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## READING CLUB: AN ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT

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**DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.7160730**

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### **Abstract:**

*This study analysed the outcomes of participating in a reading club on enhancing faculties' positive interactions with students and positive thinking. A commutative 180 faculties have participated in the reading club. The Questionnaire was used to measure how effective. Besides, results were used to triangulate and elucidate the findings. The findings revealed that the Reading club activity helps the faculty for self-development drastically and improves their communication skills and personality development. It also allows for Curriculum development and delivery for which they meant also study reveals the teacher's perception about reading the books and articles available in the library and online. Also, it uncovers that reading club activity is one of the activities to improve interpersonal skills, research skills, communication skills, etc. among the RIT teaching fertility. As a faculty, one must undergo research, need to build, and deliver a curriculum strongly, and portray the changes happening outside the world. Book Reading is quite a boring activity (Alun Hughes), but, as a faculty, one must possess the habit of reading. This paper highlights the book reading activity in Rajarambapu Institute of Technology, Sakharale (Western Maharashtra, India).*

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**Keywords:** *Book Club, Reading Club, Library Activity, Book Reading, Book preferences, RIT*

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### **Introduction:**

A reader's path is like a hack through a forest, with distinct twists and turns, entanglements, and unexpected turns. (Holden et al., 2004) This reading club activity aims to improve the faculty's reading habits and inculcate the institute's reading culture. The practice demands reading of books other than technical like biography, motivational, leadership development etc. It helps broaden the persona and perspectives of the readers. The faculty members share their reading content and experiences with other

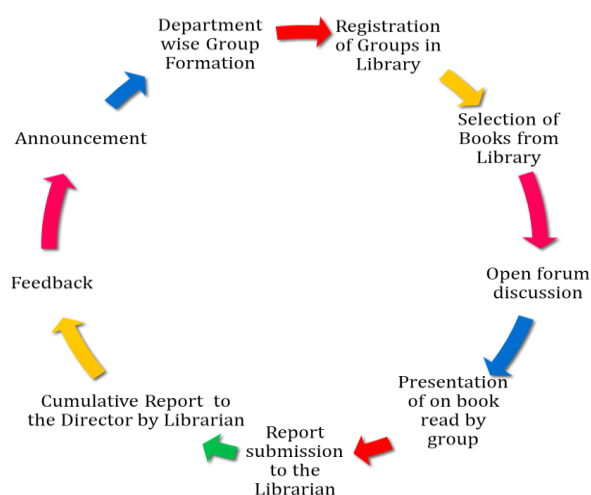
department faculty members. Hence, another objective of this practice is to initiate the idea exchange among the faculty members, thereby promoting their presentation skills and cohesion. Reading Club Activity is one of the best practices Rajarambapu Institute of Technology, Sakharale (Western Maharashtra, India). RIT organizes yearly, and NAAC also appreciates this best practice. Where faculties from all the departments make a group and select the Book or Journal to read. Institute provides 11 months to

complete the book or journal to individual faculty. Faculty and their groups present their views on the book or journal in front of department heads and other faculty members. RIT's Central Library has started the Reading Club Activity to enhance the reading habits of the faculty. The benefits of reading are mental stimulation, stress reduction, knowledge, vocabulary expansion, more vital analytical thinking skills, improved focus and concentration, and better writing skills along with personality development of the faculty members. The NAAC committee members, during their visit to the institute, had interacted with faculty members on reading habits and were advised to read non-technical texts to improve thinking and language skills. The management then weighed in on this suggestion and decided to implement this practice. In reaccreditation of college there are many types library activities, it needs to overlook by NAAC. (Salunke & Hemade, 2020)

### Reading Club Initiatives At Rajarambapu Institute of Technology:

The groups of faculty members are formed in each department for reading and knowledge-sharing discussions. The faculty groups are formed voluntarily. The ideal group size recommended is five faculty members, and care is taken not to have less than three or more than five members. One of the group members acts as a coordinator. The coordinator ensures that all members are actively reading and participating in the group. Reading Club activities are conducted in all departments, and the HOD coordinates the activities. HOD plays the role of facilitator and encourages the faculty members in the department to participate in the activity. A particular theme is selected for the year,

and the readers are expected to choose the book based on the theme. For 2019-20 the theme chosen was a motivational book. For 2020-21, the theme chosen was any article selected and read from the engineering education journal JEET (Journal of Engineering Education Transformations). At the end of the year, a meeting of all reading groups within the department is held and the members share their reading experiences with each other. The coordinator facilitates the discussions. The report is prepared and submitted to Central Library.



*Graph1- Process*

### Objective:

1. To measure the faculty's feedback towards the usefulness of the Reading Club activity.
2. To measure the faculty's involvement in preparing and delivering Contemporary knowledge to students.
3. To determine the reading preferences of faculties of engineering institutions in terms of academics and general reading.
4. To analyse the impact of the reading club on curriculum development, delivery, and assessment of engineering and management faculty.

