Reading Habits of Government Higher Secondary School Students in Tribal Areas with Special Reference to Yercaud - A Study

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ABSTRACT

In the present paper, an attempt has been made to analyze the Reading habits of Government Higher Secondary School Students in Tribal areas with special Reference to Yercaud. The user study is to know about the different types of users, this study was conducted through the survey technique using the questionnaire method for the tribal students from Standards 11th to 12th studying in GHSS and Model School were selected as samples for the investigation. The Sample collection is 140 and 135 were collected back for taking the survey, analyzed by Statistical Tools and Techniques. The overall respondent rate is 96.43%. Because of no Awareness, female students from tribal communities are controlled by the community regulations followed traditionally and are not allowed to attend school after a certain age. When compared with Model School, few of the students used to Read books academically. In government higher secondary schools, the students are rarely using the library.

KEYWORDS: User Behavior, Reading Habits, Resources, Schools in Yercaud, Information Seeking Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

User research is a systematic approach to understanding the needs, behaviors, and motivations of users through various qualitative and quantitative research methods. Other terms for user study include user research, usability testing, user evaluation, user feedback, user-centered design, and user experience research. User studies in Library and Information Science can be conducted in various ways, such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, usability testing, and ethnographic studies. The data collected through these methods can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of existing services, identify areas for improvement, and inform the development of new services that better meet the needs of library users.

Yercaud, situated in the Salem district of Tamil Nadu, India, is a hill station comprising nine village panchayats with over 60 tribal villages and a population of more than 50,000. The original inhabitants of the region are the Malayalis', who are Tamil-speaking Hindus with unique cultures, languages, and traditions. These tribes

predominantly rely on agriculture, hunting, and gathering, and some are employed in the tourism industry. Over time, modern education and urbanization have led to an increase in the education levels of the tribes in Yercaud. The government and NGOs have taken measures to address this, such as providing bilingual education, improving infrastructure, hiring more teachers, and creating awareness about the significance of education among the tribal communities to encourage parents to enroll their children in school.

Reading habit refers to the practice of reading regularly, either for pleasure or for educational purposes. It is an essential skill that provides numerous benefits and is considered a cornerstone of education. It helps to improve cognitive abilities, enhances vocabulary, improves critical thinking, and helps in the development of empathy and social skills. Reading habits have been regarded as an essential exercise to improve educational performance. Reading helps to improve one's vocabulary and skills in thinking, verbal and written communication, broadening one's horizon. Therefore, to improve academic performance, students must adopt a reading culture.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Neo Abell P. Obligar and Ma. Rosa S. Caraballe (2022) This study examined the comprehension level of Grade 7 indigenous students in silent and oral reading, and their experiences in reading during the New Normal. Mixed methods were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, with results indicating frustration in reading comprehension due to difficulty in understanding English modules. The study highlights challenges and coping strategies for reading in the New Normal.

Mithun Das, Rajesh Das (2022). This study examined the reading habits of 380 secondary and higher secondary school students in the Patrasayer block of Bankura district in West Bengal, India, with a focus on time spent in the school library. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection and analysis.

Y., S., D., et al. (2021). An action research study was conducted at Samtse College of Education to improve students' reading for pleasure habit, which was found to be poor. Data were collected through a survey and interviews with 325 students and 57 students, respectively, before and after the intervention.

Majid, S., & Tan, V. (2021). This study examines the reading habits, preferences, motivations, and attitudes of 440 upper primary students. The findings show that most students read for academic purposes, and girls are generally more avid readers than boys. Reading is the third most preferred leisure activity after hobbies and playing on the computer or the Internet. The paper suggests ways to promote reading habits among children.

Johnny B. Allred, **Michael E. Cena (2020)** Research shows that giving high school students the freedom to choose their reading materials and providing them with dedicated class time to read and discuss literature can increase their reading motivation, self-concept, and value of reading. This study emphasizes the importance of implementing evidence-based practices to enhance students' reading experiences and promote student-driven reading in the classroom.

Kumar B, B T. Sampath Kumar (2019) This study investigates how reading habits affect academic achievement in universities in Karnataka, India. 2463 postgraduate students, research scholars, and faculty members were surveyed. The study found that most respondents read daily, with preferences for newspapers/magazines and books. Reading habits positively impacted academic achievements, mental capacity, and reading skills.

Rosli, N. A., Razali, N. F., et al (2018). This paper examines the reading habits of secondary and tertiary school students in various countries, including Malaysia, the United States of America, India, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and Nigeria. The authors analyze the types of reading materials preferred by students, their reading attitudes, and how their environment affects their reading habits. The study aims to understand the relationship between students' reading attitudes and their surroundings, particularly in schools and universities. The authors emphasize the importance of understanding students' attitudes toward reading, their preferred reading materials, and their environment to determine their reading habits.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To determine the reading frequency of the respondents.
- ✓ To identify the language preferred to read.
- ✓ To identify the factors that motivate the students.
- ✓ To evaluate the frequency of visiting the library.
- ✓ To find out reasons for not visiting the library.
- ✓ To assess the awareness level of the respondents.
- ✓ To explore the effectiveness of awareness programs.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted through the survey technique using the questionnaire method. The Simple Random Sampling method was applied for data collection. The tribal students from Standards 11th to 12th studying in GHSS and Model School were selected as samples for the investigation. The questions were taken both in Tamil and English language for a better understanding of the tribal school students. 140 questionnaires were distributed and 135 were collected back for taking the survey. The overall respondent rate is 96.43%. For the data analysis Statistical Package for Social Sciences, SSPS trial version 28 was used. The data was used for analyses. To illustrate the findings, frequency tables were used.

DATA COLLECTION

The necessary data for the research were gathered from primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected from the respondents by using the questionnaire method and issued individually to the students by explaining the purpose of collecting the information and encouraging the respondents to answer the questions. Secondary data was collected from Books, Journals, Magazines, and Records.

STATISTICAL TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

➢ Two-sample T-test
➢ Chi-Square Test
➢ One way ANOVA
➢ Mean
➢ Standard Deviation

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table: 1 Age-Wise of the Respondents

S.NO	AGE	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	15	11	8.15
2	16	54	40.00
3	17	55	40.74
4	18	15	11.11
	Total	135	100.00

Table 1 shows 11 individuals in the 15-year-old age group, representing 8.15%. Similarly, there were 54 individuals in the 16-year-old age group, representing 40.00%. The majority of the sample was 16-year-old and 17-year-old age groups, with 40.00% and 40.74% of the total, respectively. The individuals in the 18-year-old age group represented 11.11%.
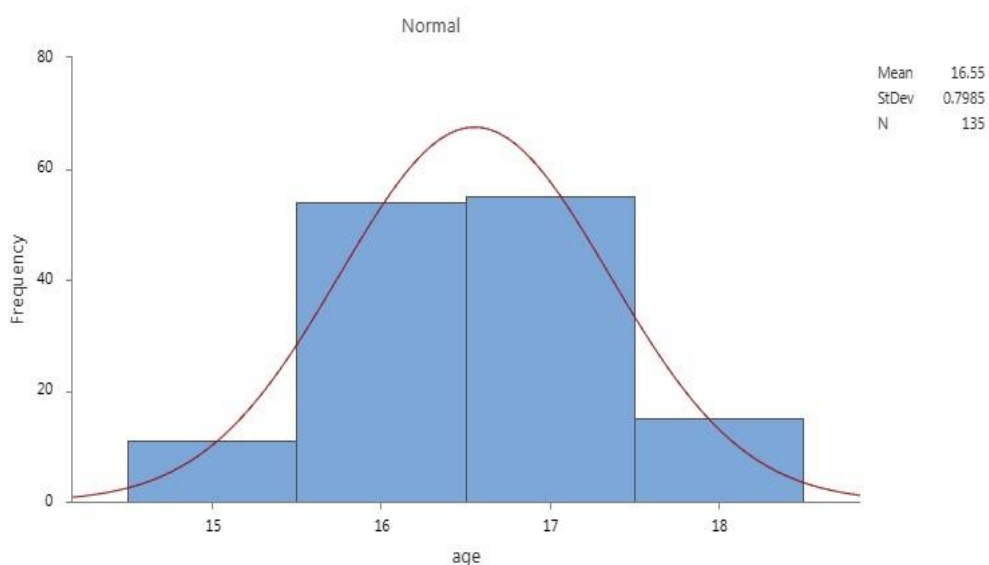
Figure: 1 Age-Wise of the Respondents

