



The impact of reading on the human psyche

Khushboo Goyal

Student, VIT Bhopal University, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

ABSTRACT

There are few facts about the impacts of reading on psychological behaviour. They suggest that there are specific ways in which a reader's views and perspectives are broadened. Fiction being the social experience for all, allows us to roam the expanse of space, time, history and offer a deeper view of ideas, concepts, emotions and body of knowledge. Living inside the life of a protagonist, you come across experiences that strengthen you and create from within, a sense of attachment towards others in real life, thus forming a significant amount of empathy in the human psyche. The results hereby show that the openness to experience and creativity make up our basic disposition and being high on this quality as the term implies can make you intellectually curious and flexible in nature to promote acceptance and grieve. The conclusion is that, contrary to the common belief, reading does shape the human psyche in a positive way.

Keywords— *Impact, Psychology, Perspective, Protagonist, Beliefs*

1. INTRODUCTION

In times of psychological development and understanding, new trends are being set every day that support research and surveys, regarding ways to enhance a devoted mindset.

The personality-set-in-stone myth was contradicted in a research conducted by the University of Toronto researchers Maja Djikic and Keith Oatley stated that people choosing the company of prints over peers have a better understanding towards people's emotions and tend to reflect more empathy than the rest. Theories focusing on personality traits convey that reading fiction helps in improving your ability to read people's emotional status and understand the situation from a diverse perspective. Getting worked up over the fates of fictional characters, extrapolating from the area of expertise, it seems plausible that the destabilization can spread to personality trait enhancements beyond empathy.

Now, can a person grip you by his words and you to keep an open mind for his work?" The book is better than the movie", true? Satisfactorily, the answer is a convincing yes and would be discussed further.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Djikic, M., & Oatley, K. (2014). The art in fiction: From indirect communication to changes of the self. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 8(4), 498-505. Doi: 10.1037/a0037999. A 2011 study published in the *Annual Review of Psychology* found overlap in brain regions used to comprehend stories and networks dedicated to interactions with others.

3. WHAT DOES LIGHT READING DO FOR US?

Your brain on books is active—growing, changing and making new connections and different patterns, depending on the type of material you're reading.

3.1 Reading heightens brain connectivity

Our brains change and develop in some fascinating ways when we read. Reading rewires parts of your brain. Maryanne Wolf explains in her book, "Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain"

Human beings invented reading only a few thousand years ago. And with this invention, we rearranged the very organization of our brain, which in turn expanded the ways we were able to think, which altered the intellectual evolution of our species. . . . Our ancestors' invention could come about only because of the human brain's extraordinary ability to make new connections among its existing structures, a process made possible by the brain's ability to be reshaped by experience.

Reading involves several brain functions, including visual and auditory processes, phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension, and more. The same neurological regions of the brain are stimulated by reading about something as by experiencing it.

According to the ongoing research at Haskins Laboratories for the Science of the Spoken and Written Word, reading, unlike watching or listening to media, gives the brain more time to stop, think, process, and imagine the narrative in from of us. Reading every day can slow down late-life cognitive decline and keeps the brains healthier.

3.2 It enhances fluid reasoning

Research shows that reading not only helps with fluid intelligence but with reading comprehension and emotional intelligence as well.

“Fluid intelligence” is that ability to solve problems, understand things and detect meaningful patterns. Reading can increase fluid intelligence, and increased fluid intelligence also improves reading comprehension. Research at Stanford showed a neurological difference between reading for pleasure and focused reading, as if for a test. Blood flows to different neural areas depending on how reading is conducted.

3.3 Reading makes you emotionally intelligence

Fiction is a social experience. The reading process plays an important social function. While reading fiction, you mentally imagine the event, the situation, the characters, and the details described by the author.

4. SURVEY

The survey was done with five questions forming a questionnaire and responses were taken from a group of 10 students. Consisting of two ‘yes or no’ questions and three questions with four options each has been presented where the bar graph shows the responses in a pictorial representation.

Questionnaire

- 1) Do you think reading about hypothetical characters in hypothetical situations promotes empathy in life?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
- 2) Do you think reading about different perspectives can broaden your own?
 - a) agree
 - b) disagree
 - c) partially agree
 - d) strongly disagree
- 3) Can write creative concepts strike up the creativity in you?
 - a) agree
 - b) disagree
 - c) partially agree
 - d) strongly disagree
- 4) Would you be able to come across the number of mindsets in real life as you do while reading?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
- 5) Does your reading ‘genre’, really shape your mindset and psychology?
 - a) Agree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Partially agree
 - d) Strongly disagree

A survey showing the responses of ten students in the form of a bar graph.

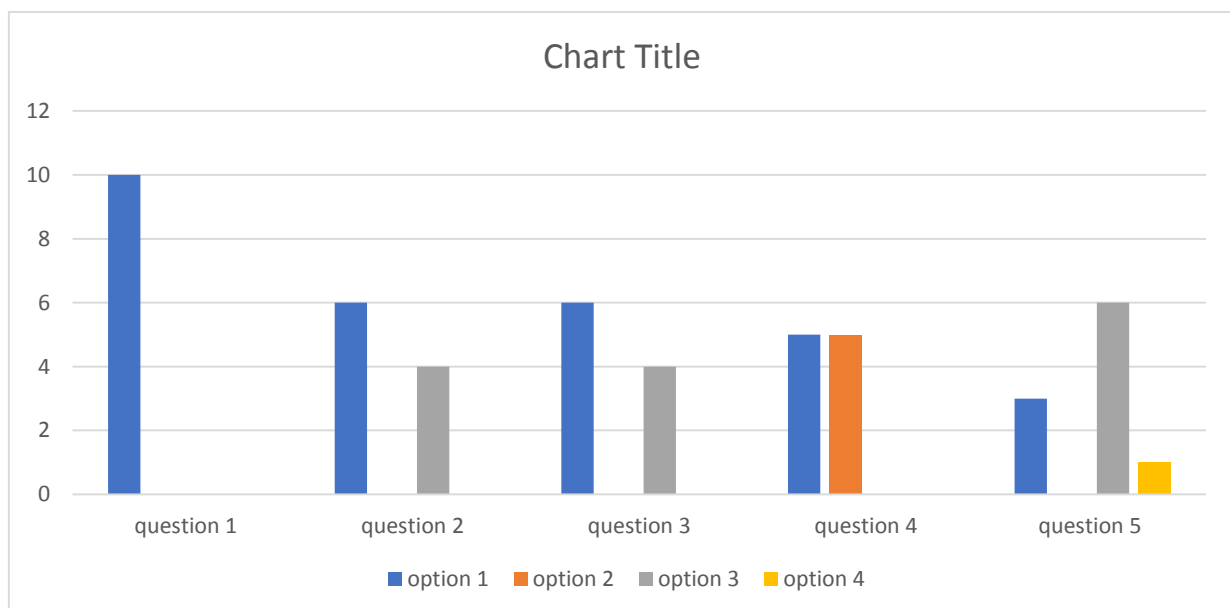


Fig. 1: Survey report

5. CONCLUSION

The following study shows that people who read books on a regular basis are humanly more understanding and tend to be more emotionally stable than those who do not read. Such reading habits promote a healthy psyche in human beings and create a balance in their lives.

6. REFERENCES

- [1] Djikic, M., & Oatley, K. (2014). The art in fiction: From indirect communication to changes of the self. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 8(4), 498-505. Doi: 10.1037/a0037999.
- [2] Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain