INFLUENCE OF FAMILIAL ENVIRONMENT ON READING

IN ADOLESCENT WOMEN STUDENTS

*Dr SarikaSawant, Asst. Prof. SHPT School of Library Science, SNDT Women’s University, New Marine Lines Mumbai 400020*

[*sarikashpt@gmail.com*](mailto:sarikashpt@gmail.com)

*Mrs Vidya Subramanian, Dr BMN College of Home Science, 338, R.A. Kidwai Road, Matunga, Mumbai 400019 Email :* [*vidya110@gmail.com*](mailto:vidya110@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

The present study presents the results of a survey conducted on undergraduate Home Science students in a Women’s college situated in suburban Mumbai. The objective of the study was to determine the influence of familial environmenton students’ reading habits. The survey was conducted keeping in mind the demographic profile of the students like the socio- economic background, their mother tongue, medium of education in school, etc.

**Keywords** :Reading habits, Influence of Family, Undergraduate, students

**Introduction**

Reading is a generic habit and can be successfully and sufficiently extended and nurtured both through educational institutions and the library. In the context of this study, reading is regarded as that the students chose to do on their own. Reading habits reflect the personal choice of material to be read as well as the time and place to read it. Interest in reading provides motivation for more reading.

Reading habits suggest the sociological aspect of the reading process, the group of readers and patterns and types of behaviour. Books and libraries are both part of the whole fabric of communication. The activity of reading is regarded as a habit when it is repeatedly carried out. Reading habits are measured in terms of amount of materials read, frequency of reading as well as average time spent on reading. (Abeyrathna, PHAS.;Zanab, A.N. 2004). In the research done by Bichy (2003) of University of Maryland Baltimore on “Reading and study skills”, he has mentioned that college students’ inadequate reading and study skills have existed since the 19th Century.

Kraschen (1996) believed that the reading habits could be nurtured at an early age. There would be differences between individuals of different age gender and there are also influences like internal factors such as home, motivation, and attitude as well as external factors like peers, teachers, and library facilities available to them.

**Literature Review**

Reading is a very important factor in enriching one’s knowledge and widening one’s perspective. Parents and thus the home environment are known to be the socializing agents to the children reading effort.

According to Baker et al (1997), children whose early encounters withliteracy are enjoyable are more likely to develop a predisposition to read frequently and broadly in subsequent years. Young children’s initiation with print and oral traditions at home, socio economic factors and educational backgrounds at home decide the reading habits

A study by NajeemahMohdYusof (2010) identifies the relationship and influence of familial factors viz income, parents’ educational level, occupation, parents’ encouragement to read and home reading environment. The results establish that the family factors strongly and positively influence the children’s reading habits and interests

Parents and the home environment figure heavily in whether or not the interest in reading is developed. The availability of reading materials in the home is certainly a necessity in developing a child's interest in books and reading. Various factors affect the reading habits in children such as education level, family income, mother tongue, language of instruction, social status, etc.

According to Sangkaeo (1999), many research studies have discovered that children who do best in literacy skills at school are those who come from homes where there are books and where parents spend time reading to them and where the children see their parents and siblings engage in reading activities

According to a study done by Noll, Under Graduate students watch 2.0 hours of TV, 1.5 hours of videos, listen to 1.2 hours of radio and 1 hour of music each day. Total time spent watching, listening to entertainment for undergraduate students is 5.4 hours/day (Noll, 2001). Hintze&Lehnus found similar results wherein they found that those who watch TV or listen to radio spend two or three hours in doing so while who read magazines/news papers spent on a average less than one hour in doing so. The total print usage for under graduates is 119.1 minutes (Noll 2001) i.e. about 2 hours in all print media including recreational college course preparation.

**Objective**

1. To study the socioeconomic, familial factors influencing reading among students
2. To study the influence of family, peer and teacher on reading

**Methodology**

First year under graduate students of a women’s Home Science College in suburban Mumbai were surveyed. A stratified sample of students were presented with a questionnaire specifically developed for the study. 90 responses were received completely filled, which were taken for the results to be tabulated. The data was summarized and percentage calculated.

**Limitations**

Only first year undergraduate women students surveyed

**Results**

**Table 1.1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Age** | **No. of respondents** |
| 17 | 19 |
| 18 | 51 |
| 19 | 10 |
| 20 and >20 | 10 |

The table shows that maximum no. of respondents are in the age group of 17 & 18 years who have joined college after completing high school education.

**Table 1.2 - Family Background**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of family** | **No. of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| Joint | 19 | 21 |
| Nuclear | 71 | 79 |

Nearly twice the respondents are from nuclear family background as against joint family.The nuclear family includes parents, siblings and grandparents while the joint family is an extended family with aunts, uncles, cousins,

**Table 1.3 – Mother tongue**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Mother Tongue** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| Marathi | 40 | 44.44 |
| Gujarati | 19 | 21.11 |
| Hindi | 13 | 14.44 |
| Urdu | 8 | 8.88 |
| South Indian | 7 | 7.77 |
| Others | 3 | 3.33 |

Being a cosmopolitan city the students come from diverse backgrounds. Majority of the respondents had Marathi as their mother tongue and the next was Gujarati. There were also respondents with other mother tongues.

