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Research Article

A STUDY OF THE READING HABITS OF THE STUDENTS OF STD VII WITH RESPECT TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

In today's contemporary society where technology has taken precedence, the good habit of reading has witnessed a setback. Reading is a prolific activity because as one reads the thought process keeps developing. Reading is important, because it enables one to be at an advantage of learning numerous things such as; one can improve vocabulary skills, develop expertise in various fields, mental ability is fostered, reading helps one to relax and it is the best way to be stress free. Reading gives a lot of exposure to life experiences it aids one in understanding people, and things. Above all one can create a good personality and can even make friends. This paper throws light on the reading habits of boys and girls which is a result of a detailed comparative study.

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INTRODUCTION

“No matter how busy you may think you are, you must find time for reading, or surrender yourself to self-chosen ignorance.”

Atwood H. Townsend

Reading habit is the most significant and imperative attribute for forming a well-read and cultured society. It forms the temperament of a person and this enables one to progress with appropriate rational thinking methods and one can generate innovative notions and philosophies. The most significant aptitude that one can possess is the ability to read and comprehend. Reading is a skill development it is the means for procurement of opinions that cannot be conveyed orally. In today's contemporary society where technology has taken precedence, the good habit of reading has witnessed a setback. Reading material is available in the form of literature, books fiction and nonfiction, periodicals, publications, journals, newspapers, newsletters etc. Reading material helps one to lead a purposeful life.

Reading, of all the linguistic abilities unwraps a novel and innovative world of knowledge and facts. In one's diurnal life, one regularly reads according to one's preference and above all each one wants to benefit and gain information. The individual who has a command over the English language has a wide spectrum of openings and experiences in all phases of education. Reading plays the key role in the course of learning experiences. Reading is an essential trait which helps in the

logical academic and responsive growth of a person. In times past, throughout the development period, reading has always been acquiring a prominent place in the shaping of the society. In the present scenario, where learning and teaching has undergone a drastic change in the world of knowledge explosion and technology. One may feel that the written word could be indispensable. Progress and change in the digital world has brought incredible transformation in printing technology.

Reading is possibly the best beneficial and constructive skill that can be accentuated in teaching English language at the secondary level. As endorsed by the Kothari Commission English must be taught as a 'library language'. English is taught at different levels even though it is taught as a library language; this enables students to excel in all spheres of life. Hence, students need to be trained since reading is essential and it is a universal skill. The need of the hour is that, if the reading habit has to be revived, the time is now. Educationists at all levels have a major role to play in developing and inculcating this good habit of reading in their students.

Linguistic verbal learning is a skill. The proficiency of learning a language is inter-dependent i.e, the student needs to progress in all the four-fold skills - reading, writing, listening and speaking. Listening and speaking are important and necessary in mastering the language. These skills which are necessary make an actual mode for learning the other two skills i.e reading and writing. Many linguists are of the opinion that of these four skills, reading is, possibly, the most beneficial skill

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that can be highlighted in teaching language at the secondary level.

The term 'reading' denotes reading with intellectual capacity it involves comprehending the importance of the subject matter, terminology, structures, notions and relationship of concepts. Generally, the books are a driving force of insight and information; therefore, one should read. One can become a meticulously well-read and knowledgeable person. Such learning and information enhances a lot of value to one's personality development. It is aptly said that if a student is incompetent to read, his /her education is said to be incomplete. Certainly, good habits of reading endorse poise among the persons and thus help in the development of their personality.

Reading makes you better

Reading Aids Intellectual Development

The mind is an influential and dominant device where thoughts and images are formed. Reading stimulates the mind and helps one to put thoughts together. When one is a beginner and he/she learns to read, the skill of reading not only becomes better but there is development in the mind and it brings out the creativity of the individual. Any action which is beneficial enables one to reason out, this itself is exercise for the mind and reading is the best activity.

Reading Eases Tension

There are numerous ways to become stress free. Yoga, jogging, long walks, counseling, spiritual activity, just relaxing, sharing with a friend etc. Whatever may be the stressful situation reading could be one of the best options. Reading ignites your imagination it takes you to places unknown. Reading could also become a spiritual activity it will be like reflection for the soul reading can appease like no other.

Reading Accelerates one's Vocabulary

Reading enhances one's vocabulary more than speaking or direct learning and benefits one in learning spellings. How does one actually increase one's vocabulary? Simple, the more regularly and habitually you come across certain words; the more you will familiarize with them in your vocabulary. So keep reading.

Reading Improves Inscription Skills

All efficacious authors, novelists, playwrights, poets will tell us that in order to inscribe well one has to read and read every day. Reading is a good practice it will improve one's mental capacity and power to use vocabulary in the right context. It will help one to write with flair and a knack for using an abundance of meaningful words.

