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## Extensive Reading at the University Level: Why is it Trivialized in Practice?

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### Abstract

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*The role of extensive reading in the formation of students' life-long reading habits and their overall academic achievement has been well established in ESL/EFL scholarship. Despite this, studies reveal that extensive reading is being either trivialized or ignored in reading instruction. In this regard, the current paper aims to explore the factors responsible for the trivialization of extensive reading in university reading instruction. To this end, the study adopted a single case study design that comprised four university ESL/EFL teachers and eight students as participants. The data were collected through three qualitative methods: non-participatory semi-structured classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussion. The analysis of the data revealed four major factors preventing university students from reading widely and extensively: students' poor reading habits, students' increased use of social media, teachers' lack of extensive reading and failure to motivate students, and an unsupportive institutional environment. The findings imply that extensive reading cannot be promoted unless it is integrated into every day reading lessons and practised under the guidance of teachers in a resourceful environment.*

**Keywords:** Extensive reading, intensive reading, trivialization, reading instruction

### Introduction

The power of extensive reading i.e., reading widely and in quantity (Day, 2015) in shaping students' productive and critical reading habits and in their overall academic performance and achievement has been well established in reading scholarship (Bell, 2020; Krashen, 2004; Renandya, 2007; Renandya & Jakcobs, 2002). A wealth of research has demonstrated its contribution to students' language development and content enrichment (Hedge, 2000; Krashen, 2004; Renandya, 2007). Extensive reading is deemed instrumental in the expansion, activation, and retention of students' vocabulary (Ghanbaria & Marzban, 2014; Lee & Mallinder, 2011; Liu & Zhang, 2018; Tiryaki, 2012), and fostering their grammar knowledge (Celik, 2019). Likewise, studies have reported the positive impact of extensive reading on students' overall reading performance, including reading comprehension, reading speed, and writing proficiency (Bell, 2020; Kirin, 2015; Mermelstein, 2015; Vu et al, 2022).

The necessity of engaging ESL/EFL students in extensive reading to enhance their language performance and expand their knowledge horizons has been recognized by the current Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) English curriculum within Tribhuvan University. The curriculum has prioritized the reading component in its four-year B.Ed. English curriculum with the allocation of nearly 23 %

weightage to reading courses i.e. five out of 22 total courses prescribed for four academic years. The courses include *General English* (B. Ed. 1st year), *Reading, Writing and Critical Thinking* (B. Ed. 1st year), *Expanding Horizons in English* (B. Ed. 2nd year), *Critical Readings in English* (B. Ed. 3rd year) and *Literature for Language Development* (B.Ed. 4th year). Interdisciplinary in nature, each of these courses draws reading texts from varied disciplines such as humanities, education, linguistics, sports, music and entertainment, science and technology, and mass media. These courses have adopted “a content-based approach to the development of reading, writing, and critical thinking abilities” (Gardner, 2005, p. v), emphasizing the integration of language and content (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013) and integration of intensive and extensive reading. A cursory survey of the objectives of these courses and course compilers' and editors' views reveals that extensive reading is treated as integral to intensive reading. The readings featured in the course books include book chapters (e.g. 'Respect for Woods' from *A Walk in the Woods*), autobiographical extracts (e.g. 'Krishnamurti's Journal'), interviews (e.g. An interview with Mo Yan), book introduction (e.g. Bhagavat Gita), apart from poems, short stories, and essays. In each reading chapter, the teacher is expected to guide students in exploring further knowledge through the reading of additional materials related to what has been read in the classroom. Moreover, the literature course (B.Ed. Fourth Year) aims to engage students in reading for both pleasure and information by requiring them to read novels. To connect students' classroom intensive reading with out-of-classroom extensive reading, each reading chapter provisions extensive reading activities that go by different names such as 'Areas for Writing', 'Making Connections', and 'Appreciation and Free Writing'. However, it seems that the course aspiration and effort to engage students in extensive reading of additional texts have been least translated into practice.

We relied on three sources to identify the virtual absence of extensive reading among B.Ed. English students: our own teaching experience, interaction with B.Ed. English teachers, and findings of previous studies. First, I (the first author) taught the course *Expanding Horizons in English* (B. Ed. 2nd year) for an academic year (2021-22), whereas the second author has been teaching *General English* (B. Ed. 1st year) for a decade. Our teaching experiences tell us that B.Ed. students do not read as extensively as the courses expect them to do so. Second, I have come across several teachers in workshops, seminars, and academic gatherings complaining about their students' poor reading habits. Third, previous studies (e.g. Adhikari, 2013; Luitel, 2012, 2016; Neupane, 2016; Tiwari, 2022) have also indicated education English majors' poor reading habits with their limited engagement with prescribed and additional reading materials. In this respect, the current paper aims to explore the factors responsible for the trivialization of extensive reading in the ESL/EFL teacher education program.

