

Reading Behavior of Chinese Primary and Secondary School Students: A Systematic Review

Yucheng Zhou

Monitor Business Machines New Zealand, Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract: *This paper's objective is to give a thorough summary of research on the reading behavior of Chinese primary and secondary school students. The majority of existing research in this field focuses on the importance of extensive reading, the status quo of reading practices among Chinese students, factors that influence student reading behavior, and techniques for enhancing student reading accomplishment. It is proposed that this review will generate more interest in the development of basic education students' reading skills.*

Science Insights Education Frontiers 2022; 13(2):1923-1937.

Doi: 10.15354/sief.22.re077

How to Cite: Zhou, Y. (2022). Reading behavior of Chinese primary and secondary school students: A systematic review. Science Insights Education Frontiers, 13(2):1923-1937.

Keywords: *Reading Environment, Reading Literacy, Extensive Reading, Primary and Secondary School Students*

Correspondence to: *Yucheng Zhou, Monitor Business Machines New Zealand, Auckland, New Zealand. E-mail: daniel.zhou@monitorbm.com*

Correspondence to: *Yucheng Zhou at Monitor Business Machines New Zealand of New Zealand.*

Conflict of Interests: *None*

© 2022 Insights Publisher. All rights reserved.



Creative Commons NonCommercial CC BY-NC: This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 License (<http://www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits non-commercial use, reproduction and distribution of the work without further permission provided the original work is attributed by the Insights Publisher.

READING has been a crucial element of education for strengthening students' cognitive skills and cultivating their humanity. Since the 1990s, however, the attainment of reading literacy among Chinese primary and secondary students has been hampered by the prevalence of internet-based fragmented reading, the decline of brick-and-mortar bookstores, and the outmoded method of teaching Chinese. Under the influence of profit-seeking capital, the book industry has become saturated with superficial and entertaining reading materials; the popular culture-influenced reading environment is detrimental to the spiritual development of students. In addition, reading in class has become tedious and routine as a result of exam-focused classroom instruction. Students may rarely recognize the pleasure of high-quality reading in this environment, let alone improve their cultural literacy, increase their cognitive capacity, and develop their character through reading. The decline in reading competence will not only hinder the intellectual, moral, and humanistic literacy development of students but will also result in talent scarcity in the cultural industry and a decline in the overall quality of the nation. To improve the reading literacy of students, it is required to undertake a logical analysis of the difficulties in their reading behavior and the underlying causes in order to develop appropriate tactics for improvement. Based on an examination of relevant journal articles and degree theses and dissertations, this study attempted to provide an overview of student reading behavior research in China against the backdrop of basic education curriculum reform in order to provide implications for future discussion on this topic.

Literature Sources

The Chinese academic database “CNKI” (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) was searched using the phrases “primary and secondary school children” and “reading behavior” to locate papers on this subject. Using 3,759 publications that were published between 2003 and 2022 as a starting point, keywords and frequently mentioned literature were screened.

The History of Research on the Reading Behavior of Primary and Secondary School Students

Research on the reading habits of elementary and secondary school students began in 2003, grew significantly starting in 2011, and peaked in 2019 (a total of 331 articles). It experienced a decline from the year 2019 until a turning point came in 2021. In the past, student reading behavior was a matter of discussion and debate in the educational world. However, due to teachers', parents', and students' fixation with high-stakes exams, advocates for voluntary or free reading were silenced. This was reflected in the volume of publications. Following recent changes to the nation's basic education curriculum program and course requirements that emphasize the development of student comprehensive competencies, the importance of student reading literacy has returned to the forefront of academics. This review concentrates on pertinent publications that have been released since 2011 to guarantee the representativeness and concentration of the review.

Keywords in Existing Student Reading Behavior Research

The frequency of keywords is calculated using data visualization analytics, and high-frequency terms like “reading guidance,” “reading interest,” “reading literacy,” “present state of student reading,” and “reading practices” are detected. In the most recent studies on the reading habits of Chinese primary and secondary school students, these keywords also constitute the hottest discussion points. The vast majority of academics and educators concur that reading literacy is a must for students to succeed academically overall and that students who ignore or lack it are hindered in their academic advancement and long-term development. Therefore, the primary issues in reading research now center on ways to enhance reading literacy, heighten reading interest, and boost voluntary reading among children in basic education.

Studies on the Value of Reading for Primary and Secondary School Students

In most cases, a well-written book has a lifelong impact on its readers. A nation’s spiritual depth is heavily dependent on its reading proficiency. However, there is no clear and systematic instruction for extensive reading teaching in current Chinese textbooks. Students’ free reading time is crowded out by examination-focused instruction. Children are deprived of the opportunity to engage in voluntary reading due to their parents’ utilitarian educational views. Additionally, the fragmented reading environment impairs students’ ability to read in depth. As a result, many Chinese language instructors do not place sufficient emphasis on reading instruction and do not know how to direct students to engage in substantial reading. In this context, a growing number of researchers have emphasized the importance of reading for enhancing students’ language competence and holistic competencies.