Reading Enriches Logical Thinking

Most often one needs logical and discerning thought process in the work place and for this reading is essential. Studies have proved that reading sharpens one's logical thinking and reasoning power. Readers have a lot of advantage they enhance their reading skills and they become well versed in general knowledge. (<http://lifedev.net>, 2009.) and <http://www.enotes.com>)

Abstracts

Naik, S.N. (1981) studied the reading interest and abilities of adolescents and adults.

1. The aim of the study was to understand the general nature of reading interest and habit of people above the age of fifteen.
2. To study the development process of these interests. Data were collected through questionnaire, and the data were analyzed in respect of the reading of newspapers, magazines and books. Social psychology of readers and interests of various age-groups were analyzed separately. A supplementary investing on the reading development of VII to XII class students was done.

The following were the important findings of the study:

1. Newspapers were read more than any other material.
2. Women in every age group read less newspaper.
3. Magazine reading increased with age.
4. Men read more than women.
5. Sports magazines were very popular up to the age of 40.
6. Development factors of reading related to psychological growth and socio-cultural advancement were different at different age level.
7. At the primary stage only the story books were read.

T.R. Nagappa conducted a survey on behalf of the Karnataka State Adult Education Council in 1988. He interviewed 410 adults in nine districts in this state. The results of the study are as follows:

1. Religion and folk literature have a high reading appeal for neo-literates. Next are the topics dealing with occupation. Topics which are already familiar to the community to some extent are preferred for reading by the neo-literates.
2. CE Books for neo-literates should take into consideration the age, sex and occupation of the readers as they influence reading interests. For example, the younger and adolescent group has a wider interest in titles related to civics and government in greater measure than elders.

W.D. Walls survey of the newspaper reading of adolescents and adults was made in Utum; 1984. It has both the advantages and disadvantages of war time conditions. The evidence suggests that the early and middle teens are as crucial in the development of newspaper reading habits, as they are in other directions. The study suggests that although newspaper reading habits are to some extent the product of environmental conditions, much could be done by specifying training in school both to improve the newspaper reading habits and attitudes of adolescents and directly to influence the content of daily press. (www.researchersworld.com, 2012.)

Statement of the problem

A study of the awareness of reading habits of the students of Std VII with respect to the English Language.

Aim of the study

To study the awareness of reading habits of the students of Std VII with respect to the English Language.

Objectives of the study

- To study the awareness of reading habits of girls of Std VII with respect to the English Language.
- To study the awareness of reading habits of the boys of Std VII with respect to the English Language.
- To compare the awareness of reading habits of the girls and boys of Std VII with respect to the English Language.

Methodology of the study

For the present study the researcher has used descriptive research design wherein the survey method has been used to study the reading habits of boys and girls of VII Std

Sample size and its nature

For the present study, the researcher collected data from the students of Std VII. The total sample was 126. Out of which 63 were girls and 63 were boys. The sample was limited to English medium students. Convenient sampling technique was used to study the reading habits of the students of Std VII.

Tool used for the study

The data was collected by using a “Questionnaire on Reading Habits”. This tool had ten statements about good reading habits.

1. I always sound out the words in the books when I read.
2. I can use the rest of the sentence to help guess the meaning of a word I don't know.
3. I use what I already know to help me understand what I'm reading.
4. I know what to do when I don't understand what I'm reading.
5. I can find books that I like to read in my room and in the school library.
6. I like to read for fun.
7. I always share the titles of good books with my friends.
8. I have some favourite authors and usually read several books by these writers.
9. I ask myself questions as I read to make sure that I understand.
10. I know how to find information in a library.

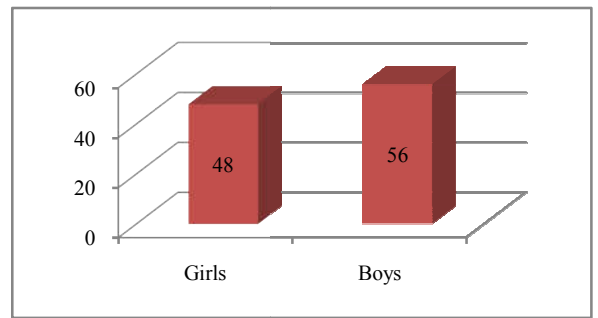
Analysis and interpretation of data

The researcher made use of descriptive analysis technique to analyze the obtained data. It included graphical representation of the obtained data.

