

Reading Habits in the Information Technology Era: A Study of B. Ed. Students

*Sanjay K Kaushik, **Pankaj Bhardwaj

*Assistant Librarian (Selection Grade), Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak-124001

**Librarian, RDS Public Girls College, Rewari, Haryana

Abstract

The present paper is an output of a study carried out to know reading habits of Bachelor of Education students. The structured questionnaire is used to obtain the data from the selected sample. The results shows that three fourth of respondents read newspaper daily and 13.9% respondents read newspaper occasionally. Only 10.2% respondents read magazines daily and 43.5% read these occasionally. About half of the respondents (48.1%) read general magazines whereas 44.4% respondents read magazines relating to various Competitions. As much as 50.9% respondents read competitions books and 30.6% read fiction/poetry books. A thumping majority of respondents (70.4%) read for knowledge and 15.7% read for Information. More than one third (39.8%) respondents frequently use their institutional library and 29.6% respondents occasionally use their institutional library. The respondents with more %age of marks in the Matric read according to a scheduled time plan as compared to the students who scored less percentage of marks in 10th. The female respondents have been found devoting more time for studies during the exams days as compared to the male respondents. The chi-square value of Gender X Frequency of use of internet is 11.853, degree of freedom is 3 and P is .008, which shows a high significant difference. More than three fourth i.e. 76.9% respondents' favorite search engine is Google and 18.5% respondents prefer Yahoo as search engine.

Keywords

Information Technology, Reading Habits, Users' Survey.

Reprint requests: Dr. Sanjay K Kaushik

Assistant Librarian (Selection Grade)

Maharshi Dayanand University

Rohtak-124001, Haryana

E-mail: kaush_s@rediffmail.com

Introduction

Reading is an art of interpreting the printed tools and written words. Reading is a quick association of the eye movement with the words. A person who can have more quick association with words and eyes, he can read more rapidly, that is why we call a person slow reader or fast reader. Reading depends upon habit formation and constant practice. Good habits of reading can be injected by motivating the students and by guiding them to read interesting content matter to widen their interest in reading. Reading is primarily an intellectual activity and reading habit is a sort of attribute of a human being. Like other habits, the habit of reading in an individual develops during the course of time. Psychologically, habit is a product of learning. Good readers are good planners too. Reading is a source for the achievement of developmental task because it gives knowledge, esthetic enjoyment and a supply of substituted experience that is merely in exhaustible. It is important for the professional staff of a library to know about the reading habits and information needs of clientele being served¹. The developments in the field of Information Technology have influenced the behaviour of library users and certainly there is an impact of IT on the reading habits of students. The present study is an attempt to know the reading habits of B. Ed. Students in this era of Information Technology.

Objectives

The major objectives of the study are as under:

- * To know the habits of reading newspaper, magazines and books among the Bachelor of Education students
- * To identify the type of magazines and books they read
- * To know the reasons for reading, favorite place of reading and style of reading

- * To know whether they read in a planned or not
- * To know the time devoted for studies
- * To know the use of internet, favorite search engine and favorite e-mail service provider

Scope

The study is delimited to the Bachelor of Education students of Satish Public College of Education, Rewari and Sardar Patel College of Education, Farrukhnagar, Gurgaon, Haryana. The total strength of both the colleges was selected as the sample for this study.

Literature Review

Sever and Branse (1991)² examined the nature of Israelis' reading habits during the past 20 years. Important social factors, influential during this period, have been the spread of education, acculturation of immigrants, the establishment of a network of public libraries, and, perhaps most pronounced, the rapid acceptance of television and video as popular media competing with reading for people's leisure time. Sakota (1993)³ reported the results of a survey carried out by Tokyo Municipal Library into the reading habits and requirements of Asians in Japan. 112 people, mainly students, were questioned. Asian residents used libraries heavily, especially smaller branch libraries which rarely had foreign language materials. They felt libraries were important to them. There was demand for both Japanese language and foreign materials. Foreign residents have a right to participate in Japan's cultural life and libraries should help them.