The Importance of Reading in Chinese Language Teaching

Researchers concur that increasing free reading can compensate for the shortcomings of in-class reading. Students should be encouraged to concentrate on reading motivational, educational, and literary works with average comprehension requirements and a variety of subject matter. In the meanwhile, students might jot down those helpful sayings, maxims, and proverbs as well as their thoughts on the books they have read. Students’ language competence, writing abilities, and capacity for reasoning can all be enhanced as a result.

Zhang (2014) asserted that reading plays a crucial role in developing students’ comprehension, which is the ability to comprehend the meaning of words and sentences and the ideas of the text through a series of thinking processes such as summary, analysis, evaluation, and comparison based on their prior knowledge and reading experience. Through reading instruction, Chinese language instructors can enhance students’ comprehension of fundamental Chinese concepts, such as word choice and sentence structure.

Most students find writing challenging since they frequently don’t know what to write about. Despite the fact that they may have read a lot, they do not intentionally make the connection between writing and reading. Wang (2012) recommended that teachers incorporate reading-for-writing activities into their lesson plans to provide additional reading instruction. They may suggest excellent books for students to read out-

side of class and give them a variety of responsibilities to do afterward, such as creating reports or reviews, leading seminars, etc. Students could develop their ability to use lovely words, phrases, amazing sentiments, aesthetic experiences, and profound ideas learned from reading to produce creative writing in this way.

Li's (2019) research found that teachers' guidance and teaching for reading have a significant impact on students' selection of reading resources. Due to their calming effects, online novels, cartoons, and other leisure activities are very likely to pique the interest of primary and secondary school students, particularly when they find classics to be too serious and challenging to comprehend. As a result, students imitate those unusual and ungrammatical network phrases that run counter to the grammatical and syntactical principles that the teacher tries to transmit in class. That gives Chinese language instructors a headache. In order to reduce students' predilection for leisure reading over serious reading and to foster in them good reading habits and a love of reading, educators should establish effective reading instruction programs.

The Significance of Reading for the Cultivation of Student Comprehensive Competences

Reading, rather than being the end goal of student personal development, is one of the means by which individual character is developed. Students can gain experience in voluminous reading, develop personal reading methods, and improve their reading appreciation ability through consistent reading, so that reading can truly become a source of spiritual support for students' growth and assist students' multi-dimensional development of emotions, attitudes, and values.

He (2020) highlighted that influential works were frequently rich in significant content. Literary works, for instance, frequently feature exciting storylines, elegant language, and complex character interactions; academic works, on the other hand, are characterized by profound thought, rigorous arguments, and a wealth of specialized knowledge. Students can only fully understand the work and make creative use of its worth through memorization, understanding, analysis, and other thinking processes. Students can develop systematic thinking and broaden their perspectives by reading books in depth and skillfully that have tightly structured material and strong reasoning.

Cai (2016) claimed that each kind of literary work has a unique instructional value. A historical novel, for example, allows students to put themselves in a specific historical situation to understand the characters in the work and their fates and, as a result, to cultivate the ability to distinguish between good and evil, beauty and ugliness, in the conflicts represented by the story. Cai's point of view echoes the requirement of national course standards for reading instruction: by appreciating well-organized language expressions, touching events, and overall artistic constructs of literary works, students improve their cognitive ability and emotional skills, completing the "inheritance of culture" naturally.

As per Li's (2017) study, reading has a fundamental value in its capacity to foster spiritual communication, and teachers should encourage their students to incorporate their personal experiences into the reading process in order to pique their emotions, reflections, and desires for communication. When students have a certain base of knowledge under their belts, they will naturally examine texts critically, and group discussions may then inspire their creativity and sharpen their analytical skills. In order for students to voice their particular opinions from multiple viewpoints and gain a custom-

ized comprehension of the text in the discourse, teachers should purposefully give them opportunities for dialogue, discussion, and inquiry throughout reading instruction.

Studies on the Current State of Student Reading

Reading Motives and Preferences of Primary and Secondary School Students

Zhang's (2013) study found that students read a lot for different reasons depending on where they are in their learning, but the top three reasons were the same for all of them: to learn more, to do better in school, and for fun. But in the current education system, which is focused on tests, students tend to spend more and more time and energy on required subjects and extra learning materials that are directly related to the senior secondary and college entrance exams as they move up through the grades.

Zhang (2018) emphasized that many schools continue to evaluate students solely based on their test scores, resulting in an unnecessary amount of schooling for students. Students must complete large amounts of homework after school and have little time for leisurely reading. Under such conditions, even the restricted reading time is devoted to reading for predetermined reasons. Students who do poorly in writing, for instance, would focus on reading instructional books and may even memorize different types of model essays to imitate on tests.

Wei (2010) revealed that many students regard after-class reading as merely an extension of the subject of Chinese. They are primarily interested in reading activities that will improve their comprehension and expression skills, which will directly affect their exam scores, while ignoring classical, significant works that have no immediate connection to academic success. Students' enthusiasm for reading becomes suppressed and warped over time, and after-class reading not only fails to relieve students' mental tension but instead becomes a hefty scholastic load for them.

Extensive reading, on the other hand, may just be a recreational leisure-time pastime for some students; picture-text mixed books, such as comics and cartoons, which are amusing, vibrant, and straightforward, can readily resonate with teenagers. This phenomenon reflects a tendency in the extensive reading of teenagers: a move from "text" to "image" reading. Teenagers' understanding and reasoning abilities are likely to suffer as a result of a lack of text reading.

Wang (2015) observed in his questionnaire study that elementary school kids chose comic books, such as *The Journey to the West* and *The Legend of Deification*, as their preferred genres of reading. This is partially a result of young children's inherent curiosity, which is more likely to be piqued by magical mythologies and the aesthetic qualities of books, such as color, pattern, and binding style. Junior secondary students are anxious to expand their life experience through reading as they go through a quick period of physical and mental development. As a result, novels have become their preferred genre. Students in senior secondary schools are getting closer to adulthood and starting to consider their future growth; therefore, they are more interested in biographies and other motivational literature.

Xie (2020) revealed via visits to local primary schools that picture books accounted for the biggest amount of students' free reading resources, which was about 65%, whereas language books made up only 4.2%. This illustrates that primary school students have a relatively restricted range of options for voluntary reading, with pleasure and recreation serving as the primary motivation. As teachers would propose certain

simplified classical literary works for after-class reading, students are more likely to be lured to read “fast food” books after completing “serious and challenging” reading assignments.

According to Zhou’s (2019) analysis of the sales data of Fuzhou No. 8 Middle School Bookstore, a branch of Fujian Dream Bookstore, foreign literature works account for nearly half of the sales and Chinese literature books account for about a third of the turnover, indicating that literary works are the preferred category of reading materials among secondary school students. Middle school kids’ reading habits are becoming increasingly recreational and fast-food-like, according to sales data from the school bookstore. For example, sales of science-thriller novels such as *Dragon Family IV* and tomb-robbery novels such as *Ghosts Blow the Lamp*, the majority of which are taken from online writings of dubious quality, have surged dramatically. As a result, it is critical to provide students with guidance so that they can broaden their reading selection and engage in extensive reading.

Reading Practices of Primary and Secondary School Students

Existing research on the reading practices of primary and secondary school students discovered that, while the majority of them are very interested in reading, a large proportion of them are unable to do scheduled, ample reading, let alone take notes and write down some reflections during the reading process. The great academic strain produced by high-stakes exams is the cause of this phenomenon.

In Lu’s (2013) survey of first through ninth graders in Shanghai, 73.4% said that reading was one of their favorite things to do in their free time. 51.5% spent about 30 minutes a day on extensive reading, and 27.8% spent about 60 minutes a day. The other 20.7% did not read every day. The data showed that the amount of time students in Shanghai spend reading is far from enough.

Ren et al. (2015) conducted a survey of urban primary and secondary school students from six provincial administrative regions in China using a random sample to collect data on self-evaluation of reading behavior, personal reading practices, unhealthy reading behavior, and factors that influence reading. The findings revealed that the majority of students believed that reading practices had a significant impact on Chinese language proficiency; that the mean degree of preference for reading was between “above average” and “average”; and that less than one-third of the students read every day, with the majority devoting approximately one hour per day to reading. Notable is the fact that 14.4% of students conducted no independent reading. According to percentage rankings, the reasons for “dislike” and “intense dislike” of extensive reading are as follows: lack of time due to heavy homework loads (50.5%), limited access to books for free reading (27.3%), lack of interest in reading (22.8%), high book prices (22.3%), a preference for watching television and playing online games (21.1%), and parental prohibition against child free reading (14.4%). The statistics indicate that a significant proportion of instructors and parents do not adequately create reading opportunities for youngsters and spark their interest in reading.

Tah (2015) conducted an extracurricular literature reading survey with 834 primary school students in Horqin Right Front Banner of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and discovered that their reading participation rates and reading time were far below the criterion for literary reading stipulated by national course standards. Only

24.2% of third and fourth graders and 41.7% of fifth and sixth graders engage in daily voluntary reading.

The General Secondary School Student Reading Behavior Questionnaire 2018 was developed by Liu (2020), who then conducted a survey of 40,012 students, who were chosen at random from all junior and senior secondary schools in Changsha City. According to the online survey's findings, the majority of students read for one hour and thirty minutes each day; just one-fourth of them read for more than an hour each day; and more than seventy percent of them read in bed at night or on weekends. As a result, reading time is brief and dispersed, which is not good for enhancing students' reading skills.

Li (2019) noticed that although quite a few students genuinely enjoy free reading, only 40% of them read intermittently without planning in his random sampling survey of more than 100 junior secondary school students in Shanghai. 60% of the students said that a lack of time prevented them from reading as much as they would have liked. Implementing a set reading schedule consistently is necessary to improve reading literacy. Random and interrupted reading has little impact on students' comprehension.

Reading Instructions for Primary and Secondary School Students

Self-regulation is still developing among students in basic school, necessitating external guidance for their considerable reading. Consequently, it is vital to investigate the ways of encouraging students continued reading. Existing research indicates that the majority of schools aim to provide children with reading instruction through reading-specific lessons and reading-related extracurricular activities.

Hao proposed (2020) that masterpieces often have profound meaning, cover a wide range of subject matter, and pose significant difficulties to the cognitive ability of elementary and secondary school students. Young kids may find acclaimed literary works confusing and boring. Therefore, reading-focused courses are essential to encouraging students to read classics since they allow teachers to explain the social context of the work and the humanistic concepts it contains. Nevertheless, Hao discovered that even though all schools offer reading lessons, the majority of them are treated as sessions for reading "exemplary articles," which are merely extensions of the Chinese language course. Her survey sampled 716 primary and secondary schools in 9 counties under the jurisdiction of Xiangyang City.

Nearly a quarter of the students in Changsha City who participated in Liu's (2020) investigation said that their school had never offered any reading-specific courses, and a third said they had one or two reading sessions each semester. Although reading lessons are offered weekly in almost half of the city's secondary schools, and senior secondary school students receive significantly more of them than their junior secondary school counterparts, the overall frequency of reading lessons is insufficient to meet the demands of the students.

Chen et al. (2019) conducted a field investigation in 80 primary and secondary schools in Ningbo City to examine how the school libraries functioned and how the schools attempted to foster a reading environment. Only 10 of the surveyed schools had built regular reading programs with their own distinctive features, they discovered, even though 92% of the schools held extracurricular reading events annually. About 90% of school libraries are larger than 300 square meters, 67% have librarians working full-time, and 58% receive annual funding for book purchases.

Studies on Factors Influencing Students' Reading Behavior

The Influence of Popular Literature Reading

As a result of the information boom and the accelerated speed of life, there has been an increase in popular literature and a loss in serious reading. The proliferation of new media such as the Internet, mobile phones, and e-books has led to an explosion of writing like fast food. Young students are naturally susceptible to peer influence and groupthink; therefore, this setting will surely have a significant impact on their ability to read freely. Those who lack the proper guidance of teachers and parents are more likely to gravitate toward reading materials that are offensive and provide no benefit.

According to Yuan (2007), there are two basic reasons why elementary and high school students enjoy reading popular literature. To begin with, popular culture is more accessible to young kids; it does not need a great deal of work because it is designed to provide fun and pleasure through direct and simple techniques. Popular literature caters to the demands of young people while simultaneously shaping their reading preferences. Once individuals become accustomed to superficial reading, real literature that requires significant time and effort becomes foreign and unappealing to them. The second cause is teachers' and parents' preoccupation with test scores. Numerous teachers and parents are compelled to overburden children with excessive quantities of homework, despite the fact that basic education should create a spiritual foundation for children's development. Under the influence of their peers, even though some students are interested in books with artistic and intellectual merit, they may turn to popular novels for mental comfort.

Long-term exposure to "culture fast food," according to Bi (2012), would dull students' awareness of superb language and deprive them of spiritual discourse with remarkable authors. The compositions of students contain an increasing amount of network slang and excessive language. In their works, personal expression and self-discovery are absent. Ironically, the students' self-assumed desire for identity culminates in similarities and mediocrity.

Luo et al. (2020) determined that the most significant disadvantage of popular literature is that it lacks the teaching role of serious literature. Popular literature is limited to the expression of personal emotions and serves as a form of pleasure, entertainment, and emotional release. Traditional literature, on the other hand, can provide students with profound insights into human nature as well as play the role of moral instruction. Due to the fact that popular literature is aimed at maximizing audiences and commercial success, its literary and artistic merit is debatable, and its harmful impact on elementary and secondary school students should be investigated.

The Impact of Fragmented Reading

The ideal reading list for elementary school students would include a wide range of books on various topics. Due to the limited amount of time for free reading, the bulk of students may currently only learn about masterpieces and classics through their distilled forms, extracts, or fragments. Whole book reading, as opposed to fragmented reading, can educate students about the author's overall viewpoints, engulf them in a wealth of knowledge, and foster students' global perspective on the world. When students become

accustomed to reading in fragments, their comprehension and motivation to learn will suffer. Over time, information retrieval will take the place of students' autonomous thinking while reading.

According to He's (2020) study, current reading instruction places an overabundance of emphasis on fragmented reading while underestimating the relevance of whole-work-based sustained reading. Another concern is the usage of so-called "reading reference resources," which include summaries and main concepts from articles and books. Such predetermined direction or "authoritarian" interpretation really interferes with students' reading experiences and has a negative impact on students' reading interest and accomplishment, as well as their ability to think creatively.

Min Zhang (2019) believed that the snippets from full works included in modern textbooks are relatively easy in structure and subject matter compared to the originals and can be comprehended without in-depth thought or advanced reading skills. Reading only excerpts limits students' horizons and has no positive effect on their reading proficiency. Such training in literacy and reading abilities cannot provide students with the capacity to comprehend texts with a more complicated structure and content. In contrast, students' higher-order reading skills can be developed through the reading of an entire book with more expansive scenes and emotional depth.

However, Zhang and Zhang (2015) argued that fragmented reading has its own set of benefits. Students in a highly competitive educational setting must accomplish mountains of schoolwork and attend multiple specialization programs, leaving little time for free reading. This is not going to change in the near future. In this context, it is an appropriate approach for relevant specialists to create "introductions" to masterpieces for students based on their professional interpretation and make classics accessible to students. When fragmented reading becomes an inescapable practice, students can use it to their advantage by learning about classics through well-written introductions.

Disparities in Reading Facilities between Cities and Towns

Shanghai's primary and secondary students rated first in the PISA 2000 and 2009 reading literacy surveys. Their reading brilliance is intimately tied to the optimal reading conditions established by communities, schools, and families (Lu, 2015). The fundamental parts of reading are reading settings, readers, and reading materials. As a vital condition for students' enjoyable and engaging reading, a good reading environment can increase their reading interest and improve their reading achievements. At the moment, concerns such as the public's low reading literacy, a scarcity of high-quality books, and a poor reading environment are negatively affecting the reading behavior of primary and secondary school students in China's large, underdeveloped areas, particularly rural areas.

There is a significant difference in the reading environment between rural and urban regions, according to Chen's (2020) study. Urban students gain a lot from a supportive reading environment and a variety of reading promotion activities, whereas in rural regions there are not enough facilities for reading and there are not enough ways to evaluate reading activities scientifically. Additionally, some migrant workers who live in rural areas are separated from their children who were left behind and are unable to monitor their reading. Even if they share a home with their kids, some parents in remote areas don't read much themselves, let alone recommend books to their kids or make the environment conducive to their avid reading.

Wang's (2019) analysis found that, due to financial constraints, the majority of rural elementary schools frequently lack their own libraries. Students often have access to a tiny collection of books in the few schools that have libraries. As a result, rural students rarely carry any additional reading materials in their schoolbags besides their textbooks and practice books. The majority of teachers in rural areas are fully aware of the value of substantial reading, but for a variety of reasons, they are unable to provide students with the reading instruction they need. Rural students find it challenging to develop their reading literacy and all-around competencies in such educational circumstances.

The Influence of Electronic Devices on Student Reading Modes

The ease availability of the internet and digital media is drastically altering how students read. Students now read in a wider variety of ways because of the widespread use of digital gadgets. Students' information-gathering and information-outputting behaviors have changed as a result of reading electronic texts, which unavoidably changes their cognitive patterns and, in turn, influences how they read.

Yuan et al. (2018) determined that reading electronic text is comparable to rapid screen browsing. During this process, fresh reading material is continuously stored in short-term memory, although only a small amount can be preserved in long-term memory. After using electronic devices, the majority of students are able to increase their reading speed, which is one consequence of their altered reading habits. Long-term reliance on electronic media may result in a propensity for superficial reading and a poor level of information internalization.

On the other hand, Liu (2018) asserted that because electronic media offer aids for taking notes, including real-time text highlighting, intercepting, and marking, they are advantageous to students' reading outcomes. If properly applied, these tools will alter students' thought processes, encourage full participation in their own learning, and improve reading effectiveness.

He (2021) has relatively neutral opinions. He stated that while conventional print media should continue to dominate student reading, electronic text reading should not be overlooked because of its growing popularity in the digital era. There is no significant difference between the two types of reading media in terms of the functions and outcomes of reading. Students can utilize electronic devices to read books they are interested in at any time and in any place, which gives electronic media a distinct edge in after-class reading.

Studies on Improvement Measures for K-12 Students' Reading

Researchers agreed that communities, schools, and parents must collaborate to improve the reading skills of students. All parties should increase their knowledge of the significance of excellent reading behavior among students and contribute to the construction of optimal reading environments for the kids' long-term development.

Recommendations on Community-Level Efforts

Existing studies include enhancing reading facilities, strengthening reading instruction for kids in basic education, and organizing meaningful reading activities as means of improving student reading proficiency at the community level. The local education department and community libraries are obligated to provide students with high-quality reading materials and reading guidance; they should also host reading activities on a regular basis to pique students' interest in reading classical works and reduce fragmented, superficial reading.

Chen (2020) claimed that the government should take the initiative to provide enticing reading environments for all residents in order to close the gap between urban and rural reading circumstances and resources. To ensure that every elementary and secondary school student has easy access to high-quality reading materials, the government should increase its investment in the construction and modernization of reading venues. To maximize the use of publicly funded reading resources, the government should also distribute books from urban libraries to public reading services in small towns and villages.

Li (2016) proposed that the government sponsor the design of a public reading service emblem and promote it via television and the Internet in order to increase public awareness of reading facilities. The identification of a public reading service might be a logo displayed in a prominent location; it is also recommended to unify the pattern and color of the appearance of public reading facilities to make local public libraries or reading services easily recognizable. In order to encourage students to visit and read in the library, community librarians can also be dispatched to schools to deliver lectures on the regular services of the public library and the specifics of library use, such as the library's location, appropriate opening hours for elementary and secondary school students, book borrowing procedures, etc.

Hao (2020) recommended that the government coordinate all types of digital resources and compel local libraries to enlist the aid of digital platforms such as portal websites, WeChat, and QQ in order to offer specialized services to elementary and secondary school students. Big data analytics can be used to push personalized digital resources to students of different ages, and online library use helps students improve their ability to search for useful digital information, thus improving their digital literacy. With the support of online platforms, students can access extensive reading materials relevant to classroom teaching content.

Recommendations on School-Level Efforts

The present study on basic education student reading indicates that there is great room for improvement in the classroom reading environment. The majority of studies underline the need for schools to spend more money on library conditions and for teachers to provide students with greater guidance for their substantial reading.

He (2020) stated that modern Chinese reading instruction requires new teaching strategies from Chinese language instructors. In the age of information explosion, people are exposed to a vast array of information and have multiple means of acquiring knowledge. With so many options for reading, students frequently struggle to decide what to read. To guarantee that students are immersed in excellent works, teachers should carefully choose the reading material for reading sessions. They should also teach students practical reading strategies so that they can read effectively and efficiently.

Yu (2007) underlined the importance of the school library in guiding students' in-depth reading. The school library should take the initiative to inform students about the most recent publications, invite experts and scholars to compile reading lists of highly recommended books for students based on their knowledge and perspectives in the relevant fields, and assist students in locating educational reading materials to increase their scientific and cultural literacy.

The improvement of student reading literacy has been hampered, according to Liu's (2020) study, by a shortage of high-quality reading courses, insufficient school library resources, and other factors. The school library should try to attract more student readers by improving the reading rooms and the online reading platform. Both in-class and inter-class reading-related interaction should be encouraged to foster the sharing of reading resources and experiences. Schools should work to establish long-term mechanisms for reading instructions, update student reading lists on a regular basis, and assist students in creating reading plans.

In light of the impact of digital reading on student reading behavior, Gu, Li, and Chang (2020) asserted that schools must regulate students' use of electronic devices on campus but can encourage teachers to utilize the benefits of digital media to broaden students' reading experiences, such as reading multiple texts and engaging in cross-cultural reflection and evaluation. In addition to specialized digital literacy instruction, the development of students' digital reading skills is aided by such training.

Suggestions for Parents

Studies suggest that family socioeconomic situation, parental education level, and the size of the family's book collection have a substantial effect on the reading motivation of elementary and secondary school students. Parents with a high level of education typically spend a great deal of money on books and periodicals as long as the family's financial situation allows. A reading-friendly family environment can promote students' interest in reading organically (Liu, 2012).

Yuqi Zhang (2019) stressed that parental reading habits have a significant impact on children's reading behavior and recommended that parents foster the ideal family reading environment by acting as role models for their kids when it comes to free reading. Additionally, he discovered that the majority of children's reading materials were owned by their parents and that the quantity of books in the home was a reliable indicator of kids' reading interests. To meet their children's various reading needs, parents should make an effort to amass a large book collection.

In her paper, Liu (2012) recommended that parents use rewards like praise and cash gifts to encourage their children's reading motivation. High-self-efficacy kids are more willing to take on obstacles and are more tenacious while working on long-term projects. As a result, parents should provide children with timely feedback and motivation to increase their reading self-efficacy.

Advice to Students

Researchers generally agree that improving students' reading competency and results depends on their awareness of reading, engagement with reading, and use of effective reading strategies. In his study, Wu (2011) emphasizes the need for students to create personalized reading schedules that are tailored to their unique reading abilities and are continually modified to ensure that their limited reading time is spent on carefully cho-

sen, insightful books. According to Liu (2022), children should set a long-term objective for free reading while understanding that reading is about long-term spiritual development rather than instant rewards. Students must understand that reading is a way to get a greater understanding of life and the world, not just a “job” to accomplish or a way to boost academic performance. The ideal reading engagement, according to Xiao (2019), is “talking through the reading substance.” To increase their worry about their reading development and sustain a constant interest in reading, students can talk with their peers about a story’s storyline or their own knowledge and sentiments during any time that is not class time, such as before and after class, during lunch, etc.

Conclusion

Reading is more than a simple pastime. In actuality, reading helps us increase our knowledge and skills while also gaining useful experience from others. People establish the habit of reading as early as childhood. Education in primary and secondary schools is setting the groundwork for students’ development and lifetime learning. Their reading consciousness, interest, and techniques must therefore be well developed during the basic education stage. Communities, schools, and families should collaborate to create conducive reading environments and provide young people with an abundance of high-quality reading materials in order to maximize their reading literacy development, which not only serves as a foundation for success in other academic areas across the board but also as a requirement for successful adult participation in society.

References

- Bi, S. J. (2008). The instruction of Chinese in the context of popular culture. *Contemporary Education Sciences*, 2008(2):61-62+64.
- Cai, L. (2016). Teaching of Chinese reading in junior secondary schools in the context of the new curriculum reform. *Education Modernization*, 2016(34):350-352. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16541/j.cnki.2095-8420.2016.34.142>
- Chen, L. Z. (2020). The current reading environments of primary and secondary school students. *Library Journal of Henan*, 2020(2):55-56+59.
- Chen, Z. J., Tu, J. N., Fu, W. P., Ying, H. L., & Ke, Y. Q. (2019). “Library+School”: The experiment of Ningbo University Park Library in promoting extracurricular reading among primary and secondary students. *Library Science Research and Work*, 2019(9):62-66. DOI: <http://dx.chinadoi.cn/10.3969/j.issn.2096-2363.2019.09.014>
- Gu, L. L., Li, G. & Chang, Y. H. (2020). An interpretation of PISA2018: An investigation of Chinese students’ reading literacy and suggestions based on the analysis of PISA2018 data from four provinces and cities of China and the international comparison. *School Administration*, 2020(1):21-24. DOI: <http://dx.chinadoi.cn/10.3969/j.issn.10022384.2020.01.005>
- Hao, L. L. (2020). Reflections on the cooperation between public libraries and schools in promoting the reading of classics among primary and secondary school students: An empirical study based on data from primary and secondary schools in Xiangcheng District, Xiangyang City. *Li-*

- brary World, 2020(4):89-94. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14072/j.cnki.tsjg.2020.04.019>
- He, W. C. (2021). Skillful use of electronic devices to promote Chinese learning. *Education Circle*, 2021(30):4-5.
- He, W. D. (2020). The principle, function, and problem resolution in the teaching of "whole-book reading". *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*, 2020(7):72-78+143. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.19877/j.cnki.kcjcf.2020.07.012>
- He, W. G. (2020). Misconceptions about the teaching of modern Chinese reading in junior secondary schools and countermeasures. *Examination Weekly*, 2020(79):29-30.
- Li, J. (2019). The current state, significance, and suggestions for free reading of secondary school students under the background of the New Curriculum Program and Standards (master's thesis). Shanghai Normal University. Available at: <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD2009&filename=2008134331.nh>
- Li, Y. B. (2017). Teaching strategies for reading of text clusters in junior secondary schools under the background of the New Curriculum Program and Standards. *Modern Chinese (Teaching Research Edition)*, 2017(10):132-133.
- Li, Y. Y. (2016). An investigation into primary and secondary school students' reading in community libraries: A case study of Qinhuangdao City. *Journal of Chinese Youth Social Sciences*, 2016(4):75-79. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16034/j.cnki.101318/c.2016.04.014>
- Liu, J. P. (2022). The current state of extracurricular reading of primary school students and promotion strategies (master's thesis). Shenyang Normal University. Available at: <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFDTEMP&filename=1022532390.nh>
- Liu, L. X. (2018). The management of primary and secondary school libraries in the internet era. *The Library Journal of Henan*, 2018(10):74-75.
- Liu, X. F. (2020). Measures to help students develop good reading habits: The big data analysis based on Changsha education quality monitoring 2018. *Examination Research*, 2020(2):16-27.
- Liu, Y. J. (2012). The development of reading motivation of primary school students and influencing factors. *Chinese Journal of Special Education*, 2012(10):90-96. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1007-3728.2012.10.016>
- Lu, M. (2013). Children's dream school library - Shanghai Student Reading Survey Report 2013. *Ideological and Theoretical Education*, 2013(12):35-37. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16075/j.cnki.cn31-1220/g4.2013.12.001>
- Luo, Y. X., Li, Y. Y., Xu, H. F. & Zhou, X. Q. (2010). An investigation of secondary school students' understanding of popular literature. *Business Culture (Academic Edition)*, 2010(7):291.
- Ren, P. J., Wang, Y., & Tu, N. (2015). An investigation of reading behavior of urban primary and middle school students. *Modern Chinese (Teaching Research Edition)*, 2015(1):123-128.
- Tah, N. (2015). The current state of extracurricular literature reading of primary school students. *Learning Weekly*, 2015(15):81. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16657/j.cnki.issn1673-9132.2015.15.063>
- Wang, B. H. (2012). More good reads for free reading of primary and secondary school students. *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*, 2012(1):53-57. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.19877/j.cnki.kcjcf.2012.01.011>
- Wang, Y. G. (2010). Libraries and the promotion of young children's reading. *Library Theory and Practice*, 2010(8):1-3.
- Wang, Y. Q. (2019). Problems in the cultivation of reading literacy of rural primary school students and improvement strategies. *New Curriculum*, 2019(7):231.
- Wei, Q. P. (2010). Over-utilitarian reading practices of primary and secondary school students and transcendence. *Theory and Practice of Education*, 2021(11):51-52.
- Wu, T. (2011). The Choice of Extracurricular Reading Materials for Primary and Middle School Students (master's thesis). Hunan Normal University. Available at: <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD2007&filename=2007173999.nh>
- Xiao, X. (2019). Voluminous reading in childhood. *References for Elementary Teaching*, 2019(3):14-15.
- Xie, M. L. (2020). The current state of extracur-

- ricular reading of the 5th and 6th graders (master's thesis). Shenyang Normal University. Available at: <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD202002&filename=1020741816.nh>
- Xu, A. B. (2021). Misconceptions about the cultivation of student reading literacy and Countermeasures. *College Entrance Examination*, 2021(14):71-72.
- Yu, H. M. (2007). The detriment of “shallow reading” among primary and secondary school students and the responsibilities of librarians. *Journal of Library and Information Sciences in Agriculture*, 2007(11):150-152.
- Yuan, Y. R. (2007). The impact of youth popular culture on secondary school students. *Moral Education China*, 2007(3):25-29.
- Yuan, Y. Y., Ma, X. L., Cao, L. J., & Zhu, H. H. (2018). The impact of electronic devices on reading behavior of primary school students and countermeasures. *The Guide of Science and Education*, 2018(5):143-145. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16400/j.cnki.kjdkz.2018.02.064>
- Zhang, B. M. (2007, May 9th). The lack of motivation for free reading in primary and secondary school students. *China Education News*. pp.005.
- Zhang, G. J. (2018). The current state of extracurricular reading of primary and secondary school students in winter and summer vacations and suggestions. *Neijiang Science and Technology*, 2018(2):129+48.
- Zhang, H. B. (2014). The importance of student reading literacy in primary school Chinese language teaching. *Education Forum*, 2014(7):203-204.
- Zhang, J. & Zhang, Z. T. (2015). The reform of textbooks in the era of fragmented reading. *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*, 2015(10):20-24. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.19877/j.cnki.kcjcjf.2015.100005>
- Zhang, M. (2019). The necessity of teaching voluminous reading in primary schools. *Education Art*, 2019(4):53.
- Zhang, Y. Q. (2019). A new interpretation of “shallow reading” from the perspective of “a broad view of Chinese language”. *Extracurricular Chinese*, 2019(22):5-6.
- Zhou, X. W. (2019). An analysis of reading behavior of secondary school students based on the sales data of campus bookstores: taking the branch of Dream Bookstore in the eighth middle school as an example. *The Library Journal of Fujian*, 2019(3):46-49.

Received: 03 August 2022

Revised: 10 September 2022

Accepted: 24 September 2022