The following are the statements and the graphical representation

Statement – 1

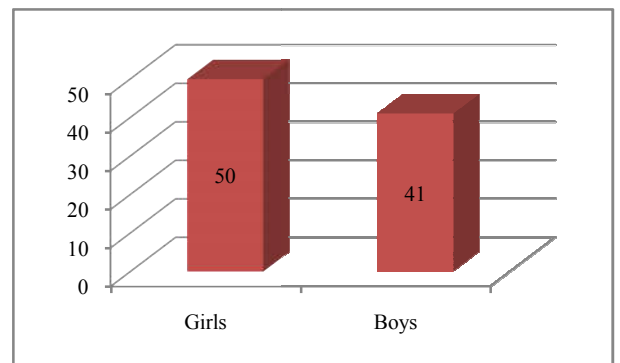
I always sound out the words in the books when I read.



Interpretation. 1: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 48 girls and 56 boys sound out the words in the books when they read.

Statement –2

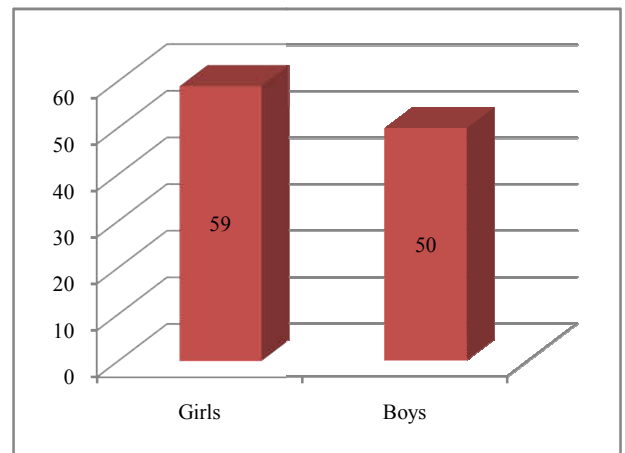
I can use the rest of the sentence to help guess the meaning of a word I don't know.



Interpretation. 2: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 50 girls and 41 boys could use the rest of the sentence to help guess the meaning of a word they didn't know.

Statement – 3

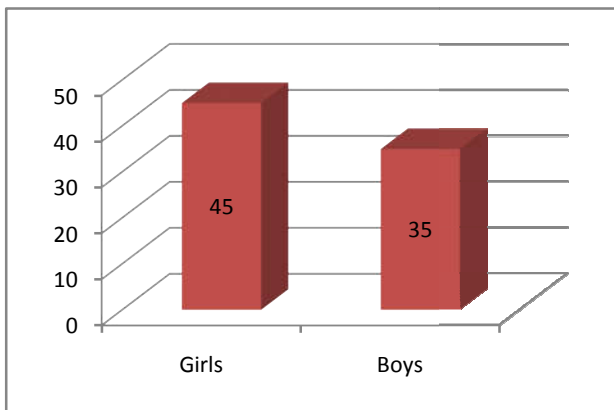
I use what I already know to help me understand what I'm reading.



Interpretation.3: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 59 girls and 50 boys use what they already know to help them understand what they are reading.

Statement –4

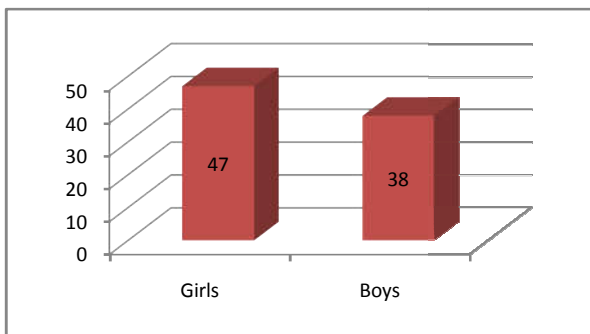
I know what to do when I don't understand what I'm reading.



Interpretation. 4: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 45 girls and 35 boys knew what to do when they didn't understand what they were reading.

Statement –5

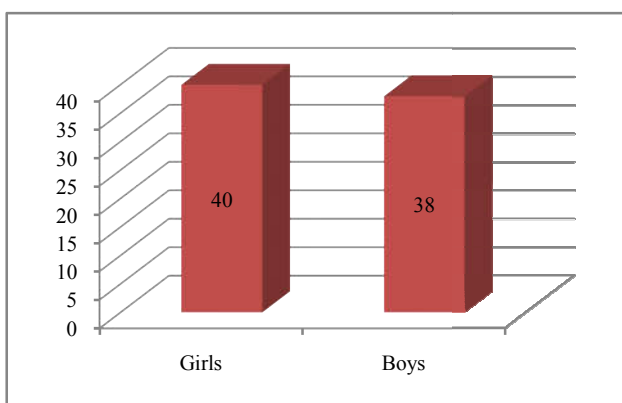
I can find books that I like to read in my room and in the school library.



Interpretation.5: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 47 girls and 38 boys could find books that they liked to read in their room and in the school library.

Statement –6

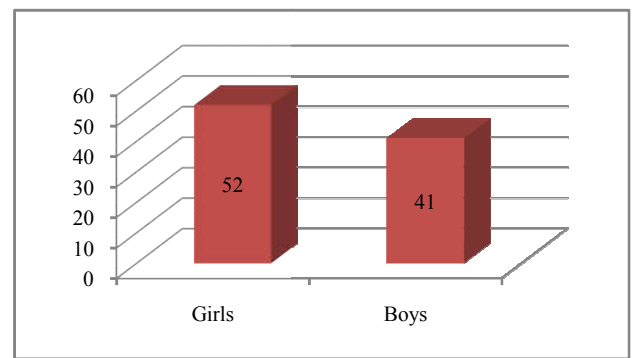
I like to read for fun.



Interpretation.6: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 40 girls and 38 boys liked to read for fun.

Statement –7

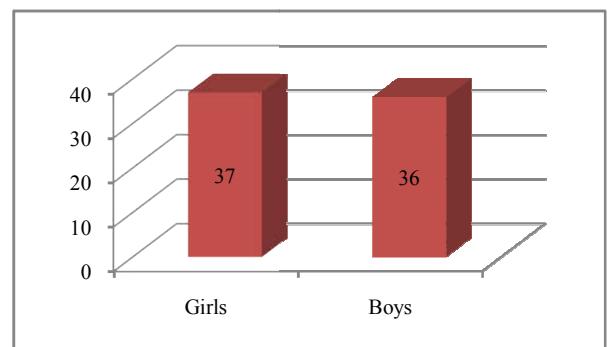
I always share the titles of good books with my friends.



Interpretation.7:It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys,52 girls and 41 boys always shared the titles of good books with their friends.

Statement –8

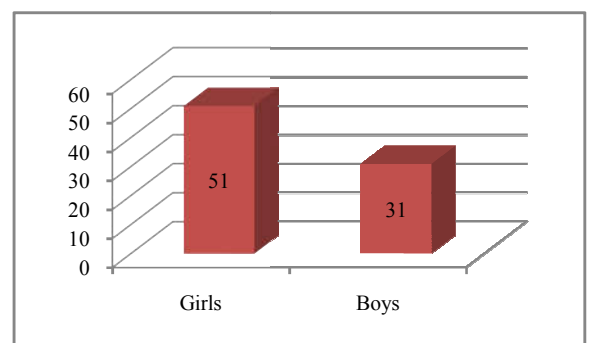
I have some favourite authors and usually read several books by these writers.



Interpretation.8: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 37 girls and 36 boys had some favourite authors and usually read several books by these writers.

Statement –9

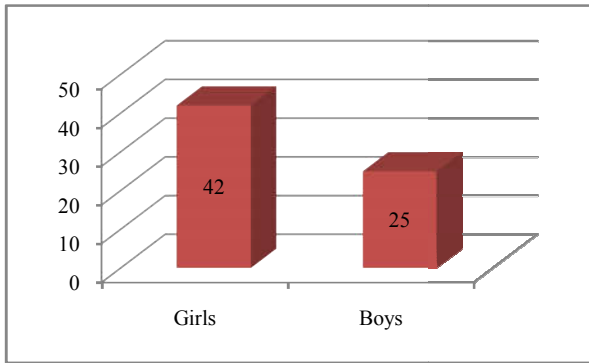
I ask myself questions as I read to make sure that I understand.



Interpretation.9: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 51 girls and 31 boys asked themselves questions as they read to make sure that they have understood.

Statement –10

I know how to find the information in a library.



Interpretation. 10: It was found that out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 42 girls and 25 boys knew how to find the information in a library.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study show that:

- About 85% girls were aware of reading habits.
- About 75 % boys were aware of reading habits
- Girls and boys did not show noticeable difference except that in statement 9 and 10 there was a marked difference.

In statement 9 - out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 51% girls and 31% boys asked themselves questions as they read to make sure that they had understood.

In statement 10 - out of 63 girls and 63 boys, 42% girls and 25% boys knew how to find the information in a library.

Overall there is good awareness about reading habits but it could be improved to make it better and best. Students both boys and girls need to be motivated to develop better reading habits.

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Hence teachers have a great role to play they should be mentors and guides to the students. This will be helpful for the students and they will have better prospects in their career.

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