

Analytical Study of Post Covid Reading Patterns: A Case Study of First Year Home Science students

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Abstract

Reading is a natural habit of everyone's life. Reading habit plays vital role in the overall development. When an individual is interested in reading, the activity will be carried out without any supervision. Reading is a process where an individual can gain knowledge from multidisciplinary approach. Covid Pandemic has created its negative impact on each sector of society. Teaching and learning aspects also badly affected by Covid19. Present article tries to find out an impact of Covid on reading habits of first year students of Home Science. During this pandemic, the mode of reading changed from the hard copies to the smart phones. In the present study first year under graduate Home Science students were considered for obtaining the data through survey. The data analyses were carried out for all the student's responses received. After studying the analysis of questionnaire, it is found that the reading habits of students have changed. There are number of reasons responsible to the changing patterns has been discussed with reference to first year students.

Keywords: Covid19, Multidisciplinary Approach, Pandemic, Home Science.

Introduction

Reading is an individual activity taken by a person on his own. When an individual is interested in reading, the activity will be carried out without any supervision. There are many reasons for reading. After all the content of the text keeps them engrossed in reading. Women readers see the influence of a book, how it affects their attitudes and helps them to tackle problems of life. Student who pursues education read for getting information which helps them to complete their educational requirements. Some students are guided by parents and acquaintances to read religious books. The belief that books helped them to maintain a stable mind gave some time for women to read and acquire the language and content. But as they move to higher education, their interests change and they prefer to read texts of their choices.

During this course, the mode of reading changed from the hard copies to the smartphones. The Covid-19 pandemic has created its impact all over the world, not only on the physical strength but also on the mental health of the people. It has changed the daily routine of the people and also their habits. To acquire the knowledge and information a variety of new materials were discovered. Reading habits have also changed due to the closure of the educational institutions and libraries as well as Newspapers. In the present study first year under graduate Home Science students were considered for obtaining the data through survey. The data analyses were carried out for all the students responses received. Researches on reading habits have been carried out through vast literature review, few of them are mentioned here. Melkote and Steeves (2001) argue that lack of access to sustainable opportunities by an individual limits the useful practices to improve their lives. The authors contend that empowerment provides individuals, communities and organizations with the necessary skills, confidence and countervailing power to deal effectively with social change. Moshin (2001) states that education helps women get aware of the world. Educated mothers become more knowledgeable and vigilant enhancing their ability to nurture and bring up children in a better way. There is a positive correlation between women literacy rate and life expectancy. Okeke (2000) views the art of reading as a priceless instrument for everyone. It helps to know one's life and experiences of others and extend his or her knowledge and enjoyment. Liu (2005) finds that a screen-based reading behaviour is emerging in recent years. It is characterized by more time spent on browsing and scanning, keyword spotting (72%) as a strategy to locate needed information as a way to cope with the overloaded information environment. Shimray, Chennupati & Chennupati (2015) examine the roles of gender, age, culture, and socioeconomic background of mobile users and their impact on mobile reading habits. The study depicts that use of hypertext and hypermedia resources www.ijnglt.com Page 4 International Journal of Next Generation Library and Technologies (ISSN 2395 – 5201) February 2018, Volume 4, Issue 1 through the internet have altered the reading of different forms in addition to printed text materials at a global level. The digital content has broken the physical boundaries of homes, libraries and offices.

Methodology:

Methodology adopted for the present study was Google questionnaire survey to create database. A questionnaire survey was conducted to understand to know the changed reading habits due to the Covid-19 pandemic among the first year Home Science students. The survey was conducted through an online platform consisting of 22 different questions. The question incorporated in the questionnaire was related to the reading habits, reading frequencies, reading materials etc. The survey gained an extreme response and collected total 118 responses. All the responses were analysed in different ways to see the reading tendencies and preferences of students. Following are the results that are gained from the analysis.

