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## READING ACHIEVEMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TERMS OF SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

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### ABSTRACT

**R**eadng occupies an important place in the school curriculum at secondary level not only as a skill but also as a basic tool for achieving proficiency in all other school subjects. Reading cannot be completely mastered by the end of the elementary school and it is carried over to the secondary school also. During the elementary stage oral reading has been given primary importance for developing proper techniques of reading among children. But in secondary schools both the types of reading are emphasized in the learning of language. Children are taught to read aloud to pick up the right type of pronunciation and recognize sounds of various words that they come across. Silent reading is also being given to children to comprehend the subject matter well. The need for



instruction in reading in secondary schools is clearly recognized.

**KEYWORDS:** Reading Achievement , Demographic Variables, learning of language.

### INTRODUCTION:

Any wrong and unnatural habit of reading becomes immediately apparent in oral reading. Oral reading widens speaking vocabulary and tends to improve speech and conversation. Even though every reader begins one's adventures in reading with oral reading, he soon enters into the other form of it, namely, the silent reading. It is more significant than the oral reading. Because it is

with silent reading that the reader would develop the reading skills proper such as, comprehension, reaction and assimilation.

Reading commences in the infant class, with the learning of the alphabet, with the gradual assimilation of knowledge. Children are led to reading by synthetic method when they are about six years old. The early education of a child is confined mainly to reading, writing and arithmetic. In the State of Karnataka, most of the time is devoted to reading, which is around ten hours a week.

By the eight or nine years when the child is studying in the third

standard, one is expected to read fluently a book suited to his age. In the first year of a child's education at least two periods of respectively thirty and thirty-five minutes are devoted to exercises on the recognition of the alphabet, with a general tendency towards fluency. In the third year, fifty per cent of the reading time is spent by a child on acquiring fluency, while for the rest of the time he concentrates on reading with comprehension. A child therefore reads more for pleasure and understanding. From the fourth class onwards reading merely for fluency is not stressed so much as reading with comprehension is being taken for granted that fluency has now been fairly well acquired. Oral examinations are held for the lower classes up to standard one. For Standards I and II, reading is an essential test for transfer to a higher class and in the

higher classes it also helps considerably to secure a high rank in the examination. Reading at the time of examination involves reading with understanding and fluency.

Reading after the fourth class is seldom treated as a separate subject in the time table. It is more commonly associated with language (prose and poetry) and social subjects and also with optional subjects. Reading will be done both in the form of oral and silent reading in all the language teaching.

Therefore, it is seen that in the State of Karnataka “reading” as a subject like any other subject has not found a place in the school curriculum. The time devoted for reading at the secondary level looks to be meagre. Hence, there is a need to study the performance of students in reading achievement at the secondary school level.

## AN OVERVIEW

The study of related literature revealed that, studies by Walter (2003) ; Siegmar Muehl et al., (1997) ; Jay Samuel et al., (2004) ; Gene (1992) ; Nancy et al., (1998) ; Howard Margolis (1998) ; Mary Clare Petty (2005) ; Selma (2002) ; Peejak et al., (2004) have shown that there is a significant positive relationship between reading readiness and reading achievement and a study by Karl et al., (2001) has shown that there is a negative relationship between reading readiness and reading achievement.

The study by Nicole Rider (1999) has revealed that there is no significant difference between boys and girls in relation to reading achievement. The study by Lisbeth Aberg-Bengtsson (1999) has shown that there is a significant positive relationship between type of school and reading achievement.

## The Problem

The main focus of the study was to investigate the reading achievement among the secondary school students in relation to their psychological and demographic factors. Therefore, the problem is stated as “A Comparative Study of Reading Achievement among Secondary School Students in terms of Selected Demographic Variables”.

## Variables

Following are the selected variables in the present study :

- i. Dependent Variable – Reading Achievement
- ii. Demographic Variables
  - Gender – Boys / Girls
  - Locality – Urban / Rural
  - Management – Government / Private
  - Medium of Instruction – Kannada / English

## The Objectives

The present study is designed with the following objectives in view:

- i. To study the difference between boys and girls in their reading achievement in Kannada.
- ii. To study the difference between urban and rural students in their reading achievement in Kannada.
- iii. To study the difference between Government and Private school students in their reading achievement in Kannada.
- iv. To study the difference between Kannada medium and English medium school students in their reading achievement in Kannada.

## Hypotheses

**Keeping in view the above specific objectives, the following research hypotheses are framed:**

- i. There is a significant difference between boys and girls in their reading achievement in Kannada.
- ii. There is a significant difference between urban and rural students in their reading achievement in Kannada.
- iii. There is a significant difference between government and private school students in their reading

achievement in Kannada.

iv. There is a significant difference between Kannada medium and English medium school students in their reading achievement in Kannada.

