



A Study on the Newspaper Reading Habits of Post Graduate Students in West Bengal State University

Mintu Halder

Librarian, Bhairab Ganguly College
Belgharia, Kolkata-700056

Abstract :

Newspaper is the primary source of information. Through it not only one does get information about the world in which one lives but also about all the events happening or imminent to take place on this planet. The present study aims at investigating the nature of newspaper reading habits and specific reading interest of Post Graduate students of West Bengal State University. This particular study attempts to explore purpose of reading, language preferences and time spent on reading newspaper daily by the students. The study also tries to find out the place where the students accustomed to read their required newspaper and language version of that particular newspaper. The paper finds out some of the barriers of newspaper reading among the students and finally concludes with some suggestions how they overcome from these barriers.

Key words :

Newspaper reading habits, newspaper, online newspaper, news seeking, PG students.

1. Introduction :

Newspaper is the store house of knowledge and provides knowledge of various disciplines of our society. (Kaushik&Khanchi, 2007).Newspaper is one of the important collections of any types of library irrespective of its user group. It is equally important for the entire society from young pupil to old aged persons. Reading habit of newspapers makes the students more aware about their society as well as builds their vocabulary skills. In most cases like many other habits newspaper reading habits also influenced by the reading habits of the parents. Newspaper reading habit has also been associated with improvement in student's

attitude towards reading overall. This habit builds the communication skills in different languages. Besides building vocabulary skills newspaper reading habit helps the students to learn the rules of behavior and life style of own as well as foreign country.

Newspaper is one of the primary information sources for the researchers; it provides the contemporary information to the readers. Newspaper also provides up to date information on local as well as world affairs. (Fendrick, 1941).

A newspaper is not only a primary source of recent information but also a store house of information which helps to find out real fact of any incidents of our society. In other words newspaper is the mirror of the society and newspaper reading habits of students not only helps them to see the society in a neutral environment but also assist them in expressing their ideas and thoughts on various aspects. It can be said that reading of newspaper is very much important to the young learners in becoming a knowledgeable citizen.

2. Review of literatures :

After an analytical study on the post- graduate students of Karnataka University about their newspaper reading habits it has been found that reading of newspaper provides better knowledge to the readers and enriches one's own experiences and at the same time helps in the journey to self-discovery. Reading provides experiences to the individual in developing one's horizons in understanding the world better. It also enhances his or her interest on the different aspects of life as newspaper provides all the information happening in the world for the interest of the readers **(Krishnamurthy &Awari, 2015)**. A study among the university graduate students in Bangladesh about newspaper reading habits reveals that that majority of the graduate students read either Bengali or English newspapers. It has been found that the respondents either prefer hall library to read printed newspaper or prefer computer center of the university central library. There are various obstacles faced by the students in reading printed and online newspapers but there are certain ways to overcome the problems **(Akanda&Haque , 2013)**. A study on the students of world university of Bangladesh with the objective to examine the level of newspaper reading habits of students reveals that there are various ways and methods to improve the newspaper reading habits of the students **(Majumder & Hasan, 2013)**. A survey among school girls from urban area regarding the reading habit reveals that



reading habit inculcates ideas and thoughts among them and an important findings is that most of the girls enjoyed reading and half of the respondents spent about an hour or so in reading every day (**Nath&Razeena, 2012**). On the basis of a study on the reading habits of the students of LIS of Annamalai University it has been observed that reading is the most important tool for lifelong learning and the LIS students normally are very interested in reading for enhancement of their Learning capabilities (**Thanuskodi , 2011**). It has been observed from a research on newspaper reading habit of the students of ChaudharyCharan Singh university that newspaper reading can nurture reading practice, inculcate knowledge and manifest awareness among young learners and the librarians has to play very important role to assess the significance of newspapers and provide better service to the students (**Kumar, Singh &Siddiqui, 2011**).

3. Objectives of the study :

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the purpose of reading newspaper by PG students of West Bengal State University;
2. To identify the different areas of interest in newspaper by PG students of West Bengal State University;
3. To know the time being devoted by PG students for reading newspaper;
4. To find out how many newspapers that the PG students read daily;
5. To identify the barriers of newspaper reading by PG students of WBSU;
6. To provide possible suggestions to make newspaper reading convenient.

