Attitudes Towards Reading Habits among Higher Secondary Level Students

R. Sengamalam @ Vaanathi

Assistant Professor, Department of Education
Directorate of Distance Education
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

Reading is the core of any academic world and thus students in general and higher secondary level students, in particular, should develop appropriate reading skills through their effective reading and thus should have an appropriate attitude towards reading skills so as to make their learning effective and productive. The present study aims at investigating the attitudes towards reading habits among the 300 higher secondary level students with respect to their background variables in Madurai District. This investigation is carried out by using a standardized tool that was developed and standardized by the investigator. This study made attempt to reveal the significant difference in the level of attitude with respect to framed dimensions of the tool and the background variables of the study.

Keywords: Attitude, Reading Habits, Higher Secondary Level Students

Introduction

The word 'reading' comes from 'read' which means to look at and understand the meaning of written or printed words or symbols; it means that reading is a process of gaining what the authors mean in printed form (Oxford Dictionary). It is also defined as reading as a process of understanding the real meaning of what writers delivered in written form through eyes and mind (Thanuskodi, 2011). Reading is the ability to recognize and examine words or sentences and understand the given information within (Lone, 2011). In general, 'habit' is a routine of behaviour that is regularly repeated and tends to occur subconsciously (Wikipedia). It is a well-known truth that any new behaviour can become automatic through the process of habit formation. Also, when behaviours are repeated in a constant context, there is an increase in the link between the context and the action and thus this increases automatically in that context. In precise, habits are rituals and behaviours that we people perform automatically allowing us to carry out necessary activities like brushing, bathing, dressing, etc., and following the same routes every day without any hurdles and being done naturally. Reading is one of the best learning activities that anyone can do in one's life ever and hence the main thing is developing the habit of reading all. The reading habits develop connective habits – visualizing, activating diagrams, questioning, inferring, determining importance, monitoring for meaning and synthesizing.

Importance of Reading Habits

The following are some of the importance of reading habits:

Helps to Think Deeply

Reading habits make an individual think beyond the level and help in developing deeper thinking to have a creative side stronger and to arrive at a smart solution for a given/faced problem.

Making Good in Everything

Reading good books or content helps reduce stress at less cost without changing the context of living or being.

Develop Vocabulary

Reading more content and concept are not only making the reader a deeper knowledgeable, creative thinker, and spending time meaningfully, but it also develops huge vocabulary enrichment among the reader for his further creative and better understanding with a speedy reading style.

Increase the Range of Perception

Reading helps in developing perception skills among the readers since time, climate, duration, type, style, etc., of the content of reading helps the learners to have different perceptions and knowledge of generalizing the learned perception to lead to final concrete perception as a result of reading through his/ her deeper understanding.

Provide First-Hand Knowledge

Many books especially fiction-like books are holding real-life events which make the learner first-hand knowledge and help them to have new knowledge through the life experiences of others easily using their different inspirations.

Significance of the Study

Reading habits enrich the reader's self-improvement such as positive thinking, understanding the world around him in a better way, and making the mind active to produce creative thinking. Reading habits also help in developing good communication skills provided with increasing knowledge; it also reduces stress to a greater degree since it makes the readers seek pleasure through their reading. The mode of reading and medium of accessing content may differ depending upon their availability and accessibility; the reading habit should be maintained for their development in general and career enrichment in particular. As reading habits help in developing personal and academic qualities among all people, it is important to have such habits among higher secondary level students to make their classroom interaction more active by means

of connecting learned content through their reading of different types of content and concepts. Hence, this study is significant to investigate the attitude of reading habits among higher secondary level students with respect to their background variables since they are in the transition stage from higher secondary level to higher education.

