

**READING HABITS AND USE OF PUBLIC LIBRARY RESOURCES BY URBAN WOMEN IN HUBLI-DHARWAD CITY: A STUDY**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Reading is a way to get better knowledge of the necessary information and insights for a person to understand the world. Women need to read because reading gives them a way to develop their life and to keep abreast of the changing times. The reading habit and library use are closely interlinked. Public library as a people's university has to play an important role in the promotion of reading habits of women. Present study tries to explore the major trends in reading habits of women and utilization of public library resources in Hubli-Dharwad city. The study reveals that 65 (81.25%) of the respondents make use of the library; 58 (89.23%) of the respondent's purpose of visiting the library is to borrow books. Location of the library at a long distance (36.25%) and inadequate reading materials (16.25%) are the main barriers in making use of the library.*

**Key words:** Reading habits, Information seeking behaviour, Public libraries, Information Communication Technology

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Reading plays an essential role in our lives. Reading transmits the collective wisdom of our ancestors, improves social skills, increase self-knowledge, develops creativity, articulates emotions that help us cope with them and assists in identity formation. The cognitive psychologists found that ability to explain people's behaviour in terms of their thoughts, feelings, beliefs and desires (Dewan, 2016, p.311). The influence of gender is a major factor in reading habits. Women dedicate much of the considerable leisure time on reading as compared to men (Ladipo & Gbotosho, 2015, p.3). It is not only a source of entertainment but also fulfils a social function; it is a prerequisite and a condition for their social interaction in a

modern world, the basis for cultured conversation and a recurrent theme in their correspondence. Their specific reading habits reflect a secular outlook in the promotion of personal development in particular and social progress in general. For this reason reading is the important act in education process. The concept of independent learning brings the importance of library in the society. The public library being a social institution justifies the information requirements of its users. All citizens must be able to find and use information. Its resources are diversified in nature and freely accessible by all members of the community (Goldberg, 2008, p.3).

**2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Moshin AliKhan (2001)** states that women's education brings more awareness towards the world among the women. Educated mothers become more knowledgeable and vigilant enhancing their ability to nurture and bring up children in a better way. There is a positive correlation between women literacy rate

and life expectancy. **Tella & Akande (2007)** assert that the ability to read is at the heart of self-education and lifelong learning and that it is an art capable of transforming life and society. **Kate (2013)** examines existing studies and theories about gender differences in the reading preferences of children, adolescents, and

adults. The result indicated that women employ a higher variety of methods for choosing books to read. They prefer for print reading materials rather than digital reading materials. **Mabawonku (2006)**

**Dewan (2016)** explains that libraries play a critical role in the promotion of reading. No institutions are better situated than libraries to undertake this responsibility. **Lindell (2009)** describes that library extension service "Reading in the Home" program greatly increased reading opportunities and

explains that most of the women's information needs are related to governance, education, religion, family and domestic matters.

motivations among South Dakota farm women. **Niegaard (2011)** studies the certain innovative changes in two new Danish public libraries, in Aarhus and Hjørring. Author opines that library construction is a vital element in the municipality's strategy for branding the Aarhus as a knowledge-based city.

### 3. NEED OF THE STUDY

Reading is a way to get better knowledge of the necessary information. Hubli-Dharwad is the second-largest city in Karnataka after Bengaluru capital of the state. Dharwad is the centre of higher education, the city of Hubballi, is the commercial centre and business hub of North Karnataka (HubliDharwadMunicipalCorporation [HDMC], 2017, para.1). The women of

Hubli-Dharwad city are well-informed and ready to accept the challenges in familial and social roles through their reading habits which are influenced by public library resources and services. Therefore it was felt necessary to undertake the study "Reading Habits and Use of Public Library Resources by Urban Women in Hubli-Dharwad city: A study".

### 4. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study is confined to reading habits and use of public library resources by women in Hubli – Dharwad city which includes housewives, women working in

**Sample design:** The total population of females' in Hubli-Dharwad city is 5, 21,749 (census, 2011). One percent of female population i.e. 5000 is considered as total population for the study. The finite population correction (FPC) factor is used to adjust the standard

government/private institutions and an entrepreneurs. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire based on the objectives of the study.

error of a sample mean when sampling is done without replacement and the sample size is at least five percent of the population. Sample size determinate using the finite population correction factor computed as in Equation (wps.pearsoned.co.uk, 2016, p.3)

$$n = \frac{n_0 N}{n_0 + (N-1)}$$

N = Population size, n = Sample size, n<sub>0</sub> = Mean value, Z = Margin of error, e = Sampling error, p = Proportion

Using the fpc factor in Equation for the proportion, with N = 5000, e = 0.07, p = 0.15, n<sub>0</sub> = 99.96 (a sample of 100), Z = 1.96 (for 95% confidence),

$$n = \frac{(99.96)(5,000)}{99.96 + (5,000 - 1)} = 98.02$$

Thus, n = 99

The statistically needed sample size rounded up for 100 was selected by means of simple random sampling, to collect the

**Statistical tools:** Data were then subjected to statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences

data. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed and 80 of them were received back with the response rate of 80 per cent. (IBM SPSS). Scheffe Test in One Way ANOVA was used to compare the data at confidence level of 95 per cent.

