

# READING HABITS OF STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF PUNJABI UNIVERSITY PATIALA

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**Abstract** *The present study was conducted to determine the reading habits of students at Punjabi University Patiala. The focus of this paper is to ascertain the average time of reading of students and their choice of reading material. A questionnaire was developed to collect the primary data and distributed among the students via Google form. The data was analysed by simple percentage method and presented in bar charts. Book remain the most preferred reading material for the students, followed by newspaper, class notes, journals, magazines, and thesis / dissertation. The majority of students read general knowledge books followed by subject related books. A large number of students read from both paper and digital. Respondents prefer to reading in the morning time. The Library is the preferred place by the respondents for reading. The majority of the respondents are motivation from the teachers for reading. Major hindrance to reading habit by the students is less time and more use of social media.*

**Keywords:** *Reading Habits, Reading Material, Place of Reading, Information & Communication Technology, Newspapers*

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## INTRODUCTION

Reading habit is an important aspect of the academic life of university students. Reading constitutes a core content of academic development. It helps in building the personality of young students. Reading widens their thinking horizons. Students explore the world through reading. It enhances their academic levels. Moreover, reading plays a vital role in developing one's competencies in daily life. (Hymavati, 2018) reading is an essential tool for learning exchange and the habit of reading in a person is an academic activity that builds abilities in reading methodologies.

The COVID-19 phase was very crucial for students and teachers because all the educational institutions and libraries were closed for physical access. Consequently, teaching, learning, and research activities shifted to online mode. The online mode of study has impacted the learning and reading habits of students up to a great extent. Students spent most of the time on watching, searching, and reading information on the Internet and social media platforms. Moreover, the other activities like international study migration and lack of job opportunities have also brought the major changes in the reading habits of the students. In the digital era, reading has evolved in format from traditional paper-based to digital platforms. Consequently, students have the option to choose their preferred reading medium.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sahib (2022) conducted a study to investigate the reading habits and attitude of the pre-service teachers at Western Mindanao State University. The study revealed that the majority of the respondents 55% spent one to two hours in reading material, while 47% respondents spent three to four hours in searching the information on the Internet. It was found that most of the respondents remember and understand the concepts better, once they visualised what they read. Additionally, respondents stated that they learned the things better, when the examples and pictures were provided in the reading materials. The study indicates that readers enjoyed reading their own books as compared to borrowed books. It was clear from the study that reading has improved the knowledge of the respondents and they also utilised free time properly.

Malipatil (2021) conducted a study to know the role of public libraries in promotion of reading habits among readers. The study indicates that majority of the students use social networking sites for reading different type of information. It was observed that most of the students prefer to read newspapers followed by students who read for self-motivation and development. The study further shows that 65% students used e-books due to the convenience of reading on mobile phones. In promotion of reading habits

some colleges have introduced library period, whereas 30% students at the different colleges don't have library period. Lack of technological skills poses a major hurdle in reading e-books through e-kindle and other devices. Students suggested that more information literacy programmes should be conducted to enhance the information and communication technology skills.

Haq et al. (2020) examined the reading habits of Filipino community working in Riyadh. The study indicates that the majority of the respondents 91% utilised their free time in watching mobile and social media, while only nine respondents spent their free time in reading books. The respondents proffered to read books on one subject at one time. The respondents' preferred electronic books to read. It was found that most of the respondents read one book for three months. The study further revealed that 55% respondents read books as a hobby, while 22% respondents read books for research purpose. Respondents suggested that more electronic books on advance learning should be available in the libraries, and reading clubs and communities should be established to promote reading among people.

Kumara and Kumar (2019) organised a survey to assess the impact of reading habits on the academic achievements of students and faculty members of Karnataka state universities. The study indicated that most of the respondents 69% preferred to read at home, while 48% respondents preferred to read at university libraries. Moreover, 58% respondents read books daily, while 22% read books two or thrice in a week. The majority of the respondents 53% prefer to read books relevant to the subject, while 41% of the respondents read books to improve communication skills. It was found that reading have improved the knowledge of respondents and enhanced various skills of life. The study further revealed that reading has improved the academic performance of respondents. It was suggested by the respondents that the library should subscribe more journals and purchase good books on every subject.

Mir, Rather and Bhat (2019) conducted a study to examine the reading habits of college students in Jammu and Kashmir. The study revealed that the majority of students read for personality development followed by the respondents who read to pass the exams. Most of the students 77% preferred to read at home, while 57% respondents preferred to read at library. The study further indicates that large number of students preferred to read newspapers on daily basis, followed by the students who use web pages to read information. It was found that most of the students 89% were motivated by their parents.

