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Impact of Reading habits on the Academic Achievements: A Survey

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Abstract

The present paper examines the impact of reading habits on the academic achievements of the students and faculty members in the universities of Karnataka state. The survey was conducted using a well design and structured questionnaire. A total of 2463 postgraduate students, research scholars and faculty members participated in the study. The study population consisted of an equal number of males (50.2%) and female (49.8%) and most of them (63%) are from rural areas. The study found that the majority of the respondents are from Science (48.8%) disciplines. The study found that almost all the respondents have reading habits and most of the them read at their home (69.1%), followed by university library (48.6%). It is very interesting to note that 57.7% of the respondents read books everyday. The study found that, most of the respondents preferred to read newspapers/magazines (69.5%), followed by books (58.9%). The study found that to a great extent, the majority of the respondents read various information sources, because they are interested in the topic of the study (53.2%). The study found that, the reading habit has made an impact on the academic achievements of the respondents. Further, it is found that reading habit has been acting as a channel for gaining real world of knowledge. Further, it also improved mental capacity and enhanced the reading skills in everyday life.

Keywords: *Reading habits, Academic achievements, Faculty members.*

Introduction

Reading is the meaningful interpretation of visual or graphical symbols (Nuttal, 1982). Reading is a means of seeking knowledge, information or entertainment through the written words. Reading is said to be a means of language acquisition, communication and sharing information and ideas (Rwanda Book Development Initiative, 2011). Reading is not only the

process of interpretation or understanding the text, but an interactive session with the thoughts of the greatest thinkers of the past, present and future genre. It provides an opportunity to transcend into a new journey with own understanding and experience of the subject and promotes new thinking (Rattan, 2013).

Reading is one of the most important components of our language and it is an essential tool for lifelong learning for all learners. The reading, especially is a resource for continued education, for the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, for gaining information through the media, especially newspapers, books, radio, television, and the computers (Chettri & Rou, 2013). The reading habit is an essential and important aspect for crating the literate society in this world. It shapes the personality of an individual and it helps them to develop the proper thinking methods and creating new ideas (Chauhan & Lal, 2012). Reading habit is an active skill based process of constructing meaning and gaining knowledge from oral, visual and written text. Reading habits are the intellectual activities for giving more information, knowledge and learn to various types of things and their activities (Babu & Durgaiyah, 2016). Reading habits also are increasingly important in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change in the global level (Asokan & Dhanavandan, 2013). Keeping in view the importance of reading habits, this study made an attempt to know the impact of reading habits on the academic achievements of faculty members and students.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the present study are:

- To know the place and frequency of reading books by the students and faculty members.
- To identify the various print sources preferred by students and faculty members for reading.
- To know the purpose of reading by students and faculty members.

- To understand the impact of reading habits on the academic achievements of students and faculty members.

Literature Review

The present study examines related literature and provides background information about theoretical researches done in the area of reading habits. In this study for the past few decades, many researchers have devoted efforts to examine the reading habits.

According to Tharumaraj & Nooreen Noordin (2011) explored the study, which tried to analyze teachers' reading habits and teaching strategies for reading skills. A total of 65 teachers participated in the study. The data showed that the majority of respondents (60%) did leisure reading almost every day. In fact, 14.6% of the respondents indicated that surfing the Internet was part of their leisure time activity. It would also result in students enjoying as well as appreciating the text that they read. The end result that should be achieved would be developing independence, mature and autonomous readers.

Thanuskodi in the year 2011 conducted the study on reading habits among library and information science students of Annamalai University. A sample of 342 of the students participated in this research, of which 186 students were female and 156 were male students. The data showed that students spend more time, i.e. 11 to 15 hours (77.48 %) reading books and 29.83 percent to surf the Internet. Further, the study indicated that the majority of the LIS students (79.53 %) are interested in reading LIS course material frequently and 30.12% sometimes read LIS related materials on the Internet. The findings of this study that LIS students need to improve their reading habits. It will be beneficial to have a record of their reading habits in order to make predictions about their academic success in the study.

Bajpai (2013) conducted the study to investigate the reading habits of the B-school users like students and faculties. A total of 130 responses was collected from students and faculty members. The purpose of this study was to know the user's response to different aspects of

reading habits. The result showed that, printed resources are the main source of information as 55.38% respondents used print resources and 44.62% respondents used electronic resources. The findings of the study show that, reading is a tool in the hands of a person by which he/she can increase his/her knowledge to obtain new ideas and reading gets a serious attention among the users.

Akanda, Hoq & Hasan (2013) conducted a study on reading habits of students in social sciences and arts: a case study of Rajshahi University. A total of 260 filled questionnaires received from the respondents. The study found that 30.38% students use the Internet for sending and receiving email, followed by research (28.85%), for downloading important texts (12.69%) and 9.62% use the Internet to read online journals. The findings of the study shows, learning leads to an overall mental, professional, and human development. Further, the study also revealed that reading not only gives people, new ideas, information, and insights, it also helps them to become more complete in every aspect.

According to Daniel et al., (2017) conducted the study on effect of reading habits on the academic performance of students: a case study of the students of Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. A total of 180 was sampled. The majority of the students who took part in the study (58.9%) were female while 41.1% of the students were male. However, the types of information, materials, mostly read by the respondents are basically their notebooks, textbooks and electronic resources. Based on the findings, the major factors militating against students reading habit is the Social media, e.g. Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, 2go etc.. Finally, the study also revealed that reading habits have significant effect on academic performance of the students.

Vellaichamy & Jeyshankar (2014) examined the reading habits of Alagappa University central library users (AUCL) only. Totally 300 filled up questionnaires were received back. The rate of response is 88%. Among them 140 respondents (46.67%) were male, 160 respondents

(53.33%) were female. The study found that for majority of users were reading was preferable place for home (36.67%) followed by library (24.67%) and classroom (21.01%). The findings of the study showed that, the majority of the users were the main obstacle for T.V (36.67%), followed by internet (22.67%), 21.0% of respondents are responded unavailability of books. The study indicated that one of the major goals of the university central library is to inspire a love for reading and to promote a reading culture among its users.

Methodology

The purpose of present study is to investigate the impact of Reading habits on the academic achievements of the students and faculty members. The study has selected 2463 students and faculty members from 11 state universities in Karnataka State. Of the 59 universities in Karnataka state, the present study has selected eleven state funded universities and hence the scope of the study is confined only to the universities in Karnataka state. viz., Akkamahadevi Women's University, Vijayapura; Bangalore University, Bengaluru; Davanagere University, Davanagere; Gulbarga University, Kalaburgi; Karnatak University, Dharawada; Kuvempu University, Shivamogga; Mangalore University, Mangaluru; Rani Chennamma University, Belagavi; Tumkur University, Tumakuru; University of Mysore, Mysuru and Vijayanagara Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Ballari.

The total strength of the faculty members and postgraduate students in the eleven universities in Karnataka state was 34,283 for the academic year 2015-16. There are several formulas for calculating the required sample size. This study has followed the formula given by Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

$$s = \frac{x^2NP(1 - P)}{d^2(N - 1) + x^2P(1 - P)}$$

s = required sample size.

χ^2 = the table value of Chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (6.635).

N = the population size (34,283).

P = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.50 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as 'p' (i.e. Margin of error=0.025)

$$s = \frac{6.635 \times 34283 \times 0.50 (1 - 0.50)}{(0.025)^2(34283 - 1) + (6.635) (0.50) (1 - 0.50)}$$

$$s=2463.371$$

The sample size has been calculated using the above-mentioned formula. The required sample size was 2463.371 but the sample population was rounded off to 2463 (Degree of accuracy/margin of error=0.025 and confidence=99%).

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table-1: Demographic information of respondents

Demographic information		Frequency (N-2463)	Percentage
Gender	Male	1236	50.2
	Female	1227	49.8
Social background	Rural	1552	63.0
	Urban	911	37.0
Subjects	Arts	878	35.6
	Science	1203	48.8
	Commerce	382	15.5
Age	20-30	2170	88.1
	31-40	176	7.1
	41-50	76	3.1
	>51	41	1.7

The data presented in the table-1 shows the demographic information of respondents. The study population consisted of an equal number of males (50.2%) and female (49.8%) respondents. The table also clearly shows that, majority of the respondents are from the rural areas (63%) and only 37.0% of respondents are from urban areas. Further, it also reveals that the majority of the respondents are from Science (48.8%), followed by Arts (35.6%), and Commerce (15.5%) disciplines. The result shows another notable findings of the study, 88.1% majority of the respondents are in the age group of below 30 years, followed by, 7.1% of them are in the age group of 31-40 years, 3.1% of the respondents age group of below 41-50 years and also few of them age group of above 51 years(1.7%).

