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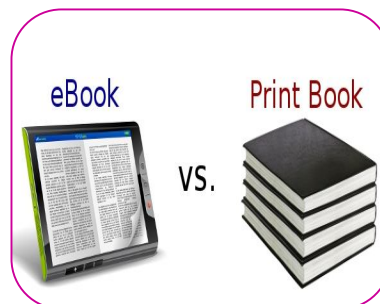
E-BOOKS VERSUS PRINT BOOKS

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Aim of paper: This research paper aims at understanding the origins of reading. There is a constant battle between what is important- the print or the e-medium, people have their own preferences but the comparison between what is best and the need of the day is what the paper focuses on telling the readers.

ABSTRACT:

Technology has taken over our lives and now has replaced our bookshelves. The avid reader was once proud of their book shelves is now addicted to reading online and is focused on stacking their e-book shelves. The technology is quite effective these days and easy to use by purchasing and preferring the e-reading gadgets, this is the future of reading

Keywords: e-book shelves , emerging technologies , literacy theory focuses.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
a.   New Literacy Theory

The New Literacy Theory focuses on how the emerging technologies exploit the potentials of the old school method of reading from the print. Coiro (2003) Kinzer and Leander (2003) the new literacy theory focuses on the emergence of the web pages, the gaming technologies and the search engines and many more which may yet to be arrived all of this ultimately has changed the pattern of literacy in a classroom at home as well as in social gatherings, these changes intentionally or unintentionally have affected the environment and we have lost the art of communication, art of reasoning and thinking, as the information is presented to us in a digitized form, all the discussions have however shrink in all the set-ups and hence there is a lack of literacy and emergence of a new literacy. Also before there was only the print medium through which information was passed through the newspapers and books, but now with the advent of new literacy there is information which is shared through posts, blogs and links as well, which has made the print decline and screens and new technology has overpowered the old school printed materials, this is the new literacy theory which focuses on the eruption of modern websites and links which make the print stand low.

b.   Media Displacement Theory:

The media displacement theory was studied in detail by Lazarsfield (1940) which focused on how one medium has replaced the other for example, the television had replaced the radio, the displacement of the new technologies were in focus for decades , movie theatres had replaced VCRs and like that in today's digital age the e-books have taken over print books. In this case further Robinson and Alvarez (2002) discussed on how the two activities are similar in function, but the new activities take over, the more the better, the new media takes over and fulfils all of the functions of the previous media and so it is successful. This is the working of the Media Displacement Theory.

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c.   Information Foraging theory

In working of the Information Foraging Theory the focus here is on the Technological innovation, today the internet provides a host of information and research articles all at one go under the www websites and thus this gives growth to the recorded information. People find it easy to access the information thus also they lack the basic time, attention and patience to browse books at a library, and in comparison find that the internet is the fastest means of gaining the required information. So when we put this theory in practice, it is obvious that people would like to browse information at their convenience and comfort of a home, and that people generally lack the attention and patience span to invest their time at libraries, this is the present scenario today and this is how the information foraging theory works with regard to literacy.

METHODOLOGY:

The research is purely qualitative, the study critically examines on the emergence of the screen culture and the decline of books. Using the descriptive method of approach, various articles, books were read and reviewed. The scope for future research is that it can encourage people to appreciate the old style of visiting libraries and reading more print books. The study also supports various theories related to e-books and print books.

i)   History and Growth of books

The word reading is derived from old English language and it means to gain knowledge, or also gather up, in German language the word means to counsel, reading is mostly done in order to enrich our language and knowledge. One should also know about the history of books which date back to the nineteenth century. When the books were discovered, they were always considered to be a 'source of communication', Reading and the growth of books have come a long way and shown a great transformation in the recent years.

As an age old tradition, various philosophers, scholars, librarians all of them gained knowledge through books so we can say that the history of books did not begin recently or just yesterday, but has been there since the time of renaissance. The field of literature has shown tremendous growth and has created a whole new revolution, from the printed pages of journals and articles to the digital screen reading, Books have redefined the set-up and the reading behaviour of all people and among all the strata of society. The main aim of reading is to associate and engage with the ideas of learned people and have discussions with others.