Shekhawat (2006)⁴ conducted a study on reading habits of engineering students at BITS, Pilani. The study shows that the most important purpose of reading by the students is to update their knowledge and information. 75% of postgraduate students read newspaper daily and 18% students read occasionally where as 7% students read newspaper rarely. In undergraduate students 64% students read newspaper daily and 36% students read occasionally. Total 15% students don't read books other than textbooks but 85% students read books other than textbooks. In total 86% students don't read religious books but 14% students read religious books. Kaushik and Khanchi (2007)⁵

revealed that as much as ninety respondents (57.69%) read newspaper daily and fifty-two respondents (33.33%) read newspaper occasionally. A majority of respondents (58.33%) read general magazines, 14.73% respondents read magazines on films, 16.67% respondents read magazines relating to various Competitions. More female under-graduates have been found reading Novels/ Poetry/ Stories books, whereas more male have been found reading religious and competitive books. The female undergraduate students have been found devoting more time for reading at home (during normal college days as well as during exam days) as compared to male undergraduate students. The use of internet by rural undergraduate students is very low, which is matter of great concern for us as librarians. Only sixteen respondents out of one hundred fifty six use the internet.

Methodology

A structured questionnaire containing the questions relating to various aspects of reading habit was designed and used to collect the data. The questionnaire was distributed among the respondents in their classrooms during the vacant periods. Every question was explained to the students for their better understanding and the students were asked to fill their questionnaire on the spot. Total one hundred fourteen questionnaires were distributed and received back. However six questionnaires were found unusable, as these were not filled up properly. Rest one hundred eight questionnaires were coded and inputted in MS-Excel. This data is then analysed with the help of SPSS 7.5 for windows. The results are presented in the next paragraph along with certain important tables.

Results

The interpretation of the data received is being made under various subheadings: -

Reading Newspaper

Newspaper is the most common source of information. It does not only contain the news but also publish articles on various topics pertaining to health, education, entertainment, employment, etc. The students at college and university level are expected to read newspaper for upgrading their general knowledge and keeping themselves aware of current affairs. The

results of the present study shows that 74.1% respondents read the newspapers daily, 13.9% read these occasionally and 12% read these rarely. Therefore we can say that respondents have a good habit of reading newspaper. While comparing the respondents on the basis of their

affiliation to the college, no significant difference is found. The chi-square value is found .792 with the degree of freedom of 2 and probability (P) level more than .05. The Gender and marks in 10th also does not have significant effect on the habit of reading newspaper by the respondents.

Table 1
College X Reading Newspaper

		Frequency of Reading Newspaper			Total
		Daily	Occasionally	Rarely	
Satish Public College of Education	Count	47	7	7	61
	% within College	77.0%	11.5%	11.5%	100.0%
Sardar Patel College of Education	Count	33	8	6	47
	% within College	70.2%	17.0%	12.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	80	15	13	108
	% within College	74.1%	13.9%	12.0%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.792(a)	2	.673

Reading Magazines

Those who missed the newspapers need not to worry as Magazines are such a source of information that provides the weekly or fortnightly or monthly capsules of general news. Hence reading magazines is also expected from these students. It is found that only 10.2% of respondents read magazines daily, 43.5% read these occasionally and 44.4% read these rarely. There are 1.9% respondents who mentioned that

they never read the magazines. Hence we can say that the habit of reading magazines is poor among the respondents. The chi-square value of College X Reading Magazine is 3.161 with a degree of freedom of 3 and P level more than .05. Once again there is no significant effect of college on the habit of reading of magazines by the respondents. The other two variables viz. Gender and marks in 10th also do not have significant effect.

Table 2
College X Reading Magazines

		Frequency of Reading Magazines				Total
		Daily	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	
Satish Public College of Education	Count	7	23	29	2	61
	% within College	11.5%	37.7%	47.5%	3.3%	100.0%
Sardar Patel College of Education	Count	4	24	19		47
	% within College	8.5%	51.1%	40.4%		100.0%
Total	Count	11	47	48	2	108
	% within College	10.2%	43.5%	44.4%	1.9%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.161(a)	3	.367

Kind of Magazines

The magazines on the basis of their contents can be classified into various categories like General, films, competitions, sports, women's, etc. The different groups of people read different

kind of magazines. It is indicated from the results that 48.1% of respondents read General magazines, 44.4% respondents read Competitions magazines, only 4.6% and 2.8% respondents read film magazines and other

magazines respectively. It shows that at this juncture of life the respondents are very much serious and cautious about their career. The chi-

square value of College X Kinds of Magazines is 1.129, degree of freedom is 3 and P level is higher than .05, which shows a non-significant difference.

