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THE LEISURE-TIME READING BEHAVIORS OF
PERSONS SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OR OLDER LIVING
WITHIN HOMES FOR THE AGED IN KENT COUNTY,
MICHIGAN.

Michigan State University, Ph.D., 1975
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THE LEISURE-TIME READING BEHAVIORS OF PERSONS
SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OR OLDER LIVING WITHIN HOMES
FOR THE AGED IN KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN

By

Ronald Edward Wolf

A DISSERTATION

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1975

ABSTRACT

THE LEISURE-TIME READING BEHAVIORS OF PERSONS SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OR OLDER LIVING WITHIN HOMES FOR THE AGED IN KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN

By

Ronald Edward Wolf

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this descriptive study was to obtain, analyze, and compare data regarding the leisure-time reading behaviors of persons living within eleven homes for the aged in Kent County, Michigan. The study focused on two major problems: (1) the identification of the leisure-time reading behaviors of the elderly, and (2) a determination as to the relationship between the identified reading behaviors and age, education, sex, former occupation, marital status, and former location of residence of the respondents.

Design of the Study

The population for this study consisted of persons living within eleven homes for the aged in Kent County, Michigan. A simple random sample of 249 respondents living within the homes provided the basis for this study. Of the 249 respondents contacted, all persons responded.

Each respondent was requested to complete a questionnaire which consisted of 18 questions. The instrument, designed by the Researcher and his guidance committee, was entitled Reading Survey. The data were analyzed by the use of t-tests, chi-square tests, product-moment correlations, and analysis of variance. In addition, 66 of the respondents participated in group interviews which served as a follow-up to the questionnaire.

Major Findings

The statistical tests supported the following findings:

1. There is a significant relationship between the time spent in leisure-time reading and variety in reading.
2. There is a significant relationship between variety in reading and sex, education, former occupation, and marital status.
3. There is a significant relationship between the time spent in leisure-time reading and education and former occupations of the respondents.
4. There is a significant relationship between the use of library services and education, sex, former occupation, and marital status.
5. There is a significant relationship between periods of intensive reading and sex, education, and past location of residence.
6. There is a significant relationship between the recognized therapeutic value of reading and education and former occupation.
7. There is a significant relationship between purposes for reading and age, sex, education, former occupation and marital status.

8. There is a significant relationship between reasons for restricted reading and age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status.

The group interviews with the respondents supported the following conclusions:

1. The reading needs of older persons could be more adequately met in retirement homes by: (a) the public library going to older persons with reading programs; (b) an increased supply of large-print books that are broader in the scope of content and of a manageable size, and (c) keeping a fresh supply of books in the homes.

2. Reading is a life-long process and it is extremely difficult to interest non-readers in existing reading programs. Further, the respondents indicated that the most significant factor in developing reading habits was seeing their parents read.

3. The respondents stated that reading, hobbies, and interests in the performing arts do contribute to adjustment in the later years of life.

4. Persons who engaged in reading activities were also socially involved with one another within the homes and with activities outside the homes.

5. Homes with the most viable reading programs were those which had librarians or book services managed by the elderly residents themselves.

DEDICATION

Charlotte, Ronald Jr. and Mary

My Family

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Background

The literature specific to the reading behaviors of the adult reader presents two related problems. First, previous research fails to pursue the possibility that the older reader may not share many traits characteristic of the younger adult reader. Second, leisure-time reading is an important factor in the lives of the older person. The degree of importance is obscured by a lack of research pertinent to older persons as a separately defined population.

Asheim and Gray and Rogers in reviewing the literature concerning the adult reader, establish variables that provide a profile of adult reading behavior. The writers consider education as a primary determinant in the reading behavior of the adult reader.

Asheim writes:

We know that education is the most important influence on reading behavior no matter what the sex, age or economic status of the reader; we know that younger adults read more than older ones; we know that the upper middle income group read more than the lower income groups. No matter how the question has been approached, the same general findings have resulted, and we can state with some certainty that our general picture of the reader is a reliable one.¹

¹Lester E. Asheim, "Research in Mass Communication and Adult Reading," Library Trends, VI (October, 1957), p. 133.

Similarly, Gray and Rogers emphasize the importance of education on the reading behavior of the adult reader. Gray and Rogers state:

To a marked extent, other characteristics of individuals which appear to influence their reading behavior and responses are clearly related to their educational status. It seems valid, therefore, to attach most importance to education as an index both of status in the social structure and of reading behavior.²

The educational generalizations of Asheim and Gray and Rogers raise some important issues concerning the reading behavior of persons sixty-five years or older. An interpretation of data clearly identifies the older adult as having limited education. Baltes and Schaie indicate that in 1970 only 29.3 percent of the aged were educated through high school or beyond.³ Ecklund contends that almost 70 percent of the older population have no more than an eighth-grade education.⁴ If the importance of education as a determinant of reading behavior is correct, it can be logically concluded that persons who are presently sixty-five years or older would not consider reading as an important leisure-time activity.

Some evidence, however, seems to indicate that the generalizations concerning the importance of education does need clarification when applied to the reader who is sixty-five years or older. For

²William S. Gray and Bernice Rogers, Maturity in Reading (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 45.

³Paul B. Baltes and K. Warner Schaie, Life-Span Developmental Psychology (New York: Academic Press, 1973), p. 313.

⁴Lowell Ecklund, "Aging and the Field of Education," in Aging and Society, Vol. II: Aging and the Professions, ed. by M. W. Riley (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1969), p. 328.

example, Riley reports that more than 80 percent of people over 65 years have on the average more than 5 leisure hours on weekdays and 6.5 hours on weekends and holidays.⁵ Further, a survey of 5,000 non-institutionalized adults reflects that the age group of those over 60 years of age read more books and magazines than does a group from 40-60 years.⁶ Reading, an essentially sedentary activity, increases as a leisure-time activity as persons grow older.⁷ Similarly, Clark concludes that reading is an important entertainment and diversion activity for older persons.⁸

The McElroy and Link and Hopf studies provide additional support for the contention that the reading behavior of older persons needs further clarification. Both studies raise some important questions that were never answered by research follow-up probes.

McElroy found that persons sixty-five years or older tend to read with more variety than younger people. McElroy rationalizes the increase as being due to the small number of persons studied and a few percentage points of difference from other groups in the study may not be significant.⁹ McElroy's study poses an important research

⁵Matilda White Riley, Aging and Society, Vol. I, An Inventory of Research Findings (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968), p. 512.

⁶Ibid., p. 516.

⁷Ibid., p. 517.

⁸Margaret Clark, Culture and Aging: An Anthropological Study of Older Americans (Springfield: Charles H. Thomas Publishing, 1967), p. 211.

⁹Elizabeth W. McElroy, "Subject Variety in Adult Reading: I. Factors Related to Variety in Reading," Library Quarterly, XXXVIII (April, 1968), pp. 161-162.

question. Would more significant differences be found if a larger and more clearly defined population of older persons were studied?

It is an interesting fact that Asheim and Gray and Rogers cite the Link and Hopf study as a partial basis for establishing characteristics of adult reading behavior.¹⁰ A careful reading of the Link and Hopf study, however, reveals that there was a slight increase in book reading for active readers at age sixty and over.¹¹ Link and Hopf did not conduct a follow-up study to probe some of the influencing factors specific to that increase. Again, the important question is unanswered. Would additional research provide significant insights into the reading behavior of persons sixty-five years or older? Do persons over sixty-five years form a distinct subgroup to which the profile of the adult reader in general does not apply?

In addition to the unanswered questions posed by previous studies, more research specific to persons sixty-five or older is needed. Kanner writes that life patterns often change for persons at about age sixty-five. The changes involve new social, physiological, and psychological problems. It is assumed that reading activities can contribute in helping older persons adjust to changes in their retirement years. Kanner reiterates that there has been little systematic

¹⁰Asheim, "Communication and Adult Reading," p. 133. See also, William S. Gray and Bernice Rogers, Maturity in Reading, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), pp. 21-44. Both sources refer to the Link and Hopf study as indicative of the importance of education on reading behaviors.

¹¹Henry C. Link and Harry A. Hopf, People and Books (New York: Book Manufacturers' Institute, 1946), p. 62 (see chart).

investigation of the reading interests of older persons. There is strong evidence of the importance of reading in fulfilling a need for the older person seeking entertainment, knowledge, the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity, cultural development, and companionship.¹²

A documentary report of the National Survey of Library Services to the Aging failed to include an evaluation of reading interests and the extent of library use by the older reader. Although an attempt was made to identify research on needs and reading interests of the aging, it was found that there were no current, comprehensive or systematic studies of the needs of users and nonusers of the library service among older individuals. The report suggests further research on the aging person's estimate of his own library needs and desires.¹³

The American Library Association, in planning for the 1971 White House Conference on Aging, requested Wayne State University's Department of Library Science to conduct a survey of services to the aged in several cities with active programs. The study recommended that more data are needed concerning the effectiveness of library services to the aging. Also, there is a need for more research in the areas of reading interests and information needs of the aged. A limitation of the study bears mentioning. Only users of the library

¹²Elliot E. Kanner, "The Impact of Gerontological Concepts on Principles of Librarianship," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1972), p. 57.

¹³U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, Bureau of Libraries and Educational Technology, National Survey of Library Services to the Aging, Washington, D.C., (1971), pp. 1-5. Also, see Phawe II, 1972, pp. 28-29. Also, a citation by Dorothy Romani, "Reading Interests and Needs of Older People," Library Trends, XXI (January, 1973), p. 399.

were interviewed. An inference can be made, therefore, that more research is required concerning the reading needs of nonusers of library services. User and nonuser reading needs may be different.¹⁴

In conclusion, the writers previously cited indicate that more research is needed concerning the reading behaviors of persons sixty-five years or older. Unanswered questions and paucity of research pertinent to the older reader, prevent firm conclusions concerning the reading profile of that group at the present time.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to obtain, analyze, and compare data regarding the leisure-time reading behaviors of persons living within Homes for the Aged in Kent County, Michigan. More specifically, the purpose is to:

1. identify the leisure-time reading behaviors within the specified limits of the research questions, and
2. determine the relationship between the leisure-time reading behaviors and age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents.

Assumptions

1. The reading behaviors of older persons can be more clearly identified when such a group is selected and studied separately.

¹⁴Genevieve M. Casey, "Public Library Service to the Aging," American Libraries, II (October, 1971), pp. 999-1104.

2. The identified reading behaviors of the aged require special library services that motivate a continued interest in reading.

3. Reading is an important social outlet that permits the older reader to fulfill such needs as seeking entertainment, knowledge, spiritual satisfaction, cultural development, and companionship.

4. Reading specialists and librarians can incorporate modern gerontological concepts into programs that present reading as a viable and meaningful activity for older persons.

Definition of Terms

The reader may better understand this study if certain terms are initially clarified.

Leisure-time Reading Behaviors

Leisure-time reading behaviors are defined as acts specific to reading books, magazines and newspapers during recreational periods of the day.

Homes for the Aged

Homes for the Aged are defined as those establishments or institutions other than hospitals, hotels or nursing homes which provide room and board to non-transient unemployed individuals 65 years or older.

Variety in Reading

Variety in reading is defined as a frequency count of different categories of books, different kinds of magazine articles, and the different parts of the newspaper read during leisure-time.

Time Spent in Leisure-time Reading

Time spent in leisure-time reading is defined as the number of hours, or fractions thereof, which are used reading books, magazines, or newspapers during recreational periods.

Use of Library Services

The use of library services is defined as the knowledge of library services provided in Homes for the Aged and the use to which this knowledge is put in obtaining library services.

Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is defined as periods of time identified by each respondent during which most reading takes place.

Therapeutic Value of Reading

The therapeutic value of reading as identified by a respondent will be construed as that which relieves psychological tensions, helps to solve problems, or helps respondents feel better about themselves.

Purposes for Reading

Purposes for reading are defined as the expressed reasons for reading a specific book or magazine article by respondents during the past year.

Restricted Reading

Restricted reading is defined as the subjectively expressed explanations by each respondent for not spending more time reading during leisure-time.

Limitations of the Study

This study is a survey of the leisure-time reading behaviors of persons sixty-five or older living within Homes for the Aged in Kent County, Michigan. The respondents surveyed will be selected at random from the total population in those homes.

The leisure-time reading behaviors of those selected will be measured by a Reading Survey questionnaire. No attempt will be made to generalize beyond the population of this study. The investigator concedes that the responses disclosed will be reported as perceived responses and not of fact.

Research Questions

If the reading behaviors of persons living in Homes for the Aged are to be recognized and understood, the following research questions should be considered:

1. Is the variety in reading related to the amount of time spent in leisure-time reading?
2. Is the variety in reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents?
3. Is the time spent in leisure-time reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents?
4. Is the use of library services related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents?
5. Are periods of intensive reading related to sex, education, and past location of residence of the respondents?
6. Is the recognized therapeutic value of reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of respondents?
7. Are purposes for reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of respondents?
8. Are reasons for restricted reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of respondents?

The answers to the research questions posed in the present study will enable administrators of Homes for the Aged, librarians, and reading specialists to:

1. Better recognize the specific leisure-time reading behaviors of persons living in Homes for the Aged.
2. Better understand the role of reading in the lives of persons living within Homes for the Aged.
3. Assist those concerned with meeting the leisure-time reading needs and interests of persons in Homes for the Aged to be more effective in planning reading programs based on assessed information.

Organization of Subsequent Chapters

The content of Chapter I has included a background for the study, purpose of the study, definition of terms, research hypotheses, methodology and organization of subsequent chapters.

In Chapter II a review of the literature related to the study is presented. It includes a discussion of the reading behaviors of adults specific to reading books, magazines, newspapers, and purposes for reading.