Objectives

- To find the level of attitudes towards reading habits among higher secondary level students in the selected sample of the study
- To find the significant difference in attitude towards reading habits among higher secondary level students with respect to the following background variables:
  - Gender
  - Nature of Residence
  - Medium of Studying
  - Group of Studying
  - Types of Studying School
  - Computer Knowledge

Hypotheses

- There is no significant difference in the level of attitudes towards reading habits among higher secondary-level students
- There is no significant difference in the attitudes towards reading habits of male and female students of the selected sample
- There is no significant difference in the attitudes towards reading habits of rural and urban residing students of the selected sample
- There is no significant difference in the attitudes towards reading habits of students studying in Science and Vocation Group students of the selected sample
- There is no significant difference in the attitudes towards reading habits of government and private school-studying students of the selected sample
- There is no significant difference in the attitudes towards reading habits of basic and advanced computer knowledge students of the selected sample

Method

This study implemented a normative survey method for this investigation.

Sample

The investigator has taken 300 higher secondary level studying students who are studying classes XI and XII in the district of Madurai. Clustered sampling technique is used to collect the data for this study.

Tool

The tool 'Attitudes Towards Reading Habits' was developed and standardized with a reliability score of 0.781 using the split-half method with 35 higher secondary students as a pilot study. It consists of four dimensions of 5 items each. Thus, the total item is 20 with a maximum score of 100 and a minimum score is 20 with the following responses and scores respectively as to a greater extent, 'to a substantial extent', 'to some extent', 'to a marginal extent', and 'to a negligible extent' with 5, 4, 3,2 and 1 score as a score.

Statistical Techniques

The following are the statistical techniques used for this investigation:
- Percentage Analysis
- Descriptive Analysis and
- Differential Analysis

Analysis

Table 1 Distribution of the Selected Sample of the Study

Variable	Sub-variables	No. of Higher Secondary Level Students	%
Gender	Male	162	54.00
	Female	138	46.00
Nature of Residence	Rural	186	62.00
	Urban	114	38.00
Medium of Studying	Tamil	202	67.33
	English	98	32.67
Group of Studying	Science Group	188	62.67
	Arts Group	112	37.33
Types of Studying School	Government	220	73.33
	Private	80	26.67
Computer Knowledge	Basic	215	71.67
	Advanced	85	28.33

From Table 1, it is observed that 54% of them are Male and the remaining 46% are Female students more than 60% (62.00%) of them are residing in a Rural background and more than 35% of them (38.00%) are from the Urban residential background; 67.33% of the sample studying Tamil Medium and remaining (32.67%) of them are studying in English Medium; like the way, more than 60% (62.67%) of them are from Science group and less than 40% (37.33%) of them are from Arts group; more than 70% of the students of this study are studying in Government schools and similarly more than 70% of them possessing Basic Computer Knowledge and thus remaining (26.67%) of them from Private Schools and Advanced Computer Knowledge (28%) of them have Advanced Level Knowledge in Computer respectively.

Table 2 Level of Attitudes towards Reading Habits among Higher Secondary Level Students

Dependent Variable	Dimensions	Level of Attitudes towards Reading Habits					
		Low		Average		High	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Attitudes towards Reading Habits	School Time Reading	31	10.33	189	63.00	80	26.67
	Leisure Time Reading	87	29.00	183	61.00	30	10.00
	Reading for Assignments	35	11.67	193	64.33	72	24.00
	Reading for Entertainment	98	32.67	180	60.00	22	7.33

It is observed from Table:2: Only 10.33% of the sample have a low-level attitude in the School Time Reading dimension of the reading attitude scale and more than 60% of them are average level in that dimension whereas more than 25% (27%) of them are in high-level attitudes with respect to that dimension. In contrast to this, the leisure time reading dimension possess only 10% (10.33%) of high-level attitude whereas low-level is 29% and like the previous one, the average level of attitude of this dimension is almost equal to that of the previous dimension (61%). In the case of Reading for Assignments,

11.67% of them are low-level attitudes whereas 24% of them are high-level attitudes and like the previous two dimensions, the average level is more than 60% (64.33%). In contrast to the previous dimension, low and high-level are just reversed such as more than 30% are low-level attitudes in Reading for Entertainment dimension and less than 10% (7.33%) of them are high level in that dimension.

