

## Reading habits of common people in the digital era: A case study.

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### Abstract

Reading is an important part of human life. Reading improves understanding, increases knowledge and gives mental pleasure. Today's reading habit has considerably decreased. There are various aspects of reading habits and these are studied in this paper.

This paper tries to investigate reading habits of common people in the digital era. It is a case study, in which a questionnaire is used as a tool for data collection. Findings from study show that 92.90% common people like reading. The study also shows that 65.70% common people read for knowledge updation purpose. It also studied the effect of social media on reading habits.

**Keywords:** Reading, reading habits, frequency of reading, purpose of reading, time spent for reading, social media etc.

### 1. Introduction

Reading is the primary activity in human being's lives. It starts from early childhood age but has an impact throughout life. Reading creates a base for overall development. Reading is an art which gives pleasure to the mind. It is intellectual activity which creates the ability to think. Reading habits need to be developed with proper intention.

Aina (2011) defined reading as a process of comprehending the representation of symbols that are written and printed by looking at them, recognizing them and sometimes verbalization of these visual signs. Reading involves a mental formulation of communication which represents sounds in human speech.

Libraries being part of academic institutes are also part of society. Society is made of common people. Hence reading habits of a common person are needed to study. Most of the members under study are working in I.T. sector, hence researcher intend to study their reading habits.

## 2. Objectives of the study

- i) To find reading habits of common people in the digital era.
- ii) To know the purpose and frequency of reading.
- iii) To find whether social media affects reading habits.

## 3. Scope of the study

Scope of the study is restricted to members of two co-operative housing societies i.e. Imperial Heights (A & B Wing) and Kute Angan (B-Wing) co-operative housing society. These societies are located at survey No 132/8 in Chinchwad area of Pune city. People from these two co-operative housing societies are involved for studying their reading habits.

## 4. Review of literature

**Lesesne (1991)** finds that elder people can inspire younger for reading and the role of teacher and guardians are important in this regard.

**Holte (1998)** finds that reading adds quality to life and gives access to culture as well as reading empowers citizens and brings people together.

**Shabi and Udofia (2009)** represented that active learning from books is much better than passive learning like television and games.

**Bature (2011)** noted that an effective reading environment exists in a society.

**Akindele (2012)** finds that it is desirable that children should be introduced to books and reading from an early age.

**Akanda, Hoq and Hasan (2013)** assessed the reading habits of the students of a leading public university in Bangladesh and identified the trends in their reading habits. Some of the trends they highlighted are - students read books and other materials with sense of purpose and with specific targets, not aimlessly or not for fun. The majority of the students read books only for 2-4 hours a day.

## 5. Methodology used

For this case study, members of Imperial heights (A& B Wing) and Kute Angan (B-wing) co-operative housing societies are studied. These societies are located at survey No 132/8 in Chinchwad area of Pune city. A structured questionnaire is prepared and distributed among members of these societies for data collection. There are 110 members in these societies. Questionnaires prepared through Google forms have been distributed among all members through WhatsApp group. 70 fully filled responses received back with response rate 63.63%. Wherever necessary, researcher has applied observation method also.

## 6. Data analysis and interpretation

Responses received through Google forms are used for data analysis and interpretation.

### 6.1 Age group

The age group of respondents is represented in table 1 below.

**Table 1: Age group of respondents**

Sr. No.	Age group	Number	Percentage
1	20-30	3	4.3
2	31-40	40	57.2
3	41-50	22	31.4
4	Above 50	5	7.1
	Total	70	100

It is seen from table 1 that, out of 70 respondents, maximum 40 (57.2%) are between 31-40 age group while minimum 3 (4.3%) are from 20-30 age group.

### 6.2 Gender

The gender of respondents is represented in table 2 below.

**Table 2: Gender of respondents**

Sr. No.	Gender	Number	Percentage
1	Male	56	80
2	Female	14	20
	Total	70	100

Table 2 shows that, out of 70 respondents, 56 (80 %) are male while 14 (20%) are female.

### 6.3 Occupation

The occupation of respondents is represented in table 3 below.

**Table 3: Occupation of respondents**

Sr. No.	Occupation	Number	Percentage
1	Employed	57	81.4
2	Business	7	10
3	Housewife	6	8.6
	Total	70	100

Table 3 shows that, out of 70 respondents, 57 (81.4 %) are employed, 7(10%) are doing business while 6 (8.6%) are housewives. As stated above maximum members are working in I.T. sector.

#### 6.4 Do you like reading?

The response is represented in table 4 below.

**Table 4: Like reading**

Sr. No.	Like reading	Number	Percentage
1	Yes	65	92.9
2	No	5	7.1
	Total	70	100

It is seen from table 4 that 65 (92.9%) people like reading while 5 (7.1%) don't like reading. It can be interpreted that it proves earlier study of Bature (2011) who noted that an effective reading environment exists in a society.

#### 6.5 Which form of reading material?

The response is represented in table 5 below.

**Table 5: Form of reading material**

Sr. No.	Form of reading material	Number	Percentage
1	Print	20	28.6
2	Electronic / Digital	12	17.1
3	Both	38	54.3
	Total	70	100

It is seen from table 5 that maximum 38(54.3%) people read both print as well as electronic material followed by 20(28.6%) people read print material and 12(17.1%) people read electronic/ digital material.

### 6.6 Which type of reading material?

The response is represented in table 6 below.

**Table 6: Type of reading material**

Sr. No.	Type of reading material	Number	Percentage
1	Fiction	31	44.3
2	Non Fiction	15	21.4
3	Biography / Autobiography	22	31.4
4	Study / Professional Material	50	71.4
5	Other	18	25.7

Table 6 shows that maximum 50(71.4%) people read study/ professional material followed by 31(44.3%) people read fiction , 22(31.4%) read biography/ autobiography, 18(25.7%) read other material and minimum 15(21.4%) people read nonfiction material. As mentioned earlier, maximum people under study are working in I.T. sector due to which they prefer reading study / professional material maximum.

### 6.7 Frequency of Reading

The response is represented in table 7 below.

**Table 7: Frequency of Reading**

Sr. No.	Frequency of Reading	Number	Percentage
1	Daily	28	40
2	Weekly	16	22.8
3	Monthly	6	8.6
4	Sometimes	20	28.6

	Total	70	100
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Table 7 represents frequency of reading by people, in which maximum 28(40%) people read daily followed by 20 (28.6%) read sometimes, 16 (22.8%) read weekly while minimum 6 (8.6%) people read monthly.

### 6.8 Time spent for Reading

The response is represented in table 8 below.

**Table 8: Time spent for Reading**

Sr. No.	Time spent for Reading	Number	Percentage
1	1 Hour	42	60
2	2 Hours	18	25.7
3	More than 2 Hours	10	14.3
	Total	70	100

Table 8 indicate that maximum 42 (60%) people spent one hour for reading, 18 (25.7%) people spent two hours for reading and minimum 10(14.3%) people spent more than 2 hours for reading. In can be interpreted that maximum people are serious about reading.

### 6.9 Preferred language

Question is asked about preferred language for reading and the response is represented in table 9 below.

**Table 9: Preferred language**

Sr. No.	Preferred language	Number	Percentage
1	Marathi	45	64.3
2	English	53	75.7
3	Other	10	14.3

It can be seen from table 9 that maximum 53 (75.7%) people prefer English language for reading followed by 45 (64.3%) people prefers Marathi language for reading while minimum 10 (14.3%) people prefer other language.

It can be interpreted that as per table 6 maximum 71.4% people read study/ professional material due to which maximum preferred language may be English.

### **6.10 Purpose of reading**

Question is asked about purpose of reading and the response is represented in table 10 below.

**Table 10: Purpose of reading**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Purpose of reading</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Personal interest	36	51.4
2	Professional interest	36	51.4
3	Knowledge updation	46	65.7
4	For Recreation / Entertainment	31	44.3

As shown in table 10 maximum 46 (65.7%) people read for knowledge updation followed by 36 (51.4%) read for personal interest and professional interest each, while minimum 31(44.3%) read for recreation/ entertainment. It can be interpreted that maximum people read for knowledge updation because as per table 3 maximum people are employed or having business and they may want to keep themselves update.

### **6.11 Your reading inspires others for reading**

The response is represented in table 11 below.

**Table 11: Reading inspires others for reading**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Reading inspires others for reading</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Yes	45	64.3
2	No	2	2.8



3	Can't say anything	23	32.9
	Total	70	100

Table 11 shows that maximum 45 (64.3%) people said that their reading inspires others for reading followed by 23 (32.9%) people said can't say anything while minimum 2 (2.8%) people said that their reading does not inspire others for reading.

It can be interpreted that maximum 45 (64.3%) people said that their reading inspires others for reading which is similar to earlier study of Lesesne (1991) who finds that elder people can inspire younger for reading.

### ***6.12 Does social media affects reading habits***

The attempt is made to know does social media affects reading habits and response is represented in table 12 below.

**Table 12: Does social media affects reading habits**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Does social media affects reading habits</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Yes	55	78.6
2	No	14	20
3	Can't say anything	1	1.4
	Total	70	100

Table 12 shows that maximum 55(78.6%) people said yes, social media affects reading habits followed by 14(20%) said no and minimum 1(1.4%) said can't say anything.

### 6.13 Which social media affects reading habit?

The response is represented in table 13 below.

**Table 13: Which social media affects reading habit?**

Sr. No.	Which social media affects reading habit	Number	Percentage
1	WhatsApp	46	65.7
2	Face book	35	50
3	You Tube	24	34.3
4	Instagram	9	12.9
5	None	14	20

Table 13 shows that maximum 46(65.7%) people said WhatsApp affects reading habit followed by 35(50%) people said face book, 24 (34.3%) people said YouTube, 14 (20%) people said none while minimum 9(12.9 %) people said instagram affects reading habit. It can be interpreted that WhatsApp is the social media which maximum affects reading habits.

### 7. Findings and suggestions

The main objective of the study was to find reading habits of common people in the digital era. The data indicates that 92.9% people of the two co-operative housing societies under study like reading. Maximum people read both print as well as electronic material. Maximum people read study / professional material. Maximum people under study are working in I.T. sector due to which they prefer reading study / professional material maximum. Maximum people read daily and spend one hour for reading. Maximum people read study/ professional material due to which maximum preferred language for reading is English. People read for knowledge updation as they are employed or having business and they may want to keep themselves updated. Maximum people said that their reading inspires others for reading and also agree that social media affects reading habits. WhatsApp is the social media which maximum affects reading habits.

It may be suggested that people may reduce use of social media or use social media only for necessary purposes. It may help people to concentrate more on reading habits.

## 8. Conclusion

The study is done only as a case study on people of two co-operative housing societies in Chinchwad area of Pune city. More aspects of reading habits may need to be highlighted in a large population. The awareness regarding benefits of reading may inculcate more reading habits. Less use of social media or use of social media only for necessary purposes may help people to concentrate more on reading habits. Maximum people said that their reading inspires others for reading which is similar to earlier study of Lesesne (1991) who finds that elder people can inspire younger for reading. Study also found similarity with earlier study of Bature (2011) who noted that an effective reading environment exists in a society. Further research can take place on a large population and other aspects of reading habits.

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