Research Article

Reading Habit and Its Affect on Academic Performance of The Students of Advanced Technological Institute, Sammanthurai

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ABSTRACT

Readings plays an important role in the life of a human. It is also one of the most important components of the language. Reading habit is determined by measuring how often the people read, how long do they read and what do they read. Particularly for students, reading is very crucial part for them during the span of learning. It is an instrument used to acquire new knowledge and skills. This study aims to investigate the reading habits among students and their effect on their academic performance. This study is conducted at ATI, Sammanthurai located in the Eastern province, Sri Lanka. Data are collected using questionnaire with deductive approach in quantitative method and analyzed by statistical package for social science (SPSS). Findings are presented using frequency analysis, regression analysis, descriptive analysis and correlation analysis. The questionnaire is conducted via Google form then shared among the students of ATI, Sammanthurai. The findings indicate that most of the students has a good reading habit and it affects their academic performance positively. Finally, the study confirms that there is a relationship between reading habit and the academic performance of the students. Some findings are that; the majority of the respondents read class notes which means the need to read it for the examination purpose. Majority of the students get reading material via internet (81.4%) as they state that they spend most of their time in surfing internet and using social media.

Keywords: *Reading, Reading habit, Academic performance, ATI, Sammanthurai*

Background

Reading is one of the main components of language and it is essential tool for all learners for the life-long learning.it leads the path to the knowledge-room (Gunasekara, 2016). If this reading activity is a part of our daily life, it

would automatically become as a habit. Reading habit helps the students to increase their academic and emotional intelligence (Okwilagwe, 1998). On the other hand, due to poor reading habit, student's academic performance and development are affected negatively (Asagwara, 2000).

Reading is playing a very important role on Sri Lankan education system (Gunasekara, 2016). A survey was conducted by National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLDSB, 2014) in Northern and Eastern provinces in Sri Lanka to find out the student's attitudes towards reading habit of students in Sri Lanka. In this survey it was found that reading habits of students was poor and most students read "light" materials such as magazines, comic books, novels and newspapers. Another major problem with the Sri Lankan students is that they read only for the sake of passing the examination and this phenomenon indicates that students do not enjoy reading voluntarily (Kulatunga, 2016).

Literature Review

The literature review highlights past studies related with this research study. This study aims to verify that the reading habits of the students affect the academic performance of the students. The factors such as; students' reading interest, attitude towards reading, preferences of materials, purpose of reading and hindrance to the reading habit determine the reading habits among the students. Ultimately, it impacts on students' academic performance.

Reading Interest

According to Wagner (2002) reading habits is the degree of time to which materials are read and the time spent on reviewing and reflecting the topic. Reading habit is an attitude expressing the likeness of reading of individual's reading types and reading tastes (Sangkaeo, 1999). Academically, reading activities help the students to develop their knowledge; store the information and also it makes some changes in a person's status socially, spiritually and economically. The Positive approach towards reading habits leads to a growth in students' comprehension (Okwilagwe, 1998). For university level

students, reading activities are very important that they always have to stick with books in order to complete their daily tasks and it requires accurate understanding of meaning of the material read (Ely, 2001). Iftanti (2015) mentions that some factors such as students' home environment help the success of reading habit. the home environment consists of parental involvement, parental influence, social class, environmental influence, and accessibility to reading materials.

Beers (Beers & Kylene, 1996) divided a class of students into 3 groups. He named one of the groups as "dormant readers" were those who liked to read and thought themselves readers but did not spend time on reading activities or improve their knowledge. They did not possess negative attitude towards reading but gave their preferences to other activities such as sports, social life and other work. They would read during their convenient times such as during breaks or after completion of some important works. The second group and third group were the unmotivated and non-committed readers. These students had negative attitude towards reading and did not want to read. The non-committed readers procrastinated their reading plans and had positive attitudes towards other readers. The unmotivated readers had no plans for future reading and were negative towards people who do read.