Chapter III comprises a description of the methodology used in the study. The sample will be a simple random selection of persons living within eleven Homes for the Aged in Kent County, Michigan.

Chapter IV organizes, analyzes, and presents the data and findings of the study.

Chapter V presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study as based on the findings.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The research needs identified in the preceding chapter establish the older reader as a distinct group for further study. A problem arises, however, in a review of the literature. Research studies dealing exclusively with persons sixty-five years or older are virtually nonexistent.¹⁵ Therefore, the present review of the literature will concentrate on the adult reader rather than the aged reader only. Specific references will be included pertaining to the reading behaviors of the aged when research data exist. The literature for the present study will deal with adult book and periodical reading behavior. Three major questions will be considered:

1. Who are the adult readers?
2. What do adults read?
3. Why do adults read?

Who Are the Adult Readers?

Research identifying the adult reader is descriptive in nature. The researchers describe respondents by making relationships

¹⁵Kanner, "Gerontological Concepts on Librarianship," p. 111. Kanner's study is the most recent review of the literature specific to studies on reading behaviors of the aged.

between reading behavior and demographic characteristics such as education, age, and socio-economic status.

Educational Characteristics

Studies establish a correlation between formal education and reading behavior. The relationship applies to the reading of books and periodicals. Link and Hopf reported in a study of 4,000 persons that formal education was the most significant influence on adult book reading.¹⁶ Similarly, Berelson's study of 1,151 adults and McElroy's research on the reading preferences of 712 adults substantiated the importance of education on reading behavior.¹⁷

Adult reading of periodicals also relates to educational attainment. Schramm and White in a study of 746 adults found that readers with less education used the newspaper for entertainment, sensational news, and pictorial content.¹⁸ In contrast, the more highly educated reader read the newspapers for information on public affairs.¹⁹ Bogart's study of 1,991 adults further indicated that

¹⁶Henry C. Link and Harry A. Hopf, People and Books (New York: Book Manufacturer's Institute, 1946), pp. 158-160.

¹⁷Bernard Berelson, The Library's Public (New York: Columbia University, 1950), pp. ix-x, 49-50; Elizabeth McElroy, "Subject Variety in Adult Reading: Phase I, Factors Related to Variety in Reading," Library Quarterly, XXXVIII (April, 1968), p. 154.

¹⁸Wilbur Schramm and David M. White, "Age, Education, and the Economic Status as Factors in Newspaper Reading," in Mass Communication, ed. by Wilbur Schramm (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1949), pp. 402-405.

¹⁹Ibid.

better educated readers were more apt to obtain news from more than one medium and they relied more on newspapers.²⁰

Factors of education also interested Lazarfeld and Kendall in a reported survey of 3,529 adults.²¹ The researchers found that as the level of formal education declined, so did the readership of magazines.²² Nearly all college graduates reported they were regular readers of magazines and less than half of the respondents with a grade school education could make a similar response.²³

Age Characteristics

Age factors present a complex and contradictory picture pertinent to adult reading behavior. Asheim writes that younger adults read more than older adults.²⁴ That generalization, however, does not agree with some other studies. Opinion Research Corporation conducted a survey of 5,000 adults and found that, although younger readers did read more books, there was an upturn in the reading of books for those

²⁰Leo Bogart, "Changing News Interests and the News Media," Public Opinion Quarterly, XXXII (1968-1969), pp. 560-562.

²¹Paul F. Lazarfeld and Patricia Kendall, Radio Listening in America (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1948), pp. 1-10. The reader is also referred to Appendix B for sample description. See also Paul F. Lazarfeld, Radio and the Printed Page (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1940), p. 136.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Asheim, "Mass Communication and Adult Reading," p. 133.

over age sixty.²⁵ Also, Lyman reported that, while younger people read more books than persons forty-five years or older, active readers in the older age groups read more than the younger respondents.²⁶

Two other studies create more questions about the relationship of age and reading behavior. Link and Hopf stated there was a decrease in book reading with an increase in age.²⁷ Yet, an examination of the data in that study shows an increase in book reading at age sixty and over.²⁸ McElroy concluded that the proportion of readers in each age group generally declined with an increase in age.²⁹ The researcher stated, however, there was a slight tendency for persons sixty years and older to read with more variety than younger readers.³⁰

Studies pertaining to adult periodical reading reinforce the conclusion that younger readers read more. Lyman found magazine readership greatest in the age group from sixteen to thirty-four. Magazine readership decreased with a proportionate increase in age.³¹ Wade and Schramm similarly found a decrease in magazine readership

²⁵Wilbur Schramm, "Aging and Mass Communication," in Aging and Society, Vol. II, Aging and the Professions, ed. by Matilda White Riley (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1969), pp. 360-361.

²⁶Helen H. Lyman, Library Materials in Service to the Adult New Reader (Chicago: American Library Association, 1973), p. 285.

²⁷Link and Hopf, People and Books, pp. 62-63.

²⁸Ibid. See the chart which presents the research data.

²⁹McElroy, "Variety in Reading," pp. 161-167.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Lyman, Adult New Reader, pp. 267-268.

among persons sixty years and older.³² Larson's description of the newspaper circulation struggle between Paddock Publications and Field Enterprises clearly favored the younger reader over the elderly reader as a newspaper consumer.³³

The preceding studies include the older reader as part of the adult reader in general. Such research can tend to obscure the exact reading behavior of the elderly reader which might be better studied as a separate group. Some such studies follow.

Beyer and Woods conducted a survey of 5,202 elderly persons and found reading to be an important leisure time activity.³⁴ Approximately 60 percent of them reported reading something during the previous day. The actual time spent on reading activities varied, but about half of the respondents devoted an hour per day to reading activities.³⁵ Buswell in a study of 700 elderly veterans indicated that book reading was a major leisure time activity for the veterans.³⁶ Schramm studied the interviews of 5,000 social security beneficiaries

³²Serena Wade and Wilbur Schramm, "The Mass Media As Sources of Public Affairs, Science, and Health Knowledge," Public Opinion Quarterly, XXXIII (1969), p. 199.

³³Carl M. Larson, "The Struggle of Paddock Publications Versus Field Enterprises, Inc.," Journalism Quarterly, XXXVIII (Winter, 1971), pp. 700-706.

³⁴Glenn H. Beyer, Housing and Society (New York: MacMillan Company, 1945), p. 417.

³⁵Ibid., p. 424. Beyer did not, however, detail the types of reading completed, (i.e., books, magazines, and newspapers).

³⁶Christa H. Buswell, "Our Other Customers; Reading and the Aged," Wilson Library Bulletin, XXXV (January, 1971), pp. 471-472.

and stated, ". . . almost 45 percent of all leisure hours available to these old people were spent on media activities--television, reading, radio, and records."³⁷

Determining the importance of magazines and newspaper reading was the purpose of Schramm's study, which involved 925 members of a senior citizens' club.³⁸ More than 80 percent of the aged read a newspaper every day or nearly every day. The respondents also read an average of three magazines regularly.³⁹

Socio-economic Characteristics

Another area of research has involved socio-economic characteristics and adult reading. The discussion will focus on books, newspapers, and magazine reading.

Peil studied library use by ninety-eight mothers who lived in a low-income area of Chicago.⁴⁰ Results of the study demonstrated a relationship between library use and personal reading habits. The mothers who used the library read more books than those who did not. Further, mothers thirty years of age were more likely to use the library than mothers who were older or younger than thirty.⁴¹ The reasons for that behavior were not determined.

³⁷Wilbur Schramm, "Aging and Mass Communication," in Aging and Society, Vol. II, Aging and the Professions, ed. by Matilda White Riley (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1969), pp. 360-361.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 363-364.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Margaret Peil, "Library Use of Low-Income Chicago Families," Library Quarterly, XXXIII (October, 1963), p. 329.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 333.

Berelson also determined a relationship between library use and socio-economic status.⁴² The researcher completed an analysis of studies specific to library use and users published since 1930.⁴³ The study concluded that the library tended to serve the middle class, defined either by occupation or by economic status, more than either the upper or lower social classes.⁴⁴ Berelson contended that the library, as a source of information, did not serve most people.⁴⁵

Lyman and McElroy found a correlation between reading behavior and occupations. Lyman indicated that persons in clerical and service occupations were book readers.⁴⁶ McElroy stated that readers with higher incomes read more than those with lower incomes.⁴⁷ Part-time women workers read more than housewives. Also, persons over age sixty-five who worked read with more variety than individuals of the same age who retired.⁴⁸

Other studies also related economic status, race, and occupational status to reading behaviors. Schramm and White reported an increase in the reading of sports and society news by readers with a

⁴²Berelson, Library's Public, pp. 49-50.

⁴³Ibid., pp. ix-x

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 49-50.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 18.

⁴⁶Lyman, Adult New Reader, p. 285.

⁴⁷McElroy, "Variety in Reading," pp. 161-167.

⁴⁸Ibid.

higher economic status.⁴⁹ Bogart similarly found that persons with higher incomes showed the strongest orientation to newspapers.⁵⁰

Lyman stated a higher percentage of white readers read newspapers daily and more Black readers read newspapers a few times a week.⁵¹

Lyman further indicated that retired persons and those readers in blue collar occupations read magazines less than individuals in other occupations.⁵²

Summary

The present review of studies considered the relationship of adult reading behavior to education, age, and socio-economic status. Education closely correlated to adult reading behavior no matter what the age or socio-economic status of the reader indicated. Persons in the higher income groups read more than persons in the lower income levels. Although studies comparing age and quantity of reading generally found that younger readers read more, studies concentrating on the elderly did find that these persons devote large amounts of leisure time to reading. The exact nature or characteristics of that reading behavior is not clearly detailed. Therefore, generalizations concerning the characteristics of the elderly reader, studies as a separate social group, are not possible from these studies.

⁴⁹Schramm and White, "Factors in Newspaper Reading," pp. 404-405.

⁵⁰Bogart, "Interests and News Media," p. 573.

⁵¹Lyman, Adult New Readers, pp. 243-244.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 267-268.

What Do Adults Read?

Literature concerning the types of books read by adults concentrates on the areas of fiction and non-fiction. The research emphasis on periodical reading pertains to newspaper and magazine topics. Although great diversity in adult reading exists, there are reading trends that research identifies specific to adult reading behavior.

The Reading of Fiction and Non-Fiction

The reading of fiction and non-fiction represents a high proportion of adult reading. Link and Hopf reported that 58 percent of their adult sample read fiction and 42 percent who read non-fiction.⁵³ Lyman reported that 58 percent of the titles reported by respondents. Fiction and non-fiction represented 110 titles.⁵⁴ Lyman reported that 58 percent of the titles reported by respondents enjoyed reading short stories, novels, biographies, and plays. Plays, scientific writing and essays were least popular with the respondents.⁵⁵ Peil also reported that the low-income women preferred reading murder mysteries.⁵⁶

Berelson compared library clientele with the types of books circulated. Women borrowed slightly more light fiction than men.⁵⁷

⁵³Link and Hopf, People and Books, p. 71.

⁵⁴Lyman, Adult New Reader, p. 286.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 287.

⁵⁶Peil, "Low Income Families," p. 331.

⁵⁷Berelson, Library's Public, pp. 68-69.

Javelin reported a survey of elderly readers completed by the Boston Public Library during 1967.⁶⁵ Results of the study revealed that senior citizens read mysteries, light romantic novels, biographies, recent fiction, nature and animal stories, and travel adventures. The older readers indicated least interest in books of humor, religion, poetry, the classics, current events, and politics.⁶⁶ Buswell's study of elderly military veterans in an institutionalized setting closely correlated with Javelin's report in these findings.⁶⁷

Blakely states that elderly users of library services in Milwaukee preferred mysteries, westerns and gothic novels.⁶⁸ The older readers also requested such books as Portnoy's Complaint, Oh Calcutta, and Everything That You Wanted to Know About Sex But Were Afraid to Ask. In addition, older persons requested non-fiction books concerning biographies, travel, and handicraft.⁶⁹ Delvalle, in a study of the aged in a nursing home environment, found similar results. Delvalle's respondents were, however, least interested in books pertaining to nature, religion, sports, westerns, and science fiction.⁷⁰

⁶⁵Muriel C. Javelin, "Services to the Senior Citizen," American Libraries, I (February, 1970), p. 133.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Buswell, "Reading and Aged," pp. 472-473.

⁶⁸Darlene Blakely, "Milwaukee Library Goes to the Elderly," Wisconsin Library Bulletin, LXVI (July, 1970), p. 210.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰June Delvalle, Dulcy B. Miller, and Mary Saldicco, "Reading Patterns of the Aged in a Nursing Home Environment," Association of Hospital and Institution Libraries Quarterly, VI (Winter, 1966), pp. 8-11.

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The Reading of Fiction and Non-Fiction

The reading of fiction constitutes a high proportion of adult reading. Link and Hopf determined that 58 percent of their adult sample read fiction as contrasted with 37 percent who read non-fiction.⁵³ Lyman classified a series of book titles reported by respondents. Fiction represented 167 titles and non-fiction represented 110 titles.⁵⁴ Lyman further stated that adults enjoyed reading short stories, novels, biographies, and historical selections. Plays, scientific writing and essays were least popular with the respondents.⁵⁵ Peil also reported that the low-income women preferred reading murder mysteries.⁵⁶

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⁵⁵Ibid., p. 287.

⁵⁶Peil, "Low Income Families," p. 331.

⁵⁷Berelson, Library's Public, pp. 68-69.

