

CONFERENCE PROCEEDING

Understanding KGI Students' Reading Habits and Attitude

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ABSTRACT

Reading is essential in the process of growth in youth as it improves brain connectivity, increases vocabulary and comprehension, acts as a mental stimulation and so much more. This paper aims to understand the reading habits and attitudes of the students in Kolej GENIUS Insan. The students enrolled in this secondary school have a high intelligence quotient (IQ) compared to their peers in other schools and are described to be gifted and talented students. A questionnaire was designed in a quantitative manner and distributed to the 50 students of Foundation 3 where only 45 responded. The questionnaire analyzed the students' reading habits, preferences and attitudes towards reading. It was revealed that most of the students enjoyed reading especially novels and fiction as they find the activity fun but if given the choice they would much rather watch movies or listen to music. They would usually read to fill up their boredom and some spend time reading as long as 30 minutes to 1 hour while others spend 1 to 2 hours. Most students read to expand their knowledge and brush up their linguistic skills and understand that reading has a positive impact on their academic performances. Some students also faced difficulty in reading as sometimes they lack motivation to read or there was a lack of reading materials around them and while most of them preferred more pictures in the reading materials, others were already fine with how the reading material was. Based on the findings, several recommendations were made to improve the students' reading habits and attitude. Conducting this survey is essential as it helps the lecturers and parents of the students to truly understand the reading habits and reading attitude of the students in KGI and more actions could be taken to benefit their positive attitude towards reading.

Keywords: *reading habits, reading attitude, reading preferences*

INTRODUCTION

As we all know, reading is involved in the development of a person. We were taught to practice reading from a young age and that could influence our mental growth. Reading helps a child's brain to grow and be more active. Research shows that those who have a good reading ability perform better in abstract thinking, general cognition and pattern finding. Medical News Today reports that strong reading skills are a predictor for higher intelligence. In this day and age, people tend to read more on devices rather than the traditional books and printed materials. People who choose to read ebooks do so due to the variety of books they can have access to through just a device. Not only that, ebooks are easier to access and are more environmentally friendly. With that said, many readers still do prefer the traditional printed books. Traditional books offer an experience that is much different from ebooks. Readers are able to absorb more information as they are more likely to focus and be less distracted. Just like everything else, the trends of reading are heavily influenced by social media. Avid readers usually share their opinions on books and recommend books to their audience on social media. Audiences vary from the young to old and that includes

students. This study is made to observe the habits and attitudes of the students of Kolej GENIUS Insan.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative survey research has been used in this study. The participants of this survey were the Foundation 3 students of Kolej GENIUS Insan in 2020. Hence, an online questionnaire was distributed to the 50 students. However, the response rate was 90% as only 45 responses were received. The questionnaire is used as the main instrument in this study. The questionnaire comprises questions based on the reading habits of students, factors that influence the students' reading habits and the students' reading attitude. Some questions required the students to choose the answers provided while other questions required the students to give their own answers. The students were given a week to submit their responses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Enjoyment of Reading

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	40	88.8
No	5	12.2

Table 1 shows the students' enjoyment of reading. 40 (88.8%) respondents enjoy reading while 5 (12.2%) respondents did not. The findings show that most of the respondents actually enjoy reading.

Table 2. Reason for reading

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Fun	21	46.6
Relaxing	11	24.4
General Knowledge	9	20.0
Educational (Exams)	4	8.8
Boring - No	4	8.8
Spare Time	2	4.4

Table 2 shows the reason students read. Surprisingly, 21 (46.6%) respondents read because it is fun and 11 (24.4%) respondents find reading to be relaxing. 9 (20.0%) respondents read to gain general knowledge. Other reasons are for educational purposes and because they had spare time. 4 (8.8%) respondents did not like reading as they find it boring.

Table 3. Something else they would rather do

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Movies/Animes	12	26.6
Music	9	20.0
Games	8	17.7
Exercise	7	15.5
Videos/Youtube	5	11.1
Reading	5	11.1
Sleep	4	8.8
Social Media/Internet	4	8.8
Writing/Assignments	3	6.6
Drawing	2	4.4

Table 3 shows the other activities the students would do instead of reading. 12 (26.6%) respondents would rather watch movies or anime, 9 (20.0%) respondents would listen to music and 8 (17.7) would play games. Other activities include exercising, sleeping, going on social media, doing some writing or drawing. Amazingly, there are still 5 (11.1%) respondents who would still choose to read among other activities.

Table 4. Preference of Reading Material

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Novels/Fiction	34	75.5
Articles/Newspapers	18	40.0
Educational	15	33.3
Comics	11	24.4
Magazines/Social Media	11	24.4

Table 4 shows the students' reading material preferences. 34 (75.5%) respondents prefer reading novels and fiction. It is surprising to find that articles and newspapers are the second most read material as 18 (40.0%) respondents prefer it as their reading material especially at their age. 15 (33.3%) respondents prefer educational reading materials. Other reading materials include comics and magazines or social media posts.

Table 5. Enhancement of Reading Experience

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Pictures	16	35.5
Sufficient	14	31.1
Vocabulary/Complexity	5	11.1
Bigger Fonts	4	8.8
Minimized Texts	3	6.6
Environment	1	2.2
Colour	1	2.2

Table 5 shows what could enhance the students' reading experience. 16 (35.5%) respondents feel that pictures would enhance their reading experience while 14 (31.1%) respondents feel they already enjoy their reading material as it is. 5 (11.1%) respondents would enjoy a wide range of vocabulary and complexity in their reading experience. Other enhancements include bigger fonts, minimized texts, their environment and the colour could enhance their reading experience.

Table 6. Frequency of Reading

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
30 minutes - 1 hour	19	42.2
1 - 2 hours	16	35.5
2 - 3 hours	9	20.0
4 hours and above	7	15.5

Table 6 shows how much time students spend their time on reading. 19 (42.2%) respondents spend about 30 minutes to an hour while 16 (35.5%) respondents spend one to two hours on reading. 9 (20.0%) respondents take as long as two to three hours to read and 7 (15.5%) respondents actually take up to four hours and above to read.

Table 7. When do you read?

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bored	22	46.6
Spare Time	18	40.0
Exams	3	6.6
Before Sleep	1	2.2
Last Option	1	2.2

Table 7 shows when students read. 22 (46.6%) respondents usually read when they are bored, 18 (40.0%) read in their spare time and 3 (6.6%) only read during exams. Others would read before sleeping or as their last option.

Table 8. Why is Reading Important to You

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Knowledge	22	48.8
Linguistic Skills	17	37.7
Creativity/Imagination	9	20.0
Fun/Relaxing	7	15.5
Not Important	1	2.2

Table 8 shows the students' understanding of the importance of reading. 22 (48.8%) respondents say it is to gain knowledge, 17 (37.7%) choose to read to improve their linguistic skills while 9 (20.0%) respondents say it encourages them to be creative and imaginative. Other respondents find reading to be fun and relaxing or even not important.

Table 9. Effect of Reading on Academic Performances

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Do Not Know At All	11	24.4
Do Not Know Specifically	10	22.2
Knowledge	10	22.2
Linguistic	5	11.1
Higher Grades	5	11.1
Concentration	2	4.4
Creativity	1	2.2

Table 9 shows the students' understanding of the effect of reading on their academic performances. Surprisingly, 11 (24.4%) respondents do not know the effect at all while 10 (22.2%) respondents understand that reading gives a positive impact but do not know what it is specifically. 10 (22.2%) respondents say reading expands their knowledge in a certain subject. Others understand that reading helps in improving their linguistic skills, achieves higher grades, helps them concentrate and encourages them to be creative.

Table 10. Factors of Reading Influence

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Self	23	51.1
Parents	10	22.2
Friends	10	22.2
Siblings	3	6.66
Teachers	2	4.4

Table 10 shows who influences the students to read. 23 (51.1%) respondents say they read on their own will and choose to read by themselves. 10 (22.2%) respondents claim their parents play a role in their reading influence while 10 (22.2%) respondents say that their friends are the ones who influence their reading habits. Others claim their siblings and teachers played a role in the reading interests.

Table 11. Obstacles Faced When Reading

Answers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of Motivation	17	37.7
Lack of Materials	9	20.0
Do not understand	7	15.5
Lack of conducive parents	5	11.1
Do Not Like Reading	2	4.4
Scared of Judgement	1	2.2
Lack of Time	1	2.2
Low Attention Span	1	2.2

Table 11 shows the obstacles the students face while reading. 17 (37.7%) respondents complain that they lack the motivation to read, 9 (20.0%) say that there is a lack of reading materials and 7 (15.5%) simply confess that they do not understand what they read. Others claim that they have a lack of conducive parents, they simply do not like reading, scared of judgement based on their reading material and they do not have time.

CONCLUSION

In summary, most of the students enjoy reading for fun and favour novels and fiction as their reading material. Most would spend 30 minutes to an hour reading and usually read when they are bored. Adding to that, students also understand that reading expands their knowledge but surprisingly, they do not feel that reading would have a huge impact on their studies. A lot of students suffer from the lack of motivation to read and would prefer to have more pictures in their reading material. Apart from that, students do not have any difficulty in self-reading as they read on their own account. With these findings, lecturers of Kolej GENIUS Insan can take advantage of the students' positive outlook towards reading and bring out the best of them. As most

students lack motivation to read, lecturers can help encourage them to read and brief them about the positive impacts reading has on their studies.

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