide the structure and focus of this paper. For instance, what is the relationship between plant materiality, human affect, and the manner in which memories are produced, recalled, and enacted? How might memories of plants be elicited before, during, and after a roving conversation in the field, such as ours on Mount Matilda, through material prompts? How do the proximate senses (touch, taste, and smell) influence the fidelity and content of botanical memory? In response to these questions, the first part of this paper formulates a material-affective theory of botanical memory, drawing on the work of historically divergent scholars, such as naturalist Henry David Thoreau and anthropologist C. Nadia Seremetakis. Then, following theorist Andrew Jones and extending the precepts of the “material turn,” the paper argues for a material-affective understanding of botanical remembrance as “dialogic encounter” (Jones, 2007, 25) between people, plants, places, and objects.

The paper’s second half historicizes and analyzes ethnographic content, thereby establishing the relevance of the theoretical exegesis to a field-based model of botanical memory. An interview with artist Holly Story reveals her

engagement with the edible resin of marri (*Corymbiacalophylla*) for producing works of art in which the endemic tree *does* the painting (Story, 2014). In another interview, the WA artist NaldaSearles explains that textiles of balga (*Xanthorrhoea preissii*) embody memories of the plant and her creative process (Searles, 2014). In comparison, plant propagator Kevin Collins employs banksia (*Banksia* spp.) parts, particularly their flowers and seed cones, to catalyze memorable experiences for visitors while evoking his own sensory recollections of the small trees (Collins, 2009a).

## 2. BACKGROUND TO MEMORY: PLACE AND PRACTICE

The Southwest Australia Ecoregion (or Southwest Botanical Province) is a triangular landmass of 493,000 square kilometers, extending from Shark Bay on the Indian Ocean in the north-west to Israelite Bay on the Southern Ocean in the south-east (WWF-Australia, 2006). In the late seventeenth century, the region's botanical uniqueness began to attract naturalists, collectors, and explorers, many of whom were astounded by the plant diversity (Lambers and Hopper, 2014). In 1699, William Dampier made the first known collection of Australian plants at Shark Bay, followed in 1791 by Archibald Menzies at King George Sound, now Albany (Lambers and Hopper, 2014, xii). Modern botanists estimate that close to 8,000 plant species exist in the Southwest—a remarkable quantity, considering that one-third have been taxonomically identified only since 1970 (Hopper and Gioia, 2004). Moreover, thirty-five percent of the plants are endemic—occurring nowhere else in a freely growing, uncultivated state. Accordingly, the region has been acknowledged as a “biodiversity hotspot,” defined as a place where “exceptional concentrations of endemic species are undergoing exceptional loss of habitat” (Myers, 2000, 853).

Despite its historical renown, by the year 2000, the Southwest's vegetation had been reduced to a meager ten percent of its original 300,000 square kilometres (Myers, 2000, 854). Of critical importance to conservation of extant diversity is the botanically-rich *kwongan*, an Aboriginal Nyoongar term denoting the unique sandplain vegetation (Pate and Beard, 1984). Mount Matilda, the site of the perambulatory conversation with Ian, is ensconced there. Cleared extensively for agriculture and pasture, the *kwongan* is currently threatened by dryland salinity, plant disease, invasive species, and habitat fragmentation (Lambers and Hopper, 2014, xiv). Regarding the Southwest, botanists Stephen Hopper and Paul Gioia (2004, 644) assert that “fundamental changes in attitudes toward land use and the intrinsic value of plant life are needed to go hand in hand with a commitment to protect, repair, and restore native vegetation in the face of uncertainty.”

Following this entreaty to foster the appreciation of “intrinsic value,” conservationists have created initiatives, such as the archival project FloraCultures, to promote the cultural heritage of the region's plant life. These projects conceptualize the heritage of Southwest flora through the myriad ways in which plants inspire individuals and communities across time (Ryan, 2014, 49–58). Nonetheless, whereas the scientific significance of the flora has been well-articulated and supported, expressions of the impact of plants on WA culture in the past, present, and future remain dispersed across heterogeneous sources: in letters, journals, newspaper articles, blogs, websites, poetry, novels, plays, performances, paintings, photographs, sculptures, crafts—and in the memory-rich narratives of activists, artists, conservationists, scientists, tourists, and other plant enthusiasts. The latter category (human narratives) is a vital, though relatively unprobed, facet of the Southwest flora's value—its “intangible cultural heritage,” characterized as “forms of cultural heritage that lack physical manifestation [and evoke] that which is untouchable, such as knowledge, memories and feelings” (Stefano, Davis, and Corsane, 2012, 1).

As the rates of floristic decline indicate, the viability of intangible plant-based heritage is in jeopardy. Therefore, cultural conservation should be a concern in the region in conjunction with the biological conservation aims of protecting living plants in their habitats. Referring to a global context, UNESCO acknowledges that “oral traditions and expressions [...] social practices, rituals and festive events [...] knowledge and practices concerning nature” are intangible heritage priority areas (UNESCO, 2003). Mindful of the value of such heritage, the researcher has interviewed individuals in the Southwest since 2009 for their memories of flora. Recently, the researcher has begun to conduct film-based oral histories focusing on the locales and species of resonance to the individuals, but with an ongoing emphasis on the *kwongan*, which includes the rapidly changing metropolitan Perth area. The interviewees have had various attachments to Southwest plants; some were recently-landed tourists who had followed, in their caravans, the seasonal blossoming of wildflowers from Shark Bay to Esperance, whereas others had life-long, site-specific histories of physical, emotional, and spiritual attachment to flora (Ryan, 2012, 157–183). Where possible, the interviews occurred in “the field”—for example, during wildflower walks, on the grounds of a botanical garden, or in the studio of an artist. Such field settings enabled particular interactions between the interviewee, the

ethnographer, and the plant-based prompts of seeds, leaves, flowers, roots, smells, tastes, sensations, artifacts, implements, and artworks.