4. Methodology :

4.1 Scope and coverage

This study is only confined to the Post Graduates students of West Bengal State University (WBSU) pursuing their master degree in different disciplines.

4.2 Methodology :

The work is mainly based on survey method that consists of the structured

questionnaire. Data are collected personally by visiting the PG departments of the WBSU by distributed 280 questionnaire of which 154 questionnaire given to male students and 126 questionnaires given to female students of Arts, Science, Commerce discipline who read newspaper daily.

5. Results and discussion :

Table No. 5.1: Discipline wise distribution.

| Discipline | No of Students | Percentage |
|------------|----------------|------------|
| Arts | 66 | 23.58 |
| Science | 120 | 42.85 |
| Commerce | 94 | 33.57 |
| Total | 280 | 100 |

Table No. 5.1 shows the discipline wise distribution that read newspapers daily. It is found that out of 280 students 66 are arts students, 120 science and 94 are commerce students who are pursuing postgraduate in their respective discipline.

Table No. 5.2: Gender wise distribution.

| Gender | No. Of Students | Percentage |
|--------|-----------------|------------|
| Male | 154 | 55 |
| Female | 126 | 45 |
| Total | 280 | 100 |

Table No. 5.2 shows the gender wise distribution of the students which shows that 154 nos. (i.e.55%) are male students and 126 nos. (i.e.45%) are female students,



who were found reading habit newspaper daily.

Table No. 5.3: Number of newspapers daily read by users.

| Number of Newspaper | No. of Students | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1-2 | 144 | 51.43 |
| 3-4 | 76 | 27.14 |
| 4-6 | 44 | 15.72 |
| More than 6 | 16 | 5.71 |
| Total | 280 | 100 |

Table No. 5.3 shows the number of newspapers daily read by users. It shows that majority number 144 nos. (i.e.51.43%) of the students read 1-2 newspapers while 76 nos. (i.e.27.14%) students read between 3-4, 44 nos. (i.e.15.72%) students read between 4-6. Moreover, 16 nos. (i.e.5.71%) read more than 6 newspapers daily.

Table No. 5.4: Language preference in newspaper reading.

| Language | No of Students | Percentage |
|----------|----------------|------------|
| Bengali | 130 | 46.42 |
| English | 68 | 24.29 |
| Hindi | 46 | 16.43 |
| Urdu | 36 | 12.86 |
| Total | 280 | 100 |

Table No. 5.4 shows that majority number 130 nos. (i.e.46.42%) of the students read Bengali news papers, while 68 nos. (i.e.24.29%) read English newspapers, 46 nos. (i.e.16.43%) read Hindi newspapers and 36 nos. (i.e.12.86%) read Urdu newspapers.



Fig. 1 : Time spent on reading newspaper daily.



With time, the regular reading of newspaper has become an integral part of our culture. So the study of acceptance or rejection of reading at various academic levels can add dimension in the overall personality development of the student. Fig.1 reveals that 49.28% students spent less than 1 hour per day reading newspaper followed by 41.43% that 1-2 hours and 9.29% more than 2 hour.

Table No. 5.5: Purpose of reading newspaper.

| Purpose | No of Students | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Collect information | 210 | 75.00 |
| Improvement of general knowledge | 220 | 78.57 |



| | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| Career Development | 216 | 77.14 |
| Higher Education | 226 | 80.00 |
| Entertainment Related | 156 | 55.71 |
| News about Sports | 230 | 82.14 |
| Usual task | 128 | 45.71 |
| Leisure Related | 104 | 37.14 |
| Improvement of self status in the society | 40 | 14.28 |
| up-to –date with current affairs | 110 | 39.28 |
| Scholarship related information | 36 | 12.86 |
| Health-related news | 6 | 27.14 |

Table No. 5.5 Shows that majority of the students 230 nos. (i.e.82.14%) read newspaper to obtain information about sports while 220 nos. (i.e.78.57%) of the respondents read newspaper for improve general knowledge and 226 nos. (i.e.80.00%) of the students read for higher education purpose. Only 36 students 36. (i.e.12.86%) read newspaper as is their as for getting various scholarship information respectively.

Fig. - 2: Sources of newspaper.