Berelson's observation in 1950 was substantiated by Asheim,⁵⁸ McElroy,⁵⁹ and Lyman.⁶⁰ In the area of non-fiction, Berelson stated that men withdrew more books than women. Similarly, younger readers borrowed more non-fiction than older readers.⁶¹

McElroy's study indicated a large proportion of full-time workers read science topics. Housewives, persons in the lowest income groups, and lower educational levels read religious topics. In contrast, high income groups and a large proportion of college graduates read in the social sciences. Respondents who read poetry and plays tended to read consistently and started their reading early in life.⁶²

Austin analyzed data concerning non-fiction "best sellers" from 1912 to 1950.⁶³ A statistical summary and categorization of books revealed certain subject matter areas which had a constant appeal to readers. Of the 345 books studied, 22 percent were biography or autobiography. The next most popular categories of non-fiction were social problems and self-help books.⁶⁴

⁵⁸Asheim, "Mass Communication and Adult Reading," p. 135.

⁵⁹Elizabeth W. McElroy, "Subject Variety in Adult Reading: II Characteristics of Readers of Ten Categories of Books," Library Quarterly, XXXVII (July, 1968), p. 264.

⁶⁰Lyman, Adult New Reader, p. 287.

⁶¹Berelson, op. cit., p. 69.

⁶²McElroy, "Variety in Adult Reading," p. 268.

⁶³Garry R. Austin, "Non-fiction Best Sellers: Types and Trends." Journal of Social Psychology, XXXVIII (August, 1953), pp. 141-143.

⁶⁴Ibid.

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⁶⁵Muriel C. Javelin, "Services to the Senior Citizen," American Libraries, I (February, 1970), p. 133.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Buswell, "Reading and Aged," pp. 472-473.

⁶⁸Darlene Blakely, "Milwaukee Library Goes to the Elderly," Wisconsin Library Bulletin, LXVI (July, 1970), p. 210.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰June Delvalle, Dulcy B. Miller, and Mary Saldicco, "Reading Patterns of the Aged in a Nursing Home Environment," Association of Hospital and Institution Libraries Quarterly, VI (Winter, 1966), pp. 8-11.

The Reading of Periodicals

The studies which pertain to the reading of magazines and newspapers examine those periodicals as sources for information. For example, Wade and Schramm report four comparable national surveys concerning public affairs knowledge.⁷¹ The researchers reported that 50 percent of the respondents regularly read newspapers and 25 percent used magazines for information on campaigns, candidates, and issues.⁷² Conducting interviews during 1957, researchers found that respondents preferred newspapers as the major source for science information.⁷³

Sources for health information were examined in 1958 using a sample of 762 respondents.⁷⁴ The study did not separate newspapers from magazines as separate sources. The printed media, however, were the primary sources for health information.⁷⁵ Further, women were more likely to read about health information.⁷⁶

Summary

The studies present a variety of books which interest the adult reader. Fiction is most read and women read more fiction than men. Elderly persons enjoy reading mysteries, westerns, and other

⁷¹Wade and Schramm, "Sources of Public Affairs Knowledge," pp. 197-198. The four surveys were conducted by the Survey Research Center, University of Michigan during 1952 (N = 1,899); 1956 (N = 1,762); 1960 (N = 1,954); and 1964 (N = 1,570).

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 201-202. Sample consisted of 1,919 respondents.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 202.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid.

light fiction. Younger readers tend to read more non-fiction than older readers. Biographies and autobiographies are of greatest interest to non-fiction readers. Full-time workers read more science topics and college graduates prefer the social sciences. Housewives and persons with lower incomes are most likely to select books on religion. Elderly readers do not prefer books on politics, current events, and religion.

Newspapers and magazines provide a major source for public affairs information. Science information is obtained primarily from newspapers. The printed media is the primary source for health information.

Why Do Adults Read?

The purposes associated with adult reading are extremely important. In a sense, purposes for reading provide a measure of the function and significance of reading in the adult's daily life. Several factors, however, influence the adult reader's purposes for reading. The following studies examine some of those factors.

The Amount of Effort Influences Choice

Schramm stated that the amount of effort required to read influenced reading behavior.⁷⁷ As such, an adult would choose to read if the act of reading was not a difficult task. Schramm further

⁷⁷Wilbur Schramm, "Why Adults Read," in Adult Reading: The Fifty-Fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education Part II, ed. Nelson B. Henry (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 67.

outlined four factors which influenced the effort to read: (1) the level of reading skill development; (2) the time available to read; (3) the physical proximity of reading materials; and (4) the economic costs associated with obtaining reading materials.⁷⁸ Sharing a similar viewpoint, Berelson and Steinberg indicated that formal education greatly decreased the difficulty of reading and positively enhanced adult reading behavior.⁷⁹

Motivations Related to Purposes

In addition to effort, motivations of the reader influenced purposes for reading.⁸⁰ Gray and Munroe wrote that motives which influenced adults recreational reading were satisfaction of curiosities, relaxation, emotional satisfaction, a sense of duty, and to idle away time.⁸¹ Lyman stated the reading motivations for one-half of the respondents studied were reading for pleasure, relaxation, or information.⁸² Waples, Berelson and Bradshaw concluded that the reader's motives for reading or the satisfactions expected affected the quality of attention a publication received.⁸³

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Bernard Berelson, "The Library's Public," in A Forum on the Public Library Inquiry, ed. Lester Asheim (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1970), p. 61. Also refer to Heinz Steinberg, "Books and Readers as A Subject of Research in Europe and America," International Social Science Journal, XXIV (1972), 751.

⁸⁰Schramm, "Why Adults Read," pp. 67-68.

⁸¹William S. Gray and Ruth Munroe, The Reading Interests and Habits of Adults, (New York: MacMillan Company, 1929), p. 268.

⁸²Lyman, Adult New Reader, p. 288.

⁸³Douglas Waples, Bernard Berelson and Franklin R. Bradshaw, "The Effects of Reading," in Mass Communications, ed. by Wilbur Schramm (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), p.488.

Personality Traits Related to Purpose

Schramm contended that a relationship existed between personality traits of the reader and purposes for reading. For example, an adult may read to reinforce existing attitudes and opinions. Personal values are also related to a reader's choice of reading materials. Similarly, readers who rated high on the F-scale of authoritarianism tended to prefer a newspaper which more often sponsored authoritarian policies.⁸⁴

Purposes Deduced From Effects

Reading purposes can be deduced from an examination of reading effects. The theoretical framework related to "reading effects" evolved from the "need theory of personality" and took into account three interrelated reading determiners: (1) the material read; (2) the readers predispositions; and (3) the observed responses. Researchers listed five reading effects from which purposes could be deduced:

(1) the instrumental effect (e.g., fuller knowledge of a practical problem and greater competence to deal with it); (2) the prestige effect (e.g., relief of inferiority feeling by reading what increases self-approval); (3) the reinforcement effect (e.g., reinforcement of an attitude or conversion to another attitude toward controversial issues); (4) the aesthetic effect (e.g., obtaining aesthetic experience from specimens of literary art; and (5) the respite effect (e.g., finding relief from tensions by reading whatever offers pleasant distractions).⁸⁵

⁸⁴Schramm, "Why Adults Read," p. 73.

⁸⁵Waples, Berelson, and Bradshaw, "Effects of Reading," p. 489. See also, William S. Gray and Bernice Rogers, Maturity in Reading (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), pp. 27-28.

Readers Communicate With Society

Steinberg posed a final consideration as to why adults read. Readers were not isolated people who attempted to escape from society. Rather, the adult reader sought to communicate with society.⁸⁶ Readers wished to communicate their thoughts to others by means of conversation because reading was an active process. Steinberg wrote:

Modern readers in America and in Europe are more communicative in their activity and vitality than non-readers. They do not read to escape from the world, but to live in it better. This really puts the main finding of research in the matter to date in a nutshell.⁸⁷

Summary: Why Do Adults Read

The amount of effort required to read directly influenced reading behavior and the choice to read. Also, such motivations as a desire for information, relaxation or pleasure directly influenced purposes for reading. Personality traits similarly are related to purposes for reading. Persons with an authoritarian personality tended to read materials which contained an authoritarian viewpoint. From a research standpoint, the "effects" of reading can be used to deduce purposes for reading. Finally, reading was described as an active process. As such, readers tended to communicate with society and not to escape from social interaction.

⁸⁶Heinz Steinberg, "Books and Readers As A Subject of Research in Europe and America," International Social Science Journal, XXIV (1972), p. 753.

⁸⁷Ibid.

Chapter Summary--The Elderly Reader

The studies reviewed clearly reflect that the specific reading needs and tastes of persons sixty-five years or older are essentially neglected. Studies tend to study adult readership in general terms and fail to view the elderly reader as a special audience.

Further, earlier research studies viewed the elderly reader from a stereotyped perspective. Older persons allegedly made up a rather sheltered audience, with conservative interests, and not interested in new things. Studies presented in the present paper directly or indirectly suggest that research take another look at the stereotyped picture. Elderly persons did read and were active in social participation. The specific reading behavior and social participation however, still require study of the older person as a special audience.

A lack of systematic research concerning the elderly reader generates a need for the present study. Therefore, the purpose of the present research is to obtain, analyze, and compare data regarding the leisure-time reading behaviors of persons sixty years or older.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This section elaborates on the methodology used in conducting the study. The population and sample are identified and defined. The data gathering procedure is outlined. The research instrument employed with its administration and statistical treatment is explained.

The questionnaire employed was designed by the researcher with the assistance and guidance of educational research consultants and the graduate committee. The questionnaire was unique to this study.

Selection of the Population

The population consisted of 1,165 persons sixty-five years of age or older, living within eleven Homes for the Aged in Kent County, Michigan.

The Michigan Directory of Hospitals, Nursing Care Facilities and Homes for the Aged was used to identify the Homes for the Aged and addresses for each of the homes.⁸⁸

⁸⁸Michigan Department of Public Health, Directory of Hospitals, Nursing Care Facilities, and Homes for the Aged (Lansing: Bureau of Health Facilities, 1974), p. 37.

Selection of the Sample

The sample was a simple random sampling of persons sixty-five years or older living within each of the eleven homes. The sample was selected in the following manner:

1. The researcher contacted each administrator or program director for a list of names of persons sixty-five years or older.
2. The names of all persons in the population for each home were put into a container and mixed.
3. Names were then selected until 20 percent of the population within each home was reached.
4. The 20 percent of the names selected was then contacted for study. The total number of persons selected for further study was 249.

Procedures

The study was conducted in two separate phases. The first phase consisted of the completion of a survey questionnaire. The second phase involved the use of group interviews.

Phase I: The Survey Questionnaire

The researcher contacted each administrator, or a designated representative, for permission to conduct the study. The purpose of the study was explained and procedure questions answered.

The researcher was assisted in the gathering of the data for the present study by two administrators, one librarian, and six activities directors for the homes studied. The persons who assisted

the researcher were selected on the basis of their interest in the topic of the study and their expressed willingness to personally participate.

The data for the study were obtained by means of a structured Reading Survey questionnaire that consisted of eighteen items (see Appendix I). A structured questionnaire format was used in order to collect quantifiable and comparable data in a uniform manner from each respondent.

Item 1 of the questionnaire provided data on the number of hours spent per week in the reading of books, magazines, and newspapers.

Items 2 through 4 sought to determine the categories of books, magazine topics, and parts of the newspaper most often read by the respondents.

Items 5 through 8 determined the sources for reading materials, public library and reading room use, and the use of large print books.

Items 9 through 15 established the educational levels, periods in the respondents life when the most reading took place, chronological ages of the respondents, sex of the respondents, marital status, former occupations, and area of residence during most of their lives (urban, rural, or suburban).

Items 16 through 18 supplied information concerning purposes for reading and reasons that prevented the respondents from reading more.

The survey questionnaire was administered in the following manner:

1. The sample for the study was selected as described in the preceding section.
2. The survey questionnaire was distributed to each respondent by either the researcher or those persons who agreed to assist in the study.
3. Respondents independently completed the survey questionnaire and returned it to the designated representative in each home who assisted in the study.
4. The researcher collected the survey questionnaires from each representative. The researcher kept a record of the number of questionnaires presented for completion and the number returned.

Phase II: The Group Interviews

Based on the results of the survey questionnaire and personal conversations with the respondents, the researcher developed four questions for in-depth study (see Appendix II). The questions were presented by the researcher to the respondents during group interview sessions. The group interviews were conducted as follows:

1. The names of all persons used in the survey sample for each home were put in a container and mixed.
 2. Six names were then selected by the researcher for interview in each of the eleven homes.
 3. The interviews were tape recorded by the researcher.
- The total number of interviews was 11. The total number of persons interviewed was 66.

Method of Reporting Results

The information recorded on each questionnaire was tabulated on a coding form. The information from each questionnaire was then keypunched on an IBM computer card.

The analysis of results was reported in the form of correlations, t-tests, analysis of variance, and chi-square tables. Correlations were used to determine the degree of relationship between variables. The t-tests permitted the researcher to compare statistical means to determine the probability that the differences between the means were real differences rather than chance differences. Analysis of variance was used to determine differences across groups. The chi-square test compared obtained frequencies with expected frequencies and indicated the probability that they were different.

The responses to the four interview questions were recorded on tape. The responses of the respondents were reported in summary form and not fragmentized for statistical analysis. The researcher decided that the information from the survey questionnaires provided sufficient statistical data specific to the purposes of the study. The interview questions, therefore, were developed to provide additional depth to the study but were not designed for statistical analysis.

Summary

This chapter offered a description of the methodology involved in conducting the study.

The population was selected from eleven Homes for the Aged in Kent County, Michigan. The sample consisted of 20 percent of the residents within each home.

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher with the assistance and advisement of the guidance committee and Research Consultants Office at Michigan State University.

The interview questions were designed by the researcher. The purpose of the questions was to provide greater depth to the study.

