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A Case Study: Relationship Between Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance in Government Post Graduate College Nowshera at Bachelor of Sciences (BS) Level

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A CASE STUDY: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' READING HABITS AND THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN GOVERNMENT POST GRADUATE COLLEGE NOWSHERA AT BACHELOR OF SCIENCES (BS) LEVEL

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Abstract

Those who read more books, have more chances of mental development and better opportunities of success. Hence, this paper is an attempt to find out relationship between students' reading habits and their academic performance in Government Post Graduate College Nowshera, Pakistan at Bachelor of Sciences (BS) level. To collect the relevant data, a questionnaire was designed and distributed among 420 (270 males and 150 females) students studying at BS level. The questionnaire investigated students' reading habit and their attitudes towards reading. Students' academic performances were recorded through the transcripts of their examination in the previous semester. The collected data were analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The researchers concluded that students do not read books frequently and female students take more interest in reading books than male students. It is recommended that teachers and parents should create a conducive environment for students to read more and more books for effective learning. Students should also make library their first point of call to get updated from time to time for development of reading habits. Adequate and updated books, journals, newspaper must be available in the libraries, so that students could be attracted for more reading.

Keywords: Reading habits, Students' Attitude towards Reading, Students' Academic Performance

1 INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in shaping and overall development of individuals (Ozturk, 2011). However, all individuals possess different and unique characters in terms of their thinking, opinions, nature, habits, abilities and interests, due to which they behave differently. Similarly, their educational interests, reading habits and learning capacity also differ from each other in several ways (Jonassen and Grabowski, 2012). Reading is the origin of opening the treasure of knowledge. Reading consists of the complicated relationship between the text and getting meaning from that text (Akubuilu *et al.*, 2015).

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Culture of reading is an important element not only for students' overall development but also important for improvement of society and national development. Furthermore, regular reading provides students free access to world and empower them to become a vital organ of society. Reading makes the community more informed, connected with the world and similarly having a greater connection with the citizens (Olasehinde *et al.*, 2015). In 21st century students of the world will read and write more than at any other time in the human history. They will need higher levels of reading literacy to carry out their jobs, run their households, act as an useful citizens and live their personal lives more effectively. As with the passage of time, technology advances and the media have certainly made students read fewer books. Instead of reading books, they spend a lot of time in surfing the internet and they prefer to do other activities that involved technologies (Annamalai and Muniandy, 2013; and Florence *et al.*, 2017). In the long run, it is very important for students to master reading skills with enhanced reading skills, learners will make better progress in all other areas of learning (Ahmed, 2016). Hence, as leader of the future , university students ought to improve their reading habits by making use of the modern technology. Also, the education system needs to prepare these students to adjust to the social world and for technological changes that are occurring (Mohd Noor, 2011).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were:

- i. To investigate Students' Reading Habits at Bachelor of Sciences (BS) level for overall students and gender wise as well.
- ii. To investigate gender differences in Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance at BS level.
- iii. To find out gender differences in Sub-scales of Students' Reading Habits.
- iv. To find out relationship between Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance.
- v. To examine the relationship among sub-scales of Students' Reading Habits.

Hypothesis of the study

To achieve the above objectives, the following null hypotheses were formulated for testing:

- i. H₀₁: There is no significant difference between males' and females' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance at BS level.
- ii. H₀₂: There is no significant difference among the factors regarding students' Reading Habits at BS level

Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited to students of Bachelor of Sciences (BS), studying various subjects in Government Post Graduate College Nowshera, KP, Pakistan.