### Methodology

The study undertaken was a descriptive research which attempts to describe and analyze the present conditions, with a view to have an accurate picture of the present which in turn forms the basis for future planning and policy-making.

### The Sample

The high school students studying in Class – IX during 2015-16 of Belgaum district forms the population for the present study. A sample of 800 high school students were drawn using random sampling method.

### Tool

In order to assess the reading achievement of secondary school students in Kannada language a “Shivananda’s Reading Achievement Test in Kannada (1980) was used. It contains five sub-tests to measure the five components of reading in Kannada namely, vocabulary, opposites, word discrimination, reading comprehension and sentence formation. It has thirty multiple choice items for each sub-tests totalling to 150 items. The range of validity coefficients was between 0.50 and 0.51, which speaks of the validity of the test. The reliability of reading achievement test was found by using test and retest method. The reliability value was found to be 0.937.

### Data Collection

The investigator personally visited the schools for data collection. The investigator administered the tool by giving clear instructions to the students. Sufficient time was given to the students to respond. The students approximately took 45 minutes to complete the tool.

### Statistical Technique

In order to study the difference in Reading Achievement with respect to selected demographic variables of secondary students, ‘t’ test was used.

### Analysis and Interpretation

The data was organized, tabulated and analyzed according to the objectives of the study to test the hypotheses as follows:

i. Comparison of Boys and Girls in terms of their Reading Achievement

**Table – 1 : Comparison between Boys and Girls in their Reading Achievement**

Variable	Male		Female		t-value	P-value	Signi.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Reading Achievement	118.89	17.06	119.68	15.19	0.68	> 0.05	NS

NS: Not Significant

The obtained ‘t’ value 0.68 with respect to Reading Achievement of secondary school boys and girls is lesser than the tabled ‘t’ value (1.97) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups do not differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school boys and

girls differ significantly in respect of their Reading Achievement is rejected. Further, it is noticed that the mean of reading achievement scores of secondary school girls is greater than that of boys. Hence, it is concluded that the secondary school girls are more effective in reading achievement when compared to boys.

ii. Comparison of Urban and Rural Students in terms of their Reading Achievement

**Table – 2 : Comparison between Urban and Rural Students in their Reading Achievement**

Variable	Urban		Rural		t-value	P-value	Signi.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Reading Achievement	121.57	13.21	117.00	18.36	4.04	< 0.05	Yes

The obtained 't' value 4.04 with respect to Reading Achievement of secondary school urban and rural students is greater than the tabled 't' value (1.97) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school urban and rural students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Achievement is accepted. Further, it is noticed that the mean of reading achievement scores of secondary school urban students is greater than that of rural students. Therefore, it is concluded that the secondary school urban students are better in their performance in reading achievement when compared to rural students.

iii. Comparison of Private and Government School Students in terms of their Reading Achievement

**Table – 3 : Comparison between Private and Government School Students in their Reading Achievement**

Variable	Private		Government		t-value	P-value	Signi.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Reading Achievement	125.17	12.31	116.88	17.96	4.42	< 0.05	Yes

The obtained 't' value 4.42 with respect to Reading Achievement of secondary school private and government students is greater than the tabled 't' value (1.97) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that secondary school private and government students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Achievement is accepted. Further, it is noticed that the mean of reading achievement scores of students studying in private school is greater than that of students studying government schools. Hence, it is concluded that students studying in private schools perform better in their reading achievement test when compared to students studying in Government schools.

iv. Comparison of Students Studying in Kannada and English Medium Schools in terms of their Reading Achievement

**Table – 4 : Comparison between Kannada and English Medium School Students in their Reading Achievement**

Variable	Private		Government		t-value	P-value	Signi.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Reading Achievement	124.32	11.23	115.64	18.34	4.24	< 0.05	Yes



The obtained 't' value 4.24 with respect to Reading Achievement of students studying in Kannada and English medium schools is greater than the tabled 't' value (1.97) at 0.05 level. It is, therefore, concluded that the two groups differ significantly in respect of the variable under consideration. Thus, the hypothesis that Kannada and English medium secondary school students differ significantly in respect of their Reading Achievement is accepted. Further, it is noticed that the mean of reading achievement scores of students studying in Kannada medium schools is greater than that of students studying in English medium schools. Hence, it is concluded that students studying in Kannada medium schools are more commendable in reading achievement when compared to students studying in English medium schools.

## CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of the above analysis and interpretation :

1. Boys and Girls studying in secondary schools do not differ in their Reading Achievement.
2. Students studying in Urban and Rural secondary schools differ in their Reading Achievement.
3. Students studying in Private and Government secondary schools differ in their Reading Achievement.
4. Students studying in Kannada and English medium secondary schools differ in their Reading Achievement.

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