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REVIEW ARTICLE

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READING HABITS BY THE STUDENTS IN CONSTITUENT COLLEGES OF MANGALORE UNIVERSITY: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Reading is an essential activity that enhances students' academic performance, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. This study investigates the reading habits, library usage, challenges, and promotion strategies among undergraduate students in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University. A structured questionnaire was administered to 328 students, achieving a response rate of 93.71%. Findings indicate that students frequently read newspapers, competitive exam materials, and academic books, whereas research journals and online resources are less accessed. Key challenges include lack of motivation, time constraints, and distractions from social media. Awareness of reading promotion programs such as competitions, quizzes, and author talks exists, while students suggested initiatives like book fairs, reading clubs, improved library facilities, and digital resources to foster a reading culture. The study highlights the importance of institutional support and motivational strategies to strengthen reading habits, thereby enhancing academic outcomes and promoting lifelong learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental skill that plays a pivotal role in the intellectual and personal development of students. In higher education, it not only facilitates the acquisition of knowledge but also enhances critical thinking, analytical ability, and lifelong learning. The advent of digital technologies and easy access to online content, however, has significantly influenced students' reading habits, often reducing engagement with traditional reading materials such as books, journals, and newspapers. Universities, as centers of learning, are responsible for fostering a culture of reading among students. The constituent colleges of Mangalore University, which serve a diverse student population across Arts, Science, and Commerce streams, provide a unique context to study these habits. Understanding students' reading patterns, library usage, and challenges can help in designing effective interventions to strengthen reading culture. Previous studies indicate that factors such as academic workload, lack of motivation, limited library resources, and distractions from social media impact students' reading habits. Simultaneously, reading promotion programmes, library facilities, and institutional initiatives can play a significant role in encouraging students to read more regularly. The present study aims to examine the reading habits of students in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University, identify

challenges in maintaining regular reading practices, and explore students' awareness of and suggestions for reading promotion

initiatives. The findings are expected to provide insights for educators, librarians, and policymakers to promote a vibrant reading culture in higher education institutions.

Need for the Study: The present study holds significant value in understanding the reading habits of students in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University. Reading is a cornerstone of academic success, and insights into students' preferences, frequency of reading, and library usage can help educators and administrators design targeted strategies to promote effective reading practices. By identifying the challenges that hinder regular reading—such as lack of time, academic workload, limited resources, and distractions—the study provides a foundation for developing interventions to address these barriers. Furthermore, examining students' awareness of reading promotion programmes and their suggestions for improving reading culture offers practical guidance for enhancing library services, digital resources, and institutional initiatives.

The study is also valuable for policy makers, college authorities, and librarians, as it highlights the role of both motivational and infrastructural factors in fostering a sustainable reading culture. Overall, the findings can contribute to improving students' academic

performance, critical thinking, and lifelong learning habits, while strengthening the culture of reading in higher education institutions.

Objectives

- **To examine the demographic and academic profile of students** in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University.
- **To analyse students' reading habits, library usage patterns, and the challenges** faced in maintaining regular reading practices.
- **To assess students' awareness of reading promotion programmes and their suggestions** for encouraging reading habits and strengthening reading culture in higher education institutions.

Hypothesis of the Study

Based on the study objectives, the following hypotheses have been formulated and tested for the study:

- **H1:** There is no significant difference in the frequency of library visits for accessing different types of reading material among the students.
- **H2:** There is no significant difference in the challenges faced by students in maintaining regular reading habits.
- **H3:** There is no significant difference in the types of reading promotion programs noticed by students in their college.
- **H4:** There is no significant difference in the initiatives suggested by students to encourage reading habits.
- **H5:** There is no significant difference in the suggestions provided by students for promoting a reading culture.

Scope and Limitation: The present study aims to conduct a detailed investigation into the reading habits of students in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University. The study is geographically limited to the constituent colleges of Mangalore University in Karnataka, a state well-equipped with diverse information sources that support both basic studies and advanced research. The research focuses specifically on undergraduate students, while postgraduate students, research scholars, and faculty members are excluded from the study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on primary data collected through a well-structured questionnaire designed specifically for undergraduate students studying in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University. The questionnaire was prepared to capture information related to students' reading habits, preferences, frequency of reading, and use of library and digital resources. The study was confined to the constituent colleges functioning under Mangalore University. The list of constituent colleges was obtained from the official website of Mangalore University. At present, the University has four constituent colleges, namely:

1. University College, Mangaluru (UCM)
2. University Evening College, Mangaluru (UECM)
3. University First Grade College, Mangalagangothri (UFGC, M)
4. University First Grade College, Nelyadi (UFGC, N)
5. University First Grade College, Bannadka (UFGC, B)

A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed among undergraduate students across these constituent colleges using a random sampling method. Out of these, 328 duly filled questionnaires were received, resulting in an overall response rate of 93.71 percent, which is considered highly satisfactory for social science research.

