Investigating the Role of Cultural, Religious, Social, Economic and Political Factors on Non-Textbook Reading of the Students and Collegians Iran-Mashhad

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of cultural, religious, social, economic and political factors on non-textbook reading of the students and university students. The applied instrument was a questionnaire. Its reliability was measured by using SPSS Software. The value of Cronbach's alpha for the university student's questionnaire was 0.85 and 0.89 was achieved for the students. For analyzing the data, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. For the research hypotheses in the descriptive level, mean and standard deviation were calculated and in inferential analysis, multivariate regression analysis was applied. The findings of the study indicate that 33 and 27% of the studied population agreed about the high impacts of the Internet, lack of appropriate books and the lack of youth's tendency towards non-textbook readings, respectively. On the other hand, the statistics show a significant relationship between the television advertising and tendency to non-textbook readings. The results also indicate that the impact of cultural, religious, social, economic and political factors on non-textbook reading of the students and university students of Mashhad. In addition, the results show that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) equals to 0.79 and the coefficient of determination (R^2) equals to 0.62 in this analysis which show the social and cultural variables increase and express 62% of the changes of non-textbook readings variations among the collegians. Some solutions including increasing the communication between TV, radio and libraries, reducing the books audit and its final price, keeping pace with technology are presented in this study.

Key words: Students, university students, reading, Mashhad, instrument

INTRODUCTION

Today is known as the information age and using various sources of information are considered as different sources of human nutrition. In order to have sophisticated and educated citizens, the societies should provide the necessary and proper information to them in different ways. This matter will allow the people to grow in different aspects and in addition to having the required expertise of the community; they enjoy the insight and knowledge that is necessary for every citizen for spending a thoughtful life. Schools and universities as the formal organizations which are responsible for the education of the population have devoted all their concern to teach them various life skills and give them valuable information in the form of textbooks. But as we know, it is not just the textbooks influence the knowledge, skills and attitudes (Assareh and Golchoubi, 2008).

Other information resources such as non-textbooks, scientific books, stories and comic books as well as magazines and newspapers always provide a variety of information to everyone. These resources have a great importance intrinsically and their utilization in the information society is considered as a necessity. Attention to these sources by the students help them in addition the specialized knowledge has been learned at school, expand their knowledge and insight into other fields, including social, cultural, artistic, scientific, political, economic ones and so on thus they can take steps in the path of personal and social development along with others (Ghotbi, 2012).

Reading book is a cultural behavior that realizes in the society and consequently, the universities can play a unique role about promoting this behavior. Universities are the authorities that have a significant portion in generating the knowledge and information of each country and students should prepare themselves to enter the society in this scientific environment since reading book is one of the tools of success and enhancing the knowledge of each scholar, the ways of encouraging this cultural behavior must be recognized and introduced to the universities. The current knowledge wants us to be aware of what leads us to the best ability for promoting the real growth of the individual (Afkane and Shakouri, 2011).

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In addition, the availability of favorite sources, alternative activities in the leisure time and the rate of support and encouragement from others are some factors that influence the student's reading habits (Raddad and Masoudi, 2013). On the other hand, the results of the accomplished studies in Iran regarding a per capita of reading, indicate neglecting the issue of reading books among the various strata of the society that the university student's group also is not excluded from this issue. It seems that Iranian students are reluctant to read books other than textbooks that certainly the root of this problem is in the stages before entering the university and this matter causes the students ignore the importance of studying the sources except their textbooks. It definitely affects the individual and social life as well as their awareness.

The book has been considered as a cultural element in all the nations at different ages. This cultural index by its influence meantime transformation of the knowledge to the audiences has changed their insights into the surroundings and the world around them and gives a new spirit to its reader a window that makes familiar any human being with others thoughts, gives the human the insight to expand his sight and brings it with himself all the times. Islam also has emphasized in reading and the heavenly voice "Read" has decorated it and in the Holy Qur'an has been sworn to pen and what writes. The followers of Islam always have given special respect to the books, reading and the library and the libraries of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Jondi Shapour had been well known with this attitude (Mortazavi, 2000).

