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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

**Educated Arabs' Reading Interests and Preferences Before, During and After the Pandemic**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study explored the reading interests, and preferences of educated Arabs such as students, faculty and professionals, the types and number of books they read before, during and after the Pandemic (between 2012 and 2022). Data were collected from Twitter threads, hashtags and surveys and responses to the question "What are you currently reading". The Twitter data analysis showed that the preferred book titles with the highest percentages were novels/fiction (31.5% before the Pandemic and 41.5% during the Pandemic); Islamic books (22.5% before the Pandemic and 12% after the Pandemic); (iii) self-development books (12.5% before the Pandemic and 20% during the Pandemic). 80.7% preferred to read paper books and 19.3% electronic books. In most surveys, between 50%-60% of the respondents do not read at all. In 2 surveys, between 76%-80% do not read. The highest number of books read was during the Pandemic as 32.5% read 5 books and 38.5% read more than 20 books. The status of reading after the Pandemic was like that before the Pandemic (43.4% did not read). Even graduate and undergraduate students. 31% of graduate and undergraduate students read nothing outside their course textbooks. For enhancing students' reading interests, preferences and the types and amounts of books read, the study recommended using book clubs, BookTok, encouraging students to visit libraries, using online courses, blogs, and mobile apps for discussing books read, integrating global topics in the school and college curriculum and others.

**KEYWORDS**

Educated Arabs, reading interests, reading preferences, types of books read, amount of books read, COVID-19 pandemic, Twitter reading surveys, book reading tweets.

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**1. Introduction**

Students' and adults' reading interests have been the focus of research for decades. In the 1970's, Sharon (1972), Carlsen, Manna and Yoder (1976), Nilsen and Donelson (2001) and others investigated the reading preferences of young adults. In the era of "digital literacy", researchers enquired whether the meaning of reading interest has changed, and they examined the psycho-behavioral dimensions of reading interest as they relate to different reading modes and different purposes. It was found that reading interest is represented by a psycho-behavioral dimension. Higher-order factor structures revealed a general factor of reading interest at the third-order level and five second-order factors representing reading in print settings, social media reading, online reading, recreational and academic reading (Putro and Lee (2017).

In the COVID-19 Pandemic era, many researchers around the world continued to explore the reading interests, amount of time spent reading, what students prefer to read, and amount of material read. For example, Sharma (2021) reviewed nine studies on the influence of Covid-19 Pandemic on reading habits. Readers in those studies read academic as well as non-academic books. They also learned digital skills and how to browse digital resources. Some read published academic and non-academic books but the majority used electronic media, internet, computers and mobile phones to read.

In Indonesia, Yulianto, Hanah and Lisniyanti (2020) found that 39% of the students selected 'articles on the internet' and 37% selected 'academic books' as their favourite types of reading. 45% selected 'education' books and 19% 'entertainment' books. The rest of the students selected poetry, horror, romance, humour, science fiction and others.

In another study in Indonesia, Setiyoningsih, Emeraldien & Arwansyah (2022). EFL undergraduate students in a Language and Literature Education Study Program—were enthusiastic about reading activities while learning from home and were reading anything, including academic material and/or books. The students preferred to read fiction/novels online more than other literary texts. The students' read between 30 minutes to 1 hour at home, 3–6 days a week. They could read academic material 30 minutes to 1 hour but could read more than an hour for fun. They read 4–6 books per semester. They received online resources such as websites, and offline sources, mainly textbooks. Smartphone reading was the most common.

In Turkey, Bekaroğlu, Kahveci, Kazoğlu, İlhan and Gökgöz (2022) indicated that 35% of secondary school students read books regularly, 57.2% read books occasionally, 7.8% do not read at all. 63.4 % read novels and stories, 16 % read scientific books, 20.2% read books regardless of the type of book. 96.7% read paper books, whereas 2.5% read on their mobile phone. 76.5% of the students read between 0-50 pages per day, 15.2% read between 50-100 pages per day, 7% read between 100-200 pages per day, 1.2% read about 200 pages or more a day. 58% of the students reported that the book cover and visuals are important for selecting books, and 42% stated that the book cover and visuals are not important for selecting books. 84.4% can reach the books they want according to the area where they live as opposed to 15.6% who have problems accessing books.

In Nigeria, Abimbola, Shabi and Aramide (2021) concluded that majority of high school students are not pressured to read but read for pleasure. They prefer a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books which they read for academic, social, relaxation and obtaining information purposes. Their reading activity was affected by the availability of reading materials. Many students could not afford to access electronic books whether free or not.

In another study in Nigeria, Adigun, Oyewusi and Aramide (2021) revealed that students read textbooks to prepare for examinations and to stay sound academically. No significant differences were found in the amount of time students spent reading during the lockdown and before the lockdown when schools were open.

In Cho, Lee, Urban, Huang and Long's (2021) readers actively escaped into fictional worlds, through re-reading books especially fiction to cope with the stress of the pandemic. The cost and available channels of access affected the readers' selection of fiction book format.

In Iran, Kafi (2021) analyzed news websites' book suggestions in March 2020. The researcher found a high level of homogeneity in the reading suggestions in terms of original language, genre, and publishers. He concluded that wider government policies encourage the promotion or marginalization of certain types of books. Fiction and nonfiction books about the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988) dominated the suggestions, while nonpolitical mystery/thrillers and comedy were almost nonexistent.

Regarding the reading interests of teachers, Kaya, Kaya and Bindak (2020) found that female teachers in Turkey had more positive attitudes towards reading books during the Pandemic than male teachers.

In a similar study, results of a study by Henda (2020) showed humble use of electronic resources by Kuwait University faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The faculty mostly used electronic resources for writing research papers. e-journals and databases were their most preferred resources. The majority of faculty at Kuwait University who are nonusers did not need these resources, and the rest reported their unawareness of these resources.

