

READING HABITS OF SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN: SOME OBSERVATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Through this survey, an attempt has been made to have an access to the liking and unlikeliness of the children of age group 5 to 14. In the survey, the authors have interviewed 240 students both boys and girls personally and the help of charging and discharging registers have also been taken.

Key words : Reading habits, Children.

INTRODUCTION

In Kendriya Vidyalaya, Librarian have to organize two-library class per week per section for students. The author while working as librarian in Kendriya Vidyalaya was finding it difficult to organize the library class purposefully, specially when more than one class of different standards were to attend the library. The reason being the varied reading habits of the students. To over come the difficulty it was thought to properly analysis and access the reading needs of students to organize the classes purposefully.

The purpose of the survey is to help the school librarians to know the reading needs of students and develop their collection in such a way, which is actually required to inculcate the reading habits in students.

METHODS

The survey is conducted on the students of two Kendriya Vidyalayas namely Kendriya Vidyalaya' Babina and Kendriya Vidyalaya Talbehat. In Kendriya Vidyalayas students hail from various sections of the society i.e. Defence Sector, Central Government employees group and civil sector, having their back rounds on literate and illiterate parents. The parents also have varied educational standard. The study was conducted by selecting a sample and the data collected through interview of students and student's record available with schools. The details are as under.

Table-1

Students Description

Name of School	No. of Students	Range of Classes	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	No. of Gifted Children	No. of Slow Learners
KVT*	160	I-VIII	80	80	80	80
KVB**	80	I-VIII	40	40	40	40
Total	240	-	120	120	120	120

*.KVT - Kendriya Vidyalaya Babina

* Kendriya Vidyalaya Talbehat

READING HABITS

The word 'Reading-habit' stands for the consumption of books (Documents) which means a peep into the experience gained by the scholars and the thoughts given as result. Thus arises a question- Why to peep into the experiences of other? The answer may be found in the lines coined by an anonymous about 400 year's age. "Anyone who neglected their (books) help and trusted solely to his won experiences for the acquisition of knowledge would be dead long before he had attained even to the rudiments of it." These lines give rise to another question- Why the books for children? Children who instead of getting the help of books, even cannot read them. How will they understand the thoughts? UNESCO LIBRARY manifesto, 1973 answer the question- 'This in early age that a taste for books and the habit of using library and their resources are must easily acquired.' The answer does not end here only because apart from acquiring a taste for book children also grows well with the help of books. Bullock report 1975 reads - 'Books compensate for the difficulties of growing up'. If that it does not matter whether a children can read and understand or not. Reading habit is a threshold of understanding the thoughts in future. Let a child be first habitual of handling the books and these may be picture books, story books or any other.

Children libraries have an important role to play in the development of these basic reading skills' where these are school are school libraries, or public libraries. Children through their schools are, easily reached by library publicity, they are prepared to try most new experience which come _ their way, they have fewer alternative ways of spending their leisure time and they can not afford ; to buy all the reading material they may want at this stage in their into account. For much of their reading material, children are dependent on adult middlemen.

Apart from their age and their lack of experience, children have few things in common. They represent a cross section of society, they include the veryable, the mentally subnormal, the affluent and the deprived, they from non reading under fives to teenagers who can read any thing and for whom the higher education lies on the not too far distant horizon, but although, then interests and abilities range widely, children can be served more effectively with fewer resources than can adult.

NEED AND INTEREST

The only kind of material which is easily and directly helpful to start with comics. Once a child is reading fluently and has access to any book within his comprehension, he goes through a period when leisure reading has to be strongly

motivated, either by the needs for escapism in one form or an other or by desire for information. In both cases the child will believe he is reading for enjoyment, but underlying this are same practical psychological reasons, for stories provide a means of coming to terms with the past and present experience. Fiction helps children to develop knowledge and understanding and to formulate individual values and beliefs. Studies of romance provide for wish fulfillment. Reading poetry makes witty and historical stories, fictions and Biographies develops wisdom.

Table-2

Purpose of Reading				
	Slow Learners	Gifted	Girls	Boys
For enjoy and relaxation	98	95	99	94
To enhance knowledge	22	25	21	26

As evident from the above table.

Children read for variety of reasons but most of them to spend their leisure time. Voluntary reading is for relaxation and enjoyment. The Reading and Survey shows a similarity of reading tastes amongst children, these are not affected by ability, and disability (slow learning) slow learners also follow the same track as the most able although at a some what later age.

The dominant factor in determining reading tastes and the amount of reading done is sex.

Table-3

Reading done in a month				
Type of Readers	Boys	Girls	Slow Learners	Gifted Children
No, of Books	'477	'711	213	975

Table-4

Family Background				
	Slow Learners	Gifted	Boys	Girls
'whose parents read in Home	11	113	66	50
Whose parents. do not read in the Home	109	7	54	62

As analyzed from the above tables,

Girls are more likely to read than boys are and tend to read more widely, The second major factor is home environment. Children brought up in the homes where their parents read and where books are regarded as an essential part of life, are more likely to become readers than those who do not have this experience.

Table-5 They Like

Age	Total	Picture Books		Stories of same Age		Stories of Fairies		Adventure Book		Specification & Mysteries	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
5-7	65	22	30	3	5	2	3	-	-	-	-
7-9	55	2	3	19	21	3	5	2	0	-	-
9-12	47	-	-	2	3	0	13	10	2	19	8
12	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	15	17	12

-".

As evident from the above table.

Under seven (5-7) are not very critical about the taste, They are mostly interested in picture books having pictures of animals and the children of their age group. An important part of the picture books experience is that an adult or older person showing sufficient interest is to be involved in a shared experience.

Children between the age of seven and nine are growing out of picture book and are not yet ready for children novels. They are becoming more egocentric, have more sense of individual identity and are more aware of others. They began to want romance stories about realistic characters in un-realistic situations. This is the period when the peer-group becomes more important; hence they demand the stories about gangs. As children become more independent, they enjoy stories in which parents and adults are shown not to be all powerful. Most of the books at this stage, they want, are simple adventure stories of and about the children of same age group.

The very important finding of the survey is that by the age of nine boys and girls have significantly tastes; girls will still read fairy tales while many boys have rejected them. Both boys and girls of ten to eleven like adventure stories involving group activity but boys show a preference for wider and rougher adventure. Girls like store set against a family back ground which deals personal relationships and reflect their need to love and be loved. By the age of twelve are interested in romance about girls slightly older than themselves, while boys like science fiction, Mysteries and facts.

The problem is becoming more acute to look at fiction for this age group (9-12) in terms of convenient categories i.e. Fantasy, Adventure, Domestic, Adventure stores new usually have some elements of domestic features and growth, domestic features and growth, domestic stories unfolds in away that makes every-day life seem exiting and fantasy stories

usually involve both adventure and domestic elements;

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

- 1 The children below five can neither read the books nor take proper care of books but for these reasons they should not be deprived of handling the books. As at the age of two a child starts to identify the familiar pictures and colors to start with red and followed by yellow, blue and green. So they should be given the opportunities to handle the books with the help of middleman.**
- 2. Children between age group five and seven are widely interested in picture books with a little description so the books for this age group should be printed carefully and at the time of reading they must be assisted by a second man for description part. In school this role is played by the teachers and the library staff and in home this role.**
- 3. The children of seven to twelve need the books some how of very different type because at this stage taste develops on the two grounds one is age and other is sex. So in the selection. of books a very sharp care should be taken.**
- 4. The library must acquaint them self with the family background of the students so that extra help may be extended to the students hailed from illiterate families.**

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