Table 3 Significant Difference in the Scores of Reading Habits Attitudes of Higher Secondary Level Students with respect to Gender

Dependent Variable	Dimensions	Independent Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calculated t-value	Remarks
Attitudes towards Reading Habits	School Time Reading	Male	162	83.10	07.44	298	1.625	NS**
		Female	138	83.84	07.11			
	Leisure Time Reading	Male	162	86.12	10.01		3.624	S*
		Female	138	88.76	09.32			
	Reading for Assignments	Male	162	85.98	10.32		1.744	NS*
		Female	138	86.01	10.22			
	Reading for Entertainment	Male	162	85.21	10.11		4.021	S*
		Female	138	88.02	09.32			

** - Not Significant at 0.05 level

* - Significant at 0.05 level

It is observed (From Table 3) that there is no significant difference between the Male and Female students in School Time Reading and Reading for Assignments Dimensions of Attitudes towards Reading Habits of this study. It is also found that there is a significant difference between the Male and Female students of the selected sample in Leisure Time Reading and Reading for Entertainment dimensions.

Table 4 Significant Difference in the Scores of Reading Habits Attitudes of Higher Secondary Level Students with respect to the Nature of Residence

Dependent Variable	Dimensions	Independent Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calculated t-value	Remarks
Attitudes towards Reading Habits	School Time Reading	Rural	186	84.98	08.22	298	1.312	NS**
		Urban	114	85.02	08.04			
	Leisure Time Reading	Rural	186	84.69	09.75		3.722	S*
		Urban	114	86.02	10.02			
	Reading for the Assignments	Rural	186	85.60	10.45		1.506	NS**
		Urban	114	85.11	10.33			
	Reading for the Entertainment	Rural	186	83.22	10.21		3.687	S*
		Urban	114	85.78	09.78			

** - Not Significant at 0.05 level

* - Significant at 0.05 level

From Table 4, it is found that there is a significant difference in attitudes towards reading habits between the Rural and Urban residing students with respect to Leisure Time Reading and Reading for Entertainment dimensions. In contrast to these, there is no significant difference in attitudes towards reading habits between the students of Rural and Urban residing with respect to dimensions - School Time Reading and Reading for Assignments of Attitudes towards Reading Habits for this study.

Table 5 Significant Difference in the Scores of Reading Habits Attitudes of Higher Secondary Level Students with respect to the Medium of Studying

Dependent Variable	Dimensions	Independent Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calculated t-value	Remarks
Attitudes towards Reading Habits	School Time Reading	Tamil	202	85.21	10.21	298	1.241	NS**
		English	98	85.02	09.55			
	Leisure Time Reading	Tamil	202	85.62	10.44		0.911	NS*
		English	98	85.04	09.35			
	Reading for the Assignments	Tamil	202	84.44	09.02		1.704	NS**
		English	98	86.89	11.02			
	Reading for the Entertainment	Tamil	202	86.22	10.38		3.985	S*
		English	98	83.27	10.87			

** - Not Significant at 0.05 level

* - Significant at 0.05 level

From Table 5, it is found that there is no significant difference in the attitudes towards reading habits between the students of this investigation studying in Tamil and English Medium with respect to Academic Reading, Leisure Time Reading and Reading for Assignments dimensions. It is also found that there is a significant difference in the attitudes towards reading habits between students studying in Tamil and English Medium with respect to the Reading for Entertainment dimension of the constructed tool of this study.

Table 6 Significant Difference in the Scores of Reading Habits Attitude of Higher Secondary Level Students with respect to the Group of Studying

Dependent Variable	Dimensions	Independent Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calculated t-value	Remarks
Attitudes towards Reading Habits	School Time Reading	Science Group	188	86.11	10.01	298	1.6325	NS**
		Arts Group	112	85.98	09.68			
	Leisure Time Reading	Science Group	188	84.62	10.14		4.032	S*
		Arts Group	112	86.04	10.85			
	Reading for the Assignments	Science Group	188	86.61	10.01		1.825	NS**
		Arts Group	112	86.90	09.22			
	Reading for the Entertainment	Science Group	188	84.28	10.44		3.895	S*
		Arts Group	112	86.07	09.31			

** - Not Significant at 0.05 level

* - Significant at 0.05 level

From Table 6, it is observed that there is no significant difference in the attitudes towards reading habits between students of the Science and Arts Group studying with respect to School Time Reading and Reading for Assignments dimensions. It is found that there is a significant difference between the Science and Arts group studying students of this study with respect to the dimensions of Leisure Time Reading and Reading for Entertainment.

Table 7 Significant Difference in the Scores of Reading Habits Attitudes of Higher Secondary Level Students with Respect to the Types of Studying School

Dependent Variable	Dimensions	Independent Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calculated t-value	Remarks
Attitudes towards Reading Habits	School Time Reading	Government	220	84.32	09.32	298	1.354	NS**
		Private	80	84.98	10.20			
	Leisure Time Reading	Government	220	84.22	10.08		3.224	S*
		Private	80	86.25	11.02			
	Reading for the Assignments	Government	220	85.74	09.42		1.652	NS**
		Private	80	85.69	10.58			
	Reading for the Entertainment	Government	220	85.65	09.87		1.254	S*
		Private	80	84.98	10.26			

** - Not Significant at 0.05 level

* - Significant at 0.05 level

From Table 7, it is found that there is no significant difference in the attitude towards reading habits between the selected sample of this study studying in government and private schools with respect to the dimensions of School Time Reading, Reading for Assignments and Reading for Entertainment and thus there is a significant difference between the students of studying in Government and Private schools with respect to Leisure Time Reading dimension for this study.

Table 8 Significant Difference in the Scores of Reading Habits Attitude of Higher Secondary Level Students with Respect to the Computer Knowledge

Dependent Variable	Dimensions	Independent Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calculated t-value	Remarks
Attitudes towards Reading Habits	School Time Reading	Basic Level	215	85.05	10.04	298	1.332	NS**
		Advanced Level	85	85.51	10.36			
	Leisure Time Reading	Basic	215	85.35	10.07		1.089	NS*
		Advanced	85	85.44	10.12			
	Reading for the Assignments	Basic	215	84.06	09.89		3.421	S**
		Advanced	85	86.04	10.84			
	Reading for the Entertainment	Basic	215	83.94	10.11		3.847	S*
		Advanced	85	86.97	09.88			

** - Not Significant at 0.05 level

* - Significant at 0.05 level

From Table 8, it is found that there is a significant difference in attitudes towards reading habits between the students having Basic and Advanced Computer Knowledge with respect to Reading for Assignments and Reading for Entertainment dimensions whereas other dimensions – School Time Reading and Leisure Time Reading, of attitudes towards reading habits do not have any significant difference between the students having Basic and Advanced Computer Knowledge of this study.

Findings

The present aims at investigating the attitude of Reading habits among Higher Secondary Level Students studying in the Madurai District. It is found that nearly 60% of the chosen sample possessed an average level of attitudes towards reading habits in all dimensions considered for this study. Considering Academic Reading and Reading for Assignments more than 20% of them are high-level attitudes, and more than 10% of them are low-level attitudes in those dimensions. In contrast to these,

in the case of Leisure Time Reading and Reading for Entertainment dimension, more than 30% of them are low-level attitudes and 10% of students of Leisure Time Reading and only 7.33% of students of Reading for Entertainment are having high-level attitudes.

