



# IMPORTANCE OF READING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO READING PREFERENCES & HABITS OF STUDENTS

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*Abstract:* Reading is a cognitive process of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning. It is a means of acquisition of language, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas, thereby leading to reading comprehension. Like all language, it is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practice, development, and refinement. The present paper aims at identifying the reading preferences and factors which influence reading habits of UG and PG students against the backdrop of importance of reading .

*Index Terms* – Reading patterns, Reading preferences, factors influencing reading habits,

## INTRODUCTION

Reading has been the passion of the greatest personalities of all times. Humans have been reading since ages and thus words of knowledge have been passed on through generations. The reading habit influences in the promotion of one's personal development in particular and social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one's living; and thereby prepares a person for an effective participation in the social, religious, cultural and political life. Reading fires the imagination of the person. It adds new sight to eyes and new wisdom to mind. The individual who reads well has a means for widening mental horizons and for multiplying opportunities of success. Reading is a vital factor affecting intellectual and emotional growth.

## Objectives of Study:

To study the importance of reading in the present day

To study the different reading patterns

To study Reading Preferences of UG and PG students

To find out different factors which help students to develop their reading skills.

## Methodology

Taking into consideration the importance of reading to develop the personality of students, primary data was collected from college students to study the reading preferences of respondents and different factors which help to develop their reading skills. Primary data is collected from responses of students to a structured questionnaire. The respondents were selected using simple random sampling. The Sample size selected to find the study included 200 students from different colleges. 100 students pursuing PG courses and 100 pursuing UG degree courses.

The secondary data is collected from books, journals, internet and newspapers to understand the different reading pattern and also the importance of reading as a communication skill.

### Importance of Reading as a communication Skills

Mere academic development is not enough to survive in this competitive world, what else is needed are good soft skills, communication skills. Heightened awareness of developing communication skills is the need of the hour. It is an aspect which makes a person able and cultured enough to survive in this competitive world. Reading is one of the four communication skills which are required to develop an all round personality. It does not come natural to a human being. It has to be acquired, and cultivated. Reading confers a host of possible benefits on the reader. A reader can not only learn what has been discovered by others but also build on the foundation of information. Reading, which is the prominent gateway to the knowledge room is one of the four communication skills required to develop an all round personality. It does not come natural to a human being. It has to be acquired, and cultivated as a habit. Reading plays a very important role in developing the personality of the students. It can be assumed as a practice that assists individuals to gain creativeness and develops their critical thinking capacities. In this sense, reading habit is an important tool for the development of personalities and mental capacities of individuals. Applying this formula of combining hard and soft skills to build the overall personality of a student, communication skill as a compulsory subject has been introduced in the areas of reading, writing and attaining written and spoken communication skills. Development of communication skills is the need of the hour. It is good and apt communication that makes culture possible.

### Reading Patterns and Preferences

#### Reading Patterns: Past and Present:

The definition of *reading* has undergone through many changes. In the past, reading simply meant to extract visual information from any given codes or systems. However, thereafter, reading became much more complex and involved the understanding of a whole text composed of written signs. The history of reading dates back to the invention of writing during the 4th millennium BC. Although reading print text is now an important way for the general population to access information, this has not always been the case. With some exceptions, only a small percentage of the population in many countries was considered literate before the Industrial Revolution. Some of the pre-modern societies with generally high literacy rates included classical Athens and the Islamic Caliphate. habits whether using modern patterns viz. E- reading or traditional patterns

Reading is typically an individual activity, although on occasion a person will read out loud for the benefit of other listeners. Reading aloud for one's own use, for better comprehension, is a form of intrapersonal communication.

The widespread influence of TV, Internet and other electronic media has sidetracked, if not completely reduced, the traditional reading patterns of students where-in students referred to printed documents and visited libraries. Nevertheless, reading habits, whether using modern patterns or traditional patterns, do play an important role in improving the performance of the reader. It goes without saying that good reading habits help in improving general knowledge, build vocabulary and thereby the writing and presentation skills leading to increase in the confidence level of the reader and social and community participation. The benefits of reading habits for readers are infinite and they aim at giving a boost to the personality of those entering the job market.

Reading Preferences of UG and PG students:

Data Analysis

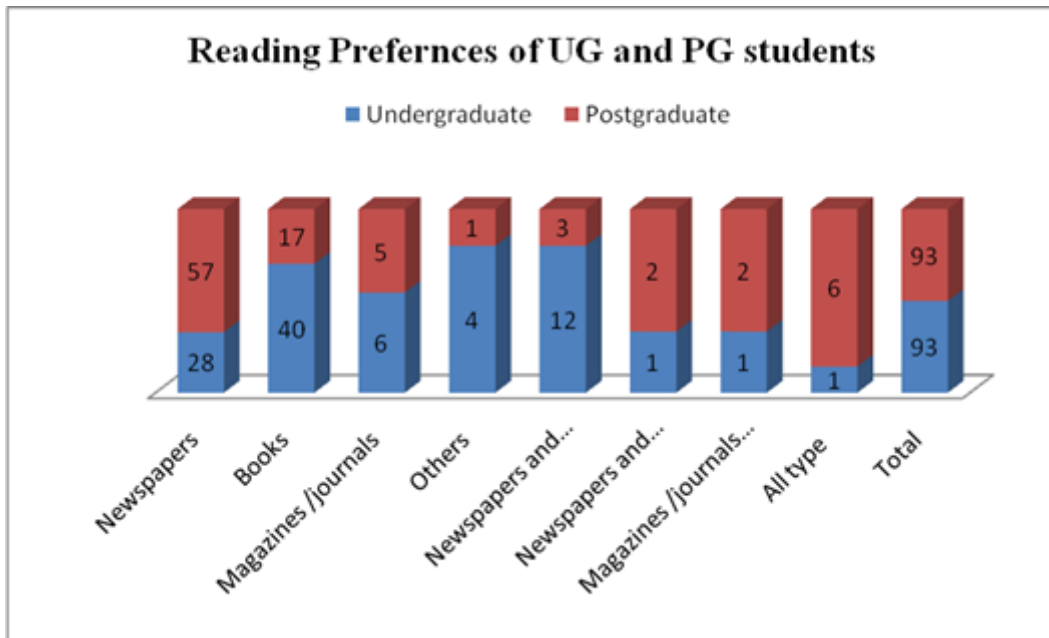


Chart 1: Reading preferences of UG and PG students

From the data displayed in Table no 6 and Chart 4 it is observed that while PG students prefer to use newspaper to update knowledge, the UG students prefer to read books. 61.2% of PG students read newspaper as against 30.15% of UG students, to update knowledge. The remaining 38.2% use other type of reading material. The percentage of UG students who read books is 43%. read books

**Factors motivating students to read**

In the study factors which inculcate reading habits among students include parents, teachers, friends, self and others.

**Data Analysis**

Factors	No of UG students	No of PG students
Parents	23	18
Teachers	29	27
Friends	18	15
Self	25	38
Others	5	5

Table 1: Factors motivating students to read.

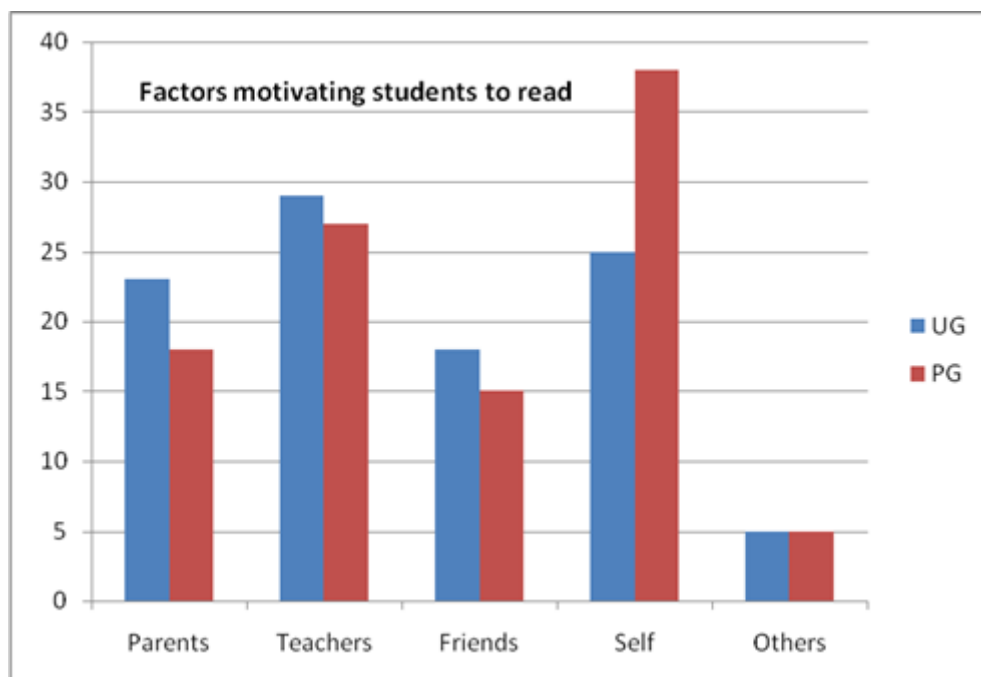


Chart 2: Factors motivating students to read

From the given table it is observed that PG students develop reading habits mostly of their own (38%) followed by the help of teachers (27%), parents (18%), friends (15%) and others (5%) respectively. It is observed that 29% of UG students are motivated by teachers, followed by self (25%), parents (23%), friends (15%) and others (5%) respectively.

### Conclusion:

Reading habits, whether using modern patterns or traditional patterns, do play an important role in improving general knowledge, build vocabulary and thereby the writing and presentation skills leading to increase in the confidence level of the reader and social and community participation. The benefits of reading habits for readers are infinite and they aim at giving a boost to the personality of those entering the job market. It is observed that teachers play a better role in developing reading habits among UG students than PG students who are self-motivated. –they develop reading habits mostly on their own followed by teachers, parents, friends, and others respectively. Teachers play a better role in motivating them to develop reading habits among UG students than self, parents, friends and others respectively.

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