Table-2. Preferred places for reading books

Places	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Home	1701	69.1	762	30.9
Public Library	393	16.0	2070	84.0
University Library	1198	48.6	1265	51.4
Department	723	29.4	1740	70.6
Hostel	783	31.8	1680	68.2
Travelling	334	13.6	2129	86.4
Friends/Neighbors' home	134	5.4	2329	94.6
Park/Field/Temple	94	3.8	2369	96.2

The table-2 shows that preferred places for reading books. The study found that almost all the respondents have reading habits and most of the them read at their home (69.1%), followed by university library (48.6%), hostel (31.8%), departments (29.4%) and few of them read in public libraries (16%).

Table-3: Frequency of the reading books (N=2463)

	Frequency	Percentage
Everyday	1421	57.7
2-3 days in a week	551	22.4
Once in a Week	179	7.3
Once in a Month	56	2.3
Occasionally (as on demand)	256	10.4
Total	2463	100

Table-3 shows that frequency of the reading books by respondents. It is very interesting to note that 57.7% of the respondents read books every day, while 22.4% of them read books 2-3 days in a week and only 10.4 % of the respondents read books occasionally.

Table-4.4: Purpose of reading

Purpose	To a great extent	To full extent	To little extent	To some extent	Not at all
I am interested in the topic	1310 (53.2%)	602 (24.4%)	203 (8.2%)	178 (7.2%)	170 (6.9%)
It is my hobby	873 (35.4%)	672 (27.3%)	382 (15.5%)	241 (9.8%)	295 (12.0%)
I read for learning	1141 (46.3%)	723 (29.4%)	297 (12.1%)	129 (5.2%)	173 (7.0%)
To gain a general overview of the text	635 (25.8%)	728 (29.6%)	475 (19.3%)	264 (10.7%)	361 (14.7%)
For exam purpose	789 (32.0%)	606 (24.6%)	365 (14.8%)	265 (10.8%)	438 (17.8%)
To prepare notes	678 (27.5%)	660 (26.8%)	442 (17.9%)	345 (14.0%)	338 (13.7%)
To complete assignments	586 (23.8%)	608 (24.7%)	464 (18.8%)	384 (15.6%)	421 (17.1%)
For research purpose	704 (28.6%)	505 (20.5%)	366 (14.9%)	372 (15.1%)	516 (21.0%)
To understand tomorrow's lecture	544 (22.1%)	550 (22.3%)	441 (17.9%)	390 (15.8%)	538 (21.8%)
To prepare my seminar presentations	736 (29.9%)	673 (27.3%)	394 (16.0%)	335 (13.6%)	325 (13.2%)
To improve the communication skills	1017 (41.3%)	636 (25.8%)	318 (12.9%)	227 (9.2%)	265 (10.8%)

The data related to the purpose of reading books are presented in Table-4. The study found that to a great extent, the majority of the respondents read various information sources because they are interested in the topic of the study (53.2%), followed by the read for learning (46.3%), to improve the communication skills (41.3%) and also the reading books in a hobby (35.4%). Furthermore, the result shows few of the respondents opined that, to prepare for the examination (32.0%), followed by to prepare my seminar presentations (29.9%), and also noted that, few of them opined for research purpose (28.6%).

Table-5: Various print sources preferred for reading

Print sources	Daily	Twice in a week	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally
Books	1450 (58.9%)	435 (17.7%)	256 (10.4%)	76 (3.1%)	246 (10.0%)
Journals/Back volumes of Journals	524 (21.3%)	494 (20.1%)	482 (19.6%)	318 (12.9%)	645 (26.2%)
Newspapers/Magazines	1712 (69.5%)	241 (9.8%)	191 (7.8%)	86 (3.5%)	233 (9.5%)
Reference sources (Dictionary/Encyclopedia/Gazetteers)	602 (24.4%)	440 (17.9%)	427 (17.3%)	267 (10.8%)	727 (29.5%)
Project reports	274 (11.1%)	269 (10.9%)	377 (15.3%)	402 (16.3%)	1141 (46.3%)
Dissertations/Theses	226 (9.2%)	231 (9.4%)	275 (11.2%)	362 (14.7%)	1369 (55.6%)
Conference proceedings	216 (8.8%)	220 (8.9%)	253 (10.3%)	384 (15.6%)	1390 (56.4%)
Reports	309 (12.5%)	253 (10.3%)	318 (12.9%)	361 (14.7%)	1222 (49.6%)
Newsletters	535 (21.7%)	327 (13.3%)	308 (12.5%)	302 (12.3%)	991 (40.2%)

The various print sources preferred for reading presented in the Table-4.5. The study found that, most of the respondents preferred to read newspapers/magazines (69.5%), followed by books (58.9%) and reference sources (dictionary/encyclopedia/gazetteers) (24.4%) on a daily basis. The result of the study shows that, less percent of respondents preferred to read newsletters (21.7%), journals/back volumes of journals (21.3%) and few of them preferred to read reports (12.5%), project reports (11.1%), dissertations/theses (9.2%) and also conference proceedings (8.8%) on a daily basis.

