

ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN PROMOTING READING INTEREST

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Abstract

Reading is an interesting and important activity in the society, the word reading habit is combination of two words namely 'reading and habit'. 'Reading is an action of a person who reads' and 'habit is product of this action' or the learning'. Many users considered reading is a good habit but reading is the basic for the human skills. Reading offers a constructive approach to improve one's vocabulary and language skills. The thirst of reading and wider dissemination of books is an indicator of progress in the world. Reading is primarily an intellectual activity and reading habit is a sort of attribute of human being, after analysis the views of various scholars in context of reading habit, it is clear that reading is important for people to acquiring new information and knowledge. Thus reading is regarded as a process, a mode of thinking, a kind of real life experience and involves many complex skills.

Key Words: books, habit, information, knowledge, library, reading, skills, traditional

Introduction

Libraries are indispensable in fostering a love for reading by providing free, equitable access to diverse reading materials, creating quiet and conducive reading environments, and offering engaging programs and expert guidance from librarians to inspire curiosity and knowledge-seeking in people of all ages. They go beyond being book repositories to become vibrant learning centers that nurture critical thinking, empathy, and lifelong learning, transforming communities by cultivating a strong reading culture. In today's era of competition, reading culture will grow only if there is a love for reading. How relevant this thought is in today's era. We all know this. Today's reader's knowledge is his greatest strength. With the help of this power, a person not only becomes profound in knowledge but also influences his work culture. The reading level of the present generation is very low compared to the previous generation. Such discussion takes place at all levels. In order to maintain the culture of reading, it is necessary to develop a love for reading in order to enrich the mind of every human being. Reading opens up a person's personality. The more you read the book, the more knowledge you will gain. Reading as much as "Books are the teachers" makes the reader reflective, think well, and develop a positive attitude. It helps to live a good life. Reading is an uplifting and entertaining aspect of life that cultivates the intellect and leads to a better life. Enrich your life with the hobby of reading. Reading is the only way to increase your knowledge. The knowledge gained from reading is not only acquired by man for knowledge or mental satisfaction; by using that knowledge, he tries to gain control over nature. creates different pleasures. Acquiring and imparting knowledge, systematising it, and using it for happiness is an important part of omniscience reading culture. Today's libraries and librarians

are doing the main work of developing the reading culture, and it is necessary to get the support of the government and society

Different Types of Information Sources Available in the Library

The library is a place with different collections of different contents, so it is known as an information centre or knowledge centre. The main purpose of any library or information centre is to select the quality and required information, collect the information sources, and organize the information sources in a well-planned way for easy management and dissemination of the collected information to the required user community. In the library books, newspapers, journals, magazines, periodicals, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, directories, yearbooks, annual reports, theses and dissertations, patents, standards and specifications, almanacs, maps, atlas, globes, etc., then we can see these collected information sources in two types like documentary sources and non-documentary sources. In the documentary sources, we can see primary sources, secondary sources, and tertiary sources, whereas in the non-documentary sources, the internet, mass media, human beings, organizations, etc. The awareness of these information sources by the library or well-trained library staff will support the users in developing their reading habits by using different information sources that are collected by the library and assisted by the library staff.

Role of Digital Libraries

Like other aspects of innovative teaching, the best schools and colleges in India have adapted to creating and using digital libraries to ensure students benefit from the best two worlds, i.e., traditional reading and modern technology. Unlike traditional libraries, students can pick any number of books from the digital library and read them at their convenience, anywhere in the world! This factor allows students to continue their reading habits away from school and also during vacations. In this article, we also understand the role of libraries in making children excellent students and ideal global citizens of tomorrow.

Reading is a Lifelong Process

Reading is a lifelong process which never ends. People read various kind of literature whether it is available in print or electronic format every day for their own purposes and gain information and knowledge to solve day to day problems and achieving the tasks as without reading it is not possible to seek any information and knowledge. The best stage of start reading is childhood and from home as well school. Kachala¹ also stated that the development of a reading interest should start in early childhood and be nurtured up to adulthood and through this process, it can build a literate nation that can transform itself into an informed and knowledgeable society which plays a significant role in society. Therefore, parents and school should motivate their children enough and provide good environment of reading interest so that from the childhood, children attract, motivate and foster to read for their pleasure and benefits.

On the other hand, any kind of libraries whether it is school libraries, public library, academic library or special library play very important role towards reading in society by providing different unique reading environment with different kind of literature, able to fulfill the information needs, attract the users, motivate the users to read and promote reading interest as well. Similarly, libraries are assisting in also providing right information to the right users,

right format at the right time. However, libraries become main source which accelerate reading interest among the users. Reading is something many, who are literate, take for granted. But if one thinks about it and tries to define it, one may have difficulty verbalizing his/her thoughts. Sybil (1984:9) defines reading as a process of communication through which most formal learning takes place. It involves understanding written language and respond to the author's message. Therefore, this means that when one is reading one has to be thinking, predicting, questioning, evaluating and defining and redefining.