Results and Discussion

The investigator found that out of the total responses, 77.12 % respondents preferred English language for reading purpose followed by Marathi language which contributes to 20.34 % of responses. Whereas very few have preferred other languages. The fact that other

languages are not preferable is that the survey was conducted in Maharashtra region and hence most of the responses are skewed towards their educational language and regional language. Though the highest number of respondents found that the reading is enjoyable but it has less proportion i.e. 37.29 %. Out of the total responses 37 respondents liked to read very much whereas, 35 (29.66%) respondents found it as satisfied. Well, it also depends on what type of literature they preferred the most. So, from the further questions it notified that the Novels (33.90%) are more preferable for reading followed by short stories (33.05%) whereas, Fantasy (20.34%) and Newspaper Articles (12.71%) were less preferable. Reading habits also needed motivation from many things. Without motivation the reading habits cannot be enhanced. The motivation can be created by the feelings each one gets like some may get relaxed or some enjoyed reading or there was motivation of curiosity that induced from the recommendations from others. From the analysis, it was observed that most of the motivation for reading was produced from getting information from the literature and for reader's personal reasons (62.39%). About 19.66 % of respondents was motivated to read as a part of enjoyment and 13.68% of respondents felt relaxed by reading. The primary consciousness for reading was to collect information and acquires knowledge from the readings undertaken. (Fig. 1). The recommendations are truly important for exploring a variety of reading materials and each one got recommendations from many sources like friends, family members, references in any published articles or books, news and media etc.

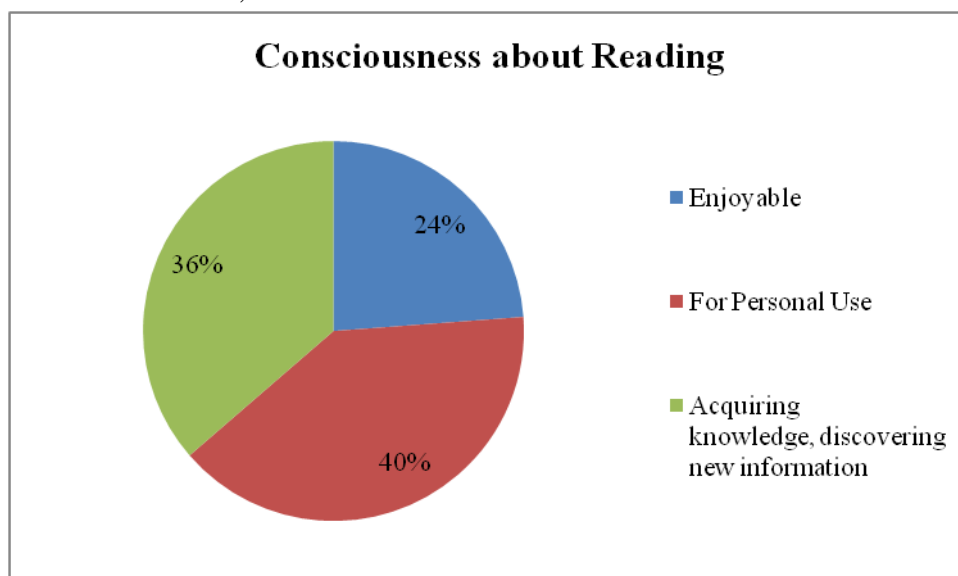


Figure 1: Consciousness about Reading

In the survey, it was observed that most of the readers were motivated to read by the recommendations they received from friends and family members who accounted about 46.15% followed by social media (34.19%). Very few students were inspired to read from literary influencers (7.69%) therefore different writers, poets etc. should be invited in the public gathering sat college level to commemorate the birth anniversary of different literary legends which helped the students to get interested for reading.

The reading choices also varied from person to person and it gave an idea of a particular group of people to conceive their choices of reading. The following figure 2. shows the distribution of responses that the respondents liked reading very much as well as the comparison between literary and non-literary readings gave an idea about the preferences or choices of the respondents. From the figure 2 it can be observed that the large proportion of readers enjoyed literary reading such as poems, novels, fictions etc. and very less proportion of respondents enjoy non-literary readings such as newspapers, articles etc. It is also notified from the results that half of the respondents liked to read entertainment sections from newspapers. Only about 9.40% of respondents had interest in reading the editorial page.

The frequencies of reading either of the literary or non-literary materials are important because it kept a reader involved with the habit of reading. Break in reading was observed to reduce the interests of readers in reading materials; hence, the frequencies of reading should not be lessened in due course.

