

Role of Libraries in Promoting Reading Habits among Users in Higher Education

Dr Suresh Sharanappa

Librarian(Selection Grade)

Government First Grade College, Manvi-584123 Raichur Dist. Karnataka, India

Abstract

According to this study, social media growth and the introduction of new technology are partially responsible for this. The fact that young individuals spend so much time using mobiles and conversing on social media sites instead of reading is depressing. This study looked at how libraries might encourage a reading habit among their patrons in higher education. There are many different strategies for encouraging young people to read, including clubs, mobile reading tents, user-centered environments, virtual helpdesks, social media, and creative methods. Users reading habits are greatly influenced by libraries.

Keywords: Libraries, Reading Habits, Higher Education, Users, Social Media, Innovative Services.

1. Introduction

Reading is a never-ending process that lasts a lifetime. People read a variety of literature every day for their own objectives, gaining information and knowledge to solve difficulties of daily living and completing chores since it is impossible to seek out any information or knowledge without reading. Literature may be found in print or electronic form. Students, both at home and at college, is the optimum time to begin reading. According to Kachala (2007) fostering a reading culture should begin

in early infancy and continue through maturity. By doing so, a country may become literate and change into an enlightened, aware society that contributes significantly to society. In order to ensure that children are attracted to reading from an early age and are encouraged to do so for their own enjoyment and benefit, parents and college should encourage their students to read often and in a positive setting.

2. Review of Literature

The goal of reading habit promotion is to spread awareness among library patrons. It is an activity designed to make reading more commonplace and become a lifetime pleasure. Making reading a habit that users value and enjoy is the major goal of establishing a reading culture. The research looks at a number of variables that contribute to a poor reading culture and the significant contributions libraries may make to enhancing and encouraging reading culture among patrons. This research will aid in taking into account several crucial elements required for enhancing and fostering a successful reading culture in the present and the future (Sethy, 2018). The purpose of the library is to promote the reading lifestyle. The library not only encourages the culture of reading but also makes it easier for readers to have access to books. As a result, the library enables its users to not only enjoy their life but also pass their time in an academic manner. The goal of this programme is to encourage individuals to enjoy reading and writing. Making reading a fun and gratifying activity for library users is the main objective of nurturing a love of reading in them. Therefore, it is essential to encourage students to develop a habit of reading and to spread knowledge of the importance of reading for enjoyment as opposed to only memorising information for exams. One-method libraries may promote the value of reading and a thriving reading culture is via Library Week, which is annually conducted throughout the high school academic year (Ashif, 2021). Reading has evolved into the most important human activity since the history of knowledge publishing began. Anyone in the world who wants to learn anything from the written material that is accessible must read. As a result, a student's reading ability is a crucial yet undervalued component of the completely educational process. The habit of reading has produced many excellent academics in their respective professions. Reading habits are becoming less prevalent in society because of likes, comments, shares, and new technology. The most disappointing current scenario is having a negative impact on readers of all ages and their reading habits. Therefore, under these conditions, encouraging, enhancing, and improving reading habits is crucial for maintaining knowledge.

3. Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study are to:

- Ensure that the library is user-centric.
- Connect users to the right information and at the right time
- Highlight significant contributions libraries may make to enhancing and promoting reading social culture.

4. Higher Education Present Scenario

The knowledge era clearly calls for education/skill enabled employability and updating skills for existing employees to adopt to the rapidly evolving changes in the society, economy, and disruptive technology mandated changes in businesses and industries. High-quality pedagogy is not restricted to a particular country, as skilled professionals move from one economic region to another; they create more jobs and business opportunities in their wake. Therefore as India moves to become a global leader with the largest population of youth or the youngest nation in terms of its average age of the population, India needs to accelerate its capability to deliver Higher Education in the coming decade. In spite of the current quality and employability issues and seemingly over capacity in Higher Education, the nation hardly has 20 to 25 percent capacity to meet the needs of the expected 300 million students in the next two decades. Hence there is an urgent need for both government and private promoters in the field of education and skill development to meet the challenges that will soon arise (Satyanarayana, 2022).

5. Role of libraries in promoting reading habits

From time to time, libraries may host activities that are specifically geared at fostering reading habits and offering potential novel approaches to inspire patrons to read more in order to get in-depth knowledge about desired themes. In order to encourage readers to read more, libraries may play a crucial role in the following ways:

5.1. Establishing portals for resource access:

As a library contains a collection of diverse materials, including books, journals, theses, newspapers, magazines, and electronic resources, not all of which are only accessible in print. In addition, a library may have materials like journals, periodicals, theses, etc. that are accessible in both print and electronic versions. Because of this, libraries have a special feature where all resources, regardless of they are ready for the users to read under a roof for their own purposes, whether they are in print or electronic form. Users who browse these resources to satisfy their information requirements may unintentionally alert other users to the library's offerings. As a

result, a library aids in persuading people to utilise a range of resources in accordance with their needs by offering this platform. Users' preferences and potential to advance reading culture.

