

## A Study on the Reading Habits of Arts and Science Students in Annamalai University

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### Abstract

The study gives a brief description about the importance of reading and aims to explore the current reading habits and attitudes of Arts and Science students of Annamalai university. The survey method was applied to conduct the study and questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. The data collected was analysed using simple statistical techniques. The results reveal that the college students have positive attitudes towards reading and majority of them spend almost one hour on academic and non-academic reading daily. The students developed reading habits mostly through self efforts followed up with the help of parents and teachers respectively.

**Keywords:** Reading Habits; Reading Choices; Reading Preferences.

### Introduction

According to the Report of the Commission on Reading, reading is considered as a cornerstone for success, not just in schools, but also throughout the adult life of an individual. Reading is regarded as a process, a mode of thinking, a kind of real experience and involves many complex skills: the ability to perceive printed words, to skim for information and then perhaps read intensively.

*“A Dumb Person becomes a Communicator and a Lame Climbs Mountains of Knowledge Through Reading”*

Reading has been the passion of the greatest personalities of all times. Humans have been reading since ages and thus words of knowledge have been passed on through generations. The reading habit 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 thereby prepares a person for an effective participation in the social, religious, cultural and political life. Reading fires the imagination of the person. It adds new sight to eyes and new wisdom to mind.

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 fires the imagination of the person by adding new sight to eyes and new wisdom to mind. The individual who reads well has at his command a means for widening his mental horizon and for multiplying his opportunities of success. Reading is a vital factor affecting intellectual and emotional growth.

Reading is the ability to recognize and examine words or sentences and understand the information within. It is a cognitive process of understanding a written linguistic message and to examine and grasp the meaning of written or printed characters, words or sentences.

This paper attempts to find out the reading habits among arts and science students of Annamalai University. For this purpose 250 students from arts and science faculty have been selected for the study. A questionnaire was prepared and administered to

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them out of which only 224 students have responded to all the questions. 110 students from arts faculty and 114 students from science faculty have responded. Simple percentage analysis has been made. Hypothesis have been framed and tested.

1. There is significant difference between in the time spent on reading among male and female students.
2. There is significant difference between in the choice of reading material among male and female students.
3. There is significant difference between in the

purpose of reading among male and female students.

Enjoyment in reading means how much they love to read or find pleasure in reading. It is clear from the Table 1 that out of 224 students 98(43.75%) of the students enjoy reading a lot. 73(32.58%) of the students enjoy reading a bit. 42(18.75%) of the students enjoy reading to some extent and 11(4.92%) of the students don't enjoy reading at all. From the table it is inferred that most of the students enjoy reading since the percentage is highest for that option.

**Table 1:** Enjoyment in reading

No	Enjoyment in Reading	No. of Respondents	%
1	A lot	98	43.75
2	A bit	73	32.58
3	To some extent	42	18.75
4	Not at all	11	4.92
	Total	224	100

**Table 2:** Time spent on reading

Time spent	Male			Female			Total
	Arts	Science	Total	Arts	Science	Total	
>1 hours	4	3	7	5	2	7	14
1 - 2 hours	24	22	46	26	30	56	102
3 - 4 hours	20	31	51	18	20	38	89
>4 hours	2	2	4	11	4	15	19
	50	58	108	60	56	116	224

1. There is significant difference between in the time spent on reading among male and female students.

DF	6
t Stat	-0.11959
P(T<=t)	0.908709
t Critical	2.446912

Result: Not significant - hypothesis is rejected

Table 2 shows that out of 224 students 14(6.25%) of the students spend 1 hour on reading. 102(45.53%) of the students spend 1 to 2 hours on reading. 89(39.73%) of the students spend 3to4 hours on readings and 19(8.94%) of students spend >4 hours on reading. It is revealed that most of the students 102 (45.53%) spend one to two hours on reading The first hypothesis is tested and it is rejected.