H1: this study expects that students' reading interest positively affect their academic performance.

Reading Attitude

According to Alexander and Filler (1976), reading attitude is an individual's feeling towards reading which stimulates the reader to engage or reject a reading situation. Smith (1992) examined the daily reading activities and reading attitudes by dividing two groups as gifted and non-gifted students at a high school. The results showed many differences in reading activities between the two groups related to types of materials read and amount of time spent on reading. Takase (2007) examined the factors motivating Japanese students to engage in English reading materials extensively, assessing 219 female students who participated in an extensive reading program for one

academic year. The findings showed that the two most affecting factors were intrinsic motivation of the students for first language (L1) reading and second language (L2) reading. Panigrahi and Panda (2002) took an investigation on the reading interests and information eliciting sources of 130 school going children of two leading English-medium schools in Rourkela, India and found hindrances to develop reading interests and suggested some required measures for improvement. The gathered data by the questionnaire shared among many related English and reading teachers in every kind of schools.

H2: this study expects that students' attitude towards reading positively affect their academic performance.

Reading Material

According to Ogunrombi (1995), if the students did not have the materials to read or did not live close to libraries that had inadequate reading materials, they were unable to form the reading habit. The insufficiency of reading materials or the unsuitable home environment hinder students to focus on reading (Acheaw, 2004: Ameyaw & Anto, 2018; Yamoah, 2015). Students who never learned to read at home because they lacked reading materials and or because of parents' level of education, have difficulties developing reading habits (Ameyaw & Anto, 2018; Yamoah, 2015).

As far as Mokhtari and Sheorey (1994) are concerned, Academic reading can be defined as reading textbook and other materials typically required for learning purposes. This such readings include reading of textbooks, journal articles, research papers, library books and any other materials assigned for coursework. Pobi (2016) explained that non-academic reading includes materials such as books, newspapers, magazines and so on which has nothing to do with academic work. He further stated that not all reading materials promote academic success. Hence, the types of material also determine the academic success of the students.

H3: this study expects that students' preference of reading material positively affects their academic performance.

Purpose of Reading

Students read for various purposes. In the findings of Pobi (2016) study, he concluded that students read for complementing their studies, to pass examinations, to improve knowledge and for pleasure. Iftani (2015) conducted a study on EFL college students in East Java, the findings indicated that most of the respondents read for some purposes, such as for pleasure, assignments, knowledge and examination purpose. In a study conducted by Priajana (2013), EFL students mostly read topics that is related to their academic purpose regardless of reading for pleasure. So, many observations reveal that students read mainly for examination purpose rather than for other purposes. It indicates that students do not read voluntarily. However, the purpose of reading has an influence on the academic performance particularly when they read for examination purposes as mentioned above.

H4: this study expects that students' purpose for reading positively affect their academic performance.

Hindrance to the reading habit

Whether students possess reading habit or not, definitely there will be a hindrance. the hindrance to the reading habit negatively affects the academic performance. In a study conducted by Micheal Owusu-Acheaw (2014), the findings of the survey indicated that more than half the respondents' hindrance to the reading was mere laziness. Another hindrance was the students' home environment. Such hindrances are formed at very early stages of life. This might bring a negative attitude towards reading. Hence, the hindrance to the reading habit affects the academic performance of the students.

H5: this study expects that students' hindrances for reading negatively affect their academic performance.

Methodology

In this study, the researcher has used the deductive approach to the research. Quantitative method was used in this study for data collection. This research study has used mainly primary data. This study was conducted on the students of ATI-SAMMANTHURAI. It includes

the students in the department of HNDE, HNDA and HNDIT. The total number of populations is 1060. Probability sampling was used in this research. Probability sampling is referred to as more scientific but not always feasible. The fact is that in probability sampling everyone in the population has equal chance of getting selected for sampling. The researcher has used simple random sampling technique to choose respondents in this research. This study is conducted on 102 students who are currently following courses at ATI-SAMMANTHURAI. Data were collected by a structured questionnaire to determine the relationship between reading habit and academic performance of the students. The researcher used google form as a platform to conduct the survey because of the feasibility in analyzing data from a large group of participants in a short period of time.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Male	38	37.3	37.3
	Female	64	62.7	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	

This table displays the number of participants in male and female gender. 64 female students and 38 male students were responded to the questionnaire. Even though the majority of these students are female, the gender of these student has no determining influence in this study.