Chikkamanju, Gaddi and Chavan (2018) investigated the reading habits of faculty members in engineering colleges. The study indicated that majority of the respondents 61%

read the subject related books followed by 31% respondents who read the journals. Over 90% of the respondents read for career development. It was stated by 77% of the respondents that they prefer to read books in English language. Additionally, 39% of the respondents spent less than one hour in the library, while 34% respondents spent more than three hours in a day in the library for reading the material. It was suggested by the large number of respondents that the library should subscribe more journals and competitive examinations-related magazines. More newspapers of different languages should be subscribed in the libraries to enhance the current knowledge of students.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to investigate the reading habits of students at Punjabi University Patiala, with the following objectives:

- To find the preferred time, language, and place of reading.
- To understand the purpose of reading and preferred reading material.
- To know the frequency of reading.
- To identify the mode of reading.
- To know the impact of ICT on reading habits.
- To find the hindrances to reading habits.
- To find the source of getting reading material.

## PUNJABI UNIVERSITY PATIALA

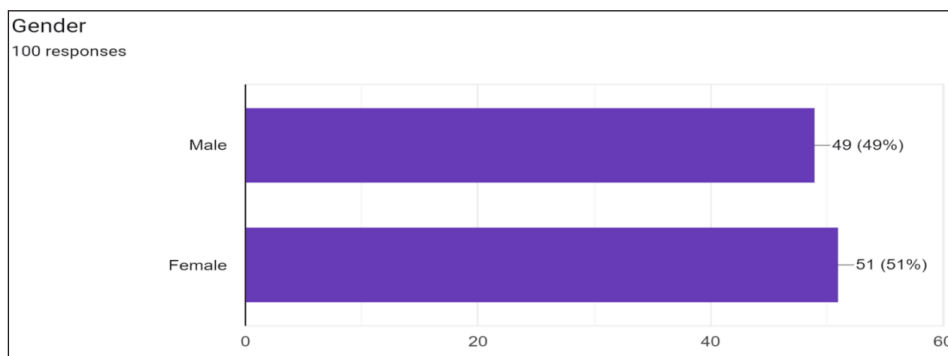
Situated in Punjab, this university was established in Patiala under the Punjab Act No. 35 of 1961, with the primary objective of advancing the cause of Punjabi language, Art, and literature. This is the second University in the world to be named after a language, the first being Hebrew University of Israel. The university caters to the educational needs of nine districts of Punjab in India by promoting higher education and research in Humanities, Arts, Sciences, Engineering, Languages, and technology. University is having 600 acres of lush green land, where more than 1500 plus teachers are imparting education to 14000 plus students in over 70 teaching and research departments/Chairs on its campus, 27 regional Centre/Neighbourhood Campuses/Constituent colleges and 274 colleges affiliated to it.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data was collected from students at Punjabi University Patiala using Google Forms. To collect the data from the respondents a structured questionnaire was prepared based on the objectives of the study. Random sampling was

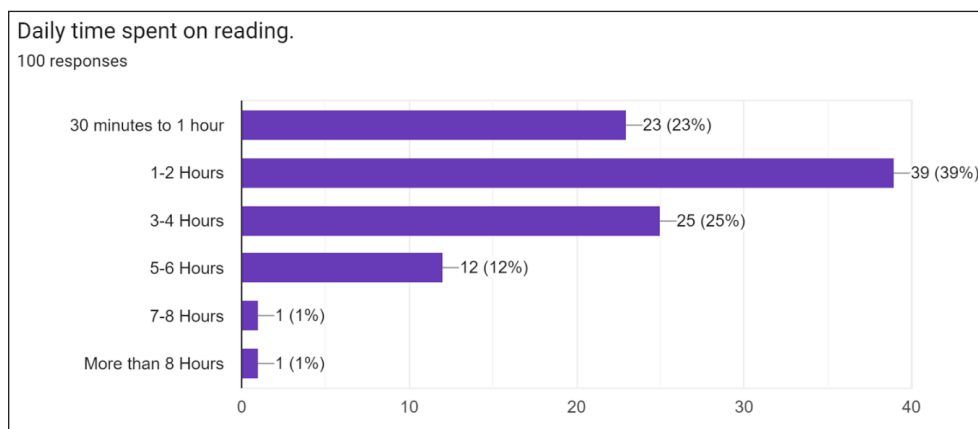
employed for selecting the samples. The responses were received from 100 respondents via Google Forms. The collected data was presented in figures and analysed using a simple method of percentage calculation.