**Scope:**

The scope of the current study is limited to evaluate the best practices and library activity of Reading Club by the faculty members (Including Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor) of Rajarambapu Institute of Technology, Islampur, (Maharashtra) India. The data is to be analysed with the help of tables, graphs and others statistical methods as per the need

**Research Methodology:**

This study adopts the survey method for data collection, and designed a well-structured Questionnaire developed in Google form. In this data collection tool, both open-ended and closed-ended questions were included. Questionnaires were sent through email and WhatsApp to the faculty members in the month of October 2021. A total of 180 questionnaires were sent, out of which 117 were received back. The collected data were analysed and presented with the help of an MS excel application to fulfill the given objectives.

**Table 1: Year-Wise Activity**

Year	No of faculty	No of Titles books
2016-17	174	42
2017-18	189	50
2018-19	201	52
2019-20	188	51
2020-21	191	72

**Data Analysis:**

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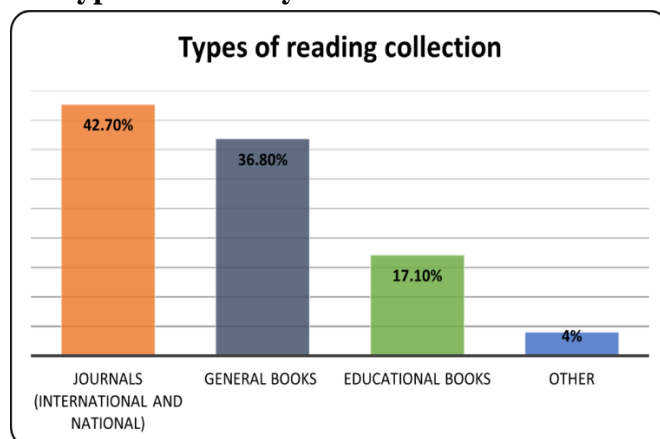
**Table 2: Demographics of The Respondents**

Participates	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	117	65%
No	63	35%

(Source: Primary Data)

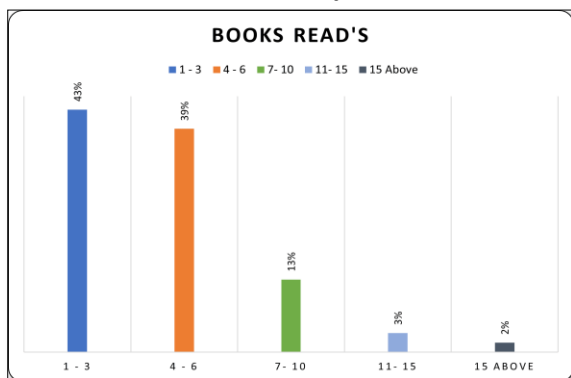
**Observation:**

It is observed that 117 (65%) of the respondents from Rajarambapu Institute of Technology, Sakhrale participated in Reading Club Activity out of 180 respondents.

**Types Of Library Resources Used****Graph 2-Types of Reading Material Preferred by Faculties****Observation:**

Out of the majority of respondents majority, i.e., 43.70% prefer to read Journals (International and National), whereas 17.1% of respondents prefer to read Educational Books and Almost 37% of the respondents prefer to read General Books. It is observed that most respondents prefer general reading books rather than educational/academic resources.

**The Number Of Library Books Reads**



*Graph 3-Number of Books read by faculty*

**Observation:**

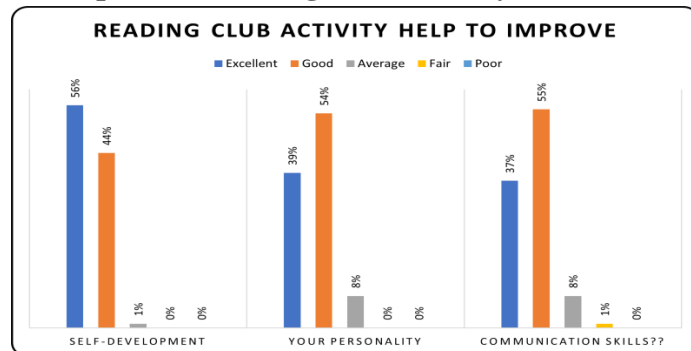
Almost 43% of the faculties have read 1 to 3 Books in the consecutive three years, and very few, i.e., 1.7 % of faculties have read more than 15 books in those three years from the commencement of Reading club activity.

**Table 3- Impact of Reading Club Activity**

Overall Rating	Self-Development	Personality development	Communication skills??:
Excellent	56%	39%	37%
Good	44%	54%	55%
Average	1%	8%	8%
Fair	0%	0%	1%
Poor	0%	0%	0%

(Source: Primary Data)

**Impact Of Reading Club Activity**



*Graph 4-Improvements in various skills because of reading club*

**Observation:**

It is observed from the above table that the highest number (56%) responded that Reading club activity has improved their self-development skill, whereas 54% responded that reading club helps to improve personality development and 54% responded that it develops communication skills of the selected faculty members.

**Table 4- Impact Of Reading Club Activity On Academic Activities**

Overall Rating	Curriculum Development?	Curriculum Delivery?	Research Work/Consultancy Work?	Preparing Student's Project Work?	Improved students' learning too?
Excellent	36%	38%	33%	30%	15%
Good	0	1%	40%	45%	56%
Average	17%	0	23%	19%	16%
Fair	0	0	3%	3%	3%
Poor	0	0	0%	1%	2%

(Source: Primary Data)

**Observation:**

As per the above table number 3, it is observed that Reading Club is highly helping most faculty members with curriculum development and delivery. It also allows for their research and preparing students' project work. Hence it can be interpreted that faculties benefit from the Reading club for Curriculum development and delivery for which they meant.

**Table 5: Top 20 Books Preferred**

Sr. No	Book Name	No of time issued	Percentage %	Total no of readers
1	The Secret	8	4.08	40
2	The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People	7	3.57	35
3	Who Moved My Cheese	7	3.57	35
4	Eat That Frog	5	2.55	25
5	I Have a Dream	5	2.55	25
6	Connect the dots	4	2.04	20
7	Rich Dad Poor Dad	4	2.04	20
8	Wings of Fire	4	2.04	20
9	Change Your Thinking Change Your Life	3	1.53	15
10	Reinventing India	3	1.53	15
11	Take Me Home	3	1.53	15
12	A Monk Who Sold His Ferrari	2	1.02	10
13	Attitude is Everything	2	1.02	10
14	Good To Great	2	1.02	10
15	Ikigai: The Japanese Secret for long and Happy Life	2	1.02	10
16	Mindset: The New Psychology of Success	2	1.02	10
17	Power of Subconscious Mind	2	1.02	10
18	Shivaji The Management Guru	2	1.02	10
19	Stay Hungry, Stay Foolish	2	1.02	10
20	The Alchemist	2	1.02	10

(Source: Primary Data)

**Observations:**

Table 4 shows the list of the top 20 books the faculty members prefer during the reading club activity. It is observed that The Secret book, written by Rhonda Byrne, was read by the highest number

(40) of faculty members and had a top position. The Alchemist book, written by Paulo Coelho, was read by the last position of ten readers. The faculty members prefer non-academic literature to benefit the scheme.

**Table 6: Top Ten Authors Preferred**

Sr.No	Author	No of time issued	%	Total no of readers
1	Rashami Bansal	14	7.14	70
2	Brian Tracy	8	4.08	40
3	Rhonda Byrne	8	4.08	40
4	Johnson Spencer	7	3.57	35
5	Stephen Covey	7	3.57	35
6	A. P. J. Abdul Kalam	4	2.04	20
7	Robert Kiyosaki	4	2.04	20
8	Mashelkar R	3	1.53	15
9	Carol S. Dweck	2	1.02	10
10	Hector Garcia and Francisc Miralle	2	1.02	10

(Source: Primary Data)

**Observations:**

Table 5 describes that Rashmi Bansal is the author preferred by the highest (7.14%) of the readers, followed by Brian Tracy and Rhonda Byrne (4.08), respectively. Hector Garcia and Francesc Miralles are authors preferred by 1.02% of readers.

**Findings:**

- It is found that the majority of the respondents prefer general reading material rather than educational/academic resources. It is observed from the study that Reading club activity helps the faculty for self-development drastically and improves their communication skills and personality development.
- The study revealed that faculty members benefit from the Reading club mostly for Curriculum development and delivery for which they meant.
- Study found that *The Secret* book was written by Rhonda Byrne and read by the highest number of faculty members.
- Rashmi Bansal is a highly preferred author by RIT faculty members. Overall, the study reveals that the Reading Club scheme run by RIT central library has a positive impact on RIT teaching members' reading culture.

**Suggestions:**

- The study suggested that reading educational and other books along with journals is also essential. Organisations or authorities can motivate staff members to read various books other than limiting them to a specific category.

- The RIT library should organize an orientation program about how to choose resources for reading and how to read information sources properly.
- There should also be a need to provide e-resources (E-books, E-Journals, audiobooks) under the Reading Club activity.

**Conclusion:**

This reading club conversation contrasts with our early examples. Does it reflect a real conversation? An interest in each other's ideas and opinions, a discussion based on the themes within the text (e.g., characters' motivations and beliefs) rather than more surface features, and above all, engagement in ideas introduced in the literature. Despite some of our initial concerns that instruction focused on the tools for successful reading, writing, and discussion might impede participants' responses, this conversation illustrates that such tools helped faculty discuss the content of the book and their reactions to the story. The current study examines the impact of Reading Club activity on RIT fertility. Most of the faculty members prefer general reading books, drastically affecting their self-development and improving their communication skills. Finally, the study suggested that the Orientation program/induction program will create awareness about the scheme amongst the library users; therefore, reading club activity will begin and improve the reading habits of the RIT library users.

**Acknowledgments:**

The authors gratefully acknowledge the extended support provided to this work by RIT (Rajarambapu Institute of Technology) for

providing facilities. Finally, the authors would like to express special thanks and gratitude to the Director, RIT for granting the permission to publish/present the research work. The authors also wish to place their sincere thanks to RIT Stakeholder for providing data.

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