## 5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of study are:

1. To know the reading habits of women in Hubli – Dharwad city.
2. To identify the use pattern of various sources of information by the women.
3. Ascertain the impact of information communication

technology on reading habits of urban women.

4. Assess the awareness and utilization of public library resources and services by women
5. To provide suggestions for the improvement of public library services for urban women.

## 6. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Hypotheses of the study are;

1. Novels are the most preferred reading materials by the respondents
2. Information Communication Technology has impact on

reading habits of the respondents

3. The awareness and use of public library resources and services by the respondents is very less.

## 7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The information or data given by the respondents is systematically analyzed

and presented in the successive paragraphs.

### 7.1 Age and marital status

The survey revealed that majority i.e. 32 (40%) of the urban women belong to the age group of 30-35 years followed by 28 (35%) to the age group of 40 and above years, 12 (15%) to the age group of

25-30 years and 8 (10%) to the age group of 35 – 40 years. 54(67.5%) of the respondents are married and 26 (32.5%) are unmarried.

### 7.2 Preferred language

Majority of the respondents i.e. 62 (77.5%) preferred to read in Kannada language, followed by 42 (52.5%)

respondents read in English and 10 (12.5%) of the respondents read in Hindi.

### 7.3 Time spent on reading in a day

The study found that 24 (30%) of the respondents read three hours and above followed by 20 (25%) respondents read for two hours, 20 (25%) of the

respondents are not sure about time spent on reading and 16 (20%) of the respondents spend at least one hour on reading in a day.

## 7.4 Purpose of reading

**Table –1: Purpose of reading**

1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree 3-Uncertain, 4-Disagree, 5-Strongly Disagree

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Reading as a hobby	48 (60)	18 (22.5)	6 (7.5)	4(5)	6(7.5)
Reading for learning	44 (55)	40(50)	00(00)	16(20)	6(7.5)
Reading to update personal knowledge	60 (75)	22 (27.5)	00 (00)	6 (7.5)	2 (2.5)
Reading for competitive examinations	20 (25)	14 (17.5)	6 (7.5)	20 (25)	20 (25)
Reading for research work	10 (12.5)	14 (17.5)	10 (12.5)	18(22.5)	28(35)
Reading to improve communication skills	28 (35)	24 (30)	8 (10)	2 (2.5)	18 (22.5)
Reading to spend leisure time	22 (27.5)	30 (37.5)	10 (12.5)	8 (10)	10 (12.5)
Reading to critique texts	6 (7.5)	12 (15)	12 (15)	22 (27.5)	28 (35)
Reading for writing work	14 (17.5)	14 (17.5)	8 (10)	18 (22.5)	26 (32.5)
Other purposes	8 (10)	00 (00)	4 (5)	32 (40)	36 (45)
ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	251.400	9	27.933	14.957	.000
Within Groups	728.350	390	1.868		
Total	979.750	399			
Scheffe Test					
Groups	1	2	3	4	5
Significance	.515	.057	.144	.057	.263

\*Values given in the parenthesis indicates percentages \*Df-Difference \* Sig- Significance

\*F- F Value/F Ratio represents variance between the mean values of two groups

Table 1 shows the purpose of reading of urban women. The study found that 60 (75%) of the respondents strongly agree that they read to update their personal knowledge, 48 (60%) of the respondents read for the reason that reading is their hobby and 44 (55%) of the respondents read for learning. From the

analysis it is found that F ratio (14.957) and significant value (.000) of the statements given by the respondents differ at one per cent level of significance. By the Post Hoc test (.515) it is found that the main purpose of reading of urban women is to update their personal knowledge.