### 3. A MATERIAL-AFFECTIVE THEORY OF MEMORY

In relation to this ethnographic practice, a material-affective theory of memory frames the bodily, sensory, emotional, and terrene (*earthy*) features of botanical recollection. In developing such a framework, this section builds upon the work of Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) and C. Nadia Seremetakis before briefly considering recent materiality and affect theory. Developed with reference to the American Northeast flora, Thoreau’s botanical memory is conspicuous in his posthumous works (Thoreau, 1993, 2000). In particular, *Wild Fruits* (2000) crystallizes the nodes between materiality (of the plants themselves and related objects) and affect (of expressiveness, emotion, embodiment, sensoriality, and relationality). Thoreau conceived of these writings as a “Kalendar”—involving the documentation of the seasonal phenomena of Concord, Massachusetts, intermixed with historical, philosophical, and experiential reflections. His journal was a substrate for “material memory” (Peck, 1990, 45), hybridizing his personal recollections with those of other writers, both classical and contemporaneous. As a result, critics have characterized Thoreau’s eco-literary corpus as “a project in memory” (Tauber, 2001, 69).

An entry from *Wild Fruits* presents a haptic recollection of *Desmodium*, a genus of plants in the pea family having the common name *tick trefoil*. The seedpod of *Desmodium* is known as a *loment*. Each seed is enclosed in a triangular sheath that readily detaches from adjoining seeds and bears barbed hairs to enhance its dispersal by clinging to animals. Thoreau recounts walking with a friend through a thick patch of trefoil along the Concord River, the “green scale-like seeds densely covering and greening our legs [and amounting] to a kind of coat of mail” (Thoreau, 2000, 159). With curiosity, humor, and amity, Thoreau’s rendering is attentive to the materiality of the loment, the two men’s clothes, and the ebbs and flows of walking: “It was the event of our walk, and we were proud to wear this badge” (Thoreau, 2000, 159). His companion’s fervent devotion to the Velcro-like seed badge even “betrayed a certain religion about it” because when he “reappeared for a walk a day or two after, his clothes were nearly as well covered as at first” (Thoreau, 2000, 159).

In a similar tone, Thoreau recounts the explosive launching mechanism of witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) nuts through haptic and sonic remembrance. A witch hazel’s woody fruit capsules rupture, releasing two dark glossy seeds as far as thirty feet away. Thoreau brings the “pretty clusters—clothed, as it were, in close-fitting buck-skin” into his chamber (Thoreau, 2000, 190). “Three nights afterward I heard at midnight a snapping sound and the fall of some small body on the floor from time to time” (Thoreau, 2000, 190). The “bodies” were the stony seeds of the nuts casting themselves around—an ecological spectacle that continued for three days. This anecdote signifies the convergence of plant materiality (the reproductive strategies embodied in seeds) and affective human memory where fascination, respect, and delight predominate. Thoreau’s affectedness represents a conception of plant materiality, not as inert substance to manipulate but as animate matter to encounter dialogically: “I believe almost in the personality of such matter [...] can even worship it as terrene, titanic matter extant in my day [...] we healthily attract one another” (Thoreau, 2000, 168). His assertions prefigure Jane Bennett’s notion of “vibrant matter” and the process she describes as “encountering a vital materiality [in which] *all* forces and flows (materialities) are or can become lively, affective and signaling” (Bennett, 2010, 111, 117).

Although considerably different from Thoreau’s nineteenth-century reflections, Seremetakis’ chapter “The Memory of the Senses” also begins with botanical encounter, specifically with the peaches of her native Greece. For Seremetakis, the content of memory is affected by the physiology of sensory experience—the “co-mingling” of memory and the senses—mediated by mnemonically-resonate things. She asks, “Is memory stored in specific everyday items that form the historicity of a culture, items that create and sustain our relationship to the historical as a sensory dimension?” (Seremetakis, 1996, 3). Seremetakis (1996, 9) understands memory as a “material practice that is activated by embodied acts and semantically dense objects.” The emotional and historical imbrications borne by such objects “can provoke and ignite gestures, discourses and acts” (Seremetakis, 1996, 7). In other words, memory is latent and affective—its dimensions contingent upon, and instigated by, the materiality of objects. Sensory memories of flora—of nibbling, sniffing, scratching—are formed, evoked, and deepened through embodied encounters with living plants (such as the springing seeds of witch hazel) and related artifacts (the clothes one wears in a trefoil field or the trekking staff with which one gestures). However, despite its generative emphasis on memory and the senses, Seremetakis’ conception is limited by a language of “objects” that elides the crucial mnemonic differences between living things (e.g. the gimlet tree) and inanimate artifacts (e.g. the gimlet staff). For example,

this elision fails to recognize the agency of plants as intelligent beings that activate the memory of humans and nonhumans, while also themselves possessing the capacity for remembering (Gagliano, Mancuso, and Robert, 2012).

In conjunction with the work of Seremetakis and Thoreau, affect theory offers a potential contribution to botanical memory—in which humans, plants, and objects reciprocally shape each other. Gregory Seigworth and Melissa Gregg characterize affect as the relational force of living bodies that “arises in the midst of *in-between-ness*: in the capacities to act and be acted upon” (Seigworth and Gregg, 2010, 1). Not simply the experience of emotion or feeling, affect denotes “*forces of encounter*” and the “ever-gathering accretion of force-relations” (Seigworth and Gregg, 2010, 2). Most significantly, for these writers, an appreciation of affect stipulates a recognition of the corporeality of relations in which bodies “co-participate in the passages of affect” (Seigworth and Gregg, 2010, 2), whereby bodies perpetually *affect* and are *affected*. Affect is “persistent proof” (Seigworth and Gregg, 2010, 1) of bodily immersion in the world, environment, or habitat, and in the trefoil field or witch hazel chamber. Therefore, memory is closely interwoven with the relational capacities that “belong to the doings of bodies” (Seigworth and Gregg, 2010, 9). In this sense, botanical memory is in-becoming (resists being fixed or complete) and entails the dynamic between remembering and being remembered. It emerges in the *in-between-ness* of vegetal and human bodies.

Alongside affect theory (with its concern for embodiment and relationality), the theorization of Seremetakis (with its emphasis on sensoriality), and the writings of Thoreau (that instantiate field-based memory), the “material turn” in anthropology (Hicks and Beaudry, 2010), archaeology (Jones, 2007), cultural studies (Bennett and Joyce, 2010), and ecocriticism (Iovino and Oppermann, 2014) merits consideration. The material turn dismisses the view of things as passive materials or symbolic structures, and instead recognizes the “distinctive forms of agency and effectivity on the part of material forces” (Joyce and Bennett, 2010, 4). In this light, Andrew Jones (2007) explores the production of memory through the materiality of artifacts. He argues against the prevailing notion of memory as a “storage container” assessed (or rejected) according to standards of authenticity or lucidity. Rather, memory is “sedimented” in our bodily actions; and material culture comprises embodied knowledge and extra-corporeal objects (Jones, 2007, 9, 11, 12). Despite Jones’ disregard for the nonhuman through his emphasis on people and objects, his theory foregrounds the complex imbrications between memory and physical phenomena. Similarly, but with attention to trees, vegetables, fields, and other living agents, Jennifer Jordan in her study of historical kitchen gardens in Europe addresses the generation of “edible collective memory” that involves the botanical world (Jordan, 2010).

#### 4. LET THE TREES PAINT: HOLLY STORY’S KINO ART

Concerned with the intertwining of memory and flora, this paper turns now to interviews with Southwest Australians. Holly Story was born in 1953 in Zimbabwe and immigrated to Australia in 1971. She is a visual artist and environmentalist who has intensively explored the use of indigenous flora—whole specimens, dyes, fibers, and resins—in her artwork. Holly’s creative practice employs plant materials to represent and critique settler relationships with the WA environment, particularly its vegetation, which has been historically regarded in acutely polarizing terms: as beautiful and picturesque, as repulsive and worthless (Seddon, 2005). In reference to Holly’s exhibition *Skin Deep* (2006), Stephen Hopper remarks optimistically that “native plant pigments and their use in dyeing textiles may well signal closer intimacy with plant life from an old landscape” (Hopper, 2006, 9). Holly’s art centers around the Deep Creek locality near Walpole, on the South Coast of Western Australia, typified by tall open forests of karri (*Eucalyptus diversicolor*) and marri (*Corymbiacalophylla*). She calls her work an “embodied practice”—and an “attempt to graft myself into the place”—through multisensorial experimentation with the plants of this vicinity (Story, 2014).

Holly’s Deep Creek studio is nestled in the eucalypt forest with a sweeping western view across the D’entrecasteaux National Park to the Indian Ocean. In the spirit of Thoreau’s cabin, she and her husband have handcrafted their rustic hilltop retreat with a painstaking affection that speaks in the details: alcoves, nooks, a narrow staircase to a sleeping loft. After a short amble in search of the spring’s first orchids, Holly shows the researcher her latest work-in-progress, a series of paintings with marri gum. Also called *kino*, this astringent blood-red exudate is common to *Eucalyptus* trees but most profuse in the endemic marri from which it seeps then congeals to a dark amber-like substance. In the ethnomedicine of the Nyoongar of the Southwest, kino has been used externally for cuts, bites, and abrasions and internally for sore throats, diarrhoea, and scurvy (Clarke, 2008, 39). According to the nineteenth-century diarist George Fletcher Moore, kino is known as *nalla* in the Nyoongar language (Moore, 1842, 82). The

gum of the endemic tree was an object of curiosity for WA explorers, settlers, and visitors. The mariner William Dampier (1651–1715) recorded his gustatory remembrance of kino while navigating the coast of Terra Australis: “The gum distils out of the knots or cracks that are in the bodies of the trees. We compared it with some gum dragon, or dragon's blood, that was aboard, and it was of the same colour and taste” (Dampier, 1703, 463). In the early twentieth century, novelist D.H. Lawrence (1885–1930), during a visit to Perth, regarded the marri gum in macabre terms: “leaves and herbage underneath seem bestrewed with blood” and “this tree seems to sweat blood” (Lawrence and Skinner, 1972, 112).

Holly's engagement with marri unveils the potential of kino while countering the predominant paradigm of artists appropriating natural materials to produce works. In this example, the trees do the art; the role of the artist is as facilitator, witness, and narrative guardian. In her studio, Holly displays large unframed canvases that are encrusted in maroon-colored gum layers of variable thicknesses. In line with Lawrence's remarks, the topography of kino splotches and splatters of the paintings does invoke blood and guts. The organic patterns provoke a visceral reaction as the researcher imagines the works receding slowly into the soil under the marri trees outside the studio. In contrast, Holly radiates exuberance, playfulness, and respect as she conveys her initial encounter with kino as medium. “I was under one tree putting some paper out just to see what might happen. Then the gum dripped on my head! It was gorgeous. I put my hand up to receive the beautiful red drip. I have tasted the gum. It is sweet when it first comes out of the tree, then it becomes bitter” (Story, 2014).

The memory of the sweet-bitter sensory transaction has inspired Holly's continued exploration of eucalypt kino as creative substance. “I'm now facilitating the creation of artworks by placing things under trees that drip a lot. In fact, some trees drip like taps” (Story, 2014). In the co-produced paintings, the linkages between botanical memory (hers, mine, and her future audience's), affective modes (from Lawrence's dread to her wonder), and the kino's materiality (the manner in which its physical properties register through sight, touch, and taste) coalesce. Holly's work exemplifies the potential for memory to encompass dialogic, embodied encounters between people and plants (Story, 2014).

## 5. A FEELING FOR MATERIAL: NALDA SEARLES' BALGA WORKS

Nalda Searles, an artist whose work integrates everyday objects into woven forms, was born in 1945 in the arid Kalgoorlie-Boulder region of WA and presently lives near Perth. Nalda troubles the dichotomies of indigenous/introduced, cultural/natural, and subject/object through her investigation of the Australian environment during a thirty-five year career. Infused with personal and collective, familial and societal, and human and nonhuman memories, Nalda's art is sympathetic to the materialities of seeds, leaves, fibers, dyes, and “the bush.” She comments, “my work reflects an awareness of the potential of plants. When I pick up things, because my skills are well-developed, I can almost straightaway identify how they can be used in a creative work” (Searles, 2014). For Nalda, botanical memory links these materialities to the narratives of plants: “They have their own indigenous stories. They have colonial stories. They have my story and your story” (Searles, 2014). Critic Ted Snell (2009, 10) has described Nalda's work as “transformative practice that works with the poetry of materials to reveal what lies beneath the surface, literally and metaphorically.”