In addition, some studies in the literature focused on the factors' that affect students' reading interests. In Vietnam, Vietnam, Vuong, Nguyen and Le (2021) surveyed 4966 secondary students (ages 11–15 years old, in grade 6 to 9) and found that the students' reading interests were positively correlated with book recommendations they receive and parental book reading activities, i.e., parents reading books to their young children. High-achieving students would be more interested in reading books if they can choose the books they prefer.

Moreover, in Pakistan Akhtar and Khan (2019) declared that that book reading is not limited to course material that the students are obliged to read to pass their exams. A variety of reading materials like story books, comic books, magazine, newspaper and references for general knowledge can broaden students' minds at all grade levels. They confirmed that students' reading interest is correlated with fathers' reading interest and availability of books at home or any place near their homes.

As far as the status of extensive reading interests and preference in Saudi Arabia, the above literature review shows lack of studies that explore the types of books and material (genres) that students, teachers, and educated individuals were reading during the COVID-19 Pandemic and are reading after the Pandemic. In other words, it aims to find out educated Arabs' reading preferences and reading interests, i.e., types of books (genres) they read before, during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic, how many books they read per month or per year, and whether they prefer digital reading on their mobile devices, laptop, or print books and material. Results will be based on data collected from surveys posted on Twitter between 2012 and 2022.

Results of this study will shed some light on changes in educated Arabs' reading preferences and the factors that affect the amount and duration of reading before, during and beyond the pandemic.

## 2. Data Collection and Analysis

Data about educated Arabs' reading preferences were collected from tweets on Twitter. Responses to questions, hashtags and threads asking "What are you currently reading" posted by some online bookstores such as Jamaloon, the Riyadh International Book Fair, some Arab Twitter users and others were collected. The responses (tweets) were tweeted by a sample of educated Arabs consisting of male and female students, faculty, professionals and others. Some with a B.A. degree, others with an M.A. or Ph.D. degree. The respondents have different areas of specialties such as business, computer science, education, Islamic Shariah, Arabic literature, languages and translation and others. Only tweets in which the respondents posted book titles were compiled. What mattered was the book titles tweeted, not who tweeted them or how many titles some respondents published in a single tweet. Tweets with multiples titles were counted not as a single response but according to how many titles are contained in the single tweet. Each title was counted as 1 response whether contained in a single tweet or tweeted with other titles in one tweet.

For comparison purposes, a total of 216 book titles were compiled from responses tweeted before the Pandemic in September 2018 and 178 book titles collected from the responses tweeted during the Pandemic in June 2021. Both data sets were subjected to further analysis. The titles were classified according to the Dewey Decimal Classification system<sup>1</sup> which constitutes of the following categories:

- Computer science, information and general works.
- Philosophy and psychology.
- Religion.
- Social sciences (sociology, anthropology, statistics, political science, economics, law, public administration, social problems and services, education, commerce, communications, transportation, and customs).
- Language, linguistics, and specific languages.
- natural sciences and mathematics.
- Technology.
- art in general, fine and decorative arts, music, and the performing arts. Recreation, including sports and games.
- Literature (rhetoric, prose, poetry, drama, etc. Folk literature).
- History and geography.

To classify the book titles accurately especially those that the author is not familiar with, the author checked the book titles in Google Images to view the cover, looked up the book in some online library websites or publishers, read the synopsis and book classification. Repetitious titles were not counted once but as many times as they had occurred and entered in the same book category as many times as found in the date.

In addition, tweets that contain some statistics about educated Arabs' reading preferences, how many books they read, and whether they prefer paper or digital books were also collected from the Twitter pages of Neel Wa Furat Online Bookstore, the Riyadh and Sharjah International Book Fairs, Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, King Abdulaziz and his Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity, Tatweer Education Company, and some poll and survey pages (Saudia Votes) and Questionnaires (Istbyanat). A total of 14 statistical tables were selected. Those reflect the reading interests and preferences of educated Arabs and the number of books they read before the Pandemic (in the year 2012, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, and February 2020); during the Pandemic (September 2020, and August 2021) and after the Pandemic (January 2022).

Although the Twitter surveys on what educated Arabs like to read and how many books they read may not be reliable and valid, several criteria were taken into consideration in the selection: (i) the number of voters should be more than 100; (ii) the number of books should start with nothing, 1 book, 2 books, 3 or more. Survey results that include categories with 10 books or less, more than 20 books and so on were not selected as responses with any number of books will fit in each category; (iii) different surveys

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/oclc/dewey/versions/print/intro.pdf>

for the same year and different years before, and during the Pandemic were selected as a reliability and validity check; (iv) surveys tweeted by different stakeholders were selected as a reliability and validity check as well.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **3.1 Educated Arabs' Book Preferences According to Genre**

Results of the data analysis reported in Tables 1 and 2 show the percentages of book types (genres) tweeted by Arab readers before the pandemic (in September 2018) and during the Pandemic (in June 2021). The preferred book titles with the highest percentages in both time periods are (i) novel and fiction books whether Arabic, translated or even English novels (31.5% before the Pandemic and 41.5% during the Pandemic); (ii) Islamic books whether classical or contemporary (22.5% before the Pandemic and 12% after the Pandemic); and (iii) self-development books whether Arabic or translated (12.5% before the Pandemic and 20% during the Pandemic).

It was noted that the number of Islamic books read during the Pandemic is lower than those read before the Pandemic. On the contrary, the number of novels read during the pandemic is higher than those read before the Pandemic. Similarly, the number of self-development books read during the Pandemic was higher than those read before the Pandemic. The majority of the titles tweeted in the two sets were different.

The data analysis showed that 12% of the books were novels in English, which means that the majority of respondents prefer to read in Arabic, their native language.

