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Newspaper Reading Habits of University Students: A Case Study of Chaudhary Charan Singh University, India

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Introduction

Newspapers help to improve reading habits, knowledge, and awareness. They can be part of good study habits for students in any area of specialization. India is a developing country with many ethnic communities who wish to live together. Efforts to solve cultural adaptation problems should be multi-dimensional and long term. Reading and library use habits have an important role in building the multicultural structure in a country. According to Stadler (1980), reading;

- Will develop the source of word of children in both mother language and householder language.
- Will contribute the thinking in both languages.
- Will raise the communication in both languages.
- Will help the children to learn the rules of behaviour and life style of householder country.

Library use can have these functions in cultural adaptation:

- To develop the intercultural understanding and relationships.
- To facilitate the intercultural passing.
- To increase the cultural diversity.
- To provide social integration.

- To give an educational support to language development. (Mylopoulos 1985)

Background on the University

Chaudhary Charan Singh University (formerly, Meerut University) was established in 1966, to cater to the needs of higher education in Western Uttar Pradesh. The University celebrated its silver jubilee in 1991 and now it is one of the premier educational institutions of the country. It has a vast campus outside the city in a pollution-free environment which sprawls over 219 acres of land with vast playgrounds and experimental fields, botanical garden, rose garden with lifesize statue of the late Prime Minister Ch. Charan Singh, gymnasium, indoor stadium, well equipped library, administrative block, spacious auditorium, guest house, community centre and medical centre. The various teaching departments under different faculties are housed in spacious buildings and have well equipped laboratories. It was the first University in the country to introduce the M.Phil. Programme. A distinct feature of the academic programme is the semester system and continuous evaluation of the students through quizzes, tests, and seminars.

About the Library

The University library is housed in a four storied modular pattern building in close proximity to the teaching departments. It has more than one lakh books, 35,000 bound volumes of journals and more than 7900 theses on its shelves. Nearly 4000 documents in the form of books, theses and dissertations are added every year. It also subscribes to about 250 National and International journals in various disciplines, and 17 newspapers. The library invests Rs 50 lakh per annum on the acquisition of reading materials.

Library membership is open to students, scholars and faculty members of the university and for the teaching staff of the colleges affiliated to the University. Reference and Bibliographic services have been specially planned to meet the growing requirements of library members. Reprographic facility is also provided to the members. Online internet access on large number of terminals is available free to the faculty and on payment to the students/scholars of the university.

The library remains open throughout the year except on 11 closed days. It observes working hours from 8.00 AM to 12.00 Night on all working days and from 8.00 AM to 8.00 PM on holidays.

Review of the Literature

Begum and Ramesh (1991) investigated factors inhibiting public library use. They analyzed responses gathered from the users of the central library, Mysore, India. Somsong (1999) looked at reading habit promotion in ASEAN libraries. Factors limiting reading habits were discussed, along with the role of local institutes or organizations in helping libraries promote reading. Bndaka (2007) explored the use of newspaper articles to develop students' reading skills in senior high school. Arulraj and Viji (2008) found that more male staff members at a professional college than female.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to discover:

- The first language of the students.

- The language in which mostly students read newspapers.
- How much time is spent reading newspapers.
- Sources of newspapers.
- Which newspapers are read most by students.
- Which sections of newspapers are read most by students.
- The types of news read.

Methodology

A questionnaire and personal interviews were used for data collection. A total of 350 questionnaires were administered and 341 filled in questionnaires were obtained from the users.

A major objective for the study was to included all primary clientele. The user populations were defined as, P.G. students, M. Phil students and Research scholars.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The collected data are organized and tabulated by using statistical method, table and percentage. The data analyses are given below:

Table 1: Size of the Sample

S. N.	Users	Total Questionnaire Distributed	Total Questionnaire Received	Sample Population in percentage (%)
1	P.G Students	200	194	56.89
2	M. Phil. Students	100	98	28.74
3	Research Scholars	50	49	14.37
Total		350	341	100

The table shows that the size of distribution and received questionnaire from the students. Total numbers of questionnaire distributed among PG students 200, M.Phil students 100, and Research scholar 50. Out of these the responses from the respondents are PG students 194 (56.89%), M.Phil students 98 (28.74%), and research scholar 49 (14.37%) from the total sample.

Table 2: First language of users

S.N.	Language	P.G Students	M.Phil Students	Research Scholars	Average % of Users
		Responses (%)	Responses (%)	Responses (%)	
1	Hindi	185 (95.36)	95 (96.94)	48 (97.96)	96.75
2	Urdu	9 (4.64)	3 (3.06)	1 (2.04)	3.25
Total		194 (100)	98 (100)	49 (100)	100

The first language of nearly all respondents is Hindi.

Table 3: Preferred languages

S.N.	Language	P.G Students	M.Phil. Students	Research Scholars	Average % of

		Responses (%)	Responses (%)	Responses (%)	Users
1	English	130 (67.01)	63 (64.28)	35 (71.42)	67.57
2	Hindi	194 (100)	96 (97.95)	45 (91.83)	96.61
3	Urdu	9 (4.63)	3 (3.06)	1 (2.04)	3.25

Multiple responses allowed

The table shows that average 96.61% of students use Hindi for newspaper reading, whereas 67.57% use English, and 3.25% students use Urdu.