Table 3
College X Kind of Magazines Read

		Kinds of magazines				Total
		General	Films	Competitions	Others	
Satish Public College of Education	Count	28	2	29	2	61
	% within College	45.9%	3.3%	47.5%	3.3%	100.0%
Sardar Patel College of Education	Count	24	1	19	3	47
	% within College	51.1%	2.1%	40.4%	6.4%	100.0%
Total	Count	52	3	48	5	108
	% within College	48.1%	2.8%	44.4%	4.6%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.129(a)	3	.770

Reading Books Other Than Textbooks

Nowadays it is popular that Teachers are limited with the curriculum, students are limited with textbooks and parents are limited with the scores (%age of marks) of their children. Reading books other than the textbooks is very important in students' life. The results indicate that 96.3% respondents have mentioned that they read the books other than their textbooks. Only 3.7% have mentioned that they do not read other books. Hence the popular saying seems to be proved wrong as far as the responses of the respondents are concerned.

Kind of Books Read

Now it is interesting to note that which kind of books respondents used to read. Almost half of the respondents i.e. 50.9% read competitions books, 30.6% read fiction/ poetry books and 10.2% respondents read religious books. There are 8.3% respondents who read biographical books. The chi-square value of College X Kind of books is 2.847, degree of freedom is 3 and P level is more than .05. Once again there is no significant effect of college, Gender and marks in 10th on kind of books read.

Table 4
College X Kinds of books Read

		Kinds of Books				Total
		Religious	Biographical	Competitions	Novels/ Poems/ Stories	
Satish Public College of Education	Count	8	4	33	16	61
	% within College	13.1%	6.6%	54.1%	26.2%	100.0%
Sardar Patel College of Education	Count	3	5	22	17	47
	% within College	6.4%	10.6%	46.8%	36.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	11	9	55	33	108
	% within College	10.2%	8.3%	50.9%	30.6%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.847(a)	3	.416

Reasons for Reading

Every individual has his own reasons for reading. The study indicates the various reasons for reading by B. Ed. students under study. It is found that a thumping majority of respondents (70.4%) read for knowledge, 15.7% read for

Information and 11.1% read for entertainment. Only 2.8% respondents have their other reason for reading. The chi-square value of college X Reasons for reading is .709 with a degree of freedom of 3 and P level more than .05, which is non-significant.

Table 5
College X Reasons for Reading

		Reasons				Total
		Information	Entertainment	Knowledge	Other	
Satish Public College of Education	Count	10	7	43	1	61
	% within College	16.4%	11.5%	70.5%	1.6%	100.0%
Sardar Patel College of Education	Count	7	5	33	2	47
	% within College	14.9%	10.6%	70.2%	4.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	17	12	76	3	108
	% within College	15.7%	11.1%	70.4%	2.8%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.709(a)	3	.871

Reading Style

Students have different reading styles. Some have lip reading style and some have the other like silent reading, loud reading, etc. The result of the present study shows that three fourth (75.9%) of respondents have silent reading style,

18.5% have lips reading style and 4.6% have loud reading style. Hence the students with loud reading style need to change their style as this style is not suitable while reading in a library. The chi-square value of college X Reading Style is 1.806, degree of freedom is 3 and P is non-significant.