The statistical procedures were designed in conjunction with the Research Consultants at Michigan State University. The data are organized, presented, and analyzed in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to identify the leisure-time reading behaviors of persons living within homes for the Aged in Kent County, Michigan. The study identified the reading behaviors of the older reader by means of a structured survey questionnaire and taped interviews. The data pertinent to reading behaviors were then statistically related to the demographic characteristics of age, education, sex, former occupation, marital status, and past location of residence. The present chapter is organized as follows:

1. Research questions and analysis of data.
2. Interview questions and an analysis of the interview responses.

Research Questions

Question 1

Is the variety in reading related to the amount of time spent in leisure-time reading?

The 249 respondents were requested to indicate the total number of hours spent in leisure-time reading per week. Of the 249 respondents studied, the mean number of hours spent in leisure-time reading per week was 11.34 hours with a range from one hour per week to forty-nine hours per week.

In addition, the respondents were asked to indicate the categories of books, magazine topics, and parts of the newspaper read during the past year. The sums of each of the different types of materials read were statistically tested. The product-moment correlation r was used to statistically test the degree of relationship between the amount of time spent in leisure-time reading and variety in reading--categories of books, magazine topics, and parts of the newspaper. All the correlation coefficients were statistically significant. (See Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Time spent in leisure-time reading and variety in reading.

Time spent in leisure-time (N = 249) reading with a range of 1 hr. -49 hours per week	Variety in Reading			
	CB ¹	MT ²	PN ³	Total
	.49*	.37*	.27*	.49*

*($p < .01$)

CB¹ = categories of books

MT² = magazine topics

PN³ = parts of the newspaper

There was a significantly positive correlation between the amount of time spent in leisure-time reading and variety in reading. Those who spent more time reading were more likely to read in a variety of books, magazine topics, and parts of the newspaper.

A more specific presentation of the different categories of books, magazine topics, and parts of the newspaper read by the respondents is presented in Tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4.

Table 4.2. Categories of books and the number of respondents who read in each category.

Categories of books	Number of respondents reading for each category	Categories of books	Number of respondents reading for each category
Bible	220	Humor	31
Religion (other than the Bible)	129	Self-improvement	29
Biography	118	Gardening	29
Adventure	104	Music	24
Travel	87	Business	18
Romance	80	Hobbies	18
History	74	Sports	12
Mysteries	70	Cookbooks	11
Poetry	52	Plays	11
Politics	41	Art	10
Health	38	Science Fiction	9
Westerns	31	Science	9

Table 4.3. Topics of magazines and the number of respondents who read in each category.

Magazine topics	Number of respondents who read each topic	Magazine Topics	Number of respondents who read each topic
Religion	153	Homemaking	33
Current events	137	Romance	32
Short stories	128	Sports	30
Travel	114	Conservation	26
Personalities	83	Hobbies	23
Health	67	Crime stories	19
Business	35	Repair	4
Self-improvement	30		

Table 4.4. Parts of the newspaper and the number of respondents who read each part of the newspaper.

Parts of the Newspaper	Number of Respondents who read each part
Local and Community News	238
Editorials	200
Births and Deaths	180
Comic Section	95
Social Events	78
Advertisements	62
Business	59
Recreation/Sports	51
National and State News	25
Classified	21

The categories of books that most interested the respondents were the Bible, religion (with light religious themes in contrast to deep theological discussions), biography, and adventure. Books of least interest to be respondents consisted of science, science fiction, art, plays, cookbooks, and sports.

The topics of magazines that most interested the respondents pertained to religion, current events, short stories, and travel. The respondents were least interested in magazine topics concerned with repair and crime stories.

The parts of the newspaper that most interested the respondents consisted of local and community news, editorials, and births and deaths. The respondents indicated the least interest in reading the classified sections, and national and state news parts of the newspaper.

Summary

The variety of reading is related to the amount of time spent in leisure-time reading. Those persons who spend more time reading are also more likely to have greater variety in their reading. Respondents read the Bible more than any other category of books, magazines topics dealing with religion more than any other magazine topics, and newspaper sections dealing with local and community news more than any other sections.

Question 2

Is the variety in reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents?

The sums for variety in reading were further statistically tested to determine if variety in reading was related to the independent variables of age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status.

(a) the product-moment correlation r statistically tested the degree of relationship between variety in reading and age and between variety in reading and education. Of the correlation coefficients computed, there was no statistical significance between variety in reading and age of the respondents. A statistically significant relationship did exist between variety in reading and education. (See Table 4.5)

Table 4.5. Variety in reading and age and education.

	Variety in Reading			
	CB ¹	MT ²	PN ³	Total
Age N = 249 ^a	-.12	-.05	-.05	-.11
Education N = 249 ^b	.38**	.43**	.15*	.41**

*($p < .05$)

**($p < .01$)

^aRange of 65-98 years
with a mean of 79.9 years

^bRange of 4-20 years with
a mean of 11.8 years

CB¹ = Categories of books

MT² = Magazine topics

PN³ = Parts of the newspaper

There was a significantly positive correlation between variety in reading and the education of respondents. Those respondents with more years of formal education were more likely to read in a variety of books, magazine topics, and parts of the newspaper.

(b) the t-test statistically tested the mean score differences between variety in reading and the sex of respondents.

The categories of books that most interested the respondents were the Bible, religion (with light religious themes in contrast to deep theological discussions), biography, and adventure. Books of least interest to be respondents consisted of science, science fiction, art, plays, cookbooks, and sports.

The topics of magazines that most interested the respondents pertained to religion, current events, short stories, and travel. The respondents were least interested in magazine topics concerned with repair and crime stories.

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Question 2

Is the variety in reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents?

The mean scores for variety in reading represent the average number of different categories of books, different magazine topics, and different parts of the newspaper read by males and females. The mean scores between males and females pertinent to variety in reading were not statistically significant for parts of the newspaper. All other t-values were statistically significant. (See Table 4.6).

Table 4.6. Variety in reading between males and females.

Sex	Mean scores for variety in reading			
	CB ¹	MT ²	PN ³	Total mean score
Males N = 55	3.76	2.55	3.78	10.09
Females N = 194	5.40	3.98	4.12	13.50
t - values	3.173**	3.449**	1.035	3.294***

** (p < .005)

*** (p < .0005)

CB¹ = Categories of books

MT² = Magazine topics

PN³ = Parts of the newspapers

There were significant differences between males and females concerning variety in reading. Women read more different categories of books and magazine topics than males. Also, when variety in reading is considered from an overall viewpoint (combined totals for categories of books, magazine topics, and parts of the newspaper), women read with significantly more variety than men.

(c) Analysis of variance statistically tested variety in reading across occupational groups of the respondents. The

analysis of variance was used to determine whether between-groups variance was significantly greater than the within-groups variance. The mean scores for variety in reading represent the average number of different categories of books, different magazine topics, and different parts of the newspaper read by each occupational group. The F-value indicates whether or not significant differences occur across occupational groups pertinent to variety in reading. (See Table 4.7).

Table 4.7. Variety in reading across occupational groups.

Former Occupations	Number of Respondents	Mean Scores for Variety in Reading			
	N = 249	CB ¹	MT ²	PN ³	Total Mean Scores
Housewife	72	4.21	2.90	3.66	10.77
Unskilled Labor	20	3.20	2.10	3.40	8.70
Clerical	39	6.02	4.85	4.89	15.76
Professional	69	6.65	4.72	4.24	15.61
Farmer	6	2.17	1.16	4.50	7.83
Sales	17	6.41	4.12	4.64	15.17
Self-employed	10	3.70	3.00	3.30	10.00
Skilled Labor	16	2.19	2.56	3.37	8.12
F - value		8.19*	5.97*	2.13**	7.77*

* ($p < .0005$)

** ($p < .05$)

CB¹ = Categories of books

MT² = Magazine topics

PN³ = Parts of the newspaper

Statistically significant differences were found between variety in reading and occupational groups. Respondents with the former occupations of clerical, professional and sales read with more variety than the other occupational groups.

(d) Analysis of variance was also used to statistically test variety in reading across marital status groups.⁸⁹ No statistically significant differences were found between marital status groups and parts of the newspaper. (See Table 4.8).

Table 4.8. Variety in reading across marital status groups.

Marital Status Groups	Number of Respondents	Mean Scores for Variety in Reading			
		CB ¹	MT ²	PN ³	Total Mean Scores
	N = 248				
Married	18	4.11	2.50	4.33	10.94
Single	54	6.15	4.52	4.20	14.87
Divorced	6	1.33	2.17	3.16	6.66
Widowed	170	4.89	3.55	3.97	12.41
F - value		4.96*	3.49**	.577	4.08*

* (p < .01)

** (p < .05)

CB¹ = Categories of books

MT² = Magazine topics

PN³ = Parts of the newspaper

⁸⁹The reader should note N = 248 for marital status groups because one (1) respondent refused to indicate marital status. As such, the computer dropped the blank marital status data specific to that respondent. The results, however, were not significantly influenced by that factor.

Statistically significant differences did occur between marital status groups and in categories of books and magazine topics. Those respondents in the marital status group designated as "single," read with more variety than the other groups.

Summary

Variety in reading is related to education, sex, former occupations, and marital status. Respondents with more years of formal education are most likely to read with more variety. Women generally read with greater variety than men. Respondents with the former occupations of clerical, professional, and sales read with more variety than the other occupational groups. Persons in the marital status group of "single" are more likely to read with more variety than other marital status groups.

Question 3

Is the time spent in leisure-time reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents?

The researcher also wanted to determine whether the total number of hours spent in leisure-time reading per week was related to age, education, sex, former occupation and marital status.

(a) The product-moment correlation r statistically tested the degree of relationship between the time spent in leisure-time reading per week and age and education. No statistically significant relationship existed between time spent in leisure-time

reading and the ages of the respondents. A statistically significant relationship did exist between time spent in leisure-time reading and education. (See Table 4.9)

Table 4.9. Time spent in leisure-time reading and age and education.

	Time spent in leisure-time reading (Range 1 hr.-49 hrs. per week) ¹
Age N = 249 (Range 65-98 years) ²	-.02
Education N = 249 (Range 4-20 years of education) ³	.34*
*(p < .01)	² mean ages of respondents 79.9 yrs.
¹ mean hrs. per week 11.3 hrs.	³ mean years of education 11.8 yrs.

There was a significantly positive correlation between the number of hours spent in leisure-time reading per week and education. Respondents with more years of formal education spent greater amounts of time in leisure-time reading activities than those with less education.

(b) The t-test statistically tested the mean score differences between the time spent in leisure-time reading per week for males and females. There was no statistically significant differences found. Both males and females spent 11.3 hours per week in leisure-time reading activities.

(c) Analysis of variance statistically tested the time spent in leisure-time reading per week across occupational groups of the respondents. The analysis of variance determined whether between-groups variance was significantly greater than within-groups variance. The statistical results are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10. Time spent in leisure-time reading across occupational groups.

Former Occupation	Number of Respondents	Mean hours per week spent in leisure-time reading
Housewife	72	8.22
Unskilled Labor	20	7.60
Clerical	39	12.97
Professional	69	14.85
Farmer	6	6.50
Sales	17	16.58
Self-employed	10	12.70
Skilled Labor	16	6.37
F - value		7.68*

* ($p < .0005$)

There were statistically significant differences between the time spent in leisure-time reading and occupational groups. Respondents with a former occupation in "sales" were more likely to spend more time in leisure-time reading per week than other former occupation groups.

(d) When analysis of variance was computed for time spent in leisure-time reading per week across marital status groups, no statistical significance was found. The F-value was 1.248 and therefore, greater than the .05 level of significance.

Summary

The time spent in leisure-time reading is related to education and the former occupations of respondents. Persons with more

years of formal education tended to spend more time in leisure-time reading per week. Further, respondents with a former occupation in sales work were more likely to spend more time in leisure-time reading activities per week than other occupation groups.

Question 4

Is the use of library services related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents?

The answer to the research question required the researcher to analyze the data according to four separate categories of library services: (a) sources for books, (b) frequency of public library use, (c) frequency of use by respondents of reading rooms in the homes, and (d) the knowledge and use of large-print books.

(a) Sources for books.--The respondents were provided with a list of eight sources for obtaining books on the survey questionnaire. The respondents were then requested to place a check mark near all the sources they used for obtaining books. If a specific source was checked, that source was considered a "yes" answer. If a source was not checked, that source was computed as a "no" answer.

The t-test statistically tested the differences between the statistical mean ages of the respondents and whether or not those respondents used a specific source for books. For example, in Table 4.11 below, 191 respondents with a mean chronological age of 80.18 years indicated they did not purchase books from a store. In contrast, 58 respondents with a mean chronological age of

79.24 years responded that they did purchase books from a store. The difference between the mean ages (80.18 and 79.24) was not statistically significant. Of the eight t-values computed, only gifts and library in the home were statistically significant. (See Table 4.11)

Table 4.11. Mean ages of persons using various sources to obtain books.

Sources	Sources Used		t-value
	No	Yes	
Purchase from store	N = 191 80.18	N = 58 79.24	.941
Visit public library	N = 211 80.25	N = 38 78.34	1.651
Use of book cart	N = 239 79.87	N = 10 82.10	1.044
Mailing service	N = 234 79.85	N = 15 81.66	1.030
Borrow from friends	N = 147 79.13	N = 102 80.00	.714
Gifts	N = 160 79.13	N = 89 81.44	2.682*
Book club	N = 225 79.91	N = 24 80.41	.352
Library in the home	N = 105 80.75	N = 144 79.36	1.674**

* (p < .01)

** (p < .05)

The statistical results indicated that older persons more often received books as gifts. In contrast, younger respondents were more likely to obtain their books from a library in the home.