### Review of Literature

Extensive reading can be broadly conceived as a mode of teaching reading and reading activity. As a mode of teaching instruction, extensive reading is an approach that encourages students to “read large quantities of material that are within their linguistic competence” (Grabe & Stoller, 2011, p. 286). As a mode of reading activity, extensive reading involves reading large quantities of materials or longer texts (e.g. novels) rapidly for general understanding prioritizing meaning over language (Carrel & Carson, 1997). Unlike intensive reading, which is reading in quality (i.e., digging into the text for content and/or language), extensive reading is reading in quantity which usually takes place outside the classroom. It is principally for pleasure, recreation, and for gaining a general understanding of the text (Richards & Schmidt, 2013; Watkins, 2017). Extensive reading fosters in students a lifelong reading habit by supportively and unthreateningly ‘flooding’ them with a large number of reading materials (Renandya & Jacobs, 2002). To follow Renandya and Jacobs (2002, pp. 296-297), the following features distinguish extensive reading from intensive reading: a) Students read a large number of texts; b) Reading

texts are usually chosen by students themselves; c) Students read a variety of topics from diverse genres; d) The selected texts lie within students' level of comprehension; e) Students usually take part in post-reading activities such as designing bookmarks for the books they have read, role-playing the story; designing posters to advertise the books and sharing their views with their friends about what they have read; f) Teachers read with their students, thus modelling enthusiasm for reading; g) Teachers and students keep track of student's reading progress.

The pragmatic philosophy of extensive reading is that classroom-intensive reading is essential but not sufficient to strengthen students' reading performance and develop their sustained reading habits. The time and opportunities that students get for intensive reading in the classroom are limited. It should, therefore, be supplemented, accompanied, and extended by out-of-classroom reading through extensive reading. Keeping this in mind, scholars have made a strong case for incorporating extensive reading in language programs (Bell, 2020; Hedge, 2000; Horst, 2009; Krashen, 2004; Renandya, 2007). Regarding this, Horst's (2009) study with adult immigrant ESL students in Canada highlights the two crucial roles of extensive reading in students' proficiency development. First, extensive reading expands students' vocabulary size beyond their existing levels. Second, it provides opportunities for them to encounter new words in diverse contexts. Drawing on the findings, Horst (2009) conclusively argues that "extensive reading plays a key role in moving learners beyond the basic levels of proficiency required for basic communication so that they are well positioned to achieve personal and professional goals". (2009, p. 63). Likewise, Bell (2020) catalogues the following multi-faceted benefits that extensive reading can offer to ESL/EFL students: a) It can provide comprehensible input and increase students' exposure to the language; b) It can enhance students' general language competence; c) It can increase students' knowledge of vocabulary; d) It can motivate students to read; e) It can consolidate previously learned language; f) It helps build confidence with extended texts; g) It facilitates the development of prediction skills; and h) It can lead to improvement in writing (pp. 243-245). Extensive reading is also highly valued for its potential to motivate students by offering them a choice regarding what to read and when to read without the pressure of formal assessment (Davis, 1995; Safaia, & Bulca, 2013). Despite its well-recognized contribution to students' reading habits, their language competence, and positive attitudes towards reading, extensive is not widely practised, as various studies have reported (e.g. Day et al., 1998; Gallagher, 2009; Huang, 2015; Renandya & Jacobs, 2002).

Renandya and Jacobs (2002) discern four reasons for the trivialization of extensive reading in ESL/EFL programs: overemphasis on intensive reading, teachers' failure to discard their traditional role as a source of knowledge, lack of sufficient time, and lack of assessment of extensive reading experiences. Conventionally, teaching reading is equated to classroom-intensive reading taking place under the close monitoring of teachers and this mode of reading is deemed sufficient for developing students' language skills and content knowledge. Likewise, Gallagher (2009) contends that institutions' overemphasis on assessment-focused intensive reading has resulted in 'readicide', "the systematic killing of the love of reading" (p. 2). In his argument, our education system values the development of short-term test takers in reading more than the development of lifelong readers, which has led to a decline in students' reading habits. Huang examined the students' and teachers' perceptions of and challenges faced in the implementation of extensive reading in senior high schools in Taiwan. Huang's study reported that despite teachers' acknowledgement of the benefits of extensive reading and students' positive attitudes towards the extensive reading activity, students were found weak in extensive reading. The study cited heavy workload from tests, homework, and cram school as the main factors that prevented schools from effective implementation of the extensive reading program.

