



## Fostering a Reading Culture: A Survey on Enhancing English Book Reading Habits among College Students

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### Abstract

This research survey examines the reading habits of college students, with a particular focus on their engagement with English books as a medium for language development, academic success, and personal enrichment. In the contemporary digital landscape, where instant content and visual media dominate student attention, the traditional practice of reading books is witnessing a steady decline. The objective of this study is to investigate current reading behaviors, identify the key barriers to sustained reading, and explore the role of educational institutions in reviving interest in English literature among youth. Data was gathered through structured questionnaires, focus group discussions, and consultations with faculty and librarians across diverse academic disciplines. The findings indicate a significant drop in voluntary reading, citing reasons such as lack of time, difficulty in comprehension, unavailability of interesting books, and limited motivation from educators. However, the study also highlights promising opportunities such as digital tools, peer recommendations, and faculty-led initiatives that can be strategically harnessed to reinvigorate reading culture. The paper proposes practical recommendations including the formation of book clubs, integration of reading into curriculum, library enhancement, digital reading platforms, and reward-based reading programs. By fostering a consistent habit of reading English books, institutions can help students improve language proficiency, critical thinking, creativity, and intercultural awareness, thereby preparing them to meet global academic and professional challenges with confidence.

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### Introduction

Reading books has long been considered essential for intellectual growth, language mastery, and the development of analytical thinking. Among college students, reading English books can significantly improve communication skills, vocabulary, and academic performance. However, the current generation of learners faces various distractions social media, online streaming, and time constraints that divert attention away from sustained reading. As a result, English reading habits are diminishing, and this trend raises concerns for educators and institutions that aim to promote literacy and language competency. This paper attempts to assess the status of English book reading habits among college students and propose measures to promote them effectively.

### Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this survey was to explore the current trends in reading English books among college students. It sought to understand the challenges that deter students from reading regularly, the factors that could motivate them, and the impact of institutional support and peer influence on their reading behavior.

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The study also aimed to suggest strategies that colleges and faculty members can adopt to build and sustain a strong reading culture.

### Methodology

To gather relevant data, the study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods. A structured online questionnaire was distributed to 300 students from various departments such as engineering, arts, and sciences. The survey included multiple-choice and open-ended questions focusing on reading frequency, preferences, challenges, and suggestions. In addition, focused group interviews were conducted with 20 students who represented both avid and reluctant readers. English faculty members and librarians were also consulted to gain expert perspectives. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis to draw meaningful conclusions.

### Findings and Discussion

The survey revealed that only about 28% of students read English books regularly, while the majority either read occasionally or not at all. Fiction, motivational books, and biographies were the most preferred genres among those who read. However, several students expressed that they found it difficult to understand complex vocabulary and grammar in English books, which discouraged them from reading further. Time constraints, especially due to academic workload, were cited as the primary barrier by 78% of the respondents. Additionally, many students reported a lack of access to interesting books and limited awareness of available reading materials.

The study also discovered that digital tools such as e-books and audiobooks appealed to students, but access to these resources was limited in college libraries. Although college libraries were well-equipped, only 21% of students visited them more than once per semester. Furthermore, classes that included reading components or faculty-recommended books witnessed higher student engagement, indicating the significant influence teachers can have on developing reading habits. Peer recommendations also played a critical role in encouraging students to pick up books.

### Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have far-reaching implications for multiple stakeholders in the educational ecosystem: educators, institutions, policymakers, parents, and the students themselves. Firstly, for educators, the study reinforces the urgent need to go beyond textbook-based teaching and cultivate a holistic learning environment where reading is central to language development. When English teachers recommend books, incorporate reading-based discussions, or design assignments around literary works, students are more likely to engage with reading voluntarily. Faculty members can act as reading role models by sharing their own reading habits and experiences, thereby inspiring students to see reading as both enjoyable and valuable.

Secondly, educational institutions play a pivotal role in creating the physical and digital infrastructure required to support reading habits. Libraries must be upgraded to include not only traditional books but also e-readers, online subscriptions, and interactive reading platforms that appeal to modern learners. Comfortable reading zones, student-led book talks, and literary events can make libraries dynamic

spaces rather than passive storage areas. Institutions can also organize campus-wide reading challenges, inter-departmental book quizzes, and author interaction sessions to make reading an integral part of student life.

Thirdly, the study has implications for curriculum designers and policymakers. Integrating English reading activities into the curriculum without making them feel burdensome can help shift reading from an optional hobby to a structured and valued academic skill. Encouraging interdisciplinary reading that connects literature to real-world issues, science, history, or culture can further stimulate curiosity and critical thinking among students. Policymakers may consider framing national or regional policies that promote multilingual reading, inclusive of English, to enhance language education outcomes across higher education institutions.

In addition, the study offers insights for parents and guardians, who remain influential in shaping reading behaviors, especially in the formative college years. Families that discuss books, provide access to reading materials, or value literacy are more likely to raise students with a positive attitude toward reading. Parental encouragement, even at the college level, can reinforce institutional efforts to promote reading.

Finally, for students themselves, the implications are transformative. Reading English books can improve not only their vocabulary, comprehension, and writing abilities but also foster empathy, global awareness, and cognitive flexibility. These skills are crucial in a competitive job market and in multicultural academic or professional settings. A regular reading habit sharpens attention, enhances articulation in interviews or presentations, and boosts overall academic confidence.

Overall, the study demonstrates that promoting English reading habits is not a one-dimensional task; it is a collaborative and multi-tiered effort that can yield lifelong benefits for learners when strategically and empathetically implemented.

### Limitations of the Study

Despite its valuable insights, this study has certain limitations. The sample was restricted to students from a single region, which may not represent broader reading habits across different colleges or cultural contexts. Additionally, the data was self-reported, and students may have overestimated or underestimated their reading habits. The study also focused solely on English books, not accounting for bilingual or native-language reading preferences. Future research can expand on these areas and include longitudinal studies to track the impact of reading interventions over time.

### Conclusion

Reading English books plays a vital role in enhancing the academic, linguistic, and personal development of college students. However, the reading culture is gradually eroding due to multiple factors such as lack of time, difficulty in language, and limited access to resources. This study has shown that with appropriate strategies like book clubs, reading-friendly infrastructure, digital access, and faculty encouragement students can be guided back to the path of consistent reading. Cultivating the habit of reading among young learners is not merely a literary pursuit; it is a foundational step toward building knowledgeable, articulate, and globally competent individuals.

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