

Reading Habits of District Public Library Users: A Survey (Special reference to Bastar Region Chhattisgarh)

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***Abstract** - The main objective of the study is to explore reading habit of public library users. For the study, questionnaire method is adopted to collect data from the library users of district public library Bastar. The study finds that majority of the library users read every day. Their purpose of reading in the library is to update their knowledge. 30% of the library users visit library once a week. Majority of the respondents visit public library to read newspapers. The main reason for not coming to the library is lack of time. A structured questionnaire was designed and personally distributed to 100 respondents over a period of seven months for the study. Responses present a dismal outlook of the libraries. Financial deficit and lack of computers, infrastructure and staff have stagnated the development of these libraries. These libraries continue to stand the same way as they stood 60 years before.*

Keywords: Reading habit, Public library, User studies, Public library users.

Introduction

Reading habit is termed as an intellectual activity for getting information, knowledge and learning of various types of professions. It involves behaviour of individual which expresses the lightness of reading that occurs regularly. It denotes a leisure reading approach. Reading habit is an active skill which is based on the process of constructing meaning and gaining knowledge from visual and written texts. Reading habit of the library users has been an active area of interest for librarians and information scientists in the context of knowing utilization of resources and services of the library.

On the basis of our survey and after meeting to the reader we found that it is the place where readers come for preparing their competitive exams, some are coming of daily news, because there mostly both Hindi and English news papers are available and children are coming for magazine purpose. We conclude that this is the place where all readers gain knowledge according to own purpose without disturbing each other.

About of Bastar

Bastar state was a princely state in India during the British Raj. It was founded in the early 14th century, supposedly by a brother of the last ruler of the Kakatiya dynasty proper, Prataparudra II. It is today used to refer the same region, called Bastar district in Chhattisgarh state. In the early 19th century the state became part of the Central Provinces and Berar under the British Raj, and acceded to the Union of India on 1 January 1948, to become part of the Madhya Pradesh in 1956, and later part of the Bastar district of Chhattisgarh state in 2000. The current ruler is Maharaja Kamal Chandra Bhanj Deo of Bastar, of the Bhanj dynasty.

Objective of the study

- To determine purpose and source of reading of the public library users in Bastar Public Library.
- To know the frequency of visit of the users in Bastar Public Library.
- To examine the types of materials read by the library users in Bastar Public Library.
- To know the sources of reading used by the users of the library in Bastar Public Library.
- To find out the reasons for not reading in the library in Bastar Public Library.
- To find out the ICT facilities in public libraries in Bastar Public Library.
- To offer some suggestions to improve the current status of public libraries in Bastar Public Library.
- To find out the members strength of the public libraries in Bastar Public Library.
- To find out the current collection strengths, collection development policies of the public libraries in Bastar Public Library.

Methodology

For the present study, a well-structured questionnaire was designed and distributed randomly among district public library users. The study was conducted on a sample of 100 public library users to examine their reading habits. The collected data was analysed with help of MS Excel.

About Library

Jagdalpur is a city in Bastar district in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh. Jagdalpur is the administrative headquarter of Bastar district and Bastar division, where the district library is situated. The district library was inaugurated on 8th April 1997, by shree Madhav Singh Dhruv (state minister, deptt. of Panchayat and rural development). District Public Library is stiveated in 2000 feet area in Near about about Sanjay market infront of Hata Groung Jagdalpur Bastar .District Public Library Bastar has a whole range of universe of knowledge to meet its readers' needs. With an aim to provide information, education and recreation to the residents of the district, Public Library was inaugurated on 8 April 1997 under local region development program, the library building was ingaurated by Madhav Dhruv (state minister, deptt. of Panchayat and rural development). In presence of Mankuram Sodi. This library started functioning with a more collection of 30000 books which currently has risen to the collection of 47800 books covering all domains of knowledge. It receives 32 journals-free and subscribed, 9 newspapers - subscribed and has 50 CD-ROMs for its clientele. It remains open on all working days except Sundays, gazetted holidays and last Thursday of the month. The administration and monitoring of the public library is carried out by the librarian. Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation which is considered backbone of all public libraries in the country plays a very vital role in building collection of this public library through matching and no matching grants.

Data Analysis

Table 1 Gender wise Distribution

Gender	Frequency	% age
Male	87	87%
Female	13	13%
Total	100	100%

Age wise Distribution

Table 2 reveal age-wise distribution of respondents. Most of the respondents (44%) are from age group 31-40 years, followed by 16-30 years (24%) and 41-50 years (14%).

Table 2 Age wise Distribution

Age	No. of response	% age
5-15	7	07%
16-30	23	24%
31-40	44	44%
41-50	14	14%
51-60	9	09%
61=above	3	03%
	100	100%

Occupation wise Distribution

Table 3 depicts occupation-wise distribution of respondents. Majority of the respondents (85%) are from the occupation 'service' followed by 'any other' that includes retired persons, housewives, and hawkers (15%).

Table 3 Occupation wise Distribution

Occupation	No. of response	% age
Student	85	85%
Service	9	9%
Business man	2	2%
Any Other	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Reading Habits

Table 4 show the frequency of reading habit of the library users the respondents read everyday followed by usually (39%) and occasionally (55%). It is observed that most of the respondents have reading habits and they read every day.

Table 4 Reading Habits

Reading habit	No. of response	% age
Every day	39	39%
Occasionally	55	55%
Rarely	6	6%
Total	100	100%

Sources for Reading

Sources of reading that users' access in the library are presented in table 5. Table and figure reveal the sources of reading read by respondents in the library. 30% of the public library users read newspapers. 42% of the respondents read stories/ novels/ dramas and 28% read magazines in the library. It shows that most of the library users read newspapers.

Table 5 Sources for Reading

Source of Reading	No. of response	% age
Stories/novels/dramas	42	42%
Magazines	28	28%
Newspapers	30	30%
Total	100	100%

Opinion about Library Services

Table 6 demonstrate the views of respondents regarding services of the public library. 90% of the users consider library services 'average' followed by 'not satisfactory' (16%). 15% of the respondents consider the library services 'good'. It shows that most of the library users consider library services as average.

Table 6 Opinion about Library Services

Library Service	No. of response	% age
Excellent	85	85%
Good	7	7%
Average	5	5%
Not Satisfactory	3	3%
Total	100	100%

Finding

The present study aims at finding the reading habits of district public library users of Amritsar. The study reveals that most of the respondents who visited library are from the age group 31-45 years and a majority of the library users are from occupation category 'service'. Their main purpose of reading in the library is to update their knowledge and for that they read newspapers and Reference sources. Library users considered library services as 'average'. Main reason given by the users for not coming to the library and reading is lack of time. Better infrastructure and staff in the library will definitely promote reading culture among users. So as better library services to the readers will also motivate them to sustain their reading habit.

Conclusion

Jagdalpur is a city in Bastar district in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh. Jagdalpur is the administrative headquarter of Bastar district and Bastar division, where the district library is situated. The district library was inaugurated on 8th April 1997, by shree Madhav Singh Dhruv (state minister, deptt. of Panchayat and rural development). Reading habit enriches our knowledge and wisdom. "Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one's living." Public library should able to attract its users and book lovers with its ambience atmosphere. Reading habit is lifelong activity and who so ever indulges in it, derives pleasure, relaxation and delight. Public libraries can promote reading habit especially in children by providing attractive, comfortable and helpful librarian. None than public library, is the only place to stimulate lifelong reading habit.

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