Collectively, the global studies reviewed above highlight the marginal status of extensive reading in language education. In Nepal's higher university context, Neupane (2016) surveyed the views of English major students at the Faculty of Education regarding their choice of reading materials, their purposes of reading, and the expected teacher roles. His study reported that the students preferred easy, interesting, and informative reading materials mainly for general information; and they expected teachers to be their model readers. The studies reviewed so far offer little or no information about the factors responsible for the marginal status of extensive reading in university ESL/EFL programs. The current study aims to fill this research gap.

### **Methodology**

The current study adopted a single case study design to understand the status and practice of extensive reading at the B.Ed. level. The case study design enables the researcher to explore the phenomenon more holistically and comprehensively (Creswell, 2009; Duff, 2018; Riazi, 2016). A constituent campus of Tribhuvan University running B.Ed. and M.Ed. English programmes located in the capital city of Kathmandu were purposively selected as a research site. This campus was designated as a research site because of its location and accessibility (Dornyei, 2007). I (first author) have been teaching at this campus for more than two decades which, we believed, would ensure our better accessibility to participants. We purposively selected two cohorts of participants. The first cohort comprised four university English teachers teaching B.Ed. English reading courses at different academic years, whereas the second cohort consisted of eight B.Ed. English students, two from each academic year. We employed three qualitative methods, namely semi-structured classroom observation, semi-structured interview, and focus group discussion (FGD) to study the phenomenon from multiple standpoints (Cohen et al., 2007). A semi-structured observation scheme comprised broadly identified observational categories such as approach, techniques/activities, resources, and challenges.

Altogether, 28 classes, seven classes of each teacher, were observed, audio-recorded, and supplemented by narrative field notes and reflections (Dornyei, 2007; Nunan 2010; Riazi, 2016). Each teacher was interviewed after every three classes in the Nepali-English mixed medium. Each interview lasted approximately an hour to 45 minutes. Moreover, FGD was held with the selected students to explore their views and experiences of extensive reading. Interviews and FGD were audio-recorded with participants' consent. The recorded lessons, interviews, discussions, and field notes were coded by both authors to ensure inter-rater reliability, and codes were categorized and thematized (Riazi, 2016). In the analysis, teacher participants were anonymized and given pseudonyms: Binod, Asmita, Hikmat, and Bharat to ensure their anonymity.

### **Findings and Discussion**

This paper is part of a larger study that sought to explore the practice and challenges of teaching reading at the B.Ed. level. This section presents and discusses the findings drawing primarily on interview and focus group discussion data concerning only extensive reading. Classroom observation data are also referred to where necessary. The analysis of the data showed four major themes related to extensive reading in the case campus: students' poor reading habits, increased use of social media, teachers' lack of extensive reading and their failure to motivate students, and unsupportive institutional environment.

#### **Students' Poor Reading Habits**

All teacher participants categorized their students as poor readers, lacking strong reading habits. They unanimously reported that their students had difficulty reading the prescribed texts even under their teachers' close guidance. When asked how often his students read texts other than the prescribed ones in the course of study, Binod replied in a tone of surprise:

Additional reading?! Don't expect this from these students. They even don't read the prescribed texts, and forget about reading additional texts for pleasure. Most of them expect their teachers to explain the texts to them. All they need is lesson notes and summaries.

Other teachers also recounted that their students showed unwillingness to read the texts contained in the prescribed course books. When probed further into reasons for their lack of interest in reading, Asmita stated that her students did not read much because of their limited English proficiency and poor content knowledge, which together led to a lack of confidence in reading. In her observation, their English proficiency is below standards and not sufficient to cope with the language of prescribed texts. Echoing his experience, Bharat stated:

As you might have noticed during classroom observation, most of them cannot read the text fluently. I mean they have not developed reading skills properly. They are poor in reading, and always dependent on teachers' explanations and notes. When asked to read the texts themselves at home, they hardly do so.