It was also noted that the percentage of books that the respondents tweeted about history, literature, politics, philosophy, sociology, religion, poetry, travel ranged between 1% and 5% before the Pandemic and even lower during the Pandemic. Tweets containing books titles in computer, economics, art, physics, physiology, psychology, anthropology, dictionaries, language, library science, manuscripts, pharmacy are either lower than 1% or non-existence.

In addition, none of the respondents tweeted books or material about the COVID-19 Pandemic since the whole world was affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic, medical and health issues, current global events, scientific books, business books, math, engineering, agriculture, environment, global warming, political science, law, public administration, social problems and services, education, commerce, communications, transportation, customs, natural sciences, chemistry, physics, biology, technology, fine and decorative arts, performing arts, recreation, sports and games, and geography

It seems that respondents' interests, in general, are affected by the kinds of topics and material they read their "Reading Textbooks" at school. Analysis of the junior and senior high school reading textbooks showed that 29% of the reading texts are devoted to Islamic history; 13% focus on general topics; 11% deal with stories from classical Arabic literature; 10% to Quranic verses and Prophet Mohammed's traditions; Arabic poetry (9%); the history and geography of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (8%); scientific topics (6%); flora and fauna (6%); the Islamic and Arab Worlds (4%); contemporary Arabic literature (2%); international and Arabic organizations (1%); and biographies of foreign personalities (1%) (Al-Jarf, 2004e; Al-Jurf, 2004).

The reading interests of Twitter respondents in the current study are completely different from those of Saudi female college students about 2 decades ago. In Al-Jarf (2004e) and Al-Jurf (2004) studies a study that investigated the reading interests of female college students in terms of the magazines they read and the topics they like to read, Al-Jarf (2004e) and Al-Jurf (2004) found that 77% of the students read women's magazines, 77% read about fashion and make-up, 66% read articles about movies and pop-stars, 24% read poetry magazines, between 1-4% read religious, educational, literary, political, computer and internet, and historical articles. It was concluded that female college students liked to read magazines and topics that prevailed on satellite T.V. broadcasting. Both magazines and satellite T.V. shows serve to marginalize the culture of young people and distract them from the vital social issues.

Furthermore, findings in the current study are confirmed by results of a Twitter survey conducted by the Riyadh International Book Fair before the Pandemic (in 2017) with a sample of 996 voters which show that 34.3% read literature, poetry and novels; 30.1% read religious and Islamic books and 26.9% read self-development books. Unlike the Twitter survey results, respondents in the current study who posted economics titles constituted less than 1.5% before and after the Pandemic (See Table 2).

As in the current study, majority of high school students in Nigeria prefer to read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books which they read for academic, social, relaxation and obtaining information purposes (Abimbola, Shabi & Aramide, 2021). In Indonesia, 45% of the students selected education books, 19% selected entertainment books and selected poetry, horror, romance, humour, science fiction and others (Yulianto, Hanah & Lisniyanti, 2020). In Cho, Lee, Urban, Huang and Long's (2021) study, readers read fiction to cope with the stress of the pandemic. In Turkey, 63,4 % read novels and stories, 16 % read scientific books, 20.2% read books

regardless of the type of book. 96.7% read paper books, whereas 2.5% read on the mobile phone (Bekaroğlu, Kahveci, Kazoğlu, İlhan & Gökgez, 2022).

Unlike the current study, Vyas and Tandel (2020) reported that college faculty in India give the top priority to reference books to update their subject knowledge. In-depth reading and quick browsing were also the styles of reading of academic staff during the lockdown. In Iran, Kafi (2021) found a high level of homogeneity in the book suggestions in March 2020 in terms of original language, genre, and publishers. He concluded that wider government policies encourage the promotion or marginalization of certain types of books. Fiction and nonfiction books about the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988) dominated the suggestions, while nonpolitical mystery/thrillers and comedy were almost nonexistent.

Table 1: Types of Books That Respondents Like to Read Before the Pandemic (September 2018) and During The Pandemic (June 2021) Base on Respondents' Tweets

Book Genres	Before the Pandemic September 2018	During the Pandemic June 2021
	%	%
Novels, fiction, poetry & literature	35.5%	42.5%
Islamic and religion	24.5%	12%
Self-development	12.5%	21%
Biography	7%	4.5%
History	4%	3%
Politics	5%	Less than 1%
Philosophy	1%	5%
Travel	1%	Less than 1%
Computer	Less than 1%	--
Economics	Less than 1%	1.5%
Art	Less than .5%	--
Physics	Less than .5%	--
Physiology	Less than .5%	--
Psychology and sociology	1.5%	4%
Anthropology	--	Less than 1%
Dictionary	--	Less than 1%
Language and linguistics	--	1%
Library science	--	Less than 1%
Manuscripts	--	Less than 1%
Pharmacy	--	Less than 1%
None	3%	4%
Total book titles	216	178

Table 2: What Are the Books that you Mostly Read (Before the Pandemic, March 15, 2017)

Types of Book Read	Percentage
Literature, Poetry and Novels	34.3%
Religious and Islamic	30.1%
Self-Development	26.9%
Economics and International Relations	8.6%
Total Votes	996

Source: Riyadh International Book Fair - [twitter.com/Innovative\\_Cont/status/84205305659857305](https://twitter.com/Innovative_Cont/status/84205305659857305)

### 3.2 Educated Arabs' Preferences for Paper and Electronic Books

Results of a Twitter survey with 607 Twitter voters presented in Table 3 show that 80.7% of the respondents reported reading paper books as opposed to 19.3% who read electronic books.