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION



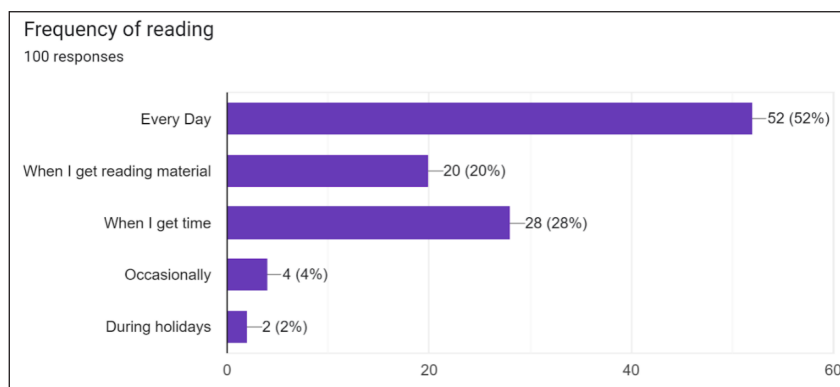
**Fig. 1: Gender Wise Distribution**

The Fig. 1, shows the gender wise responses of respondents. There are 51% female respondents and 49% are male who have taken part in the survey and filled the questionnaires completely.



**Fig. 2: Daily Time Spent on Reading**

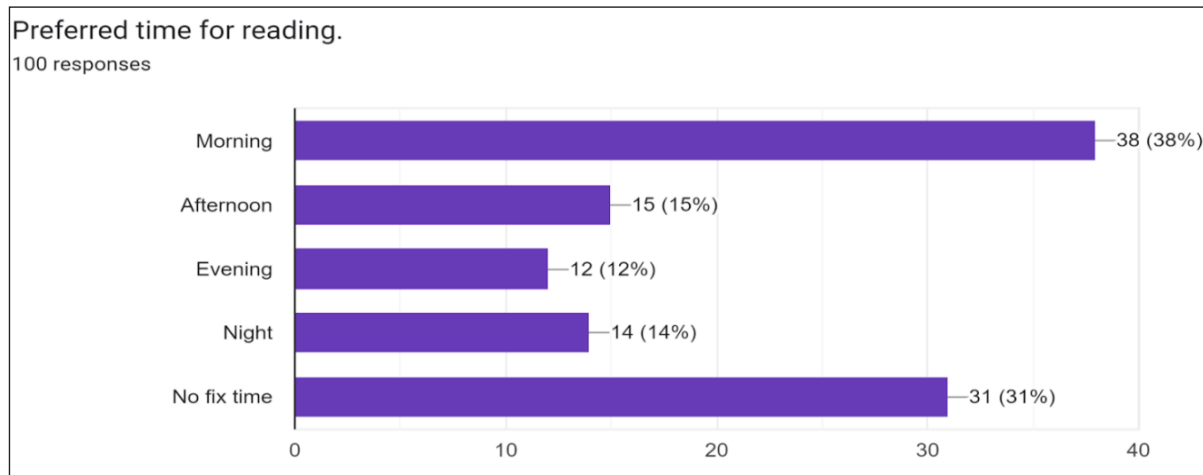
Fig. 2 shows the daily time spent on reading. Majority of the students 39% daily read for 1-2 hours, followed by 30 minutes to 1 hour (23%) and 3-4 hour (25%).



**Fig. 3: Frequency of Reading**

Fig. 3 depicts that large number of respondents 52% have stated that they read every day, while 28% respondents read when they get time. The figure shows that only 4%

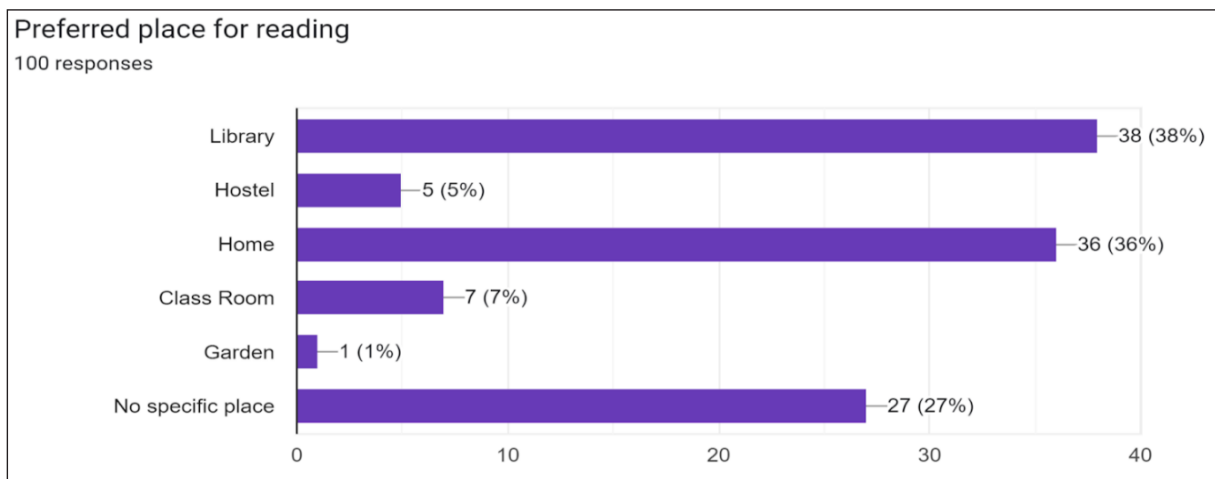
respondents read occasionally. It is clear from the figure that students have good reading habits.



