

THE READING HABITS OF FIRST-SEMESTER DIPLOMA UiTM
STUDENTS IN SARAWAK CAMPUS

PREPARED BY:

ROSELIND WEE
JACQUELINE SIM PHEK KIM
ROBERT JOHN JINGUT

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Prof. Dr. Azni Zain Ahmad

Penolong Naib Canselor (Penyelidikan)

Institute of Research, Development and Commercialization (IRDC)

Universiti Teknologi Mara

40450 Shah Alam

Selangor

Prof. Dr.

**FINAL RESEARCH REPORT ON “THE READING HABITS OF FIRST-SEMESTER DIPLOMA
UiTM STUDENTS IN SARAWAK CAMPUS”**

We wish to present the report on “The Reading Habits of First-Semester Diploma Students in Sarawak Campus” as authorized by Institute of Research, Development and Commercialization (IRDC). Enclosed are three copies of the report.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely



Roselind Wee

Head

Research Project

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ABSTRACT

This study was done to investigate the reading habits of 543 first-semester Diploma students by determining how much time per week they spent on reading and examining the reasons for their choice of reading materials. It was found that the majority of the subjects regardless of their family background or programmes that they were in were motivated to read. However, it was discovered that the subjects' motivation to read was very much influenced by the family buying reading materials. Reading to gain knowledge ranked as the most important reason for reading among the subjects. Even though the majority of the subjects stayed in the hostel, the home was considered the most preferred place to read. Night time was also chosen as the best time to read as they were probably busy during the day. Almost all the subjects preferred to read alone. Females were more avid readers than males and scored the higher percentage for reading more than 120 minutes per week compared to the males. Moreover, the females were also the more versatile readers choosing reading materials of various genres compared to the males who were more selective in their preferences of reading materials. In the choice of reading materials, the male and female subjects showed different preferences. Novels were the most popular among the females but the least popular among the males. On the other hand, internet materials were the most popular among the males but the least preferred by the females.

In addition, this study also looked into the factors that motivated them to read. It was found that the subjects tend to choose reading materials that had a content or topic that appealed to them as well as good reviews. Their ability to understand the reading materials also motivated them to read. Reading materials published in Bahasa Malaysia were more favoured. The study showed that the library in UiTMCS provided adequate reading materials even though not many of the subjects chose the library as the most convenient place to read.

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The official national language of Malaysia is Bahasa Malaysia but English is still an important second language, particularly now with the renewed emphasis on the importance of achieving proficiency in the language. English Literature is making a come back after years of neglect. Dr. Khairulmaini Osman Salleh, Dean of University of Malaya's Arts Faculty pointed out that one of the main reasons why English Literature was re-introduced in the school syllabus was the realisation that the teaching of language cannot be effective without the cultivation of a healthy reading habit. He also elaborated that as students generally do not see the relevance of learning literature in schools, teachers have to explain to them the benefits of cultivating a reading habit (The Star, 16 March, 2003).

Biliterate Malaysians speak and understand their own mother-tongue and the national language but there are some who are trilliterate; that is, they speak and understand their own mother tongue, the national language and English (the second language of the country). However, Malaysians by nature do not possess the reading culture. "We are not a reading society but chatting society, the background of learning through culture. The cultural habit of the people is they prefer listening and chatting more than reading" (Sangkaeo, 1999).