EXPLORING THE ELEMENTS THAT INFLUENCE POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' READING TRENDS IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN ISLAMABAD

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Abstract

Purpose: *The purpose of this study was to investigate factors influencing post-graduate students' reading trends at university libraries in Islamabad as well as students' reading trends and their effects on academic achievement.*

Methodology: *To accomplish the study's objectives, a quantitative research technique was used, and a survey based on a questionnaire was undertaken. For the purpose of gathering information from the respondents, a structured questionnaire was created. Data was gathered from the libraries of Islamabad-based HEC-recognized universities using a purposive sampling technique. The survey received 129 responses from users of the 16 libraries.*

Findings: *This study reveals that respondents like to read electronic documents rather than paper-based materials. They read for multiple purposes, including academic assignments and course work, self-development, preparation for exams, and to improve their ability in spoken and written English language communication. The study also reveals that respondents get good grades due to reading, expressing themselves well in class, can make assignments easily, makes them feel proud, and reading newspapers increases their awareness level. The study also reveals that social networking sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and others, as well as time spent watching TV and playing video games, have a detrimental impact on the reading trends of postgraduate students in Islamabad.*

Originality: *This is the first study of its kind conducted in the territory of Islamabad. Therefore, its findings can have a significant impact on the readers.*

Keywords: Reading trends, Factors affecting reading trends, Effects of readingtrends, Library, Public Universities, Islamabad

Introduction

Reading is an important medium for intellectual exchange and developing a reading habit in an individual is an intellectual practice that develops abilities of thinking. Reading can be used to learn more about both written and non-printed content. According to (Walia & Sinha, 2014) reading is regarded as a procedure, a mode of thought, and a type of experience that requires several complex skills: the ability to interpret written words, skim for knowledge, and then possibly read intelligently. Reading has been

characterized in various ways throughout history. Reading used to mean interpreting visual input from any given code or method (Lone, 2011). According to Kutay (2014) reading increases thinking abilities by providing new ideas, as well as improving vocabulary and grammar, all of which are important in communication. Du Toit (2001) described reading as a method of thinking, remembering, and comparing concepts through the use of written words. There are several formats that have been used as intelligence and information carriers. A reader can choose from a variety of texts in various formats to read. Reading is often affected by the reader's mood (utility, enjoyment, or self-fulfillment), intent, and prior experience. Reading practices have a major impact on a student's academic success in school. Therefore, parents must pay greater attention to monitoring their children's educational development at home to ensure better academic achievements among pupils (Dollah et al., 2017).

Rapid improvements in reading trends tend to emerge as a result of technological advancements under the digital paradigm. Reading trends have shifted with the passing of time and the introduction of emerging technologies. Sumerians used clay tablets to write 3,500 years ago, and papyrus scrolls were later used for writing and reading. The advancement in technology has a significant effect on every aspect of human life, including the ability to read on a tablet. E-reading has many advantages, including portability, ease of transport, broad storage volume, no space constraints, and time savings, among others. People have been shifting away from print content and into online material over the past two decades, and most libraries have begun to sell downloadable books (e-books) to their patrons. E-books are usually digitized from paper formats, though libraries still have print copies (Mirza, et al., 2021). As a result, libraries can now support their customers in a variety of formats. For both the patron and the library, e-books have many benefits over their paper counterparts. E-books provide the patrons with 24-hour availability, remote access outside of the physical library, full-text browsing, copying, and pasting of text and images. E-books do not need shelf space or re-shelving in libraries and are never misplaced, destroyed, stolen, or overdue (Littman & Connaway, 2004). People whose online versions will be able to get a better experience with a more advanced, streamlined presentation. It should be possible to save space as well as money overall (Ware, 2005).