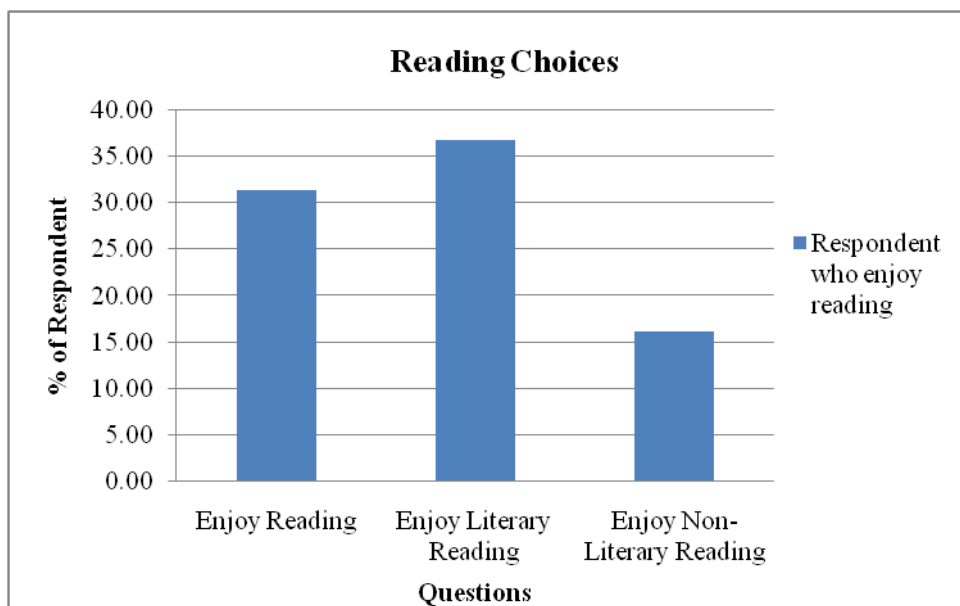


Figure 2: Reading Choices

To understand the frequency of reading among female students, in the Pre-Covid and Post-Covid situation the questions were asked. The analysis results are shown in a graph form (Fig. 3). It can be noted from the graph that large proportion of respondents (i.e. 40.68%) say that they enjoyed reading, 1-2 times in a week, 31.36% of respondents have 2-3 times reading frequency in a week whilst 23.73% respondents read every day. Reading is important for the long-term development of personality and acquiring knowledge. It also helped in keeping the mind's stability and can also improve writing skills as well as comprehension ability. There are various effects of reading and it varied from person to person. The survey result shows that about 63.25% of respondents thought that the reading helped to improve their vocabulary to understand better (21.37%).

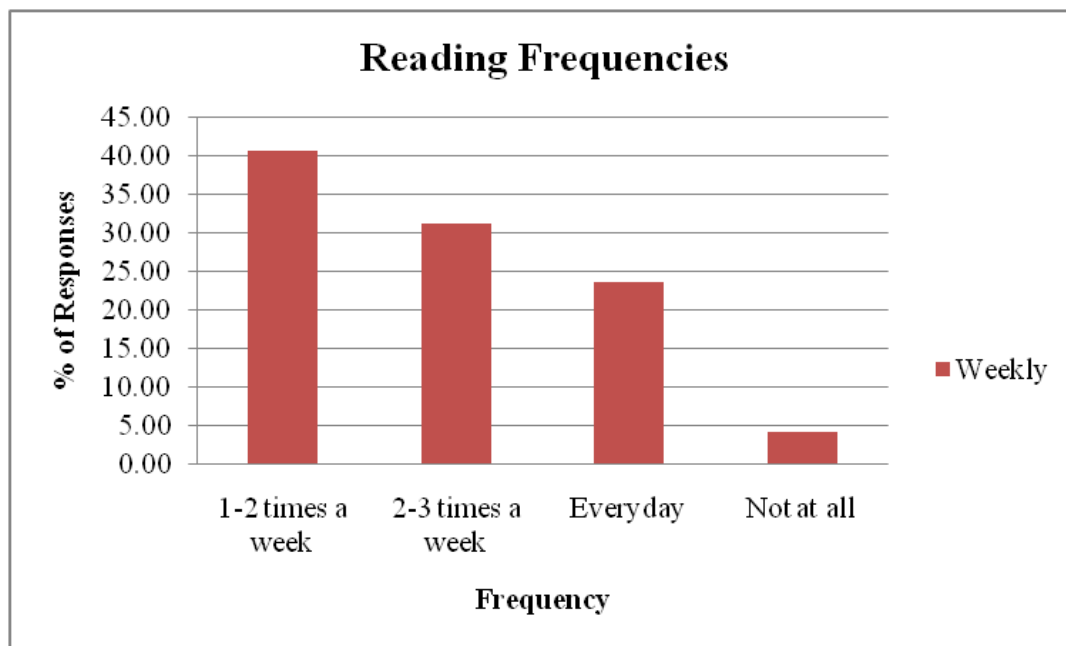


Figure 3: Weekly Reading Frequencies

There were about 50.83% respondents who read daily for more than 30 minutes and about 37.29% of respondents read in the range of 15 to 30 minutes in a day (Fig. 4). Very less proportion of respondents were in a category that read less than 15 minutes or only when they felt the necessity to read. The requirement may be summarised as a part of schooling exercises or exam-oriented readings or can be some non-literary readings like newspapers or social media messages that used to gain updated or information about the current affairs.

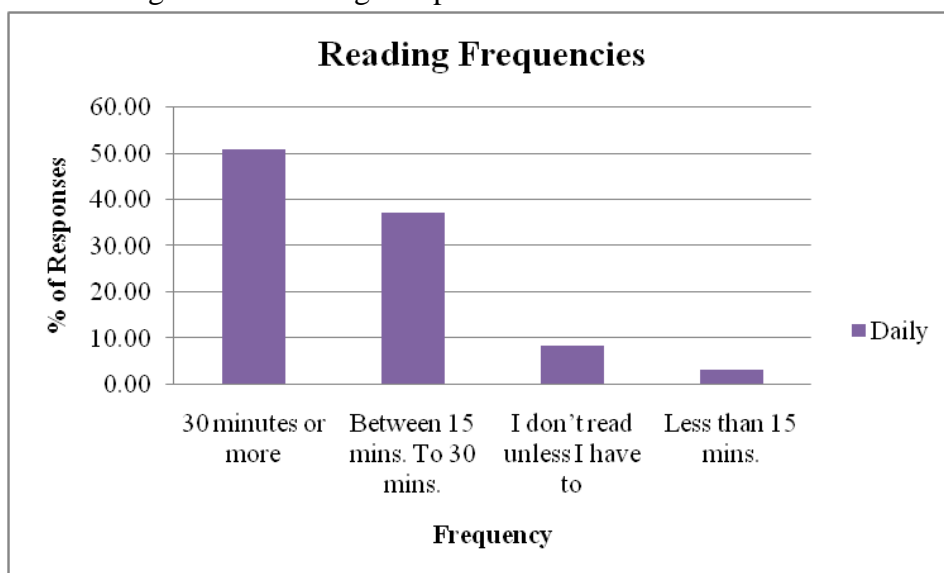


Figure 4: Daily Reading Frequencies

In a Covid-19 situation and due to complete lockdown, the books were the only source of entertainment for many respondents. From the survey it was also noticed that in the lockdown period, out of the total 118 respondents about 46 respondents had continued reading whilst 42 respondents read sometimes (Fig. 5).

