Scientific articles

Las creencias de estudiantes de secundaria sobre la lectura

High school students' beliefs about Reading

Crenças de estudantes do ensino médio sobre leitura

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Resumen

La lectura es fundamental en el desarrollo de los adolescentes, no obstante en México persiste la falta de interés por esta importante actividad. Las creencias sobre la lectura, construidas por experiencias personales, influencias familiares y el contexto sociocultural, desempeñan un papel crucial, que promueven o dificultan la formación del hábito. El objetivo del presente estudio fue identificar las creencias sobre la lectura en los estudiantes de secundaria. El método de investigación se fundamentó en un enfoque cualitativo fenomenológico, caracterizado por explorar las experiencias de los participantes sobre el

objeto de estudio. Se realizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas a 12 estudiantes de secundaria del norte de México reconocidos como buenos lectores. El análisis de la información permitió identificar cuatro categorías principales: 1) Lecturas preferidas, 2) Creencias sobre los vínculos familiares por la lectura, 3) Creencias sobre los hábitos de lectura, y 4) Creencias sobre los beneficios de la lectura. Las conclusiones destacan que los participantes consideran que las lecturas emocionantes y llamativas les proveen entretenimiento, y el desarrollo de sus habilidades cognitivas. Además, resaltan las creencias familiares en la formación de los hábitos de lectura. Asimismo, los estudiantes comparten la creencia de que la lectura iniciada con aburrimiento puede llegar a transformarse en un hábito gratificante. Finalmente, se identificaron las creencias sobre los beneficios que la lectura habitual tiene en los estudiantes de secundaria.

Palabras clave: Alfabetización, hábitos de lectura, comprensión de lectura.

Abstract

Reading is essential for adolescent development, still in Mexico there is a lack of interest in this important activity. Beliefs about reading, built on personal experiences, family influences and the sociocultural context, play a crucial role in promoting or hindering the formation of the habit. The aim of this study was to identify beliefs about reading in high school students. The research method was based on a qualitative phenomenological approach, characterized by exploring the experiences of the participants about the object of study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 high school students from northern Mexico recognized as good readers. The analysis of the information allowed us to identify four main categories: 1) Preferred readings, 2) Beliefs about family ties through reading, 3) Beliefs about reading habits, and 4) Beliefs about the benefits of reading. The conclusions highlight the participants consider that exciting and attractive readings provide them with entertainment, and the development of their cognitive skills. In addition, family beliefs are highlighted in the formation of reading habits. Likewise, students share the belief that reading, which begins with boredom, can become a rewarding habit. Finally, beliefs about the benefits that regular reading have on high school students were identified.

Keywords: Literacy, reading habits, reading comprehension.

Resumo

Ler é essencial para o desenvolvimento dos adolescentes, mas no México ainda há falta de interesse por essa atividade importante. As crenças sobre a leitura, construídas por experiências pessoais, influências familiares e contexto sociocultural, desempenham um papel crucial, promovendo ou dificultando a formação do hábito. O objetivo do presente estudo foi identificar crenças sobre leitura em estudantes do ensino médio. O método de pesquisa fundamentou-se na abordagem qualitativa fenomenológica, caracterizada pela exploração das experiências dos participantes em relação ao objeto de estudo. Foram realizadas entrevistas semiestruturadas com 12 estudantes do ensino médio do norte do México, reconhecidos como bons leitores. A análise das informações permitiu identificar quatro categorias principais: 1) Leituras preferidas, 2) Crenças sobre laços familiares por meio da leitura, 3) Crenças sobre hábitos de leitura e 4) Crenças sobre os benefícios da leitura. Os resultados destacam que os participantes consideram que leituras emocionantes e envolventes proporcionam entretenimento e o desenvolvimento de suas habilidades cognitivas. Além disso, destacam as crenças familiares na formação de hábitos de leitura. Os alunos também compartilham a crença de que a leitura, que começa com o tédio, pode se tornar um hábito gratificante. Por fim, foram identificadas as crenças sobre os benefícios da leitura regular em estudantes do ensino médio.