**Table 3:** Inculcating reading habits

No	Inculcating reading habits	No. of Respondents	%
1	Parents	31	13.84
2	Brother/Sisters	18	8.04
3	Teachers	115	51.34
4	Friends	15	6.69
5	Self interest	35	15.63
6	Others	10	4.46
	Total	224	100

**Table 4:** Preferred languages for reading

No	Preferred languages	No. of Respondents	%
1	English	80	35.71
2	Tamil	24	10.71
3	Both	120	53.58
	Total	224	100

Inculcating reading habits means the source from where they developed interest for reading others refers to famous personalities, relatives and other sources. It is obvious from Table 3 out of 224 students 31(13.84%) of the students inculcate reading habits from their parents. 18 (8.04%) of the students in reading habits from their brother/sister. 115(51.34%) of the students inculcate reading habits from teachers. 15(6.69%) of the students inculcate reading habits from friends. 35(15.63%) of the students have

developed reading habits through their own interest and 10(4.46%) of the students inculcate reading habits from others. It is inferred that teachers were the main source of inspiration since 115 (51.34%) of students have marked teachers.

From Table 4 it is observed that 80(35.71%) of the students prefer to read in English. 24(10.71%) of the students prefer to read in Tamil and 120(53.58%) of the students prefer to read in both languages.

**Table 5:** Purpose of reading

Purpose of reading	Male			Female			Total
	Arts	Science	Total	Arts	Science	Total	
Knowledge	18	26	44	20	24	44	88
Information	12	20	32	18	15	33	65
Relaxation & Pleasure	15	7	22	18	4	22	44
Others	5	5	10	4	13	17	27
Total	50	58	108	60	56	116	224

2. There is significant difference between in the purpose of reading among male and female students.

DF	6
t Stat	-0.2126
P(T<=t)	0.83868
t Critical	2.446912

Result: Not significant – hypothesis is rejected

Table 5 shows that 88(39.28%) of the students purpose of reading is to gain knowledge. 65(29.02%) of the students purpose of reading is to get Information. 44(19.64%) of the students purpose of reading is for relaxation & pleasure and 27(12.06%) of the students reading for other purposes. The hypothesis is tested and it is rejected

**Table 6:** Preference of materials to be read

Choice of reading material	Male			Female			Total
	Arts	Science	Total	Arts	Science	Total	
Reference books	13	16	29	19	13	32	61
Magazines	3	5	8	8	4	12	20
Newspapers	10	10	20	12	16	28	48
General books	12	7	19	7	12	19	38
Journals	8	12	20	10	11	21	41
Other materials	4	8	12	4	-	4	16
Total	50	58	108	60	56	116	224

3. There is significant difference between in the choice of reading material among male and female students.

DF	10
t Stat	-0.25928
P(T<=t)	0.800677
t Critical	2.228139

Result: Not significant – hypothesis is rejected

From Table 6 it is inferred out of 224 students. 61 (27.23%) of the students prefer reference books for

reading. 20 (8.93%) of the students prefer magazines for reading. 48(21.43%) of the students prefer to read newspapers. 38(16.96%) of the students prefer to read general books. 41(18.30%) of the students prefer to read journals and 16(7.14%) of the students prefer to read other materials. The hypothesis is tested and rejected

Table 7 shows the various factor which affects the reading habits. 63(28.12%) of the students feel that there is inadequate reading materials. 65(29.02%) of the students feel that there is rustication in borrowing books . 49(21.87%) of the students feel that they have don't conducive environment to read and 47(20.99%) of the students are not interested in reading .

**Table 7:** Factors affecting reading habits

No	Factors affecting reading habits	No. of Respondents	%
1	Lack of reading materials	63	28.12
2	Restriction on borrowing books	65	29.02
3	Not conducive environment	49	21.87
4	Not interested	47	20.99
	Total	224	100

### Findings

The results reveal that the college students have positive attitudes towards reading and enjoy reading a lot. Majority of them spend almost two hours on academic and non-academic reading daily. The students developed reading habits mostly through their teachers and spend nearly one to hours on reading. The college students prefer to read in both languages ( Tamil and English ). The results also depict that students mostly read for gaining knowledge followed by to seek information. The students prefer reference books for reading. The students face many problems in getting reading materials like restriction on borrowing in libraries and inadequate collection.

### Conclusion

To develop the reading habit of the students and turning them into lifelong learner and to develop a knowledge society reading has become imperative. Reading is essential because it equips people with necessary knowledge and understanding, not only for building their own life but also for contributing positively in the socio-economic development of the nation. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made with a view to improving the reading habit of the younger generation in particular and people from all cross-sections of life in general.

1. The students should start the reading habit right from III std
2. Parents should read to their children good stories during night time
3. They should be motivated to find the required information on their own by reading books or

referring to text or through browsing

4. Teachers should encourage individual loud reading at least one period in a week
5. Spending in books is not waste of money but it should be considered as a investment to gain knowledge.

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