## 7.5 Preferred types of literature

**Table –2: Preferred types of literature**

1- Always, 2- Often, 3- Sometime, 4- Rarely, 5- Never

Types of literature	1	2	3	4	5
Novels	18 (22.5)	20 (25)	10 (12.5)	10 (12.5)	6 (7.5)
Religious books	14 (17.5)	16 (20)	24(30)	12 (15)	14 (17.5)
Poetry	2 (2.5)	8 (10)	18 (22.5)	16 (20)	36 (45)
Short stories	16 (20)	28 (35)	8 (10)	8 (10)	22 (27.5)
Biographies	14 (17.5)	14 (17.5)	22 (27.5)	14 (17.5)	16 (20)

Adventure stories	14 (17.5)	20 (25)	14 (17.5)	11(13.75)	24 (30)
Comics	20 (25)	14(17.5)	19 (23.75)	6 (7.5)	24 (30)
Dramas	8 (10)	12 (15)	20 (25)	8 (10)	32 (40)
Travel guides	10 (12.5)	15 (18.75)	14 (17.5)	20 (25)	24 (30)
Other books	15 (18.75)	12 (15)	10 (12.5)	3 (7.5)	46 (57.5)
<b>ANOVA</b>					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	101.823	9	11.314	5.588	.000
Within Groups	789.575	390	2.025		
Total	891.398	399			
<b>Scheffe Test</b>					
Groups	1	2			
Significance	.069	.220			

\*Values given in the parenthesis indicates percentages \*Df-Difference \* Sig- Significance  
 \*F- F Value/F Ratio represents variance between the mean values of two groups

Table 2 reveals that types of reading materials used by urban women. In the analysis other types of reading materials are compared with the novels to identify the preferred types of reading materials by the respondents. From the analysis of F ratio (5.588) it is found that there is a significant (.000) difference between the said groups. By the Post Hoc

test (.220) it is found that all types of information sources are equally preferred by urban women as the use of a particular source of information depends on their purpose of reading. Hence, the first hypothesis that “novels are the most preferred reading materials by the respondents” is rejected.

**7.6 Impact of ICT on reading habits**

**Table – 3: Impact of ICT on reading habits**

1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree 3-Uncertain, 4-Disagree, 5-Strongly Disagree

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Save the time in search of information	30 (37.5)	14 (17.5)	4 (5)	4 (5)	18(22.5)
Get all the needed information at one place	20 (25)	20 (25)	6 (7.5)	6 (7.5)	18(22.5)
Download and store more reading materials	26(32.5)	14(17.5)	4(5)	14(17.5)	22(27.5)
Read more e-resources any time of the day	24(30)	12(15)	6(7.5)	12(15)	24(30)
Get the resources through online libraries	18(22.5)	12(15)	6(7.5)	10(12.5)	34(42.5)
Accessing and sharing of e-resources is easy	38(47.5)	18(22.5)	2(2.5)	8(10)	34(42.5)
<b>ANOVA</b>					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	284.783	5	56.957	28.576	.000
Within Groups	466.400	234	1.993		
Total	751.183	239			
<b>Scheffe Test</b>					
Groups	1	2			
Significance	1.000	.179			

\*ICT-Information Communication Technology \* Sig- Significance \* Df-Difference  
 \*Values given in the parenthesis indicates percentages \*F- F Value/F Ratio represents variance between the mean values of two groups

Table 3 depicts that the impact of ICT on reading habits of urban women. The study found that 38 (47.5%) of the respondents strongly agree that electronic resources are easy to access and share. The statement (variable) “accessing and sharing of e-resources is easy” is found to be significantly different with all other statements. From the analysis of variance the mean values (28.576) of the statements

given by the respondents differ at one per cent level of significance (.000). By Post Hoc test (1.000) it is found that ICT has impact on the reading habits of urban women as the respondents felt that accessing and sharing of e-resources is easier. Hence, the second hypothesis that “ICT has impact on reading habit of the respondents” is accepted.

**7.7 Participation of urban women in programs conducted by the public library**

Majority of the respondents i.e. 43 (53.75%) do not participate in any programs conducted by the public library, followed by 34 (42.5%) respondents

participate in book exhibitions, and only 6 (7.5%) of the respondents participate in library orientation programs.

**7.8 Expectation of special services for women from the public library**

The respondents were asked about expectation of special services for women from the public library. 56 (70%) of the respondents felt they need special services but 24 (30%) of the respondents felt that they don't need the same. 22(27.5%) of the

respondents expect Women's Info-link service to full extent, 20(25%) of the respondents felt they need Internet service and 28(35%) of the respondents expect Information service on Government schemes for women.

