

**LIS PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR READING HABITS IN COLLEGE AND
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN INDIA**

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Abstract:

This study is about reading habits of library professionals is based on users' survey. Researcher employed questionnaire to study reading habits of library professionals who is presently serving in university and college libraries. Finding from the study shows that the print collections are the major source of information. Majority of LIS professionals prefer English language for gaining knowledge in their profession. The study also shown that, the most important purpose of reading by LIS professionals is to meet the library users' requirements with the help of reference material.

Keywords: Reading, Reading habits, Libraries, Library professionals,

1. Introduction:

Librarians are mostly associated with the literature. Whereas reading is primarily an intellectual activity and a vital mean of acquisition of knowledge, skills and expression of thought especially in this modern world of science and technology which demands that one should be able to take in an intelligent and informed interest of happenings within ones environment and the world in general. Reading is a skill that is essential to people's well-being, health, hygiene, negotiations and economic growth. The number of people who cannot read is shocking. The reading habit influences in the promotion of one's personal development in particular and social progress in general.

Aina et al. (2011) defined as a process of comprehending the representation of symbols that are written and printed by looking at them, recognizing them and sometimes verbalization of these visual signs. It involves a mental formulation of communication which represents sounds in human speech. Reading takes place when the reader understands what has been encoded and decodes it properly.

The UNESCO in a 2012 report found that 774 million people worldwide, including 123 million youth, could not read or write. Even those at school are lagging behind in reading age relative to their chronological age. UNESCO's 'Education For All Report' puts the number of functionally illiterate children in primary schools at 250 million. Most people would rather not read for leisure except for a purpose. In most cases we read when we have a programme at hand or to pass examinations. Many of us would rather prefer visiting friends, sit and chat, watch television or play video games than to read a book. Even when we read, we do not read to broaden our knowledge, we read because it is mandatory at that point in time. However, it is important to note that readers are leaders and good readers make good leaders.

The present paper is a questionnaire based study of the reading habits of library professionals who is presently serving in university and college libraries and serving to their users in their concern libraries from different part of the country. The reading habits of professional requirements, their educational qualifications, psychological needs etc. have been studied. In order to carry out the study, a questionnaire was designed for the library professionals serving in the college and university libraries in India.

2. Objectives:

The following were the specific objectives of the study:

1. To identify the kind of literature being read by the library professionals.
2. To study the frequency and extent of the use of the library by the library professionals.
3. To identify the barriers which keep away the library professional from reading and using the information.

3. Methodology

For the purpose of the study a questionnaire was designed and distributed among the respondents. The study was limited to find out the reading habits of library professionals who is serving in the college and university libraries in India and attended for attending Refresher course in HRDC, University of Hyderabad during 8 -28 December 2017. The data analysis and interpretation is based on sample of 50 participants selected respondents out of three categories viz., Assistant Professor in Library and Information Science, Assistant Librarians in University Libraries and College Librarians of different part of the country.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 State / Territory wise distribution of Library Professionals

Since the reading of literature and reading habit is one of the burning issues in the present scenario and to know the state wise distribution and designation wise statistic of the library professionals. A question was asked to know about the distribution of library professionals in the country. The received data is presented in table number 1.

Table 1: State / Territory wise distribution of Library Professionals (n=50)

State / Territory	Asstt. Professor	Asstt. Librarian	College Librarian	Total	Percent
Andhra Pradesh	1	0	2	3	6%
Assam	1	0	1	2	4%
Himachal Pradesh	1	0	1	2	4%
Karnataka	2	2	10	14	28%
Kerala	1	0	0	1	2%
Maharashtra	1	1	7	9	18%

Tamilnadu	3	4	2	9	18%
Telangana	3	1	3	7	14%
West Bengal	1	0	0	1	2%
New Delhi	0	2	0	2	4%
Total	14	10	26	50	100%

Out of the sample population, 28% respondents were from Karnataka state, followed by Maharashtra (18%), Tamilnadu (18%), Telangana (14%) and so on. Among all the respondents there were 26 (52%) College Librarians, 14 (28%) Assistant Professors and 10 (20%) were from the category of Assistant Librarians respectively.

4.2 Material for general reading:

It is assumed that all library professionals are dealing and spending most of the time with reading materials. A question was asked to know the reading preference given by type of the collection available in the library by the LIS professionals. Responses are tabulated and presented in the following table no. 2.

Table 2.: Preferred source of reading in general

Type of collection	Asstt. Professor	Asstt. Librarian	College Librarian	Total	Percent
Print material	12	7	24	43	86%
Electronic Material	2	3	2	7	14%
Audio Video Material	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14	10	26	50	100%

From the above table no. 2 it is noticed that, library professionals mostly preferred print source (86%) of reading in the their day-to-day life due to the comfortability and easiness in reading. Electronic material is preferred by 14%, whereas no one responded to the preference of audio and video books. This may be because its less availability in the library.

4.3 Use of language for reading

Literature is available in many languages; English is the global language where most of the literature is available but there are many languages in India where we are able to find quality literature. To find out the preference of language given by the respondents, the question was asked. The received response is tabulated in the next table.

Table 3.: Preferred language of reading

Preferred language	Asstt. Professor	Asstt. Librarian	College Librarian	Total	Percent
English	8	6	19	43	76%
Mother tong language	6	4	7	17	24%
Any other language	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14	10	26	50	100%

From the Table 3 it can be understood that 43 (76%) of the respondents under the study preferred to read in English language whereas 17(24%) of the respondents prefer their own mother tong language to read. None of the respondents mentioned any other language. Thus the analysis is that the most preferred language is mother language.

4.5 Purpose of reading

The purpose of reading may vary by person to person, like: reading for pleasure, reading for information or knowledge etc. That is why a question was asked to understand the purpose of reading among the LIS professionals. The recorded response is presented it the following table.

Table 4.: Purpose of reading

Purpose of reading	Asstt. Professor	Asstt. Librarian	College Librarian	Total	Percent
To meet users requirements	07	06	15	28	56%
To be knowledgeable	07	03	08	18	36%
For recreation	00	01	03	04	08%
Total	14	10	26	50	100%

It is evident that more than half of the respondents (56%) under the study read for meeting the users' requirements in learning and research. The second largest category of the respondents (36%) were reading to keep themselves up-to-date in their fir=eld. It was found that 8% were reading for the sake of recreation (Table no. 4).

4.6 Source of Information

The source of information under the study can be divided into two categories i.e. scientific information and general information. The LIS professionals read scientific information in order to meet their user's needs and general information for knowledge, recreation etc. To

know the source of information a question was asked. The results are tabulated in the following table no. 5.

Table 5. Source of Information

Purpose of reading	Asstt. Professor	Asstt. Librarian	College Librarian	Total	Percent
General Books	02	01	08	11	22%
Reference Books	04	04	09	17	34%
Periodicals / Journals	05	04	07	16	32%
News Papers	03	01	02	06	12%
Total	14	10	26	50	100%

From the above table it is noticed that reference book is clear indication of most preferred reading source (34%) as most of the queries in the library solved by using help of reference books. Periodical / Journals are second most preferred reading material (32%) of the LIS professionals under the study. General books (22%) and News Papers (12%) source of information preferred by the LIS professionals under the study.

5. Conclusion:

The present study on preference of reading of LIS professionals of difference college and university libraries shows that print collections are the major source of information. It is also seen that majority of LIS professionals prefer English language for gaining knowledge in their profession. The study also shown that, the most important purpose of reading by LIS professionals is to meet the library users' requirements with the help of reference material.

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