The Status of Reading Habit and Interests among Secondary School Children in Sri Lanka

Abstract

Explores the leisure reading habits and interest among 300 secondary school students from 10 schools in Sri Lanka. The study also observes the students' attitude towards reading, their use of the school library and knowledge of how the school library are organised for locating needed materials. The problems students face in obtaining reading materials is also identified. The study uses a structured questionnaire as the survey instrument. The findings generally indicate that the students read regularly outside school hours. This reading however, is mainly confined to textbooks and mainly carried out for the purpose of acquiring knowledge or for study. Consequently, the library is used mainly to study or do homework rather than to borrow items to read at leisure. Most students indicate positive attitude towards the library for providing them with the facility to carry out their study or meet friends, but hardly use the services the library provides. Most express dissatisfaction with their library's collection.

How to Cite

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Children in Sri Lanka start school for the first time at the age of 5 and are required to stay until the age of 16. Languages of instruction include Sinhala, Tamil, and English. The Country’s education system has undergone a number of reform efforts over the past 70 years. According to the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka enacted “comprehensive education reforms” in 1947, 1960-61, 1972, 1981, 1997 and 2006. Only four percent of schools in Sri Lanka are exclusively secondary education institutions. At the secondary level, the government provides textbooks, and uniforms to students and also offers other welfare benefits, such as subsidized transportation and health services, to help students from disadvantaged families. In Sri Lanka, the National Library and Documentation Service Board (NLDB) carried out a survey in 2002 and found the following situations; reading habits of students was poor due to the condition of the school libraries that was not encouraging as the book collections were old and most students read “light” materials such as magazines, novels, comic books and newspapers (Abeyrathna & Zainab, 2004). 2.4 PARENTS’ ROLE. Parents play an important role in order to reinforce the child’s reading habit and interest (Cole, 1999). Parents who are readers can encourage reading for pleasure among their children but it will be reduced once the child grew older (Demise, 2001). College students do not need parental encouragement as they usually read for pleasure. Keywords: Reading, Reading Habits, Secondary School and Students. Cite this paper: Akande S. O. , Oyedapo R. O. , Developing the Reading Habits of Secondary School Students in Nigeria: The Way Forward, International Journal of Library Science, Vol. 7 No. 1, 2018, pp. 15-20. doi: 10.5923/j.library.20180701.03. Article Outline. 1. Introduction. 2. Importance of Reading Habits. 3. Developing Good Reading Habits. Developing a good reading habit is highly essential to students because it will enable reading with ease, and provide opportunity to have great accomplishments in any task. It is when students do not understand what is taught in school that the interest in pursuing academic goals is lost and subsequently they drop out of school.