Table 6

College X Style of Reading

		Reading Styles				Total
		Silent	Loud	Lips	Other	
Satish Public College of Education	Count	48	3	10		61
	% within College	78.7%	4.9%	16.4%		100.0%
Sardar Patel College of Education	Count	34	2	10	1	47
	% within College	72.3%	4.3%	21.3%	2.1%	100.0%
Total	Count	82	5	20	1	108
	% within College	75.9%	4.6%	18.5%	.9%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.806(a)	3	.614

Use of Library

Use of a library is also an indicator towards the reading habits of an individual. Library use is very important in developing of reading habits. It is a well thought assumption that more the library is used, more reading habit is developed. The responses related to library use by the respondents indicate that 39.8% respondents frequently use their institutional

library, 29.6% respondents occasionally use their institutional library and 19.4% respondents most frequently use their institutional library. Only 11.1% respondents rarely use their institutional library. It is a good indication that the coming teachers have a habit of using a library. The chi-square value of college X Use of Library is 5.372, degree of freedom is 3 and P is more than .05 (Non-significant).

Table 7

College X Use of Library

		Frequency of Library Use				Total
		Most Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	
Satish Public College of Education	Count	14	28	14	5	61
	% within College	23.0%	45.9%	23.0%	8.2%	100.0%
Sardar Patel College of Education	Count	7	15	18	7	47
	% within College	14.9%	31.9%	38.3%	14.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	21	43	32	12	108
	% within College	19.4%	39.8%	29.6%	11.1%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.372(a)	3	.146

Favorite Place for Reading

Some students prefer to read in library, others may prefer to read in hostel and some other may prefer at any other place like home, park, garden, fields, etc. The place for reading contributes a lot in the concentration on reading. Everyone must read at the best place for him/her. The study indicated that majority of respondents' favorite place of reading is home.

As much as 20.4% respondents' favorite place of reading is Library and 13.9% respondents have given their preference to other places like parks, gardens, etc. Hostel is not found as favorite place of reading as only 6.5% respondents have shown their preference to hostel. The chi-square value of college X Favorite Place of Reading is 1.066, degree of freedom is 3 and P level is more than .05, which indicate a non-significant difference.

Table 8

College X Favorite Place for Reading

		Favorite Places				Total
		Library	Hostel	Home	Other	
Satish Public College of Education	Count	13	5	34	9	61
	% within College	21.3%	8.2%	55.7%	14.8%	100.0%
Sardar Patel College of Education	Count	9	2	30	6	47
	% within College	19.1%	4.3%	63.8%	12.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	22	7	64	15	108
	% within College	20.4%	6.5%	59.3%	13.9%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.066(a)	3	.785

Planned Time Schedule

Those who are much disciplined, act according to a planned time schedule. The planned time schedule is the mantra for time management. Through the time management people take best out of the same 24 hours from which the other can not get their best. Hence it is important for students also that they should chalk out their time schedule for reading. The results of present study shows that two third of

the respondents i.e. 66.7% do not read according to a scheduled time plan whereas only one third (33.3%) read according to a scheduled time plan. The chi-square value of Marks in 10th X Reading according to a scheduled time plan is 10.469 with a degree of freedom of 3 and P equal to .015, which shows a significant difference. We may note that the more students with more %age of marks in the Matric read according to a scheduled time plan as compared to the students who scored less percentage of marks in 10th.

Table 9
Marks in 10th X Scheduled Time Plan

				Total
		Yes	No	
> 60%	Count	6	28	34
	% within V3	17.6%	82.4%	100.0%
60 to 69%	Count	16	26	42
	% within V3	38.1%	61.9%	100.0%
70 to 79%	Count	11	18	29
	% within V3	37.9%	62.1%	100.0%
80 to 89%	Count	3		3
	% within V3	100.0%		100.0%
Total	Count	36	72	108
	% within V3	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.469(a)	3	.015

Time Devoted for Studies

Students are supposed to devote most of their time for studies. It depends upon a number of factors that how much time a student can devote for studies. The time devoted for studies also differ during the normal college days and during the examinations. The study found that during the normal college days, 63.9% respondents devote 2 to 5 hours daily on their studies, 31.5% devote less than 2 hours daily and only 4.6% respondents devote more than 5 hours daily. During exams days the time devoted for studies is expected to be more as compared to the normal college days. The results also support this. It is found that during exams days 68.5% respondents devote 6 to 10 hours daily, 16.7%

devote less than 5 hours daily and 13% devote 11 to 15 hours daily. Only 1.9% respondents devote more than 15 hours daily during exams days. The chi-square value of Gender X Time devoted during exams days is 13.891, degree of freedom being 3 and P is .003, which shows a high significant difference. The female respondents have been found devoting more time for studies during the exams days as compared to the male respondents. The chi-square value of Marks in 10th X Time devoted during exams days is 20.848, degree of freedom being 9 and P is .013, which shows a significant difference. Again the respondents with higher marks in 10th have been found devoting more time on studies during the exams.