All teachers unanimously concluded that their students hardly read additional materials for pleasure and to expand their understanding of the content served in the coursebooks. These teachers saw no possibility of engaging the struggling readers in additional reading activities when they found it difficult to read even the prescribed short reading texts. The Focus Group Discussion with the students also revealed a similar picture of students' poor reading habits. None of the students recounted reading at least two pages a day at home, and only two of them said that they had the prescribed English coursebooks. None of them called themselves regular readers and had explored additional materials online or borrowed ones from the library. Their main concern was to get notes from their teachers that they could use to pass exams. Since they felt it challenging to read the prescribed texts, reading additional texts seemed to be out of the question for them. The class observation showed that the teachers adopted lecture-centered instruction with little space for students to encounter additional texts. We can postulate a causal relationship between students' poor reading habits and lack of extensive reading. Students did not read extensively because they were poor in reading. Conversely, students were poor in reading because they were not engaged in extensive reading activities. This implies that poor reading habit is the cause and consequence of the absence of extensive reading.

### **Increased Use of Social Media**

Concerns were expressed about students' increased use of social media and its negative impact on extensive reading. All teacher participants identified social media such as Facebook, TikTok and YouTube as a major source of distraction ruining students' reading habits. Referring to his ongoing classroom research about students' unwillingness to read, Binod asserted:

I am conducting a sort of research to find out why my students do not have time to read or don't read. I have found that reading and writing are of secondary importance to them. They spend most of their time on social media and they have no time for books. They find using social media far more entertaining than reading.

In his observation, students spend most of their out-of-class time on social media mainly for entertainment. He showed grave concern over students' addiction to social media mainly Facebook and Tik Tok. He even recounted some students getting internet data packs and using Facebook on their cell phones in the classroom. Other teachers also complained about cellphone usage and social media browsing in the classrooms and students' increased dependency on them for entertainment. They also

lamented that social media is killing their students' precious study time in and out of classrooms and distancing them from books. A similar finding has emerged from the University of Namibia showing how social media usage is taking over out-of-classroom reading activity (Liswaniso & Mubanga, 2019). Liswaniso and Mubanga's (2019) findings show that university students spent most of their time on social media posting photos and chatting rather than reading books for recreation and information.

Also known as free voluntary reading, extensive reading is carried out for pleasure and recreation with little or no comprehension-checking questions (Gallagher, 2009; Krashen, 2004; Watkins, 2017). It means that extensive reading is done mainly for pleasure and recreation. However, what is noteworthy here is that today's techno-native students have unlimited sources of pleasure and creation on the internet. In this regard, Hikmat's view is notable:

In today's digital age, students have easy access to various forms of entertainment, such as social media, video games, and streaming platforms. Now it is hard for books to compete with such entertaining platforms. Students are spending more time on social media than reading books for recreation.

Likewise, Binod noted that students find more pleasure in social media such as YouTube, Facebook, and TokTok than in books, leading to the depletion of students' reading time. As all teacher participants viewed, with the unprecedented rise of social media platforms, books are no longer serving as the major source of recreation. These teachers indicated that the sources of pleasure and recreation have shifted from books to social media.

The focus group discussion with the students also revealed the encroachment of social media on reading. The student participants called themselves active Facebook users- all of them had Facebook accounts, scrolled through Facebook many times a day, posted statuses frequently, shared photos several times a week, liked and commented on others' posts, and communicated almost every day via Facebook Messenger. Similarly, they loved watching songs and entertaining videos on YouTube. Moreover, girls had picked up a habit of watching TikTok videos several times a day. None of the students recounted reading short stories, poems, and novels in their free time. All this suggests that voluntary reading is giving way to social media usage and there is less time left for students to read for information and recreation.

Previous studies have also reported the encroachment of social media on extensive reading activity (Al-Jarf, 2023; Huang et al, 2014; Mokhtari et al.; 2009). Situated in the American context, Huang et al. (2014) study reported the Internet as a major factor responsible for a decline in students' academic and extracurricular reading. This study found students spend more time online with its a negative impact on academic and extracurricular reading activities. Mokhtari et al. (2009) also reported a similar finding. They studied the impact of the Internet and television use on reading habits and practices of college studies and reported the students' increased use of the Internet and correspondingly their decreased involvement in recreational and academic reading.

### **Teachers' Lack of Extensive Reading and their Failure to Motivate Students**

Although teachers lamented students' poor reading habits, they were found to be poor readers. Interview and classroom observation data both revealed that the teachers' reading was limited to prescribed texts only and they failed to motivate their students to read widely, leading to the trivialization of extensive reading.

