

# A Study on Reading Habits of Users in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu

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**Abstract** – Reading Habit has been a subject of investigation in Librarianship, Journalism, Education, Psychology, Literature and history. Specifically reading habit refers to the settled tendency or practice of people to voluntarily seek reading material and devote time to reading. This article attempts to investigate into the reading habits of university students by studying about their use of university library. Questionnaire is used to investigate the participant's general attitudes towards reading and their reading preferences. The gathered data highlighted what motivates students when they read for leisure and their preferred language of reading materials.

**Keywords:** University Students, Investigation Reading Habits

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the age of modern living mastery of printed word is essential. Documents furnish keys to understanding one's self and they provide opportunity for improving the art of human relationships. Reading has been the key subject in the curriculum for young children for centuries, and the subject for considerable research activity and controversy. It is a basic tool of education and one of the powerful and lasting influence in the promotion of one's personal development in particular and social progress in general. David H. Russel and Henry Fea defined reading as "the act of identifying the symbol and obtaining meaning from the identified symbol". A good reading habit is an important tool for the development of personalities and mental capacities. Library is a centre of knowledge and temple of learning established to meet the information needs of its readers. The readers are the key person in any information system. In a library and

information centre, the essential components are documents, readers and librarians. It is a common complaint that the information users often neglect the general readers and their information needs. It is the responsibility of the Librarians to make available the relevant information to the reader. The present article aims to study the reading habit of the students studying in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli by analyzing the use of reading habits of the students.

## II. MANONMANIAM SUNDARANAR UNIVERSITY : PROFILE

Manonmaniam Sunaranar University (MSU), Tirunelveli was established on 7th September, 1990, by the Government of Tamil Nadu as a Teaching cum affiliating University. The University is named after the Tamil poet laureate Prof.P.Sundaram Pillai (1855-1897) who is the author of the famous verse drama MANONMANIAM. The University caters to the needs of the three southern districts of Tamil Nadu viz. Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari. The University is located in a campus of 550 acres at Abishekapatti (on Tirunelveli Tenkasi Road) at a distance of 8 kilometers from Tirunelveli Junction. Manonmaniam Sunaranar University is accredited by NAAC with B++ grade equivalent to 5 star status with a mission in pursuit of Excellence by providing quality education. There are 24 academic departments in the University. The University offers Post-Graduate, M.Phil. and Ph.D. programmes (Full time and Part time). Manonmaniam Sunaranar University is the first to offer Choice-Based Credit System.

**A. University Library**

The Library is located in a double storied building constructed in the front part of the University campus. It is a quite spacious place and provides separate space for journal users and book users. The users of the library are facilitated with adequate number of furniture to ensure better reading. Separate rooms are provided to carry out technical works and circulating books. A separate research section with research reports is available to encourage research activities. With the help of INFLIBNET center, Ahmadabad a LAN (Local Area Network) is established for the purpose of Library automation, online bibliographical services and the Internet browsing. The University Library has rich collection of books and journals on a wide range of subjects. The quality and quantity of the collection and the information resources have earned all – round appreciation from readers.

**III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The primary goal of the study is to examine the reading habits of students in the University Students. More specifically the study is aimed at the following:

1. To find out reading materials like read books, periodicals, newspapers etc.
2. To identify the actual strengths and weakness of library resources and services.
3. To find out how students spend their leisure time and whether reading constituted as one of their very important activities.
4. To assess the use of library facilities by the readers to ascertain reader satisfaction.

TABLE I RESPONDENTS-COURSE-WISE

S.No.	Course	No. of Male	Percentage	No. of Female	Percentage	Total
1	M.Phil	65	86.67	52	52	117
2	M.Tech	-	-	8	8	8
3	M.B.A	10	13.33	40	40	50
	Total	75	100.00	100	100	175

Out of the 175 respondents selected for study, 75 are male and 100 are Female students. To give equal representation to all sections of the students, respondents are selected both from M.Phil and PG engineering classes as well as from M.B.A students. The respondents include both boys and

**IV. METHODOLOGY**

For data collection, primary questionnaire method was used. In order to corroborate the findings arrived at from the questionnaire was also used on a selective basis.