As a result, the way people learn is shifting as a result of the rise of ICT People like to collect and obtain information in a convenient and distant manner. To put it simply, reading patterns are determined by how often a person reads, how much they read, what they read, and what they read. Is it still common for students to read books today? Reading may be described as a habit that includes the use of books, written documents, and electric devices. It varies according to how the content affects their reading trends. A significant number of studies were conducted in Pakistan that investigated the reading trends of various classes of society, including teenagers, adults, men, and women (Abbasi, 1991; Ahmed, 1964; Awais & Ameen, 2013; Asif & Sandhu, 2023; Baloch, 1975; Kanwal, et al., 2008; Malik, 1970; Mumtaz et al., 2023; Nishan et al., 2024; Qureshi, 2004; Raju et al., 2024; Shabab, 1975; Tirmizi, 2004; Virk, 2009; Ullah et al., 2023).

Problem Statement

There have been distinct explanations for students' poor reading trends from the past to the present. Researchers' preliminary observations found that students have a poor passion for reading, and most of them do not know how to read, so they face reading difficulties during exam times. The result of students' inability to learn correctly is their low scores in final exams. On the other hand, it is possible that one of the major challenges confronting students these days is not a lack of ability to read, but rather a lack of passion for

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reading. Today, a variety of elements, such as social media addiction, internet usage, etc., influence students' reading trends. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the reading trends of students, their influence on academic performance, and the variables influencing post-graduate students' reading trends at university libraries in Islamabad.

Objectives

The study aims to investigate the factors affecting the reading trends of post-graduate students in public sector university libraries in Islamabad. To keep the statement of the problem in mind, the following objectives are drawn.

- To investigate the reading preferences of postgraduate students.
- To investigate how reading influence students' academic performance.
- To explore those factors that affect students' reading trends.

Research Questions

The following questions have been addressed by the current study.

1. What are the trends of reading among post-graduate students?
2. What effect do reading trends have on students' academic success?
3. What types of influences have an impact on students' reading trends?

Significant of the Study

The proverb "reading is the warehouse of knowledge" is the unrivaled reality revealed to mankind. Reading is an art form that exposes one to an understanding of the world. To put it differently, it is the art of deciphering messages through written words. The present study is carried out the reading habits of post-graduate students from HEC recognized universities in Islamabad. This study investigates the reading habits of the students. What kind of resources do they prefer to read. How much they are spending their time on reading. This study finds out the impact of reading on the student's academic performance. Is there any effect of reading on the students?

The core aim of this study is to investigate the factors affecting the reading habits of postgraduate students of Islamabad. The study suggests how the parents or teachers can develop an interest in reading and can avoid unnecessary things in the students. This study will be helpful for the students and teachers. The students will be able to know their reading habits while teachers will be able to know which factors affect the reading habits of students.

Delimitations/limitations

The current analysis is geographically restricted to the universities in Islamabad that have been accredited by the Higher Education Commission (HEC). Only post-graduate students enrolled in Islamabad's public sector universities provided the data.

Literature Review

Ahmad et al. (2021) discovered the factor affecting reading trends among children. According to their research findings, parents have the most difficulty encouraging their children to read because of the excessive use of screens like mobile phones, TVs, and video games. The overuse of textbooks for the curriculum, the disinterest of parents, the high price of reading materials, the absence of school-level practices, and the lack of a school library are some of the additional challenges. Additionally, the study discovered that limiting

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screen time, rewarding reading, maintaining accurate records of children's reading activities, book discussions with peers or in groups, associating reading with enjoyment, having kids read certain words every day, and taking schoolchildren to libraries, book exhibitions, and literary locations are all effective ways to promote reading trends. Samsuddin et al. (2020) investigation into reading trends in Malaysia's rural communities with low literacy rates. The people residing close to the rural library were locals. A straightforward random sample method was used to choose the respondents. A questionnaire was used to gather the information from 400 respondents. According to the study's findings, rural areas with low literacy rates have satisfactory reading trends. They found that the majority of respondents preferred to read magazines and books. According to their findings, the bulk of the respondents read for one to two hours each day. (Soroya & Amin, 2020) discussed the challenges of e-learning during pandemic period. Their study's findings reported several issues, including a lack of preparedness (on the part of students and institutions), poor interaction quality, a lack of enthusiasm, a lack of class activities, and a forced adoption of e-learning.

In their study Rafiq and Warraich (2018) looked into the views of Lahore medical undergraduate students toward using and not using e-books. They collected data from 232 respondents using a self-structured questionnaire. They revealed that respondents had access to Google books and they use e-books for academic purposes. On the other hand, those who weren't e-book subscribers were eager to read the printed books. (Sehar & Ghaffar, 2018) studied the reading patterns of NED University of Engineering & Technology undergraduate students. A questionnaire was used to gather information from 50 respondents. Despite the use of paperback books, they discovered that respondents often read e-books. Furthermore, they discovered that respondents read for academic purposes for more than two hours a day. Soroya and Ameen (2018) investigated the demand for Millennials as well as the position of Pakistani libraries. They used a questionnaire to collect data from 515 students at the University of Lahore. According to their study's results, participants were using a notebook, smartphones. Besides that, they stated that respondents were expected to learn a wide variety of reading materials in both print and digital formats.

Rabaud et al. (2018) evaluated digital reading among undergraduates' students of the University of Mauritius. A questionnaire was used for the purpose of data collection. The data was collected from 231 respondents of the study. The findings showed that respondents of the study were reading for the purpose of entertainment, academic needs, and personal interest. They highlighted that the majority of the respondents were reading research articles, magazines, and fictions related reading materials. Moreover, they disclosed that still; the students of Mauritian were considering print reading materials. They suggested that university management should distribute tablets among the students for promoting digital reading.

Celik (2019) conducted a study on the factors affecting the reading trends of Ishik Kindergarten students in Erbil, Iraq. The study's findings demonstrated the importance of families in helping kids develop the habit of reading. The study also found that crucial during this era of preparation was the friend group, the surroundings, a variety of books and genres, kindergarten instruction, and libraries. (Florence et al., 2017) conducted a survey to investigate the reading trends among the college students of Oyo town. A questionnaire was employed for the purpose of collection of data. The data was collected from 200 students from two colleges in Oyo town. The results revealed that nearly all respondents recognize the value of reading. 65.5 percent enjoy reading from their respective fields of specialization on a regular basis, while 25.0 percent enjoy reading from their various fields of specialization once a week. According to the findings, healthy reading practices improve academic results. The study suggested that first-year students take communication skills

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classes, and second-year students take prose work and literature such as novels as a required course (200 level). They recommended that new technology-based services should include in the library.

Soroya and Ameen (2016) investigated the reading trends of Pakistani teenagers. A questionnaire was used to collect a total of 50 final-year students at the University of the Punjab. They indicated that respondents' reading trends have improved over the past five years. They also revealed that respondents' digital reading time has grown as a result of the presence of digital computers and digital learning materials. (Mahmood & Saeed, 2014) investigated researchers' automated knowledge-seeking actions. Respondents stated that they often use digital data for academic purposes. Respondents also mentioned that they were proficient in digital content. However, since the analysis was conducted among participants, it is likely that their digital knowledge skills were enhanced as a result of their participation in research activities;however, other studies from Pakistan (Ameen & Gorman, 2009; Rafique, 2014) disagree this.

Pinto et al. (2014) investigated e-book reading among university students in Spain. The information was gathered from 745 students from 15related disciplines at the University of Granada. They indicated that students in the arts, social sciences, and health disciplines preferred to read e-books. (Stebbins, 2012) described three reading motivations: utility, satisfaction, and fulfillment. Materialist readers read to solve challenges, accomplish goals, or complete projects. Pleasure readers read for enjoyment, as a recreational exercise, and to get sensory stimuli. Self-fulfillment readers read for pleasure to expand theirawareness. Stebbins (2012) categorized reading content into four types: books, periodicals, pamphlets, and manuals. Books are binding pieces of art. Magazines, journals, newspapers, bulletins, and other similar publications are examples of periodicals. Pamphlets are similar to books that have fewer pages and are published asa single or occasional work, such as surveys and work papers. E-books have a variety of advantageous alternatives, including "fast accessibility," "an increasing pace of digital publication or born-digital content,""improvement of digital content in the form of static," "hypertext," "interactive text," "multimedia" text, and so on, as well as the relentless development and reshaping of technology." People's reading trends are changing as a result of technological advancements, and reading is becoming a more mobile practice. According to research published at a university in Texas, 18-24year-old Americans probably spent 21 hours per week reading for both leisure activities and educational purposes in all formats, with more than 40 percent of this reading accruing to social media, often instead of reading print textbooks (Berrett, 2012).

Vandenhoek (2013) examined screen reading among the students at university of Limerick, Ireland. He collected data through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was short and consisted of 10 questions. He gathered data from 630 respondents of the study to accomplish the objectives of the study. They discovered that the most notable finding of the sample is a propensity for print reading, with 74% of participants responding in pursuit of paper-based reading. The findings showed that 60% of students read print less articles. The causes for not printing papers are equally evident, with 82 percent of students citing cost and 33 percent citing environmental concerns as the main motivations for not printing.

The provided studies discusses various research studies on reading trends, particularly among students. Parents play a significant role in fostering reading habits in children. Excessive screen time and lack of parental engagement hinder reading. E-books and digital resources are increasingly popular, but traditional print books still hold significant value. Factors like personal interest, academic requirements, and entertainment drive reading choices. Obstacles like limited access to reading materials, lack of library facilities, and ineffective teaching methods can impact reading habits. Encouraging reading through rewards,

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book discussions, and library visits can promote positive reading trends. The studies included in the study highlighted the evolving nature of reading habits, the importance of parental involvement, and the need for a balanced approach that combines both traditional and digital reading formats.

Research methodology

In this study, a structured questionnaire was created to collect data from the respondents using the survey approach. The postgraduate students at public universities in Islamabad accredited by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) were the study's target group. In any research project, a sample is a segment of the population that is being studied.

Sampling Technique

The current study used a purposive sample technique; therefore, information was exclusively gathered from post-graduate students at public universities in Islamabad that were approved by the HEC. Islamabad is home to 16 public universities that have been accredited by the HEC. The questionnaire was completed and returned by 129 respondents in total.

Research Instrument

To keep in mind the goals of this study, a questionnaire was developed. In light of the previously published literature, a structured questionnaire was designed. There were four sections in the questionnaire. The respondents' demographic data was covered in the first part. Seven closed-ended Likert scale questions about reading trends of students were asked in the second segment. Six closed-ended Likert scale questions about the impacts of reading trends on students' performance were inquired in the third part. Eight closed-ended Likert scale questioned about the variables influencing their reading trends in the fourth and final section. A scale is the form of composite measure that consists of several items that are linked either logically or empirically. In social science, Likert scales are frequently used to gauge respondents' opinions. A four-point Likert scale was utilized in the current study's questionnaire to collect data from the respondents.

Pilot testing

Twenty users of Islamabad's university libraries took part in the pilot project. The pilot test's objectives included improving the questionnaire's clarity, gauging respondents' comprehension, and keeping track of the time needed to complete it. Following the pilot study, certain questionnaire statements were changed, and new questions were introduced.

Data collection

The researchers visited all university libraries of Islamabad for the purpose of data collection. However, data was collected from 129 users of the university libraries in Islamabad. The researchers briefed about the questions when respondent asked them for moreclarity.

Data Analysis

The researcher gave each questionnaire a number after the data collection phase was complete. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to enter and analyze the data. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, frequency, and percentage count, mean, and std. deviation, by using SPSS software. The Independent Samples t-test was also employed to know the difference in opinion of public and private sector university respondents. Results were presented in tables and graphs.

Results and Discussions

The whole explanation of the findings is covered in this section. The research methodology used in this study was quantitative. 129 people answered the questionnaire and provided responses. The SPSS software was used to examine the data. The results were derived using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The T-test was also used to investigate any discrepancies in the respondents' viewpoints. Theanalysis of questionnaire-based data is discussed below in detail.

Purpose of Reading

Table 1 displays the mean scores of the statements regarding the purpose of reading. The results demonstrate that four statements got mean score > 4.00 while three statements got mean score < 4.00. These results show that amajority of the respondents agreed that they read for assignment and coursework (Mean=4.49) self-development (Mean=4.43), preparation of exam (Mean=4.22), and to improve the ability of spoken/written English language.

Table 1

Purpose of reading (N=129)

Statement	Mean	SD
For assignment and course work	4.49	0.79
For self-development	4.43	0.80
For examination	4.22	0.93
To improve the ability of spoken/written English language	4.07	1.02
For pleasure and relaxation	3.95	1.21
To impress my parents/teachers	3.41	1.40
To while away time	2.62	1.45

Note: Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Purpose of reading based on gender

An Independent t-test applied to examine any significant differences amongthe opinions of male and female respondents. The results of Table 2 show that only one statement got a significant difference among the opinions of genders. The results demonstrated that male respondents significantly agreed that the purpose of reading for them was to improve spoken/written English *(p=0.02)*.

Table 2

Purpose of reading based on genders (N=129)

Statement	Mean		t-value	Sig.
	Male (68)	Female (61)		
For examination	4.25	4.19	0.32	0.74
For self-development	4.44	4.42	0.10	0.91
For assignment and coursework	4.44	4.55	-0.83	0.40
For pleasure and relaxation	3.85	4.06	-0.99	0.32
To improve spoken/written English	4.16	3.98	0.99	0.02
To impress my parents/teachers	4.33	4.06	-0.92	0.35
To while away time	2.66	2.59	0.27	0.78

Note: Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

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Reading Trends of Students

Table 3 displays the mean scores of statements regarding reading trends of students. The results indicate that all six statements got mean scores of more than 4.00. These findings reveals that respondents agreed that they like to read electronic documents rather than paper materials (Mean=4.36, SD=0.74), they first hear about the book I'm going to read from friends who have read it or from my professor who has suggested it for a specific course (Mean=4.34, SD=0.79), they just read when they have to (Mean=4.31, SD=0.68) and they were more interested in reading their lecture/class notes (Mean=4.11, SD=0.86).

Table 3

Reading trends of students (N=129)

Statement	Mean	SD
I like to read electronic documents rather than paper materials.	4.36	0.74
I first hear about the book I'm going toread from friends who have read it or from my professor who has suggested it for a specific course.	4.34	0.79
I just read when I have to.	4.31	0.68
I'm more interested in reading my Lecture/class notes.	4.11	0.86
My favorite place to read is the library.	4.09	0.86
The formal characteristics of a book(thickness, font size, drawings, etc.) Influence my decision to read it or not.	4.02	0.94

Note: Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Reading trends of students based on gender.

An independent t-test was used to investigate the differences in responses from male and female respondents on students' reading trends. Table 4's findings indicate that there was a substantial difference in the opinions of male and female respondents on two statements. The findings showed that male respondents significantly agreed that the formal characteristicsof a book (thickness, font size, drawings, etc.) influence my decision to read it or not *(p=0.04)*. The results demonstrated that female respondents significantly agreed that I first hear about the book I'm going to read from friends who have read it or frommy professor who has suggested it for a specific course *(p=0.03)*.

Table 4

Reading trends of students based on genders (N=129)

Statement	Mean		t-value	Sig.
	Male (68)	Female (61)		
I just read when I have to.	4.27	4.36	-0.67	0.50
I'm more interested in reading my lecture/class notes.	4.14	4.08	0.42	0.67
I like to read electronic documents rather than paper materials.	4.35	4.37	-0.18	0.85
The formal characteristics of a book (thickness, font size, drawings, etc.) influence my decision to read it or not.	4.08	3.95	0.82	0.04
I first hear about the book I'm going to read from friends who have read it or from my professor who has suggested it for a specific course.	4.26	4.42	-1.15	0.03
My favorite place to read is the library.	4.11	4.06	0.34	0.73

Note: Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

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Impact of Reading on Students' Performance

Table 5 displays the mean scores of statements regarding Impact of reading on student's performance. The results shows that four statements got mean score > 4.00 while four statements got mean score > 3.00. These results shows that greater part of the respondents agreed that they got grades due to reading (Mean=4.24, SD=0.90), express their-self well in class (Mean=4.17, SD=0.84), they can make assignments easily (Mean=4.05, SD=1.07), makes them feel proud (Mean=4.03, SD=1.08) and reading newspapers increased their awareness level (Mean=3.94, SD=1.24).

Table 5

Impact of reading on students' performance (N=129)

Statement	Mean	SD
I got good grades due to reading	4.24	0.90
Express me well in class	4.17	0.84
I can make assignments easily	4.05	1.07
Makes me feel Proud	4.03	1.08
Reading newspapers increased my awareness level.	3.94	1.24
It supports my Studies	3.89	1.07
A habit of reading increased my writing power.	3.85	1.18
Reading books increased my knowledge.	3.25	1.38

Note: Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Impact of reading on students' performance based on gender.

An independent t-test was used to investigate any differences between the opinions of genders on the impact of reading on students' performances. The results shown in Table 6 demonstrate that there is no significant difference between the opinions of both genders male and female.

Table 6

Impact of reading on students' performance based on genders (N=129)

Statement	Mean		t-value	Sig.
	Male (68)	Female (61)		
Express me well in Class	4.16	4.19	-0.23	0.81
It support my Studies	3.97	3.81	0.79	0.42
Makes me feel Proud	3.98	4.08	0.50	0.61
I can make assignments easily	4.07	4.03	0.21	0.83
I got good grades due to reading	4.29	4.18	0.70	0.48
The habit of reading increased mywriting power.	3.89	3.80	0.44	0.65
Reading books increased my knowledge.	3.30	3.19	0.45	0.64
Reading newspapers increased my awareness level.	3.95	3.93	0.09	0.92

Note: Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Factors Affecting Reading Trends of the Students

Table 7 displays the mean values for the assertions made about what influences pupils' reading trends. The findings show that six statements had mean scores greater than 3.00 and the remaining statements had

mean scores less than 3.00. These results reveal that most respondents concurred that social networking sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and others affected the reading trends of postgraduate students in Islamabad. (Mean=3.87, SD=1.05) there is a scarcity of interesting and new reading resources, (Mean=3.52, SD=1.21), lack of reading materials at home (Mean=3.48, SD=1.28), and most time is spent watching TV and playing video games (Mean=3.36,SD=1.13).

Table 7

Factors affecting reading trends of the students (N=129)

Statement	Means	SD
Social networking platformssuch as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, etc.	3.87	1.05
There is a scarcity of interesting and new reading resources.	3.52	1.21
Lack of reading materials at Home	3.48	1.28
Most time is spent watching TV and playing video games.	3.36	1.13
The library's information services are insufficient.	3.20	1.27
When reading, I get bored.	3.13	1.26
Staff hostility in the library.	2.92	1.23
Reading is too time-consuming	2.74	1.28
Lack of motivation to read	2.71	1.23
Lack of conducive home environment	2.60	1.26

Note: Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Factors affecting reading trends of the students based on gender.

An independent t-test was used to look into the large discrepancy between male and female respondents' assessments of the factors impacting students' reading trends. According to the findings in table 8, there was no statistically significant difference in the respondents' perceptions of the factors affecting the students' reading trends between the genders.

Table 8

Factors affecting reading trends of the students based on genders (N=129)

Statement	Mean		t-value	Sig.
	Male (68)	Female (61)		
The library's information services are insufficient.	3.19	3.22	-1.69	0.86
There is a scarcity of interesting and new reading resources.	3.45	3.60	-0.70	0.48
Social networking platforms such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, etc.	3.89	3.85	0.23	0.81
Most time is spent watching TV and playing video games.	3.51	3.19	1.59	0.11
Staff hostility in the library.	2.82	3.03	-0.96	0.33
Lack of conducive home environment	2.58	2.62	-0.15	0.87
Lack of motivation to read	2.76	2.65	0.49	0.62
Lack of reading materials at home	3.47	3.49	-0.09	0.92
Reading is too time-consuming	2.72	2.77	-0.22	0.82
When reading, I get bored.	3.19	3.08	0.48	0.62

Note: Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

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Discussions

Question 1: What are the trends of reading among post-graduate students?

The findings of this study revealed that the respondents agreed that they read for multiple purposes including educational assignment and course work, self-development, preparation of exam, and to improve the ability of spoken/written English language. An Independent t-test was applied to examine the significant difference among the opinions of male and female respondents. The results demonstrated that male respondents significantly agreed that the purpose of reading for them was to improve spoken/written English *(p=0.02)*. The findings showed that male respondents significantly agreed that the formal characteristics of a book (thickness, font size, drawings, etc.) influence my decision to read it or not *(p=0.04)*. The results demonstrated that female respondents significantly agreed that "I first hear about the book I'm going to read from friends who have read it or from my professor who has suggested it for a specific course" *(p=0.03)*. The previous study of Rafiq and Warraich (2018) also correlates with the findings of current study. They confirmed that the users had access to Google Books and used e-books for academic purposes. A previous study of Soroya and Ameen (2016) also reported that the digital reading has grown because of the presence of digital computers and digital learning materials.

Question 2: What effect do reading trends have on students' academic success?

The present study explored that respondent got grades due to reading, expresstheir-self well in the class, they can make assignments easily, make them feel proud and reading newspapers increased their awareness level. An independent t-test was used to investigate the difference between theopinions of genders on the impact of reading on students' performances. The results disclosed that there is no significant difference between the opinions of both gender male and female. The past study of Soroya and Ameen (2018) also confirms that if the reading trends of students are improved it will positively impact on students' performance. They found the participants were using a notebook and smartphone for reading purposes. They also mentioned that responders were required to read a variety of books in print and digital formats. The previous study of Rafique (2014) also correlates with the current study. He found that the digital knowledge skills of students were enhanced because of their participation in research activities. Mahmood and Saeed (2014) also confirmed that the students often use digital data for academic purposes.

Question 3: What types of influences have an impact on students' reading trends?

The present study discovered that the respondents agreed that factors affecting the reading trends of postgraduate students of Islamabad included social networking platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, etc. There was scarcity of interesting and new reading resources, lack of reading materials at home, and most time is spent watching TV and playing video games. The findings of the independent t-test showed that no significant difference was found in the opinions of male and female respondents regarding the factors affecting reading trends of the students. The past study of Soroya and Ameen (2020) also repots some challenges that affect the reading trends of students. They highlighted several issues of reading trends, including a lack of preparedness (on the part of students and institutions), poor interaction quality, a lack of enthusiasm, a lack of class activities, and a forced adoption of e-learning Ahmad et al., (2021) argue that the parents face most difficulty encouraging their children to read because of the excessive usage of screens like mobile phones, TVs, and video games.

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Conclusions

This study concludes that the post-graduate students of the university libraries in Islamabad prefer to read electronic documents rather than reading paper materials. They read for multiple purposes, including for academic assignments and course work, self-development, preparation of exams, and to improve their ability in spoken and written English language communication. Moreover, due to reading, the respondents get good grades in exams, express their-self well in the class, they also make assignments easily, reading makes them feel proud and reading newspapers increases their awareness level. The factors that negatively affect the reading trends of the postgraduate students of Islamabad include social networking platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, etc. and time spent in watching TV and playingvideo games. The students need to overcome the habit of the excessive use of social media networks in order to gain best results in their pedagogical and social activities.

Recommendations

1. Parents and teachers should try to develop reading trends in students in theearly years of their age.
2. Libraries should host seminars on the topic of reading trends in order to create and foster a culture of reading in the students.
3. Teachers should encourage students to engage in leisure reading books.
4. Students should spend less time on using social media networking websites.
5. Nowadays, students like to read on screen. Therefore, parents should try to make available tablets and laptops to their children.
6. Students should focus on reading course work books so that they may get good grades in their studies.
7. Librarians should conduct information literacy sessions to attract students towards reading biographies of famous personalities, novels, and science fiction.
8. Library management and university administration should create a comfortableenvironment in the library so that students can comfortably read in the library.

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