Extensive reading was trivialized in almost all reading lessons. As observed, the teachers avoided post-reading activities given in course books. The purpose of post-reading activities provisioned at the end of each reading chapter is to extend classroom-intensive reading experiences by engaging

students in additional reading materials. For example, the chapter 'The Bhagavatagita' (Readings for the New Horizons, B. Ed. 2nd year) contains a post-reading activity- Visit the library or websites and write short notes on Homer, The New Testament and Sermon on the Mount. An activity like this plays a crucial role in integrating classroom-intensive reading with out-of-classroom extensive reading. However, none of the teachers was found to engage students in any of such activities that encourage students to read additional longer texts. For instance, the teacher (Bharat) teaching 'The Bhagavatagita' ended the lesson with a summary and left the classroom without engaging the students in extensive reading questions given in the post-reading section. Like him, another teacher (Asmita) explained the key points of the essay 'I Want a Wife' and told the students to read the essay at home. She did not inform the students anything about additional reading related to the essay. These teachers' skipping of the post-reading phase corroborates the earlier observation, which showed that M.Ed. teacher students teaching B.Ed. reading courses did not engage students in any post-reading activities (Adhikari & Poudel, 2020).

Although the teachers expected their students to read additional materials to widen their reading experiences, they were not found to play an active role in initiating students' extensive reading. The teachers seemed to preach the 'You should-read-a- lot' approach but failed to awaken students to the value of self-selected or teacher-recommended longer texts, including short stories and novels (Hedge, 2002). When asked, none of the teachers said that they ever provisioned even a single class to orient students to the value of extensive reading and educate them about its short-term and long-term contributions to their academic achievement. Teachers' role is deemed crucial in orienting students in extensive reading, helping them in the selection of reading materials and designing different activities to engage them in extensive reading (Peragine & Mattson, 2023).

Classroom observation and interview data also showed the teachers' lack of extensive reading experience. In none of the observed lessons, the teachers connected the prescribed reading texts to the longer texts from where they were extracted. For example, there is a short reading 'Frequently asked questions about Multiple Intelligences', a chapter extracted from H. Gardner's book *Multiple Intelligence: New Horizons* (1993). In teaching this chapter, Asmita did not make any mention of the book. In the post-lesson interview, she admitted that she had no idea about the book, let alone read it. The same was true of a chapter extracted from the novel *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho included in the course book *English for the New Millennium*. Hikmat, who had been teaching this course for four years, admitted that he had not read the complete novel. Further probing into the issue revealed that the teachers' reading was almost exclusively limited to the prescribed course books. They hardly read texts other than those prescribed in the reading course they were teaching. Binod shed light on teachers' reading habits as:

Teachers themselves don't read widely. I don't read other texts related to the prescribed ones. Apart from this class, I am engaged in other institutions too. This is the case with all teachers here. So, when teachers don't read themselves, you cannot expect your students to do so.

Surprisingly, the teacher teaching the literary course admitted that he had not read any of the novels and dramas prescribed in the course. The course prescribes three novels (Tetsuko Kuroyanagi's *Totto-Chan: The Little Girl at the Window*, Patrick Modiano's *The Search Warrant*, and Kim Edwards's *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*), and one drama (Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*) and he had not read any of them. It was a bit shocking revelation that he had been teaching the course for five years, but he did not have these novels and dramas with him. He would gather information from different online sources, specifically Wikipedia, prepare notes and summaries and present them to students. This

indicates that the teachers could not present themselves as model readers for their students, which runs counter to Neupane's (2016) finding that students expect their teachers to act as model readers.

### **Unsupportive Institutional Environment**

The inadequately resourced and poorly managed library was identified as one of the factors contributing to students' poor reading habits and trivialization of extensive reading. Teacher and student participants both expressed their dissatisfaction with the campus administration's poor management of the library. They complained about the lack of recent publications and reader-friendly space in the library. Bharat remarked on the unavailability of recent books:

The library is stuffed with old books. You can see only outdated books in the stacks. I have hardly seen any teachers and students issuing books from the library. There is no point in going to the library. Why? Because I hardly get the *books*, I need to teach the course.

In this teacher's experience, the college library does not contain even basic reference materials prescribed in the courses and forgets about information resources such as yearbooks, bibliographies, biographies, indexes, and recent literary books. Hikmat also noted that a poorly resourced library does not appeal to teachers and students:

There is a library in name only. Why should students go to such a library that does not have sufficient reading materials? You can see some Nepali and English dailies lying on desks outside the library. Students cannot enter the library and study there.