It is found that female students scored more than males in the case of Leisure Time Reading and Reading for Entertainment. Urban residential background plays an important role to have spent more of their Leisure Time Reading and Reading for Entertainment since they may have more time than pupils from rural residential backgrounds. Out of all framed dimensions of the tool for this study, the students studying in Tamil Medium is having more scores in Reading for Entertainment on comparing other dimensions of students studying Tamil and English Medium. It is observed that students of this study studying in the Science Group have scored more than Arts Group studying students with respect to Leisure Time Reading and Reading for Entertainment. It is evident that students from Government schools are of higher Leisure time reading habits than Private school studying students. This study gave the result that students with advanced computer knowledge have spent more time Reading for Assignments and for their environment than the students with basic level computer knowledge.

Conclusion

Reading plays an important role for all of us and it opens the doors to the assets of knowledge. It is known that reading is one of the important language skills and it is a vital tool for lifelong learning for all. It is an accepted truth that reading habits often show signs of advanced intelligence levels. Reading any content is not only meant for memorizing the event for further use and also enhances imaginative power and capacity for creativity. In addition, reading habits develop analytical thinking and reduce the boredom of leisure time to use their time productively. As per the quote, 'readers are the leaders, everyone should promote good reading habits to attain the level of leadership since reading is nothing but a form of participation for the successful completion of any task. The interest in reading is to be developed among the learners, especially from the initial stage

itself. Reading is unified with the entire educational process and thus its success requires successful reading. A deep and meaningful reading makes everyone perfect and effective in all further actions further and hence it is required to have good reading habits among students, especially at higher secondary levels thus teachers should provide appropriate space and activities to develop and sustain their reading habits for their successful learning not only for their school level and it will be a foundation for their higher education in the next level productively.

References

Alkodimi, Khaled Abkar, and Arif Ahmed Mohammed Hassan Al-Ahdal. "Strategies of Teaching Writing at Saudi Tertiary-Level Institutions: Reality and Expectations." *Arab World English Journal*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2021, pp. 399-413.

Baba, Jamiah and Faiza Rostam Affendiz. "Reading Habits and Students' Attitudes towards Reading: A Study of Students in the Faculty of Education UITM Puncak Alam." *Asian Journal of University Education (AJUE)*, vol. 16, no. 1, 2020, pp. 109-122

Bacong, Maria Lourdes C. and Imelda L. An. "Attitude toward Reading and Reading Performance of High School Students from Private Academic Institution in the Philippines." *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts and Sciences*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2020, pp. 21-27.

Bamise, O. F., and S. O. Akande. "Gender Differences in the Reading Habits of Secondary School Students of Osun State Public Schools." *African Educational Research Journal*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2021, pp. 720-727.

Best, John W. and James V. Kahn. *Research in Education*. Prentice-Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1995.

Chettri, Kushmeeta and S. K. Rout. "Reading Habits – An Overview." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 14, no. 6, 2013, pp. 13-17.

Guerra, Genaina Fernandes., and Matias Noll. "Scientific Methodology in Integrated High Schools: A Case Study." International Journal of Instruction, vol. 14, no. 2, 2021, pp. 571-590.

Hassen, Rukya. "Reading Habits of Secondary School Students: A Study of Selected Secondary Schools in Addis Ababa and Dessie." *Journal of Education and Practice*, vol. 7, no. 22, 2016, pp. 59-67

Pardede, Parlindungan. "Print vs Digital Reading Comprehension in EFL." *Journal of English Teaching*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2019, pp. 77-90.

Teksan, Keziban. "The Perceptions of Students Studying in the Faculty of Education towards Reading in Terms of their Reading Motivations." *International Journal of Progressive Education*, vol. 15, no. 5, 2019, pp. 162-184.

Thanushkodi Shanmugam. "Reading Habits among Library and Information Science Students of Annamalai University: A Survey." *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2011, pp. 79-83.

Author Details

Dr. R. Sengamalam @ Vaanathi, *Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Directorate of Distance Education, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India,* **Email ID***: vaanu.77@gmail.com*