

SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JORHAT DISTRICT LIBRARY, JORHAT (ASSAM)

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ABSTRACT:

Here discusses about the reading habit of children in public library. Life-long habit of reading can be inculcated and nurtured at the early stage of children. For continuous reading in the library it is necessary to grow the reading habit at their childhood. The library environment should be very attractive to motivate the children for reading and the library staff should be responsible for inculcating the reading habit for the children. In the age of IT the children's are more inquisitiveness to learn through internet. And for that the habit of e-reading is also increasing day by day.

KEYWORDS: Reading habit, Motivation, Public Library, Children, IT

1. INTRODUCTION:

Reading is the root for learning at early childhood. The development of good reading habit can acquire in the early stage of the children. In this stage the parents should be responsible to do needful for their child and understand the need of them to enhance for life-long learning. The home is the first learning environment for children and parents are their first teachers. Good reading habit is necessary for intellectual growth which creates a crucial role in enabling a person to achieve practical efficiency. By reading books one can judge what is wrong or right for them and always think positively to achieve the goal. Pleasure of reading in the childhood leads as life-long reading habit and also strengthens the language skills, communication skills, personality and develops the inherent quality. Reading habit starts at home through parent's inspiration. Teacher and parents can play an important role in educating children how to keep the balance in the children's leisure activities including the interesting reading for them. A good reader is a good learner. Reading makes way for the better understanding of ones own experiences and it earns the self discovery knowledge. Reading habits means behavior which expresses the individual reading. The reader

come to the library regularly at their leisure time to fulfill their need of interest through reading the good books/magazines etc which one can satisfy them at an extent level.

Gray (1984) indicates that reading influences the extent and accuracy of information as well as attitude, moral belief, judgment, and action of the reader. The reading habit has one of the most powerful lasting influence in promotion of one's personal development in particular and social in general. Reading habit refers to the behavior which expresses the likeness of reading of individual types of reading and tastes of reading (*Sangkaeo 1999*). **Bignold (2003)** indicated that the habit of reading improved children's reading skills. Reading is a habit, which is not a onetime experience and it is a continuous process. It is accepted that a good reading habit has to be cultivated and nurtured in the early years of life (*Wijesuriya, 1995*)

2. OBJECTIVES:

1. To know the interests of reading materials among the children.
2. To know the purpose of usage of the library by the children.
3. To know the activities for the children by the library staff.
4. To know the spending time of the children in the library.
5. To know the frequency of library visit among the children.
6. To know the problems faced by the children.

3. METHODOLOGY:

For this study questionnaire was prepared and distributed it to the library staff as well as for the different ages of children in the respective library. The questions are also asked directly to the user for better response. Reliable observation as well as personal discussion also applied for collecting the required information with the different ages of children inside the children corner of the library.

4. SCOPE:

The scope is limited only for the children in different type of ages ranging from 6 to 14 years who visited the Jorhat district library, Jorhat (Assam State) in different times.

5. READING HABIT IN DIGITAL AGE:

The advances of IT have brought out a new trend of reading and learning through the internet. WWW has changed a great revolution in the information society in the entire globe. The production of online resources has changed the concept of reading habit in the digital environment. In traditional library system the user go to the library regularly and browse the books and read their most interesting books or magazines and sometimes borrow the books to read in their home. But now days in the digital age the user can read any kind of books/magazine at any time at any places at low cost without going to the library. Today the concept of library is without four walls.

The advent of IT has great effect on readers. In comparison to printed books the e-books/magazines/comics/audio books have become more popular in the midst of readers. The online resources can be used through 24 hours with the help of networking. It can be downloaded to the mobile phone, laptop, desktop, tablet etc. Besides reading the e-books anyone can watch videos of different type of reading/learning skill through demo version and listen the audio books. E-book readers such as Kindle and Nook are designed primarily for electronic books. Users can save a variety of books and they can take it anywhere to read. Some of the books are in audio mode, by which the reader can listen it when they are working at leisure time, travelling time etc. This kind of e reading facility is increasingly growing in our society and improves the reading habit among the readers. There are various ways to develop the reading habits in modern IT world. The reading materials through technology assisted are the most influential part to improve for better learning and teaching. Parents and teachers should be equally involved with the children to keep them abreast with the new upcoming technology and their developments. There are variety types of online resources for children also like comics, rhymes, fairytales, jocks, children magazine, horror books, adventure books, video games etc. *Copper Wiki (2008)* reported that reading habits among children are on the decline and the reasons for decline in reading habits among children are offshoots of technological advancements. Hawkins (2000) noted that despite advances in production and delivery of electronic information, the printed book publishing industry continues to thrive. People read books actively or passively, focusing on one or multiple texts, for a variety of reasons.