A t-test also statistically tested the differences between the mean number of years of formal education pertinent to the respondents and sources for obtaining books. For example in Table 4.12, 191 respondents with a mean of 11.68 years of formal education indicated they did not purchase books from a store. In contrast, 58 respondents with a mean of 12.20 years of formal education stated they did purchase books from a store. The difference between the two mean scores was not, however, statistically significant. Of the eight t-values computed, visits to the public library, mailing service, borrow from friends, gifts, and library in the home were statistically significant. (See Table 4.12)

Table 4.12. Mean years of education using various sources to obtain books.

Sources	Sources Used		t-value
	No	Yes	
Purchase from store	N = 191 11.68	N = 58 12.20	.995
Visit public library	N = 211 11.41	N = 38 13.97	4.263*
Use of book cart	N = 239 11.74	N = 10 13.10	1.188
Mailing service	N = 234 11.69	N = 15 13.53	1.972**
Borrow from friends	N = 147 11.27	N = 102 12.56	2.896***
Gifts	N = 160 11.43	N = 89 12.46	2.212**
Book club	N = 225 11.71	N = 24 12.66	1.263
Library in the home	N = 105 11.22	N = 144 12.22	2.213**
* (p < .0005) ** (p < .05) *** (p < .01)			

Statistically significant differences between the mean number of years of formal education and various sources used to obtain books were found. Respondents with more years of education were more likely to use visits to the public library, mailing service, borrow from friends, gifts, and library in the home as sources for obtaining books than respondents with less education.

Chi-square statistically tested sources for obtaining books between males and females. Of the eight chi-squares computed, five proved to be statistically significant. (See Tables 4.13, 4.14, 4.15, 4.16, and 4.17) There were no statistically significant results between sex differences and sources for books pertinent to visits to the public library, use of a book cart, and library in the home.

Table 4.13. Sex of respondents and purchase from the store.

Sex	Purchase from Store		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Male	65%	35%	55
Female	80%	20%	194

Chi-square = 5.002; d.f. = 1; ($p < .05$)

A high percentage of respondents of both sexes did not prefer to purchase books from a store. Men, however, were more likely to purchase books from a store than were women.

Table 4.14. Sex of respondents and book mailing from public library.

Sex	Book Mailing		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Male	100%	0%	55
Female	92%	8%	194

Chi-square = 4.525; d.f. = 1; ($p < .05$)

The majority of the respondents did not use the book mailing service from the public library. If book mailing was used, women were more likely to avail themselves to that service as a source for books than were men.

Table 4.15. Sex of respondents and borrow from friends.

Sex	Borrow from Friends		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Male	78%	22%	55
Female	54%	46%	194

Chi-square = 10.700; d.f. = 1; ($p < .005$)

A greater percentage of the respondents did not borrow books from friends. A higher percentage of women, however, were more inclined to borrow books from friends than were men.

Table 4.16. Sex of respondents and gifts.

Sex	Gifts		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Male	80%	20%	55
Female	60%	40%	194

Chi-square = 7.618; d.f. = 1; ($p < .005$)

A high percentage of both men and women did not consider gifts as an important source for books. Women were, however, more likely to receive books as gifts than men.

Table 4.17. Sex of respondents and book club.

Sex	Book Club		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Male	98%	2%	55
Female	88%	12%	194

Chi-square = 4.957; d.f. = 1; ($p < .05$)

Respondents generally did not belong to book clubs. A higher percentage of women, however, did use book clubs as a source for books than did men.

Chi-square was also computed pertaining to sources for obtaining books and occupation groups. Of the eight chi-squares computed, five proved to be statistically significant. (See Tables 4.18, 4.19, 4.20, 4.21 and 4.22). The relationships between occupations and sources for books were not statistically significant when combined with book mailing, book club, and library in the home.

Table 4.18. Former occupation of respondents and purchase from a store.

Former Occupation	Purchase from Store		Number Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	82%	18%	72
Unskilled Labor	75%	25%	20
Clerical	87%	13%	39
Professional	72%	28%	69
Farmer	83%	17%	6
Sales	82%	18%	17
Self-employed	30%	70%	10
Skilled Labor	69%	31%	16

Chi-square = 17.454; d.f. = 7; ($p < .01$)

A high percentage of the respondents in each former occupation group was not interested in the purchasing of books from stores. Self-employed respondents, however, were more inclined to purchase books from a store than any of the other occupational groups.

Table 4.19. Former occupation of respondents and visit to the public library.

Former Occupation	Visit Public Library		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	89%	11%	72
Unskilled Labor	100%	0%	20
Clerical	85%	15%	39
Professional	70%	30%	69
Farmer	100%	0%	6
Sales	88%	12%	17
Self-employed	90%	10%	10
Skilled Labor	100%	0%	16

Chi-square = 21.183; d.f. = 7; ($p < .005$)

A high percentage of persons in each of the occupational groups was less likely to directly visit the public library to obtain books. Further, 100 percent of the persons with former occupations as unskilled labor, farmer, and skilled labor were least inclined to visit the public library than other occupational groups.

A significant percentage of the respondents in each of the occupational groups was least likely to use a book cart service as a means to obtain books. Respondents (100 percent) with the former occupations of housewife, unskilled labor, farmer, sales, and self-employed were least inclined to use a book cart service in any degree for obtaining books as contrasted with the other occupation groups.

Table 4.20. Former occupation of respondents and book cart use.

Former Occupation	Use of Book Cart		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	100%	0%	72
Unskilled Labor	100%	0%	20
Clerical	90%	10%	39
Professional	93%	7%	69
Farmer	100%	0%	6
Sales	100%	0%	17
Self-employed	90%	10%	10
Skilled Labor	100%	0%	16

Chi-square = 12.218; d.f. = 7; ($p < .05$)

Table 4.21. Former occupation of the respondents and borrowing from friends.

Former Occupation	Borrow from Friends		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	64%	36%	72
Unskilled Labor	85%	15%	20
Clerical	46%	54%	39
Professional	46%	54%	69
Farmer	100%	0%	6
Sales	59%	41%	17
Self-employed	80%	20%	10
Skilled Labor	62%	38%	16

Chi-square = 19.585; d.f. = 7; ($p < .005$)

Although a greater percentage of respondents did not borrow books from friends, significant differences did occur between occupational groups. Persons with former occupations as clerical and professional were more likely to borrow books from friends than the other occupational groups.

Table 4.22. Former occupation of the respondents and gifts.

Former Occupation	Gifts		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	68%	32%	72
Unskilled Labor	85%	15%	20
Clerical	56%	44%	39
Professional	54%	46%	69

Table 4.22. Continued.

Former Occupation	Gifts		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Farmer	83%	17%	6
Sales	71%	29%	17
Self-employed	90%	10%	10
Skilled Labor	56%	44%	16

Chi-square = 13.221; d.f. = 7; ($p < .05$)

A greater percentage of persons in each of the occupational groups did not rely on gifts as a source for books. Respondents formerly in the occupation groups of clerical, professional, and skilled labor received a higher percentage of books as gifts than did the other occupational groups.

Data pertaining to sources of books and marital status groups were similarly analyzed by chi-squares. Of the eight chi-squares computed, four proved to be statistically significant. (See Tables 4.23, 4.24, 4.25 and 4.26)

Table 4.23. Marital status and purchase from the store.

Marital Status	Purchase from Store		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Married	50%	50%	18
Single	74%	26%	54
Divorced	100%	0%	6
Widowed	80%	20%	170

Chi-square = 10.332; d.f. = 3; ($p < .01$)

A significantly greater percentage of the respondents in the marital status groups did not purchase books from a store. Married persons, however, were more likely to purchase books from a store than the other marital status groups. Divorced respondents were the least likely of all the marital status groups to purchase books from a store.

Table 4.24. Marital status and book cart service.

Marital Status	Use of Book Cart		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Married	83%	17%	18
Single	93%	7%	54
Divorced	100%	0%	6
Widowed	98%	2%	170

Chi-square = 11.526; d.f. = 3; ($p < .005$)

A significantly greater percentage of respondents in the marital status groups did not depend on a book cart service as a source for books. Married persons, however, were more likely to use a book cart service as a source for books than the other marital status groups.

Table 4.25. Marital status and borrowing from friends.

Marital Status	Borrow from Friends		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Married	94%	6%	18
Single	46%	54%	54
Divorced	100%	0%	6
Widowed	58%	42%	170

Chi-square = 17.189; d.f. = 3; ($P < .0005$)

Although a greater percentage of the respondents in the marital status groups was least inclined to borrow books from friends, differences did occur between the groups. Persons in the marital status groups of "single" and "widowed" were more likely to borrow books from friends than persons in the other marital status groups.

Table 4.26. Marital status and gifts.

Marital Status	Gifts from Friends		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Married	100%	0%	18
Single	61%	39%	54
Divorced	83%	17%	6
Widowed	61%	39%	170

Chi-square = 11.930; d.f. = 3; ($P < .005$)

A significantly greater percentage of the respondents did not receive books as gifts. Persons, however, who were "single" or "widowed" received more books as gifts than any of the other marital status groups.

Summary of Sources of Books

Respondents with more years of formal education were more likely to use visits to the public library, mailing services, borrowing from friends, and library in the home as sources for obtaining books. Men were more inclined to purchase books from a store than were women. In contrast, women, more than men, used book mailing from the public library, borrow from friends, gifts, and book clubs as sources for books. Self-employed persons were more likely to obtain books through purchase from a store than the other occupation groups. A visit to the public library for books was least likely to occur among the occupation groups of unskilled laborers, farmers, and skilled laborers. Respondents in the clerical and professional former occupation groups were more inclined to borrow books from friends than the other occupations. Book cart services least interested the occupational groups of housewife, unskilled labor, farmer, sales, and self-employed. Respondents in the former occupation groups of clerical, professional, and skilled labor were more likely to receive books as gifts than the other occupations. Married respondents used purchases from the store and book cart services more than the other marital status groups as sources for books. Widowed and single respondents were more inclined to borrow books from friends and to receive books as gifts than other marital status groups.

(b) Frequency of public library use.--Respondents were asked how frequently they used the service of the public library--frequently, occasionally, hardly ever, or never. Each of the

response choices was weighted according to the following values for further analysis: frequently--4; occasionally--3; hardly ever--2; and never--1. The sums for each of the choices were then statistically tested.

The product-moment correlation r statistically tested the degree of relationship between public library use and age and education. No statistically significant relationship existed between public library use and age of the respondents. A statistically significant relationship did exist between use of the public library and education. (See Table 4.27)

There was a significantly positive correlation between the use of public library services and education. Respondents with more years of formal education were more likely to use the services of the public library.

Table 4.27. Use of public library services and age and education.

	Use of public library services
Age N = 249	-.02
Education N = 249	.34*

* ($P < .01$)

The t-test statistically tested the differences in mean scores for males and females pertaining to frequency of public library use. The t-value computed was statistically significant. (See Table 4.28) The reader is again cautioned to remember that the "mean scores" for use of public library services are "weighted scores."

That means the respondents were asked how frequently they used the service of the public library--frequently, occasionally, hardly ever, or never. Each of the response choices was then weighted according to the following values: frequently--4; occasionally--3; hardly ever--2; and never--1. The sums for each of the choices were then obtained and a statistical mean score computed.

Table 4.28. Frequency of library use by sex.

Sex	Frequency N = 249	Mean scores for frequency of use of public library services
Male	55	1.49
Female	194	1.98
t-value		3.031*

*(p < .01)

A significant difference was found between men and women pertinent to the frequency of public library use. The mean scores of 1.49 for men and 1.98 for women would imply that women were more likely to use the services of the public library than were men. From an overall viewpoint of the 249 respondents, neither of the sexes substantially went to the public library building for services.

Analysis of variance statistically tested the use of the public library across occupational groups. The analysis of variance determined whether between-groups variance was significantly greater than within-groups variance. The statistical results are presented in Table 4.29.

Table 4.29. Frequency of library use and occupation groups.

Occupation Groups	Frequency N = 249	Mean scores for frequency of Use of the public library
Housewife	72	1.87
Unskilled Labor	20	1.10
Clerical	39	1.92
Professional	69	2.33
Farmer	6	1.33
Sales	17	1.47
Self-employed	10	1.80
Skilled Labor	16	1.43
F-value		4.59*

*($p < .0005$)

Again, respondents in each of the occupational groups were not inclined to go directly to the public library for services. Respondents in the professional occupation group, however, went to the library more frequently than any of the other occupational groups.

Similarly, analysis of variance was used to test the frequency of library use across marital status groups. There were no statistically significant differences found. The F-value was 1,432 and, therefore, greater than the .05 level of significance.

Summary of Frequency of Public Library Use

In general, respondents did not go directly to the public library for reading services. Women were more frequent users of public library services than were men. Respondents in the professional occupation group used the services of the public library more directly than did persons in the other occupational groups.

(c) Presence or absence of a reading room in the home.--

The respondents were requested on the survey questionnaire to indicate whether or not there was a reading room in the home.

The response choices were either "yes" or "no." The presence or absence of a reading room in each of the eleven homes was computed by chi-square test. The results are presented in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30. Reading room in each of the eleven homes for the aged.

Home Number	Reading Room in the Home		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
1	4%	96%	49
2	10%	90%	10
3	12%	88%	26
4	25%	75%	16
5	50%	50%	12
6	0%	100%	13
7	5%	95%	43
8	100%	0%	9
9	0%	100%	9
10	24%	76%	34
11	7%	93%	28

Chi-square = 113.345; d.f. = 20; ($p < .0005$)

Although all of the homes, except home number eight, had reading rooms, Table 4.30 shows that either the respondents were not always aware of their existence or other variables influenced the responses. Why, for example, did the respondents in home number five respond "yes" (50%) and "no" (50%) as to the existence of a reading room in that home? In order to clarify the data, the researcher

statistically significant relationships between frequency of use of existing reading rooms and age, education, sex, former occupation, or marital status of the respondents.

