Proposal for Graduation Project
My name
King Faisal University

Does Owning a Tablet or Smartphone Motivate Reading Among Students?

Abstract

With the teachings it provides, it is important that reading literature books are promoted to individuals early on in their lives. Since the use of electronic gadgets has been continuously increasing, it can serve as an avenue to motivate literature reading. Given this, we should identify the factors that promote or deter the use of gadgets in encouraging literature reading, so that we will be able to make an effective plan in promoting reading through gadgets. For this, a survey will be conducted among high school and college students of King Faisal University. After seeking consent, a questionnaire will be handed out to them, and the responses will be analyzed to allow comparison between owners and non-owners, as well as college and high school students. The outcome will be used to develop a plan in promoting reading literature books through gadgets.

Objectives

(1) This study aims to explore the potential of technological advancements in the form of tablets or smartphones in motivating literature reading among high school and college students. To achieve this, its specific objectives include

- identifying the number of high school and college students who owns a tablet or a smartphone,
- asking from a sample of these population regarding their literature reading habits,
- comparing differences among samples
- suggesting ways of how owning tablet or smartphone can improve reading.

Introduction

Reading books is an important aspect of learning. Primarily, it allows mastery of the language in which it was written in. Since experience is limited by time and space, reading becomes a good alternative that opens doors to a myriad of knowledge and possibilities that can only be accessed by opening books. Writings from hundreds of years ago provide a glimpse as to how life was during that time, while those of other countries allow exploration of different cultures. More importantly, they provide core values by guiding and inspiring its readers. They teach love for learning, patience, as well as discipline. They also harness creativity and put them away from trouble. Due to these, reading books are encouraged among students, so that they can imbibe these characteristics even early on in their lives.

There are different books for different purposes. For students, the ones they are most exposed to are manuals, textbooks and literature. Manuals are meant to guide students in properly doing a procedure, while textbooks are well-organized and comprehensive collection of the course's lessons that is appropriate for the school level it is being used in. Unlike literature, not much is left to imagination as everything necessary to understand that particular lesson is provided for. Reading of these, most of the time, are required by teachers. Literature books are, in many ways, different from the other two. For almost all of them, there are no well-specified parts. One cannot simply choose specific parts to read. Readers have to finish the whole book in order to understand a parcel. These books partner with the reader in creating a picture of what was being told. Unlike textbooks, reading of these is usually based on student's own liking and pace.

Recent times have seen the ubiquity of handheld electronic gadgets such as tablets and smartphones. Aside from its other applications, they can be used to read books digitized in the form of eBooks, chm , or PDF files. In just one gadget, an owner can store multiple books of his own liking. All they have to do is download them from the internet. Through this function, using gadgets for school activities also allows long-distant learning, whereby teachers can upload study materials for students even if they are at home, thus saving them the inconvenience of going to school. In addition, due to the multiple functionalities of tablets, students can organize better and integrate their learning from different sources, such as books and videos. More importantly, content sharing cultivates a sense of cooperation in the academic community *in-text(Heerden & Van, 2013)*

The use of tablet for academic purposes poses other benefits aside from facilitating learning. Because natural resources are continuously decreasing in amounts, the use of e-books can lessen the amount of raw material such as paper that will be used for printing. In the long run, it also lessens the cost of being an avid book reader, because books in digital format are cheaper compared to printed ones. The lightweight gadget also provide health benefits, particularly the prevention of back pain common among students, and brought about by the much heavier printed books. However, the extent of its use is limited by the initial cost of the gadget and the issue of piracy *in-text (Heerden, M. & Belle, J ,2013). pp, 154-166"*

Literature Review

Because the rise of tablets and smartphones only occurred recently in such unprecedented high rate, studies on the effects of these gadgets were few and small-scale. The researches mentioned below were the ones very similar to the type of study to be conducted.

Since this study will be conducted in a country that does not use English during usual conversations, a study of how literature was promoted in a similar country will be quite informative. in-text (Tseng, F,**2010**, Pp. 53-65)

, it observed the responses of 28 Taiwanese EFL senior high school students during a 14-week class that taught 24 English literature works with the aid of computer assisted literature teaching (CALT) in providing plot summaries as well as supplementary media materials to the students. The survey among the students revealed that there was good response to this set-up, as almost half of the respondents were motivated to read literature after the course. It was also found that these students preferred contemporary literature, particularly movie novels, realistic fiction, fantasies and mysteries, than classic ones.

A research conducted in University of Cape Town in Africa, which aimed to determine the student body's opinion regarding the use of tablets in their studies, utilized a systematic sampling method in order to ensure that all courses are represented in this study. Answers from 500 respondents, which made up 2% of the University's school population, revealed that students were very open to technologic advancements, such as tablets and smartphones. In fact, data showed that 40% intended to use their tablet everyday, while 26% would use it at least twice a week. Although only half of them would use it to study, almost 75% agree that their academic performance would improve because of the gadget. As for the brand of tablet, most of the respondents preferred iPad over other brands. The top three most important features that must be present in a tablet are portability, speed, and long battery life, while its reader application should have search capabilities as well as marking options, in the form of notes and highlighting. Among the reasons given by these student included the fact that books in this format can be automatically retrieved through the internet. Its portability and accessibility is also considered as an advantage for the respondents. In fact, many students predict that e-books will soon replace printed ones completely
*In-text (Heerden, M. & Belle, J. ,**2013**, pp. 154-166)*

However, as shown in the study of Helen Kwan of Stanford University, if gadgets are to be used in promoting reading, then availability of such devices is an important issue that must be addressed. In her literature review of the pros and cons of gadgets, the importance of tactile reading experience and the effects of technology to learners, she deduced that reading through gadgets can be a vital cog in improving reading comprehension among students in particular, provided that the use of electronic devices for such purpose be carefully studied and planned out. *In-text (Kwan, H. ,2012)*
 since it must be noted that there are still other issues to be considered before the use of gadgets in school setting is promoted. The long time spent reading though digital screens are cited to cause eye fatigue, lack of retention, inability to take notes or even mark the text *in-text (Peters, T. & Bell, L. ,2013).*

Also, gadgets of multiple functionality, such as tablets and smartphones, are noted to be distracting students during classes. An online study conducted among 333 college students of University of Scranton aged between 18-24 years old who own internet-capable mobile phones using iOS or Android programs tried to determine whether gadgets can act as a distraction or not. The sample represented 22% of the total school population. Results showed that 43% and 81% of the participants admitted being distracted by their gadget during class and while doing homework outside class, respectively. Such effect in a significant number of students can be a drawback to promotion of reading among students. *In-text (Yarmey, K. ,2011).*

Significance of Research

Because many people own gadgets, they have the potential of motivating literature reading, especially among students. Knowing the factors that influence the use of these gadgets in reading literature is important in strategizing ways in effectively using tablets and smartphones for encouraging reading literature books among young ones. By doing so, it can increase the number of youth that can get benefit from the values these writings potentially provide.

Research Question

This research will try to answer the following questions:
1. Does owning a tablet or smartphone motivate literature reading among students?
2. What proportion of high school and college students own a gadget?
3. What are the reading habits of these students?
4. How different are the owners and non-owners in terms of literature reading habits?
5. How does owning a gadget help in encouraging reading literature reading among students?
6. What factors motivate or discourage gadget owners in literature reading?

Research Methodology

This study will be conducted using a systematic sampling method to allow ample representation of all high school and college students currently enrolled at King Faisal

University in Saudi Arabia. Door-to-door visits will be used in order to sample 20% of the school's high school and college students population.

Ethical Considerations

Teachers of the classes will be given the project proposal prior to the conduct of the study. Upon their approval, students will be informed of the nature of the study through a short lecture-type presentation. Questions regarding the research will also be entertained by this time. After consent being determined by show of hands, participants will be given 10 minutes to answer the questionnaire.

Data Gathering

The use of a survey including two-point scales will be the mode of data gathering for this study. The questions are formulated to determine the effect of owning a tablet/smartphone to reading literature books, as well as other factors such as age, sex, school level, course, hobbies and interests, financial status, inherent liking for reading, knowing someone who owns a gadget, and knowing how to operate the gadget. Also, through the form, the respondents' opinions regarding the factors that promote or discourage literature reading will be determined. The questionnaire will be distributed to all members of the class.

#	Questions	Yes	No
	Please check appropriate box. Check only one box per question.		
1	Do you own a tablet/smartphone?		
	If yes, who bought it for you? Answer:		
2	Do any of your parents/siblings/peers own a tablet/smartphone?		
3	Have you tried reading a book using a tablet/smartphone?		
4	Do you enjoy reading literature books?		
5	Do you think reading literature books is important?		
6	Do you like/want to read books using a tablet/smartphone?		
7	Do you prefer reading books using tablet/smartphone over actual book?		
8	Are you motivated by tablet/smartphone to read literature books?		
9	Do you think owning a tablet/smartphone can motivate a student to reading literature books?		
	Write your answers to the questions below		
10	What topics do/would you like to read about? *Answer:*		
11	What are the titles of the books you have recently read? *Answer:*		
12	What are the factors that MOTIVATE you to read literature books? *Answer:*		
13	What are the factors that DISCOURAGE you from reading literature books using tablet/smartphone?		

	Answer:
14	What are your suggestions to encourage more students to read literature books?
	Answer:
	You have finished the survey. Thank you for your response! Please pass it to the researcher.

Limitations of the Study

Data from college and high school students will be analyzed separately. Owners and non-owners will first be compared based on age, sex, school level, course, hobbies and interests, financial status, inherent liking for reading, knowing someone who owns a gadget, and knowing how to operate the gadget. Significant difference between the two groups will be determined statistically using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The opinions will also be collated. Thereafter, high school and college students will be compared based on significant factors affecting literature reading.

Expected Results

With the rampancy of gadgets today, it can be expected that at least half of the students surveyed own a tablet/smartphone. Although there is probably no significant difference in terms of age and sex, it is predicted that financial status, together with family structure, is a significant factor in determining whether the student owns a gadget or not. If this is true, then it is expected that most of the gadgets come from parents. However, it is likely that everyone knows someone owning a gadget, regardless of whether they have one or not. In this regard, it is expected that all respondents has tried at least once to read through the gadget.

A diversity of responses is expected from answers in questions 12-13, although the more common motivators should be there: nice books and availability of books. These responses will be studied further together with the responses using the yes or no questionnaire. Answers to 10-11, will also be considered in determining what motivates reading in the respondent. These answers, together with those for question 14, will be used in drawing up a strategy in promoting reading through gadgets. Among the suggestions expected are, free gadgets, access to unlimited books, and removal of other distracting apps, such as games.

In comparing data from high school students to that from college students, it is expected that a bigger proportion of the latter will own a gadget as compared to the proportion of gadget owners in high school. Otherwise, they are expected to be practically the same in their responses to other questions.

References

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Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE
Age/Sex: School Level: Course: Favorite Subject: Hobbies: Annual Family Income (estimate):   Occupation of parents: # of siblings: