

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF READING HABITS AMONG STUDENTS TO EMPOWER SOCIETY

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Abstract:

Reading inculcates the essential skills of a knowledge driven society among the readers. It fosters critical thinking, analytical skills along with the ability to synthesize information and new ideas. The readers have been exposed to global perspectives, diverse cultural aspects through the books, articles, and digital content which enhanced their empathetic sensitivity towards humanity.

Keywords: *Reading Habits, Students, Libraries, Society*

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Introduction:

Reading is an inevitable way to acquire the knowledge about culture and the universe around us. It has to be developed as a routine habit among the students as it supports their intellectual development. The libraries are the places where knowledge is collected, shared, and created so libraries have the duty of promoting effective reading. Reading is something that makes the reader think and increase vocabulary, comprehension, and analytical skills. Reading keeps the reader aware of the events around him. Reading creates an enterprising society that thinks well. Reading develops the personality of the reader and increases concentration, which brings good emotional benefits to the reader. The reader can handle daily stress properly. It plays an important role in creating a knowledge-based society. Library is an important bridge in creating readers and a knowledge-based society.

Reading as coding and decoding printed words limits the engagement of students with texts to surface meanings. When language learning becomes overly instrumental, students' capacity to expand their vocabulary and imagination diminishes. In today's culture of memes and brief social messages, reading

risks becoming formulaic and stripped of creativity and vitality (Mishra Tarc, A. 2015).

Literature Review:

Ubat and Academia (2025) surveyed how college students use libraries, their reading habits, and how library spaces can be improved. Libraries perform the role of a catalyst for the effective implementation of teaching- learning process in the education and research fields. In this research found that students favoured spaces that offered good access, useful activities, comfort, and opportunities for social interaction. **Fleming (2019)** explored how organising a school library with the specification affects the reading habits of students learning in seventh grade. The study focused on students' confidence in their reading skills, their ability to choose reading material, and the amount of time they spent in reading for pleasure. The results showed positive improvement in how students viewed reading for enjoyment. **Sethy, S. (2018)** explained that promoting a reading culture means not to motivate students to read only for the purpose of examination but to inspire them to enjoy reading and develop it as a regular habit. The present research paper defines the

idea of a reading culture and discusses ongoing efforts to strengthen it. It also looks at the reasons behind weak reading habits and highlights how libraries can support and improve reading culture among its users forever. **Luo, Li, Li and Zheng (2025)** studied the factors that influence users' deeper involvement in smart reading promotion. Their findings offer not only theoretical but also practical guidance for libraries. **Duke, Ward and Pearson (2021)** described what reading comprehension is and explained how educators can help students to develop this skill. **Togam, M. (2022)** examined the scholarly literature produced on the topic of reading habits. The Google Scholar database was used to collect all material on the topic of Reading habits and India.

Need and Role of Academic Libraries in Building a Reading Culture:

There are plenty of ways to develop the reading culture among the schools. The schools can motivate students to value reading by holding regular reading promotion activities such as book-sharing sessions, reading contests, and setting up reading corners. These activities will help to cultivate the daily reading habits among the students. Events like literary talks, book clubs, and salons introduce students to a variety of literary works. These activities will help to improve the reading ability, critical understanding and gaining an esoteric aptitude so that they can understand the aesthetic beauty of a literary work. These activities will also be helpful for schools to guide students in interpreting, judging, and creating texts, strengthening their critical and creative thinking.

Strategies for Reading Promotion:

As academic and cultural spaces, university libraries help to build students' reading interests and improve their reading levels through various services.

Reading Events:

Regular themed reading events help students to explore topics in depth. These activities increase students'

understanding and interest in specific subjects. Libraries may invite experts and scholars to give talks and share research findings, academic ideas, and reading experiences. These sessions inspire students to get deeper knowledge and support academic discussion.

Multimedia Promotion:

The use of multimedia and social media can increase awareness of library services and will help to encourage participation in reading activities. Libraries can produce attractive promotional materials such as videos, posters, and brochures designed to match the theme of reading events.

Reading Needs in the ICT Era:

- **Digital Literacy:** Students need the skills to navigate, understand, and judge digital texts, including websites, e-books, blogs, and multimedia. They have to understand hyperlinks, embedded media, and interactive content.
- **Multimodal Understanding:** The technology driven globe has provided many platforms for students to read. They can utilize many formats like infographics, videos, animations, and simulations. They must be able to combine information from different sources.
- **Critical Thinking and Evaluation:** With the great amount of online content, students must be able to identify the reliable information and detect biased content, authorship, and purpose.
- **Engagement and Motivation:** Digital tools can make reading more enjoyable. Interactive stories, gamified apps, and graphic texts appeal to many learners. However, distractions are common, so building focus is important.
- **Language and Communication Skills:** The availability of global content and improved analytical as well as critical approach reading in the digital age supports vocabulary growth and develops a wide range of viewpoints.

- **Access and Inclusivity:** Technology offers personalised reading options, such as text-to-speech, adjustable fonts, and audiobooks, helping learners with different needs.
- **Health and Well-being Consideration:** Excessive screen time may cause eye strain and reduce focus so the users have to balance the digital reading with printed material in order to maintain the mental and emotional aspects.

Conclusion:

Academic libraries are dynamic learning environments because they help students to become critical thinkers, responsible researchers, and lifelong learners. The accession and production of knowledge has been transformed with tools such as AI search systems, virtual reality spaces, and digital storytelling platforms. The libraries have to support learning and academic research. Reading promotion can increase interest for learning and support academic work. Libraries should gather books, journals, and resources from many subjects to meet the needs of teachers and students. They should also promote digital resources, teach information literacy, and help users to make better use of modern technology. This improves knowledge access and strengthens research skills.

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