

Reading Habit among the Students of Higher Education: An Evaluative Study Based on South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Reading is indispensable to gain the maturity of Human's knowledge and this makes one perfect in Knowledge. In particular, the habits of reading as a major factor influence the level of knowledge in students. It is of paramount importance to the students of a university. Because, the habit of reading plays a major role in the progress of the community, academics achievements of the students, and intellectualism. Accordingly, the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka has a main library and faculty libraries to encourage the reading habits of the students, and a huge number of books are purchased by the University every year. Further, to enhance the reading habits of the students, the university is also conducting awareness programmes, distributing free Wi-Fi, and hosting exhibitions. However, the fact that students' reading habits and use of available resources to its full potential have not reached an acceptable level was identified as a point of opinion among the researchers. In this background, a study was carried out to find the situation of reading habits of the third-year students of the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language at the university and the factors that prevent the reading. Data were obtained with distributing a questionnaire from 184 students as a study sample out of 372 students who continued their studies in the academic year 2019/2020. Furthermore, an interview was held with the involvement of ten selected participants. The data were analyzed with the help of SPSS 24.0 software and the results were explained through the graphs. In addition to these, secondary data were such as books, thesis, magazines, and web pages were used. According to the survey, students' reading habits were found to be in an acceptable level and the increased workload was perceived to be a barrier to the task of reading and the impact of the headrace is noticeable among the female students. This is due to the heavy home tutorials provided by the lecturers and the burden of household chores married female students faced.

Key words: Reading Habit, Higher Education Students, Evaluative Study, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Library