1 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Reading

Reading is the gateway to success in education and essential component in the learning process. In literate societies it serves as a means of communication and language acquisition. It is the source of knowledge and entertainment as it satisfies one's longing for knowledge about the world (Thums *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, reading is the practice of understanding and obtaining information for progression and personal growth (Florence *et al.*, 2017). However, reading should start at an early age and sustain for a lifetime (Daniel *et al.*, 2017). Reading is also a very important factor in helping students to improve their fluency, increase their vocabulary and enhance general knowledge (Ho and Lau, 2018). Reading skills can be seen as a required tool for an individual to successfully engage in social life (Williams, 2017). Students who bear good reading skills are eligible to have better job opportunities (Ene, 2017). However, Reading does not become a 'habit' unless it is carried out regularly. When reading is carried out constantly and critically, it is known as reading habits (Erdem, 2015). Reading habits are usually measured in terms of frequency of reading, materials of reading as well as the time spent on reading (Florence *et al.*, 2017). Students who read more and more books, are likely to become proficient readers (Krashen, 2009). Their reading skills assist them in thoroughly comprehending knowledge and information (Annamalai & Muniandy, 2013). According to studies in the United States, students' attitudes towards reading are abstract and reading is the main component in the learning process. (Alsaeedi *et al.*, 2021). Reading habits and attitudes towards reading is one of the primary concerns in the field of education (Baba & Affendi, 2020). Hence reading is a process of thinking, recalling and relating ideas under the functioning of written words. It is the ability to understand what is seen in the text, which is the ability of the reader to capture before processing that information and acquire meaning from it (Adetunji, 2007).

Reading Habits

Reading habit is a continuous process in which an individual organizes his/her reading culture in a worthwhile literacy. Good reading habits are highly essential in students, because one of the most important factors of education is the ability to read, understand and comprehend the text. However to be able to inculcate reading habits, students must read books on daily basis (Yusuf, 2015). Aliyu and Bilikisu (2012) are of the view that reading habits are well-planned activities and deliberate pattern of study which have attained a form of consistency on the part of students towards understanding, academic subjects and passing at examinations. Sangkaeo, (1999) explained that reading is the expression of likeness for each individual, which means every individual have different reading types and preferences. Ilori & Abdulahi, (2016) claimed that development of reading habits should start from an early stage of life for every student through home and parents and should transfer to students in school environment as the poor reading habit has great consequences on the academic performance of every student. Researchers and

educators have highly recommended that good reading habits could be created among the students through conducive reading environment (Berk, 2009; Ormrod, 2006; Pandian, 2000). A good reading habit is essential for one's healthy intellectual growth as it provides the reader with a sense of values which help him to gradually develop the capability to understand other's point of view (Mohd Noor, 2011). One's interest of reading is determined by the amount of reading materials that she/he reads and the intensity, how much she/he wants to keep reading. Apart from that, reading speed, fluency, vocabulary, general knowledge and academic achievement can be developed with a good reading habits (Chettri and Rout, 2013). Florence *et al.*, (2017) concluded that good reading habit improves students' academic performance. They also showed that most of the respondents are aware about the importance of reading books. On the other hand, Anyaegbu, (2016) found that poor reading habit affects students' academic performance, and lack of understanding in reading leads to discourage the students from reading outside the classroom.

Developing Reading Habit

According to Inderjit (2014), reading habit can be developed not only in the classroom or at home, but it can also be developed in community. Anyaegbu (2016) explained that there are four factors which help in the development students' reading habits. First, students' social circle (parents and friends) who enjoy reading, plays an influencing role in the development of her/his reading habits. Second factor is the availability of books at home, in college library or in public library. Third one is teacher, who can influence students' reading habits. Teacher must be good reader as she/he is role models to all students. Finally, the class work that is closely related to library reading. Library is one of the resources that can stimulate and develop the reading interest of students and it plays vital roles in promoting reading (Liu, 2005). Most of the studies concluded that students do not read books for enjoyment, but they read only to pass the examinations. Majority of students prefer to read magazines and fiction materials, mostly their source of reading is electronic material (Alsaedi, *et al.*, 2021; Odewole, 2019; Egong, 2014; and Owusu-Acheaw, 2014).