Books are powerful tools with many benefits for students and are known as the best source of knowledge. Schools from time immemorial have been avenues of knowledge, thanks to their libraries that inspire students to become avid readers. Besides being excellent sources of knowledge on various topics, books are also known to improve students' reading, spelling, writing, comprehension, research, diction and many other essential skills!

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study comprises following objectives:

To define the concept of reading interest

To investigate causes behind the poor reading and necessity to improve them

To suggest important roles libraries can play in order to improving and promoting reading interest in society.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR POOR READING INTEREST

1. Poverty
2. Commercialization of Education
3. Lack of Govt. Policies (Absconding role of state towards Higher Education)
4. Corruption
5. Noise interest
6. Malpractices attached to earn "quick money"/ wealth
7. Lack of reading language
8. Administration's poor attitude towards libraries

ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN PROMOTING READING INTEREST

Libraries can play an imperative role in following ways for promoting reading cultural among readers: Providing platforms to access resources As a library has collection of variety of resources such as books, journals, thesis, newspapers, magazines, CD(s), DVD(s) etc. in which some resources are in available in print form and some are available in electronic form. Beside this, a library may comprise resources like journals, magazines, thesis etc. which can be available in both formats print as well as electronic format. Therefore, this is a unique feature of libraries where all resources whether they are in print or electronic are ready available to read in a roof to the users and for their own purposes. When users read these resources to fulfill their information needs then automatic may tell other users about resources available in the library. As such, through providing this platform, a library helps in attracting users to use variety of resources as per users choice and can be promoted reading interest.

Atmosphere

Atmosphere matters lot Atmosphere is a vital feature that affects everyone in order to develop anything. Hence, it is prime duty of library staff members to make silent and reading

atmosphere within the library as good and supportive reading atmosphere may easily inspire users for reading as in a library, items like collection of reading materials, library furniture staff, users and so on are the symbols of reading and help in creating positive atmosphere for reading through which users affect a lot and promote themselves to be a part of this reading atmosphere. On the other hand, parents of students should engage in reading activities so that parents also read the books and make reading atmosphere for their children even in the home. Interaction with users Interaction with users is another important point to discuss reading developing a reading interest. By making an interaction with each other, one can share and discuss their personal and professional ideas and information. This practice creates a platform to express user's views and promote reading interest.

Creating effective strategy

For making reading interest in the libraries, it is very essential to make effective strategies as proper strategy is key to success towards achieving the goals. In this exercise, library mission and vision should include so that with developing reading interest among readers, a library will be able to achieve its goals as well. Encourage users to read widely and deeply Many times library users, students don't read beyond their favourite genre or author deeply and not able to get wider knowledge. Therefore, it is very necessary to encourage users to read outside of their preferred genres wide variety of genres and text types in order to build a wide vocabulary and depth background knowledge. Encourage users to read and write through social media Users should encourage enough for expressing their comments while users read any book or any reading material. On the one hand, social media is extensively used for information communication by any type of reading community. Therefore, for commenting purpose, a blog may be a proper medium through which a user and blogger can get reflections easily about their works. On the other hand, RSS (Rich Site Summary) feeds play a vital role to keep users up-to-date in their interested fields for which users must subscribe particular RSS feeds. After subscribing RSS feeds, a user can fetch update information and read new updates when new information is added on library website.

The famous quote Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body describes the importance of reading in our lives. Reading a book gives the reader a wonderful insight into the author's mind and the world created by the author. Books are said to be the faithful friends of the reader. They speak to the readers and keep them engrossed in it so much that the readers even forget their present environments around them and enter into the virtual world brought in by the books. Those who have developed the habit of reading find their comfort with books especially during loneliness. A learning process is formed as a result of continuous reading. Reading helps to develop the creativity within and also stimulates the thinking process of the reader. It is rightly said that good reading habit can feed the creative mind.

Library period

A college apart from teaching also needs to inculcate the habit of reading among its students. This is extremely important because if the student fails to adopt the habit of reading it can create an impact on their educational life. The students were asked whether they had a library period in their college and the responses given are as follows: According to the above figure no.3 it is seen that 259 (69.07%) students stated that they had a library period in college 101

(26.93%) students stated that there was no library period in the college was a library period in their college. It can be concluded that from the total of 375 respondents. 116 (30.93%) students did not have a library period in their college. The students were further asked if they were given books to read during the library period and all the 259 students responded positively that books were provided to read during that period.

