Digital Reading Behaviour in Sri Lankan Secondary Education: Cases on Digital Textbook Reading

N.W.W.G.K. Prabhashini

Department of Mass Media, Sri Palee Campus, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

k.prabhashini@gmail.com

The reading behaviour of senior secondary school education transformed from print media texts to hypertext with the advent of digital textbooks. According to Mangen's research (2013), shallow reading behaviours like scanning and skimming are prevalent in digital reading, which causes us to read less intently and shallowly. The easiest way to define the idea of "digital textbooks" is as any digital resource used to improve student learning. This study aimed to investigate the effects of digital reading behaviour on Sri Lankan secondary school education. The study's major goal was to determine how secondary school students' digital reading habits affect them when they use digital textbooks. This study was based on a survey approach, and 325 senior secondary school students in the Western Province of Sri Lanka were given access to an online questionnaire. Of the 323 respondents, the raw data was accurate. *Google doc* was used to produce the questionnaire, which was then shared via WhatsApp. The survey data showed that 115 students still utilized printed textbooks while 188 students stated they used both digital and conventional textbooks. Only approximately 25% of pupils favour using the digital textbook exclusively. 60.7% of students access digital textbooks using a smartphone. The principles of searchability, portability, and accessibility provide the basis for the usage of digital textbooks. Due to technological limitations, a preference for reading only printed books, Internet vulnerabilities, and an inability to read screens, digital textbooks are not widely used. This sample shows that students' perceptions are influenced by their reading behaviour when reading on a digital device. Speedy internet facility, awareness programs on digital textbooks, and increase in infrastructure facility for digital reading can be suggested as recommendations.

Keywords: digital reading, reading behaviour, digital textbook, secondary education, Sri Lanka