Data was collected from Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. 175 questionnaires were distributed among the students in M. Phil and Post Graduate Engineering boys and girls and also from M.B.A students. A sampling of 175 students consisting of 75 boys and 100 girls has been selected on the basis of stratified random sampling method. To collect first hand information a structured, close ended mailed questionnaire has been used.

To give equal representation student have been selected both from under M.Phil and Post Graduate Engineering boys and girls and also from M.B.A students as given below:

Students	Number of Male	Number of Female	Total
M.Phil	65	52	117
M.Tech / M.E.,	-	08	08
M.B.A	10	40	50
Total	75	100	175

**A. Limitations of the Study**

The study is entirely based on the respondents drawn from the students of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Tirunelveli. Since the units of study were selected at stratified random and do not include factors like academic achievements and intelligence. Hence the outcome of the study cannot be generalized.

**V. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

A sample of 175 students has been selected on the basis of stratified random sampling method.

girls. The sample covers about 11% of the population of 3400 students.

A questionnaire was distributed to all the respondents to understand about the different purpose for which the respondents visit library. From the responses it was learned that students visit library for different purposes.

TABLE II PURPOSE OF LIBRARY VISIT

S.No.	Purpose of visit	No. of Male	Percentage	No. of Female	Percentage	Total
1	To refer to general books	42	56	45	45	88
2	Technical books	15	20	18	18	34
3	Science books	3	4	7	7	9
4	To refer to journals	9	12	20	20	28
5	To study to newspapers	6	8	10	10	16
	Total	75	100	100	100	175

It is evident from table II that the majority of the respondents visit library for the purpose of referring to general books. Next, students visit library to refer to technical books. The third categories of students come to library to refer to journals connected with their subjects, science books are very rarely by the engineering students.

Out of 175 student respondents only 16 students have stated that they go to library mainly to read news papers.

The purpose of visits by the reader will not serve any purpose unless it is clear as to how long do they stay in the library. Their responses in this regard are given in table III.

TABLE III TIME SPENT IN THE UNIVERSITY

S. No.	Time spent	M. Phil	M.Tech.	M.B.A	Total	Percentage
1	Less than an hour	85	1	29	115	66
2	One hour	20	3	11	34	19
3	Two to three hours	7	2	10	19	11
4	More than three hours	5	2	-	7	4
	Total	117	8	50	175	100

Table III shows that hardly 1% of the respondents stay in the library for more than three hours. On enquiry, it is reliably learned that few M.Phil students stay in the library for more than three hours during the last semester and concentrate on the preparation of their final project. The

majorities of the M.Phil students visit the library during library hours and stays for 50 to 60 minutes and push off to next class during next period.

Regarding the attitude of the library staff, different type of users hold different views.

TABLE IV ATTITUDE OF THE LIBRARY STAFF

S.No.	Opinion	M.Phil	M.Tech.	M.B.A	Total
1	Friendly	90	5	45	140
2	Not friendly	27	3	5	35
		117	8	50	175

Out of the respondents of 175 students 140 persons have stated that the library staff are friendly and only about 35

respondents stated that library staff are harsh, strict and are not friendly.

## VI. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

The University library is equipped with about 98,476 books and about 193 National, International level journals.

The studies on library readers identify how many people used the library and how many books have been borrowed and the purpose of their visit. The study reveals that about 88 respondents visited library to refer to general books. About 16 respondents have utilized the library to study news papers. The study also revealed that majority of the visitors stay in the library for less than an hour. Research scholars use the library for more than 2 to 3 hours for preparing for their dissertation. Students also felt that the numbers of library cards given are not enough so it is suggested to give more cards. Library period should be included in the timetable so as to increase the reading habits among students.

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