Nalda's home studio is replete with previously exhibited works, intriguing found objects, organic miscellany, exhibition catalogues, and taxonomic guides, each instigating her memories as the researcher points, asks, and listens. Her recollections meander between concepts that inspired works, people who were involved, particularly her mentor Pantjiti Mary McLean, and artistic techniques Nalda has developed or adapted to facilitate the use of WA flora in textiles. Many of Nalda's artworks were gestated during her occasional eight-hour drives from Perth to Kalgoorlie. Motioning toward *Mallee Leaf Jacket* (1996), a salvaged tweed jacket embroidered with eucalyptus leaves, she explains, “I keep my sharp eye out. I've made that drive at least a hundred times. If there's a storm, a whole branch comes down. If I can reach it, I stop, drag it out of the bush, and put it in the car. Then I have this fresh material. When I get something like that, I need to use it straight away” (Searles, 2014). Nalda conveys her experience in the present tense, signifying that the memory is not quarantined to the past, but inheres within current moments and future prospects. *The Shape Changers Slippers* (1997), a pair of felted slippers covered in sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) sawdust, materializes a memory of her father: “I had his slippers from when he died. He used bits of rubber called *bowyangs* to hold the slippers on his feet; old men used to do that. Later in his life, he bought a lathe and went bush, like a lot of fellas his age, to collect sandalwood pieces. He'd always offer me the sawdust, which I hoarded” (Searles, 2014).

Among the panoply of mneumonically-laden objects in Nalda’s studio, balga bracts—glistening uncannily like an array of dead cockroaches—attract attention. Known historically as *grass tree* and *blackboy*, *balga* is the Nyoongar name for *Xanthorrhoea preissii*, a tree-like monocot endemic to the Southwest. Bearing tall and thin flowering spikes, balga exhibits grass-like foliage. Its bracts—the specialized leaves of the inflorescence—are dark brown and large. *Blackboy* is an antiquated name that reflects the settler-era likening of the plant to the distant image of an Aboriginal person. The species has been used extensively: for example, dead flowering stalks for spear-making, living flower stalks for a fermented drink, and resin applied as an adhesive (Ryan, 2012, 140). On setting up camp during an excursion with Nyoongar guides, Moore commented in 1831, “blackboy poles are stuck in the ground [...] these are covered with grassy tops of the blackboy: it is a good temporary shelter in rain” (Moore, 1834, 95). In comparable language, during the 1930s, composer Thomas Wood (1938, 105) personified the tree as “that strange fascination [...] wearing a mop of tousled grass overtopped by a spear.”

The use of balga bracts in textile art involves personal and collective memories of the plant’s cultural significance. For instance, *Balga Blanket* (1995–2008) is a large woolen blanket covered in more than three-thousand bracts. Known as appliqué, the technique involved the production of rectangular patterns through the stitching of bracts to the blanket. Another example of appliqué, *Xanthorrhoea Dress* (1996) is a brown woolen gown clothed in bracts and eventually subsumed within the work *Kangaroo Couple* (1995–2008). Made by the artist’s mother in 1975, the gown was worn by Nalda for twenty years until its creative appropriation. Similarly sheathed in bracts, *Whiteboy Blazer* (1996) projects the “colonial connotations” of her work through its satirical play on the obsolete name *blackboy* (Searles, 2014). Regarding the application of bracts to textiles, Nalda notes her need “to go inside the plant. I had to put the plant on me to get a feeling for the material. I had already been making big baskets from local flora, but I never stitched plants onto clothing. The idea hit me like a bolt during a drive to Kalgoorlie” (Searles, 2014). Her tactile use of balga stimulated a distinctly creative period. “I made *Balga Blanket* during this time. I took a whole double-bed blanket and covered it with balga. I stitched on the bracts” (Searles, 2014). As mnemonic objects, the bract-based textile works are permeated with the affective registers of balga—a protective plant providing warmth, nourishment, identity, and spiritual meaning to people for millennia.

## 6. BITTER TASTES: KEVIN COLLINS’ BANKSIA MNEUMONICS

In 1984, Kevin Collins and his family purchased the “bare grass paddock” in Mount Barker, WA, that would later become Banksia Farm, comprising an arboretum, botanical art gallery, and stone guesthouse (Collins, 2009a). Three years on, they had planted nearly half of the known species of banksias (*Banksia* spp.):

We thought to ourselves, ‘we have thirty species and there’s only seventy-six [now seventy-eight]. Let’s keep going’. We flew to Queensland in 1991 to get the last one, which grows on Hinchinbrook Island. We added new banksias discovered in 2000 and 2007 to complete the collection. (Collins, 2009a)

Known for their prominent inflorescences, these shrubs and small trees are quintessentially Australian; only one (*B. dentata*) occurs naturally outside of the nation and 80% of all species grow only in the Southwest (Collins, 2009b, 32). In addition to their role as a food source for native vertebrates and invertebrates, banksias are economically vital to the cut-flower and wildflower tourism industries.

As conspicuous members of the Southwest bush, banksias also pervade the botanical memory of past and present. For instance, bull banksia (*B. grandis*), which is named *poolgarla* in Nyoongar, has been used ethnobotanically for an array of purposes, including to make a fermented beverage (flowers) and to transport smouldering coals (stalks) (Daw, Walley, and Keighery, 1997, 40). During his visit to the King George Sound area, the physician Isaac Scott Nind (1797–1868) confirmed “every individual of the tribe, when travelling or going to a distance from their encampment, carries a fire-stick [...] It is generally a cone of *Banksia grandis*, which has the property of keeping ignited for a considerable time” (Nind, 1979, 21). Moreover, during his 2000-mile traverse of the coastline from Adelaide to Albany, the explorer Edward John Eyre (1815–1901) observed, with palpable affect, “the appearance for the first time of the Banksia, a shrub which I had never before found to the westward of Spencer’s Gulf [an inlet in SA], but which I knew to abound in the vicinity of King George’s [*sic*] Sound,” the end point of his calamitous expedition (Eyre, 1845, 14). Eyre’s “eagerness and anxiety” were assuaged by the “degree of satisfaction” he experienced on first spotting banksia (Eyre, 1845, 14). The trees indicated a landscape change, marked his advance to Albany, and hence signified the hope of salvation from grim circumstances (mutiny, starvation, extreme thirst).

In the visitors' center at Banksia Farm, Collins invokes these sorts of historical narratives as he adroitly selects an object from his table of vegetal paraphernalia: a *Banksia grandis* cone studded with the woody lips of dehiscent follicles (or dry fruits). He expounds on the physical properties vis-à-vis Nyoongar understandings of the cone:

It's the heaviest banksia cone and has excellent qualities. It is very hard. The outer layer smoulders. Aboriginal people transported their campfire with it. In a fresh state, the flowers contain tons of nectar for birds and possums. Aboriginal people made nectar drinks by immersing its flowers in water. (Collins, 2009a)

When the researcher asks him about the palatability of its seeds, Collins grimaces then furrows his brow, revealing the ineradicable imprint of a gustatory memory. "When I first tried a *B. grandis* seed, I spit it out because it was too bitter. However, most banksia seeds are quite pleasant, at least to my palate. In fact, only a couple taste bitter" (Collins, 2009a). Such embodied memories are essential to Collins' instructional approach; he presents his recollections of contact with banksia to foster visitors' memories through the plants' material presence.

During his interactive exposition, Collins tracks seamlessly between sensory memory, banksia physiology, and corporeal immediacy. He peers studiously at the follicle of another banksia. "It is only attached by a small cord to the flower head. You can pop out the follicle with your fingers. Expose it to high heat to get it jumping like popcorn. That will release the seeds" (Collins, 2009a). He encourages visitors to engross themselves sensorially—without inhibition:

"Feel the texture. See the old flower heads? If you squeeze them, you will feel the follicles underneath. The structure is very dense with a strong protective layer, indicating that this species must have fire to release seeds." (Collins, 2009a)

Furthermore, human-plant mnemonics involve the interlacing of taste, touch, and smell. "This flower smells sweet but you have to put your nose into it. As kids, we would part the flowers, poke our tongues in there, and suck the delicious nectar" (Collins, 2009a). Regarding another banksia's inflorescence, Collins effuses, "when you squeeze them, little balls of nectar should appear. There's one in the middle there! Just chew the whole flower. You will get some of that nectar!" (Collins, 2009a).

## 7. CONCLUSION

During the field interviews reported in this paper, material prompts (follicles, bracts, kino, and derived objects) activated botanical memory to a degree that would not have been possible otherwise. The multisensorial prompts—both living and inanimate, all "vibrant matter"—discussed in this paper enabled Ian Smith, Holly Story, Nalda Searles, and Kevin Collins to recount (bring to mind) and enact (form new, or deepen) their memories of Southwest flora. The researcher asserts that these extracts demonstrate that botanical memory is "sedimented" (echoing Jones) in the articulations between plants, people, and objects. Affectively rich and materially referential, botanical memory also engages empirical understandings of plants, such as the structural characteristics, biogeographical distributions, ecological dynamics, and ethnobotanical dimensions of species. These intricate mnemonic narratives are not recited by the interviewees as a series of matter-of-fact, chronologically arranged observations. Instead, their stories are marked by corporeal, spatial, and temporal interpenetrations that reach across the past, present, and future while blurring the ontological categories of *human*, *plant*, and *environment*. From these interviews, the researcher believes it is further evident that the proximate senses strongly underlie affective memory. Sucking banksia nectar, touching balga bracts, tasting marri kino, and grasping the gimlett staff are corporeal actions with mnemonic resonance. And, in this material-affective sense, the exploration of plant-based human memory has never been more timely. In an era of catastrophic species loss, the process of remembering becomes intrinsically linked to the act of conserving.

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## **E HALAL LABEL AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: PROPOSAL OF A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **LE LABEL HALAL ET LE COMPORTEMENT DU CONSOMMATEUR : PROPOSITION D'UN CADRE CONCEPTUEL**

Adel OUERTANI, assistant à l'Institut Supérieur d'Informatique et de Gestion de Kairouan,  
adelouertani@yahoo.fr

#### **ABSTRACT**

The current trend in the generation of new, more reliable and more efficient than existing labels to credible offers including against Muslims is a widely used approach. As such, the Halal label appears to be a type of information allowing a synthesis of several dimensions of product quality and credibility than mere commercial promise and Halal whose character will not be challenged. This article aims to present a preliminary conceptual framework of the effects of labeling on consumer behavior.

**KEY WORDS:** Halal label, perceived quality, consumer behavior

#### **RESUME**

La tendance actuelle à la génération de nouveaux labels plus fiables et plus efficaces que ceux existants afin de crédibiliser les offres notamment vis à vis des musulmans est une démarche fréquemment utilisée. A ce titre, le label Halal semble constituer un type d'information permettant une synthèse de plusieurs dimensions de la qualité du produit et plus crédible que la simple promesse commerciale et dont le caractère Halal ne sera pas remis en cause. Cet article a pour but de présenter un cadre conceptuel préliminaire des effets de la labellisation sur le comportement du consommateur.

