Marathi Literature Readers in Pune: A Study of Reading Habits

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Abstract

Marathi literature is regarded as an important medium for preserving the linguistic and cultural heritage of Maharashtra. This article explores the reading habits of readers of Marathi literature in Pune, including reading frequency, time spent reading, literary preferences, and motivation to read. Results indicate that 42% of respondents read Marathi books daily, and 43% spend 30-60 min reading. The most preferred literary form is short stories, followed by humour writing, travel writing, and novels. The various literary interests and regular reading indicate the diversity of the respondents. The respondent profile shows readership concentrated among older and educated groups: 38% were above 60 years and 35% were aged 51–60, while 51% held postgraduate qualifications. This profile provides context for interpreting reading patterns, although it should not be considered representative of Marathi readers across Pune city as a whole. The research is for reader-oriented collections and promotion of literature within the library. The drawbacks of the limited sample size and geographical scope, however, limit the generalisability.

Keywords

Marathi Literature; Reading Habits; Literary Preferences; Reading motivation; Regional language

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1. Introduction

Marathi literature is of significant value in terms of the cultural and intellectual legacy of Maharashtra and it still resonates with the readers with a variety of genres, topics and current expressions. Pune is also a hub of Marathi literature and readers read novels, short stories, poetry, essays, biographies and other literature. The reading habits of Marathi literature readers serve as evidence of their likes and dislikes regarding genre, reading frequency, sources of reading material, motivations, and reading patterns. This paper examines the reading habits of readers of Marathi literature in Pune, focusing on reading frequency, duration, literary preferences, and motivations for reading (Nimavat, 2025).

1.1. Background of Marathi Literature Reading

Marathi literature is a vital part of the linguistic, cultural and intellectual heritage of Maharashtra. It is the manifestation of a variety of literary traditions by means of poets, novelists, short story writers, dramatists, essayists, biographers, autobiographers, critics, and periodical writers. Reading Marathi literature is hence not a matter of just consuming literatures but is one that leaves no room for estrangement from language, cultural memory, social values, historical experiences, and contemporary realities. The city of Pune has traditionally had links to education, publishers, libraries, literary bodies, authors and reading groups and thus holds a prominence in this literary space. Thus, the city represents a proper social and cultural environment to investigate the present reading behaviour of readers of Marathi literatures.

Reading habits include reading frequency, time spent reading, literary preferences, motivations, and the contexts in which readers engage with books. In the context of Marathi literature, these dimensions offer a glimpse into readers' selection of literary genres, access to books, time allocation, and engagement with Marathi literary works. Pune already has a well-developed library system, and access to Marathi literary resources is still ongoing. For instance, The Pune Marathi Granth Alaya currently houses over 1.75 lakh Marathi books, ranging from literature to reference books and historical periodicals, while providing facilities for reading, reference and lending. Such an institutional landscape indicates the continued availability of Marathi literary resources in the city (Kumthekar, 2026).

The research is deductive, based on Reading behaviour concept which views approach to reading as a multidimensional activity shaped by personal preferences, motives, availability of resources, social context, educational background, and personal reading interrests. With this view, reading behaviour is not only the act of reading, but also the choice of reading material, how often is reading done, how long is reading time, the type of reading material to be read, reading access sources, and the purpose of reading. Such an approach can be applied to the study of reading in Marathi literature, where it will enable insights into a reader as an active participant in literary and cultural life who makes reading choices according to personal interests and preferences.

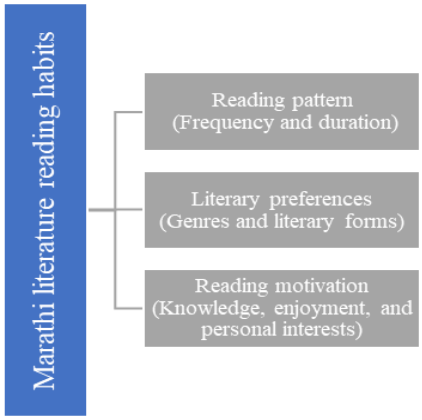


Figure 1: Dimensions of Marathi Reading Habits Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the objectives of the study.

1.2. Research Problem, Rationale and Scholarly Significance

The relationship between Marathi literature and the contemporary audience is the research problem. Pune is home to a certain literary tradition, with libraries, educational institutes, publishers, literary organisations, spaces to read and readers. But changes in lifestyle and personal taste can have an impact on the amount of reading, literary genres read and the motivation to read in Marathi. While the city's literary culture, bolstered by libraries and literary institutions, lives on, empirical investigation in systematic ways is necessary to get a glimpse into how readers deal with the Marathi literary products, of the preference of a particular genre, and of the distinctions in reading culture.

The rationale for examining these patterns lies in understanding readership as an essential component of literary and cultural sustainability. The act of reading is affected by personal interests, social and educational background, and personal experiences as well as by the materials of literature offered in the reading environments available to the readers. Thus, reading frequency, reading duration, type of literary work read, reading motives and usage of library resources can reveal the whole picture of what is currently going on in reading of Marathi literature. The significance of this examination is more in this context of Pune, where there is a long tradition of literature and a variety of reader groups exist to form a suitable context for understanding Marathi literary readers' reading practices and preferences.

The research is academically relevant as it offers empirical inputs related to reading practices and attributes of the literary readers of Marathi in Pune. The results of this can help develop reader-centred library collections, literary programmes, reading promotion programmes and strategies to sustain region-language literature. Besides, by knowing the preference, reading habit and motives of readers, literary institution/publishing houses can cater to the readers in a better way for encouraging the reader to read more literary books in Maratha. The analysis of reading behaviour, literary preferences and reading practices is discussed in a broader perspective on region language literature, literacy readership and the preservation of cultural habits.

2. Review of literature

The literature review focuses on scholars' ideas relating to reading behaviour, reader's preferences of literature. It examines reading frequency, duration, genre selection, and motivation to understand readers' engagement with literature.

2.1 Reading Behaviour and Habit Patterns

The Reading Frequency had been broadly studied as one of the significant factors in reading engagement with literary materials. An increasing the number of reading times had generally been correlated with reading engagement and increased familiarity with reading content. Some people who had made reading a habit had been more regular with looking at books and other reading materials (Tonne, I., & Pihl, J. 2012). On the other hand, irregular reading was found to be related with limited time, competing activities and changing life style pattern. These findings had provided the basis for the use of reading frequency as a major variable for the understanding of intensity and continuity of literary reading behaviour.

Reading frequency is an important dimension of reading behaviour since it shows the frequency of reader's interaction with literary materials. An analysis of reading frequency serves as an indicator of regular vs occasional reading, and gives some indication of the continuity of reading interests. Time spent reading is also a key feature and it is a measure of the time individual readers spend on literature in each reading. Reading frequency and reading time combined constitute the foundation to understand reading habits of Marathi literary readers of Pune. The present research investigates these variables to see whether there are any general regularities and time investments concerning literary reading.

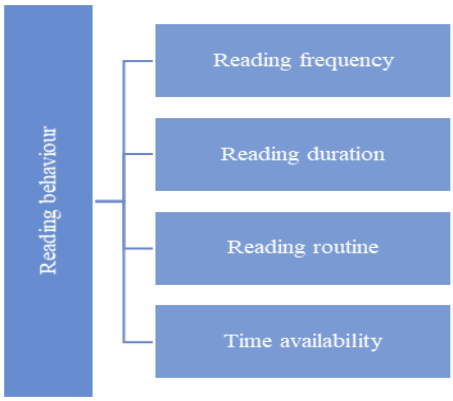


Figure 2: Key Variables of Reading Behaviour
Source: Authors own compilation

2.2 Literary Preferences and Genre Selection

The study of literary reading behaviour had recognised this genre preference as a significant variable. Rentfrow, P. J., et al., (2011) conducted a study involving readers' preferences for novels, poetry, short stories, drama, biographies, autobiographies, essays and other works of literature. A strong relationship between genre choice and one's own interests, education, age, culture and reading purpose was more commonly found (Thums, K., et al., 2021). Entertainers who had chosen specific titles in the genre rather than as an entertainment source had tended to pick favourites of show storytelling, while entertainment readers interested in learning about themselves, others, or the world more broadly had tended to favour biographies, essays, and other treatments that covered information. Literary preferences would therefore be affected by the individual choice and context. The actual study of genre preference was felt to be significant because it had thrown light upon what forms of literary material readers were interested in and how sustained involvement with literature was established (Fong, K., et al., 2013).

Author preference was also a key factor in the selection of literary work, which was also studied. There was a high level of reader's loyalty towards writers due to their familiarity with the writing style, thematic interests, literary fame and reading preferences (Nikale, M. P., & Ghodke, D. M. 2026). Those writers who were recognized by cultural and literary correctness had attracted readers and those who were coming up on contemporary themes were sought for. As some authors had been mentioned again and again, this created an increase in the amount of reading and impacted future literary decisions. Author preference had also been linked to linguistic familiarity and cultural relevance especially in regional-language literary communities. It had so far been possible, therefore, to learn something of the nature of individual literary relations and the way in which readers have drawn together their consuming habits in literature.

Motivation to read had become a crucial factor in determining the enjoyment of literary reading. In a previous survey, reading for entertainment, for relaxation, to gain knowledge, for educational development, for personal enrichment, for cultural exposure, and for emotional satisfaction were found to be important reasons for reading. There were, of course, varying motivations in respect to age, occupation, educational status and personal situation that each reader had evidence of; (Merga, M. K. 2017). Literary reading was related to emotional and recreational attitudes and reading for knowledge was related to intellectual development and information acquisition. There had been particular relevance of cultural motivation to regional-language literature, in which reading could enhance one's familiarity with language, traditions, social experiences, and cultural identity. It proved that knowledge of motivation was not just crucial for understanding what kind of text a reader had chosen but also necessary in order to understand why he continued to read literary texts.

2.3 Reading motivation and literary engagement

Library access had been regarded as a vital factor determining the readers' opportunities in literature. Fong et al. (2013) had analysed libraries as an affordable source of diverse and organised reading materials and had pointed out their function to help regular reading habits. Readers' use of library facilities was affected by library membership, library

size, availability of preferred titles, reading room facilities, and lending services. The librarians were especially useful to those who did not have a large number of books to read or lacked the funds for private library. Library collections had been valuable sources of access to literary works that may have been hard to find in regional-language environments. So the study of the library had continued to be relevant to understanding the relations of institutional control for the literary reading process.

Reading motivation comes from personal interests, enjoyment of literary works, and a desire to learn or understand social and cultural experiences. Other channels that can foster literature in the library include library collections and reading facilities, which offer access to various literary works in Marathi. The following analysis of the factors offers insights into the motives and reading behaviour of Pune's Marathi literary readers.

2.4 Research gap

The literature has investigated various factors in reading habits, such as reading frequency, reading time, literary tastes, and interest in reading. However, a focused look at Marathi literary readers in Pune is needed to understand their reading practices. The present research fills this gap by examining the frequency of reading, reading hours, preferred types of literature, and the motives for reading Marathi literary works among readers.

3. Objective of the study

- To study the reading habits of Marathi literature readers in Pune.
- To find out how often Marathi literature readers read, how much time they spend reading, and what types of Marathi literature they read.
- To understand the main reasons and ways of reading Marathi literature by readers in Pune.

4. Scope and limitations of the study

The study focuses on the reading habits of Marathi literature readers in Pune, including their reading frequency, duration, literary preferences, and motivations. The number of respondents is 100, using a structured questionnaire and a descriptive quantitative approach. But the small sample size, the geographical focus on Pune, and the questionnaire responses restrict the generalisability of the findings and the understanding of individual reading experiences.

5. Methodology

The present study employs a descriptive research design to examine the reading habits of Marathi literature readers in Pune. Adopting a quantitative approach, it has a sample of 100 respondents who read Marathi literary materials in Pune. Data are gathered by using a structured questionnaire with a set of items on how often and how long people read, their reading frequency, reading duration, literary preferences, and motivations for reading. The collected information is organised systematically, and Analysis is performed using MS Excel and SPSS. The descriptive statistical technique of frequencies and percentages is used to determine the general pattern and preferences of respondents' reading. Its goal is to develop an empirical understanding of Marathi literary readership in Pune by examining reading frequency, reading duration, literary preferences, and motivations for reading.

6. Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	N	%
Gender	Female	47	47.0
	Male	53	53.0
Age Group	Below 30 years	5	5.0
	31–50 years	22	22.0
	51–60 years	35	35.0
	Above 60 years	38	38.0
Educational Qualification	School Education	4	4.0
	Graduate	38	38.0
	Postgraduate	51	51.0
	M.Phil.	1	1.0
	Ph.D.	6	6.0
Occupation	Unspecified	2	2.0
	Business/Self-employed	32	32.0
	Government Employee	3	3.0
	Housewife	11	11.0
	Journalist	1	1.0
	Marathi Author	1	1.0
	Private Employee	10	10.0
	Retired	28	28.0
	Student	3	3.0
	Teacher/Professor	9	9.0
Total Respondents		100	100.0

Table 1 presents a basic breakdown of responses from 100 respondents. As far as gender is concerned, 53% of the respondents are male and 47% female, a reasonably balanced gender distribution. The greatest number of respondents ages were over 60 years (38%), from 51-60 years (35%). In terms of education, postgraduates make up the largest group (51%) followed by graduates (38%). As indicated in the occupational distribution, the largest group of respondents are business/self-employed (32%), with retired persons coming next (28%). The percentages of private employees (10) and housewives (11) are less. Table 1 generally shows that the respondents are older adults, well-educated, and business/self-employed or retired.

Objective 1: To study the reading habits of Marathi literature readers in Pune.

The reading habits of Marathi literature readers in the city of Pune are explored based on the frequency of their reading and the time they spend with books. Reading frequency is the number of times people read Marathi literature, and reading duration is the time spent reading in each session. These are aspects that help distinguish frequent from occasional readers. Ongoing interactions with print could indicate established reading routines, individually preferred reading genres, and the provision of reading time. Similarly, the time spent on reading can vary depending on the nature of the job, age, lifestyle and personal choice. A study of these dimensions provides insight into the uniformity of reader involvement in literary works and forms a foundation for examining the reading habits of readers here. Table 2 presents the frequency and duration of reading among the respondents and indicates the regularity of reading Marathi literature and the time spent reading each time.

Table 2: Reading Frequency and Duration Patterns

Reading Frequency	Respondents	Cumulative %	Reading Duration (per sitting)	Respondents	Cumulative %
Daily	42	42	Less than 30 minutes	32	32
4–6 times a week	14	56	30–60 minutes	43	75
2–3 times a week	15	71	1–2 hours	16	91
Once a week	12	83	More than 2 hours	9	100
Monthly	5	88	—	—	—
Occasionally	12	100	—	—	—
Total	100	100	Total	100	100

Literary preferences constitute an important dimension of the reading habits of Marathi literature readers in Pune. Depending on what readers want and why, they can choose among various literary forms such as novels, short stories, poetry, drama, biographies, autobiographies and essays. These preferences help to understand which literary materials readers are interested in reading and engage with. Factors that could affect individual selections include educational backgrounds, cultural comfort, immersion in certain themes or authors, and life experiences. Knowledge of readers' preferences is especially important in Marathi literature, where various forms of literature reflect the region's culture, social experiences, historical events, and problems. Analysis of the respondents' literary selections will therefore help determine popular genres, enabling one to see the extent of the respondents' reading interests in the Marathi language.

The readers can read Marathi literature for pleasure, relaxation, knowledge, or cultural understanding. Access to literature through libraries, bookstores, and collections may also play a role in their choices. The analysis of these motivations can help in understanding why readers engage with certain literary works and provide insight into the reading practices of Marathi literary readers in Pune.

Table 3: Reading Frequency and Duration Cross-Tabulation

Reading Frequency	Less than 30 min	30–60 min	1–2 hours	More than 2 hours	Total
Daily	10	20	7	5	42
4–6 times a week	6	4	2	2	14
2–3 times a week	4	9	2	0	15

Once a week	6	5	1	0	12
Monthly	1	2	1	1	5
Occasionally	5	3	3	1	12
Total	32	43	16	9	100

Objective 2: To find out how often Marathi literature readers read, how much time they spend reading, and what types of Marathi literature they read.

The reading habits of Marathi literature readers, the time they spend reading, and the types of literature they prefer to read are examined. Frequency of reading provides insights into how regularly readers read Marathi literature, and reading duration indicates the time readers invest in each encounter. Both of these dimensions provide insight into the regularity of reading activities and whether respondents read for literary purposes as part of their everyday or weekly lives. When these patterns are explored, one could create a better understanding of the readers' involvement in Marathi literature (HAZARIKA, 2025).

Variations in literary interests and tastes of the respondents are also indicated through the type of Marathi literature being read by them. Readers can engage with various literary genres, including novels, short stories, poetry, biographies, humour writing, travel writing, and essays. A study of these preferences indicates which forms enjoy greater readership and demonstrates the variety of literary interests among the Marathi reading population in Pune. Reading habits analyses based on the three aspects, reading frequency, duration and literary preference, will bring about a comprehensive understanding of reading habits and directly meet the goal of the present study (Mudaliar, et al., 2016).

Table 4: Marathi Literature Preferences by Reading Frequency

Rank	Type of Literature	Readers	Daily	4–6 Times/Week	2–3 Times/Week	Once a Week	Monthly	Occasionally
1	Short Stories	58	25	9	11	5	3	5
2	Humour Writing	48	17	10	5	6	3	7
3	Travel Writing	47	20	8	5	4	3	7
4	Novel	45	17	9	7	5	3	4
5	Biography/Autobiography	43	21	5	10	0	2	5
6	Column Writing	39	21	5	6	4	0	3
7	Articles/Essays	38	16	6	6	5	2	3
8	Educational	26	13	4	3	2	1	3
9	Translation	25	11	3	5	1	2	3
10	Poetry	25	9	2	6	3	1	4
11	Psychology Literature	24	12	3	5	0	1	3
12	Management	24	14	1	3	5	0	1
13	Memoir/Reminiscences	20	9	2	3	4	0	2
14	Economics	17	11	1	1	0	1	3
15	Children’s Literature	13	5	2	2	2	1	1
16	Literary Criticism	13	8	2	1	1	0	1
17	Folk Literature	12	6	2	1	0	1	2
18	Drama	12	6	1	3	0	0	2

Objective 3: To understand the main reasons and ways of reading Marathi literature by readers in Pune.

Reading Marathi literature serves diverse intellectual, educational, recreational, and personal purposes among readers in Pune. Individual motivations can be knowledge seeking as well as developing linguistic proficiency or understanding of social and cultural experiences, development of academic interest, or personal enjoyment. Literary engagement also helps readers understand the various ways of thinking, value cultural norms, and reenact experiences portrayed in literary works. In the process of understanding these underlying motivations, it becomes possible to know the relevance of Marathi literature in the development of reader personally, intellectually and in his day-to-day life (Rosen, 2015).

Readers read Marathi literature for various purposes such as enjoyment, knowledge acquisition, linguistic

enhancement, study, and social and cultural awareness. These could be interpreted as reasons why reading literature is important to a reader's life. By studying these reasons, it may be possible to discover what increases readers' motivation to engage with Marathi literary works and how the reading motivation of Marathi literary readers may be understood.

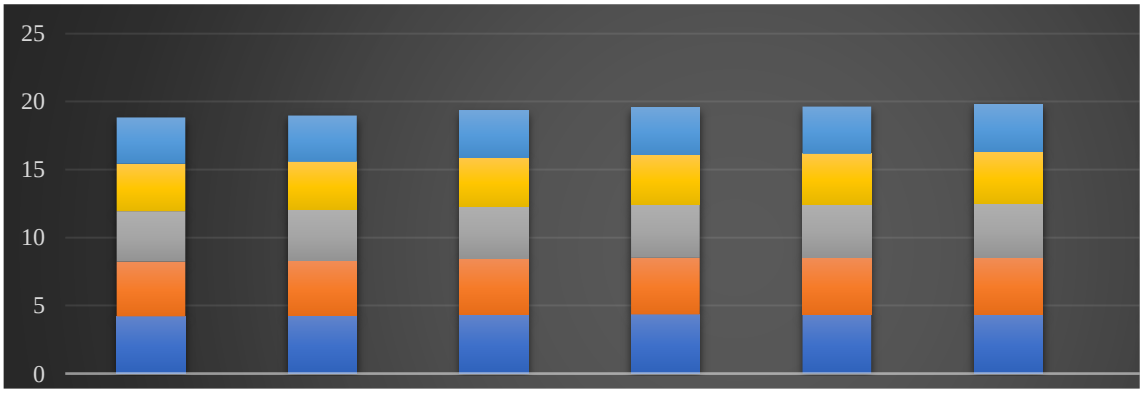


Figure 3: Year-Wise Reasons for Reading Marathi Literature
Source: Author's compilation

7. Findings of the study

In Pune, there is a significant level of engagement with Marathi literature as evidenced by reading frequency. The results revealed that 42% read every day, 14% read four to six times per week and 15% read two to three times per week. These results indicate that reading is a daily activity for a significant number of the readers who were surveyed. Chattopadhyay, D. This finding is supported by the fact that (2023) found that frequency of reading serves as an important indicator of reading engagement. The current study's results also indicate that 29% of participants reported reading only once in a week, once in a month or occasionally. The variability suggests that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to considering literary involvement within the sample, and it offers a sign of the presence of 'traditional' reading behaviours and infrequent behaviours (Vakkari, & Mikkonen, 2020).

The duration of reading offers deeper clarity to the literary activity of readers of Marathi literature. Results show that 43% of the respondents spend 30-60 minutes to read a book or paper during one sitting and 32% spend less than 30 minutes. Only 16% read 1-2 hours and 9% read more than 2 hours. These findings indicate that, generally speaking, reading sessions are not longer than an hour, and a smaller percentage have longer sessions. The reading duration and reading behaviour are identified as important aspects, as is the importance of motivation in reading engagement. Whilst the findings of the present study confirm the value of studying the allocation of time the results do not indicate whether the shorter sessions are due to limited availability time, individual preference or other factors.

The literary preference indicates that short stories (58) were most frequently expressed, followed by humour writing (48), travel writing (47), and novels (45). These preferences reflect significant interest among the surveyed readers in narrative and literary forms that are easily accessible. Tevdovska (2016) explores the links between entertainment preferences and reader choices, and Schneider-Mayerson et al. (2023) consider the differences between readers' preferences based on their interests and their purpose. The current findings are in general line with the idea that there is a variety of literary selections and that it is not just one particular type of literature. However, as far as short stories are concerned, being popular does not mean readers choose them primarily because they are there to entertain; the survey results here do not directly link each short-story genre to a specific motivation. The genre distribution, however, shows the range of literary interests of the Marathi readers in Pune.

8. Conclusion of the study

The study analyses the reading habits among Marathi literature readers of Pune in terms of reading frequency, time spent reading, literary preferences, and motivation to read. According to the results, 42% of the respondents read Marathi literature every day, 14% read four to six times a week, and 15% of them read two to three times a week. When it comes to reading duration, 43% read for 30-60 minutes at a time, while 32% read for less than 30 minutes. Thus, short stories appear to be the most popular literary genre, with 58 respondents, followed by humour

writing (48), travel writing (47), and novels (45). The results reveal that there was regular literary contact and a variety of literary preferences among it which is very important to know to sustain the literary readership of Marathi language.

The results indicate the need to create library collections, literary programmes and reading promotion programmes based on readers' tastes and preferences of Marathi literature readers in Pune. It is recommended that Libraries and publishers should keep readers' interests in mind in selecting literary works for inclusion and promotion in their collections, as this is reflected in the popularity of short stories, humour writing, travelling writing and novels. The study's descriptive and quantitative design, however, does not permit generalisability of the data or the establishment of cause-and-effect links, and has only 100 respondents from Pune, thereby limiting the scope of the study. The structured questionnaire might also not reflect readers' personal experiences and motivations. These studies should be replicated in a larger geographical area of Maharashtra, with more representative samples both in the urban, semi-urban and rural regions. Comparative analysis across demographic groups, informed by qualitative interviews and focus group discussions, could provide deeper insights into reading frequency, duration, literary preferences, and motivations, thereby informing effective strategies to sustain Marathi literary readership and preserve regional literary traditions.

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