**Fig. 4: Preferred Time for Reading**

Fig. 4 presents the preferred time spent by the students for reading. It shows that 38% respondents prefer to read in the morning time, while 31% respondents do not have fix time

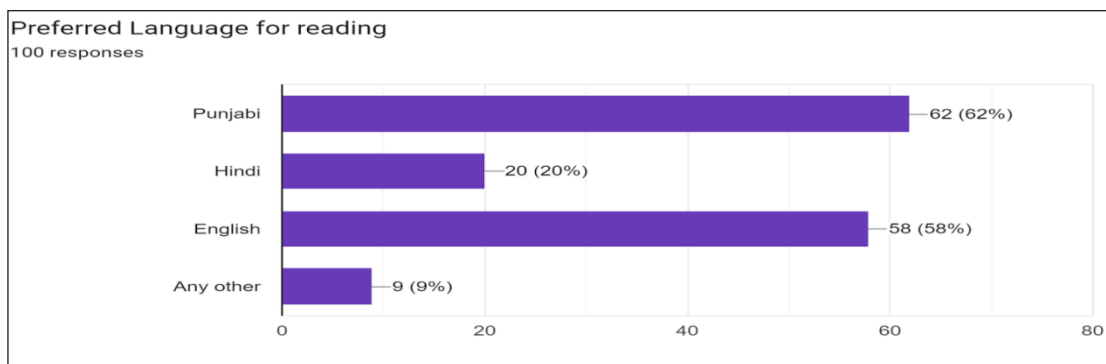
for reading. It is clear from the figure that morning time is more suitable for students to read different type of reading material.



**Fig. 5: Preferred Place for Reading**

Fig. 5 presents the preferred place of students for reading. It shows that 38% respondents prefer library for reading, whereas 36% respondents read at their home. Moreover 27% respondents have not specific place for reading. Only 5% of the respondents reported reading in their hostel rooms. It is evident from the figure that library is a most preferred place

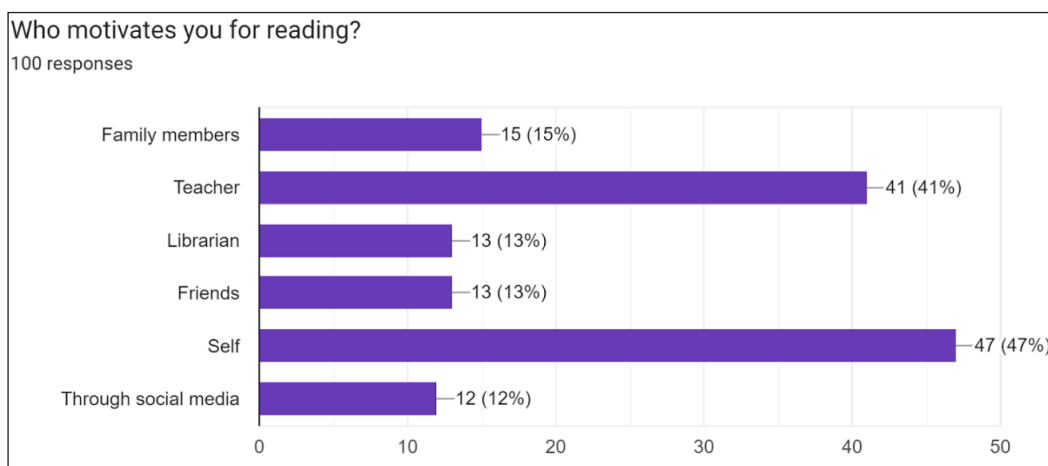
for reading. Thus, it is indicated that though the internet has influenced the various academic fields of the students, but the library still has a place in their academic activities. In the current digital scenario the libraries are still plying important role in the academic life of the university students.