Like other teachers, he was a rare visitor to the campus library, as he thought it was a waste of time. As a teacher from the same campus, I am aware of the fact that even teachers have to get permission from librarians to enter the library. Then one could not expect students to enter there and choose the books of their interest by themselves. By not allowing readers to enter the library, the institution was creating a distance between books and readers, further contributing to students' poor reading habits and devaluation of extensive reading. Librarians mentioned the lack of space for reading as a reason for disallowing readers to enter the library. It means that the campus library does not even have the minimum requirement of a general library. More than a library, it looked like a bookstore guarded by some campus staff and rarely visited by students and teachers. To compensate for the lack of reading space in the library, the campus has placed some benches on the passage. The space allocated by the campus for library visitors contained two old wooden benches and three chairs placed around two large tables joined together. The wooden stakes and a steel cupboard contained masters' level theses and some old locally produced reference materials. During my frequent visits to the library, I did not find any students and teachers sitting and reading in this narrow and congested space, which did not look like a reading place in the library from any angle. Regarding the lack of adequate peaceful space for reading in the library, Binod questioned:

How can we promote reading culture when there is not even space in the library to sit and read? I have hardly seen any students going to the library and reading there. Forget about students, even we teachers don't go to the library. When students don't see their teachers reading, how can we expect them to read?

Setting up a resourceful library is a must for building a successful reading culture and promoting extensive reading (Loh et al., 2017). Accentuating the role of a library in encouraging students to read widely, Loh et al. (2017) identify the following as crucial to promote a reading culture among students:



a) curate the book selection for readers; b) make books visible; (c) create programs to excite readers; and (d) design spaces for reading. However, none of these provisions were made in the case campus. Binod associated the lack of a student-friendly campus environment with students' poor reading culture:

Our campus has the worst study environment. As I said, the library is not properly managed, there is no facility for students to sit and read. There is no study room in this big campus. Students have no access to the Internet to explore additional information about their courses. There is no water facility in the toilet. No drinking water. This poor physical facility has a direct impact on their regularity and the time they spend in the campus premises.

Like teachers, the students participating in FGD complained about the unmanaged library and lack of a supportive environment on the campus. The following are the representative voices:

The library has no books that we want to read. It is a shame that this big education campus does not have the needed books.

The library is so unmanaged. There is no place to sit and read.

Look! There is no place in the campus compound to sit and read. I have seen on YouTube that in foreign universities students can sit on the ground and read. They can read in the cafeteria. But here there is nothing like this in this campus. If we can read like this, I don't think that sitting in the classroom and listening to the teacher is always necessary.

Contrary to teachers' common belief that their students lack the willingness to read, these remarks demonstrate the institution's failure to create a supportive environment for reading. Their views and experiences carry undertones of frustration with the campus administration for not providing them with a resourceful library and reading spaces. Rodrigo et al.'s (2014) study demonstrates a positive correlation between the availability of a well-resourced library and adult readers' extensive reading with a conclusion that a well-resourced library and easy access to books are key factors in promoting extensive and recreational reading.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

The current paper aims to explore the factors hindering university students' engagement in extensive reading. The findings demonstrate four major factors preventing students from reading widely for information and recreation, which were related to students (i.e. their poor reading habits and increased use of social media), teachers (i.e. teachers' lack of extensive reading and failure to motivate students), and institution (unsupportive institutional environment). These findings lead to a conclusion that despite its pivotal role in the formation of students' life-long reading habits and contribution to their academic performance, extensive reading is trivialized or ignored both at the personal and institutional levels. These findings have important implications for teaching reading policies and practices. At the policy level, extensive reading needs to be treated as integral to reading instruction by incorporating extensive reading activities in reading courses. Likewise, the institution should plan and implement an extensive reading program both for students and teachers. At the practice level, classroom-intensive reading and out-of-classroom extensive reading should be integrated into every day reading lessons, one extending and strengthening the other. An important implication of this study is that students do not read extensively by themselves unless teachers encourage them to do so, and therefore teachers should present themselves as model readers, and an institution should have a well-resourced library with a pleasant

reading environment. These findings contribute to our understanding of the problems of engaging students in extensive reading and help us find out ways to overcome them. As a case study, it was limited to a campus of Tribhuvan University with a small number of research participants, its findings are not generalizable to the students and teachers from other institutions. To address this limitation, a larger-scale study comprising a survey and interview is needed to fully understand the status and practice of extensive reading in Nepal's higher education.

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