Table 10
Gender X Time Devoted during Exam days

			Time Devoted				Total
			> 5 Hrs	6 to 10 Hrs.	11 to 15 Hrs	15 to 20 Hrs	
V1	Male	Count	14	28	3		45
		% within V1	31.1%	62.2%	6.7%		100.0%
	Female	Count	4	46	11	2	63
		% within V1	6.3%	73.0%	17.5%	3.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	18	74	14	2	108
		% within V1	16.7%	68.5%	13.0%	1.9%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.891(a)	3	.003

Table 11

Marks in 10th X Time Devoted During Exam days

		Time Devoted				Total
		> 5 Hrs	6 to 10 Hrs.	11 to 15 Hrs	15 to 20 Hrs	
> 60%	Count	6	23	5		34
	% within V3	17.6%	67.6%	14.7%		100.0%
60 to 69%	Count	6	32	4		42
	% within V3	14.3%	76.2%	9.5%		100.0%
70 to 79%	Count	6	17	5	1	29
	% within V3	20.7%	58.6%	17.2%	3.4%	100.0%
80 to 89%	Count		2		1	3
	% within V3		66.7%		33.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	18	74	14	2	108
	% within V3	16.7%	68.5%	13.0%	1.9%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.848(a)	9	.013

Use of Internet

The biggest invention of the 20th century is the computer. With advancement in communication and networking technology, internet becomes the indispensable source of information. A huge amount of literature in various formats is available on internet. The use of internet in research and education has increased during the last decade or so. Nowadays even students are expected to use internet. It is revealed that 57.4% respondents use internet whereas 42.6% respondents do not

use it. The frequency of using internet also varies. The results indicate that 53.7% respondents occasionally use internet, 26.9% respondents rarely use internet and only 18.5% respondents daily use internet. There is only one respondent who never use internet. The chi-square value of Gender X Frequency of use of internet is 11.853, degree of freedom is 3 and P is .008, which shows a high significant difference. The male respondents have been found using internet more frequently as compared to the female respondents.

Table 12

Gender X Frequency of Use of Internet

			V24				Total
			Daily	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	
V1	Male	Count	8	31	5	1	45
		% within V1	17.8%	68.9%	11.1%	2.2%	100.0%
	Female	Count	12	27	24		63
		% within V1	19.0%	42.9%	38.1%		100.0%
Total		Count	20	58	29	1	108
		% within V1	18.5%	53.7%	26.9%	.9%	100.0%

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.853(a)	3	.008

There are various search engines which helps the internet users in finding the required information. The B. Ed. Students were asked to mention their favorite search engine. The results indicate that more than three fourth i.e. 76.9% respondents' favorite search engine is Google, 18.5% respondents prefer Yahoo and 3.7% like

rediff. Only one respondent likes Gopher. Electronic mail (E-mail) is the cheapest and quickest means of communication for long messages. The results show that 78.7% respondents use e-mail but 21.3% respondents do not use it. Yahoo mail is the favorite e-mail provider of 78.7% respondents, 8.3% like

Indiatimes, 9.3% prefer Rediffmail and 3.7% respondents favor Hotmail.

Conclusion

The results of the study clearly indicate that Information Technology have an impact on the reading habits of respondents. Now they are not restricted to documentary sources but they also use the online digital sources. The variety of sources of information has grown due to the developments in the field of Information Technology. The emergence of internet has made possible the easy accessibility of remote digital resources. The use of internet, e-mail and interest in various search engines clearly indicate that with the development of information technology the reading habits of B. Ed. Students have been influenced.

Referemces

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