**Fig. 6: Preferred Language for Reading**

Fig. 6 shows the preferred language of students for reading. It indicates that 62% respondents preferred to read the material in Punjabi language, while 58% respondents use

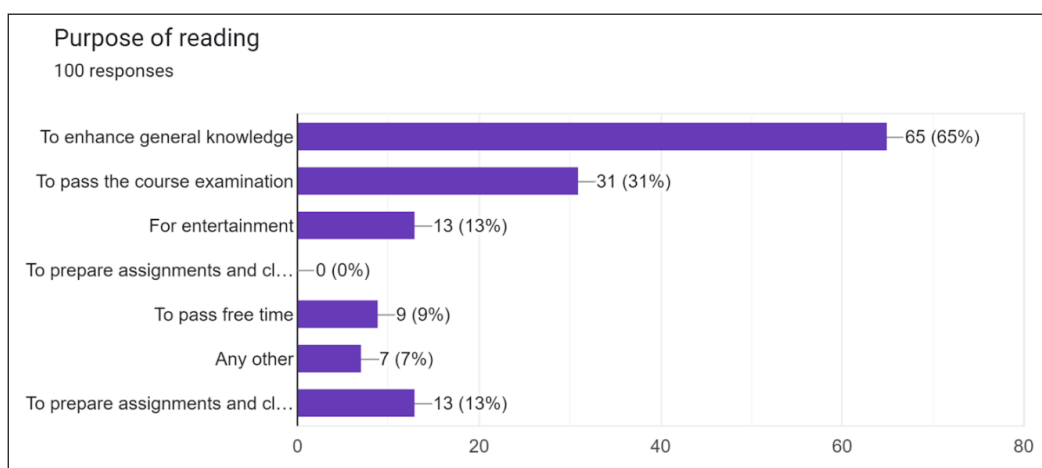
English language for reading. Moreover 20% respondents prefer to read the material in Hindi language. It is clear from the figure that Punjabi language is most preferred for reading.



**Fig. 7: Motivation for Reading**

Fig. 7 presents the data on motivation for reading. It depicts that 47% respondents get motivation by themselves, while 41% respondents get motivation from their teachers. The figure further shows that 15% respondents get motivation

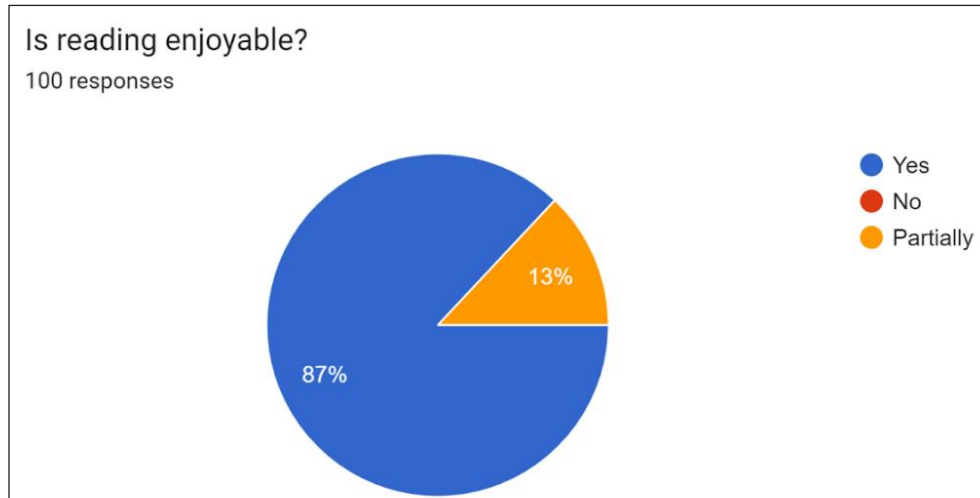
from their parents, whereas 12% respondents get motivation from social media. It is clear from the figure that large number of students get motivation by themselves or by their teachers.