Several factors affect the formation of reading habits in the students. Some experts believe that the latency of reading habit begins in the childhood and passes a growing process to the adulthood.

The family has one of the most important roles in this growing trend that in order to make the effectiveness of this factor better other important factors such as economic issues, parent's level of education, the existence of local, native and national advertising in line with familiarity with the book and non-textbook readings are effective. On the other hand, according to some researchers the recent developments in the field of new information technologies and specifically the Internet affect the study habits of the students and university students because of its attractiveness, fast and easy access to information (Shen, 2006).

In another study with the title of the attitudes of high school students of Shahre Kord about the promoting and preventing factors in free reading, this conclusion was achieved that in comparison the view of the girls with the boys in terms of the reading inhibiting factors the role of

boredom is more than average and lack of time, no access to the books, escape from reading and the high price of the books are moderate. Based on the results of the Tukey follow-up test in terms of lack of access to books there was a significant difference between the second and third grade students. Also about escaping from reading the mean differences between the first grade and the second and the second with the third grade were significant. In terms of lack of time for reading there was a significant difference between Laran and Ben regions and there was no significant difference in other cases. The mean difference between Laran and Ben regions was significant about the high cost of the book.

The main hypothesis in this study is that the cultural, religious, social, economic and political factors are effective in non-textbook reading of the students and university students in Mashhad and the secondary hypotheses are:

- There is a significant relationship between the family income and the amount of non-textbook reading
- There is a significant relationship between the parent's level of education and non-textbook reading
- There is a significant relationship between gender and non-textbook reading
- There is a significant relationship between using the Internet and the amount of non-textbook reading
- There is a significant relationship between watching movies and television series and the amount of non textbook reading

So, each of them will be mentioned and described in the analysis and the conclusion sections.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study in terms of the aim is applied study and in terms of the method of implementation is descriptive; the post-event study. The applied instrument in this study is a questionnaire. The mentioned questionnaire has been prepared in the form of 5-item Likert scale (very much, much, partly, a little and too little). The components of the research questionnaire were prepared in consultation with the Librarianship and informing and educational science's professors. The validity of the questionnaire was reviewed and approved by the experienced professors of librarianship, informing and educational sciences of Razi University of Kermanshah and its reliability was measured by using SPSS Software. The cronbach's alpha values of the university student's and the high school student's questionnaires were 0.85 and 0.89, respectively which

represent an acceptable reliability. The statistical population included the high school students in three regions and the university students of Payme Noor and Ferdowsi universities of Mashhad. The available sampling method was used in this study. The sample size was determined by using Morgan Table and the researcher-made questionnaire was distributed among them. It means that initially the schools in Mashhad were divided into four socio-economic levels geographically and in each region 380 questionnaires were distributed among the students. For the university students, two universities which were in priority in the number of the students persons were selected as the available samples based on Morgan Table and the researcher-made questionnaire was distributed among them and collected. In analyzing the data, descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were used. In the descriptive level, mean and standard deviation were calculated and in the inferential level multivariate regression test for the research hypotheses was applied to analyze the hypothesis by using SPSS Software Version 19.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main research question of this study was whether the cultural, religious, social, economic and political factors are effective on non-textbook reading of the students and university students in Mashhad?

As it can be seen in Table 1, 33% of the participants believe that the internet is the most important factor in the lack of youth's tendency towards non-textbook reading while lack of appropriate books with 27% is another important factor in reducing the amount of non-textbook reading.

According to Table 2, it can be observed the correlation coefficient value of the two variables, income and non-textbook reading are $(r = 0.403)$ and the significance level is (Sig. = 0.009). Because the amount of level of significance is >0.01 it represents a significant correlation between the two variables; therefore, hypothesis H_0 is rejected and hypothesis H_1 is accepted.

In relation to the above table, it can be perceived the obtained correlation coefficient of two variables, i.e., parent's education and non-textbook reading is $(r = 0.375)$ and the significance level is (Sig. = 0.025). Because the value of the level of significance is <0.05, it shows the relationship between the two variables; so, the H_0 hypothesis is rejected and H_1 hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the two variables (Table 3).