**MOTS-CLES:** label Halal, qualité perçue, comportement du consommateur

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Qu'est ce qu'un produit Halal ?**

Littéralement, " Halal " signifie "permis", "licite", au contraire du mot "haram" qui définit tout ce qui est interdit par la religion musulmane. Bien entendu, tout produit Halal se doit de respecter les caractéristiques et procédures religieuses musulmanes. Les produits Halal se définissent comme des produits « sûrs » ne contenant aucun ingrédient non Halal, fabriqués et transformés à l'aide d'équipements qui n'ont pas été contaminés par des éléments non Halal, dans des conditions hygiéniques strictes et selon le rite musulman. Parmi les interdits majeurs : le porc qui suscite une très forte aversion et dans une moindre mesure : l'alcool. Pour le reste, les interprétations sont diverses. L'essentiel de l'industrie Halal se concentre en fait sur les produits alimentaires notamment la viande. Puis, elle s'est progressivement pénétrée de nouveaux marchés par "effet domino". Le Halal semble, selon Fall et ses collègues (2014), couvrir une vaste gamme de « produits islamiques » qui déborde du cadre autrefois limité de ce qu'on désignait par les biens de croyance.

Actuellement, elle touche les secteurs de l'hôtellerie, de l'habillement, de la parfumerie, des cosmétiques, des médicaments, des services sanitaires et de la finance islamique. L'étendue de la liste ne s'arrête toutefois pas là, on assiste à l'émergence d'un Halal « way of life » (Nestorovic, 2009). Il n'est pas un jour sans que la presse internationale rapporte les cas de réussite de sociétés de production ou de distribution Halal (Bergeaud-Blackler, 2006). Le marché Halal est en plein essor. Il représente 450 milliards d'euros et concerne 1,6 milliard de consommateurs potentiels. Sa croissance annuelle est de 10%, selon l'agence Solis, spécialisée dans le marketing ethnique. Ce secteur est, néanmoins, confronté à une crise de confiance des consommateurs à l'égard de l'étiquetage des produits qui leur sont proposés suite à la succession de plusieurs scandales alimentaires. Citons à titre d'exemple

les poulets Doux et Tilly Sabco frauduleusement estampillés Halal vendus aux pèlerins qui se rendent à La Mecque pour le hajj en 2013.

En l'absence d'une réglementation claire et précise qui encadre l'utilisation du terme Halal, le faux Halal perdurera. En effet, selon une étude de l'OABA (Œuvre d'assistance aux bêtes d'abattoirs), « ce qui n'est pas vendu sur le marché classique est réorienté vers les circuits Halal » se confirme au jour le jour. Bergeaud-Blackler (2006) suggère de son côté que « L'allégation Halal est socialement partagée et sans cadre légal. Halal est devenu un énoncé performatif, il suffit de prononcer son nom pour le faire exister, comme pour le contester ». D'où la nécessité pour les acteurs majeurs de se montrer plus engagés par la génération de nouveaux certificats répondant à ces exigences, plus fiables et plus efficaces que ceux existants afin de crédibiliser leurs offres notamment vis à vis des musulmans. Le label «Halal » fait référence ainsi à une démarche de certification garantissant la conformité d'un produit ou d'un service vis-à-vis d'un cahier de charges préalablement adopté et répondant aux principes et règles de consommation prescrits dans la religion musulmane.

La Malaisie présente une « success » story en matière de certification en mettant en place une norme Halal indispensable délivrée uniquement par l'autorité religieuse du pays, le Jakim. C'est un sigle unique gage de confiance et de qualité qui permet de faciliter les exportations et de garantir aux consommateurs un produit dont le caractère Halal ne sera pas remis en cause. Selon Bergeaud-Blackler (2006), la certification Halal est « un instrument commercial visant à protéger son marché et à en pénétrer d'autres ». En Tunisie, la certification des produits «Halal» sort de l'ombre en 2013 suite à une convention de coopération entre l'Institut National de la Normalisation et de la Propriété Industrielle (INNORPI) et le Cabinet du Mufti. Ce label «Halal » est surtout octroyé à des produits agroalimentaires. Toutefois, à notre connaissance, aucune recherche n'a étudié et validé dans un contexte tunisien les effets de la labellisation Halal. Dans ce qui suit, nous présentons notre modèle conceptuel qui propose d'expliquer les effets de la labellisation Halal en identifiant cinq variables déterminantes ( l'évaluation de la qualité d'un produit, les préférences de consommation, l'intention d'achat, la propension à offrir et la propension à payer plus cher) et une variable modératrice (la crédibilité du label Halal).

## 1.2 Qu'est ce qu'un label

Plusieurs auteurs estiment qu'on vit aujourd'hui dans un univers de risques. Ce terme à peine exagéré au regard des grandes crises sanitaires ou alimentaires qui ont secoué les vingt dernières années. En réponse à toutes ces turbulences, et à cette mutation industrielle, le consommateur adopte une attitude d'angoisse, en perdant ses repères traditionnels. Comme le suggère Giraud (2001), « L'une des nombreuses conséquences du climat actuel d'insécurité alimentaire est le regain d'intérêt pour tous les signes susceptibles de répondre à la «quête de réassurance» des consommateurs ».

Motivé par un souci d'économie cognitive ou encore une économie de la perception (Jazi, 2003), le consommateur utilise des raccourcis cognitifs (des inférences à partir des informations disponibles) ou encore des « clés de lecture » pour former un jugement ou prendre une décision. Les fragments d'information utilisés pour formuler des attentes en matière de qualité s'appellent des « indicateurs de qualité » (Grunert et al, 2001). Ces indicateurs correspondent à des caractéristiques observables par le consommateur. Comme le rappelle Dandouau (2001), il convient de distinguer « les signes de qualité » qui désignent un sous-ensemble d'attributs choisis par l'entreprise pour communiquer la qualité, des « indicateurs de qualité ». Egalement, il convient de distinguer les «indicateurs de qualité», des «attributs de qualité ». Jazi (2003) explique que l'information traitée est considérée comme un indicateur de l'attribut de qualité d'un produit. Par exemple la couleur (indicateur) d'une tranche de viande est utilisée pour évaluer son goût (attribut) et la texture (indicateur) est utilisée pour évaluer la qualité d'un yaourt (attribut).