**Fig. 8: Purpose of Reading**

Fig. 8 presents data regarding the purpose of reading among students. It reveals that large number of respondents 65% read to enhance their general knowledge, while 31% respondents read to pass the course examination. Only 9%

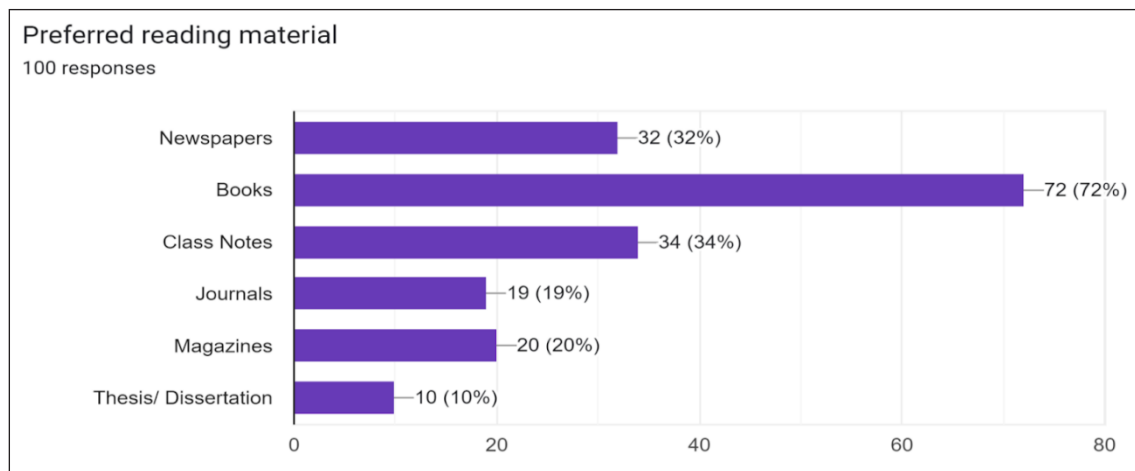
respondents read for passing the free time. It is clear from the figure that the main purpose of students for reading is to enhance the general knowledge.



**Fig. 9: Enjoyment of Reading**

Fig. 9 depicts the respondents' opinion regarding their enjoyment of reading. It indicates that a large number of respondents 87% have stated that they enjoy the reading,

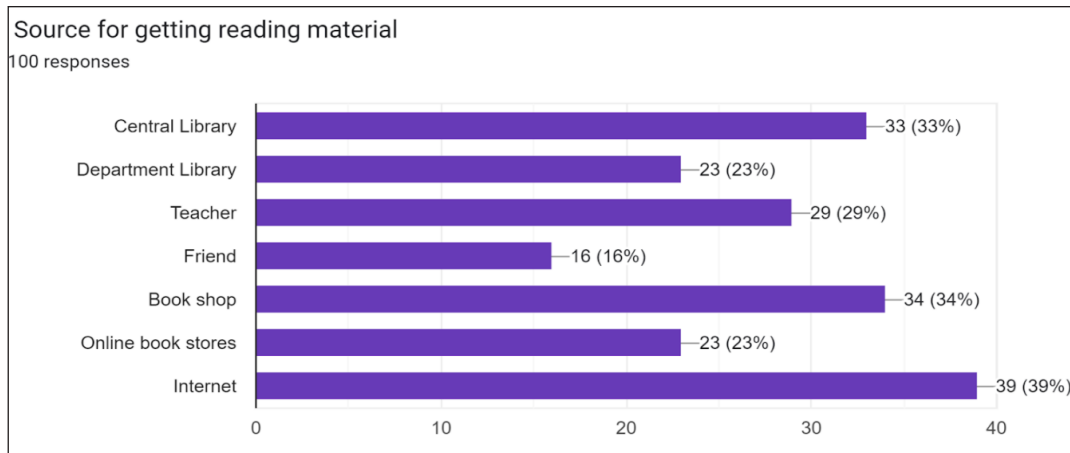
while 13% respondents partially enjoy the reading. It is clear from the figure that reading is very enjoyable phenomena among students.



**Fig. 10: Preferred Reading Material**

Fig. 10 shows that 72% respondents prefer to read books, while 34% respondents read class notes. Additionally, 32% of respondents read newspapers, while 19% respondents

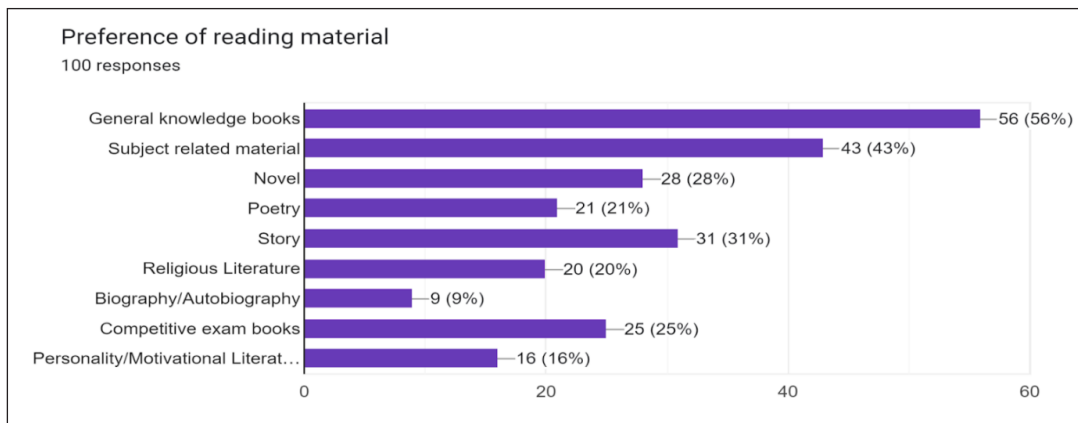
read journals. Only 10% of respondents read thesis and dissertations. It is clear from the figure that students still prefer to read books.



**Fig. 11: Source for Getting Reading Material**

Fig. 11 shows that 39% respondents get the reading material through the Internet, while 33% from central library of the university. It further indicates that 34% respondents buy the reading material from book shops and 29% respondents get

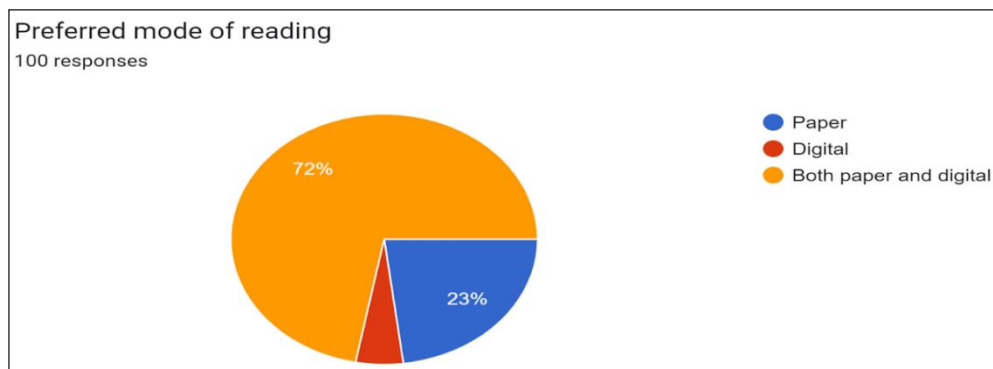
the reading material from the teachers. It is clear from the figure that large number of respondents prefer the Internet to get the reading material.



**Fig. 12: Preference of Reading Material**

Fig. 12 presents the data of respondents' preference for reading material. It shows that a large number of respondents 56% prefer to read general knowledge books, while 43% respondents prefer to read subject related books. The

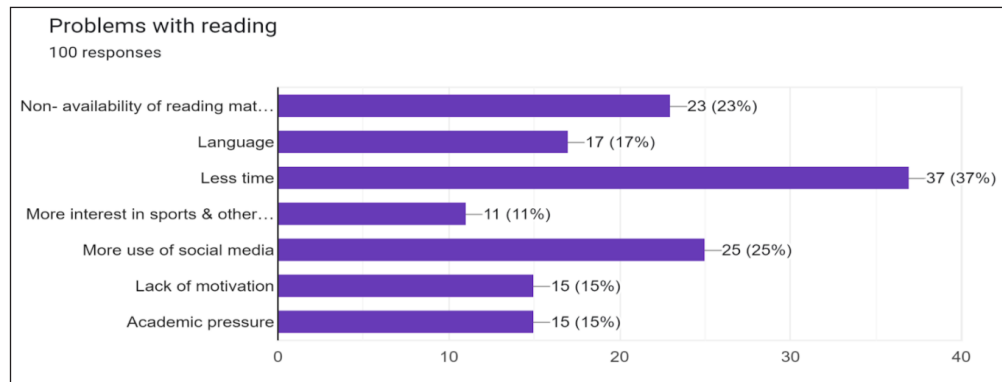
figure further shows that 25% respondents prefer to read competitive exam related books, while 28% respondents read novels. It is clear from the figure that majority of the respondents prefer to read general knowledge books.