By using independent t-test, mentioned in Table 4, the average of non-textbook reading (between male and

Table 1: Frequency distribution and the percentage of subjects according to the effective factors on the lack of youth's tendency towards non-textbook reading based on the priority

Reluctance	Percentage
Internet	33
Lack of appropriate books	27
Lack of proper and attractive books	19
More tendency to sports	14
Lack of notification	7
Total	100

Table 2: Pearson correlation coefficient of the relationship between the family income and tendency to non-textbook reading

Statistics	N	Mean	SD	The correlation coefficient	Level of significance
Income	500	62	10.25	0.403	0. 009
Non-textbook reading		88	11.25		

Table 3: Pearson correlation coefficient of the relationship between parent's level of education and the tendency to non-textbook reading

Statistics	N	Mean	SD	The correlation coefficient	Level of significance
Parent's level of education	500	64.000	10.14	0.375	0.025
Non-textbook reading		880	11.250		

Table 4: The comparison between the two groups of male and female in terms of non-textbook reading

Variable	Mean	SD	The level of significance
Non-textbook reading			
Male	64.21	11.21	0.012
Female	66.23	10.23	

Table 5: The comparison between the two groups of boys and girls in terms of amount of using the Internet

Variables	Mean	SD	Level of significance
Non-textbook reading			
Girl	60.46	11.09	0.025
Boy	51.21	10.03	

Table 6: Pearson correlation coefficient of the relationship between television advertising andthe tendency to non-textbook reading

Statistics	N	Mean	SD	The correlation coefficient	Level of significance
Television advertising	500	62	12.05	0.411	0.016
Non-textbook reading		88	11.25		

female) was investigated that the results indicate that there is a significant difference between the two groups in terms of non-textbook reading at the 5% level.

The given results in Table 5 show the average of non-textbook reading of those who use the Internet to those who do not use it. The results indicate that there is a significant difference at the 5% level between the two groups in terms of non-textbook reading.

Regarding the above Table 6 it can be observed that the obtained correlation coefficient value is $(r = 0.411)$ and the level of significance is (Sig. = 0.016). Because the value of the level of significance is >0.05, it demonstrates a relationship between the two variables so, hypothesis H_1 is accepted. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the television advertising and non-textbook reading.

Table 7: Multiple regression analysis via the combined method

Variables	b	SD	β	t-values	The level of significance
Fixed amount	46.455	6.060	-	7.6650	0.000
Income	0.764	0.211	0.204	2.1250	0.011
Parent's education	0.658	0.215	0.121	2.3250	0.017
Cultural situation	0.587	0.147	0.101	2.4520	0.008
Family environment	0.456	0.312	0.054	2.7520	0.009
Social status	0.632	0.254	0.087	1.1450	0.021
Society culture	0.489	0.187	0.028	1.3520	0.018
TV ads	0.455	6.060	0.198	0.6653	0.000
Newspapers	0.654	0.213	0.094	2.3250	0.003
Students research	0.708	0.312	0.221	2.0250	0.007
Library facilities	0.687	0.167	0.311	2.3420	0.018
Interest and motivation					
to study	0.655	5.123	0.118	3.4650	0.0001
Local ads	0.682	0.217	0.108	2.3550	0.0080

In order to investigate and determine the predictor variables of the amount of non-textbook reading through the social and cultural categories and factors the combined method of multiple regression analysis was used.

According to Table 7, in this analysis the multiple correlation coefficient (R) equals to 0. 79 and the coefficient of determination (R^2) equals to 0.62 that show the social and cultural variables increase and explain 62% of variable changes of non-textbook readings among the university students.