This result is consistent with results of a study by Parlindungan, Rahmatillah and Lisyati (2021) which revealed that most Indonesian undergraduate students favored print format for their academic materials. The students gave different reasons for their preferences such as the types of courses they study, accessibility, being accustomed to print reading habits, and lack of confidence in electronic

material. In Turkey, 63,4 % secondary school students read novels and stories, 16 % read scientific books, 20.2% read books regardless of the type of book. 96.7% read paper books, whereas 2.5% read on the mobile phone (Bekaroğlu, Kahveci, Kazoğlu, İlhan & Gökğöz, 2022)

By contrast, most Nigerians used their phone to read during the COVID-19 lockdown (Adeyemi, 2021). WhatsApp was the more comfortable social media used for reading during the COVID-19 pandemic period. Male and female undergraduate EFL students aged 19–23 years in Indonesia preferred reading social media to spend their leisure time Ahire (2021). Female students tend to read e-books, while male respondents prefer printed books. Moreover, EFL learners prefer reading the sources in their native language (L1) because it is more comprehensible to them than the target language (L2) (Milal, Jannah, Sa'adah & Fitria, 2021). In India, most of the faculty were using both print and electronic sources for reading and they give priority to accessing electronic information via their mobile, phones followed that laptop (Vyas & Tandel, 2020). EFL undergraduate students in Indonesia-preferred to read fiction/novels online more than other literary texts. They received online resources such as websites, and offline sources, mainly textbooks. Smartphone reading was the most common (Setiyoningsih, Emeraldien & Arwansyah (2022)..

University faculty in Kuwait showed humble use of electronic resources during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The faculty mostly used electronic resources for writing research papers. e-journals and databases were their most preferred resources. The majority of nonusers did not need these resources, and the rest reported their unawareness of electronic resources, e-journals and databases (Hendal, 2020). Likewise, the average usage frequency of all electronic databases at a sample of Arab universities is once a year at King Saud University and once a year per 8 persons at King Abdul-Aziz University, once in 14 months per 2 persons at Umm Al-Qura University, 3 times a year per person at the Institute of Public Administration, and once every 2 years per person at the American University in Beirut (Al-Jarf, 2004c; Al-Jarf, 2004d).

Table 3: What Kind of Book format Do You Prefer To Read (After the Pandemic, Oct 17, 2021)

Type of Book Formats preferred	Percentage of Response
Paper books	80.7%
Electronic Books	19.3%
Total Votes	607

Source: [twitter.com/alla1428/status/1449564022676889601](https://twitter.com/alla1428/status/1449564022676889601)

### 3.3 How Many Books Educated Arabs Read

Tables 4 to 17 show several Twitter surveys that report the number of books Twitter respondents read per month or per year before, during and after the Pandemic. Before the Pandemic, Tables 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, and 11 show that between 50% and 60% of the respondents do not read books at all. In tables 7 and 13, between 76% and 80% of the respondents do not read at all.

Interestingly 31% of B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. students read nothing outside their course textbooks; and 24.9% read between 1-6 books a year, taking into consideration the fact that M.A. and Ph.D. students need to read many books and reference material for their theses (See Table 9). This is similar to the status of reading in Nigeria where students read textbooks to prepare for examinations and to stay sound academically. No significant differences were found in the amount of time students spent reading during the lockdown and before the lockdown when schools were open (Adigun, Oyewusi & Aramide, 2021).

During the pandemic, Tables 16 shows the highest number of books read in all 14 tables, as all 468 respondents read at least 5 books and 38.5% read 20 books. In Table 16, 73.4% of 128 respondents read at least 1 book per month.

After the Pandemic in 2022, the number of books read is similar to those before the Pandemic as 43.4% did not read at all, and 28.9% read one book over the whole year (See Table 17).

No significant differences between male and female respondents in the number of books they read, before, during and after the Pandemic.

Results of the survey presented in Tables 4 to 17 show lack of interest in reading among educated respondents as almost half the respondents do not read at all. This finding is contrary to findings of prior studies conducted in numerous countries in the literature.

In India, 83 % of the faculty surveyed reported that they were reading every day during the lockdown. In-depth reading and quick browsing were also the styles of reading of academic staff during the lockdown. (Vyas & Tandel, 2020). 61% of Indonesian students read less than an hour 2 – 3 days a week and the rest read less than an hour (Yulianto, Hanah & Lisniyanti (2020). In another study, EFL undergraduate students in Indonesia read between 30 minutes to 1 hour at home, 3–6 days a week. They can read academic

material 30 minutes to 1 hour but could read more than an hour for fun. They read 4–6 books per semester. They received online resources such as websites, and offline sources, mainly textbooks (Setiyoningsih, Emeraldien & Arwansyah, 2022).

In Turkey, indicated that 35% of the secondary school students read books regularly, 57.2% read books occasionally, 7.8% do not read at all. 76.5% of the students read between 0-50 pages per day, 15.2% read between 50-100 pages per day, 7% read between 100-200 pages per day, 1.2% read about 200 pages or more a day (Bekaroğlu, Kahveci, Kazoğlu, İlhan & Gökgöz (2022).

Unlike the present study which found no significant differences between male and female respondents in the number of books they read, Milal, Jannah, Sa’adah & Fitria (2021) indicated that female undergraduate EFL students aged 19–23 years in Indonesia favored reading more than males. They practice extensive reading to get knowledge more than to get pleasure.