The children are very busy along with their homework and for that the children cannot go to library regularly as they have to spend much time for their academic activities. The children are also very interested for online activities rather than print book reading. Many time the children do their school project work by seeing the demo version of different project through internet.

6. JORHAT DISTRICT LIBRARY: AN OVERVIEW

The District Library, Jorhat was established in the Bisturam Barua Hall on 23/02/1955 at first by joining the district librarian Sri Ganesh Goswami on that date. It was formally open for the public of Jorhat at first in the month of July 1955 vide state librarians letter no SLG.6/55/89 (26/1955). The present district library is a two stored building. It is equipped with the modern design. It has an attached auditorium hall named *Sri Sri Pitambar Deba Goswami Auditorium*. The auditorium is maintained by Jorhat District Library Auditorium Management Committee in which the Deputy Commissioner, Jorhat is the Chairman and the District Librarian is the Secretary. The auditorium equipped with 1075 seat capacity, an automatic screen, sound system, mike, light & a 25kb generator.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

The data collected through the questionnaire was tabulated and then analyzed for the results and discussions. The positive and negative responses from the observation and questionnaire are provided in different category wise for the convenience of findings and results.

Table 7.1: AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE CHILDREN

Sl. No	Frequency	No. of users	% of users
1	6-8	7	14%
2	8-10	11	22%
3	10-12	18	36%
4	12-14	14	28%

From the above table it is seen that the questionnaire is distributed among the different ages of children. Here it is seen that from 10 to 14 years age children basically visit the library comparatively 6 to 10 years age children.

Table 7.2: SEX WISE DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE CHILDREN

Sl. No	Sex	No. of users	% of users
1	Male	19	38%
2	Female	31	62%

The questionnaire is distributed by sex wise among the children. Here it is seen that female child are 62% and male child only 38%.

Table 7.3: FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY VISIT OF THE CHILDREN

Sl. No	Frequency	No. of users	% of users
1	Everyday	11	22%
2	Very Often	17	34%
3	Sometimes	13	26%
4	Rarely	9	18%

It is seen that 34% children often visit the library whereas 22% children visit the library everyday, 26% children visit the library sometimes and 18% children visit the library rarely.

Table 7.4: PURPOSE OF USAGES OF LIBRARY

Sl. No	Purpose	No. of users	% of users
1	Reading story books/comics/fiction/magazine	34	68%
2	For borrow the books	17	34%
3	For fun	7	14%
4	For the extracurricular activities	18	36%
5	For attend the special program	15	30%
6	To browse the internet	18	36%
7	For academic purpose	10	20%

It is seen that 68% children use the library for reading story books/comics/fiction/magazine, 36% children use the library for extracurricular activities and for browsing the internet, 34% children use the library for borrow the books, 30% children use the library to attend the special program which held in the

library, 20% children use the library for academic purpose and 14% children use the library for fun or time pass.

Table 7.5: ACTIVITIES FOR THE CHILDREN IN THE LIBRARY

Sl. No	Activities	No. of users	% of users
1	Art/Drawing competition	27	54%
2	Singing/Dancing competition	16	32%
3	Quiz competition	43	86%
4	Story telling competition	32	64%
5	Project work	37	74%

From the above table it is clear that different types of activities are done for the children in the library in some special time by the library staff. 86% children participate in the quiz competition, 74% children participate in the project work, 64% children participate in story telling competition, 54% children participate in art/drawing competition, and 32% children participate in singing/dancing competition.