Palavras-chave: Alfabetização, hábitos de leitura, compreensão leitora.

Introduction

The first civilizations in the history of humanity transmitted their knowledge through oral tradition. Later, memories were recorded through the use of symbols and letters. Since then, writing and reading have been key educational processes for the maintenance and evolution of society (Cerrillo, 2006). Currently, reading is an educational experience between the reader and the author where new meanings are constructed. These meanings are produced from the reader's knowledge about the world or about a topic, so that the reader processes the information within a text to represent his or her reality (Serrano, 2000).

Hernández et al. (2017) point out that school is a setting in which writing and reading are presented as means of learning, as they are social practices that organize school culture. Because of this reading is one of the most important linguistic processes for

academic progress . However, in Mexico there is a student population that lacks interest in reading and those who do have interest face problems in understanding texts, especially when decoding the content of the information, whether explicit or implicit (Santos, 2022).

The results on reading proficiency in Mexico from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2022 revealed that three-quarters of 16-year-old students do not have the minimum level of expected proficiency (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2023). Students that don't develop this skill have difficulties to understand what they read and generate apathy towards this activity. In this way, they get involved in a negative cycle where they make efforts to read but become demotivated by not gaining comprehension, giving up reading at an early age (Ramírez, 2022).

For Vega (2022), students at the secondary level do not identify themselves as frequent readers and the time dedicated to reading is more out an imposition than habit. Rodríguez et al. (2018) consider that deficiencies in primary education, as well as poor educational practices at higher levels, generate emotional blockages that can impact on the rejection of reading throughout life.

Montes et al. (2021) recognize the urgency of creating affective and pedagogical relationships that stimulate reading in class since textbooks do not generate pedagogical dynamics by themselves in the school environment. In this regard, Santos (2022) points out that efforts should be directed towards developing cognitive and social skills through reading, which enables reading comprehension in young people.

The study of reading beliefs opens up possibilities for change and innovation in family and school settings (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Beliefs are subjective convictions that guide individuals in making decisions that drive or restrict their actions in everyday life. However, beliefs cannot be observed directly. In this sense, qualitative studies identify those beliefs that direct the personal and social development of students by analyzing the information collected in the field (Manig et al., 2022).

Diez (2017) considers that if someone has a certain belief, an expressive and symbolic action is carried out that affects the believer's reality. This effect on reality becomes stronger when individual beliefs are brought together in a cluster of agreements, thus forming shared beliefs (intersubjectivity). For Serrano (2000) shared beliefs about reading influence the interest, perceived need, and acquired ability to read in a population. In this regard Pedroza et al. (2016) pointed out the importance of developing reading comprehension under the new beliefs with which students conceive the world.

In accordance with the above, the research objective is aimed at identifying high school students' beliefs about reading. The study in this first approach limited its approach to students from two private schools located in the municipality of Cajeme in the state of Sonora, Mexico, projecting to replicate it in public schools in the future, as well as in different socioeconomic and geographical contexts. For the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP, 2021), reading is one of the best habits that can be acquired in childhood and youth since it opens the paths to the acquisition of knowledge. Due to this, it is justified to maintain field studies on reading practices and the analysis of their implications in the students' development.

The importance of reading in adolescents

During adolescence young people tend to lose interest in reading or opt for simple readings on different digital media. Although the basic education stage is the most appropriate time to develop the habit of reading in this educational field it is used purely as an instrumental tool.

In light of this Cerrillo (2006) points out the need to train a competent and critical reading student, capable of reading different materials and understanding the most relevant aspects of the texts. The aforementioned author also mentions the following benefits of reading: a) Cognitive, it develops comprehension skills, b) Educational, it improves attention and stimulates personal and social development, and c) Cultural, it improves communication in interpersonal relationships.

The reading habit can be fostered in the family environment. Osorio (2019) highlights the family as a micro-population in which the first training aimed at personal and social development takes place. Fuentes (2020) states that family relationships "play a fundamental role in the development of reading habits in students" (p.18); he also mentions the learning theories of Piaget and Vygotsky explain how the processes of knowledge acquisition through reading are subordinated by metacognition. Bedoya (2021) considers important to promote the joy and love of reading within the family as a key process of self-knowledge of identity, autonomy and happiness. Cerrillo (2006) states that reading is a means of knowledge about the concepts of the world and its possible realities since it connects the reader with historical or fictional characters and facts from different cultures. For these reasons, the family must promote this habit, aimed at the personal and social

development of childhood and youth. As a starting point it is useful to understand the different types of readers and their characteristics.

Reader typology

Studies on reading have developed a series of classifications of the different types of readers. For Cerrillo (2006) the categories of readers are divided into: a) Traditional reader, who identifies himself as the one who usually reads books, capable of reading competently either silently or aloud; and, b) New reader, fascinated by new technologies, who does not read printed books or any printed source of information. These assessments coincide with the study carried out by Santos et al. (2024), which classifies adolescents into paper or analog readers (frequent readers), and into digital readers (occasional readers).

For his part, Fuentes (2020) defines the following reader profiles: a) The profile of the little reader, which is characterized by little or no interaction with any reading material, with a poor interest in school subjects that leads him to read out of obligation from his parents or teachers; b) The profile of the frequent newspaper reader, which is characterized by the daily reading of press releases, with a moderate taste for reading books or school materials, enemy of comics and fictional stories; and, c) The profile of the frequent reader of diverse material, which is characterized by the reading of magazines, books and newspapers, motivated by the frequent reading of school materials to develop learning processes.

The listed typologies of readers are useful for identifying the characteristics of reading habits. However, Rivas (2023) points out the importance of developing a critical spirit in the reader, capable of understanding the structural characteristics of texts, placing reading in historical contexts, making informed value judgments, knowing themselves to be a product of various fields of knowledge, carrying out frequent, comparative and demanding reading and, no less important, making reading one of their forms of enjoyment and happiness. Based on the description of the typologies of readers, and their respective characteristics, it is intended to discuss whether student readers present coincidences or divergences according to these.

Methodology

This research is based on the phenomenological method which, according to Fuster (2019), focuses on understanding people's beliefs about the phenomena they experience. Under this approach the researcher must abandon his preconceptions about the object of study to analyze the information provided by the participants and discover the underlying intersubjectivity. This method asks about beliefs about the object of study in order to reach an understanding of shared beliefs about what was experienced (underlying intersubjectivity), which make it possible for the study participants to construct everyday reality.

Participants

The study was conducted in two private secondary schools in Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, Mexico. The homogeneous group technique was used to select the participants, which allows for an in-depth description of a subgroup. This technique consists of defining reference criteria based on some kind of common experience the participants share in relation to the thematic core that the research is aimed at (Quintana, 2006). The characteristics for selecting the group of participants were two criteria: the first was to be recognized by the teachers as a good reader and the second was to be recognized by oneself as a good reader. The teachers of these institutions referred to 20 students who stood out for their mastery in reading comprehension. After conducting the interviews it was identified that eight students did not recognize themselves as good readers. The final sample that met the selection criteria was made up of 12 first-grade secondary school students, equally divided between men and women, aged between 11 and 14 years. Once the participating sample was confirmed, information was collected through dialogue and recording of their testimonies regarding the object of study.

Information retrieval technique

The semi-structured interview was selected as the information retrieval technique, as it allows for exploring beliefs about the object of study from a naturalistic perspective (Folgueiras, 2016). The instrument used was an interview guide composed of questions designed to recover beliefs based on the participants' personal experience with reading (Table 1). These questions addressed the love of reading in personal settings, as well as in school and family interactions. This guide allowed us to approach the subjective reality of

the participants and to inquire about their preferences regarding literary genres, topics of interest and time spent reading outside the school environment.

Table 1. Semi-structured interview guide

Trigger questions
1. How important is reading for you?
2. What is your story with reading?
3. In your way of reading, how do you do it? What differences do you notice compared to other people?
4. What can you tell me about your reading tastes? And about the speed and frequency at which you read?
5. What are your reading habits?
6. What do you like to read about outside of class?
7. And inside the classroom?
8. At school, how difficult do you find the readings assigned to you? Why?
9. Who in your family reads as a hobby? How does your family influence your reading habits?
10. What differences do you notice between people who read as a habit and those who don't have that habit?

Source: Own elaboration

Once the interviews and their corresponding transcriptions were completed a process of analysis and interpretation was carried out to identify the most significant textual fragments, group the findings into categories and contribute to the discussion of the results.

Analysis technique

The analysis technique is based on three elements: a) The control of the information record proposed by Manig et al. (2017); b) The open coding of the grounded theory of Strauss and Corbin (2002); and c) The levels proposed by the interpretive phenomenological analysis (AFI) method of Duque and Aristizábal (2019). This process culminates in the theoretical categorization and description of the categories, as proposed by Ruiz (2012).

The information recording control procedure was carried out by assigning a code key to each participant for identification. This code key consists of the letter *P* (which stands for participant) followed by a consecutive number. In this way, the anonymity of the participants was ensured. Likewise, this code key was used in the open coding system (Manig et al., 2017).

Open coding, according to Strauss and Corbin (2002), corresponds to the first level of analysis and aims to identify important fragments in the recorded testimonies. This

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process was carried out on each literal transcription of the participants' interviews. In this way, open coding was carried out on the textual fragments that the participants associated with their beliefs (Table 2).

Table 2. Open coding

Code key	Meaning of the code
GL	Beliefs about what they like to read in class and outside of class
IL	Importance given to reading
OF	Family opinion on reading
DP	Notable differences between people who read as a hobby and those who don't
RE	Personal relationships outside the school
DP	Beliefs about reading before, during and after the pandemic

Source: Own elaboration

Once the beliefs were coded the second level of analysis was carried out based on the AFI (Duque & Aristizábal, 2019), which consisted of finding emerging themes that were terms or phrases that, when relating similar fragments, summarized and synthesized what was expressed by the participant. The third level of analysis was a categorization, which allowed constructing narratives based on the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the recovered information (Ruiz, 2012). That is, based on the coding and relationship between testimonies through interpretive analysis, theoretical categories that represent the shared beliefs of the participants around reading were generated.

These theoretical categories were named according to the intersubjectivity identified as a product of the second level of analysis. Intersubjectivity, according to Bonilla-Castro and Rodríguez (2005), is the result of the social construction of reality that represents the way in which it functions on a daily basis. At this stage, special care was taken to not substitute the beliefs of the participants for those of the research team, since if this were to happen the information would be biased and the research would not be reliable (Blumer, 1982).

The theoretical categorization process was carried out based on the major themes, the product of the AFI, in order to characterize and describe the resulting categories. The principle of intersubjectivity worked to describe these categories according to the students' perspective. In this way, the interpretation of the theoretical categories was considered as a moment of scientific experience, which allowed the generation of knowledge according to

the results obtained (Bentolila, 2011), and it was from the interpretation and description of such categories that the intersubjectivity of the participants was realized, in order to define the findings of the study and derive the final conclusions.

Results

The results obtained reflect the beliefs shared (intersubjectivity) by the participants about reading in the following categories: 1) Preferred readings, 2) Beliefs about family ties through reading, 3) Beliefs about reading habits, and 4) Beliefs about the benefits of reading. These are presented below based on the description of the coding tables obtained.

Category 1. Favorite readings

The first category shows the preferences regarding the content of the readings that the interviewees frequently read, in their variety of materials and literary genres. The participants expressed an interest in readings with varied themes, among which stand out plots with suspense (P6, P7, P11, P12), science fiction (P5, P8, P10, P12), history (P1, P2, P3, P8) or comics (P3, P7, P8). These literary genres are characterized by containing exciting and striking stories, some based on real events, which provide them with a source of entertainment and, according to the interviewees, a healthy alternative to escape the monotony of school readings, as can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Preferred readings

Codes
(P1) "History books…"
(P1) "I almost always like to read adventure books"
(P2) "History"
(P2) "My cousin likes romance as much as I do"
(P3) "History"
(P3) "Comics, based on movies"
(P3) "History, comics, based on movies…"
(P4) "Cartoons, football, recipe books"
(P4) "I like reading cartoons, about football… sports, footballers… food. How to cook"
(P5) "I like reading in Spanish class. The topics we cover are fun. They are important for learning about spelling."
(P5) "I really like science fiction books. And since it is an interesting topic, I read them"
(P6) "I like mystery and suspense"
(P7) "I really like action, so I don't know if I consider it good… I mean, comics. Suspense and stuff like that"
(P8) "At home I read a lot of books that I have on the bookshelf, science fiction, Marvel or others"
(P8) "In History, yes. In a unit in the quarter, they told us about Hitler and the Nazis, and that. And I bought a book about that and I really liked it"
(P9) "These school books kind of bore me, because they are not of interest to me"
(P9) "I like police suspense books, murders, kidnappings and so on"
(P10) "More science fiction. I remember that there were two that I read the most, that were my favorites, so to speak: they were Alice in Wonderland and My Good Friend, the BFG"
(P11) "Our teacher asked us to read a book called "Champion's Blood" and I really liked it. So I started looking for books and I liked reading"
(P11) "It could be a detective, horror or suspense novel"
(P12) "I like to read about science fiction, drama, suspense books"

Source: Own elaboration

Table 3 shows that participants' preferred readings include varied genres, ranging from science fiction to cooking, highlighting how these choices provide them with both entertainment and learning.

Category 2. Beliefs about family ties through reading

The second category reveals the participants' beliefs about family ties that encouraged their love of reading. The interviewees recognized their parents as the most important agents who have influenced them to acquire the habit of reading (P1, P9, P10, P11, P12). These and others pointed out that they not only provided them with books, but also learned from them the importance of reading for personal and academic development (P1, P6, P8, P10, P11, P12). Older siblings also played a relevant role, because they were role models (P5, P6, P7). Close relatives such as cousins or other family members, who

share a love of reading, have also had an influence (P1, P2, P4, P8). These family ties have been key in the construction of ideas and opinions around the practice and evaluation of reading, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Beliefs about family ties through reading

Codes
(P1) "(My parents) help me a lot"
(P1) "To my cousin… we can talk about the books we don't like"
(P2) "My cousin is a very important person"
(P4) "Sometimes my family likes to read"
(P5) "(My older sister) told me that even though I watched the movies, it was different (reading the book)"
(P6) "Especially my dad, he is the one who reads the most"
(P6) "In my room there is… A bookcase that has many books that belonged to my brother. But… he hardly ever comes here anymore, so I read them"
(P7) "My older sister… reads a lot"
(P8) "They brought me books and comics so I could read them and have reading comprehension, and read faster. And it helped me to do a task faster"
(P8) "Well, almost everyone in my family is a reader"
(P9) "The books that I read; I give them to her. The ones that she says 'They're really good' I give to my mom. She reads them and likes them too. We have that in common. And it's really cool"
(P10) "My parents told me that reading is a very important skill for life"
(P10) "And in the artistic field, (my parents) are the ones who inspired me to change… It's not about leaving the field of reading, but about taking a little time away from it and giving it to something I like, to my passions."
(P11) "My parents do buy me some books that I see in a supermarket we go to. I like to look at books and have a look at them. And if I'm interested in one, I ask them to buy it"
(P11) "(Parents) have told me that it is important, because it can help me a lot in the future"
(P11) "My parents do buy me some books that I see"
(P12) "It was my father who especially encouraged me the most because he was the one who instilled in me that habit of reading, and he told me that it was very good for my health and intelligence"

Source: Own elaboration

Table 4 reflects that the participants see their close relatives, whether parents, siblings, and other relatives of a similar age, as role models who influence their perception of reading activity, promoting its practice as a positive family activity.

Category 3. Beliefs about reading habits

Participants pointed out how they fostered their reading habit. Some shared they started reading when they had nothing to do or out of boredom (P3, P11). Others shared that this situation led them to discover its value, helping them to improve and develop this

habit (P6, P7, P8). Also, there were those who considered that reading favors comprehension (P10) and improved their way of speaking (P12). This can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Beliefs about reading habits

Codes
(P3) "Yes, I read when I had nothing to do"
(P6) "Since I started doing it before bed, I improved a little"
(P7) "Because before I used to confuse words and now I'm getting better"
(P8) "I feel like I have changed, and I have developed reading habits"
(P9) "Yes, I read. But I also liked other reading genres, like science fiction and so on"
(P10) "I have reading comprehension, according to my sixth-grade teachers, it is something I have done since I was little"
(P11) "I was very bored, I didn't have many things to do"
(P12) "I have seen that some people change after reading. It shows in their actions, in their way of speaking. Because they take what is in the book and put it into practice"

Source: Own elaboration

Table 5 shows that, based on the testimonies of the participants, they are aware of the changes that the habit of reading implies and the differences from their state prior to their frequent practice, which implies a process of self-perception and formation of one's own identity.

Category 4. Beliefs about the benefits of reading

Participants stated that reading has brought them several benefits, pointing out that it fosters their creativity, the learning of new meanings, improves vocabulary, relaxes them, makes schoolwork easier and develops their intelligence (P1, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10, P12). They also associate the practice of reading with an improvement in the ability to read, both in terms of speed and comprehension (P3, P5, P6). Likewise, it helps in the completion of tasks, in the understanding of specific topics, in self-directed learning and in the acquisition of knowledge on various topics (P6, P8, P10, P11, P12). All of the above, in their opinion, makes them better people (P8, P11, P12). As shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Beliefs about the benefits of reading

Codes
(P1) "I manage to get inspired…I become more creative and have ideas…"
(P3) "Like when they make me read, I read better or something like that"
(P4) "When I am angry, I read something to calm me down…"
(P5) "I learn new meanings. I learn to use words I didn't know"
(P5) "I imagine that those who tend to read more often have a faster reading speed"
(P6) "It helps me relax"
(P6) "Those who do read, find it a little easier to read aloud and do their work faster"
(P8) "Because it helps me a lot, to do homework, to know about a specific topic to know more about the subject"
(P9) "I have a broader vocabulary than my classmates…I use words that I think everyone uses, but it turns out they don't understand"
(P10) "I feel like I transform the words in the book into whatever the author wants to convey"
(P11) "I always like to be learning something new every day"
(P11) "For those of us who do like to read, it is easier to finish all the activities that the teacher gives us"
(P12) "I like to read for about 20 or 30 minutes, something short but entertaining. It helps me with my knowledge"
(P12) "For me it is important, because it is a method... not only for fun, but for teaching. It teaches you many things, it entertains you. It is wonderful"
(P12) "I feel like they can improve their writing, their text, their intelligence, the way they speak. Those things. It's going to help them become better people"

Source: Own elaboration

Table 6 shares the fragments of the testimonies in which the participants have perceived the benefits of practicing reading, mentioning autonomous learning, improving their comprehension and expanding their vocabulary, relaxing in moments of great emotion and being a source of creativity.

Discussion

In this section, the results obtained are interpreted in light of the consulted literature, exploring the similarities and contrasts based on the beliefs about adolescent reading.

The first category indicated the reading preferences of the participants. This allowed us to identify their beliefs about the texts that interest them, revealing a wide variety of literary genres. For Rivas (2023), being a frequent reader makes reading a form of joy and happiness. In this sense, it is important to note how the reading preferences of the participants intertwine entertainment and learning. The above is compatible with the profile of a frequent reader of diverse material pointed out by Fuentes (2020), who mentioned that the variety of readings is a characteristic of those who practice this habit. Likewise, Santos et al. (2024) pointed out the profile of the paper reader refers to a frequent reader. These

similarities with the authors confirm the importance of initially fostering a taste for reading through the diversity of literary genres complementary to those conferred by the school.

However, for Lluch and Zayas (2015), knowing how to read implies identifying the specific conditions of each genre. Therefore, from an educational point of view, reading different literary genres does not necessarily allow the student to understand the statements of a text, making it essential to analyze the diversity of situations and its purposes. Similarly, Donoso et al. (2020) consider the reading activity should involve metacognition, which allows the student to understand their reading performance, as well as the learning acquired. In this sense, promoting reading not only refers to the taste for different literary genres, but also entails readers learn to set goals according to each one and reflect on how to apply what they have learned in the different situations of their school and social life.

According to the second category, participants recognized their parents as the most important socializing agents in the reading culture by providing them with books and setting an example. They also recognized their older sisters/brothers as role models and close relatives (cousins) as a source of socialization in reading. This agrees with Malco and Sevilla (2024), who stated that the role of the family is crucial for the development of reading skills in high school students. Likewise, Fuentes (2020) pointed out family relationships are essential for the development of the reading habit in students. For Bedoya (2021) the family must promote the taste and love for reading as a key process of self-knowledge, autonomy, and happiness. This suggests that reading begins and is reinforced in the family environment, according to the authors consulted. This social bond makes it possible for reading habits and literary tastes to be inherited, which strengthens beliefs about the value of reading.

The limitations in this category lie in understanding how social ties contribute to forming the extrinsic motivations that, according to Pizzi & Rius-Ulldemolins (2024), encourage and normalize reading as a regular activity. These authors highlight the significant influence of family ties and friendships with the educational environment and the reading habit. The factors that stand out are receiving greater incentives to read during the formative stage, talking about reading with friends, and establishing social relationships mediated by the exchange or gift of books and/or social activities related to reading. Likewise, Paucar et al. (2024) consider that the family must generate a social environment with the necessary texts to induce active and enthusiastic reading, as the axis and backbone that achieves the habit of reading.

Another limitation of the results obtained is the lack of description of the problems associated with promoting the reading habit in the family. According to Pérez-López and Gómez (2011) these problems are caused by parents' fatigue after work, excessive use of technology in the family environment (television, cell phones, video games, social networks) and students' stress due to conflicts of domestic violence. Likewise, Campos and Tabernero (2024) mentioned that low economic income and the low educational level of parents are associated with family tensions. According to González and Cárdenas (2020) these are not only associated with their negative influence on the development of the reading habit, but also with poor academic performance.

The third category defined the participants' beliefs about the reading habit. According to them, reading went from being a boring and unappreciated activity to becoming a hobby that improves social communication. This coincides with Santos (2022), who recognizes that reading improves the development of language skills, especially in young people. Thus, as participants explore the different genres and topics that reading offers, their habits are consolidated and thus they improve social communication through this practice in their lives.

The beliefs shared by participants from two private schools located in a municipality are insufficient to generalize about reading habits; they only represent the understanding of a particular educational reality. For Romero-Oliva et al. (2020) the study of reading is a complex phenomenon due to the variety of existing schools and educational styles, which generate a lack of consensus in the teaching of linguistic competence, giving rise to cases in which texts are offered that do not fit the needs and tastes of the reader, which prevent reading from being seen as a rewarding activity that generates multiple benefits; which results being seen more as a tedious burden of school work. Even when seeking to generate positive experiences allocating a space for independent reading within school hours (Arrabal & Hoz, 2021), young people despise such reading activities when they are imposed on them (Vega, 2022). Therefore, reading research involves continuing its study in different social and geographical contexts until obtaining a holistic view of this relevant topic.

The fourth category included the participants' beliefs about the benefits of reading. They pointed out how reading makes them better people, developing creativity, vocabulary, intelligence, and how this relaxes them and makes it easier for them to complete school tasks. In this regard, Pedroza et al. (2016) highlighted the importance of reading for the development of students' cognitive skills. For their part, Aguilar et al. (2024) stated that

reading benefits students' well-being, stimulates mental health, and fosters knowledge. Therefore, reading is not only a source of entertainment but also of well-being and knowledge. Thus, reading is presented as an integral tool for the intellectual, emotional, and social development of adolescents.

The limitation lies in the fact that these results were constructed from the beliefs of students who are considered good readers by their teachers and by themselves. The results do not include adolescents who do not seek to read or have not developed a reading habit due to some difficulty (psychological, social or family). For Almeida (2022) these students not only present the absence of the benefits of reading, but also a deterioration in language and a delay in metacognition expected at their age. For Gago (2021), these characteristics prevent them from inferring, reflecting and interacting with texts as well as communicating with young readers. These communicative deficiencies, from the psycholinguistic and sociocultural perspective, expose the need to intervene to improve them due to the risk of not developing socially effectively (Gutiérrez & Belén, 2020). In this regard young people, by not developing the habit of reading, limit their development in several areas of their life. Therefore, reading competence is related not only to academic performance and cognitive development, but also to emotional intelligence, perception of the world, social communication and personality development.

Conclusions

The research objective was aimed at identifying high school students' beliefs about reading. The findings indicate how participants are inclined to read exciting and engaging books, which provide them with entertainment, and how in this practice they consider that they develop cognitive skills, which have a favorable impact on their school activities. These perceptions suggest that diversity in the range of texts can foster interest in reading in young people. However, this does not necessarily allow the student to acquire a good reading habit, characterized by the critical analysis of literary genres, the development of metacognitive processes and the practical application of learning. Therefore, it is necessary to foster a taste for reading and, at the same time, a critical formation as a reader.

Now, beliefs about family ties point out how family influence is key to forming the habit of reading. Accordingly, the importance of involving families in reading promotion strategies is highlighted, either through book exchanges or socializing by discussing readings. However, it should be noted schools' efforts to encourage reading may not be well

received by students; either due to the lack of diversity in class dynamics or displeasure at the imposition of certain readings, instead of encouraging reading as an autonomous activity. On the other hand, there are negative aspects in families that can prevent the habit of reading, such as various family problems or the intensive use of entertainment technology, which are generators of distractions and tensions with the potential to prevent the development of the reading habit.

Another important finding refers to the change in the assessment of reading, which indicates how participants started reading out of boredom, and how with practice they came to turn it into a rewarding hobby. In this sense, it is concluded the habit of reading improves academic skills, in addition to favoring their personal development and social communication. Therefore, it is recommended, in accordance with the beliefs of the students, to encourage reading as an attractive, fun and independent activity in the family and at school to enable this habit.

Future lines of research

Based on the findings the following lines of research are suggested. First, the analysis of the reading strategies of students recognized as good readers, in order to provide alternative solutions to the functional illiteracy that exists in secondary education. Second, explore the impact of digital technology on reading habits. Third, test the effectiveness of proposals aimed at promoting reading in various academic environments. Fourth, replicate the study in public schools, as well as in different socioeconomic and geographic contexts. And fifth, expand the study of beliefs about reading in teachers and family members identified as significant, until achieving a triangulation based on the different perspectives of the actors involved according to the perspectives obtained from the participating students.

Gratitude

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