Plusieurs chercheurs, traitant la qualité d'un produit, recourent généralement à la trichotomie de Nelson(1970). Celle-ci stipule l'existence de trois types d'attributs : les attributs de recherche, d'expérience et de croyance. L'attribut de recherche correspond à une caractéristique factuelle du produit qui peut être facilement vérifiable à distance, tandis que l'attribut d'expérience nécessite l'expérience directe ou la consommation du produit. L'attribut de croyance nécessite quant à lui un avis d'expert pour l'évaluation de sa qualité. Suite aux travaux de Olson et Jacoby (1972), d'autres chercheurs ont distingué les indicateurs de qualité intrinsèques et extrinsèques. Les premiers, comme la forme, la taille du produit, sont liés au produit dans la mesure où un changement de celui-ci entraîne une modification d'un ou plusieurs de ces indicateurs. A l'opposé, le produit et les indicateurs de qualité extrinsèques comme le prix, le lieu de vente peuvent être modifiés de façon tout à fait indépendante. Jazi (2003) suggère que

cette distinction entre les caractéristiques de recherche, d'expérience ou de croyance se fait à travers des attributs intrinsèques et extrinsèques de la qualité. De son côté, Keller (1993) précise que les signaux que l'acheteur mobilise n'agissent pas nécessairement de façon additive mais interagissent entre eux, interactions que le marketing analyse en termes de congruence.

Parallèlement, on assiste à une prolifération des labels (à la fois officiels et non officiels, techniques et expérimentiels, privés et collectifs) qui semble, selon Chameroy et Chandon (2010), liée à la nécessité, pour certaines marques, d'accroître leur différenciation, d'apporter des garanties complémentaires, de signaler un élément de la qualité, d'augmenter la valeur perçue de l'offre mais aussi de montrer leur engagement dans une démarche « responsable » et ce dans un contexte très concurrentiel. Aux yeux de Jongmans et ses collègues (2014), « ces évolutions sont cependant à double tranchant. D'une part, elles répondent à une demande accrue des consommateurs. D'autre part, ceux-ci peuvent être perdus dans la pléthore des labels et mentions auto-déclarées ». D'un point de vue marketing, le label fait partie de l'arsenal à la disposition des producteurs pour réduire l'asymétrie d'informations dont souffrent les consommateurs et faciliter leur choix. En tant qu'outil de communication, suggère Larceneux (2003), un label est un signal crédible qui vise à informer le consommateur sur des dimensions non observables de la qualité d'un produit ou service et provenant d'un organisme tiers, indépendant du producteur. L'auteur ajoute que « le label est une marque particulière, qui n'émane pas d'une entreprise productrice mais utilisable par elle. La marque identifie le producteur de produits et services, tandis que le label identifie une forme de certification de ces produits et services ».

Ainsi, Larceneux (2004) encourage les responsables opérationnels à mener des stratégies de signalisation de la qualité via des labels du fait qu'elle permet, d'une part, de faciliter les transactions et d'améliorer l'efficacité des marchés nationaux et internationaux caractérisés par de trop fortes asymétries d'information. D'autre part, elle permet de comprendre des éléments constitutifs du processus de décision d'achat des produits labellisés et de calculer par la suite la rentabilité des investissements potentiels imposés par un programme de labellisation.

Cette importance cruciale prise par la stratégie de signalisation de la qualité via des labels a poussé Larceneux (2004) à envisager la notion de « Capital du label » de manière analogue au « capital de marque ». Selon lui, un label se caractérise, tout comme une marque, par sa notoriété et son image ainsi que par sa fonction d'indication de la qualité et son ambition de contribuer à influencer positivement la décision d'achat du consommateur.

Certains responsables commerciaux ont développé le « label Halal ». Les textes qui régissent le cadre religieux des différents aspects du *Halal* (licite) et du *Haram* (illicite) sont mentionnés dans le Coran, dans les traditions rapportées du prophète (hadith et sunna), dans certains ouvrages d'exégèse ( tafsir) et enfin dans la législation religieuse (fiqh). De plus en plus de consommateurs s'y intéressent ; de plus en plus d'entreprises s'y engagent. C'est pourquoi nous proposons ici de le retenir comme une catégorie spécifique de label. Celui-ci reste un attribut de croyance mais il permet aux consommateurs de mieux appréhender la qualité du produit avant l'achat. Halal est devenu un énoncé performatif, il suffit de prononcer son nom pour le faire exister, comme pour le contester (Bergeaud-Blackler, 2006).

## 2. Cadre conceptuel et Hypothèses de la recherche

Les recherches traitant l'influence des labels sur le comportement du consommateur sont beaucoup moins nombreuses et se sont focalisées essentiellement la labellisation alimentaire nutritionnelle.

Cette recherche se propose de présenter un cadre conceptuel préliminaire des effets de la labellisation sur le comportement du consommateur.

### 2.1 L'évaluation de la qualité perçue

Historiquement, la labellisation avait pour objectif d'informer et de rassurer le consommateur sur plusieurs dimensions de la qualité (notamment les caractéristiques de croyance du produit) que la consommation ne permet pas de révéler. En effet, dans sa définition la plus actuelle, un label est un signe crédible qui informe sur des dimensions de la qualité intrinsèque des produits ou des services, mais aussi sur les conditions sociales et économiques qui entourent leur fabrication ou production (Larceneux, 2004). Cependant, il s'est ajouté à cela une volonté de contrôler la fraude, une protection sanitaire, une dimension marketing et commerciale (Florent, 2011). Trabelsi-Trigui et al (2012) suggèrent en fait quatre fonctions pour les labels : ils permettent d'identifier, qualifier, décrire et promouvoir le produit. La plupart des études menées sur le sujet montre que le label a un effet significatif

sur l'évaluation du produit par les consommateurs ; ces derniers l'utilisent comme un indicateur pour former des jugements à propos de la qualité du produit. Ce qui nous conduit à formuler les hypothèses suivantes :

H1 : La présence d'une mention « Halal » sur le produit a un effet positif sur l'évaluation de sa *qualité perçue*.