Purposes of Reading

Students usually read books for their academic achievements known as academic reading, or they read for pleasure, which is known as leisure reading. They also read books for both purposes. Academic reading performed by students, refers to the reading activities which are assigned by teachers, tutors or parents for the sake of acquiring academic knowledge and skills (De Naeghel *et al.*, 2012). It also refers to all text related readings that are done in school, college or universities for acquiring knowledge. Academic reading is complicated and differs from other forms of readings in terms of the length and level of texts (Sohail, 2016). this reading should be done critically and purposefully (Isakson & Isakson, 2017). Researchers have emphasized the role of leisure reading in an individual's life (Attiyat, 2019; Mak & Fancourt, 2020; Whitten *et al.*, 2019; and

Wilhelm & Smith, 2016). Leisure reading reflects the person's choice of reading materials, time and place, which also enhances reading skills and academic performance (Wang *et al.*, 2020). Leisure reading is usually done voluntarily and out-of-school activities (McKenna *et al.*, 2012). A variety of leisure reading materials are available for leisure purposes such as newspapers, fiction books, magazines, comics, novels and many other genres (Rahmat *et al.*, 2018).

Academic Performance

Park *et al.*, (2014) summarized the academic performance of students as knowledge, values and attitudes, skills or appropriate behaviors. The status of academic performance of students is measured by the status of critical thinking ability, analytical reasoning ability, problem-solving ability and communication ability of students. Willcox, (2011) has expressed that academic performance is actually the level of knowledge of students in an area or subject compared to the norm, and it is generally measured using the Grade Point Average (GPA). This is not only an effective way to judge the value growth of students, but also an important way to explore development of students and an effective method to measure the learning and quality of their education (Douglass *et al.*, 2012).

Previous Studies

It has been discovered by Liasu and Bakrin, (2022) to possess the potency to impact positively on the reading habits of the students especially when it robs on the contribution of friends and family in enhancing a positive reading culture. Rasiah *et al.*, (2011) have found that most of the students with 42% mainly read books to pass their examinations, 30% students read books for acquiring knowledge, and only 28% of them read for pleasure. According to the study of Skenderi and Ejupi, (2017), majority of students enjoy reading and the most favorable types of materials which students read, were romance, psychology and economy, while politics and poetry were the least genres favored by students. They mentioned, concerning the frequency of reading books, majority of students read one book every month. In a case study Diwan (2020) has described the reading habits of 200 university students that around half of the students spend 1-3 hours for reading books. They only read books for preparation and passing their competitive examinations. However, only 5 respondents reported reading in their free time for pleasure. It was recommended by the researcher that students are expected to read more books and to allocate time for non-academic readings to develop their personalities and become more qualified to succeed in their subsequent stage of life.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population

Population of this study comprised of total 1398 students (898 males and 500 female students) studying at BS level in Government Post Graduate College Nowshera, Pakistan (College, 2022).

Sample

The size of the sample for this study was constituted as 420 students (270 males and 150 female students) of BS level, which is 30 percent of the total population.

Research Instrument

A questionnaire was used as research instrument. The questionnaire consisting 30-items, was designed to measure students' responses about reading habits. The responses of students were scored on 5-points Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) for each item. The questionnaire comprised of six subscales i.e Students' Attitude towards Reading, Reading Frequency, Reading Material, Time/Duration of Reading, Place/Venue of Reading and Purpose of Reading.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

To check the validity and reliability, the research instrument was evaluated by experts to determine their relevance and applicability, and subsequently, the items were refined. The questionnaire was distributed among a chosen sample of 50 students of BS level in Government Superior Science College, Peshawar, Pakistan. The questionnaire was analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha formula developed by Cronbach (1951). The value of Cronbach Alpha test regarding students' reading habits is 0.76, which suggests a high level of reliability (Wiersma, 2000).

