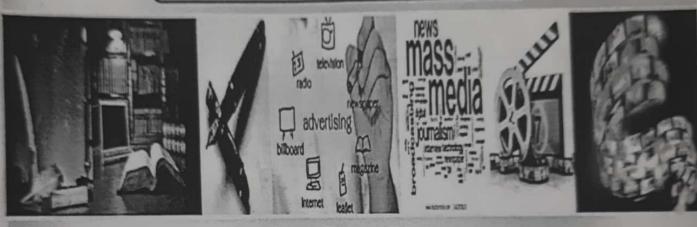
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RESEARCH JOURNEY

International Multidisciplinary E-Research Journal

PEER REFREED & INDEXED JOURNAL
December-2019 Special Issue - 210

साहित्य व्यवहाराचे बदलते स्वरूप



Guest Editor:
Dr. Bhausaheb Game,
Principal,
MGV's Arts & Commerce College, Yeola
Dist. Nashik [M.S.] INDIA

Prof. Raghunath Wakle Dr. Gajanan Bhamare Prof. Sharad Chavhan

Chief Editor: Dr. Dhanraj Dhangar

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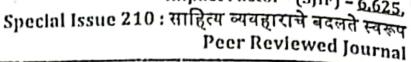
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Impact of Digitization on Reading Culture

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Abstract:

New technical devices are developing continuously to assist and improve our quality of life. Digital books influence children's ability to read, it makes the book interesting and influences literacy and reading. Many critics fear that the digital revolution signifies the death of the printed book. Parents themselves are digital readers but they still prefer to use printed books for their children. A recent study shows that children are more able to assimilate multimodal and digital texts. The new trend of reading on digital devices is no exception to the new generation readers. Digital media offers great possibilities for the creation of valuable, educational as well as engaging reading skills.

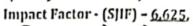
Keywords: Digital, literacy, digital revolution, multimodal, digital text, digital media....

Digitization and all other developments have become a part of our everyday life. Digital developments like E-mails, websites, word processing, computer/ mobile games, various apps etc. have their influences on education in general and literature education in particular. Today being permanently online is considered as normal. New technical devices are developing continuously to assist and improve our quality of life. Reading books are affected by this change. People increasingly prefer the use of digital devices for reading news and literary articles. Reading on these digital devices is different than reading of printed books. Interaction and multimodality are the advantages of a digital text which differs from a printed text. Digital books influence children's ability to read, it makes the book interesting and influences literacy and reading.

Use of internet and more mobile devices has been changing our way of life and behavior immensely. The huge quantities of information through the use of internet can be accessed permanently and content can be easily downloaded every day. People are reading online version of the news on tablets rather daily printed newspaper. It may have serious effects on the publishing industry. Many critics fear that the digital revolution signifies the death of the printed book. Cultural theorist, Ted Striphas argues that,

The book still has an important status in today's society and that print continues to be the most valued medium of knowledge transmission (Striphas, 2009).

Digitalization does not only affect the book and the publishing sector but it also affects the reading habits. Reading online and on digital devices is increasing day by day during the last few years and the use of print media is decreased. This shift is considered as dangerous to our culture and education. Nicholas Carr argues in his book *The Shallows* that reading online makes us stupid, due to the internet's influence on our way of reading. Internet search engine provides endless information within a second. However, due to excess amount of requested results by the



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World Wide Web, it is impossible to read all in depth and detail. Skimming of paragraphs is a more appropriate technique to overcome this problem. Carr states that,

This shift in reading behavior is affecting and transforming our brain, making us incapable of focusing on long texts.

In other words the loss of deep reading skills involves the loss of deep thinking. The ability of concentrating on text is negatively influenced by the use of digital media.

Multimodality is the combination of different modes to create meaning like text, sound and images. A mode is a term used to describe a set of socially and culturally shaped resources for making meaning. Different modes hold different values in the society. The new digital books offer opportunity to use multimodality and more than written text to create meaning. There is a fear that this combination of different media forms in one text could be more distracting. This concern is mentioned by Carr as,

It injects the medium's content with hyperlinks, blinking ads, and other digital gewgaws, and it surrounds the content with the content of all the other media it has absorbed. A new e-mail message, for instance, may announce its arrival as we're glancing over the latest headlines at a newspaper's site. The result is to scatter our attention and diffuse our concentration.

Digital books for children are often interesting and permit the creation of multimodal and interactive books for tablets which can combine sounds, videos, images, animation and text and offer completely new reading experience for children. Parents themselves are digital readers but they still prefer to use printed books for their children. A recent study shows that children are more able to assimilate multimodal and digital texts. They state that,

Children today live in media-saturated homes and communities and that is therefore impossible to exclude children from digital media. (Hisrich, Blanchard, 2009).

Children see their parents, older siblings and everybody else in their environment using digital devices and media. A study by Rachel Levy, an education professor, shows that children are very comfortable with the use of digital media and have no trouble using it. Digitization supports the children's understanding of written text.

Whenever a new writing technology has emerged, it has have always seen as endangering our intellectual property and education.

The intellectual history of reading and writing technologies consists, as it were, of a recursive series of laments about the apparent incapacity of these technologies to represent or manifest fully- the word, presence, personality, meaning, intention, and beyond. It is, moreover, a history so densely laden with contradictions and role reversals that a time when something besides loss and alienation ruled the day seems almost unimaginable. Striphas, 26

The new trend of reading on digital devices is no exception to the new generation readers. Critics fear that through the decrease in reading of print media literacy, our education will spoil significantly through the next years. It means literary culture and skills will worsen and reading as a leisure activity will disappear in half a century. But digitization has altered the relationship of people towards media and their use of technological and digital devices. Devices like GPS systems, smartphones, and tablets are an essential part of society and people spent their time and life with these devices more increasingly day by day. It doesn't mean that people are not spending their time for reading. Reading in fact does not decrease with the use of digital devices.

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It proves that people did not stop reading but there is the trend towards reading online and on digital devices. The main advantage of e-readers and e-books are the facilitation of access of books, transportation and storage issues. One can store a huge number of books in only one small and light device.

In spite of the advantages of digital reading, there are numerous people and young adults who still prefer print books over their digital versions. Many readers prefer a printed book due to its economic value and to an emotional binding to paper books. So it seems that apart from the negative predictions, the printed book is not going away any time soon. Striphas says,

Book (will) remain key artifacts through which vocal actors articulate and struggle over specific interests, values, practices and worldviews. (Striphas, 2009)

The printed book still takes an important place in our society. It still holds the status of the main artifact of education and knowledge transmission. It will not be forgotten or vanish completely. Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin argue that every remediation of a medium depends on its predecessor, which means that the old medium can never be completely erased. The new medium depends on the old one and permanently reminds of it. The new media and technologies we use for reading and learning to read play an important role in shaping our brain. Parents are still skeptical about the use of e-books reading with their children. It is their opinion that a printed book is better in terms of helping children learn how to read. There is not a research study which proves that digital reading is better or worse than print. Digitalization of books does not have negative influence on the publishing sector and children's literary development.

It is undeniable that the growing popularity and development of digital books and digital reading has had immense impact on readers and publishers. The death of book is a biased and premature conclusion. Research shows that younger generations still prefer printed books over the digital due to the emotional bonding and economic value. Digital reading and especially the new technology of enhanced books are closely associated with the theories of multimodality. This development suggests a great possibility to create a new educational reading experience and get them involved and create interest for reading. Children's literary development, the changing ecology of reading should be seen as a development encouraged by changes in culture rather danger to culture. Digital media offers great possibilities for the creation of valuable, educational as well as engaging reading skills and it is time to start using them to get benefit from this development.

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