Table 4: How Many Books Do You Read Per Year (Before The Pandemic, March 28, 2012)

Type of Book Formats preferred	Percentage of Response
Nothing (I do not read)	56%
1 book	15%
2 books	8%
3 or more books	22%
Total Votes	1649

Table 5: How Many Books Do You Read Per Month (Before The Pandemic, November 27, 2015)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
None (I do not read)	58.8%
I browse 1 book	24.2%
I read a whole book	9.5%
I read 2 or more books	7.6%
Total votes	931

Source: [twitter.com/ALMANSOUR\\_MOHD/status/670248821163716609](https://twitter.com/ALMANSOUR_MOHD/status/670248821163716609)

Table 6: How Many Books Do You Read Per Month (Before The Pandemic, October 15, 2016)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
Less than 1 book	57.1%
1 book	16.9%
2 books	9.7%
3 books	16.2%
Total Votes	154

Source: Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government  
[twitter.com/MBRSG/status/787254119916593152](https://twitter.com/MBRSG/status/787254119916593152)

Table 7: How Many Books Do You Read Per Month Before The Pandemic (January 2, 2016)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
I do not read	76.7%
1 book	15.7%
2 books	3.9%
3 books or more	3.7%
Total Votes	408

Source: [twitter.com/saudiaVotes/status/683371881236426754](https://twitter.com/saudiaVotes/status/683371881236426754)

Table 8: How Many Books A Year Do You Read Per Year (Before The Pandemic, November 26, 2016)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
I do not read	50.5%
2 books	21.6%
4 books	9.9%
More than 6 books	18%
Total Votes	4,163

Source: <https://twitter.com/khalidalyahmadi/status/802359750859968512>

Table 9: How Many Books BA, MA, & Ph.D. College Students Read (Before The Pandemic, June 17, 2017)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
I do not read beyond my course textbooks	31.2%
1 to 6 books	24.9%
More than 6 books	8.4%
NA	35.5%
Total Votes	5,054

Source: <https://twitter.com/istbyanat/status/876090480580276225>

Table 10: How Many Books Do You Read Per Year (Before The Pandemic, November 1, 2017)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
I do not read	50.6%
1 book	15.8%
2-5 books	20.6%
More than 10 books	13%
Total Votes	6,299

Source: Sharjah International Book Fair - <https://twitter.com/tafa3olcom/status/925642964302483457>

Table 11: How Many Books A Year Do You Read (Before The Pandemic, February 18, 2019)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
I do not read	55.8%
1-5 books	24.6%
5-10 books	6.7%
More than 10 books	12.8%
Total Votes	865

Source: [https://twitter.com/al\\_wisal/status/1097502828757745664](https://twitter.com/al_wisal/status/1097502828757745664)

Table 12: How Many Books Do You Read Per Month (Before The Pandemic, March 24, 2019)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
I do not read	27.2%
1-2 books	16.2%
I read once in a while	56.6%
Total Votes	1,765

Source: King Abdulaziz and his Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity  
[twitter.com/mawhiba/status/1109713737567690752](https://twitter.com/mawhiba/status/1109713737567690752)

Table 13: How Many Medium-size Books Do You Read Per Month (Before The Pandemic, June 19, 2019)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
Less than a book	80.3%
1-2 books	14.8%
3 books or more	4.9%
Total Votes	61

Source: [twitter.com/osamhnulla/status/1141236734212157440](https://twitter.com/osamhnulla/status/1141236734212157440)

Table 14: How Many Books Do You Read Per Year (Before The Pandemic, February 17, 2020)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
1 book	49/6%
2-4 books	14.2%
5-9 books	12.8%
More than 10	23.4%
Total Votes	141

Source: <https://twitter.com/QATARTEAM/status/1229502561851465729>

Table 15: How Many Books Do You Read Per Year (During the Pandemic, September 25, 2020)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
5 books	32.5%
8 books	9.2%
10 books	19.9%
20 books	38.5%
Total Votes	468

Source: Neel Wafurat Online Bookstore - [twitter.com/neelwafurat/status/1309473487120195584](https://twitter.com/neelwafurat/status/1309473487120195584)

Table 16: How Many Books Do You Read Per Month (During the Pandemic, August 9, 2021)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
One Book	73.4%
2 books	7%
More than 2	19.5%
Total Votes	128

Source: [twitter.com/tatweers\\_sa/status/1424717411484381190](https://twitter.com/tatweers_sa/status/1424717411484381190)

Table 17: How Many Books Do You Read Per Year (After The Pandemic, January 24, 2022)

Number of Book Read	Percentage of Response
0 books	43.4%
1 book	28.9%
2 books	19.9%
3 or more books	7.8%
Total Votes	1,399

Source: [www.twitter.com/Manal\\_AISalloum/status/1485535171843694593](https://www.twitter.com/Manal_AISalloum/status/1485535171843694593)

#### 4. Recommendation

Analysis of the data collected from Twitter on the reading interested and preferences of Educated Arab respondents show that types of books, reading book format and amount of books they read per year whether before, during or after the COVID-19 pandemic (between 2012 and 2022) are in adequate for academic, professional or developmental purposes. Therefore to enhance Arab students and adults interest in extensive reading the current study recommends the following:

- Creating books clubs where students and adults can recommend, exchange, read and discuss books with each other (Limlamai, 2021).
- Using BookTok communities on TikTok for out of school reading practices for all ages (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). BookTok can be integrated into the classroom to provide junior and senior high readers with agency, community, and digital literacies for their voices, ideas, and creativity to materialize.
- Encouraging students of all ages to visit public and school libraries to improve their reading habits and to have access to different types of reading materials that suit the reading preferences and meet the diverse purposes of reading (Abimbola, Shabi & Aramide, 2021).
- Parents and teachers should enhance digital learning capabilities, reading skills among the students and enhancing reading habits, exploring digital resources (Sharma, 2021).
- Establishing book selection committees at the university for recommending extensive reading material to students to choose from and read in addition to their course textbooks. An academic requirement should be added to college programs to motivate students to read extra materials.

- Re-selecting the topics of reading textbooks for middle and secondary school students so that contemporary global topics related to human values, international organizations, current global issues and world history and introducing students to other cultures (Al-Jarf, 2004a).
- Adding a course in reading and internet searching skills in each grade level in which students are required and trained to search for specific topics in Internet websites, magazines, and books and setting a time for students to discuss what they have read (Al-Jarf, 2004b).
- Encouraging extensive reading on serious topics, starting from the primary stage, by assigning students to read books appropriate for their ages on different topics, writing a report on them, and discussing them in class, introducing students to magazines and interesting books in different disciplines, and encouraging each student to make for himself A record of the books he reads, keeping these records, and appreciating the students who persevere in reading with prizes and grades.
- Conducting book reading and summarizing competitions and preparing reports on them within the school extracurricular activities at school and in of the summer youth centers.
- Establishing reading clubs and reading groups under the auspices of teachers and librarians.
- Students may create online discussion forums and blogs where they can post book summaries of their own, choose and display new books of interest to them.
- Organizing reading and book campaigns for students and teachers.
- Encouraging students to attend book fairs and visiting cultural centers and public libraries in order to read some of the books available there.
- Magazines and books should have a glossary page for introducing readers to new terms and new information circulated by the media on a daily basis and to test readers' ability to understand them in the Word Power style of the Reader's Digest magazine.
- To instill the habit of reading books and not just magazines in students, it is necessary to allocate a corner for books and reading in every classroom and in the school library, and to provide school libraries with books, stories, interesting, attractive and illustrated magazines and books about other cultures.
- The Ministry of Education may publish a periodical for students and teachers at schools and universities and another to show them the importance of free reading and to introduce them to new books.
- To enable students to read and understand long texts specialized in scientific, educational and technological fields instead of reading short light magazine articles, it is necessary to develop the students' ability to read fast with comprehension, train them to read a specific topic from several papers and electronic sources, and develop their ability to summarize what they read, to understand the organizational structure of the text and infer meanings of difficult words from context.
- Introducing a global education course for junior and senior high school students to encourage them to read global topics related to current global events, world history, and global educational, health, political and technological systems (Al-Jarf 2020, Al-Jarf, 2020).
- Integrating global topics in the history, geography, literature and social studies curricula (Al-Jarf, 2003a; Al-Jarf, 2003b).
- Encouraging students to read texts and books in various disciplines such as multicultural arts, literature and children's stories (Al-Jarf, 2015; Al-Jarf, 2011).
- Developing students' awareness of current global issues by integrating them in the speaking and reading activities in the classroom (Al-Jarf, 2022b).
- Reading online using online course platforms such as Blackboard, where students read what they like outside the classroom and post a summary of what they have read in the online course (Al-Jarf, 2019b; Al-Jarf, 2013; Al-Jarf, 2009a; Al-Jarf, 2007).
- Using mobile reading applications such as audiobooks, where students choose the books that they like to listen to, followed by a discussion of the content of the audiobooks orally or in writing (Al-Jarf, 2021d). Collaborative group reading activities can be held with discussions about what the students have read (Al-Jarf, 2021a).
- Using blogs, where the students read about the latest developments in world events, post a summary of what they have read, and hold discussions about what they have read in their individual or class blog (Al-Jarf, 2022a).
- Teachers should not delete or reduce the amount of material to be studied in the textbooks to make it easy for the students and help them pass their courses with high grades. The more the students read, the faster they become at reading. Reading will become an easy and enjoyable task rather than a chore (Al-Jarf, 2021c).
- It is necessary that extensive reading be part of the school curriculum and extra-curricular activities in the pre-university stages, i.e., the primary, junior high and secondary school levels, so that reading becomes a habit for students when they are older (Al-Jarf, 2019a; Al-Jarf, 2009b; Al-Jarf, 2009c).
- To develop the students' reading appreciation skills, they can collect and analyze motivational and inspirational quotes, and linguistic landscapes in the community (Al-Jarf, 2021e; Al-Jarf, 2021b).

Finally, it is significant to conduct periodic survey studies every few years to identify the reading trends of male and female students of all levels of education, to identify the changes that occur in their reading interests and habits, and to develop appropriate plans for modifying young people's reading skills to achieve the desired educational goals.

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**Appendix 1**  
**Book Titles Read By The Respondents During The Pandemic (June 2021)**