Table-6: Impact of Reading habit on the academic achievements

Impact	Strongly agree	Agree	Can't say	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It is a channel for gaining real world of knowledge	1389 (56.4%)	818 (33.2%)	97 (3.9%)	29 (1.2%)	130 (5.3%)
It affects on my success during the exam times	876 (35.6%)	1009 (41.0%)	263 (10.7%)	93 (3.8%)	222 (9.0%)
It enables me to express my feelings	597 (24.2%)	897 (36.4%)	561 (22.8%)	165 (6.7%)	243 (9.9%)
It improves mental capacity	1007 (40.9%)	999 (40.6%)	185 (7.5%)	84 (3.4%)	188 (7.6%)
It is the basic tool of education	1139 (46.2%)	900 (36.5%)	158 (6.4%)	74 (3.0%)	192 (7.8%)
It enhances skills in everyday life	991 (40.2%)	915 (37.1%)	241 (9.8%)	95 (3.9%)	221 (9.0%)
It improves/sharpens the intellect	941 (38.2%)	936 (38.0%)	243 (9.9%)	97 (3.9%)	246 (10.0%)
It promotes effective participation in the social life	883 (35.9%)	932 (37.8%)	298 (12.1%)	125 (5.1%)	225 (9.1%)

The impact of reading habits on the academic achievements is shown in Table-6. The study found that, the reading habit has made an impact on the academic achievements of the respondents. The majority of the respondents strongly agreed that, reading is the channel for

gaining real world of knowledge (56.4%), followed by it is the basic tool of education (46.2%), it improves mental ability (40.9%), and also it enhances skills in everyday life (40.2%). Furthermore, they have opined that, reading is improves/sharpens the intellect (38.2%), it promotes effective participation in the social life (35.9%), its affects on my success during the exam times (35.6%) and also few of them opined that it enable me to express my feelings (24.2%).

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study found that various interesting results with respect to preferred places of reading books as well as purpose of reading books and impact of reading habits of their academic achievements.

The study found that, the population consisted of an equal number of male (50.2%) and female (49.8%) respondents and it is observed that most of the respondents are from the rural areas (63%). The study recommends that university authority needs to provide free hostel facilities on the campus to promote reading habits among the students.

It is very interesting to note that almost all the respondents have reading habits and most of them read books at their home (69.1%). It is also found that most of the respondents have a high positive attitude toward reading books. The respondents also showed their interest read books at home. Therefore, it is suggested that the library timings need to be extended, so that the students and faculty members can read books in the library for the longer hours.

In this survey, it is observed that, most of the respondents are not aware of the gazetteers, bulletins, encyclopaedias and other reading materials. The study recommends that, faculty members of the concerned departments, university libraries and library staff need to create awareness about gazetteers, bulletins, encyclopedias and other reading materials.

Further, the study revealed that most of the respondents read various information sources because they are interested in the topic of the study. In this context, the university authorities need to create awareness among the students and faculty members to read books not only for their topic of the study, but also to know more about reading books, to prepare for the examination, to prepare seminar presentations and also in the research work. Furthermore, university authorities and all faculty members may hold reading campaigns by inviting more influential or inspiring personalities so the students will be more attracted to participate in the reading events.

The study found that, few of the respondents read literature for research purpose. This shows that most of the respondents are not interested in the research work. The study recommends that, university authorities may provide the research grants and also organise more number of research related seminars, conferences, workshops, and symposiums to encourage and motivate the students and faculty members to do better research.

Another notable finding of the study is that the all most all the students and faculty members are very much interested to read books. The study found that most of the respondents have a high positive attitude toward reading books. This study shows that the reading habit has made an impact on the academic achievements of the students and the faculty members. Further, it is found that reading habit has been acting as a channel for gaining real world of knowledge, improved mental capacity and enhanced the reading skills in everyday life. Therefore, the study recommends that university library need to subscribe more number of books, journals and related materials for further study. Moreover, the events viz., study circle, debate clubs, seminars, essay competitions, quiz competitions may be conducted by the library to attract the students and faculty members towards the library to increase the reading habits.

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