Table 4: Time spent reading Newspapers

S.N.	Time Spent	P.G Students	M. Phil. Students	Research Scholars	Average % of Users
		Responses (%)	Responses (%)	Responses (%)	
1.	Less than one hour	39 (20.10)	19 (19.38)	13 (26.53)	22.00
2.	1 to 2 hours	134 (69.08)	61 (62.25)	22 (44.90)	58.75
3.	More than 2 hours	21 (10.82)	18 (18.37)	14 (28.57)	19.25
Total		194 (100)	98 (100)	49 (100)	100

The table shows that nearly 60 percent of students spend 1-2 hours daily reading newspapers..

Table 5: Sources of Newspapers

S.N.	Sources	P.G. Students	M.Phil. Students	Research Scholars	Average % of Users
		Responses (%)	Responses (%)	Responses (%)	
1.	Individual Subscription	113 (58.25)	63 (64.28)	41 (83.67)	68.73
2.	Library	64 (32.99)	31 (31.64)	6 (12.25)	25.63
3.	Hostel	17 (8.76)	4 (4.08)	2 (4.08)	5.64
Total		194 (100)	98 (100)	49 (100)	100

Individual subscriptions are the most common source of newspapers for students.

Table 6: Read Newspaper Daily

S.N.	Newspaper	P.G Students	M. Phil. Students	Research Scholars	Average % of Users
		Responses (%)	Responses (%)	Responses (%)	
1	The Times of India	129 (6.49)	61 (62.55)	34 (69.38)	66.14
2	Hindustan Times	117 (60.30)	27 (27.55)	22 (44.89)	44.25
3	The Hindu	30 (15.46)	13 (13.26)	11 (22.44)	17.05
4	The Indian Express	9 (4.63)	10 (10.20)	10 (20.40)	17.74

5	Dainik Jagran	189 (97.42)	91 (92.85)	44 (89.79)	93.35
6	Amar Ujala	122 (62.88)	61 (62.24)	30 (61.22)	62.11
7	Hindustan (Hindi)	155 (59.28)	63 (64.28)	32 (65.30)	62.95
8	Navbharat Times	21 (10.82)	13 (13.26)	9 (18.36)	14.14
9	Others	15 (7.73)	9 (9.18)	8 (16.32)	11.07

Multiple responses allowed

Nearly all users read Dainik Jagran, while two-thirds read the Times of India..

Table 7: Which Sections of Newspaper Do You Like Most?

S.N.	Newspaper Section	P.G Students	M.Phil. Students	Research Scholars	Average % of Users
		Responses (%)	Responses (%)	Responses (%)	
1	Sensational news	150 (77.31)	69 (70.40)	17 (34.69)	60.80
2	Editorial	153 (78.86)	63 (64.28)	46 (93.87)	79.00
3	Advertisement	27 (13.91)	12 (12.24)	7 (14.28)	13.48
4	Letter to editors	36 (18.55)	11 (11.22)	4 (8.16)	12.64
5	Politics	161 (82.98)	58 (59.18)	37 (75.51)	72.55
6	Sport	174 (89.69)	79 (80.61)	24 (48.97)	73.09
7	Cinema news	56 (28.86)	23 (23.46)	11 (22.44)	24.92

Multiple responses allowed

About three-quarters of respondents prefer the editorial, sports, and politics sections of the newspaper.

Table 8: Motives for Reading of Newspapers

S.N.	Motive	P.G Student	M.Phil. Students	Research Scholars	Average % of Users
		Responses (%)	Responses (%)	Responses (%)	
1.	To get information	119 (61.34)	57 (58.16)	29 (59.18)	59.56
2	To improve my general knowledge	69 (35.57)	34 (34.69)	17 (34.69)	34.98
3	It is my hobby	6 (3.09)	7 (7.15)	3 (6.13)	5.46
Total		194 (100)	98 (100)	49 (100)	100

The table shows that a majority read newspapers for information, while more than one-third do so toimprove general knowledge.

Findings

- The majority of students read newspapers in Hindi or English language.

- The majority of time spent reading newspapers is one to two hours daily.
- The majority of the students read newspapers to get information and improve their general knowledge.
- The main sources of newspapers are individual subscription, followed by the university library and student hostels.
- The most popular Hindi and English newspapers among the university students are Danik Jagran and The Times of India.
- Students prefer to read editorial sections, followed by sports and politics..

Conclusion and Recommendations

Library users read newspaper to get the latest information about what is happening around. Newspapers are responsible for creating and generating reading habits among university students. Newspapers are essential for university students, but due to the enormous explosion of information published in the form of newspapers in different languages in particular, it is impossible for libraries to subscribe all that are published at the national and international levels. Under these circumstances the best way of serving the users is by proper display of newspapers and notifying users about new information related to education. In library there should be adequate newspapers to accelerate reading habits. This study helps librarians understand the importance of newspapers and improve the services related to newspapers.

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