Literature Review

Purpose of Using Library among Public Library Users Through the availability of reading resources and space, public libraries play an important role in enhancing the lives of citizens in a country (Horton, 2018). Because of this role, users are likely to be motivated to visit the public library for a variety of reasons. For example, Oluwadare (2006) investigated the accessibility and usage of library resources by part-time students in Nigeria and discovered that the majority of those polled stated that they visited the library on occasion when they wanted to read. This demonstrates that the majority of people went to the library only when they had something to read or an assignment to work on.

Danladi and Soko (2018) investigated the role of school libraries in encouraging reading interest among secondary school students at a federal government institution. According to the study, the majority of library users did not visit the library on a daily basis, but rather on occasion. According to their research, the majority of library users who visited the library read fiction books because most of the materials discovered in the library were obsolete and some of them were in languages unfamiliar to the majority of them. Ifedili (2009) investigated the reading interest of Nigerian tertiary students. The data found that the majority of respondents only visited the library on occasion since the library was subpar. The presence of outdated and unrelated topics was the reason for the library's infrequent use and decline in reading habits.

The growing illiteracy rate was found to be the reasons behind causing the majority of individuals not to visit the library. Therefore, it significantly caused the decline of the reading interest in the community. On the other hand, several studies have investigated and shown various aspects linked with reading habits, such as time spent reading and resource choices. Akanda, Hoq, and Hasan (2013) discovered that most respondents spend two to four hours at the library reading textbooks. They also mentioned that they spent a lot of time reading books in order to improve their lives. In their study,

Danladi and Soko (2018) discovered that the majority of library users spent one to two hours reading when they visited the library. Further, they acknowledged that they read with the goal of passing their exams. This kills the reading habit because they actively use the library to read when they have a class assignment or are studying for a test. Haliru et al (2015) in their study discovered that the majority of library users spent one to two hours reading. The majority of them read primarily to gain new knowledge and skills. As a result, libraries play a vital role in fostering a reading interest. Onuoha, Unegbu, and Umahi (2013) conducted research on reading habits and library use among Babcock University information resources management students. According to the study, the majority of library users in Nigeria spent more than one hour reading in the library. It was discovered that the majority of people spend more time in the library reading for pleasure, making reading a routine practice. Factors Hindering Users from Reading in Public Libraries

There are numerous studies that indicate elements that limit reading interest in public libraries. For example, Danladi and Soko (2018) discovered that addiction to watching television in the library among users and lack of relevant literature is among the factors that prevent them from reading while in the library. Users of libraries, particularly young individuals, are more interested in viewing devices than in reading materials. Nssein (2008) investigated reading habits and skills and discovered that difficulty differentiating main ideas from relevant details, slow comprehensive rate, slow reading rate, inadequate vocabulary, inadequate reading interests, unavailability of reading materials, distractions from television, and other viewing gadgets were among the factors causing poor and declining reading interest.

Long distances to reach the public library appear to be one of the reasons leading to poor and declining reading interest, according to Haliru et al (2015). In addition to budgetary constraints, most library users failed to visit the library regularly in order to make reading a routine practice. Strauss (2008) investigated Thai L2 students' reading habits and attitudes. According to the report, the majority of Thai students prefer watching television than reading books. The survey also indicated that viewing television provides an individual with entertainment, sports, economic news, and general interest.

Reasons for Poor Reading Habits among the Users

Reading habits are the best treatment for a good society; how libraries are established in society and how library sources, services, and staff play a role in society all become significant reasons for poor or good reading habits among library users. Lack of interest, location of the library and library building, convenient opening hours of the library, well-trained staff of the library, financial support, good collections, provisions for regular procure of information sources, user convenient language information sources, etc.^[11]

Conclusion

In this digital era, one might think a librarian is not necessary due to the availability of electronic information sources and internet access with new libraries, and the process of organized information may be accessed automatically in modern libraries. But it is not true, due to growth of information, it is necessary to efficiently find, select check and make information available, and understands the user's needs. It all depends on the librarian, and he is the only person who can convert the occasional user to a regular user. Because 'Google may give a variety of information on the same content, but the librarian suggests which one is right'. Librarians are not a professional group, and their role is not limited to passing books to the user community, but modern academic library staff works toward winning new users, similar to commercial organizations winning their customers. Users may or may not be aware of their information needs, but the role of a librarian consists of comforting the users and supporting them so that they can overcome their own fears about being in the library.^[13] To make a user-friendly image of libraries and librarian, so the librarian may known as 'powerful search engine tool with gentle heart.' Therefore, the librarian is indispensable in the era of information society.

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