According to Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula, a minimum sample size of 317 respondents was sufficient for the present population. However, since 328 valid responses were obtained, all were included for further analysis and interpretation. The

collected data were systematically coded, tabulated, and analysed using appropriate statistical tools to draw meaningful conclusions related to students' reading habits.

Data Analysis and Interpretation: The table presents the gender-wise distribution of the respondents selected for the study. Out of the total 328 undergraduate students surveyed, 179 respondents (54.6%) were female, while 149 respondents (45.4%) were male. This indicates a slightly higher representation of female students in the sample. The distribution reflects a balanced gender composition, enabling meaningful analysis of reading habits across both male and female students in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University.

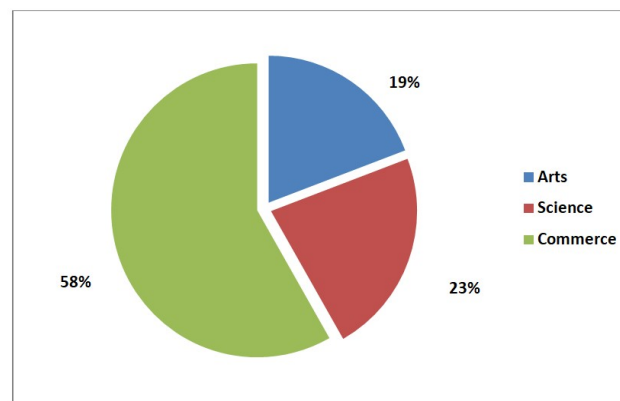


Figure 1. Discipline-Wise Distribution of Respondents

Table 3 shows the discipline-wise distribution of the respondents included in the study. Out of the total 328 undergraduate students, a majority of 191 respondents (58.2%) belonged to the Commerce stream, followed by Science students with 74 respondents (22.6%) and Arts students with 63 respondents (19.2%). The higher representation of Commerce students reflects their larger enrolment in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University. This diverse disciplinary composition allows for a comparative understanding of reading habits across Arts, Science, and Commerce streams. Table 4 indicates that 250 students visit the library to read newspapers, while 78 students do not. Library visits for competitive examination materials were reported by 223 students, compared to 105 non-visitors. Reading fiction/novels/short stories attracted 190 visitors and 138 non-visitors, whereas 176 students visited the library for academic/reference books and 152 did not. In contrast, fewer students visited the library for research papers and journals (142 visitors; 186 non-visitors) and online blogs/articles (162 visitors; 166 non-visitors).

H1: There is no significant difference in the frequency of library visits for accessing different types of reading material among the students.

According to Table 4, the Chi-square value for frequency of library visits among students is $\chi^2 = 115.389$ at $P < 0.00$, which indicates that there is a significant difference between students who visit the library and those who do not visit the library for accessing newspapers. Since the p-value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Similarly, the distribution of responses for other reading materials such as magazines, fiction/novels/short stories, academic/reference books, competitive exam materials, online blogs/articles, and research papers/journals shows variation between students who visit and who do not visit the library. The significant Chi-square value for newspapers indicates that differences exist in visiting patterns for reading materials, and this supports the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis. Acceptance of the alternate hypothesis signifies that students' frequency of library visits varies depending on the type of reading material they seek. This means that different types of resources—such as newspapers, magazines, fiction, academic books, competitive exam materials, online articles, and research journals—are not used uniformly, and their usage depends significantly on students' visiting behavior.

Table 1: Response Rate of the Survey

Sl. No.	Colleges	Total Population	Questionnaires Distributed	Responses Received	Percentage
1	UCM	1100	95	92	96.84
2	UECM	66	38	32	84.21
3	UFGC, M	182	85	81	95.29
4	UFGC, N	65	52	48	92.30
5	UFGC, B	115	80	75	93.75
Total		1528	350	328	93.71

Note: UCM – University College, Mangaluru; UECM – University Evening College, Mangaluru; UFGC, M – University First Grade College, Mangalagangotri; UFGC, N – University First Grade College, Nelyadi; UFGC, B – University First Grade College, Bannadka.

