UNLOCKING LEARNING: A STUDY OF READING HABITS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHINESE THEMED BOOKS IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Reading have always been a very important activity, which further paves the way for excellence in life both academically and non-academically. It is a fundamental skill that unlocks learning and provides individual's benefits. Reading habit and attitude become an interest topic to discuss because it can be the key success in learning. This study aimed to examine the reading habits and attitudes of big city residents in Pakistan towards books with Chinese themes, available in Chinese, English, or Urdu language. Using a survey design and simple random sampling, data was collected from 300 respondents through a pre-tested questionnaire based on Smith's (1991) Adult Survey of Reading Attitude. The study analyzed data from 11 online bookstores and publishers in Pakistan used to provide recent insights. We used two keywords (China, Chinese: چائنا ,چائنیز) to collect data from online bookstores. The results of the study, with a reliability test score of 0.79, showed that the participants had a positive attitude towards reading Chinese themed books. The findings of this study can inform the development of educational programs to enhance reading skills and cultural understanding for users of Chinese-themed books in Pakistan.

Keywords: Reading Habits, Reading Attitude, Online Reading, Chinese Books Reading

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is an essential component of the human experience, playing a critical role in shaping an individual's understanding of the world and their place within it. According to van Manen (2016), the act of reading begins from the moment a human being is present, and it continues throughout their lifetime. The process of reading involves giving meaning to written symbols, which transforms abstract objects and situations into tangible realities (Perfetti 2003). Reading opens the door to a world of knowledge, thoughts, feelings, dreams, and much more, making these things tangible and real (Seker 2016; Visser et al. 2005). It enables individuals to connect with others and the world around them by sharing ideas, emotions, and experiences. By expanding an individual's understanding of the world and their place within it, reading has the power to shape a person's life and enrich their experiences.

Reading is a complex and multifaceted process that encompasses more than just deciphering written characters on a page. According to Goodman & Goodman (2014), a wide range of activities, including interpreting animal traces in the forest by a zoologist, understanding the complex patterns of a woven garment by a weaver, and comprehending multiple notes combined on a page by an artist, can all be considered forms of reading. Highlight that the common thread among these different types of

reading is the process of decoding and making meaning from various signals. (Schirrmeister et al. 2017) highlight that the common thread among these different types of reading is the process of decoding and making meaning from various signals. Lesjak (2013) refers to this wide range of reading as one of the most serious activities in the world and emphasizes its importance, especially when considered in a philosophical context (Coward 2016). Chen et al. (2018) view reading as a collection of skills, not just one single ability, while Pulvermüller (2013) explains that individual symbols are interpreted and understood through the senses in the brain. Alvermann et al. (2018) take a broader perspective, defining reading as a dynamic process that requires active and effective communication between the writer and reader to establish meaning.

Therefore, it can be seen that reading is not just a simple act of decoding written characters, but a complex process that encompasses a range of activities and requires a deep understanding of the meaning behind various signals.

Reading is a crucial tool for gaining information and developing meaning through the decoding of symbols in text and context (Aslam, Qutab & Ali 2022; Hudson et al. 2008). It contributes to the growth of one's personality and cognitive abilities(Tynjälä et al. 2016) and reflects an individual's reading preferences and tastes (Baba & Rostam Affendi 2020; Asif & Yang 2021). Good reading habits, including pleasure reading, informational reading, and knowledge-seeking, can be formed from a young age (Nkomo 2022; Johnsson-Smaragdi & Jönsson 2006). However, a study by Chua (2008) found that the number of students who spend over an hour reading books for leisure after school has declined. Attitude plays a significant role in determining reading behavior and can be defined as a positive feeling towards books (Hsiao & Chen 2017; Hsiao 2013). The growth of language and socio-cultural advancement greatly impacts the development of reading skills, as noted by (Daniels 2015). Pakistan and China have recognized the importance of enhancing people-to-people cooperation to strengthen their relationship. China has expressed gratitude for Pakistan's efforts to promote the Chinese language and establish Confucius Institutes in the country (Hussain, Hussain & Qambari 2020). Both nations aim to familiarize Pakistanis with Chinese culture and traditions through a multi-faceted approach(Shafqat & Marinova 2022). This is being achieved by opening Confucius Institutes in major Pakistani cities, inviting numerous Pakistani students to study in China, and offering Mandarin language courses in Pakistani universities and private language schools (Abb 2022).

This research aims to investigate the reading habits and attitudes of Pakistani users towards Chinese books in various languages such as English, Chinese, and Urdu. While previous studies have explored reading habits and attitudes, none have specifically focused on Chinese books in Pakistan. Combining language and cultural elements is a crucial aspect of achieving a comprehensive and well-rounded reading experience. However, there are two major challenges that Pakistani readers face when it comes to Chinese books. One of the main challenges is the lack of proficiency in the Chinese language, making it difficult for them to fully understand and appreciate the

books. The other challenge is the cultural differences that exist between the two nations, which can affect the reader's interpretation and enjoyment of the material. These challenges highlight the need for further research in this area to better understand the reading habits and attitudes of Pakistani users towards Chinese books.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The significance of reading

The history of reading dates back to the invention of script in the 4th millennium BC, and it has since been recognized as a valuable tool for acquiring new information and expanding knowledge (Richelle 2016). It is a fundamental skill that unlocks the door to learning, knowledge, and enjoyment. Engaging in leisure reading has been shown to significantly enhance language competencies (Gabrieli 2016; Sesma et al. 2009). Despite its benefits, reading remains one of the easiest language skills to study but hardest habits to develop (Samsuddin et al. 2019). The challenge of building a reading habit highlights the need for continuous encouragement and support, especially in developing a love for reading in individuals of all ages. With the right resources and guidance, reading can be transformed from a chore into a lifelong passion that continues to provide personal growth and intellectual stimulation.

Reading serves as a powerful tool for acquiring knowledge and ideas that cannot be conveyed through oral means. It allows individuals to broaden their mental horizons and expand their experiences (Zugarramurdi et al. 2022). It plays a crucial role in shaping both intellectual and emotional growth, and is a fundamental aspect of the learning process. Throughout history, the importance of reading has continued to grow, becoming a crucial aspect of human functioning and the regulation of society (Baba & Rostam Affendi 2020; King et al. 2003). The explosion of knowledge and advancements in communication technology have made reading and its widespread distribution indispensable. The significant progress in science and technology has also brought about significant improvements in printing technology (Nguyen et al. 2022). The significance of reading habits and attitudes has been the subject of research in Asia, with studies focusing on this issue having been conducted in various countries (Mansor et al. 2013; Huang 2015; Ramzan, Perveen & Altaf 2022). Ahmad, Dar & Lone (2019) specifically studied the reading habits and attitudes of students in Malaysia, examining factors such as gender, academic program, and the types of reading materials and resources used. The examination of users' attitudes and habits towards reading is important as it has a direct impact on successful learning outcomes.

Understanding the attitudes and habits that shape an individual's relationship with reading can help in fostering a love for reading and in promoting reading as an essential life skill. By analyzing the attitudes and habits that promote or hinder reading, researchers can provide insights into how to improve the reading culture and encourage a lifelong love of reading.

2.2 Reading Habits & Attitude

Knowledge is a powerful asset, and it is acquired and increased through the development of good reading habits. Regular reading can enhance an individual's personality and mental capacity. Reading habits are determined by the frequency, quantity, and type of material that is read(Yuliani & Barokah 2017). It is a pattern of behavior that involves consistent and continuous reading. Veissière et al. (2020) found that reading habits are influenced by various factors such as gender, age, educational background, academic performance, and professional growth. Wu & Chen (2011) defined reading habits as a behavior that expresses an individual's preference for reading certain types and genres of material. Reading habits are best formed at a young age but can last a lifetime once established (Alvermann et al. 2018). Fromm (2020) stated that through reading, individuals are able to critically assess and validate their own ideas and beliefs about right and wrong in society. Kollmuss & Agyeman (2002) argued that reading habits are not only developed within an individual but are also shaped by external factors such as environment, education, social background, and access to reading materials and facilities. Reading attitudes refer to the emotions and beliefs a person holds towards reading, which can affect their approach towards reading activities (Kim 2016). The willingness to participate in reading (Cooter & Alexander 1984) and the perspective towards reading activities, along with related feelings and convictions (Petit, Li & Ali 2021), are part of these attitudes. A positive reading attitude is fostered by factors such as a belief in the importance of reading, enjoyment of reading, high self-esteem as a reader, and a verbally stimulating home environment (Boerma, Mol & Jolles 2016) A positive reading attitude can result in increased reading, diverse reading choices, and improved academic performance (Bastug 2014). Reading attitudes can be positive or negative and are shaped by past reading experiences (Bohn-Gettler & McCrudden 2022).

2.3 Reading Habits as an Integral Part of the Academics and non-Academics

Reading habits play a critical role in the development of an individual's character, both in academic and non-academic areas. While the reasons for reading may differ, such as reading for pleasure or for academic success, both can have a profound impact on a person's life (Simanjuntak, Nawangsari & Ardi 2022). The importance of reading habits is highlighted in numerous studies conducted by experts in the field. For instance, Burgess et al. (2007) found that reading for pleasure can help improve language skills unconsciously. Another study by Othman et al. (2021) focused on the impact of reading habits on reading skills, but it is worth noting that this is just one aspect of the many benefits of reading. Reading can broaden one's horizons and enhance their experiences, as demonstrated in a study by (Alsaeedi et al. 2021). In addition, Dali & McNiff (2020) found that both academic and non-academic readings can improve vocabulary retention, oral skills, and general knowledge. Furthermore, reading regularly can help an individual become a more proficient speaker and a more successful learner. It is a well-established fact that reading is an essential activity for personal growth and

development. By incorporating regular reading into their daily routine, individuals can reap the many benefits that come with this habit.

2.4 Online Reading

The world has seen a significant shift in the way people read books. With the advent of technology and the internet, people, regardless of their gender or age, are increasingly turning to online reading. Online reading is defined as accessing information through the internet and its connectivity. This concept, which was originally limited to the realm of information technology, has now expanded to encompass human interaction and communication. In this fast-paced digital era, it is estimated that readers will increasingly opt for screen-based reading to keep pace with the knowledge-rich environment. (Loh, Sun & Majid 2020; Merisuo-Storm 2006). Research supports this trend, with studies showing that people tend to read more when they have access to text on mobile devices. A comprehensive survey conducted by UNESCO in developing countries such as Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Zimbabwe found that people not only read more when they have access to books on their mobile devices, but they also enjoy reading more and commonly read books and stories to children from these devices. These findings demonstrate the significance of online reading and its impact on the world of literature and knowledge dissemination (Jahanbakht et al. 2021; Ally, Grimus & Ebner 2014).

The advancement of electronic book (e-book) technology has significantly altered the way people read. With the introduction of e-reader devices such as Amazon Kindle, Noble Nook, iPad, and tablet PC, traditional printed books are being replaced by digital ones. The popularity of e-books has been on the rise, particularly among young people. In 2013, a significant number of individuals under the age of 30 had read at least one e-book, with 47% of readers between 18 and 29 years old reporting that they had read an e-book, compared to 31% in 2012 and 25% in 2011 (Hsiao & Chen 2017). To meet the demands of consumers and increase profits, publishing companies have adopted an access-based business model by offering e-book subscription services. These services allow users to rent an unlimited number of e-books for a monthly fee, reducing the financial burden of purchasing individual books. The convenience of these subscription services has made them increasingly popular among readers. In conclusion, the development of e-book technology has not only changed people's reading habits and behaviors but also opened up new avenues for publishing companies to reach a wider audience (Wang, Ko & Wang 2022).

3. CONTEXT OF PAKISTAN

This study aims to examine the reading habits and attitudes towards Chinese books among the citizens of Pakistan. Despite the increasing interest in Chinese language and culture, there is a significant challenge for readers in Pakistan to comprehend Chinese books due to the language and cultural barriers. While previous studies have explored the importance of learning Chinese language and culture in the context of job

opportunities under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) program, none have specifically focused on the reading habits and attitudes towards Chinese books. This study fills this gap by being the first to investigate this issue (Asif et al. 2019;Hussain & Aziz 2020;Asif et al. 2021;Mukhtar et al. 2022). Additionally, the study recognizes the two main obstacles faced by Chinese expatriates in their work environment in Pakistan, namely, language and cultural differences. These barriers hinder their ability to effectively communicate and integrate into their new surroundings. By examining the reading habits and attitudes towards Chinese books, this study provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by Chinese expatriates in Pakistan and the potential benefits of promoting Chinese language and culture in the country (Huang et al. 2020).

In the beginning, there was a lack of motivation among the citizens of Pakistan to learn the Chinese language. However, the scenario has changed dramatically in recent times, with an increasing number of Pakistanis showing interest in learning Chinese in the hope of securing a job in one of the multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects (Duan et al. 2022). This growing demand for knowledge about China has resulted in a rise in private institutions offering Chinese language courses. The study aims to bridge the communication gap between China and Pakistan and create job opportunities for the citizens of Pakistan. The increased proficiency in the Chinese language will enable them to work as interpreters and translators in various China-Pakistan joint projects, and also provide students with the opportunity to study in China (Khan, Zaki & Memon 2023). This will not only benefit the individuals but also enhance the relationship between China and Pakistan by promoting mutual understanding and cooperation. In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of learning the Chinese language and its potential impact on the economic and cultural exchange between the two countries (Ullah et al. 2021).

The promotion of the Chinese language in Pakistan is a positive step forward in terms of enhancing the country's employment opportunities and promoting the reading of Chinese books. This initiative provides the people of Pakistan with the chance to broaden their knowledge and experience of the Chinese culture. It is widely known that learning a new language has the ability to expand one's worldview, and this holds true for the Chinese language as well (Kim 2020). To promote Chinese book reading, efforts should be made to create a conducive environment, starting from homes and libraries (Guo et al. 2021). This would mean removing any barriers that may discourage people from picking up Chinese books and embracing the language. The initiative to promote Chinese book reading aligns with the National Reading Movement in Singapore, which aims to encourage more citizens to develop a reading habit. This movement is based on the understanding that reading is essential for self-directed, lifelong learning. By promoting Chinese book reading in Pakistan, not only will people have access to a wealth of knowledge, but they will also be able to enhance their reading skills, which will benefit them in the long run (Hale et al. 2017). Overall, the promotion of the Chinese language in Pakistan has the potential to bring about numerous benefits for the people, and it should be encouraged and supported to the fullest extent.

3.1 Availability of Chinese literature texts in libraries and bookshops

The library serves as a leading source for the generation and dissemination of knowledge. In recent years, Chinese academic libraries have taken an active role in organizing international conferences to support open access strategies and policies (Patwardhan et al. 2005; Sheikh 2020). Libraries and Publications Exchange programs are bridging the gap between communities across the globe. China's economic reform in 1979 marked a significant step forward in the modernization of Chinese academic libraries, resulting in improvements in space, collections, and technology (Yun 2020). China boasts a world-class library system and is becoming a hub for first-hand knowledge (Liu et al. 2020). The National Library of China, founded in 1909 in Beijing, is one of the largest in China, Asia, and the world, (Wang et al. 2020), holding the largest collection of Chinese literature and historical documents (Vierthaler 2020). With over 32 million volumes of books, it is a major resource for research and learning (Coyle 2006; Ullah et al. 2022). Aman et al. (2022) suggested to further enhance library services, a new association under the China-Pakistan Library Association may be established with representatives from both countries working together to share resources and cooperate in providing better library services.

A recent survey of students at a school in Singapore has shed light on the reading habits of the youth in the country. The results of the survey showed that the majority of children in the school prefer Chinese books for leisure reading. This preference is reflected in the source of the books, with 34% of the students reporting that they get their books from public libraries, 32% from bookstores, and 25% from their school library. The increased availability of public libraries and international bookstores, such as Borders and Kinokuniya, is a likely factor contributing to this trend. Public libraries have become increasingly popular in Singapore, providing an accessible and convenient source of books for students. International bookstores, like Borders and Kinokuniya, also offer a diverse range of books, including Chinese books, attracting students who want to broaden their reading material. However, the survey results are concerning in one aspect. Only 25% of students surveyed reported borrowing books from their school library. This suggests that there is a significant proportion of students who are not utilizing the resources available to them in their own school. The school library is an important resource that provides students with access to books and educational materials. Thus, it is crucial to encourage students to make use of this resource, so they can continue to develop their reading skills and knowledge (Le et al. 2019;Sun, Loh & Nie 2021).

In conclusion, the survey conducted in a school in Singapore highlights the reading habits of children in the country, and the sources of the books they read. While the rise in public libraries and international bookstores has influenced this trend, it is concerning that only a small proportion of students are utilizing the resources available in their own school library. English literature is widely available in translation today, and two of the primary sources for these translated works are the Russian and Chinese Foreign

Language Publishing Houses. These publishing houses have a significant impact on the availability of translated English literature in different parts of the world, particularly in countries where English is not the native language. They produce a vast array of books at very low prices, catering to a wide audience. These books are available in either Urdu or English, depending on the target audience and market demand. These publishing houses play an important role in promoting English literature to a global audience and making it accessible to those who might not otherwise have access to it. By doing so, they are contributing to the spread of knowledge and culture, and fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of English literature. (Bernhardt 2010; Zecchini 2020). The China Pakistan Economic Corridor should prioritize supporting the educational advancement of Pakistan. This includes providing opportunities for libraries and library staff to collaborate and serve both nations. Chinese librarians should be invited to visit Pakistan to observe library conditions, and Pakistani librarians should have the opportunity to attend short programs in China. CPEC can facilitate resource sharing and development between the two countries, connecting the people of China and Pakistan and promoting understanding of each other's cultures, traditions, norms, and values. Additionally, access to Chinese books in libraries and bookstores in Pakistan should be increased through the availability of literature and books (Tung & Verbeke 2010;Aman et al. 2022).

Newspapers play a crucial role in keeping the public informed about current events. The emergence of Chinese-language print media in Pakistan is a recent trend, exemplified by the launch of the weekly newspaper "Huashang" in 2017 in Islamabad. Starting with a circulation of 5000 copies, the newspaper quickly grew to reach 60,000 readers by its 21st edition (Asif et al. 2021). Distributed in major cities and at CPEC project sites across Pakistan, "Huashang" promotes business and commercial cooperation between China and Pakistan and presents a positive view of society and the country. According to local reports, the Pakistani audience has positively received the Chinese drama series "The Legend of Fuyao," especially young women who appreciate the lead character's experiences of hardships and adventures in foreign lands (Aman et al. 2022).

A study conducted by Shen (2006) in Taiwan revealed that magazines and newspapers were the most popular reading materials for both entertainment and information gathering. The study found that over 70% of undergraduate students preferred reading magazines and newspapers over novels, with half of them regularly reading sports and entertainment news. These findings highlight the important role that print media plays in providing both leisure and educational opportunities for young adults in Taiwan. The preference for magazines and newspapers as reading materials reflects the need for quick, easily accessible sources of information and entertainment. The study provides insight into the reading habits of young adults in Taiwan and suggests that print media continues to play a significant role in their daily lives. The results also suggest that there is a strong market for sports and entertainment news, which can be beneficial for publishers looking to target this demographic (Ko et al. 2015). It is worth noting that

while this study was conducted in Taiwan, similar trends may be seen in other regions as well. Further research could explore whether these findings hold true in other countries, and whether the popularity of print media has changed with the increasing availability of digital media.

China has made a significant impact on Pakistan's digital infrastructure, greatly benefiting its media industry. The sophisticated digital infrastructure has been developed with Chinese assistance and includes Chinese search engines for those who prefer to read in Chinese (Surahio et al. 2022). The rise of digital media has been a game-changer for reading, with a shift towards electronic forms of materials such as e-books, e-journals, and online databases (Wang & Bai 2016; Samsuddin et al. 2019). The extensive use of the internet and various forms of digital reading materials, including hypertext and hypermedia resources, has changed the way people consume information and entertainment (Carr 2015; Safdar, Javed & Amin 2020). Reading styles have evolved, and people are now more likely to read electronic documents instead of physical ones. The growth of electronic media as a source of information and entertainment has been significant (Bilal et al. 2020). The digital content has broken down physical barriers, allowing access to information and entertainment from homes, libraries, and offices (López-Escribano, Valverde-Montesino & García-Ortega 2021).

While this shift in reading habits has been observed globally, some studies suggest that students in Malaysia may find reading on electronic media more engaging than traditional print media. Further research could examine whether this trend holds true in other regions. Regardless, it is clear that digital media is here to stay and has had a profound impact on the way we consume and access information.

3.2 Reading Habits and Attitudes of Chinese e-book

An e-book is a digital format book that includes text, graphics, video, sound, and/or animation, and is designed to be displayed on a computer screen or handheld device (Shadiev & Yang 2020). The Chinese e-book market is experiencing rapid growth and has a growing number of readers (Lin et al. 2016). This study focuses on Chinese e-book subscription services and specifically targets users of MagV, one of the most popular Chinese e-book services in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China (Hsiao & Chen 2017), MagV was chosen as the target service as it has received limited attention in past studies (Liao & Liu 2022). Although the use of e-books is increasing, print books remain a staple in American reading habits. According to the Pew Research Center's Internet Project, most e-book readers also read print books, with only 4% identifying as "e-book only" readers. The average American adult reads just five books per year (Sung & Chiu 2022). Meanwhile, people in China read an average of eight books a year, according to 2015 statistics (Hsiao & Chen 2017). Given these reading habits, the cost of e-book subscription services may not be justified. Past studies have used habit as a factor to explain information technology usage (Stejskal, Hajek & Prokop 2021), and this concept of "e-reading habit" is likely to play a role in influencing users' intentions to use digital products or services, including e-book services. From the perspective of

publishers, understanding how this habit affects users' willingness to pay for e-book subscriptions merits further examination (Mushtaq, Soroya & Mahmood 2021).

The affordability of a weekly subscription fee of USD 0.99 for Chinese readers in Taiwan makes e-book services an attractive option. This fee is lower than the cost of purchasing physical magazines, and this cost-effectiveness is especially appealing to budget-conscious consumers. The growing concern for the environment is also contributing to the popularity of e-book services. With e-books being digital products, they have a smaller carbon footprint compared to traditional print books, and this environmental awareness is making consumers more willing to subscribe to e-book services (Lv, Shi & Gursoy 2022). In addition, the high reading frequency of Taiwanese people is a potential factor in their willingness to subscribe to e-book services. Research shows that Taiwanese people read more books per year compared to Americans, with an average of over five books. This higher reading frequency could translate into a greater appreciation for e-book services and a more positive attitude towards e-book subscription services. In conclusion, a combination of factors, such as affordability, environmental concerns, and high reading frequency, are contributing to the growing popularity of e-book services among Chinese readers in Taiwan. (Hidayat-ur-Rehman et al. 2020).

3.3 Reading in Print and on E-reader

In the early 2010s, there was a shift from traditional print media to e-reading due to the increased impact of digital connectivity on daily activities such as work communication, shopping, and leisure (Stein et al. 2019). With advancements in technology and the production of smartphones, daily activities are becoming more connected to mobile devices. Although reading on an e-reader and reading printed books provide different experiences (Sage et al. 2020), mobile phones and cellular networks are bridging the gap for millions of people who previously lacked access to books (Renzo et al. 2019). A UK survey showed that people are now more likely to prefer reading on a computer screen than a printed book or magazine. The study also revealed that almost a third of young people read fiction on online devices, in addition to social networking and browsing websites (Twenge, Martin & Spitzberg 2019).

The decision to read either in physical printed book form or on an e-reader is ultimately up to the reader. Some avid readers opt for technology due to its convenience, while others prefer printed books as they enjoy the tactile experience and the ability to read comfortably anywhere (Baron, Calixte & Havewala 2017). Physical books are easy on the eyes as they do not have a backlight, and they don't require batteries or electronic devices. Additionally, they are always readily available for reading without a warranty period. People often use printed books for in-depth reading (Sage et al. 2020; Liu 2022). Technological advancements have greatly impacted the way we live, creating a divide between developed and underdeveloped countries. Students in developed countries have access to technology-based learning, while those in underdeveloped countries rely on worn printed textbooks (Tripathi & Bajpai 2021).

The National Book Foundation in Pakistan was established with the goal of producing affordable textbooks for students. However, these locally produced books are not always cheaper than the least expensive imported books. In recent years, there has been an increase in the availability of very cheap Russian and Chinese books in English (Ali 2010; Lam 2002). This study aims to promote the reading of Chinese books and to raise awareness, particularly in Pakistan, about China's culture and language. The objective is to enhance the knowledge and understanding of China and to improve the reading habits and attitudes towards Chinese books. By encouraging people to read more Chinese books, this study seeks to foster a deeper appreciation and understanding of Chinese culture and language.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Population and Sample

Our study population consisted of 350 individuals from the major cities of Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore in Pakistan. Out of the 350 questionnaires distributed, we received 300 valid responses. We selected 11 online bookstores and publishers from Pakistan and utilized the keywords "China" and "Chinese" in both English and Urdu (چائنا, چائنذیز) to gather data. Our aim was to gather current data from all available sources to bolster our argument.

4.2 Instrument Development

The main data retrieval tool in this study was the Adult Survey of Reading Attitude (ASRA) questionnaire. Developed by Smith in 1990, ASRA was adapted from a questionnaire created by Wallbrown, Brown, and Engin in 1977. The questionnaire was utilized to assess reading habits and attitudes of users in Pakistan. It comprised three sections: the first section asked for background information, the second section had 7 close-ended questions about the participants' reading habits and preferences, and the third section consisted of 25 items using a 1-5 Likert scale to measure the users' attitudes and preferences towards reading (9 items on the activity of reading, 8 items on the enjoyment of reading, and 8 items on anxiety and difficulty in reading).

4.3 Data Collection and Measurement

A survey was conducted to gather data using a questionnaire. Participants were asked to rate statements on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 being "Strongly Disagree" and 5 being "Strongly Agree". Validity and reliability are interrelated concepts, and a reliable instrument should consistently produce the same results when used with different participants. The questionnaire was presented in English and its questions were taken directly from the ASRA source without modification. A pilot study was conducted to ensure the reliability and validity of the instruments and collected data. A group of experts was consulted to assess the validity of the questionnaire based on its content, the clarity of its items, and to avoid any misunderstandings. The questionnaire was distributed to 30 respondents, representing 15% of the study population, to validate its

reliability. ASRA by Smith (1990) as adapted by Al-Obaydi & Iddagoda (2022), Ziaur Rahman et al. (2020), the reliability of the questionnaire, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.79, indicating an acceptable level of reliability (see Table 1).

4.4 Data analysis

The data for this study was collected using quantitative methods and was analyzed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Participants were asked to respond to questions on a 5-point Likert scale in the questionnaires, which were used as the source of data. The responses were then quantitatively analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation.

5. RESULTS

Table 1: Shows the number of book shops these bookshops are available online

| Book Shop	Publisher
Books Inn	Paramount Publisher
Saeed Book Bank	Awesome publishers
liberty books	Carvan publishers
Readings	Auraq publishers
Online Book Outlet	Ferozsons publishers
Book berry	U.S. Publishers
Daraz	National Book Foundation, Pakistan Publisher
Bukhari Books	Daniyal Publisher
Global Books	U.S. Publisher
MBA book store	Sang-e-Meel Publisher
Kitabain	Daastan Publisher
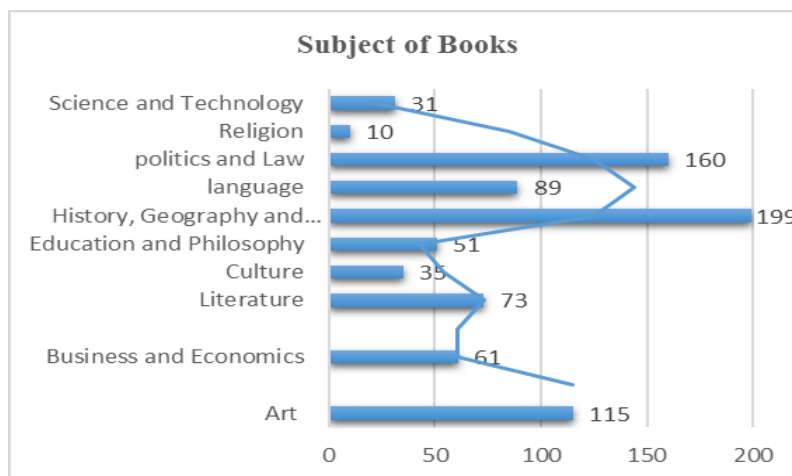
Figure 1: shows the different subject of books

The availability of Chinese books in Pakistan covers a wide range of topics, which can be grouped into 10 main categories. These categories include politics, literature, economy, biography, geography, tourism, art, history, law, education, children's books,

and religion. Out of these categories, the ones with the most publications are politics, art, and history, which are the top three. On the other hand, the category with the least number of publications is religion.

In the sample of 824 books, a breakdown of the distribution of books by category can be seen as follows: 199 books are on history, geography, and biography; 115 books are on art; 160 books are on politics and law; 73 books are on literature; 51 books are on education and philosophy; 89 books are on language; 35 books are on culture; 31 books are on science and technology; and only 10 books are on religion. Overall, the wide range of topics available in Chinese books in Pakistan provides readers with a diverse selection to choose from, with the categories of history, geography, and biography, as well as art and politics, having the most number of publications.
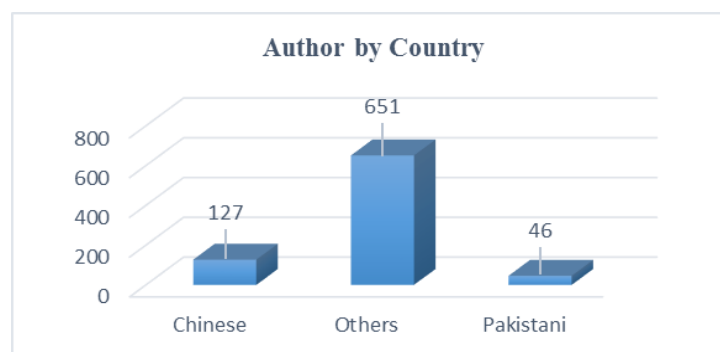

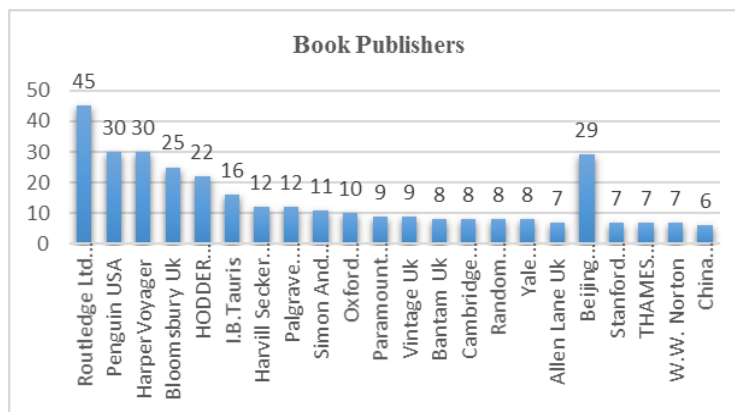**Figure 2: Shows the Book Author's country**

Figure 3: Shows the publishers

According to our data, there were a total of 824 book authors. Out of these authors, 127 were from China, 46 were from Pakistan, and 651 were from other countries. The data also shows the distribution of book publishers, as depicted in Fig.3. Beijing Language and Culture University Press was the publisher of 29 books, followed by China Intercontinental Press, which published 40 books. In Pakistan, 9 books were published by Paramount Publisher. The largest number of book publishers were from various

countries, including Routledge Ltd Taylor and Francis (UK), Harvill Secker (UK), Oxford University Press (USA), and many others. These publishers were responsible for the majority of books published in the sample. It is worth noting that the data presented in Fig.3 gives us a comprehensive understanding of the book publishing industry and the various countries and regions that are contributing to it. This information can be used to make informed decisions and understand the current state of the industry.

5.1 Demographic

The total number of respondents in the survey was 300, with an equal number of participants from Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore (33.3 percent each). Out of the 300 respondents, 101 (33.7 percent) were students, 73 (24.3 percent) were teachers, 92 (30.7 percent) were researchers, and 34 (11.3 percent) were general users. The gender distribution showed that a majority of the participants were male (53.3 percent). The age group of the respondents was primarily between 26-35 years old, accounting for 60 percent of the participants, which is considered a normal age range. Most of the respondents were also graduates (53 percent). The demographics of the respondents, including gender, age, profession, education level, and city, were summarized in Table 2. This information provides insights into the characteristics of the participants and helps in understanding the results of the survey.

Table 2: Demographic Information of the respondents.

Variables	F	%
Gender		
Male	160	53.3
Female	140	46.7
Age		
15-25	15	5
26-35	180	60
36-45	99	33
46 0ver	6	2
Profession		
Student	101	33.7
Teacher	73	24.3
Researcher	92	30.7
General User	34	11.3
Education		
High School	8	2.7
Undergraduate	23	7.7
Graduate	110	36.7
Post graduate	59	53.0
City		
Islamabad	100	33.3
Karachi	100	33.3
Lahore	100	33.3
Total	300	100

5.2 Reading Habits

This section consisted of 6 items, all of which were close-ended questions focusing on the participants' reading habits and preferences. The responses to these questions are presented in the accompanying figures.
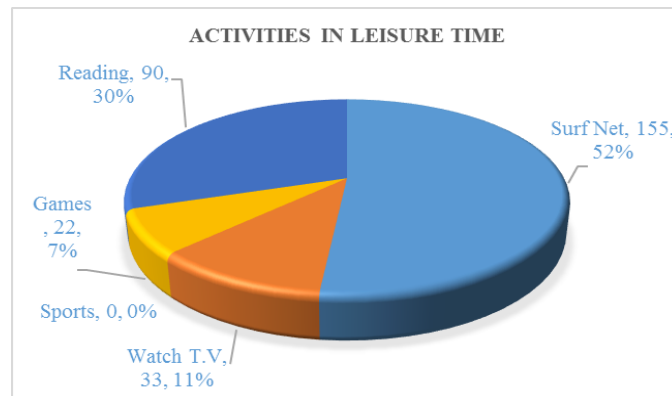

Figure 3: Activities in Leisure Time

As seen from the above figure, the highest score among the participants was for surfing the internet, with 52% indicating that they spend more time doing so. Conversely, the lowest score was for sports, with 0% of the participants indicating that they spend more time participating in sports. The results of the survey suggest that these participants primarily spend more time surfing the internet rather than reading.
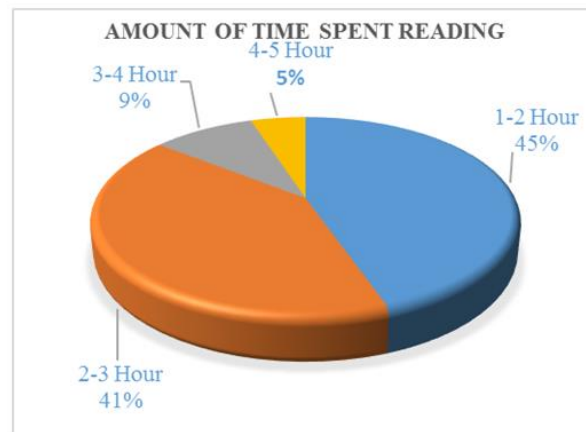

Figure 4: Amount of Time Spent on Reading

As indicated by the above figure, the majority of the respondents (45%) reported spending 1 to 2 hours per day on reading, while only a small percentage (5%) reported reading for 4 to 5 hours per day. This suggests that the interest and engagement of people in Pakistan towards reading is still relatively low.
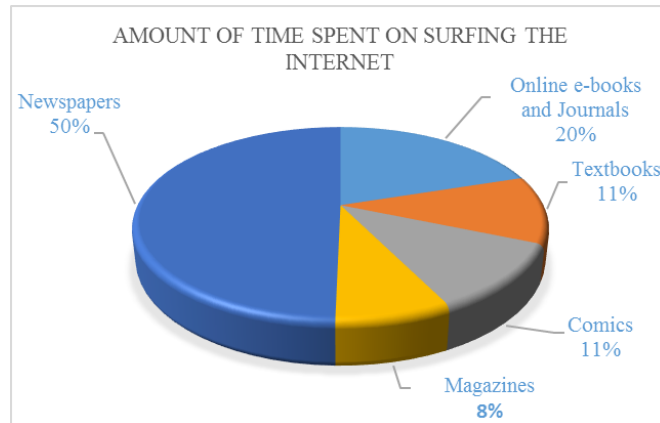
Figure 5: Amount of Time Spent on Surfing Internet

As depicted in the figure above, the research found that the participants had diverse reading preferences. A total of 50% of the respondents reported reading newspapers, while 20% reported reading online reading materials such as e-books and journals. Textbooks and comics were reported by 11% of the participants each, and the least popular reading preference was magazines, with only 8% of the respondents reporting that they read magazines.
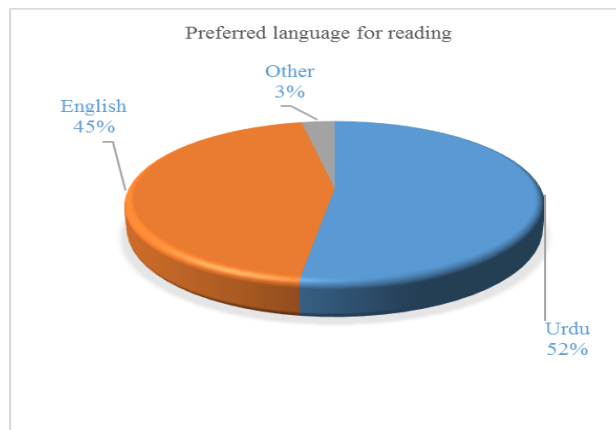

Figure 6: Preferred Language for Reading

The figure above provides insight into the language preference of the respondents when it comes to reading. The data analysis revealed that a significant portion of the participants, 52%, favored reading in URDU, while 45% preferred reading in English. It is worth noting that a large proportion of the respondents were foreign speakers, which explains why a considerable number of them preferred to read in URDU. This preference for the URDU language is an important consideration for publishers, libraries, and other stakeholders involved in the promotion and dissemination of reading materials. Understanding the language preferences of the target audience will enable these organizations to tailor their services and offerings to better meet the needs and

preferences of the audience. The results of this study can help inform strategies aimed at promoting reading culture and encouraging more people to engage in reading, especially in the languages preferred by the target audience.
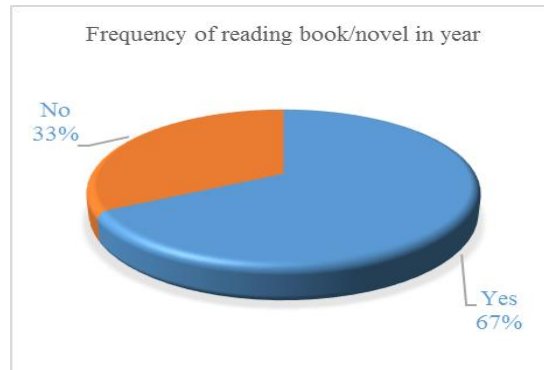

Figure 7. Frequency of Reading Book/Novel in Year

The figure above provides valuable insights into the reading habits of the participants in the study. Based on the data analysis, the researcher found that a substantial proportion of the participants, 67%, reported reading books or novels on a regular basis. This information is essential in understanding the reading patterns of the target population and can be used to inform strategies aimed at promoting reading and increasing the demand for reading materials.

For publishers, libraries, and other stakeholders in the book industry, the findings of this study can provide valuable information about the reading habits and preferences of their target audience. By understanding the frequency of book reading among the participants, these organizations can tailor their offerings and services to meet the needs of the audience and promote reading culture. The results of this study can also be used to encourage more people to engage in reading, especially by promoting the benefits of reading and making reading materials more accessible and appealing to the target audience.
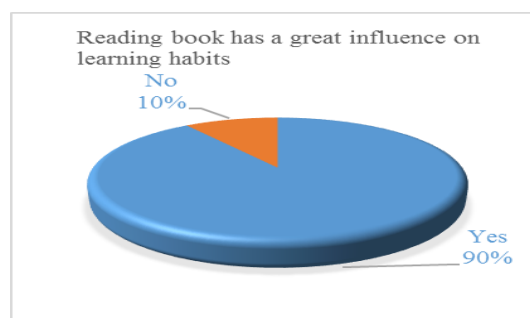

Figure 8: Influence of Reading Book on Learning Habits

The figure above provides valuable insights into the perception of the participants regarding the influence of reading on learning habits. The results showed that a

substantial proportion of the participants, 90%, believed that reading books has a significant impact on their learning habits. This information is crucial in understanding the attitudes of the target population towards reading and can be used to inform strategies aimed at promoting reading and increasing the demand for reading materials.

For educators, parents, and other stakeholders in the education sector, the findings of this study can provide valuable information about the attitudes of students and young adults towards reading and its influence on learning. By understanding the views of the target population, these organizations can tailor their programs and services to promote reading and improve learning outcomes. The results of this study can also be used to raise awareness about the importance of reading and encourage more people to engage in reading as a means of enhancing their learning habits.

Moreover, the fact that 10% of the participants responded that reading does not have a significant influence on their learning habits highlights the need for further research and education to better understand why some individuals may not view reading as an important tool for learning and how to change those attitudes.

5.2 Reading Attitudes

This section comprised of 25 items designed to assess the users' attitudes and preferences towards reading. The items were presented using a 5-point Likert scale, with 9 items focused on the frequency and involvement in reading activities, 8 items measuring the enjoyment of reading, and 8 items assessing anxiety and difficulty in reading. By utilizing this comprehensive measurement tool, the researcher aimed to gather in-depth information about the users' experiences and perspectives towards reading, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the topic under investigation.

Table 3: Activity of Reading

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I can read but I don't understand what I've read	2.75%	1.45%	32.7%	9%	14.%	21.3%	14%
2. There are better ways to learn new things than by reading a book.	3.38%	1.26%	9%	16.3%	26.7%	23.7%	24.3%
3. I am a good reader	3.77%	1.10%	2.7%	9%	31.3%	22%	35%
4. I buy books of my own	3.29	1.32%	12.3%	15.7%	26%	22%	24%
5. I try very hard, but just can't read very well	2.89	1.37%	18.7%	28%	15.7%	21%	16.7%
6. My friends and I often discuss the books we have read.	3.75%	1.11%	5.3%	7%	24%	34.3%	29.3%
7. It is easier for me to understand what I am reading if pictures, charts, and diagram are included.	3.78%	1.22%	9.3%	7%	10.7%	42.3%	30%
8. When I read, I usually get tired and sleepy	3.21%	1.15%	14%	7.3%	31%	39%	8.7%
9. I have a lot in common with people who are poor readers	2.97%	1.35%	16%	26%	12%	17%	19%

The table above presents the data related to the 9 statements regarding the Activity of Reading. The data is presented in the form of the mean and standard deviation. The mean provides an average of each statement, while the standard deviation provides information about the degree of variation from the mean. The results of the Activity of Reading section showed that the statement with the highest mean was statement number 7, with a mean value of 3.78% and a standard deviation of 1.22%. On the other hand, the statement with the lowest mean was statement number 1, with a mean value

of 2.75% and a standard deviation of 1.45%. These results provide insights into the participants' engagement in reading activities, with statement number 7 indicating the highest level of involvement and statement number 1 indicating the lowest level of involvement. These findings are useful for understanding the general tendencies and tendencies of the participants' reading habits.

Table 4: Enjoyment of Reading

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Reading is one the best ways for me to learn things.	3.81%	1.38%	10.7%	17%	18.7%	14.7%	48%
2. Reading helps to understand the Chinese culture.	3.57%	1.40%	12.7%	24.3%	14.3%	25%	35.3%
3. I like to read books.	3.67%	1.14%	5.3%	20.3%	31%	25%	30.7%
4. I read when I have the time to enjoy it.	3.66%	1.07%	3.7%	9.3%	26.7%	34.7%	24.7%
5. Reading is useful in social development.	4.17%	1.03%	4.7%	30.3%	10.7%	35.3%	47%
6. I like to visit the library for books.	3.55%	1.10%	7.3%	35.7%	26.3%	39.3%	19.3%
7. When I read an in interesting book, story, or article I like to tell my friends about it.	3.99%	1.11%	5.3%	26%	8.7%	40.3%	38.3%
8. Reading is one of the most interesting things which I do.	3.90%	1.10%	2.7%	26.3%	24%	25%	39.7%

The data presented above provides information regarding the participants' enjoyment of reading. The results show that the highest mean value for enjoyment of reading was recorded for statement number 5, with a mean value of 4.17% and a standard deviation of 1.03%. On the other hand, the lowest mean value for enjoyment of reading was recorded for statement number 6, with a mean value of 3.55% and a standard deviation of 1.10%. These findings give an insight into the participants' level of enjoyment towards reading and how much they enjoy reading activities.

Table 5: Anxiety and Difficulty

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I need a lot of help in reading.	2.99%	1.40%	20%	17%	29.3%	11.3%	22.3%
2. I get upset when I think about having to read.	2.92%	1.27%	16.3%	24.3%	21.7%	25.7%	12%
3. I get nervous if I have to read a lot of information for some social activity.	3.24%	1.17%	7.7%	20.3%	27.7%	28.3%	16%
4. Encountering unfamiliar words is the hardest part of reading.	3.82%	1.21%	6.3%	9.3%	18%	28.3%	38%
5. I worry a lot about my reading.	2.90%	1.25%	14%	30.3%	19%	25%	11.7%
6. I try to avoid reading because it makes me feel anxious.	2.45%	1.22%	24%	35.7%	20%	11.3%	9%
7. I have trouble understanding what I read.	2.84%	1.36%	19%	26%	25.7%	10%	19.3%
8. I'm afraid that people may find out what a poor reader I am.	2.40%	1.41%	36%	26.3%	12.7%	11.3%	13.7%

The data related to the statements about the anxiety and difficulty in reading is analyzed and presented in the table above. The results indicate that the highest mean value for the participants' anxiety and difficulty towards reading is seen in the statement number 4 with a mean value of 3.82% and a standard deviation of 1.21%. On the other hand, the lowest mean value for the participants' anxiety and difficulty towards reading is recorded in the statement number 8 with a mean value of 2.40% and a standard deviation of 1.41%. These results give insight into the participants' attitudes and preferences towards reading, specifically regarding their level of anxiety and difficulty experienced while reading.
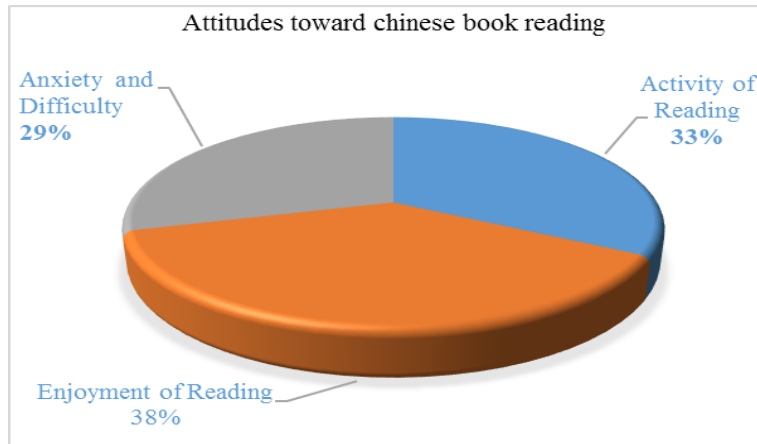
Figure 7: Reading Attitudes towards Chinese Book Reading

The figure above highlights the attitudes of Pakistani people towards reading. The data indicates that the average enjoyment of reading among the participants was 3.79% with a standard deviation of 1.16. This suggests that the majority of the respondents had positive attitudes towards the enjoyment of reading. In contrast, the average score for anxiety and difficulty in reading was 2.94% with a standard deviation of 1.28, the lowest among the three aspects measured. Meanwhile, the average reading attitude score was 3.31% with a standard deviation of 1.25, which is also relatively low compared to the enjoyment of reading.

6. DISCUSSION

The present study analyzed the reading habits of Pakistani people through various activities such as leisure time, amount of time spent on reading, amount of time spent on surfing the internet, preferred language for reading, frequency of reading books/novels in a year, influence of reading books on learning habits, and preferred format for reading (printed or online). The results of the study are consistent with the findings from previous studies (Deale & Lee 2022; Shameem Ahmed 2015). Samsuddin & Mohd Khalid (2021) found that the majority of participants spend their leisure time surfing the internet and that the amount of time spent on reading is usually 1 to 2 hours. Furthermore, the study results also align with the previous research that found that the majority of participants preferred to read newspapers over e-books, journals, textbooks, comics, and magazines.

The results of the studies conducted by (Little 2020; Manan, David & Dumanig 2016) revealed that the majority of the respondents were native speakers, with the medium of instruction being either Malay or Urdu. This preference for reading in their native language is evident as most students in the first study preferred to read in Malay, while those in the second study preferred to read in Urdu. Additionally, Beach et al. (2018) found that most readers completed one book and had the lowest level of reading during the summer months. This result is in line with another study which found that 67% of

participants had a frequency of reading books/novels while 33% reported not reading in a year.

Rudi, Suryadi & Rosjanuardi (2020) found that effective reading is a crucial component of successful learning. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the majority of participants in the study preferred reading books as a means of enhancing their learning habits. However, Jeong & Gweon (2021) pointed out that the difference between reading online and reading in print is not significant. While most students still preferred print media, there was a notable shift towards online reading, particularly in regards to Chinese books reading in Pakistan. Despite these findings, the study by (Ogunbodede & Sawyerr-George 2023) contradicts these results, revealing that the availability of digital media has led to significant changes in students' reading habits. Thus, it is evident that the impact of digital media is affecting students' reading habits and the future of reading (Ali et al. 2021).

The study aimed to examine the users' attitudes towards reading Chinese books by means of a questionnaire. The results of the Activity of Reading subject showed that the highest score was received by statement number 7, "It is easier for me to understand what I am reading if pictures, charts, and diagrams are included." Meanwhile, the lowest score was attributed to statement number 1, "I can read but I don't understand what I've read." These findings were in agreement with those of the study conducted by (García-Roca 2020; Bal 2018). However, the results produced by (Shameem Ahmed 2015) did not coincide with the findings of the present study.

The results of a study on the enjoyment of reading indicate that statement number 5, "Reading is useful in social development," received the highest value. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted by (Preece & Levy 2020; Zaccoletti, Altoè & Mason 2020), both of which revealed a positive attitude towards the enjoyment of reading. On the other hand, statement number 6, "I like going to the library for books," received the lowest value. This result mirrors the findings of (Azhari & Ramadan 2022; Pfost & Heyne 2023) study, where the majority of respondents disagreed with the idea that they enjoy visiting the library for books. These results suggest that while people may value the social benefits of reading, they may not necessarily have a strong interest in going to the library to obtain books.

The results of the study on Anxiety and Difficulty reveal that the greatest challenge faced by respondents while reading is encountering unfamiliar words, as indicated by statement number 4. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by (Orchard et al. 2020; Zuppardo et al. 2021). On the other hand, statement number 8, "I'm afraid that people may find out what a poor reader I am," received the lowest value, indicating that respondents disagree with this statement. This contradicts the findings of previous studies conducted by (Ymous et al. 2020; Hall 2010; Baki 2017), which showed that students had a negative attitude towards reading and that this caused anxieties and difficulties. These anxieties and difficulties were further investigated by (Liu & Xu 2021; SPARKS 2021), who conducted a study focused on the difficulties faced by school

students while reading in English. The study found that students experienced difficulties in reading due to anxiety about their general proficiency in decoding and comprehending texts.

7. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to gain insights into the reading habits and attitudes of Pakistani users towards Chinese books. The findings showed that the majority of the users spent the majority of their time browsing the internet, with 52% choosing it over other activities. The daily reading time was limited to 1-2 hours for most users. The students read a variety of materials, including online e-books and journals, textbooks, comics, and magazines. However, the preferred reading material was online, with newspapers being the most popular choice at 52%. The majority of users preferred to read books in the Urdu language, with 52% choosing it over English (45%) and other languages (3%). 67% of users reported reading books or novels, while 33% did not. The results indicated that reading books has a strong influence on learning habits, with 90% of users agreeing, while 10% did not. The users were divided between using print media (54%) and online reading (45%).

The results of a study on users' reading attitudes revealed that the average activity of reading was 3.31%, the average enjoyment of reading was 3.79, and the average anxiety and difficulty towards reading was 2.94. Despite having a positive attitude towards reading, the students faced some obstacles such as encountering unfamiliar words, which were not considered significant. However, the researcher suggests that there is a need to develop the reading habits of the undergraduate students. In order to achieve this, the lecturer and department should understand the significance of reading and implement various promotional activities to motivate the students. This study can be useful for researchers who are studying reading habits and attitudes and can contribute to the development of undergraduate students in the future.

In the 21st century, the world is becoming increasingly interconnected and cultural boundaries are breaking down, leading to the emergence of hybrid cultures. Translation plays a crucial role in this changing world, especially in a multi-lingual and multi-cultural society like Pakistan. By translating various types of literature, we can bridge linguistic, social, cultural, and political divides and bring people of different backgrounds closer together, as seen under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Translating Chinese literature into Urdu is an effective way to deepen mutual understanding and strengthen people-to-people relations between the two countries. The Chinese Culture Translation and Studies Support (CCTSS) has taken the lead with the Sino-Pakistan Translation Workshop, paving the way for a Pak-China Literary Corridor. Governments can also play a role in promoting Chinese literature in other countries like Pakistan by collaborating on financial support and sponsorships for the translation of famous works by Chinese authors, dramatists, and writers. After publication, these works can be

publicly launched and promoted through libraries and media by literary figures and others.

8. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

A comprehensive study on the impact of Chinese books on society can involve analyzing various aspects such as the popularity and accessibility of Chinese literature, the reception and perception of Chinese culture, and the influence of Chinese books on society's values, beliefs, and behaviors. This can be achieved through surveys, focus groups, interviews, and other research methods. The study can also examine the impact of the digital age on the dissemination of Chinese literature and its effect on society.

A study on the attitude of users towards Chinese book reading can focus on exploring factors such as the motivation to read, the perceived challenges, and the benefits of reading Chinese literature. This can also involve examining the reading habits and preferences of different demographic groups and the role of libraries, schools, and other institutions in promoting Chinese literature. The impact of Chinese literature change on the operation of academic libraries can look at how libraries are adapting to the changing landscape of Chinese literature, including digitalization and the increased demand for Chinese books and resources. This study can explore the challenges and opportunities facing academic libraries in acquiring, preserving, and promoting Chinese literature, and the role of libraries in supporting research and learning in this area.

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