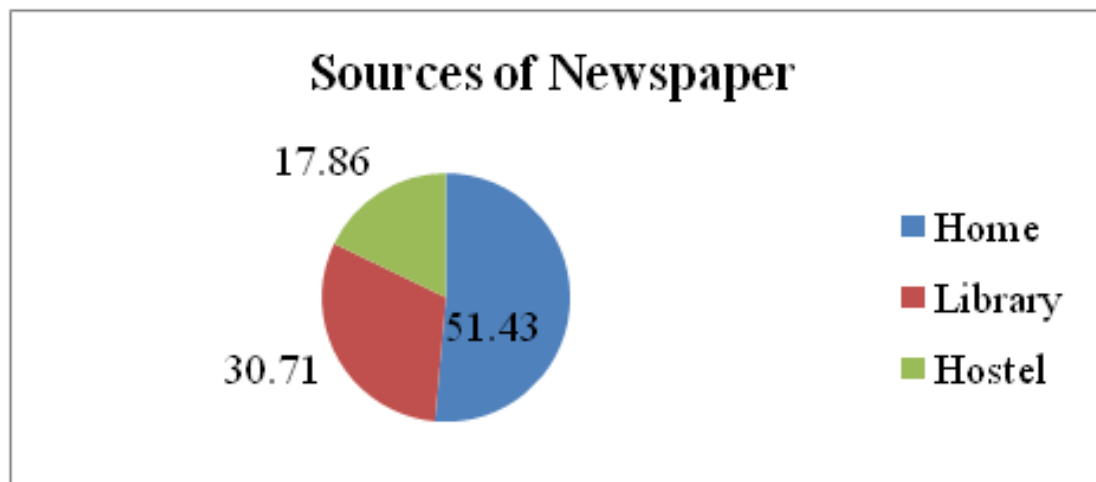


Fig. - .2 shows that 51.43% majority of the students read newspaper at home, while 30.71% students read newspaper at libraries and only 17.86% students read in the hostel.

Fig. - 3: Section of newspaper that the users like most.