Table 2. Gender-Wise Distribution of Respondents

Sl. No	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	149	45.4%
2	Female	179	54.6%
Total		328	100.0%

Table 3. Discipline-Wise Distribution of Respondents

Sl. No.	Discipline	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Arts	63	19.2%
2	Science	74	22.6%
3	Commerce	191	58.2%
Total		328	100.0%

Table 4. Frequency of Library Visits among Students

Reading Material	Visit	Do Not Visit	Total	Test Statistics
Newspapers	250 (10.9%)	78 (3.4%)	328 (14.3%)	$\chi^2 = 115.389$ P<0.00
Magazines	151 (6.6%)	177 (7.7%)	328 (14.3%)	
Fiction/Novels/Short stories	190 (8.3%)	138 (6.0%)	328 (14.3%)	
Academic/Reference books	176 (7.7%)	152 (6.6%)	328 (14.3%)	
Competitive exam materials	223 (9.7%)	105 (4.6%)	328 (14.3%)	
Online blogs/articles	162 (7.1%)	166 (7.2%)	328 (14.3%)	
Research papers/journals	142 (6.2%)	186 (8.1%)	328 (14.3%)	
Total	1294 (6.2%)	1002 (8.1%)	2296 (100.0%)	

Table 5. Challenges Faced by Students in Maintaining Regular Reading Habits

Challenges	Facing	Not Facing	Total	Test Statistics
Lack of time	178 (10.9%)	150 (9.1%)	328 (20.0%)	$\chi^2 = 23.259$ P<0.00
Academic workload	137 (8.4%)	191 (11.6%)	328 (20.0%)	
Lack of interest/motivation	197 (12.0%)	131 (8.0%)	328 (20.0%)	
Limited library resources	165 (10.1%)	163 (9.9%)	328 (20.0%)	
Distraction from social media/OTT	170 (51.8%)	158 (48.2%)	328 (20.0%)	
Total	847 (51.6%)	793 (48.4%)	328 (20.0%)	

Table 6. Types of Reading Promotion Programs Noticed by Students in Their College

Promotion Programs	Yes	No	Total	Test Statistics
Book exhibitions	117 (8.9%)	211 (16.1%)	328 (25.0%)	$\chi^2 = 49.962$ P<0.00
Reading clubs	149 (11.4%)	179 (13.6%)	328 (25.0%)	
Competitions/quizzes	205 (15.6%)	123 (9.4%)	328 (25.0%)	
Author talks/book reviews	170 (13.0%)	158 (12.0%)	328 (25.0%)	
Total	641 (48.9%)	671 (51.1%)	1312 (100.0%)	

Table 7. Initiatives Suggested by Students to Encourage Reading Habits

Initiatives	Suggested	Not Suggested	Total	Test Statistics
Book fairs/exhibitions	230 (11.7%)	98 (5.0%)	328 (16.7%)	$\chi^2 = 77.234$ P<0.00
Reading clubs/discussion groups	189 (9.6%)	139 (7.1%)	328 (16.7%)	
Incentives/recognition for active readers	192 (9.8%)	136 (6.9%)	328 (16.7%)	
Better library ambience and extended hours	142 (7.2%)	186 (9.5%)	328 (16.7%)	
Access to more e-resources	150 (7.6%)	178 (9.0%)	328 (16.7%)	
Peer/group reading sessions	142 (7.2%)	186 (9.5%)	328 (16.7%)	
Total	1045 (53.1%)	923 (46.9%)	1968 (100.0%)	

Table 8. Students' Suggestions for Promoting Reading Culture

Suggestions	Suggested	Not Suggested	Total	Test Statistics
Self-motivation / Personal interest	173 (8.8%)	155 (7.9%)	328 (16.7%)	$\chi^2 = 45.894$ P<0.00
Improving library infrastructure and accessibility	216 (11.0%)	112 (5.7%)	328 (16.7%)	
Introducing rewards and recognition for readers	191 (9.7%)	137 (7.0%)	328 (16.7%)	
Providing more engaging and diverse reading materials	206 (10.5%)	122 (6.2%)	328 (16.7%)	
Encouraging faculty involvement in reading initiatives	159 (8.1%)	169 (8.6%)	328 (16.7%)	
Integrating digital reading platforms and e-resources	146 (7.4%)	182 (9.2%)	328 (16.7%)	
Total	1091 (55.4%)	877 (44.6%)	1968 (100.0%)	

The findings highlight that reading preferences strongly influence how often students visit the library.