The main hypothesis of this paper is the effect of the cultural, religious, social, economic and political factors on non-textbook reading of the students and university students in Mashhad. In order to investigate and determine the predictor variables of non-textbook readings through the social and cultural categories and factors via the combined method of the multiple regression analysis, the results of Table 7 showed that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.79 and the coefficient of determination (R^2) equals to 0.62 that indicate the social and cultural variables variations increase and explain 62% of the non-textbook readings variable among the university students. The importance of the book, the reading culture and the great position of the book is obvious to everyone. The book has been considered as one of the important means of awareness and insight long time ago. One of the criteria of evaluating the intellectual and cultural development of every nation and country is the number of libraries, bookstores, published books and book readers of that community. Reading book and the high rate of reading has been recognized as one of the indicators of development and growth in the world.

Cultural, religious, social, economic and political factors are the most important factors in this field that require the attention, follow-up and planning to improve the situation of non-textbook readings of the high school students and university students. Confirmation of the present study hypotheses indicates the role of the cultural, religious, social, economic and political factors in non-academic reading of the students and university students in Mashhad.

Sub-hypotheses: There is a significant relationship between the family income and non-textbook reading. The results of Table 2 based on Pearson correlation coefficient explain the relationship between the family income and non-textbook reading of the students and indicate that there is a significant relationship between the family income and non-textbook reading at the level of 0.001. This result is in line with the results of Dehghotobldini and Ahadi (2013), Assareh and Golchoubi (2008) studies. In explaining this finding, it can be said that the overall result of the impact of the purposeful behavior of the parent's reading and the familie's socioeconomic situation on creating the positive attitude of parents to reading revealed that father's reading purposeful behavior and mother's education level have a more important effect on creating the parent's positive attitude to reading at home. Also the results of investigating the indirect effects and the general effect of the parent's reading purposeful behavior and the socioeconomic situation of the parents on positive attitude of the children to reading, the interaction of the children's reading at home and school demonstrated that the purposeful behavior of the parent's reading has a stronger effect than the socioeconomic status of the parents on creating the positive attitude in the children towards reading (enjoying the reading, wanting to talk to others about the books, desiring to read the books that the person himself selects, requiring to read for the future success), increasing the reading interaction at home (reading aloud for the family members, talking about the books with the family members, listening to other's reading at home and increasing the reading interaction at school (listening to the teacher's voice when s/he reads, reading aloud for all the of the class students or for a number of them).

There is a significant relationship between the parent's educational level and the rate of non-textbook reading. The results of Table 3 explained and showed Pearson correlation coefficient and the relationship between the amount of parent's reading and the student's tendency to non-textbook readings that there is a significant relationship at 0.0001 level. The obtained result about this theory is in the same way with research that in his research showed that among the effective factors on reading among the clients of the public libraries, there are significant positive relationships between the status of the public libraries and the people's education and also between the parent's education level and the family's

income and also it is consistent with research. In explaining these findings, it can be concluded that the results of the conducted research and also the opinions of the experts and scholars indicate that the parent's education level is one of the effective factors on the tendency of the children to study. For this reason, it is expected as much as the parent's education level is higher, encouraging their children to non-textbook reading increase equally; because the educated parents are usually the ones who are familiar with the variety of information media more or less and use them for various reasons. In contrast, parents who have an education degree lower than a diploma should not benefit from such feature and this matter can have negative effects on the children's reading-oriented behavior.

There is a significant relationship between the gender and non-textbook reading. Based on the listed findings in Table 4, the average of non-textbook readings (between boys and girls) was examined. The results suggest that there is a significant difference between the two mentioned groups at the 5% level in terms of non textbook readings. It is in line with the research results of which showed there is not any significant correlation between the marital factors and gender. In explaining these findings, we can point to the differences of the participants in Moaref Zadeh research they were the clients of public libraries but in the current study they are students. In other research, investigated the fundamental role of accurate recognition of the educational needs of the students in the field of the types of books for enhancing the scientific insight and increasing their knowledge and skills and non-textbook reading areas. The comparison of the needs of the girls and boys to non-textbook reading in relation to the discussed fields except the health and physical hygiene areas and the cultural information, it showed that, there is a significant difference between the interest of the male and female students in the rest of the fields; thus, it is in line with the results of the present study. High school students are in their teens and the sexuality issues intensify in this period; for this reason, reading about the areas such as the male and female relationships and marriage matters or romance novels and stories are a priority for them to obtain further information in these areas in this way.