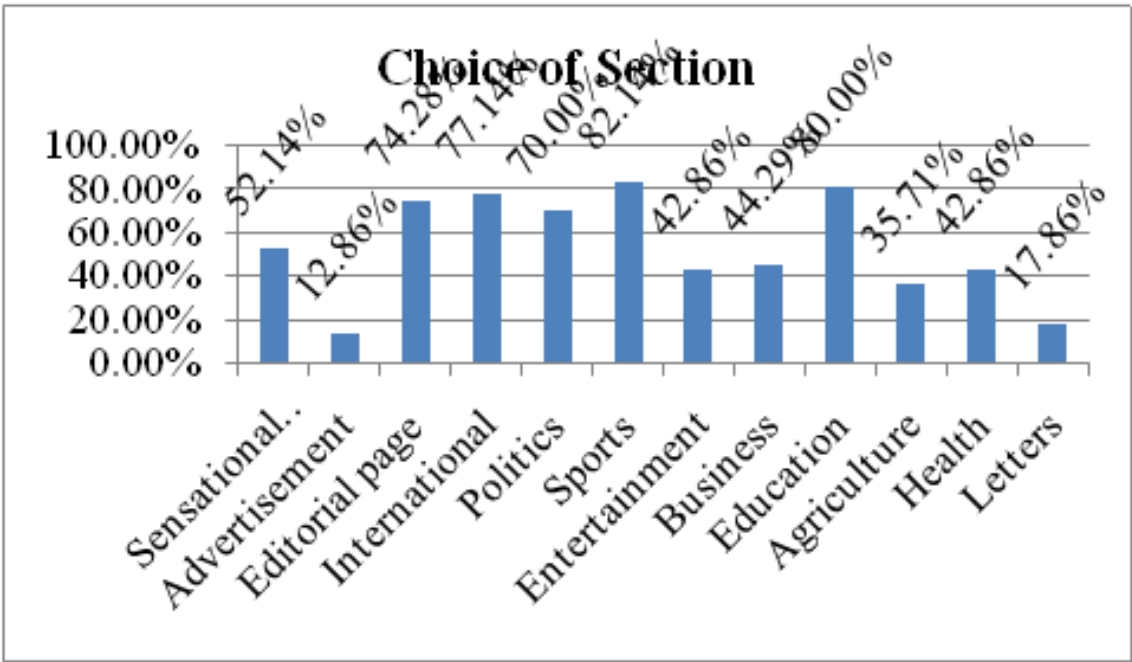


Fig. - 3 depicts the information related to the section of newspaper that the users wish to read in their day to day newspaper as different people prefer to read different sections of newspapers. It shows that 82.14% of the students prefer sports news followed by 80.00% in educational news, 77.14% interested in international issues, 74.28% follows editorial page, 70.00% in politics, 52.14% in sensational news, 44.29% in business related news, 35.71% in agriculture, and 17.86% on letters. It has been revealed that entertainment section and health section is preferred by the 42.86% of the respondents. A very small percentage of the respondents (12.86%) prefer the advertisement section of newspaper.

**Table No. 5.6: Newspaper and readership.**

| Newspaper | No of Students | Percentage |
|--------------------|----------------|------------|
| AnandabazarPatrika | 196 | 70.00 |
| BartamanPatrika | 96 | 34.28 |
| Sangbad pratidin | 114 | 40.71 |
| Aajkaal | 78 | 27.85 |
| EiSamay | 134 | 47.85 |
| The Telegraph | 178 | 63.57 |
| The Hindu | 110 | 39.28 |
| Times of India | 146 | 52.14 |
| Sanmarg | 156 | 55.71 |
| Jansatta | 116 | 41.42 |
| Dainikjagran | 96 | 34.28 |
| PravatKhabar | 68 | 24.28 |
| Akhbar-e-Mashriq | 70 | 25.00 |
| Aabshar | 62 | 22.14 |
| Azad Hind | 56 | 20.00 |
| Rashtriya Sahara | 74 | 26.42 |

Table No.5.6 shows the various newspapers and their readership the majority number 196 nos. (i.e.70.00%) of the students read AnandabazarPatrika, while the second largest number 178 nos.(i.e.63.57%) of students prefer the Telegraph. Moreover , the Sanmarg is being preferred by 156 nos. (i.e.55.71%) and 146 nos. (i.e.52.14%) students read the Times of India.



Fig. - 4: Format/version of newspaper reading

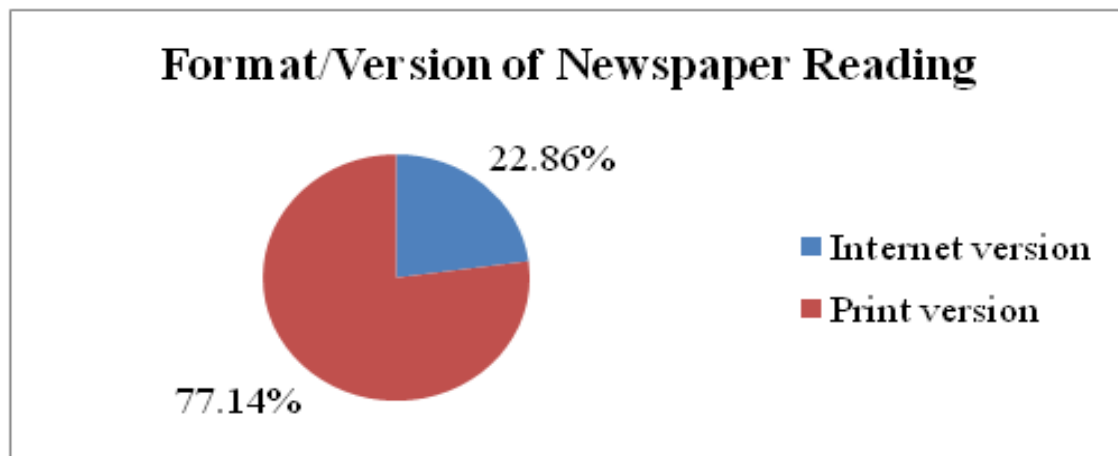


Chart No.5.4 shows the format and version of the newspaper that are being preferred by the students. It has been found that majority of them (77.14%) prefer to read print version of newspaper and a very small portion (22.86%) prefer to read on internet.

Fig. 5: Place of accessing online newspaper.

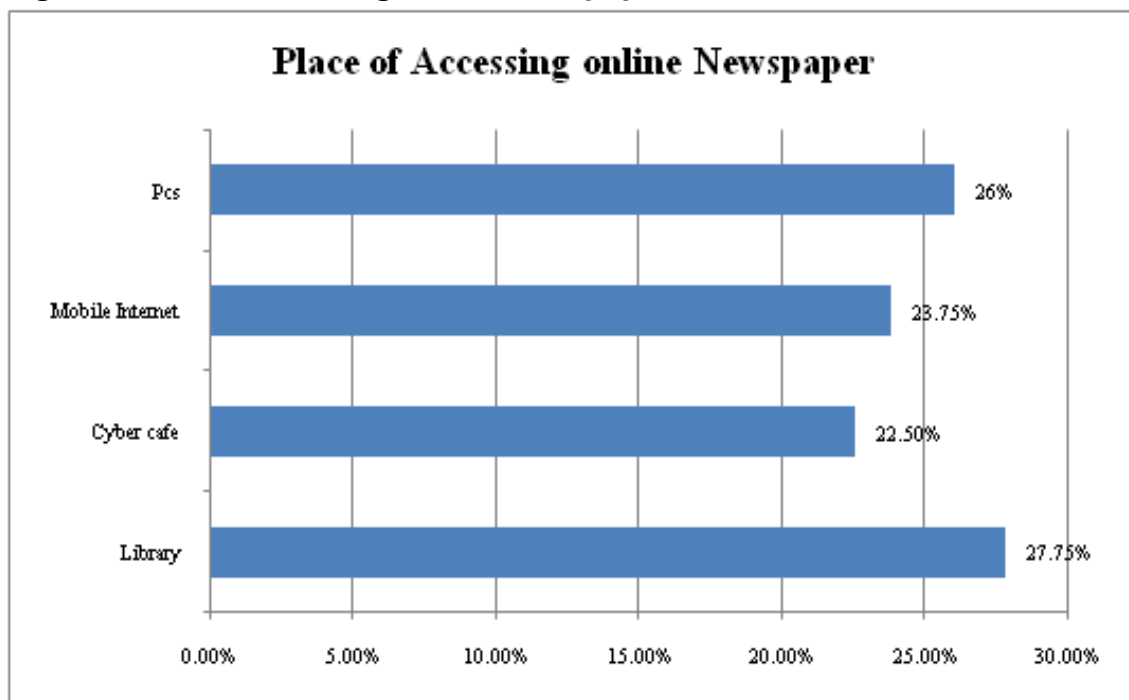


Fig.- 5 reveals that the distribution of figures in place of accessing the newspaper is quite evenly poised as 27.75% of students prefer their university library using computers, 26% tries to access to online newspaper by Pcs, 23.75% uses Internet and 22.50% uses Cybercafe.

Table No.5.7: Barriers of newspaper reading

| Barriers faced by Readers | No of students | Percentage |
|--|----------------|------------|
| Space Crunch in newspaper section of library | 146 | 52.14 |
| Availability of Newspaper in time | 118 | 42.14 |
| Shortage of Limite | 74 | 26.43 |
| High Cost of newspaper | 102 | 36.43 |
| Gossipng and Watching TV | 64 | 22.86 |
| Small copies of newspaper | 158 | 56.43 |
| Low speed of Internet | 84 | 30.00 |
| High Internet subscription rate | 116 | 41.42 |
| Poor knowledge in ICTs | 60 | 21.43 |
| Interruption due to electricity Problem | 110 | 39.29 |

Table 5.7 reveals the different reasons of difficulties that are being faced by the students in reading newspapers. The major problems they face are inadequate copies of newspapers in the library (56.43%), limited space in the newspaper section in the library (52.14%), delayed arrival of newspaper in the library (42.14%), frequent interruption of power supply (39.29%%), low speed of Internet (30.00%),

6. Findings and suggestions :

1. The half of students 130 nos. (i.e.46.42%) prefer to read Bengali language newspapers.



2. The majority of students 138 nos. (i.e.49.28%) time spent on reading news papers are less than one hours daily.
3. The main purpose of reading newspaper to obtain information about sports news followed by educational information.
4. The majority of students 51.43% prefer to read newspaper at home, followed by University Library (30.17%) and University hostel (17.86%).
5. 82.14% of the Students prefer to read sports news followed by education (80.00%) and international news (77.14%).
6. The majority number 196 nos. (i.e.70.00%) of the students read AnandabazarPatrika followed by 178 nos.(i.e.63.57%) of students prefer the Telegraph, 156 nos. (i.e.55.71%) prefer the Sanmarg and 146 nos. (i.e.52.14%) students read the Times of India.
7. Print copy is still used as the best medium of newspaper for the respondents.
8. The major problems they face are inadequate copies of newspapers in the library followed by limited space in the newspaper section in the library, delayed arrival of newspaper in the library .