Serenad رواية تركية اسمها	رسائل من القرآن لادهم شرقاوي"	100 من عظماء الإسلام غيروا مجرى التاريخ
David coperfield	رقائق القرآن	33 استراتيجية للحرب روبرت غرين
Fahrenheit 451	رواية جنتلمان_في_موسكو مترجم	الأبله لدوستوفسكي
Feeling good	الروحاني الأخير المؤلف مهدي الموسوي	ابناء الأيام مترجم
Find you in the dark	زيارة لمكتبات العالم مترجم	ابنة السراب
How to win friends and influence people	ستوند	اجاثا كرسطي
Life after google	سجينة طهران	اخيار البلدان وعجائب البلدان
Never say never	سيكولوجية الجماهير	الأخوة السود - ليزا تيتنر
Oliver Twist	شجرتي شجرة البرتقال الرائعة	ارض الله حكاية عمر بن سيد 57 عاما في العبودية
Option B	الشخصية الإسرائيلية - حسن ظاظا	إسأل تُعط تعلم ان تظهر رغباتك
Out of the desert	شرح ابن عقيل لألفية ابن مالك	إغاثة اللهفان من مكائد الشيطان
Pharmacology Summary	شرح رياض الصالحين	أفعال بشرية ادب كوري
predictably	شيفرة دافنشي مترجم	الأفكار و المشاعر
Rich dad poor dad	صاحب الظل الطويل مترجم	الاقتصاد العجيب مترجم
Start with why	الصحراء العربية قراءة أنثروبولوجية	أقوم قبلا
The black swan	ضيقه خلق	الاكسير
The chimp paradox (the mind management)	الطمأنينة الفلسفية	ألف شمس ساطعه خالد حسيني
The diving bell and the butterfly	طوق الحمامة ل علي بن حزم الاندلسي	الآن أفهم للدكتور أحمد خالد توفيق
The trial Franz Kafka	ظل الريح مترجم	انتحار جماعي في هاريانا رواية
The Wheel of time	العادات السبع للناس الأكثر فعالية	انسان بعد التحديث شريف عرفة
Certified quality auditor	عاصفة السيوف مترجم	الانسان والبحث عن المعنى فرانكل مترجم
Civilized to death	عدوي اللدود جين ويستر	اول مرة اتدبر القرآن
Allow Departure Mechanism	عن الثورة والمرأة والابداع وال السعداوي	أيمن العتوم كان في أدب السجون
المرأة الكاملة	غوايات القراءة علي حسين	البداية والنهاية
مزرعة الحيوان جورج اورويل	فكر دون أن تفكر ايكا وارثانا	برواية عام من العزلة
مصباح علاء الدين مترجم	فن القراءة	البؤساء
مع النبي ادهم الشرقاوي	فن اللامبالاة	البؤساء
مُعجم معالم الحجاز	فن المحاولة (محمد السالم )	البيت الأندلسي .. واسيني الأعرج
مغامرات شيرلوك هولمز "عصبة ذوي الشعر الأحمر	فنجالي	بيكاسو وستارباكس ياسر حارب
مقدمة ابن خلدون	في الدين والعقل والفلسفة	تاريخ اول ديموقراطية في العالم مترجم
مكتبة منتصف الليل	في العلم والأخلاق والسياسة ليف تولستوي	تلك العتمة الباهرة
Epic of Gilgamesh ملحمة جلجامش	فيريديو - أحمد مراد	تمهيد لتاريخ الفلسفة الاسلامية
ملهم العالم عائض القرني	القاء الفيل الزهري	جرما الترجمان محمد حسن علوان
من الراس إلى الكراسي ل محمد النفاعي	قريبًا ستمطر - مشعل حمد	الجلطة التي أنارت بصيرتي لدكتورة: جيل بولتي تيلور
مهزلة العقل البشري علي الوردي	قصص الأنبياء	جو رواية المعتقل جهاد
موت صغير محمد حسن علوان	قلق السعي إلى المكانة	الحاج مراد ليف تولستوي
الموتى الفرعوني لبرت إم هرو يدج	القمر الاحمر .. عادة أحمد	حادي الارواح في بلاد الافراح لابن القيم
موسوعة علم الاجتماع. (أسعد نظامي تالش)	قواعد العشق الأربعون	حديقة الضباب (تان توان انغ) رواية
النبا العظيم	كافكا على الشاطئ	الحرافيش ، نجيب محفوظ
نظرية الفستق	كبيرة الورد سلطان موسى الموسى	الحرب على الكسل خالد ابو شادي
النورس جوناثان ليفينسجتون	كيف تعمل اللغة وتؤثر علينا	الحضور / لمايكل براون
هروبي الى الحرية عزت بيجوفيتش	لا املك الا المسافات التي تبعدني عبد السلام بنعبد العالي	حكايا سعودي في أوروبا
الهشاشة النفسية	لو كان يامكاني إخبارك شيئا واحدا فقط	حياة في الادارة - غازي القصيبي
هكذا تكلم زراداشت نيتشه	اللؤلؤة التي كسرت محارثها	حياتك الثانية تبدأ حين تدرك ان لديك حياة واحدة
هيبتا رواية	لوليتا مترجم	خدش في ابيدياتي
وجل لسمر حماد	ليف تولستوي - :الحرب والسلام	خوارق اللاشعور

الخوف ل د. أحمد فؤاد الأهواني	مادونا صاحبة معطف الفرو صباح الدين علي	الوجه
ذكريات الطنطاوي	المخطوطة المفقودة	وياهي عثمه
رحلة ابن بطوطة	مدينيو اسيا في زمن الحرب مترجم	يوتوبيا لأحمد خالد توفيق
		يوم المغفرة رواية

Note: all repetitious titles were deleted.

## Appendix 2

### Book Titles Read By The Respondents Before The Pandemic (September 2018)

بين القصرين نجيب محفوظ	دفاعاً عن الجنون	aleph .. the secret
تقرير الى غريكو - نيكوس كازنتزاكي.	دكتور جيפקو لـ بورييس باسترناك	GOT G.R.R. Martin
الاب الغني والاب الفقير	دلائل الإعجاز عبد القاهر الجرجاني	Unesy Lies The Head سيرة حياة الملك
إبقَ قوياً لديمي لوفاتو	الدوافع المحركة للبشر	الراحل الحسين بن طلال
الأبله لدوستويفسكي	ديوان وسميه وسنابل الطفوله للشاعر	آلية السماح Allow Departure Mechanism
أحببت وغدا: للتعافي من العلاقات المؤذية	الشهيد فايق عبد الجليل	هاوكينز بالرحيل
الأحلام " للدكتور علي الوردي "	ذكريات علي الطنطاوي	القرآن ولجج آخر
إختراع شعب إسرائيل	الراهب الذي باع سيارته الفيراري	القرآن والاحاديث
اختلال العالم - أمين معلوف ،	الرد على الجهمية للدارمي	قصة الأصل   ديفيد كريستيان
الاخوة كارامازوف	الرقص مع الحياة	قصة الايمان بين العلم والفلسفة والدين
الأدب الصغير والأدب الكبير لابن المقفع	الرقص مع الحياة من حديث النفس	نديم الجسر
أدباء العرب في الجاهلية وصدر الإسلام.	رقصة مع التنانين جورج مارتن	-قصص الأنبياء للطبري
أريد أن أعيش، للكاتب مهدي الموسوي	رياض الصالحين	القصص المصورة
أزمة النهضة العربية و حرب الأفكار هاني نسيرة	زاد المعاد	قلق السعي الى المكانة لأن دو بوتون
استرداد عمر	الساعة الخامسة والعشرون	قواعد العشق الأربعون
اسرار الرموز فوز كردي	السجينة	قوة الان ؛ ايكهارت تول
أسطر من النقل والعقل والفكر	سلايدات فيسيولوجي بروف سليمة	قوة العقل الباطن لجوزيف ميرفي
الإسلام والايمان	سورة الكهف	كافكا على الشاطئ هاروكي موراكامي.
إسمه أحمد للكاتب أيمن العتوم	السيرة النبوية	كفاحي ادولف هتلر
اصوات مراكش	سيكولوجية الجماهير غوستاف لو يون	الكلب الاسود شامل عن الاكتئاب
الاقتصاد كئيّراً	شارع اللصوص	الكوميديا الإلهية/ دانتي
الاحاد في مواجهة نفسه	شاطئ المحار	لا تحزن
أم سعد لغسان كنفاني	شحاذو المعجزات لقسطنطين جيورجيو	لأنك الله،
امراة الصابط الفرنسي	شرح التوحيد تيسير العزيز الحميد	اللعبة الامريكية قناع ضياع جياع قاسم
امراة في النافذة..	شرح الاصول الثلاثة الشيخ ابن عثيمين	البغدادى
إمراة من طراز خاص كريم الشاذلي	شرح العقيدة الطحاوية	لعبة الأمم /مايلز كوبلاند
ان تبقى ل دخولة حمدي	شروط النهضة لمالك بن نبي	لعبة الشطرنج الكبرى
أن في المرتفعات الخضراء	الشعر	لماذا سقطت الماركسية مصطفى محمود
أنا كارنين	شقة الحرية - غازي القصيبي	اللؤلؤ المكنون لموسى بن راشد العازمي
انجيل برنابا	الشمائل المحمدية	مائة عام من العزله
انشاء مباني	الشيخ والبحر	المتسطف في كل فن مستطرف.
الإيمان من مجموع الفتاوى لابن تيمية ..	شيفرة بلال	مثالب الولادة
ياحاثات عن حياة	شيفرة دافنشي لـ دان براون	المثقفون والسلطة في مصر غالي شكري
اليخلاء	الصارم والمسلول	محامي الغد مقدمة لمستقبلك
بداية ونهاية :نجيب محفوظ	صندوق طير جوش مالبرمان	المحركات والتربو والجوده
البدايه والنهايه	الطايبور/ بسمه عبد العزيز	محنة الامام أحمد برواية حنبل ٢
بنات حواء الثلاث -أليف شافاك	طاقة العقل الباطن	المدخل الى تاريخ شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية
البؤساء	الطبقات الكبرى	مدارج السالكين
التأثير لجيني نايبين	ظل الريح	مدارس بلوغ المرام مصطلح الحديث
تاريخ الفلسفة الغربية برتراند راسل	عاصفة السيوف	مذكرات زوجة دوستيفسكي
التثليث والتجسد لإسحاق نيوتن	عالم صوفي جويستان غاردر	مذكرات كازنتزاكي
	عبدالله العجيري	المرصد لحنا مينه
		مزرعة الحيوان جورج اوريل
		مزرعة الحيوان
		المشوق إلى القرآن

مصنفان الجاحظ، البيان والتبيين	عبقرية محمد لعباس محمود العقاد	تحفة الجالس في احكام المجالس
مع النبي لأدهم الشرقاوي	عتبة الالم	تدهور الحضارة الغربية شبنجلر
من حديث النفس للطنطاوي	عداء الطائر الورقية	تعلم او مت Learn or Die...
المنتقى من بطون الكتب- محمد الحمد	العرجون القديم مروان البخيت	تعويذه شفتشي
منطق الطير	عزاءات الفلسفة لآلن دو بوتون	تفسير السعدي
مهزلة العقل البشري	العصر العباسي	تكوين المفكر، لعبد الكريم بكار .
المؤمن الصادق	عصرنا والعيش في زمانه الصعب	تميكثو بول اوستر
النبا العظيم	العطر باتريك زوسكيند	التميمه البشريه
نبيض	العقل العربي المعاصر ونهاية عصر البترول	ثلاثية غرناطة
نظرية الفستق	العقل المدير لماريا كونيكوفا.	ثلاثية غرناطة
هدى السيرة النبوية في التغيير الاجتماعي	عقل غير هادئ - -	ثورة الفن ل أحمد مشرف
هكذا ربانا جدي علي الطنطاوي عايدة العظم	عمدة الأحكام وبلوغ المرام	الجامع في الاداب والحكم
هكذا علمتني الحياة- مصطفى السباعي	عودة الغائب	الجداول -ايليا ابو ماضي
هل يسمع الأموات كلام الاحياء	غداً أجمل المغلوث	الجزء الثالث من سلسلة أغنية الجليد و النار
وأظلمت المدينة	الغرفة ٢٠٧ رواية احمد خالد توفيق	جين آيبر
الوحى الثانى فى ضوء الوحى الاول مروان كردى	العريب للمرة الثانية	الحب في زمن الكوليرا؟
وصايا.. لمحمد الرطبان	الفتى المقيم والمعلم لـ اليف شافاق..	حديث الصباح ، أدهم الشرقاوي
وما صاحبكم بمجنون .. لـ أحمد الزمام	الفقراء لديستوفسكى ..	الحروب الصليبية للدكتور راغب السرجاني
وهم الشيطان the devil's delusion	الفن	الحصار.. ترامب تحت القصف
ياصاحبي السجن - أيمن العتوم	في ظلال القرآن	حياة في الإدارة .. غازي القصيبي
يافا حكاية غياب ومطر	فئران أمي حصة أبي طويل الساقين	الحيوان
يوتوبيا احمد خالد توفيق	الفيزياء المسلية	حيونة الانسان ممدوح عدوان
	القدس ليست اورشليم فاضل الربيعي	الداء والدواء

Note: All repetitious titles were deleted.