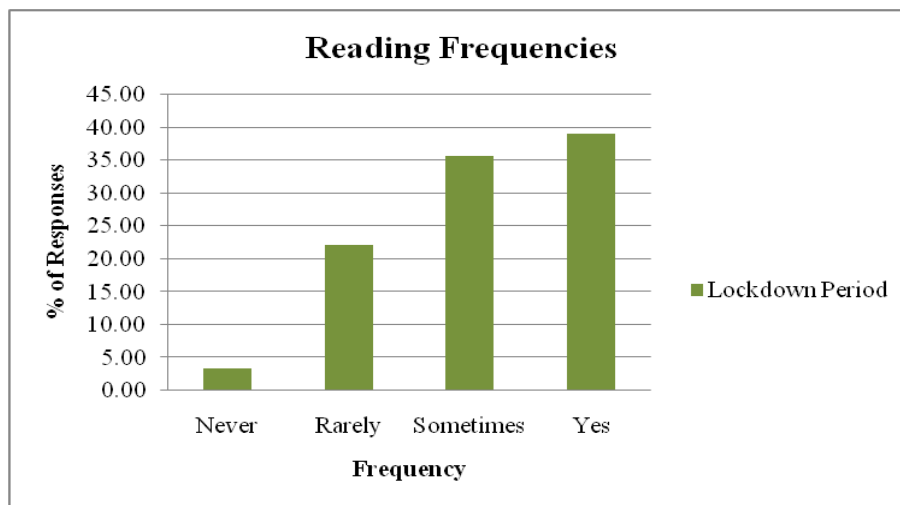


Figure 5: Reading Frequency in the Lockdown Period

About 26 respondents mentioned that they rarely read in a lockdown period and only 4 respondents (i.e., 3.39%) never availed the opportunity to read any of the literary or non-literary material.

Nowadays, the inventions in a technology and spread to internet web explored many virtual resources of reading. The discovery of a smart phone, computers made possible to read anything, everywhere resulting in reduced print materials. There are many respondents who enjoyed reading from printed books rather than e-books. The obtained results from the surveys show that there are more than 70% of respondents who enjoyed reading from printed books (Fig. 6). Less than 10% of the respondents liked to use a computer or an e-reader device whereas, about 20% of the respondents used smart phones for reading purposes. But there is a fact that a smart phone was worth usable for reading simultaneously with other kinds of work like while having meals. The result shows that about 64.49% of respondents read using smart phones while having their meals.

There is also a fact that all the reading materials were not readily available in all formats. It is sometimes difficult to get all the reading material in a desired format. Knowing this fact, about 40.52% respondents also felt that only sometimes they got the reading material in a desired format, 37.93% of responses gave an idea that they got the reading material most of the time in a desired format. It can be noted from the above results that the world of internet has revolutionised the world of reading.

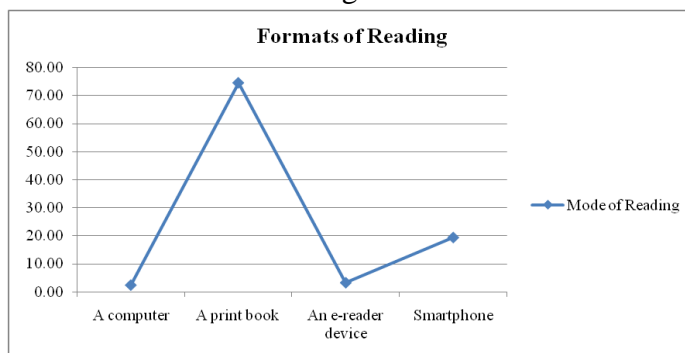


Figure 6: Formats of Reading

Apart from formal reading habits the respondents were more engaged in chatting and blogging. The invention of smart devices made possible to chat instantly with friends, colleagues and family members. The survey results show that there are 86.96% respondents who engage themselves in chatting and blogging with their friends whilst only 8.70% of respondents involved their family members.

Conclusions

After studying the analysis of questionnaire, it is found that the reading habits of students have changed. There are number of reasons responsible to the changing patterns. A Covid-19 period led to implement lockdown across the world which changed the lifestyle of people. Many of the habits have been modified due to lack of mobility to far off distances. Closing down educational institutions and libraries etc. had a major impact on the reading habits of the people. The invention of e-learning materials such as smart phones, e-readers, laptop, desktop revolutionised the reading habits.

The survey results show that how the reading frequencies, reading materials, reading choices, consciousness about reading is featured by many aspects. Reading habits have to be continued among students to develop their understanding about the world facts as well as to improve their overall learning skills. Every institute should organise various literary fests to enhance the reading ability of the students. Apart from the academic reading, some lectures/workshops should be arranged to improve reading skills. Exercises based on reading should be conducted to generate reading skills. Very few students were inspired to read from literary influencers (7.69%) therefore different writers, poets etc. should be invited in the public gatherings at college level to commemorate the birth anniversary of different literary legends which can help students to start reading.

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