Table 2. Perception on reading habit

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Difficult	2	2.0	2.0
	Boring	7	6.9	8.8
	Useful	61	59.8	68.6
	Interesting/Enjoyable	32	31.4	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	

According to this table, in most of the respondents' point of view reading is an useful (59.8%) and interesting (31.4%) habit while rest of them find it boring (6.9%) and difficult (2%).

Table 3. List of Reading material

Materials	Frequency	Percentage %
Class notes	63	61.8
Novels	31	30.4
Short stories	49	48
Newspaper	55	53.9
Textbooks	31	30.4
Magazines	43	42.2
e-books	47	46.1
Other	3	3

This Table displays that, 61.8% read class notes, 53.9% read Newspapers 48% of the respondents read Storybooks and 46.1% read e-books. The majority of them read class notes which means the need to read it for the examination purpose.

Table 4. List of Purposes of reading

Purposes	Frequency	Percentage %
Reading for pleasure	41	40.2
To complete the syllabus	36	35.3
To pass examinations	54	52.9
To learn new things	70	68.6
To get information and knowledge	80	78.4
To improve my language proficiency	66	64.7
To improve my vocabulary	61	59.8
Other	1	1

To know the purpose of reading among the students, the respondents were allowed to select more than one option. As the results, 78.4% of them read to get information and knowledge, 68.6% of them read to learn new things and 64.7% of them read to improve their language proficiency.

Table 5. Perception on the influence on the academic performance

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	No	7	6.9	6.9
	Yes	95	93.1	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	

The main objective of the study is to find out whether students' reading habit has influence on their academic performance. Hence, the respondents were questioned about their perception on the above-mentioned objective of the research. Ultimately, 93.1% of them were positively answered to question while only 6.9% of them denied it.

Table 6. GPA of the students

GPA range	Frequency	Percentage %
0-1	4	4
1-2	7	6.8
2-3	18	17.6
3-4	73	71.6
Total	102	100

The respondents were asked about their final semester' GPA to measure their academic performance. Most (72) of the respondents have got the GPA between the scale of 3 to 4 that can be said as 71.3% of all the respondents. 17.3% of them have got the GPA between the scale of 2 to 3.

Table 7. List of Leisure time activity

Activities	Frequency	Percentage %
Watching TV	24	23.5
Engaging in a reading activity	56	54.9
Browsing the Internet	75	73.5
Visiting social media sites	66	64.7
Listening to music	27	26.5
Watching movies	24	23.5
Engage in sporting activities	13	12.7
Other	6	6

This table shows the various leisure time activity that the respondents engaged in. the majority of them spend their leisure time browsing internet (73.5%) and visiting social media sites (64.7%).

Table 8. List of Statements

Statements	Frequency and Percentage %	
	Disagree	Agree
I spend a lot of my free time in reading	51(50.5%)	50(49.5%)
I get tired and sleepy when I read	50(49%)	52(51%)
Reading is one of my interesting activities	22(21.8%)	79(78.2%)
I hate it when I have to read a lot for my study or for	44(44%)	56(56%)
my examination.	70(68.6%)	32(31.4%)
I have problem in understanding what I read		

Approximately, half of the respondents agree and another half of them disagree with the statements which say that they spend a lot of their free time in reading and they get tired and sleepy when they read. Most of the respondents have a positive attitude towards reading as nearly 4 out of 5 of the respondents agreed with the statement that reading is one of their interesting activity. 56% of the respondents hate to read even for their examinations. 70% of them have problems in understanding what they read. This is a serious issue to be solved and this is the main cause the students do not like to read. Further it leads to negative results in their academic performance.