There is a significant relationship between using the Internet and the amount of non-textbook reading. The listed results in Table 5 were examined the average of non-textbook readings of those who use the internet to those who do not use; the results indicate that there is a significant difference between the two studied groups at 5% level in terms of non-textbook readings. Raddad and Masoudi (2013) have stated some reasons for the lack of

non-textbook reading, including doing other activities such as music, sports, computer games and the high amount of school assignments which it is in line with the present study results. It is expected the university students community of Iran devote special attention to non-textbook reading due to the situation which they are in and also because of their considerable needs to being aware of the written thoughts and experiences but unfortunately, the obtained results of this study show the lack of special attention to this issue and other ways of spending the leisure time overtake the non-textbook reading.

According to the research findings, the majority of the students and university students know the high impact of accessing to the Internet on their studies information and needs. Also the growing popularity of the Internet among the students has been reported somehow by Hassell and Lutz, 2006; Moje *et al*. (2008) studies. The tendency of the students to the Internet provides a great opportunity for the education and training planners to use this new information environment to create the appropriate websites for the students to access the reading resources and thus, expand their reading habits.

There is a significant relationship between watching movies and television series and the amount of non-textbook reading. The value of correlation coefficient is (t = 0.411) and the significance level is (Sig. = 0.016). Because the value of the level of significance is <0.05, it demonstrates the existence of a relationship between the two variables; therefore, there is a significant relationship between TV commercials and non-textbook readings. That is in line with the findings by Moradmand (2010) and Razavi *et al*. (2007) which express that there is a significant relationship between watching TV and non-textbook reading. This means that the more students watch TV programs, they will attempt less to read.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, it seems there is a fundamental shortcoming in the status of non-textbook reading of the students and the university students in Iran that this study seeks to answer this question why there is little interest to reading in Iran and whether economic, cultural, social, political and religious factors have any role in non-textbook reading or not.

SUGGESTIONS

It is recommended that the authorities of cultural affairs especially those who are responsible for the mass communication media, including radio, television and the

press plan in the field of developing the culture of reading, especially non-textbook reading; these programs are such as the public education through conducting the training workshops about the reading methods, holding book reading competitions, holding book fares, presenting books, equipping the public libraries and so on.

Assigning a radio and television channel as far as possible for the promotion, encouragement and development of the reading culture, especially non textbook reading.

Providing the facilities of books such as granting a voucher for purchasing the books and other reading sources by the government officials and universities to meet the expensiveness factor which plays a major role in reducing the reading. Training parents on how to create the habit of reading in their children from childhood. Informing the parents of the students about the importance of non-textbook reading in strengthening and flourishing their children's talents via holding various workshops and conferences should be placed on the Parents Teacher Association agenda.

Changing the approaches in determining the student's homework assignment from the traditional textbook-oriented method to the research-oriented one by the teachers while the educational objectives of the course are obtained the students are motivated towards doing research, reading and using other non-textbook sources.

Determining the library orientation course in the first academic year in all of the university majors in order to familiarize the students more with the non-textbook sources and create the enthusiasm to study.

The study and reading culture in the society will not be stabilized unless the proper context becomes provided from the family environment; a compiled program should be provided to achieve this purpose and book should be defined in the household's expenditure, so; the families are compelled somehow to enter the book in their own lives as a basic requirement.

Conducting different classroom activities in a codified planning by the teachers and professors towards non-textbook reading. One of the problems that the reader's community of Iran has always complained is the high price of the books and this issue also has been ingrained among the college students that relate their lack of tendency to the book to its expensiveness. In order to cope with this phenomenon, it is necessary to adopt a policy in the country that the academic community be able

to provide their favorite books at a lower cost. For this matter, by the necessary coordinations among the universities, the central organization of the universities islamic culture and guidance office and management and planning organization can compile a program that the students can provide their required book with discount.

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