Table: 2 Gender-Wise Distributions of the Respondents

S.NO	GENDER	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	Female	67	49.63
2	Male	68	50.37
	Total	135	100.00

Table 2 shows two genders represented in the data, Female and Male, where 67 individuals identified as Female, representing 49.63% of the total sample, and 68 individuals identified as Male, representing 50.37%, respectively.

Table: 3 Standards of the Respondents

S.NO	STANDARD	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	11	65	48.15
2	12	70	51.85
	Total	135	100.00

Table 3 shows 65 individuals in standard 11, representing 48.15% of the total sample, and 70 individuals in standard 12, representing 51.85%, respectively.

TWO SAMPLE T-TEST- NULL HYPOTHESES

H_0: There is no significant difference between the age of the respondents and the standard of the respondents.

Table: 3.1 Difference between the Age and Standard of the Respondents

S.NO	SAMPLE	N	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	T-VALUE	P-VALUE	RESULT
1	Age	135	16.548	0.798	61.98	0.000	Rejected
2	Standard	135	11.519	0.502			

Table 3.1 shows; a two-sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean age of the sample to a hypothetical value of 11.519, which is the population mean for the variable "Standard." The results indicate that the mean age of the sample is significantly different from 11.519 (t-value = 61.98, p-value = 0.000).

Therefore, the null hypothesis that the mean age of the sample is equal to 11.519 is rejected, and we can conclude that the sample age is significantly different from the population mean age for the variable "Standard". Therefore, it can be concluded that the sample does not represent the standard population in terms of age.

Table: 4 Name of the School of the Respondents

| S.NO	NAME OF THE SCHOOL	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	GHSS school	73	54.07
2	Model school	62	45.93
	Total	135	100.00

Table 4 shows 73 individuals who belong to GHSS, representing 54.07% of the total sample, and 62 individuals who belong to the Model, representing 45.93%. We can see more individuals in the GHSS compared to the model.

Table: 5 Qualification of the Respondent's Parents

S.NO	PARENTS QUALIFICATION	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	Below SSLC	76	56.30
2	HSC/SSLC	41	30.37
3	PG	9	6.67
4	UG	9	6.67
	Total	135	100.00

Table 5 shows 76 individuals whose parents have below SSLC qualification, representing 56.30% of the total sample, 41 individuals whose parents are HSC/SSLC qualification, representing 30.37%, 9 individuals whose parents had PG education representing 6.67%, 9 individuals whose parents had UG education representing 6.67%. The majority of individuals have parents with below SSLC qualification
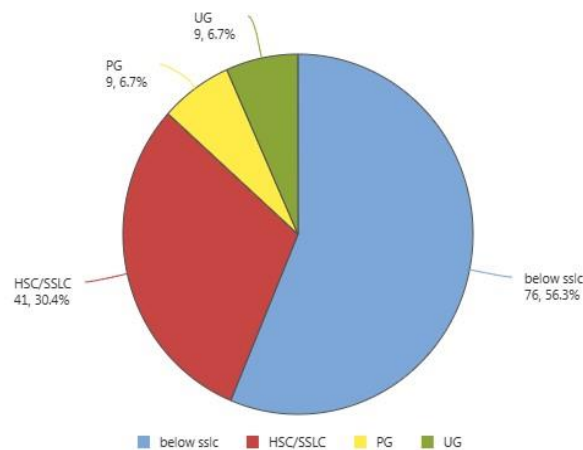

Figure: 2 Qualifications of the Respondent's Parents

Table: 6 Reading Frequency of the Respondents

S.NO	READING FREQUENCY	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	2-3 days a week	62	45.93
2	Almost every day	22	16.30
3	Once a week	44	32.59
4	Rarely	7	5.19
	Total	135	100.00

Table 6 shows the frequency at which students read books in a week. Out of 135 respondents, 62 (45.93%) reported reading books for 2-3 days a week, 22 (16.30%) reported reading books almost every day, 44 (32.59%) reported reading books once a week, and 7 (5.19%) reported reading books rarely. Overall, the majority of respondents read books 2-3 days a week or once a week, while a smaller proportion read them almost every day or rarely.
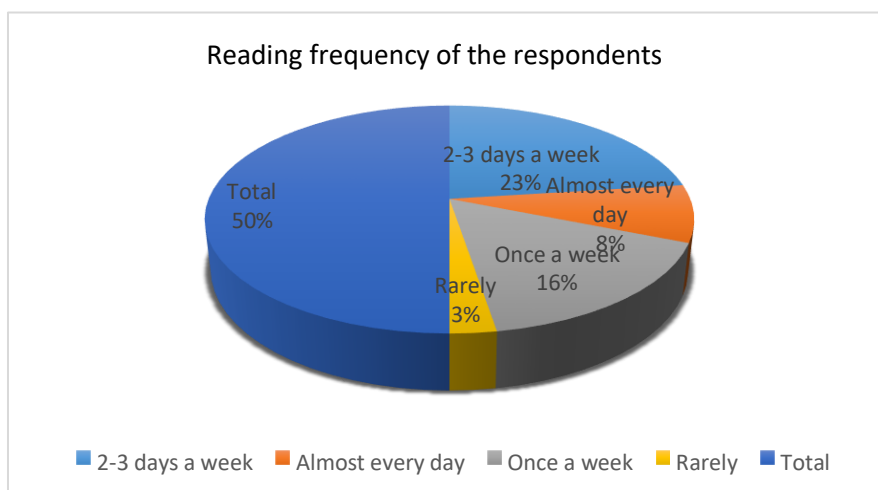
Figure: 3 Reading Frequency of the Respondents

CHI-SQUARE TEST-NULL HYPOTHESES

H₀: There is no significant difference between the name of the school and the reading frequency of the respondents.

Table: 6.1 Difference between the Name of the School and the Reading Frequency of the Respondents

S.NO	NAME OF SCHOOL	READING FREQUENCY				TOTAL	SIG	RESULT
		2-3 DAYS A WEEK	**ALMOST EVERY DAY**	**ONCE A WEEK**	**RARELY**			

1	GHSS	38	12	23	0	73	0.02	Rejected
	%	33.53	11.90	23.79	3.79			
2	Model	24	10	21	7	62		
	%	28.47	10.10	20.21	3.21			
	Total	62	22	44	7	135		

Table: 6.1 shows the reading frequency of the respondents in a school. Out of 135 respondents, 38 students read 2-3 days a week, 12 students read almost every day, 23 students read once a week, and 0 students read rarely. The chi-square test was performed with a significance level of 0.05 and the obtained p-value was 0.022. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that there is a significant association between reading frequency and school. Therefore, we can infer that the reading frequency of the respondents is not equal among the four categories.

Table: 7 Books Preferred to Read

S.NO	BOOKS READ	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	Academic	84	62.22
2	Fiction	26	19.26
3	Non-fiction	25	18.52
	Total	135	100.00

Table 7 shows Majority of respondents prefer to read academic books, accounting for 62.22% of the total responses. Fiction books were the second most preferred category representing 19.26% of the total sample, followed by non-fiction books with 18.52%.
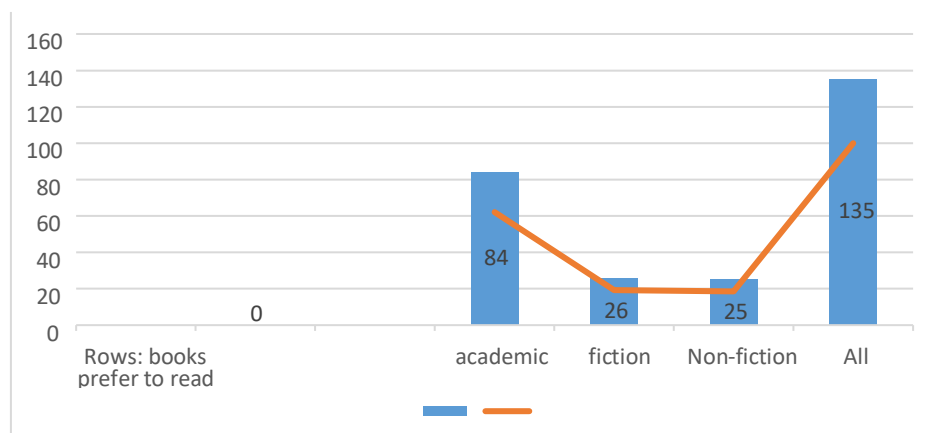
Figure: 4 Books Preferred to Read

Table: 8 Preferred Reading Format

S.NO	READING FORMAT	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	E-books	6	4.44
2	Print books	129	95.56
	Total	135	100.00

Table 8 shows 95.56% of the respondents prefer reading print books, while only 4.44% prefer e-books.

Table: 9 Factors that Motivate to Read Books

S.NO	FACTORS	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	Academic requirements	52	38.52
2	Mandatory	60	44.44
3	Personal interest	23	17.04
	Total	135	100.00

Table 9 shows Majority of the respondents are motivated to read due to mandatory requirements, accounting for 44.44% of the responses. Academic requirements were the second most common motivator, with 38.52% of the responses, followed by personal interest with 17.04%.

Table: 10 Language Preferred to Read

S.NO	LANGUAGE	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	Tamil	95	70.37
2	English	31	22.96
3	Others	9	6.67
	Total	135	100.00

Table 10 shows Tamil was the most common language chosen by respondents representing 70.37%. The English language was chosen by 22.96% of the responses, followed by other languages with 6.67%.
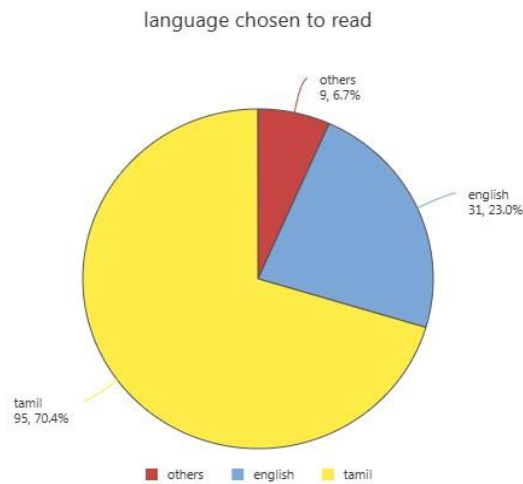
Figure: 5 Languages Preferred To Read

Table: 11 Reading Improve Academic Performance

S.NO	READING IMPROVES ACADEMICS	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	No	11	8.15
2	Yes	124	91.85
	Total	135	100.00

Table 11 shows the Majority of the respondents (91.85%) representing that their academic performance improved by reading, and only 8.15% of the respondents represented no positive impact on their academic performance due to reading.

Table: 12 Accesses to the Library

S.NO	ACCESS TO LIBRARY	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	No	73	54.07
2	Yes	62	45.93
	Total	135	100.00

Table 12 Access to school library shows 73 individuals answered no, representing 54.07% of the total sample and 62 individuals answered yes, representing 45.93%. More individuals reported no compared to yes.

Table: 13 Frequency of Visiting the Library

S.NO	FREQUENCY OF VISITING	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	Once a week	32	23.70
2	Rarely	103	76.30
	Total	135	100.00

Table 13 shows 32 individuals visit the library once a week, representing 23.70% of the total sample. The majority of 103 individuals rarely visit the library, representing 76.30%.

Table: 14 Reasons for Not Visiting the School Library

S.NO	REASONS FOR NOT VISITING	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	Inadequate library facilities	51	37.78
2	library staff not available	54	40.00
3	Limited access to books	30	22.22
	Total	135	100.00

Table 14 shows the most common reason cited for not visiting the library was the lack of availability of library staff, accounting for 40% of the responses. Inadequate library facilities were the second most common reason representing 37.78% of the responses, followed by limited access to books with 22.22%.

Table: 15 Awareness Level of the Respondents

S.NO	AWARENESS LEVEL	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	No	88	65.19
2	Yes	47	34.81
	Total	135	100.00

Table 15 shows 34.81% of the respondents were introduced to awareness about the importance of reading, while 65.19% reported not being introduced to such awareness.

Table: 16 Effectiveness of Awareness Programs

S.NO	EFFECTIVENESS	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
1	Conducting workshops and training	45	33.33
2	Encouraging reading groups	35	25.93
3	Incentivizing students to read	32	23.70
4	Providing access to books	23	17.04
	Total	135	100.00

Table 16 shows the majority of respondents (33.33%) believe that conducting workshops and training sessions is the most effective way to promote reading. This is followed closely by encouraging reading groups (25.93%) and incentivizing students to read (23.70%). Providing access to books is seen as the least effective method, with only 17.04% of respondents choosing it.

ONE-WAY ANOVA-NULL HYPOTHESES

H_0: **There is no significant difference between the standard and effectiveness of awareness programs.**

Table: 16.1 Differences Between Standard and Effectiveness of Awareness Programs

S.NO	SOURCE	DF	SS	MS	F-VALUE	P-VALUE	RESULT
1	Between-group	3	9.232	3.0774	16.47	0.000	Rejected
2	Within-group	131	24.471	0.1868			
	Total	134	33.704				

Table 16.1 shows that there is a significant difference between the means of the groups concerning how programs can be promoted (F (3, 131) = 16.47, p < 0.001). This indicates that the variation between the means of the groups is not likely to have occurred by chance. The effect size is moderate with an R-squared value of 27.39%. The within-group variability is relatively low (MS = 0.1868) compared to the between-group variability (MS = 3.0774). Based on the table, the F-value for the between-group source is 16.47, which is much higher than the F-value for the within-group source (0.1868). The p-value for the between-group source is 0.000, which is less than the significance level of 0.05 indicating that the differences between the groups are statistically significant, and we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we can conclude that the effectiveness of awareness programs that can be promoted has a significant effect on the response variable.

FINDINGS

- The majority ages of the respondents were 16-year-old and 17-year-old age groups, with 40.00% and 40.74% of the total, respectively.

- The majority gender-wise distribution of the respondents where male representing

- 50.37% and females representing 49.63% of the total sample.

- The majority of 76 individuals whose parent's educational qualification where below SSLC qualification representing 56.30%

- The majority of 62 respondents representing 45.93% read books 2-3 days a week.

- The majority of 84 respondents prefer to read academic books, representing 62.22% of the total responses.

- The majority of 129 respondents representing 95.56% prefer reading print books.

- The majority of 60 respondents are motivated to read due to mandatory requirements, representing 44.44% of the responses.

- The Majority of 124 respondents (91.85%) represented that their academic performance improved by reading.

- The Majority of 95 respondents prefer Tamil as the most common language chosen representing 70.37%.

- The majority of 103 individuals rarely visit the library, representing 76.30%.

- The most common reason cited for not visiting the library was the lack of availability of library staff, representing 40% of the responses. Inadequate library facilities were the second most common reason representing 37.78% of the responses, followed by limited access to books with 22.22%.

- The majority of the respondents (69.63%) are aware of the benefits of reading print books.

- The majority of 88 respondents representing 65.19% reported not being introduced to such awareness levels programs that promote reading habits.

- The majority of respondents (33.33%) believe that conducting workshops and training sessions is the most effective way to promote reading. This is followed closely by encouraging reading groups (25.93%) and incentivizing students to read (23.70%). Providing access to books is seen as the least effective method, with only 17.04% of respondents choosing it.

CONCLUSION

Female students from tribal communities are controlled by the community regulations followed traditionally and are not allowed to attend school after a certain age. Further, their parents belong to the poor income group who could not afford money for higher studies. Promoting the importance of government schemes and the awareness of various aspects such as why to regulate a good reading habit, and how to apply the knowledge theoretically and practically in further studies. When compared with Model School which has a library room, very few of the students used to read only academic books rarely and the students in the government higher secondary school are mostly not using the library. Most of the students do not know whether the school library is available or not. No proper staff guidance related to the library was found.

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