**Table 1.4 - Income group**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Family Income in Rupees ( Monthly)** | **No. of respondents** | **Percentage** |
| 10,000-15,000 | 5 | 5.55 |
| 16,000-25,000 | 25 | 27.77 |
| 25,000 – 45,000 | 39 | 43.33 |
| Above Rs.45,000 | 26 | 28.88 |

Respondents are from middle and higher middleincome families. But the locations where they stay were widely dispersed. It ranged from around the city ( 2-10 kms ) to the suburbs (25-50Kms) away from the college.

**Table 1.5 Medium of Instruction in school and high school**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Medium of Instruction** | **No. Of Students** | **%** |
| **English** | **79** | **87.77** |
| **Hindi** | **1** | **1.11** |
| **Marathi** | **5** | **5.55** |
| **Urdu** | **2** | **2.22** |
| **Others** | **3** | **3.33** |
|  |  |  |

Majority of the respondents were aware of many ready materials available to them. Newspaper, textbooks, magazines, storybooks, comics and novels featured among the widely aware reading materials.

**Table 2.1 - Exposure from family**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Reading materials purchased at home** | **No, of respondents** | **%** |
| **Newspapers** | **88** | **97.77** |
| **Textbooks** | **63** | **70** |
| **Magazines** | **49** | **54.44** |
| **Comics** | **19** | **21.11** |
| **Novels** | **40** | **44.44** |
| **Poetry & Drama books** | **16** | **17.77** |

Majority of the respondents had newspapers being purchased in the house.Around half of the respondents has access to novels and magazines at home.

**Table 2.1 (A) – Language of the materials purchased at home**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Language of reading material purchased** | **No of homes** | **%** |
| English | 69 | 76.66 |
| Hindi | 20 | 22.22 |
| Marathi | 28 | 31.11 |
| Gujarati | 9 | 10 |
| Urdu | 3 | 3.33 |
| Others | 2 | 2.22 |

From the above table it shows that though the mother tongues of the respondents are different majority of them are exposed to English language reading material in a major way along with their own mother tongue as most of the houses had materials bought in English All these materials are purchased at their homes.

**Table 2.2 – Materials read by family members. {No. (%)}**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reading materials** | **You** | **Father** | **Mother** | **Sibling** | **Grand Parents** |
| News papers | 70 (77.77%) | 66 (73.33%) | 39 (43.33%) | 37 (41.11%) | 29 (32.22%) |
| Magazines | 43  (47.77%) | 14 (15.55%) | 14 (15.55%) | 24 (26.66%) | 6  (6.66%) |
| Text books | 68 (75.55%) | 3  (3.33%) | 7  (7.77%) | 52 (57.77%) | 1  (1.11%) |
| Comics | 29 (32.22%) | 4  (4.44%) | 4  (4.44%) | 40  (44.44%) | - |
| Storybooks/Novels | 41  (45.55%) | 8  (8.88%) | 8  (8.88%) | 21  23.33%) | 5  (5.55%) |
| Poetry | 7  (7.77%) | 5  (5.55%) | 5  (5.55%) | 8  (8.88%) | 25  (27.77%) |
| Drama | 12  (13.33%) | 4  (4.44%) | 4  (4.44%) | 7  (7.77%) | - |
| Religious Books | 29  (32.22%) | 30  (33.33%) | 46  (51.11%) | 16  (17.77%) | 3  (3.33%) |

Here the family members included the immediate and extended family members. The question thus provided the exposure of family members to reading materials, familiarity and thus their influence on the respondents reading environment.

**Reading** :96.66% of respondents like to read while only 3% did not like reading at all

**Table 3 - Language of reading**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Language** | **No. respondents** | **Percentage (%)** |
| English | 75 | 83.33 |
| Hindi | 12 | 13.33 |
| Marathi | 18 | 20 |
| Gujarati | 5 | 5.55 |
| Others | 7 | 7.77 |

The language of instruction in the college was English. Majority of the respondents read in English but a few did read in their mother tongue also especially in Marathi and Hindi which happen to be the languages taught in school and high school.

**Table 4 - People who influenced**

The respondents were asked as to whom they remembered reading to them or reading with them in an ordered format (Descending 1st, 2nd, 3rd.) The response was as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Relation** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** |
| Mother | 34 | 6 | 5 |
| Father | 6 | 18 | 5 |
| Grand Parents | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| Sibling | 15 | 10 | 2 |
| Teachers | 8 | 1 | 6 |
| Friends | 13 | 16 | 13 |

The results reveal that the parents especially the mother formed the key person who kindled their reading within the family. Whereever grandparents are present, they were also key to initiation into reading, The teacher has also played an important role in reading and sharing among the respondents.

**Table 5 – Sharing the reading**

The person with whom or to whom the respondents discussed what they read was also asked and the respondents chose the order of preference with whom they discussed. The results are as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Relation** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** |
| Mother | 44 | 7 | 5 |
| Father | 7 | 19 | 9 |
| Grand Parents | 8 | 7 | 2 |
| Sibling | 9 | 6 | 7 |
| Friends | 4 | 13 | 6 |
| Teachers | 8 | 7 | 12 |
| Librarian | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Others | 1 | 4 | 3 |

The response is indeed like the previous factor, wherein mother, friend and sibling form the network of sharing. Reading with and sharing with friends and siblings is seen. A healthy reading atmosphere in the family kindles reading amongst the respondents.

**Conclusion**

The important influence of parents and the home environment on thedeveloping child provides educators with a resource to ensure children'ssuccessful growth in reading.

The present study was undertaken as it was observed that the students’ reading was restricted to only academic purposes and academic materials (Prescribed). It was found that general awareness of different reading materials was also found to be lacking. A survey through a questionnaire was done to explore thefamilial entities like socio economic background, familial influences, awareness of materials that can be read, etc.

Parents are known to be socializing agents to their children especially when reading effort is concerned. This is well evident in the study conducted. It has been observed that the respondents were aware about most of the reading material available. There was a positive influence of family and peer members in their reading, irrespective of their demographic profile. Their preferred reading place was home and many of them read during travel. The study also reveals that the student’s initiation into reading was from the family and they shared their reading with family and friends.Parents should be advised to create healthy reading environment at home.

To keep the reading going as a lifelong habit the respondents have to be initiated into the library culture thoroughly In order to enhance the students reading, the librarian should promote reading and facilitate the browsing needs so that the students are able to connect with the reading and learning materials available to them.Teachers and parents should commit themselves to allot time to children / students to read other light materials in addition to reading for academic purposes.

**Bibliography**

1. Abeyratna, Phas.,& Zainab, A.N.(2004). The status of reading habit and interests among secondary school children in Sri Lanka. Malaysian Journal of Library and Information Science, 9, 109-123.

# Acharya, Neha., Joshi, Shobhana., (2011).Achievement motivation and parenteral support to adolescents. Journal of the Indian Academy of applied psychology, 27, 132-130.

1. Baker, Linda.,Scher, Deborah., Mackrel, Kirsten. (1997). Home and family influences on reading. Education psychologist, 32, 69-82.
2. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240240898_Home_and_Family_Influences_on_Motivations_for_Reading>
3. Bichy, C. L., (2003). “Reading and study skills”, Retrieved on November 7, 2004, from University of Maryland Baltimore Campus Web Site: http://www.umbc.edu/sss/reading skills.html
4. Cambria, Jenna., Guthrie, John T.( 2010). Motivating and engaging students in reading. The NERA journal, 46, 16-29.

http://www.literacyconnects.org/img/2013/03/Motivating-and-engaging-students-in-reading-Cambria-Guthrie.pdf

1. Danci, M.O., Cetin, Z., &Dogan,O.(2015). The effect of adolescents’ reading children literature to their younger siblings on their book reading habits. Creative education, 6, 2013-2020.

http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ce.2015.618206

# [Elsje van Bergen](http://www.tandfonline.com/author/van+Bergen%2C+Elsje)., [Dorothy Bishop](http://www.tandfonline.com/author/Bishop%2C+Dorothy). ,[Titia van Zuijen](http://www.tandfonline.com/author/van+Zuijen%2C+Titia) &[Peter F. de Jong](http://www.tandfonline.com/author/de+Jong%2C+Peter+F) (2015). How Does Parental Reading Influence Children’s Reading? A Study of Cognitive Mediation. Scientific studies of reading, 19, 325-339 .<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10888438.2015.1050103>

1. Hintze, W. &Lehnus J., (1998) Media habits and internet usage among America’s youth. AB-103 Symposium.

<http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a362210.pdf>

1. Krashen, D.,(1996). Comic book reading, enjoyment and pleasure reading among middle school students. Journal of Reading Improvement, 53, 51-54.
2. Morni, Affidah., Sahari,Siti-Huzaimah.(2013). The impact of living environment on reading attitudes. Procedia-Social and behavioral sciences, 101, 415-425.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259167577_The_Impact_of_Living_Environment_on_Reading_Attitudes>

1. Noll, A.M., (2001). Voice vs. data: Estimates of media usage and network traffic.

https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e7fc/76891822ab9d5aab6aa9cc9bb3e594feb9e6.pdf

1. Sangkaeo, J.N. (1999). Reading habit promotion in asian libraries. 65th IFLA council and General Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, Aug. 20-28.
2. Yosuf, NajeemahMohd.(2010). Influence of family factors on reading habits and interest among level2 pupils in national primary schools In Malaysia. Procedia-Social and behavioral sciences, 5, 1160-1165.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271881254_CHAPTER_1_Influence_of_family_factors_on_reading_habits_and_interest_among_level_2_pupils_in_national_primary_schools_in_Malaysia>

1. What Roles Do Parent Involvement, Family Background, and Culture Play in Student Motivation?

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED532667.pdf>