With the modern development the new generation has adopted the modern means of embracing device reading. This phenomenon is called the e-reading. E-book or electronic book is defined as the presentation of electronic files on digital displays, the highlight of the e-books is that the moving imagery and the audio is also presented. Today's generation is being dependent on the gadgets that there is a lack of contact with the old school libraries and also the feel of print is absent. One should never forget that reading a book is an experience of its own, and to be submerged in the feeling of holding a book and reading has lost its charm in the world of e-reading devices.

ii)   Evolution of reading

Books and the process of reading has seen a transformation, it is very difficult to convince the young generation to embrace books in the period of easy digitisation, however there are youngsters who read a lot of print, but certainly screens again overpower. The main attraction and reason of this evolution is the start of smart devices like Amazon and Kindle which actually give a feel of a real book, though the pages of the book are viewed in a screen, there are multiple options of turning the page, accompanied by the sound of a page turning so what happens is that it feels and looks so real that automatically a person is attracted to it.

But though these digital technologies are ruling, there are certain effects that these changes can take place in the mind of a person addicted to these e-devices. Just as excessive use of social media harms

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the person's mind, these devices are also digital and prolonged usage might cause a lot of disturbance. So all these factors play a vital role, though there has been a stupendous success of these devices, however when we welcome these new technologies there is a decrease in the traditional reading practices and again there is a problem and various differences in encoding and decoding the messages. So the evolution has certainly reached a point where the children actually do not know how to properly read and write .The screen lacks the art of gaining knowledge and in fact more focused on the entertainment value, where children as well as adults feel that the devices are attractive and also less time-consuming. This drastic transformation and evolution has taken place over the ages and the preference is entirely shifted to digitisation of reading.

iii) Role of libraries v/s The role of screens

Pleasure of reading and reading from the screen requires a different fuel. Reading from the books requires a lot of effort than reading from the screen. There is a lot of patience required when it comes to embracing physical reading. Unlike reading from devices the concept is easy as with just one swipe one can read the book.

In libraries one gets a variety of information, also one should understand that there is a certain discipline one gains by entering so, which is absent in the working of the screen culture, so the libraries teach us various traits that are important- patience, discipline and hard work rather than smart work.

In the reading that is done through the devices, there are various negative effects of it to start with though it may be done in the luxurious way of being in the comfort of your space, but the library culture teaches us the 'art of socialization' there can be various advantages to it, joining a library can make one expand contacts, have reading and book club sessions and meetings that will only boost and enhance one's knowledge as well as develop a lot of self-confidence which in the other scenario is not possible, as the person is left isolated only with their gadget.

Also academic libraries have an open stock and access to journals and books that may not be easily available online, at times a researcher may not find an important article online but my find it in a physical library, when the online sites promise the access to international journals and articles there can also be cases where the article may be accessed with great difficulty only when you are a member. So here again the physical books and libraries are preferred more and there can be various other problems when it comes to stocking of books and of e-books, where the books are stocked easily in a library physically, the stocking of e-books might be a task, as the librarian or concerned staff must be an expert in online management of books and be regular to update all the volumes of books, articles only then the e-book will be of help to the reader, the frustration levels are high when compared to the stocking and updating of e-books. All of these factors are necessary to keep in mind, and as technically we are advancing again it also requires us to be smart readers and make our choices wisely, so when it comes to reading both may be preferred or only the importance may be given to the online version, but the "easy accessibility" is what gains the attention of the reader.

iv) Reduces Reading Comprehension

Traditionally a text is defined as a "written down message and symbols in forms of books, magazines and newspapers", today for an overall development people should be encouraged and exposed to reading more of books, e-books carry a multi-dimensional effect on the mind, and with the animation that is on screen is not which one can feel on paper and that will not impact the brain, hence causing the knowledge and creativity to shrink.