Table 5 highlights the major challenges faced by students in maintaining regular reading habits. Lack of interest or motivation was reported by the highest number of students (197 respondents), followed by lack of time (178 students) and distraction from social media/OTT platforms (170 students). Limited library resources were cited by 165 students, while academic workload was reported by 137 students as a challenge. Overall, 847 responses (51.6%) indicated that students faced various challenges in sustaining regular reading habits, whereas 793 responses (48.4%) reported not facing such difficulties.

H2: There is no significant difference in the challenges faced by students in maintaining regular reading habits

According to Table 5, the Chi-square value is $\chi^2 = 23.259$ at $P < 0.00$, which shows that there is a statistically significant difference between students who face various reading-related challenges and those who do not. Since the p-value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. The distribution of responses clearly indicates that students do not face all challenges equally. Lack of time and academic workload affect many students, while lack of interest/motivation emerges as a major barrier for a larger group. Challenges like limited library resources and distraction from social media/OTT also vary significantly across students. These differences in response patterns confirm that reading challenges are not uniform. Acceptance of the alternate hypothesis signifies that the difficulties experienced by students differ in intensity and nature. Some challenges are more widespread—such as time constraints and motivational issues—while others, like library resource limitations or digital distractions, impact students differently. This variation highlights that maintaining regular reading habits is influenced by multiple, unevenly experienced obstacles.

Table 6 presents students' awareness of reading promotion programmes conducted in their colleges. A majority of students reported noticing competitions and quizzes (205 students), making it the most visible reading promotion activity. This was followed by author talks and book review programmes (170 students) and reading clubs (149 students). In contrast, book exhibitions were noticed by a relatively smaller number of students (117 respondents), while 211 students reported not noticing such programmes.

Overall, 641 responses (48.9%) indicated awareness of reading promotion initiatives, whereas 671 responses (51.1%) reflected a lack of awareness.

H3: There is no significant difference in the types of reading promotion programs noticed by students in their college

According to Table 6, the Chi-square value is $\chi^2 = 49.962$ at $P < 0.00$, which indicates a statistically significant difference between students who have noticed various reading promotion programs and those who have not. Since the p-value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. The distribution of responses shows that students do not notice all promotion programs equally. Book exhibitions have comparatively lower visibility, while reading clubs, competitions/quizzes, and author talks/book reviews are noticed by a greater proportion of students. The noticeable variation in "Yes" and "No" responses across the different programs confirms that awareness levels differ significantly depending on the type of initiative. Acceptance of the alternate hypothesis signifies that students' exposure to reading promotion programs is uneven. Some programs such as competitions and author interactions attract more student attention, whereas others, like book exhibitions, may lack visibility or frequency. This variation suggests that colleges need to strengthen the promotion and consistency of certain programs to ensure wider student awareness and participation.

Table 7 presents the initiatives suggested by students to promote better reading habits. The most frequently suggested initiative was

book fairs and exhibitions, supported by 230 students, indicating a strong preference for exposure to a wide range of books. This was followed by incentives or recognition for active readers (192 students) and reading clubs or discussion groups (189 students). Additionally, access to more e-resources was suggested by 150 students, while better library ambience with extended working hours and peer or group reading sessions were each suggested by 142 students. Overall, 1,045 responses (53.1%) favoured various initiatives to encourage reading, compared to 923 responses (46.9%) that did not suggest these measures.

H4: There is no significant difference in the initiatives suggested by students to encourage reading habits.

According to Table 7, the Chi-square value is $\chi^2 = 77.234$ at $P < 0.00$, indicating a statistically significant difference between students who suggested various reading promotion initiatives and those who did not. Since the p-value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

The distribution of responses reveals that students do not recommend all initiatives equally. Book fairs/exhibitions are the most frequently suggested initiative, followed by reading clubs/discussion groups, incentives or recognition, and access to more e-resources. In contrast, initiatives such as better library ambience/extended hours and peer or group reading sessions have comparatively fewer suggestions. This pattern shows clear variation in students' preferences for different reading promotion strategies. Acceptance of the alternate hypothesis signifies that students' suggestions for encouraging reading habits vary widely. Some initiatives appeal to a large number of students reflecting strong interest while others receive relatively less support. These differences indicate that students prioritize certain strategies over others, suggesting that colleges should focus on the most widely preferred initiatives to effectively promote reading habits.