On the basis of data analysis and feedback from the students, some important suggestions may be prescribed that may help in promoting the newspaper reading habits among the students of Post-graduate courses in the West Bengal State University.

1. It has been suggested to increase subscription of the newspaper used in the library. The students should be motivated.
2. Efforts should be made to publish educational articles in the newspaper on regular basis. It will help to disseminate knowledge among the students.
3. More awareness campaign should be organised among the students. It will help them to get interest in reading newspaper that automatically updates them with current happenings around the world.
4. The excessive price of internet subscription must be lowered significantly.
5. There is a number of news portals available in the online efforts should be made to the students to searched new portals for getting instant news.

7. Conclusions :

News Paper reading has social, academic and economical significance in



the modern world. The major objective of the present study was to investigate the nature of reading interest and habits among the students of Post Graduate Students courses in the West Bengal State University.

Reading of News Paper is an effective means of communication and an important aspect of language and arts. It is a significant ability in the educative process of the pupil as well as of the adults. Newspaper reading is an intellectual activity which contributes immensely in the development of balanced personality, in solving personal problems and in the attainment of mental materials and evolving an independence of thought.

Newspaper reading occupies a very important place in the wholesome development of a student. It helps the students to understand society and his role as a citizen and as an individual with his own personal needs and problems. It involves the whole personality, promising countless personal and social values. It is essential for fuller personal development and achievement of life.

Newspaper reading is indispensable factors among students, interwoven with work, recreation and other activities of young pupils. (Bankole & Babalola, 2011). It also indispensable means of communication in an advanced educational society.

Reading Newspaper includes the whole personality and countless values among the pupils. In this age of democracy reading of News Paper has merge social values also.

From this study we can conclude that basic reason behind the reading of Newspaper is to combat the unemployment or on the other hand, to provide relaxation from a busy life.

References :

- Akanda, A.E., & Haque, M.A. (2013). Newspaper reading habits of university graduate students in Bangladesh : a case study. *IJRANSS*, 1 (3), 1-8.
- Bankole, O. M., & Babalola, S. O. (2011). Use of newspaper by students of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/462/>
- Beard, R.L. (1956). Reading habits and interest. *The High School Journal*, 39 (4), 207-212.



- Berwald, R. (1940). Learning to use the newspaper. *The Elementary English Review*, 27 (7), 257-261.
- Cruzer, F. (1930). Newspaper reading habits. *The Elementary English Review*, 7 (2), 35-36
- Dunlap, C. C. (1951). Readability of newspaper items and basic reading material. *The Elementary School Journal*, 51 (9), 499-501.
- Fendrick, P. (1941). Newspaper reading interest of high school and college students. *The Journal of Educational Research*. 34 (7), 522-530.
- Kaushik, S. K., & Khanchi, J. S. (2007). Reading habits of rural under-graduate students. *Library Herald*, 45 (1), 61-69.
- Krishnamurthy, C., & Awari, V. H. (2015). Newspaper reading habits among post-graduate students of Karnataka university, Dharwad. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 35 (1), 25-29.
- Kumar, D., Singh, R., & Siddiqui, J. A. (2011). Newspaper reading habits of university students: A case study of Chaudhary Charan University. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/470/>
- Majumder, D., & Hasan, M. M. (2013). Newspaper reading habits of private university students: a case study on World University of Bangladesh. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 12 (1), 87-91.
- Mandal, P. S. (2010). Problems and prospects of reading habits of early teenagers. *Library Herald*, 48 (4), 385-389.
- Nath, B. K., & Razeena. (2012). Reading habits in school going girls in city area. *Library Herald*, 50 (4), 306-312.
- Thanuskodi, S. (2011). Reading habits among library and information science students of Annamalai University: A survey. *International Journal of Educational Science*, 3 (2), 79-83