**7.9 Influence of public library on lifestyle**

**Table – 4: Influence of public library on lifestyle**  
 1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree 3-Uncertain, 4-Disagree, 5-Strongly Disagree

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Library is a pleasant place to visit and read	40(50)	10(12.5)	6(7.5)	4(5)	0(00)
Library resource meets information needs of the users	30(37.5)	20(25)	10(12.5)	8(10)	00(00)
Library facilitates informal learning	25(31.25)	18(22.5)	11(13.25)	20(25)	6(7.5)
Library supports children's education	18(22.5)	22(27.5)	10(12.5)	22(27.5)	8(10)
Library enhances knowledge of local culture and arts	20(25)	24(30)	10(12.5)	18(22.5)	8(10)
Library makes users' involvement in the community activities	20(25)	16(20)	28(35)	14(17.5)	22(27.5)
Library resources enable users as an entrepreneur	18(22.5)	12(15)	7(8.75)	12(15)	36(45)
Library helps the users to carry out job tasks and achieve goals	24(30)	10(12.5)	9(11.25)	12(15)	32(40)

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	10.738	7	1.534	.877	.525
Within Groups	545.450	312	1.748		
Total	556.188	319			
Scheffe Test					
Groups	1	2			
Significance	2.000	.358			

\*Values given in the parenthesis indicates percentages \*Df-Difference \* Sig- Significance

\*F- F Value/F Ratio represents variance between the mean values of two groups

Table 4 depicts that the influence of public library on lifestyle of urban women. The data reveals that 40(50%) of the respondents strongly agree that library is a pleasant place to visit and read. It is observed from the analysis that there is an insignificant difference between sub set of first three statements (variables) compared with other statements given by the respondents. Analysis of variance the

mean values (.877) of the statements given by the respondents differ at five per cent level of significance (.525). By Post Hoc test (.358) it is found that the respondents are not aware of public library services. Hence, the third hypothesis that “awareness and use of public library resources and services by urban women is very less” is accepted.

### 7.10 Barriers faced by the urban women in making use of the library

29 (36.25%) of the respondents opine that library is located far away from their place, followed by 22 (27.5%) respondents express that there is no barriers in making use of the library, 13

(16.25%) of the respondents said that library has inadequate reading materials and 9 (11.25%) of the respondents feel that lack of time to visit the library.

## 8. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study are;

1. The study reveals that majority of the respondents i.e.40 (50%) are house wives, followed by 16 (20%) have their own business, 14 (17.5%) are working in the private institutions and 8 (10%) are working in the government institutions and 64 (80%) of the urban women have personal book collection at their home.
2. From the survey it is found that majority of the respondents i.e. 62 (77.5%) prefer to read in Kannada language and 69 (86.25%) of the respondents borrow books from the public library.
3. The study explores that 24 (30%) of the respondents read three hours and above because reading gives them a way to develop their life and to keep abreast of the changing times.
4. It can be observed that 43 (53.75%) of the respondents do not participate in any programs conducted by the public library, 34 (42.5%) of the respondents participate in book exhibitions, and only 6 (7.5%) of the respondents participate in library orientation programs.

5. The data reveals that 56 (70%) of the respondents expect special services for women from the public library and about 28(35%) of the respondents expect information service on Government Schemes for women to full extent, 22(27.5%) of the respondents expect Women's Info-link service and 20(25%) of the respondents expect Internet service in the library.
6. Majority of the respondents i.e.29 (36.25%) opine that library is located far away from their place and about 22 (27.5%) respondents express that there is no barriers in making use of the library, 13 (16.25%) of the respondents said that library has inadequate reading materials and 9 (11.25%) of the respondents feel that lack of time to visit the library.

## 9. SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of analysis of the study and the opinion given by the respondents, some of the important suggestions have been made, which will

1. Public library authority should take initiation to upgrade the reading materials, services and infrastructure facilities of the library according to the changing needs of the users.
2. Library staff should take more interest in the maintenance of catalogue (OPAC) to locate their required book without any loss of time.
3. Library authority should promote mobile library service regularly which helps to women residing in the long distanced areas in the city.

## 10. CONCLUSION

The nature of self learning among women validates the public library's function of lifelong learning which has a unique role in the society. The findings of the study leads to conclude that women in Hubli-Dharwad city prefer to read all types of information sources to update their personal knowledge. They enjoy reading as much as other activities that involve technologies. The availability of electronic information resources save their time in searching of information. The barriers like location of the library at a long distance, inadequate reading materials and lack of time to visit the library are declining the

help in making effective use of public libraries in enhancing reading habits of women in Hubli-Dharwad city.

4. Public library should collaborate with other government, private educational institutions and women organizations in extending their programs to reach out the women community.
5. Public library should conduct orientation programs, book exhibitions, reading circles, special talks on women related issues to ensure that women as an important stakeholder in the public library system.

influence of public library on the life style of urban women. However public libraries in Hubli-Dharwad city have made a commendable progress in spreading the knowledge by opening good number of branch libraries but they are not satisfying the needs of women community. Hence, women of Hubli-Dharwad city expect some services meant for women from the public library. The library staff should also improve their skills in order to identify the relevant information needs of public library users in the changing environment and promote the use of library resources and services.



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