5.2. User centric Atmosphere matters:

The atmosphere affects everyone, which is a crucial aspect of the development of everything. Consequently, it is the primary responsibility of library staff members to create a quiet and reading environment within the building as a good and encouraging reading environment may easily inspire users to read as in a library, items like collections of reading materials, library furniture staff, users, and so on are the symbols of reading and help in creating positive reading environments through which users affect a lot and promote themselves to be a part of this reading environments. On the other hand, parents of students should participate in reading activities so that they read the books themselves and foster a love of reading among their kids.

5.3. Users' Interaction:

Supporting students is more important than ever for academic librarians right now. Resources to engage and connect with students may be offered by librarians. Hence, librarian need to create strategies for effectively engaging students. Students need to be reminded that even when the physical library is closed, it is still accessible online and has a wealth of useful materials.

5.4. Library Club Activities

The library club offers plenty of chances for students to interact and engage in discussion about books and writers. It aims to increase students' knowledge of books and periodicals. The library club has expanded its borders to include e-resources at this time, and it also uses orientation, competition, quizzes, and other activities to encourage students to read.

5.5. Support students with online resources

Libraries need to provide patrons access to a broad variety of materials, both offline and online. Texts that may be downloaded or seen online and read digitally are called "e-books." E-books and e-journals have gained popularity among readers in recent years as a source of information and entertainment. Accessing texts from anywhere, especially on the fly, is now simple thanks to online marketplaces. Specialized e-readers, tablets, computers, cellphones, and other computing devices can hold hundreds of books while providing access to more texts through cloud-based services.

5.6. Library Website

To enable access to scholarly and scientific material, we must bring the library to the

users and allow them the freedom to access information whenever and wherever they want. Due to the exponential growth of Internet-capable devices like Smartphones and Tablets, concerns about the accessibility of web-based material are more important than ever. Libraries have taken on a significant responsibility by developing a responsive library website in order to better serve its users by reaching them wherever they are and saving their time.

5.7. QR Code Technology

The library has several books with QR codes on the shelf, and patrons may access these books by scanning the QR codes with their smartphones. Numerous libraries, publishers, and aggregators develop and distribute a book's title QR code so that people may access the content through these QR codes. Libraries should provide QR code access to electronic resources at campus locations like the cafeteria, canteen, and other areas where students used to spend their free time.

5.8. Use social media to engage with students

The library may utilise many forms of social media for a variety of purposes. A few of these are like information communication (Facebook, twitter, blog etc.), Content creation (YouTube, Wikipedia etc.) and knowledge organization (Net vibe, Delicious etc.). Social media supports libraries in connecting with a wide number of users at anytime, anywhere, and provides an engaging, multimedia environment that helps libraries attract new users.

5.9. Virtual Helpdesk

The library staff is available to assist users in using the library's resources and to support your academic endeavours. There are many various methods to contact users, and each one is designed specifically for the kind of help users they may want, such as email support, chat, ask a librarian, etc. Thus, it provides excellent support for users' ongoing academic endeavours.

5.10. Innovative Services

For this last point, libraries keep on practicing innovations about a variety of prospective services, such as online "ask a librarian"-style research assistance, mobile library apps, pre-loaded e-readers, community library kiosks, and that could be checked out.

Conclusion

This study explored a variety of issues related to encouraging a reading culture among participants and concluded that, in order to maintain reading habits, make society

well-literate across a wide range of subjects, and use reading in daily life, it is urgently necessary to develop reading culture in the society. According to this study's findings, libraries should play a variety of roles, including adapting their services, materials, and environments to meet readers' needs right now, particularly in relation to college, parents, and libraries, as well as creating effective education policies to promote a culture of reading. In addition to helping to encourage reading habits, these methods are also capable of meeting users' complicated information demands and expectations.

References

- [1] Ashif, M (2021). An investigation of the reading culture: the role of libraries to promote reading culture in Pakistan. *Journal of Language and Cultural Education* 9(3):40-62.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358723806_An_investigation_of_the_reading_culture_the_role_of_libraries_to_promote_reading_culture_in_Pakistan .
- [2] Kachala, F.F.C. (2007). Developing a reading culture among the rural masses of Mwambo, Zomba District, Malawi: a concept for the 21st century and beyond.
- [3] Satyanarayana, B. S. (2022). The Evolving Higher Education Scenario in India. <https://www.thehighereducationreview.com/opinion/mentors-opinion/the-evolving-higher-education-scenario-in-india-fid-66.html>
- [4] Sethy, S. (2018). Promoting Reading Habits and The Role of Library. *International Journal of Library and Information Studies*, 8(1).
<https://www.ijlis.org/articles/promoting-reading-habits-and-the-role-of-library.pdf>
- [5] Sharma, S. C. (2018). The Role of Librarians in Promotion of Reading Habits in Contemporary Era of Technology. *International Journal of Information Movement*, 2(XI), 307-310.
<http://www.ijim.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Vol-2-Issue-XI-307-310-paper-5055-subhash-Sharma-reading-habit1.pdf>