In homes where no reading room existed, the respondents were requested to indicate the potential frequency of use if such a room was provided. Again, each of the response choices was weighted according to the following values: frequently--4; occasionally--3; hardly ever--2; and never--1. There were no statistically significant relationships between potential frequency of use if reading rooms were provided and age, education, sex, former occupation, or marital status of the respondents.

There were 208 respondents living in homes with reading rooms who reported they "occasionally used the rooms for reading." In the homes reported by the respondents as not having reading rooms, forty-one respondents indicated they would "hardly ever" use such rooms if provided.

Summary Pertinent to the Presence or Absence of Reading Rooms in the Homes

Ten of the eleven homes had reading rooms. There were no statistically significant relationships between frequency of use of existing reading rooms and age, education, sex, former occupation, or marital status. Also, there were no statistically significant relationships between potential frequency of use if reading rooms were provided and age, education, sex, former occupation, or marital status.

(d) Knowledge and use of large-print books.--A knowledge of large-print books was tested by the use of chi-square. The respondents were asked, "have you ever seen a large-print book?" The response choice was either a "yes" or a "no" answer. The knowledge of large-print books pertinent to the respondents living in all eleven homes was statistically significant. (See Table 4.31.)

Table 4.31. Knowledge of large-print books within each home.

Home Number	Knowledge of large-print books		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
1	8%	92%	49
2	10%	90%	10
3	23%	77%	26
4	31%	69%	16
5	33%	67%	12
6	8%	92%	13
7	7%	93%	43
8	44%	56%	9
9	0%	100%	9
10	6%	94%	34
11	14%	86%	28

Chi-square = 23.897; d.f. = 10; ($p < .005$)

The respondents were further requested to indicate the frequency of their use of large-print books. Each of the response choices was weighted according to the following values: frequency--4; occasionally--3; hardly ever--2; and never--1. There were no statistically significant relationships between frequency of use of

large-print books and age, education, sex, or marital status. An analysis of variance did, however, determine a statistically significant difference in the frequency of large-print books and former occupation as shown in Table 4.32.

Table 4.32. Use of large-print books and occupation groups.

Former Occupation	Number of Respondents	Mean Scores for frequency values
Housewife	72	2.51
Unskilled Labor	20	2.80
Clerical	39	2.12
Professional	69	2.40
Farmer	6	3.00
Sales	17	1.58
Self-employed	10	3.90
Skilled Labor	16	2.37
F-value		4.00*

*($p < .0005$)

There were statistically significant differences between the frequency of use of large-print books and former occupation groups. For example, the 10 respondents in the self-employed group indicated the most frequent use of large-print books. Respondents with a former occupation of sales less frequently read large-print books in contrast to the other occupation groups.

Summary for Knowledge and Use
of Large-Print Books

The majority of respondents in the study knew that large-print editions of books existed. Farmers and self-employed former occupation groups most frequently read large-print books. Persons with a former occupation of "sales" were least likely to read large-print books. The other former occupation groups "hardly ever" read large-print books.

Question 5

Are periods of intensive reading related to sex, education, and past location of residence of the respondents?

The respondents were asked to indicate the ages in which the most intensive reading took place in their lives. The response choices consisted of six age groups: 6-10 years, 11-14 years, 15-20 years, 21-40 years, 41-64 years, and age 65 or older. The respondents were free to check as many of the response choices as desired. If a response item was checked indicating a period of intensive reading, that item was considered a "yes" response. Unchecked response choices were considered as a "no" response.

Of the six chi-squares computed pertaining to sex differences and periods in which intensive reading took place, three chi-squares proved to be statistically significant. (See Tables 4.33, 4.34 and 4.35) The interaction between sex differences and period of intensive reading were not statistically significant during the periods of 21-40 years, 41-64 years, and 65 years or older.

Table 4.33. Periods of intensive reading (6-10 years) between males and females.

Sex	Intensive Reading During 6-10 years		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Males	58%	42%	55
Females	45%	55%	194

Chi-square = 3.055; d.f. = 1; ($p < .05$)

The period of intensive reading (6-10) was statistically significant between males and females. Women read more intensively than men during the chronological ages of 6-10 years.

Table 4.34. Periods of intensive reading (11-14 years) between males and females.

Sex	Intensive Reading During 11-14 years		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Males	60%	40%	55
Females	45%	55%	194

Chi-square = 3.676; d.f. = 1; ($p < .05$)

The period of intensive reading (11-14 years) was statistically significant between males and females. Women read more intensively than men during the chronological ages of 11-14 years.

Table 4.35. Periods of intensive reading (15-20 years) between males and females.

Sex	Intensive Reading During 15-20 years		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Males	56%	44%	55
Females	38%	62%	194

Chi-square = 5.833; d.f. = 1; ($p < .01$)

The period of intensive reading (15-20 years) was statistically significant between males and females. Women read more intensively than men during the chronological ages of 15-20 years.

Although three chi-squares were not statistically significant, the data concerning periods of intensive reading and sex differences are summarized in Table 4.36. The percentages in each of the cells are to be interpreted as a "yes" response specific to each of the periods of years.

Table 4.36. Summarized data concerning periods of intensive reading between males and females.

Sex	6-10 yrs.	11-14 yrs.	15-20 yrs.	21-40 yrs.	41-64 yrs.	65 yrs. or older
Males	42%	40%	44%	60%	58%	79%
Females	55%	55%	62%	51%	62%	79%

N = 249

Women were more likely to read more intensively than men throughout all age periods with the exception of the period 65 years

or older. The attention of the reader is also directed towards a greater variability pertinent to periods of intensive reading for men than women.

The t-test statistically tested the mean score differences between periods of intensive reading and years of education for the respondents. There were no statistically significant t-values for the age 65 years or older category and years of education. All other t-values were statistically significant. (See Table 4.37) In order to interpret Table 4.37, the following example is provided. During the period of 6-10 years, 130 of the respondents with a mean of 12.23 years of education read more intensively than 119 of the respondents with a mean of 11.32 years of education.

Table 4.37. Mean years of education and periods of intensive reading.

Periods of Intensive Reading	Read Intensively During Each Period		t-value
	No	Yes	
6-10 years	N = 119 11.32	N = 130 12.23	2.049*
11-14 years	N = 121 11.24	N = 128 12.32	2.440**
15-20 years	N = 105 10.93	N = 144 12.43	3.395***
21-40 years	N = 96 10.96	N = 153 12.32	3.006**
41-64 years	N = 96 10.53	N = 153 12.60	4.698***
Age 65 or older	N = 50 11.26	N = 198 11.93	.861
* (p < .05) ** (p < .01) *** (p < .0005)			

Significant differences were determined between the mean years of education and periods of extensive reading. With the exception of the period of age 65 or older, respondents with more years of education tended to read more intensively throughout their life-span than persons with less education.

Chi-square statistically tested the relationship between periods of intensive reading and past location of residence of the respondents. Of the six chi-squares computed, three were statistically significant. (See Tables 4.38, 4.39 and 4.40) There were no statistically significant relationships between past location of residence (rural, urban and suburban) and periods of intensive reading during 6-10 years, 11-14 years, and 21-40 years.

In order to interpret the data presented in the following three tables, the data in Table 4.38 is presented as an example. Of the 36 respondents whose former residence was in a rural area, 58% indicated they did not (No) read intensively during the ages of 15-20 years in contrast to 42% of the respondents who indicated they did (Yes) read intensively.

Table 4.38. Periods of intensive reading (15-20 years) and past location of residence.

Past Location of Residence	Intensive Reading During 15-20 Years		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Rural	58%	42%	36
Urban	38%	62%	182
Suburban	48%	52%	31

Chi-square = 5.701; d.f. = 2; ($p < .05$)

A statistically significant relationship was found between the period of intensive reading (15-20 years) and past location of residence. Respondents with a past location of residence in an urban area were more likely to read more intensively during the period of 15-20 years than persons living in either rural or suburban areas.

Table 4.39. Periods of intensive reading (41-64 years) and past location of residence.

Past Location of Residence	Intensive Reading During 41-64 Years		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Rural	58%	42%	36
Urban	36%	64%	182
Suburban	32%	68%	31

Chi-square = 7.083; d.f. = 2; ($p < .05$)

A statistically significant relationship existed between the period of intensive reading (41-64 years) and past location of residence. Respondents living in suburban areas were more likely to read intensively during 41-64 years than were persons living in rural or urban areas.

Table 4.40. Periods of intensive reading (65 years or older) and past location of residence.

Past Location of Residence	Intensive Reading During 65 years or Older		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Rural	34%	66%	36
Urban	17%	83%	182
Suburban	23%	77%	31

Chi-square = 5.557; d.f. = 2; ($p < .05$)

A statistically significant relationship was found between periods of intensive reading 65 years or older and past location of residence. Persons whose past residence was in an urban area were more likely to read more intensively during the period 65 years or older than persons from rural or suburban areas.

Summary

Periods of intensive reading were related to sex, education and past location of residence. Women were more likely than men to read more intensively during the periods 6-10 years, 11-14 years, and 15-20 years. Respondents with more years of formal education read more intensively throughout their life-span than persons with less education. Persons with a past location of residence in an urban area tended to read more intensively during 15-20 years, and 65 years or older. Respondents living in suburban areas were more likely to read more intensively during 41-64 years.

Question 6

Is the recognized therapeutic value of reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of the respondents?

The respondents were requested to indicate the frequency with which reading helped to solve a problem or relieve psychological tensions. Each of the response choices was weighted according to the following values: frequently--4; occasionally--3; hardly ever--2; and never--1.

(a) The product-moment correlation r statistically tested the degree of relationship between the recognized therapeutic value of reading and age and education. The coefficient for age was not statistically significant. The relationship, however, between the recognized therapeutic value of reading and education was statistically significant. (See Table 4.41)

Table 4.41. Recognized therapeutic value of reading and age and education.

	Recognized therapeutic value of reading
Age N = 249	.05
Education N = 249	.21*

*($p < .01$)

There was a significantly positive correlation between the recognized therapeutic value of reading and education. Respondents with more formal education were more likely to indicate that reading helped to solve a problem, relieved psychological tensions, or just helped them feel better about themselves than persons with less education.

(b) The t-test statistically tested the differences in frequency mean scores pertaining to the recognized therapeutic value of reading for males and females. No statistically significant t-value was determined.

(c) An analysis of variance statistically tested the recognized therapeutic value of reading across marital status

Summary

The recognized therapeutic value of reading was related to education and former occupation. Respondents with more years of formal education were more likely to recognize the therapeutic value of reading than persons with less education. The self-employed occupation groups "frequently" recognized the therapeutic value of reading in contrast to the other occupation groups.

Question 7

Are purposes for reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of respondents?

The respondents were directed to think of a book or magazine article which was read during the past year and considered to be important or interesting. The respondents were further requested to write the topic of the book or magazine article. Of the 249 respondents in this study, 13 respondents with a mean age of 77.84 years did not find any topics interesting or important. In contrast, 236 respondents with a mean age of 80.14 years cited the topics of biographies, religion, travel, and light fiction as interesting or important.

The respondents were then provided with seven response choices which explained why the topics were important or interesting. The respondents were free to choose as many of the seven choices as they desired. In the computation of the data, therefore, any response choices checked by the respondents were considered as "yes" responses and any choices not checked were considered "no" responses. For

example, in Table 4.43, 110 respondents with a mean age of 80.75 years considered their topic important because it "filled a spiritual need." In contrast, 139 respondents with a mean age of 79.33 years did not check that choice as important pertinent to their topic.

The t-test statistically tested the differences between the mean ages of the respondents and purposes for reading. The results are presented in Table 4.43.

Table 4.43. Mean ages and purposes for reading.

Possible response choices pertaining to purposes for reading	Mean Ages and Number of Respondents		t-value
	No	Yes	
Filled spiritual need	N = 139 79.33	N = 110 80.75	1.687*
Pleasure or relaxation	N = 128 80.03	N = 121 79.89	.174
Used for conversation with others	N = 195 79.78	N = 54 80.61	.814
Self-improvement	N = 201 79.98	N = 48 79.87	.104
Helps avoid boredom	N = 201 80.14	N = 48 79.20	.823
Provided practical information for demands of daily living	N = 193 79.87	N = 56 80.28	.414
Related to a hobby	N = 245 80.04	N = 4 74.74	1.597
Other reasons	N = 233 80.02	N = 16 79.06	.564

*(p < .05)

Significant differences existed between the mean ages of the respondents and purposes for reading. Respondents (110) with a mean age of 80.75 read to fill a spiritual need more often than 139 respondents with mean ages of 79.33. No other statistically significant differences were found.

The t-test also statistically tested the differences between years of education of the respondents and purposes for reading. The results are presented in Table 4.44.

Table 4.44. Education and purposes for reading.

Purposes for Reading	Mean Years of Education and Number of Respondents		t-value
	No	Yes	
Filled spiritual need	N = 139 12.07	N = 110 11.46	1.354
Pleasure and relaxation	N = 128 11.23	N = 121 12.40	2.650*
Used for conversation with others	N = 195 11.57	N = 54 12.61	1.913**
Self-improvement	N = 201 11.40	N = 48 13.45	3.712***
Help avoid boredom	N = 201 11.80	N = 48 11.79	.245
Provided practical information for demands of daily living	N = 193 11.47	N = 56 12.94	2.794*
Related to a hobby	N = 245 11.76	N = 4 14.00	1.258
Other reasons	N = 233 11.67	N = 16 13.62	2.152**

*(p < .01)

** (p < .05)

*** (p < .0005)

Statistically significant differences existed between years of education of the respondents and purposes for reading. Respondents with more formal education read for pleasure and relaxation, for conversation with others, self-improvement, for practical information, and for other reasons in contrast to those with less education.