**Fig. 13: Preferred Mode of Reading**

Fig. 13 presents the opinion of respondents about their preference to the mode of reading material. It shows that large number of respondents 72% prefer to both paper and digital format of reading documents, while 5% respondents

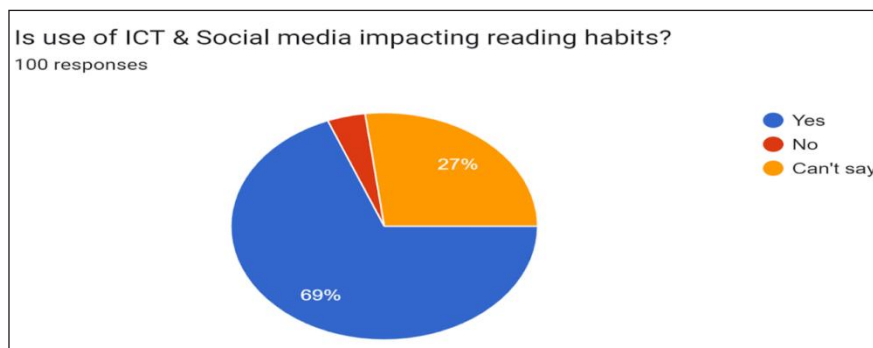
prefer only digital format of reading material. It is clear from the figure that both paper and digital formats are more popular among students for reading.



**Fig. 14: Problems with Reading**

Fig. 14 illustrate the problems of respondents related to the reading. It shows that large number of respondents 37% face the problem of less time for reading, while 25% of respondents do not get the time for reading due to the more use of social media. Additionally, 23% feel that the

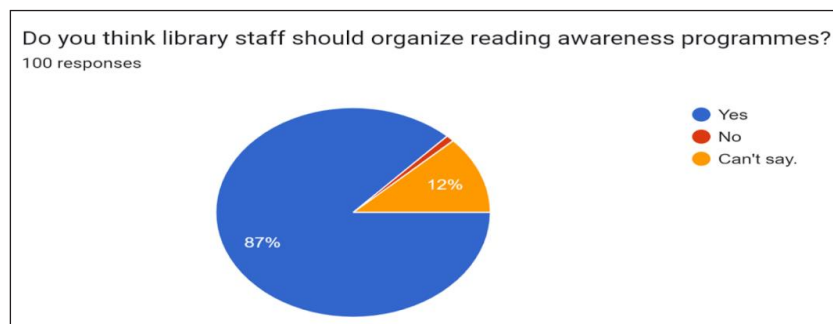
non-availability of reading material while 17% respondents face problems in reading due to language barrier, and 15% face problems in reading due to academic pressure. It is clear from the study that students get less time for reading due to the busy schedule in other activities.



**Fig. 15: Impact of ICT & Social Media on Reading**

Fig. 15 depicts that 69% of the respondents have stated that the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and social media has drastically impacted the reading habits of students, whereas 27% respondents have stated that the

use of ICT and social media has not impacted the reading habits. It is clear from the study that more use of ICT and social media is impacting the reading habits of students up to a large extent.



**Fig. 16: Reading Awareness Programmes**

Fig. 16 presents the respondents' opinions about the role of reading awareness programmes by the library staff. It shows that a large number of respondents 87% have stated that the library staff should organise reading awareness programmes to enhance the reading habits among university students. Only 12% of the respondents have stated that there is no need to organise reading awareness programme to enhance reading among university students. It is clear from the study that library staff should organise more reading awareness programmes to promote the reading habits among university students.

## FINDINGS

- Maximum students read every day. During holidays reading is least preferred by the students.
- Morning is the most preferred time for reading.
- Library is a most preferred place for reading among students.
- Punjabi language is most preferred for reading, followed by English and Hindi.
- The students were self-motivated for reading followed by teacher and Family members.
- A large number of the students read to enhance their general knowledge.
- Students enjoy reading in present digital scenario.
- Book remains the most preferred reading material for the students, followed by newspapers, class notes, journals and magazines, and thesis / dissertations.
- A large number of students get reading material from internet, central, and departmental libraries.
- Maximum students read general knowledge books followed by subject related books.
- A large number of students read from both paper and digital sources.
- Major hindrance to reading habit by the students is less time and more use of social media.
- Maximum students are of the view that use of ICT and social media has impact on reading habits.
- Majority of the students are of the opinion that the library staff should organise reading awareness programmes.

## CONCLUSION

Reading is an important aspect of student life in the era of ICT. Moreover, the social media and other online gaming and other channels have drastically impacted the reading habits of university students. During the time of COVID-19 all the educational institutions and libraries were closed for

physical access. The students were attending online classes and getting reading material through internet. This phase has highly changed the students' attitude and behaviour for reading and visiting the libraries physically. The study was conducted to know the reading habits of students at Punjabi university Patiala. Maximum students read and enjoy reading though they have less time due to their busy academic schedule. Book is still preferred by them in the times of digital media. Reading can be improved if more initiatives are taken by university library by conducting user awareness programmes.

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