## 2.2 Les préférences de consommation

Les économistes savent parfaitement que les préférences du consommateur ne tombent pas du ciel. Ils supposent que tout individu, parfaitement informé sur les différents biens et services, est capable d'émettre des préférences sur différents profils de consommation et ceci indépendamment du prix. Ces préférences sont personnelles et dépendent des goûts de chacun. En marketing, les préférences des consommateurs sont principalement soumises à deux effets : celui des caractéristiques intrinsèques ou sensorielles du produit (texture, goût, couleur) et celui des caractéristiques extrinsèques (nom de marque, label, prix, pays d'origine). Les études portant sur l'examen de l'effet du label du produit sur les préférences des consommateurs sont moins nombreuses. Parmi ces études, nous pouvons citer celle de Giraud (2001), qui a effectué une étude sur la perception de produits labellisés (fromage camembert, saucisson sec). Selon cet auteur, ces produits obtiennent des résultats satisfaisants auprès des consommateurs, en termes de préférences déclarées mais pas toujours en termes du comportement d'achat. Ce résultat confirme que le signe officiel de qualité n'est pas en soi un critère déterminant de choix. Chameroy et Chandon (2010) stipulent que la volonté de guider et d'informer le consommateur qui est à l'origine du développement des labels. Pour Larceneux (2003, 2004), un label se caractérise, tout comme une marque, par sa notoriété et son image ainsi que par sa fonction d'indication de la qualité et son ambition de contribuer à influencer positivement la décision d'achat du consommateur. L'hypothèse suivante a été posée :

H2: La préférence du consommateur pour les produits labellisés Halal est plus forte que pour les produits non labellisés Halal.

## 2.3 L'intention d'achat

Les travaux sur l'intention d'achat trouvent leur source dans les recherches en psychologie sociale qui suggèrent que l'intention serait le meilleur prédicteur du comportement d'un individu. Elle est généralement utilisée afin de prédire les ventes de produits existants à travers le temps pour différents segments de consommateurs. L'effet de la qualité perçue de l'offre et l'intention d'achat a été étudié depuis longtemps. Dans ce sens, plus la qualité perçue d'une marque est élevée, plus son intention d'achat sera forte. Plus formellement nous pouvons proposer :

H3: L'intention d'achat des produits labellisés Halal est plus forte chez le consommateur que pour les produits non labellisés Halal. Toutefois, les effets des labels sur le consommateur en termes d'intention d'achat ou de comportement effectif ne sont pas systématiques (Dufeu et al, 2014). Certaines conditions doivent être remplies. Pour qu'un label produise des effets positifs, il faut qu'il combine notoriété, évocations et garantie (Carpenter et Larceneux, 2008; Giraud, 2001; Grunert et al, 2001 ; Chameroy et Chandon, 2010).

## 2.4 La propension à offrir

Les recherches sur le don en comportement du consommateur et en marketing sont aussi nombreuses que diverses. Le Gall-Ely (2013) le définit comme « tout acte impliquant le transfert de biens ou de services de toute nature entre un donateur, individu ou organisation, et un receveur, individu ou organisation, sans obligation contractuelle ni contrepartie immédiate, ayant pour but la création d'un lien de nature sociale ». Étudiant le concept de don de cadeau, Kessous et Roux (2010) rappellent celui-ci, au-delà de sa valeur monétaire, il a une importance symbolique et affective particulière. Il permet de créer et de maintenir des relations interpersonnelles, mais également de marquer les événements importants de la vie. Ceci amène à formuler l'hypothèse suivante :

H4: La propension d'offrir la marque est plus grande pour les marques perçues comme Halal que pour les marques perçues comme non Halal.

## 2.5 La propension à payer plus cher

Selon l'approche traditionnelle de la perception des prix, un prix est jugé de la même manière d'une personne à l'autre. Quand l'individu est exposé à un prix, il traite cette information souvent selon un processus comparatif à un prix de référence préexistant. (Thao BUI et Décaudin, 2014). Plusieurs formes peuvent coexister. Le concept de consentement à payer (CAP) est également au cœur de ce cadre d'analyse. Ce CAP, ou prix de réserve, est défini par Le Gall-Ely (2013) comme le prix maximum qu'un acheteur consent à payer pour une quantité donnée d'un bien ou d'un service. Il se rapproche de la notion de prix acceptable. En effet, selon Dufeu et al (2014), les labels, s'ils

tendent à renforcer l'attrait et la confiance des consommateurs, les incitent également à une moindre sensibilité au prix et à un consentement à payer (CAP) supérieur. Ce qui nous conduit à formuler l'hypothèse suivante :

H5: La propension à payer plus cher est plus grande pour les marques perçues comme Halal que pour les marques perçues comme non Halal.

## **2.6 Le rôle modérateur de la crédibilité du label**

Néanmoins, plusieurs études ont montré que, malgré leur rôle de réducteurs d'incertitude, les labels n'ont pas toujours leurs effets positifs qu'on leur suppose (Trabelsi-Trigui et al, 2012). Larceneux (2004) note qu'un des éléments cruciaux de l'efficacité commerciale d'un signe de qualité, qu'il soit officiel ou non, est la crédibilité que le consommateur attribue à ce signe. En effet, la crédibilité d'un label est basée sur le fait que le produit ou service proposé à l'achat est évalué par un tiers de confiance selon un cahier des charges strict et accessible à tous (Chameroy et Chandon, 2010).

## **CONCLUSION ET VOIES DE RECHERCHE**

Plus qu'une simple norme alimentaire, le " Halal " est devenu un mode de vie pour certains, et une véritable mine d'or pour d'autres. Désormais, le marché Halal n'est plus réservé à la viande. Il s'étend peu à peu vers des produits non-alimentaires tels que la cosmétique, les services bancaires ou bien même le tourisme. Notre recherche vise à construire un cadre conceptuel relatif à la compréhension de l'impact de la labellisation Halal sur l'évaluation de la qualité d'un produit et à mesurer les préférences, l'intention d'achat et d'offrir les marques Halal. Cette recherche reste une modeste contribution qui pourrait être complétée et enrichie par des travaux futurs et des études empiriques sont ainsi nécessaires pour valider ce travail.

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