

Assessing Reading Habits of Pre-Service Teachers in this Electronic Era

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Abstract: The author conducted an online survey research in order to find out the reading habit of pre-service teachers. The research survey tool was distributed to the students of 2014-15 batch. The finding of the study shows that the majority of the future teachers would like to read books but they are not doing it regularly. The pre-service teachers asked to rate themselves about their Level of Reading during the last one year, it was observed that 41% read below 5 books and 41% read 5-20 books. Majority of the pre-service teachers had an opinion that they have not received any help from teachers in selecting books for reading.

Keywords: Library, Pre-Service Teachers, Reading Habits

I. INTRODUCTION

The reading habits of pre-service teachers have been a topic for academic research for a very long period. On the occasion of Teachers' Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed teachers and students at the massive Manshaw Auditorium in New Delhi on Sept 5th 2014. Hon'ble Prime Minister asked the students to bring out their inner curiosity and maintain it throughout their lives. He said to get inspiration and work towards building a better future, children should look towards books and develop a reading habit.

The empirical evidence collected by the author through literature review reveals that there is a decrease in reading habits among the pre-service teachers. Applegate, & Applegate in 2004 observed that majority of the pre-service teachers are not avid readers themselves and this lack of engagement may pass on to their students. Reading is the foundation of all learning. To teach effectively, teachers must be first to be a reader and writers themselves. The research conducted by researcher reveals that the pre-service teachers are not enthusiastic readers. Draper, Barksdale-Ladd & Radencich, (2000) in their research found that students whose greatest enjoyment came from reading for information had sometimes rated themselves as low reading for Pleasure despite sometimes being avid readers of books,

Oguz, Yıldız, & Hayirsever, 2009 conducted a study which revealed that about 45% of the future teachers hardly ever read or did not read at all. The fact that the mostly uttered excuse by the future teachers for not reading books more is "lack of time (56,6%)" is thought provoking.

Applegate et al, 2014 in their research identified that only 46.6% of surveyed students could be classified as Enthusiastic readers, and only 5.7% could be classified as Engaged and Avid readers. The authors investigated the

reading attitudes of college students, particularly those aspiring to be teachers, and found that 48.9% of teachers will be called on to inspire their students with a love of reading that they do not have.

Kennedy, (2014) conducted a research through the use of the Children's Literature Student Survey, Checkpoint Survey, and focus groups, examined the reading habits and attitudes of students who are enrolled in the teacher education program at a university in Pennsylvania. Results indicated that participants were not enthusiastic readers despite reporting overall positive feelings about their early elementary reading experiences

II. OUR EXPERIENCE IN TEACHER PREPARATION

But what if a significant number of student teachers have no love for reading Books? As a librarian from a college of Education it was my experience that the future teachers very much interested in playing games, listening music and forwarding jokes in their mobiles. By compulsion they are taking books on academic purpose from the library only to be photocopied. This photocopied material they will refer during the exam time. The students were not even showing an interest to refer other reference books in the library. We must emphasize to motivate all the students to read more books not only for academic purpose but for reading for pleasure too. The author realized that those who can't read may not be able to encourage the students in future. The author used a modified survey tool which is based on Applegate & Applegate in 2004 and Nathanson, Pruslow, & Levitt, (2008) for conducting this research.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

The link of the online tool was distributed to 90 students who are having valid email IDs. The researcher received 29 responses. 83% of respondents were females and rest males. The 55% of student teachers were post graduates and 45% were graduates. The data was collected and analyzed using Microsoft Excel.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Reading Activity during the Summer Vacation:

Students were asked to respond to the reading activity undertaken by them during the summer vacation.

The 21% respondents reported that they only read newspapers and magazines. 21% completed one book and

45% completed several books. The study shows that majority of the future teachers would like to read books. The researcher observed that students are not issuing reference books from the library may they enjoy light reading books like fiction, novels etc which the library is lacking.

4.2 Enjoyment associated with reading:

When students were asked to place themselves in general as a reader how much enjoyment they are associated with reading, 62% of respondents like reading but not doing it regularly 28% of pre-service teachers placed them as enthusiastic readers where as only 3% said that they read wide variety of reading materials and they placed them in the category of avid readers.

4.3 Impact of school instruction on their reading Habits:

Pre-service teachers were asked to rate in 5 point scale where 1 is no emphasis and 5 is for great deal of emphasis on the instruction they received in schools which motivated them or cultivated their reading habits

4.3.1 : 34 % respondents give some emphasis on school instruction on what they read 31% provide considerable emphasis and 14 % provide a great deal of emphasis on school instruction about remembering what they read during these years.

4.3.2 : 54% respondents agree that school instruction somewhat emphasized for interpreting what they read. whereas only 3 % agreed that school instruction played a great deal in interpreting the data which they read. Only 7% respondents said that schools were allowed them to share the matter they read with teachers and friends

4.3.3 When the pre-service teachers were asked to rate their reading habits in elementary school 45% responded positive and 45% as negative and others were neutral

4.3.4 The student teachers were asked whether they identified their favorite authors 52% replied that they identified their favorite reader and 48 % still has to identify the favorites author.

4.4 Experience of Reading from Home:

86% respondents agree that the experience of reading differs from reading in the college library. This may be the reason why students are not interested in the college Library. The Library in which the research working observed that college uses library as a multipurpose room. Sometimes few classes are conducted by the teachers, lesson guidance are provided, in few occasions, library is used for refreshments to be provided to guests and participants who came to participate in various events organized by the college.

Majority of the pre-service teachers had an opinion that they have not received any help from teachers in selecting books for reading. This might be one of the reason of decreasing reading habits in colleges today. only 45% agreed that the teachers shared about the reading materials they read. only 41 % student teachers have positive experience about reading during their college time

4.5 Type of material read:

The respondents were asked to respond on which readi-

ng material they like the most. 87 % like to read novels and 28% liked poems and only 7% liked to read biographies. 75% spent around 60% in a day for reading various reading materials

The pre-service teachers asked to rate themselves self about their Level of Reading during the last one year, it was observed that 41% read below 5 books and 41% read 5-20 books. Only 7 % read more than 20 books. The remaining 11% stated that they haven't consulted a single books.

4.6 Regularity in updating current knowledge:

The pre-service teachers responded to regularity about their reading magazines and newspapers, 90% of respondents admitted that they are not reading magazines regularly where as 55% read newspaper regularly and 45% not reading newspapers regularly. As a teacher it is very import to the current affairs and the teacher should share this knowledge or incorporate it while teaching. It was also revealed from the survey that majority of the respondents are not owning a bookshelf

V. SUGGESTIONS

1. College library should acquire books and other reading materials in all categories of documents
2. Student teachers should be motivated to reading
3. The Library should arrange seminars and conference on themes like reading habits, effective use of library etc
4. Authors can be invited to the college for a talk about their latest publication
5. Book review competition should be organized in the college.

VI. CONCLUSION

If teachers are open to reading wide variety of reading materials they will surely be able to give something to their students and students will carry the same spirit and will be successful in life.

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