Table 7.6: SPENDING TIME OF THE CHILDREN IN THE LIBRARY

Sl. No	Time	No. of users	% of users
1	1-2 hours	13	26%
2	2-3 hours	21	42%
3	3-4 hours	7	14%
4	4-5 hours	3	6%
5	Less than 1 hour	6	12%

Maximum children spent time 2 to 3 hours in the library i.e. 42%, some children spent 1 to 2 hours i.e. 26%, A few children only spent the time within 3 to 5 hours that is accordingly 14% and 6%. Lastly only 12% children spent the time less than 1 hour.

Table 7.7: PROBLEMS FACED BY THE CHILDREN IN THE LIBRARY

Sl. No	Time	No. of users	% of users
1	Insufficient story books/comics	7	14%
3	Lack of computer games	16	32%
4	Lack of supporting staff to guide the children	0	0
5	Lack of spaces	23	46%
6	Lack of time	27	54%
7	Technical problem	31	62%

From the above table it is clear that 54% children cannot use the library regularly due to lack of time, 46% children faced the problem to use library due to lack of sufficient spaces, 32% children get the problem for insufficient games, 62% children faced the technical problem, 14% children faced the problem to use the library for insufficient story books/comics. But a single child never gets the problem from the library staff in their guidance.

7. FINDINGS:

- a. From 10 years to 12 years age children visit the library regularly.
- b. Maximum children spend the time 2 to 3 hours in the library.
- c. Maximum children visit the library very often.
- d. The children visit the library to read story books/comics/fiction/magazine, for fun, for browse the internet, to borrow books, to attend some special program which is held in the library etc.
- e. The librarian and other staff arrange some activities for the children for their attraction to come to the library like art/drawing competition, singing/dancing competition, quiz competition, story telling competition, project work etc.
- f. The children face the problem in the library like insufficient story books/comics, lack of spaces, lack of time, technical problem. For technical problem they can not use the internet properly. Now days the students are very busy along with their heavy academic schedule and for that they cannot visit library regularly.
- g. The librarian and other library staff are very co-operative along with the children and their parents.

8. SUGGESSTIONS OF PROMOTING THE READING HABIT

- a. The library should be open access which provides the close relationship between library resources and the reader. The reader can browse widely the different materials and they may found more interesting materials by which they can increase the regular visit towards library.
- b. The best way to busy the children for reading a book because the reading habit is inculcated at the age of 8 to 14 years. In the school also there is need of library classes for the better reading habit.
- c. The school teacher and parents should be involved with the children by influencing the need and importance of reading for the growth of reading habit.
- d. The public library should held different types of activities by which the children are willing to come to the library regularly.
- e. Encourage the children for reading by distributing the prize or gift as a best reader.
- f. Organization of story hour, quiz competition, drawing competition, book fair, book exhibition, drama/dancing/singing competition and project work relating to academic area.
- g. Introducing new IT along with multimedia in the children section of the public library so that children can get the attraction by using digital technology and they can do a lot of fun by creating the e-reading habit.
- h. Availability of too much books like fiction, biography, jokes, comics, magazines, online games, video games, e-books for the maximum usages of children.
- i. The teachers, librarian or parents etc can give a book as gift according to the age of children in their birthday instead of other gifts. It helps the children to motivate in reading the books.
- j. Use of latest information technology in the library. With the advance of technology the children are very interesting to play video games, T V, 3D video etc. But the parents can motivate them to read e-resources which are available on internet rather than video games, cartoon in TV.

9. CONCLUSION:

Reading habit is cultivated at the childhood. Though reading habit is the self willing habit of reading yet the role of a librarian and the parents cannot be ignored. Teachers, parent and librarian should be very conscious to motivate the reading for the children. Now a day the children's are very busy with the internet activities and for that they give the low interest in paper based materials. But it is mentionable that the addiction of reading a book is more amazing than searching of pages in www. The most effective benefit of reading habits depends upon the

practice of regular reading; the more you read the more accomplished you become. Reading makes children smarter and it keeps brain sharp and boosts analytical skills.

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