Reading Habits Among The School Children in Northern District of Tamil Nadu, India.

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Abstract

A modern saying says “Today’s Readers are tomorrow’s Leader”. One should read books and other materials to acquire knowledge. Unless one reads and get in touch with the mass media, it is difficult to know what is going around us. Not only that, a student has to read books, other than his text books, so that the area of thinking and acting will become broader. If the reading habit is not inculcated among the student community, the school of knowledge will go in vain. The hour is come for the student community to rise up and read books. So it is found necessary to study about the reading habit so the high school students. And it is found in this study that the reading habit among the student community shown a progressive improvement which is for sure a positive sign for a developing nation like India.

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1Reading:

Reading is the art of interpreting printed and written words. It is a basic tool of education. According to William S. Grey, reading influences the extent and accuracy of information as well as the attitudes, moral beliefs, judgments and action of readers. The reading habit is one of the powerful and lasting influences in the promotion of one’s personal development in particular and social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one’s living; and there by prepares him for an effective civilizing force tending to unite social groups through the dissemination of common experiences.

Considering the social, cultural and educational goals of reading, it is felt that it is worthwhile to know the reading habits of students’ community. There are only a few numbers of attempts in the field of reading interest of Secondary school children. Moreover, sufficient study of the reading interest, especially of adolescent group in Indian setting is lacking. Another factor for the choice of the secondary school students is the important nature of this stage in the educational setup.

Cultivation of general reading in order to reduce the stress on textbooks and to widen the sphere of thinking in an original manner on the
part of the students is a vital necessity. As the library will contain standard and authoritative reference books, up-to-date in their information as well as books on the subjects of the curriculum, it will definitely be an attraction to the growing mind of the adolescent, which often craves for more challenging presentation and appreciates contacts with more creative minds than textbook writers are generally gifted.

There is yet another important reason to cultivate reading habit at an early age in life. This is linked with another objective of secondary education viz. to equip the students adequately for higher education. At the level of higher education, thanks to the fast expansion of knowledge and the consequent increase in quantum of knowledge to be embedded by the students, it will become increasingly necessary for them to do extensive reading and for this purpose to depend heavily on libraries. Nevertheless, the habit of reading unless developed at an early stage in the educational career of a student will be difficult to cultivate later on. A student who has had no introduction to the library and books at the school level will enter higher education without an essential part of his equipment to meet the new challenges that await him. On the other hand, the habit of reading, if acquired at an early stage, will continue throughout life, and the high school library by initiating every student into the rich and exhilarating experience of learning through books converts him into a user of books throughout his life.

1.2 Benefits of Reading

The impact of reading in people’s lives is extraordinarily widespread. A reader can learn new skills, can be introduced to new facts, can become a more knowledgeable person of the whole world and he can be stimulated to both thought and emotion.

Reading has the unique power of transforming readers. It sometimes is said, “We are what we read”. Abraham Lincoln said, “The things I want to know are in books. My friend is the man who will get a book to read”. Francis Bacon therefore; rightly said, “Reading makes a full man”.

The school library should create the reading habit among children, because this is the main objective of the school library. This will in turn help them to make the best use of college, university and public libraries in future. The collection in a school library must include Junior Reference sources, books supplementing the prescribed reading materials.

1.3 Reading habit and School Libraries:
It is too much of a task to induce any new habit, and the habit of using a library is not an exception. Any inculcation of including that of reading should be initiated in childhood. The education method in schools should develop in each student the capacity and the desire to use library not only at school stage but also all through the life. To achieve this end, the school library should work in close collaboration with classroom work. This is now accepted as an essential function of a school library. In its new edition, the New English dictionary should include this as a necessary function of a library, in its definition of the term.

The school library should be adequately equipped with books and efficiently organized for its role. It should be so located as to catch the eye of the students. The furniture should be functional and comfortable.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

The methodologies in the research that has been adopted to study about the reading interest or habits among the high school students are,

2.1 Statement of the problem:

The problem under study is “Reading Habit among School Children in Northern District of Tamil Nadu, India.”

2.2 Scope of the Study:

The study covers the High School students of English Medium School in Vellore district, Tamil Nadu.

2.3 Objectives of the Study:

The researcher framed the following objectives:

1) To know whether the students spend time in reading books, Newspapers, Magazines, comics etc at home.

2) To know whether the students read books other than their text books.

3) To know the total time spent in the school Library

4) To know whether the students buy books and gift books to their friends.

2.4 Research Design:

In this study, the researcher presented the details related to the level of High School Students and their lever of reading habits. Their ideas and views about reading also been presented. The data presented is based purely on the subjective report of the respondents. This study is thus based on the ‘Descriptive Research Design’.

College Science in India 2 : 1 June 2008
R. Senthil Kumar, Abigail Senthil Kumar, B.S. Swaroop Rani
Reading Habits Among The School Children in Northern District of Tamil Nadu, India
2.5 Universe of Sampling:
The universe of sample comprises of “Reading Habit among School Children in Northern District of Tamil Nadu, India.”

2.6 Criteria for Sampling Selection:
The high school students presently studying in standards IX & X in English medium schools in Northern District are taken as samples.

2.7 Tools used for Data Collection:
Questionnaires were used to collect data. There one hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires distributed. Ninety six (96) of them responded and returned.

3. ANALAYSIS OF DATA

3.1 Distribution
Distribution of respondents based on Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of respondents (n=96)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distribution of respondents based on the habit of Reading Newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Do you read Newspaper regularly</th>
<th>Number of Respondents (n=96)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>78.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on the habit of reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Time Spent</th>
<th>Total (n=66)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15-30 Mins</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30 – 60 Mins</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>More than 1 Hr</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
newspaper regularly. 75 (78.10%) of the respondents are reading regularly and 21 (21.90) of them are not reading regularly).

The habit of reading is inculcated among school children in a very young age by parents and children. It is seen from the above table that more than three fourth of the children read regularly. Librarians also play a role in helping the children read books other than textbooks. In spite of other entertainment media like Television, Internet games and Compact Discs children still like to read story books.

3.2 Distribution of respondents based on the habit of Reading books other than their text books

3.3 Distribution of Respondents based on the time spent in reading books other than textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Presenting Books</th>
<th>Total (n=66)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Findings:

The following chapter provides the findings of 96 questionnaires from four schools. In the previous chapter there are data has been computed analysed and interpreted to derive certain findings. Based
on the objectives the researcher synthesised the following findings.

- 75 of the respondents (78.10%) are reading regularly and 21 of them (21.90%) are not reading regularly.

- 66 of the respondents (68.75%) read other books also. However, 30 of those (31.25%) do not read other books at all.

- 27 of the respondents (40.90%) spent 15 to 30 minutes for reading. Another 27 of those (40.90%) spent 30 to 60 minutes and 12 of them (18.20%) spent more than one hour in reading General books.

- 72 respondents (75%) from all schools are presenting Books to others during birthday and other special days and 24 of them (25%) do not present books. Almost more than half of the respondents from each school present books to their friends on special occasions.

4.2 Conclusion

It is encouraging to know that the student community awakened to read which will raise a very good citizen to the country. The role of Librarian in school is really challenging. If the children in school start reading at the young age, it will create an impact in every area of their life. So with the help of the teachers the Librarian should create an atmosphere for reading and use of Library.

Periodical SWOT analysis (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats) can be done to improve the usage of Library and reading.
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