Table 8 highlights students' key suggestions for promoting a stronger reading culture in their colleges. The most frequently suggested measure was improving library infrastructure and accessibility, supported by 216 students, followed by providing more engaging and diverse reading materials (206 students). Introducing rewards and recognition for readers was suggested by 191 students, while self-motivation and personal interest was emphasized by 173 students. Further, encouraging faculty involvement in reading initiatives was suggested by 159 students, whereas integrating digital reading platforms and e-resources received comparatively lower support (146 students). Overall, 1,091 responses (55.4%) favoured various measures to promote reading culture, while 877 responses (44.6%) did not suggest these options.

H5: There is no significant difference in the suggestions provided by students for promoting a reading culture.

According to Table 5.39, the Chi-square value is $\chi^2 = 45.894$ at $P < 0.00$, indicating a statistically significant difference between students who suggested different strategies for promoting reading culture and those who did not. Since the p-value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. The distribution of responses shows that students' suggestions are not uniform across categories. A higher percentage of students recommended improving library infrastructure and accessibility, followed by providing diverse reading materials, introducing rewards and recognition, and self-motivation/personal interest. On the other hand, suggestions like encouraging faculty involvement and integrating digital reading platforms received a comparatively lower level of support. These variations indicate that students differ significantly in their views about which initiatives are most effective. Acceptance of the alternate hypothesis signifies that students propose different approaches for promoting a reading culture, reflecting varied priorities and expectations. While some students emphasize strengthening library facilities and resources, others focus on motivational strategies, digital access, or faculty role. This diversity in suggestions highlights the need for a multi-dimensional approach to effectively promote reading among students.

Findings

- The present study examined the reading habits, library usage, challenges, and suggestions for promoting reading culture among students in the constituent colleges of Mangalore University. The sample consisted of 328 undergraduate students, with a balanced gender distribution (45.4% male, 54.6% female) and representation across disciplines: Commerce (58.2%), Science (22.6%), and Arts (19.2%) (See Tables 2 and 3).
- Analysis of library usage revealed that students frequently visited the library for newspapers (250 students) and competitive examination materials (223 students), while access to research papers, journals (142 students), and online articles was limited (See Table 4).
- The study identified several challenges affecting regular reading, including lack of interest/motivation (197 students), lack of time (178 students), and distractions from social media (170 students) (See Table 5).
- Awareness of reading promotion programmes varied across initiatives. Competitions and quizzes (205 students) were the most noticed activities, followed by author talks/book reviews (170 students) and reading clubs (149 students), whereas fewer students were aware of book exhibitions (117 students) (See Table 6).
- Students suggested multiple initiatives to encourage reading, including book fairs/exhibitions (230 students), incentives for active readers (192 students), and reading clubs (189 students), along with better library ambience, access to e-resources, and peer reading sessions (See Table 7).
- For promoting a sustained reading culture, students emphasized improving library infrastructure (216 students), providing diverse reading materials (206 students), and introducing rewards and recognition for readers (191 students). Other notable suggestions included self-motivation, faculty involvement, and integration of digital resources (See Table 8).

Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on these findings, the study proposes the following recommendations to strengthen reading habits:

- **Enhance Library Facilities:** Improve reading spaces, extend library hours, and provide greater access to both print and digital resources.
- **Conduct Reading Programs:** Organize book fairs, competitions, quizzes, author talks, and reading clubs to stimulate interest in reading.
- **Provide Incentives and Recognition:** Introduce awards, certificates, and other recognition for active readers.
- **Encourage Faculty Involvement:** Engage teachers in mentoring, discussion groups, and reading initiatives.
- **Foster Self-Motivation:** Conduct workshops on time management and personal reading strategies.
- **Leverage Digital Platforms:** Offer e-books, online journals, blogs, and other digital materials to supplement traditional resources.

- **Address Reading Challenges:** Minimize distractions and help students manage academic workload to support consistent reading practices.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that while students actively engage with newspapers, competitive exam materials, and academic books, research-focused and digital reading remains limited. Challenges such as lack of motivation, time constraints, and distractions hinder regular reading habits. Awareness of reading promotion initiatives exists but varies by type. Implementing the suggested measures—including enhanced library facilities, structured reading programs, incentives, faculty involvement, and access to digital resources—can foster a sustainable reading culture. Such interventions will enhance academic performance, critical thinking, personal development, and lifelong learning, making reading an integral part of higher education.

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