Chi-square tested the relationship between sex differences and purposes for reading. Of the eight chi-squares computed, one was statistically significant. (See Table 4.45) Sex differences and purposes for reading were not statistically significant for the following: filled a spiritual need, provided pleasure or relaxation, self-improvement, helped to avoid boredom, helped to provide information concerning the practical demands of daily living, related to a hobby, or other reasons.

Table 4.45. Purposes for reading--conversation with others--for males and females.

Sex	Conversation with Others		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Males	89%	11%	55
Females	75%	25%	194

Chi-square = 4.828; d.f. = 1; ($p < .05$)

There were significant differences between males and females and purposes for reading. Women, more than men, more often read in order to converse with other persons.

Chi-square also statistically tested purposes for reading and marital status groups. Of the eight chi-squares computed, one

was statistically significant. (See Table 4.46) The relationship between marital status and purposes for reading was not statistically significant pertinent to the following: filled a spiritual need, provided pleasure or relaxation, used for conversation with others, self-improvement, helped to avoid boredom, helped to provide information concerning the practical demands of daily living, and other reasons.

Table 4.46. Purpose for reading--related to a hobby--and marital status.

Marital Status	Related to a Hobby		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Married	94%	6%	18
Single	94%	6%	54
Divorced	100%	0%	6
Widowed	100%	0%	170

Chi-square = 9.938; d.f. = 3; ($p < .01$)

Purposes for reading (related to a hobby) and marital status were statistically significant. Divorced and widowed respondents most often did not read for purposes related to a hobby than did respondents in the other marital status groups.

Similarly, chi-square was used to test purposes for reading and occupational groups. Of the eight chi-squares computed, one was statistically significant--helped to provide information concerning the practical demands of daily living--(see Table 4.47). The relationship between purposes for reading and former occupation was not

statistically significant for filled a spiritual need, provided pleasure or relaxation, used for conversation with others, self-improvement, helped to avoid boredom, related to a hobby, or other reasons.

There were significant relationships between purposes for reading (helped to provide information concerning the practical demands of daily living) and occupational groups. Self-employed persons more often read for purposes that helped to provide information concerning the practical demands of daily living than the others occupational groups. Farmers were least likely, in contrast to the other occupational groups, to read for such a purpose.

Table 4.47. Purposes for reading--helped to provide information concerning the practical demands of daily living.

Former Occupation	Practical Demands of Daily Living		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	86%	14%	72
Unskilled Labor	90%	10%	20
Clerical	69%	31%	39
Professional	71%	29%	69
Farmer	100%	0%	6
Sales	82%	18%	17
Self-employed	60%	40%	10
Skilled Labor	69%	31%	16

Chi-square = 12.482; d.f. = 7; ($p < .05$)

Summary

Purposes for reading were related to age, education, sex, marital status, and former occupation. Older respondents more often read to fill a spiritual need. Persons with more formal education read for pleasure and relaxation, conversation with others, self-improvement, practical information for daily living, and for other reasons. Women, more often than men, read in order to converse with others. Divorced and widowed respondents were least likely to read for purposes related to a hobby. Self-employed respondents were more likely to read for information concerning the practical demands of daily living than the other occupation groups.

Question 8

Are reasons for restricted reading related to age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status of respondents?

The respondents were asked what factors prevented them from reading more. The responses were grouped according to ten categories: no desire, read too slowly, large-type materials not available, eye problems, desired reading material not available, get too sleepy, watch T.V., hobbies, other social activities, and other reasons.

The t-test statistically tested the differences between mean ages of the respondents and reasons for restricted reading. The t-values and levels of significance are presented in Table 4.48. As an example, 52 of the respondents with a mean age of 80.57 years indicated they did (Yes) feel "no desire" to read more. In contrast, 197 respondents with a mean age of 79.80 indicated they did not (No) feel the "no desire" choice applied to them.

Table 4.48. Mean ages of the respondents and reasons for restricted reading.

Reasons for Restricted Reading	Mean Ages of Respondents and Number of Respondents		t-value
	No	Yes	
No desire	N = 197 79.80	N = 52 80.57	1.188
Read too slowly	N = 233 79.97	N = 16 79.81	.947
Large-type materials not available	N = 239 79.86	N = 10 82.40	1.192
Eye problems	N = 135 78.42	N = 114 81.78	4.118*
Desired materials not available	N = 242 80.02	N = 7 78.00	.888
Get too sleepy	N = 214 80.28	N = 35 78.02	1.880**
Watch television	N = 215 80.24	N = 34 78.20	1.677**
Hobbies	N = 206 80.03	N = 43 79.60	.392
Other social activities	N = 220 80.00	N = 29 79.62	.297
Other reasons	N = 216 79.97	N = 33 79.90	.510

*(p < .0005)

**(p < .05)

Table 4.49. Mean years of education and reasons for restricted reading.

Reasons for Restricted Reading	Mean Years of Education and Number of Respondents		t-value
	No	Yes	
No desire	N = 197 11.76	N = 52 11.94	.319
Read too slowly	N = 233 11.77	N = 16 12.25	.523
Large-type materials not available	N = 239 11.77	N = 10 12.40	.545
Eye problems	N = 135 12.36	N = 114 11.14	2.763*
Desired materials not available	N = 242 11.74	N = 7 13.85	1.568
Get too sleepy	N = 214 11.89	N = 35 11.22	1.040
Watch television	N = 215 11.84	N = 34 11.55	.434
Hobbies	N = 206 11.66	N = 43 12.46	1.356
Other social activities	N = 220 11.66	N = 29 12.82	1.670**
Other reasons	N = 216 11.62	N = 33 12.93	2.000**

*(p < .01)

**(p < .05)

Table 4.50. Reasons for restricted reading--large-type materials not available--between males and females.

Sex	Large-type print not available		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Males	100%	0%	55
Females	95%	5%	194

Chi-square = 2.954; d.f. = 1; (p < .05)

There was a significant relationship between sex differences and reasons for restricted reading. Women, more often than men, indicated that sufficient large-type materials were not available.

Table 4.51. Reasons for restricted reading--other social activities--between males and females.

Sex	Other Social Activities		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Males	96%	5%	55
Females	86%	14%	194

Chi-square = 4.402; d.f. = 1; ($p < .05$)

There was a significant relationship between sex differences and reasons for restricted reading which pertained to "other social activities." Women were more likely than men to list "other social activities" as reasons for restricted reading.

Table 4.52. Reasons for restricted reading--other reasons--between males and females.

Sex	Other Reasons		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Males	94%	6%	55
Females	86%	14%	194

Chi-square = 3.734; d.f. = 1 ($p < .05$)

There was a significant relationship between sex differences and reasons for restricted reading which pertained to "other reasons." Women were more likely than men to list "other reasons" as related to reasons for restricted reading.

Chi-square statistically tested reasons for restricted reading pertaining to former occupation. Of the ten chi-squares computed, three were statistically significant. (See Table 4.53, 4.54 and 4.55)

Table 4.53. Reasons for restricted reading--eye problems--and occupation groups.

Former Occupation	Eye Problems		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	42%	58%	72
Unskilled Labor	50%	50%	20
Clerical	62%	38%	39
Professional	68%	32%	69
Farmer	83%	17%	6
Sales	59%	41%	17
Self-employed	30%	70%	10
Skilled Labor	38%	62%	16

Chi-square = 17.283; d.f. = 7; ($p < .01$)

There were significant relationships between reasons for restricted reading (eye problems) and former occupations. Self-employed respondents were more likely to experience eye problems which restricted reading than the other occupations. Farmers were least likely to list "eye problems" as a reason for restricted reading than the other occupation groups.

There were significant relationships between reasons for restricted reading (get too sleepy) and occupation groups. Unskilled laborers were more likely to list "get too sleepy" as a reason for

Table 4.54. Reasons for restricted reading--get too sleepy--and occupation groups.

Occupation Groups	Get too Sleepy		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	90%	10%	73
Unskilled Labor	65%	35%	20
Clerical	82%	18%	39
Professional	88%	12%	69
Farmer	83%	17%	6
Sales	76%	24%	17
Self-employed	100%	0%	10
Skilled Labor	94%	6%	16

Chi-square = 12.956; d.f. = 7; ($p < .05$)

Table 4.55. Reasons for restricted reading--other reasons--and occupation groups.

Occupation Groups	Other Reasons		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Housewife	94%	6%	72
Unskilled Labor	100%	0%	20
Clerical	90%	10%	39
Professional	74%	26%	69
Farmer	100%	0%	6
Sales	82%	18%	17
Self-employed	100%	0%	10
Skilled Labor	81%	19%	16

Chi-square = 18.889; d.f. = 7; ($p < .005$)

restricted reading than the other occupation groups. Self-employed respondents were least likely to suggest that "get too sleepy" was a reason for restricted reading than the other occupation groups.

There were significant relationships between reasons for restricted reading (other reasons) and occupation groups. Professional groups were more likely to list "other reasons" for restricted reading than the other occupational groups. Respondents whose former occupations were unskilled labor or self-employed were least likely to list "other reasons" for restricted reading in contrast to the other occupation groups.

Chi-square also statistically tested reasons for restricted reading and marital status. Of the ten chi-squares computed, one chi-square was statistically significant. (See Table 4.56)

Table 4.56. Reasons for restricted reading--other social activities--and marital status groups.

Marital Status Groups	Other Social Activities		Number of Respondents
	No	Yes	
Married	89%	11%	18
Single	83%	17%	54
Divorced	50%	50%	6
Widowed	91%	9%	170

Chi-square = 11.182; d.f. = 3; ($p < .01$)

There were significant relationships between reasons for restricted reading (other social activities) and marital status. Divorced persons were more likely to indicate that "other social activities" restricted reading than the other marital status groups.

Widowed respondents were least likely to consider "other social activities" as restricting reading in contrast to the other marital status groups.

Summary

Reasons for restricted reading were related to age, education, sex, former occupation and marital status. Older respondents and self-employed respondents most often listed "eye problems" as reasons for restricted reading. Women were more likely than men to indicate that large-type materials, other social activities, and other reasons restricted reading. Unskilled laborers most often listed "get too sleepy" as a reason for restricted reading. Respondents in the "professional" former occupation group more often than the other occupation groups cited "other reasons" to explain restricted reading.

Interview Questions

The writer did not submit the answers pertinent to the interviews to statistical analysis. The taped interviews were, however, analyzed by the researcher and the answers of the respondents categorized.

Question 1

How could your reading needs be met more adequately today?

The respondents discussed many variables pertinent to the question. In general, however, their conclusions were summarized into four major needs: (1) the public library should increase efforts

In general, the respondents felt that it was extremely difficult to interest a person in reading who previously was not interested. A summary as to some suggestions for interesting persons in reading activities is presented in Table 4.57.

Table 4.57. Interest more older persons in reading.

Ways to Interest Persons In Reading N = 66	Percentage of Agreement or Disagreement	
	No	Yes
Reduce prices in large-print Readers' Digest magazines	10%	90%
Provide high interest low vocabulary materials	90%	10%
Survey interests of older persons	70%	30%
Concentrate on children to develop an interest in reading when young	5%	95%
Reading is a life-long interest and little can be done to interest those who dislike reading	10%	90%

Question 4

Some libraries and universities provide courses and reading programs to help the younger adult prepare for retirement. What kinds of problems do you feel the younger adult should be prepared for after he retires?

The respondents indicated that the problems of retirement greatly vary between individuals. The respondents with 100 percent

agreement indicated that programs which promote a variety of interests--especially in reading and the arts--contribute to adjustment in retirement. They stated further that younger adults need to learn how to depend on their own inner resources. As one respondent indicated, "It would appear that younger adults are so externally oriented, they can't stand their own company."

Summary for Interview Questions

The major reading needs mentioned by the respondents were for the public library to increase efforts to interest the older person in library services, to provide more large-print books, to maintain libraries in each home, and to provide a fresh supply of books. The older person does want to become involved with public library programs. In general, the respondents stated that it was extremely difficult to interest a person in reading who previously was not interested. Individuals might become interested in reading if their reading interests were determined, large-print books available, and materials of high interest and low vocabulary provided. The respondents indicated that a helpful way for the younger adult to prepare for retirement was to rely more on his own inner resources. Also, it was important for the younger adult to develop a variety of interests especially in hobbies, reading, and performing arts.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the leisure-time reading behaviors of persons living within Homes for the Aged in Kent County, Michigan. The study identified the reading behaviors of the older reader by means of a structured survey questionnaire and taped interviews. The data pertinent to reading behaviors were then statistically related to the demographic characteristics of age, education, sex, former occupation, marital status, and past location of residence.

The present chapter is organized as follows:

1. Major results and discussion
2. Implications
3. Recommendations

Major Results and Discussions

1. There was a direct and significant relationship between the time spent in leisure-time reading and variety in reading. Persons who spent more time in reading activities tended to read more categories of books, magazine topics, and parts of the newspaper.

2. There was a direct and significant relationship between variety in reading and sex, education, former occupation, and marital status.

a. Women demonstrated a greater variety in reading behaviors than men.

b. Respondents with more years of formal education read with more variety than those with less education.

c. Persons with the former occupations of professional (teacher, lawyer, minister, nurse, administrative with a college degree), clerical (secretary and office workers), and sales read with more variety than other occupational groups.

d. Unmarried and widowed respondents read with more variety than married or divorced persons. Married persons indicated a greater interest in hobbies. The low number of divorced persons studied may account for a sampling bias which affected the statistical results.

3. There was a direct and significant relationship between the time spent in leisure-time reading and education and former occupations of the respondents.

a. Respondents with more years of formal education spend greater periods of time in reading activities than respondents with fewer years of formal education. Further, the older person prefers to read for many short periods of time rather than for long, sustained periods of time.

b. Persons with the former occupations of professional, clerical, and self-employed spend more time in reading activities than persons with other former occupations.