S.No	Scale	Number of Item	Cronbach's Alpha Test
1	Students' Reading Habits	30	0.76

Collection of Data

An online survey was administered to the students of Bachelor level, studying different subject at Government Post Graduate College Nowshera. The survey was elaborated in online Form and shared through college of every group of the subject. As part of the ethical criteria, before fulfilling the survey, the students could read the objectives.

Analysis of Data

The collected data were analyzed by applying descriptive Statistics through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). After applying SPSS, Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and Skewness were calculated in order to meet the objectives of the study. Student's Independent t-test was applied for investigation of significance of the difference between males' and females' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance. Furthermore gender differences in subscales of Students' Reading Habits were also investigated. Relationships among Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance were examined through Coefficient of Pearson Correlation. Relationships among subscales of Students' Reading Habits were also investigated.

4 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Statistical Package (SPSS) was applied for statistical analysis in order to achieve the above mentioned objectives. The results and interpretation are given in the following tables.

Results:

Table 1 Descriptive Statistic of Subscales of Students' Reading Habits

S.No	Sub-scale	Gender	Percentage					Mean Score	S.D	Sk
			SA	A	Dk	DA	SDA			
1-5	Attitude	M=270	47.62	27.18	4.86	8.34	12.03	2.02	1.30	1.20
		F=150	46.42	24.54	6.54	11.50	11.00	2.10	1.37	0.97
	Total	420	47.02	25.86	5.70	9.92	11.51	2.09	1.33	1.08
6-10	Frequency	M=270	11.80	16.04	19.83	30.60	20.92	3.28	1.21	-1.9
		F=150	10.14	21.50	21.74	27.68	19.54	3.25	1.18	-1.2
	Total	420	10.9	18.85	20.80	29.14	20.23	3.26	1.20	-1.5
11-16	Material	M=270	22.83	34.82	16.78	14.83	11.10	2.56	1.25	0.52
		F=150	21.76	36.33	16.88	13.45	11.56	2.56	1.21	0.60
	Total	420	22.30	35.60	16.84	13.85	11.40	2.56	1.23	0.56
17-20	Time/Duration	M=270	11.37	35.72	13.90	26.85	12.15	2.92	1.08	0.23
		F=150	12.35	35.17	14.32	26.15	11.97	2.90	1.11	0.23
	Total	420	11.90	35.44	14.11	26.50	12.06	2.91	1.09	0.23
21-25	Place/Venue	M=270	24.54	33.04	8.20	25.98	8.20	2.60	1.14	0.48
		F=150	25.20	31.86	7.60	27.20	8.12	2.61	1.13	0.43
	Total	420	24.87	32.45	7.93	26.59	8.16	2.60	1.13	0.45
26-30	Purpose	M=270	32.68	50.82	4.72	7.20	4.80	2.00	0.97	1.49
		F=150	35.54	49.48	4.12	4.68	3.20	1.84	0.89	1.29
	Total	420	35.61	50.15	4.42	5.83	4.00	1.92	0.93	1.39

Note: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, Dk=Don't know, DA=Disagree, SDA=Strongly Disagree, S.D=Standard Deviation and Sk=Skewness

Note: Table 1 reflects that values Sk = 1.08 and 1.39 about students' Attitude towards Reading Habits and their Purpose of Reading. It means that students take interest in reading books and are aware about purpose of reading. The value Sk = -1.5 is negatively skewed which means that students are not reading frequently.

Table 2 Gender wise differences of Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance

S.No	Variable	Gender	N	Mean Score	S.D	Mean Difference	T-test (2-tailed)
1	Students' Reading Habits	Male	270	2.482	0.257	-0.021	-0.80
		Female	150	2.503	0.258		
2	Students' Academic Performance	Male	270	2.766	0.553	-0.012	-0.22
		Female	150	2.778	0.531		

Note: d.f = 418, the table value at 0.05 level of significance = ± 2.96 , $p < 0.05$

Note: Table 2 illustrates the significance of the difference between males' and females' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance after application of t-test. The calculated values for Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance are $t = -0.80$ and -0.22 with $p < 0.05$ respectively which don't fall in the critical region. Hence, the null hypotheses are accepted and it is concluded that males' and females' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance are not significantly different.

Table 3 Gender wise differences of Subscales of Students' Reading Habits

S.No	Subscale	Gender	N	Mean Score	S.D	Mean Difference	T-test (2-tailed)
1	Attitude towards Reading	Male	270	1.700	0.510	-0.259	-5.004**
		Female	150	1.950	0.506		
2	Frequency of Reading	Male	270	2.732	0.440	-0.138	-3.063**
		Female	150	2.870	0.441		
3	Material of Reading	Male	270	2.193	0.470	-0.138	-3.026**
		Female	150	2.331	0.401		
4	Time/Duration of Reading	Male	270	2.341	0.530	-0.169	-3.074**
		Female	150	2.510	0.558		
5	Place/Venue of Reading	Male	270	2.178	0.480	-0.168	-3.390**
		Female	150	2.346	0.500		
6	Purpose of Reading	Male	270	1.671	0.387	-0.035	-0.854
		Female	150	1.706	0.430		

Note: d.f = 418, table value at 0.05 = ± 2.96 , and at 0.01 = ± 2.58 . *, indicates t-value is significant at $p < 0.05$ and **, indicates t-value is significant at $p < 0.01$.

Note: Table 3 shows that values of $t = -5.004, -3.063, -3.026, -3.074$ and -3.390 with $p < 0.01$ are significant, which conclude that males' and females' Attitude towards Reading, Frequency of Reading, Material of Reading, Time/Duration of Reading and Place of Reading are significantly different.

Table 4 Correlation between Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance

Variable	Variable					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Students' Reading Habits	--					
2. Students' Academic Performance	0.106*	--				
3. Males' Reading Habits	1.000	0.115*	--			
4. Females' Reading Habits	1.000	0.092	0.000	--		
5. Males' Academic Performance	0.112*	1.000	0.115*	1.000	--	
6. Females' Academic Performance	0.092	1.000	0.000	0.092	0.000	--

Note: *, correlation is significant at $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed).

Note: Table 4 shows the value of correlation ($r = 0.106, p < 0.05$) means that Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance have weak positive relationship. Similarly correlation ($r = 0.115, p < 0.05$) also reflects that Males' Reading Habits have a weak positive relationship with their Academic Performance.

Fig 1-2 Scatter Diagrams

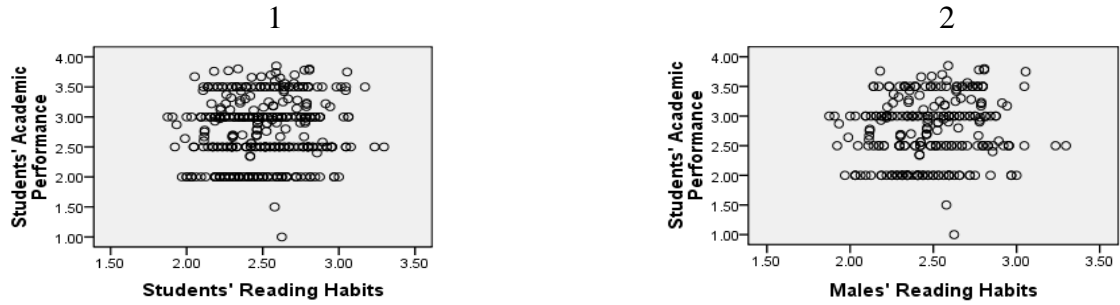


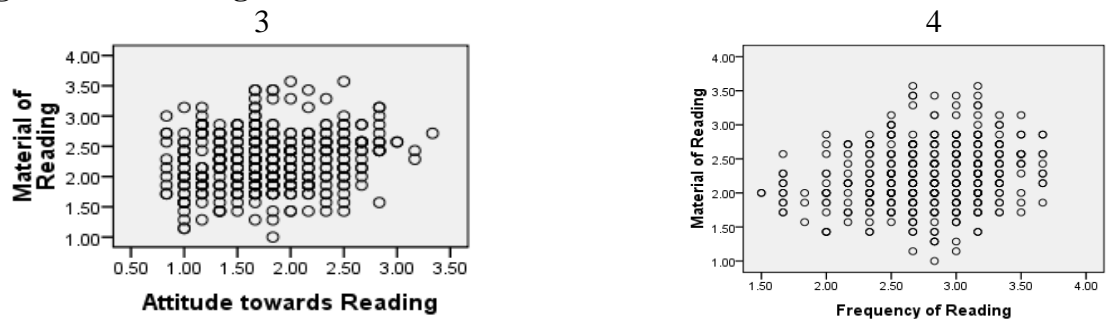
Table 5 Correlation between Subscale of Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance

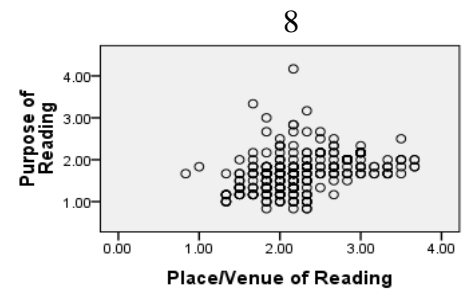
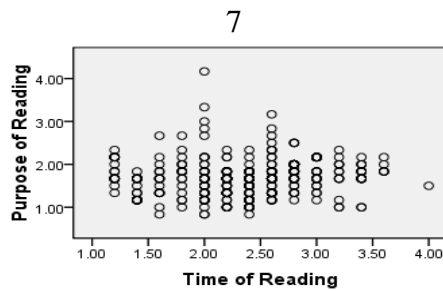
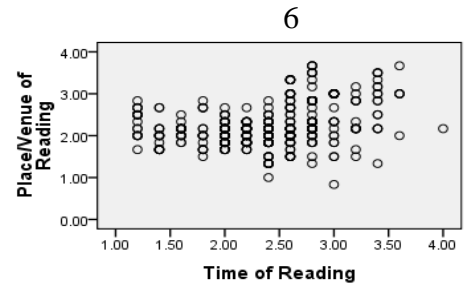
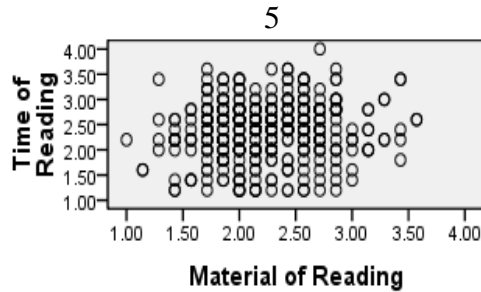
Variable	Variable						
Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Attitude	--						
2. Frequency	.067	--					
3. Material	.183**	.204**	--				
4. Time/Duration	.021	.009	.119*	--			
5. Place/ Venue	.060	-.037	.032	.335**	--		
6. Purpose	.005	.028	.021	.131**	.404**	--	
7. Academic Performance	.060	-.003	-.059	.055	.067	.018	--

Note: *, indicates correlation is significant at $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed), **, indicates Correlation is significant at $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

Note: Table 5 illustrates that values of correlations ($r = .183, .204, .335, .131$ and $.404, p < 0.01$) mean that factors, Students' Attitude towards Reading with Material of Reading, Frequency of Reading with Material of Reading, Duration of Reading with Place of Reading, Duration of Reading with Purpose of Reading and Place of Reading with Purpose of Reading have moderate positive relationship. The value of correlation ($r = .119, p < 0.05$) also means that Material of Reading has a weak positive relationship with the Duration of Reading. Students' Academic Performance has no relationship with any one of these subscales.

Fig 3-8: Scatter Diagrams





DISCUSSION

This study, as described above, was carried out to examine the relationships between Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance at BS level. The study was designed to investigate gender differences and to find out the relationships among Students' Reading Habits, Subscales of Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance. For this purpose the researchers took overall mean scores of Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance for overall students and calculated the correlations among these variables for overall students and gender-wise separately. The researchers described gender-wise subscales of Students' Reading Habits at BS level. They found that students take interest in reading books and are aware about purpose of the reading books. They also found that students are not reading books frequently (see Table 1). These findings are consistent to those of [Baba and Affendi, \(2020\)](#); [Ahmad, \(2016\)](#) and contrary to [Annamalai and Muniandy, \(2013\)](#). It was found that males' and females' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance were not significantly different (see Table 2). These findings are consistent with the findings of [Elui, \(2015\)](#); and [Reilly *et al.*, \(2019\)](#). The researchers found that males' and females' Attitude towards Reading, Frequency of Reading, Material of Reading, Time/Duration of Reading and Place of Reading are significantly different. These findings reveal that female students have more positive attitude towards reading than male students and they are aware about the purpose of reading. Female students in this study scored better than males' group (see Table 3). These findings are supported by [Al-Adwani *at el.*, \(2022\)](#); and [Reilly *et al.*, \(2019\)](#). The researchers also found that Students' Reading Habits and their Academic Performance have weak positive relationship. Similarly they also found that males' Reading Habits have a weak positive relationship with their Academic Performance (see Table 4). These findings are supported by those of the findings of

Hassan *et al.*, (2021); Petrus and Shah, (2020); and Samsuddin *et al.*, (2020). These findings are contrary to Abid *et al.*, (2023). It was found that factors, Students' Attitude towards Reading with Material of Reading, Frequency of Reading with Material of Reading, Duration of Reading with Place of Reading, Duration of Reading with Purpose of Reading and Place of Reading with Purpose of Reading have moderate positive relationship. It was also found that Material of Reading has a weak positive relationship with the Duration of Reading. Students' Academic Performance has no relationship with any one of these subscales (see Table 5). These findings are supported by Samsuddin *et al.*, (2020); Samsuddin and Aspura, (2021); and contrary to Abid *et al.*, (2023)

CONCLUSIONS

In the light above mentioned findings, the researchers arrived at the following conclusions:

The researchers concluded that students do not read books frequently. It was concluded that males' and females' Attitude towards Reading, Frequency of Reading, Material of Reading, Time/Duration of Reading and Place of Reading are significantly different. It means that female students take more interest in reading books than male students. It was also concluded that males students' Reading Habits have a weak positive relationship with their Academic Performance. The researchers concluded that subscales of Students' Reading Habits have no relationship with their academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers suggested some recommendations in the light of above mentioned conclusions. Students don't read books frequently, therefore students should be encouraged and motivated for more reading by their teachers and parents from an early stage of life. Home, teachers, and peers play a vital role in promoting reading habits among students and instilling positive attitudes towards reading through a conducive environment. Government should organize campaign on reading and should also modify the curriculum to be task and activity oriented. Female students scored better than male students. Hence teachers should encourage male students particularly to develop interest in reading by making communication skills a compulsory course for students. Teachers should also create awareness among the male students on the importance of cultivating reading culture by creating periods for individual and group presentation of assignments. Students specially males should also make library their first point of call to get updated from time to time through development of reading habits. Students must aware about the importance of reading and allocate time for reading books and other materials which inculcate reading habits among the students. In this way students' academic performances could be improved through effective reading.

SUGGESTIONS

It is suggested that a bibliographic study on literature related to cultivate Reading Habits among the students should be conducted. It is also suggested that a study on relationship

of students' Anxiety in reading and their academic achievements in a specific subject should be conducted.

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