E-books have the power of animation and some opt for audio books as well so that is a main distraction as the message is gained through the screens and further it only has a limited motivation, so compared to it the print books increase a person's attention and comprehension span more, the print makes the information less attractive but makes the reader attentive, whereas the screens make one robotic. Also the e-reading can lead to low achievement levels, it may make the child literate but also the mind will be

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multi-dimensional looking for pictures, audio or other disturbances that might occur in the screen, and as for the books there is only one goal to be fixed to the page an reading an d then improving one's reading speed and vocabulary as well.

The print version of reading will always will give a word recognition power, the impact will always be high. In the digital format, there are chances of being careless and the information will not remain effective and clear for a long period of time, so in the print version the power of discussion, retaining the information all of it sees a high level of improvement. This is how it effects the reading and attention levels in comparison with the print and e-books.

v) Technological and Privacy Issues

E-Books can only be viewed on our electronic systems, sometimes technology can be a great source of immediacy and it becomes easy for the e-books to view, but can also create technical complications, one of the reasons of easy viewing shifts to technology being a great issue, at times there can be difficulties in uploading files, system failures are common, and in this case when the reader demands or wants an access to the whole document online and it fails to download or access, then e-books can be quite bizarre.

Many times there are also privacy issues and doubts that are in the mind of many. Sometimes to gain the access of the document it is necessary to provide basic details of mail, phone, addresses and at other times credit and debit details, in all these cases the reader would wanted to ensure that the site is a reputed one and only then subscribe, so keeping all these issues in mind, people prefer to read a physical book instead. Also at other times not everyone can afford technological gadgets and kindles so in these cases the printed physical books are still relevant today. Risk can be one of the added problems and not everyone prefers to take technical risks. Unfortunately privacy and technological issues is one of the most important factors which is relevant when comparing the effects of e-books and print books.

vi) Challenges of Preservation

Centuries ago, there were dedicated libraries which owned and preserved a lot of books for future references, but now the scenario is changed even libraries have a huge collection of e-books, physical book preservation needs a lot of care and is generally preserved as there is no digital content available, but some of this content has now been converted to e-books much to the relief of people who prefer only e-books and easy browsing of content. But again the challenge is that these e-books require a lot of constant upgrading in order to maintain the e-book files, the software should be licensed and updated and these have special preservation agencies (third party organizations dedicated to the people who purely preserve the digital content) and since 2005 a lot of academic content has been published online and it is one of the logical ways of preservation for the academic community.

vii) Rise and Dip in Sales

The rise in e-reading culture has seen a new high and people have definitely replaced the screen with the print, these days, people prefer to scroll down their e-content at their own comfort. The sales of the e-reading devices sees a high rise during the holiday gift-giving season, Ownership and sales of kindle devices also shoot up, in order to turn tables this can be moderated by the libraries and literary associations who can encourage the sales and promotion of more of books rather than the digitized content only then the audience will prefer to buy more of print, encourage and embrace print and arrange workshops and speak more on the effects of reading a book rather than on a device, though the devices face a high number of customers, some of these devices can be quite costly and also with only access to a limited material, so print gives us a wide choice and the devices give us a limited exposure but because today everything has become highly mechanized the devices have become trendy, so one can read more and spread awareness about the importance of print only then the rise in print can see a new high compared to the current scenario where the e-books are widely read.

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viii) CONCLUSION

The future of reading is definitely digitized, reading has a blurry future and the digitized screens overpower the good old print, for the development of minds and the proper functioning of the literary world more of books should be embraced and preference to print be given, as there is not one but many other aspects which are at a toll and though devices make us look smart, the print definitely increases and encourages the mind to be more free to discuss, debate and socialize, with the libraries being a community of their own the e-medium may have an impact but not yield the best results with regard to communication and free discussion, the digital form still makes us a little alienated whereas the print acts as a more preferred public medium.

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