Table 9. Correlation table

	Interest	Preference	Purpose	Hindrance	Attitude	Academic performance
Interest	1					
Preference	.095	1				
Purpose	-.046	.459**	1			
Hindrance	-.038	.719**	.252*	1		
Attitudes	-.111	.154	.123	.028	1	
Academic Performance	.045	.033	.174	.504**	.695**	1

Table 10. Model summary

The purpose of regression analysis is to determine how strong the linear relationship is and the relationships between variables.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.69a	.52	.43	.39068

The Table explains the regression model used in this research. Students' academic performance is the dependent variable and interest, preference, purpose, hindrance and attitude are the independent variables.

Table 11. ANOVAa

Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.970	5	.194	1.270	.283b
	Residual	14.653	96	.153		
	Total	15.622	101			

Table 11 above indicates the overall significance of the model, which suggests that the regression model is statistically significant as the p-value is less than 0.05. (P= 0.000)

Coefficient

Table 12. Coefficients 01

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.500	.396		6.306	.000
	Interest	.036	.053	.068	2.896	.008
	Preference	-.007	.068	-.017	-.104	.918
	Purpose	.051	.030	.190	2.680	.000
	Hindrance	.050	.080	-.091	2.620	.000
	Attitude	.241	.173	.142	1.992	.023

The above table shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between the students' reading interest and the academic performance as the beta (0.068) is positive and the P-value (0.008) is less than 0.05 which means the students' reading interests have influence on their academic performance. In contrast to this, there is no significant relationship between the preference of reading materials and students' academic performance as the beta (-0.017) is negative and the P-value (0.918) is greater than 0.05 which means the preference of reading materials has no impact on students' academic performance.

Moreover, there is a positive and significant relationship between the students' purpose of reading and the academic performance as the beta (0.190) is positive and the P-value (0.000) is less than 0.05 which means the students' purpose of reading have influence on their academic performance. But there is no significant relationship between the hindrances of reading and students' academic performance as the beta (-0.091) is negative which means the hindrances of reading has no impact on students' academic performance.

Likewise, there is a positive and significant relationship between the students' attitudes towards reading and the academic performance as the beta (0.142) is positive and the P-value (0.023) is less than 0.05 which means students' attitudes towards reading have influence on their academic performance. So that, hypothesis 1 (H1), hypothesis 3 (H3) and hypothesis 5 (H5) were accepted when hypothesis 2 (H2) and hypothesis 4 (H4) were rejected.

Table 13. Coefficients 02

Model		Collinearity statistic	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Interest	.933	1.071
	Preference	.369	2.709
	Purpose	.764	1.309
	Hindrance	.453	2.209
	Attitudes	.940	1.064

Table 14. Descriptive analysis

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Interest	102	1.33	6.33	4.4902	.75300
Preference	102	1.00	5.00	2.7843	.94269
Purpose	102	1.00	5.00	3.7549	1.46535
Hindrance	102	1.00	4.00	2.2745	.71969
Attitudes	102	1.00	2.00	1.4725	.23172
Academic Performance	102	1.43	3.57	3.0728	.39329
Valid N (listwise)	102				

Conclusion

This study was conducted to determine the influence of reading habits on the academic performance of students at ATI-Sammanthurai, Sri Lanka. It particularly looked into the students' reading interest, purpose, materials, attitudes, hindrances and factors affecting reading habits and how it affects their performance. The study results indicate that students have cultivated some type of reading habit for they read class notes at the class room. Students read mainly for examination purposes. Reading was also found to help the students to improve their knowledge, make it easy to write examinations and develop their writing skills. However, the lack of interest in reading is the major problem. Therefore, it is really important that the importance of reading should be emphasized. Finally, there was a positive correlation between the purpose of reading and academic performance.

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