



Research Article

Role of School Libraries in Promoting Reading Habits Among Students: A Case Study of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Amreli

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Abstract

Reading habits play a crucial role in shaping students' academic achievement, cognitive development, and lifelong learning abilities. School libraries serve as essential educational resources that provide access to diverse reading materials and foster a culture of independent learning. The present study investigates the role of the school library in promoting reading habits among students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), Amreli. Using a descriptive survey method, data were collected from students through a structured questionnaire focusing on library usage, reading preferences, and perceived academic benefits. The findings indicate that regular use of the school library positively influences students' reading habits, language proficiency, concentration, and academic performance. The study highlights the importance of well-organised library resources, supportive library staff, and reading-oriented activities in cultivating a sustained reading culture among students. The paper concludes with suggestions to strengthen school library services in order to enhance students' reading engagement and overall educational development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental component of education that enables students to acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and enhance language proficiency. In the contemporary educational environment, characterised by rapid technological advancement and digital distractions, nurturing consistent reading habits among students has become increasingly challenging. In this context, school libraries play a vital role in promoting reading as an intellectual and recreational activity.

A school library functions as a knowledge hub that supports curricular and co-curricular activities. It provides students with access to textbooks, reference materials, fiction, non-fiction, periodicals, and competitive examination resources. Beyond academic support, libraries encourage self-directed learning, creativity, and intellectual curiosity.

Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are residential schools established to provide quality education to talented students, particularly from rural backgrounds. The residential nature of these institutions places additional responsibility on school libraries to serve as key learning spaces. This study focuses on Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Amreli, to analyze how the school library contributes to the development of reading habits among students and supports their academic and personal growth.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous studies have consistently emphasised the positive relationship between school library usage and students' reading achievement. Researchers have found that students with access to well-resourced school libraries demonstrate higher levels of reading motivation, comprehension, and academic performance. The availability of diverse reading materials and structured library programs has been shown to enhance voluntary reading among students.

Studies also highlight the role of librarians in guiding students toward appropriate reading materials and creating an engaging library environment. However, some research points to challenges such as inadequate resources, limited reading time, and lack of structured reading programs. The present study extends existing literature by examining the role of a school library within the specific institutional context of a Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To examine the reading habits of students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Amreli.
2. To analyze the pattern of library usage among students.
3. To assess the role of the school library in promoting reading habits.
4. To study the impact of library usage on students' academic and personal development.
5. To suggest measures for improving school library services.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to collect data related to students' reading habits and library usage.

4.2 Sample

The sample comprised students from Classes VI to XII of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Amreli. A random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across different classes.

4.3 Tool for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was developed and administered to students. The questionnaire included items related to:

- Frequency of library visits
- Types of reading materials preferred
- Reading habits
- Perception of library environment and librarian support
- Academic benefits of library usage

4.4 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed personally to the selected students. The purpose of the study was explained, and confidentiality of responses was assured.

4.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation (Based on Responses of 100 Students)

The present study is based on primary data collected from 100 students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Amreli, belonging to Classes VI to XII. The responses were obtained through a structured questionnaire designed to examine students' reading habits, frequency of library usage, and the perceived role of the school library in promoting reading behavior. The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis and interpreted descriptively.

Library Usage Pattern

Analysis of responses revealed that the school library is regularly used by a majority of students. Out of 100 respondents, 38 students (38%) reported visiting the library daily, while 27 students (27%) visited the library two to three times a week. 20 students (20%) reported visiting the library once a week. However, 10 students (10%) visited the library occasionally, and 5 students (5%) reported rare visits. This indicates that nearly 65% of students are frequent library users, reflecting a strong culture of library engagement within the school.

Time Spent in the Library

Regarding the duration of time spent in the library, 42 students (42%) reported spending 30–60 minutes per visit, whereas 28 students (28%) spent more than one hour. 30 students (30%) spent less than 30 minutes in the library. The findings suggest that a significant proportion of students engage in meaningful reading activities during library hours.

Reading Interest and Preferences

The data indicate a positive attitude toward reading among students. 82 students (82%) reported that they enjoy reading books, while 18 students (18%) expressed limited interest in reading. In terms of reading preferences, 35 students (35%) preferred storybooks and novels, 25 students (25%) preferred general knowledge books, 20 students (20%) preferred academic and reference books, and 20 students (20%) showed interest in competitive examination materials. This diversity in preferences highlights the importance of maintaining a varied library collection.

Monthly Reading Frequency

Analysis of monthly reading habits revealed that 32 students (32%) read 1–2 books per month, 26 students (26%) read 3–4 books, and 18 students (18%) read more than four books per month. However, 24 students (24%) reported not reading any book in a typical month. These findings indicate that while a majority of students are engaged in regular reading, there is still scope to motivate non-readers.

Perceived Role of the School Library

When asked whether the school library motivates them to read regularly, 40 students (40%) strongly agreed, 34 students (34%) agreed, 16 students (16%) remained neutral, and 10 students (10%) disagreed. Thus, 74% of respondents acknowledged the motivating role of the school library in developing reading habits.

Regarding the availability of books, 36 students (36%) rated the library resources as excellent, 39 students (39%) as good, 18 students (18%) as average, and 7 students (7%) as poor. This suggests overall satisfaction with the library collection, though further enhancement is possible.

Role of Librarian and Library Environment

The library environment was rated as comfortable or very comfortable by 76 students (76%), while 24 students (24%) considered it average or uncomfortable. In terms of librarian support, 44 students (44%) found it very helpful, 32 students (32%) helpful, 16 students (16%) somewhat helpful, and 8 students (8%) not helpful. These findings underline the significant role played by the librarian in guiding students toward effective reading.

Impact on Academic and Personal Development

A majority of respondents (78 students; 78%) believed that regular library use improved their academic performance. Furthermore, 81 students (81%) agreed that library reading helped them develop discipline, concentration, and independent learning skills. Participation in library-based activities such as reading hours and book exhibitions was reported to encourage reading habits by 73 students (73%).

The analysis of responses from 100 students clearly indicates that the school library at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Amreli, plays a significant and positive role in promoting reading habits. Regular library usage, availability of diverse reading materials, a supportive environment, and librarian guidance

collectively contribute to enhanced reading interest and academic development among students. However, the presence of a small proportion of irregular readers suggests the need for targeted motivational strategies and enriched library programs.

5. DISCUSSION

The analysis revealed that a significant proportion of students visit the school library regularly. Most students expressed a preference for storybooks, novels, and general knowledge materials in addition to academic books. Students reported that regular reading improved their vocabulary, comprehension, and concentration.

The findings further indicated that a supportive library environment and guidance from the librarian played a key role in motivating students to read. Library-based activities such as reading hours and book displays were found to positively influence students' interest in reading.

6. FINDINGS

1. The majority of students regularly use the school library.
2. School library facilities significantly promote reading habits among students.
3. Regular library use contributes to improved language skills and academic performance.
4. A positive library environment enhances students' motivation to read.
5. Librarian assistance plays an important role in guiding students' reading choices.

7. Suggestions

1. The library collection should be expanded to include more fiction and competitive examination materials.
2. Digital library resources may be introduced to complement print materials.
3. Regular reading programs and book clubs should be organized.
4. Students should be encouraged to allocate dedicated time for library reading.
5. Orientation programs on effective use of library resources should be conducted.

8. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the school library plays a significant role in promoting reading habits among students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Amreli. A well-maintained library not only supports academic learning but also fosters intellectual curiosity and lifelong reading habits. Strengthening library resources, activities, and student engagement can further enhance the educational impact of school libraries.

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