4. There was a direct and significant relationship between the use of library services and education, sex, former occupation and marital status.

a. Persons living in homes for the aged in Kent County rely on four major sources for books: (1) library in the home, (2) book cart supplied with books from the public library, (3) a book mailing service from the public library, (4) borrowing from friends.

b. Men tend to purchase more books from stores than women. Women, in contrast to men, obtain most of their books through the use of mailing services, borrowing from friends, gifts, and book club memberships.

c. Professional occupational groups, obtain most of their books from store purchases, visits to the public library, borrowing from friends, and as gifts. Respondents who were self-employed indicated the major sources used to obtain books were purchases from the store and book cart services in the home. Persons with a former occupation of a clerical nature reported their sources for books included book cart in the home, visits to the public library, books borrowed from friends, and gifts. Respondents classified as skilled labor reported their primary sources for books were purchases from the store and gifts. Persons in the unskilled labor occupational group stated their major source for books was purchases from stores.

d. Married persons tend to use book cart services and purchase books from the store. Unmarried and widowed respondents obtain books as gifts and by borrowing from friends. Divorced persons receive books as gifts.

e. In general, respondents do not go to the public library for books. The most often cited reason was the lack of transportation to the public library. The data of the study supported that the conscious use of public library services was slightly greater among the respondents with more formal education, women, and professional occupational groups.

f. The majority of the eleven homes do have reading rooms; however, respondents prefer to use their own rooms for reading. The availability of books in each home seems to be more significant to reading behavior than where reading occurs.

g. The majority of respondents do know about large-print books. In general, the respondents do use large-print books and no significant differences were found between the use of large-print books and age, sex, education, and marital status. Differences did occur among occupational groups which require clarification. Farmers primarily read large-print editions of the Bible. The other occupational groups read a combination of large-print editions of the Bible and other large-print books. Sales groups were least likely to read large-print books.

The most often cited reasons for not reading large-print books were "not needed" and "no interest." Although those responses were most often indicated on the survey questionnaire, the researcher also found more subtle reasons for not

reading large-print books through group interviews: (1) large-print books are so large and bulky that older persons find holding them extremely difficult; (2) the use of large-print books is an admission of eye problems and coincident with a further manifestation of aging; and (3) large-print books are limited in supply and scope of subject matter at the present time.

5. There was a direct and significant relationship between periods of intensive reading and sex, education, and past location of residence.

a. From an overall viewpoint, there was an increase in reading behavior with a corresponding increase of chronological age. The findings pertinent to the sample for the present study refutes the contention, concerning adult readers in general, that reading behaviors decrease as persons grow older.

b. Women are more consistently life-long readers than men. Women read more intensively than men during the period 6-20 years. It is interesting to note however, that at age 65 or older, no significant differences occur between men and women as to intensive reading.

c. Respondents with greater formal education read more intensively throughout all age groups.

d. Respondents from rural areas spend less time in reading activities across age groups than do persons whose former residences were in urban or suburban areas.

Persons from rural areas do increase in their reading behavior in the age group of 65 years or older. The researcher, after interviewing the respondents, concludes that the availability of reading materials and increased free-time do contribute to that phenomena.

6. There was a direct and significant relationship between the recognized therapeutic value of reading and education and former occupation.

a. Respondents with greater formal education indicated that reading helped to solve problems, relieved psychological tensions, or just helped the respondents feel better about themselves.

b. Persons who were self-employed most frequently indicated reading as having a therapeutic value. All other occupational groups, with the exception of farmers, also recognized reading as having some therapeutic value.

7. There was a direct and significant relationship between purpose for reading and age, sex, education, former occupation and marital status.

a. The respondents were directed to write the topic of a book or magazine article that was read and considered interesting. The most often cited topics were biographies, religion, travel, and light fiction.

b. There were thirteen respondents (5 percent) who indicated no topics were important or interesting. The most often cited reasons for checking that item were eye problems

which prohibit the reading of books and magazines or a lack of interest in reading. Older respondents read to fill a spiritual need. No other statistically significant differences between age and purposes for reading were determined.

c. Respondents with more formal educational generally read for "relaxation and pleasure," "conversation with others," "self-improvement," "practical information," and "other reasons." The categories pertinent to "other reasons" consisted of reading for political information, interesting experience which related to respondents' early life, an interest in personalities, and historical interests. Persons with more education were least interested in "reading to fill a spiritual need."

d. Women discuss books with other persons more than men. Further, the researcher determined in interviewing the respondents that the borrowing of books from friends directly relate to discussion of books. Unmarried and widowed persons especially use the "borrowing of books from friends" as a means to communicate and interact with other persons. Reading activities, therefore, seem to serve a social purpose in retirement homes.

e. Married and unmarried respondents most often read for purposes related to a hobby. No widowed or divorced persons indicated they read for purposes related to a hobby.

f. Self-employed respondents more than any other occupational group read to obtain information concerning the practical demands of daily living.

8. There was a direct and significant relationship between reasons for restricted reading and age, education, sex, former occupation, and marital status.

a. Older respondents list eye problems as the major reason for restricted reading. Younger respondents indicated that watching television and getting too sleepy restricts reading activities.

b. Eye problems least affect the restricted reading behaviors of those with more education. Respondents with more formal education indicated that, although they do spend large amounts of time reading, they are also interested in such social activities as: attending lectures, traveling, church, games, and hiking. Persons with less formal education stated that "eye problems" were the major reasons for restricted reading.

c. Women, in contrast to men, are more socially involved in a variety of activities. As such, women respondents would indicate that those activities restrict reading time.

d. Eye problems are frequently listed by housewives, skilled laborers, self-employed, and unskilled laborers as the reason for restricted reading. Professional groups tend to be involved with other social activities and list that factor as the reason for restricted reading.

e. Married, divorced, and unmarried respondents indicate reasons for restricted reading as: hobbies, church, card games, travel, and--believe it or not--attending court trials.

9. At the interview sessions, the respondents indicated that reading needs could be more adequately met in retirement homes by: (1) the public library going to the older person with reading programs, (2) increased large-print editions of books and magazines, and (3) an increased supply of fresh books in the home. As one respondent stated, "I'm sick of these goody-goody books and re-reading the books I like. Book supplies need a face-lifting in the homes."

10. The persons interviewed felt that it was extremely difficult to interest non-readers in existing reading programs because reading is a life-long process. The most significant factor in developing their reading interests was seeing parents read.

11. The respondents, with 100 percent agreement, indicated that programs which promote a variety of interests--especially reading and the arts--contribute to adjustment in the later years. The researcher found that persons who engaged in reading activities were also more socially involved. As one person indicated, "I'm here to die. No question about that! I do much reading, get involved with life, and rely on my own inner resources."

12. The researcher concluded that homes with the most viable reading programs were those which had libraries managed by the residents themselves.

Implications

It would appear from the data pertinent to the present study that education is a significant variable which influences the reading behaviors of older persons. A consistent pattern throughout

this study indicates that older persons with more formal education tend to spend more time in reading activities and read with greater variety than those with less formal education.

The evidence also seems to indicate that older persons do spend many leisure-hours in reading activities. It seems possible, therefore, that reading activities do not decrease after persons retire. The respondents, at least in the present study, consistently emphasized the importance of reading as a leisure-time activity.

After an examination of the survey results pertinent to variety in reading and discussions with the respondents, the implications are that older persons do read with great variety. It appears logical, therefore, that the reading needs of the aged can best be determined when that group is studied separately from the adult reader in general.

It would also seem that reading serves a social function in homes for the aged. Many respondents indicated they shared and discussed books with one another. The writer believes that such social behavior provided a means for the older person to fulfill a need for social interaction.

The evidence presented in this study seems to reflect that library extension programs and services are appreciated by older persons. The respondents consistently related to the writer than transportation problems prohibited them from traveling directly to the library. As such, the library services of providing book mailing, book carts, and special services related to helping persons with eye

problems were especially helpful. One respondent stated, "When the library tears down its walls and goes to the people, the library becomes an institution for all persons in society."

Senior citizens need more large-print editions of books and magazines. The large-print editions, however, should be abridged in scope and manageable in book size. The respondents indicated to the writer that many large-print books are just too difficult to hold. Also, there is not enough reading variety specific to large-print books.

Residents living in the homes should supervise the library programs. It appeared to the writer that in homes where the residents managed the home libraries a greater enthusiasm for reading existed. It also appeared to the writer that when residents managed the libraries in the home, those resident librarians felt they provided a useful service. As such, they were enthusiastic about the importance of reading and made efforts to share their enthusiasm with other older persons in the home.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. There is a need for further research concerning the reading needs of elderly persons not living in retirement homes.
2. Greater research efforts are needed to determine the therapeutic value of reading. Further research is needed to more clearly identify the factors pertinent to reading which help the older person adjust to the problems of daily living.

3. There is also a need for research which more clearly outlines the function of parents in developing life-long interests in reading.

4. Research is similarly needed to determine the reasons for some older persons not using public library services.

5. Research applicable to older persons living in nursing homes is needed. The medical problems of such persons may create special reading needs and interests.

6. There is a need for research which compares the reading behaviors of older persons living in retirement homes which are managed by religious organizations and those managed through public funds.

7. Research is needed in retirement homes concerning the attitudes of administrators towards public library services in the homes.

8. More research studies are needed to determine how large-print books could be made less bulky and more manageable.

9. There is also a need for more research which would reveal the differences in reading needs between women and men in retirement homes when education is held constant.

10. Research studies are also needed specific to the reading environments within retirement homes. Variables should be studied within the home environments which provide and create incentives for reading among older persons.

11. There is a need for a greater clarification as to the function of universities in providing specific programs in reading which appeal to older persons and promote life-long reading habits.

12. Training programs should be researched which provide a viable means to train older persons to run their own libraries in the retirement homes.

13. Research still needs to be conducted which identifies reasons for the fact that women read more than men.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

READING SURVEY

1. How much time do you spend in leisure-time reading per week:

_____ per week

2. What categories of books have you read during the past year?

☐ Did not read books (Why?) _____

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> mysteries | <input type="checkbox"/> poetry | <input type="checkbox"/> science fiction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> westerns | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> self-improvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> humor | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> hobbies/crafts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> romance | <input type="checkbox"/> history | <input type="checkbox"/> science or technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> adventure | <input type="checkbox"/> biographies | <input type="checkbox"/> religion (other than Bible) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> business | <input type="checkbox"/> sports | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> politics | <input type="checkbox"/> gardening | <input type="checkbox"/> health or family care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plays | <input type="checkbox"/> travel | <input type="checkbox"/> cookbooks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> repair |

3. What magazine topics do you usually read?

☐ Do not read magazines (Why?) _____

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> sports | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | <input type="checkbox"/> health or family care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hobbies | <input type="checkbox"/> personalities | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> homemaking | <input type="checkbox"/> romance | <input type="checkbox"/> current events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> repair | <input type="checkbox"/> crime stories | <input type="checkbox"/> self-improvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> travel | <input type="checkbox"/> business | <input type="checkbox"/> short stories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) _____ | | |

4. What parts of the newspaper do you usually read?
 () Do not read newspapers (Why?) _____
 () editorials () comics () local & community news
 () business () advertisements () recreation/sports
 () social events () classified section () births and deaths
 () other (specify) _____
5. How do you obtain most of your books?
 () purchase from store () loan from friends
 () visit to public library () gifts
 () book cart service () book club
 () book mailing from public library () library in the home
6. How often do you use the services of the public library to obtain reading materials?
 () frequently () occasionally () hardly ever
 () never (Why?) _____
7. Is there a reading room in the home? () yes () no
 If yes, how often do you use it? () frequently () occasionally
 () hardly ever () never (Why?) _____
 If no, how often would you use it if provided? () frequently
 () occasionally () hardly ever () never (Why?) _____
8. Have you ever seen a large print book? () yes () no
 If available, how often would you use it? () frequently
 () occasionally () hardly ever () never (Why?) _____
9. What is your education background? _____
10. During which ages in your life, did you do the most reading?
 () always, since childhood () 21-40 years
 () 6-10 years () 41-64 years
 () 11-14 years () 65 years or older
 () 15-20 years

11. What is your age? _____ years
12. Sex of respondent is: () Male () Female
13. What is your marital status? () Married () Single
() Divorced () Widowed
14. What was your occupation? _____
15. Where did you live during most of your life? () rural area
() urban area () suburban area
16. How often do you feel that reading helps to solve a problem,
relieves many psychological tensions or just helps you to
feel better about yourself?
() frequently () occasionally () hardly ever () never
17. Think of a book or magazine article which you read during the
past year that was extremely interesting or important to you.
What was the topic? _____
Why was it important or interesting?
() none important or interesting () helped to avoid boredom
() filled a spiritual need () helped to provide informa-
() provide pleasure or relaxation tion concerning the
() used for conversation with others practical demands of
daily living
() self improvement () related to a hobby
() other (specify) _____
18. Many people say they would like to read more. What prevents
you from reading more?
() no desire () eye problems
() read too slowly () desired material not available
() large-type materials () get too sleepy
not available
() enjoy other forms of entertainment more (specify) _____

() other reasons (specify) _____

APPENDIX II
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How could your reading needs be met more adequately today?
2. A few public libraries provide special services to older persons such as having older persons review books, bookmobiles and book mailing services. There are persons who feel that such programs are a waste of time and older citizens just want to be left alone and not involved.
 - a. Do you think the older person does want to get involved in library services?
 - b. What could be done to promote that involvement?
3. Some older persons indicate that they are not interested in reading because they have gone to school only a few years. What do you think librarians or publishers could do to interest such persons in reading?
4. Some libraries and universities provide courses and reading programs to help the younger adult prepare for retirement. What kinds of problems do you feel the younger adult should be prepared for after they retire?