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IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO READING IN PAKISTAN

A SPECIAL STUDY

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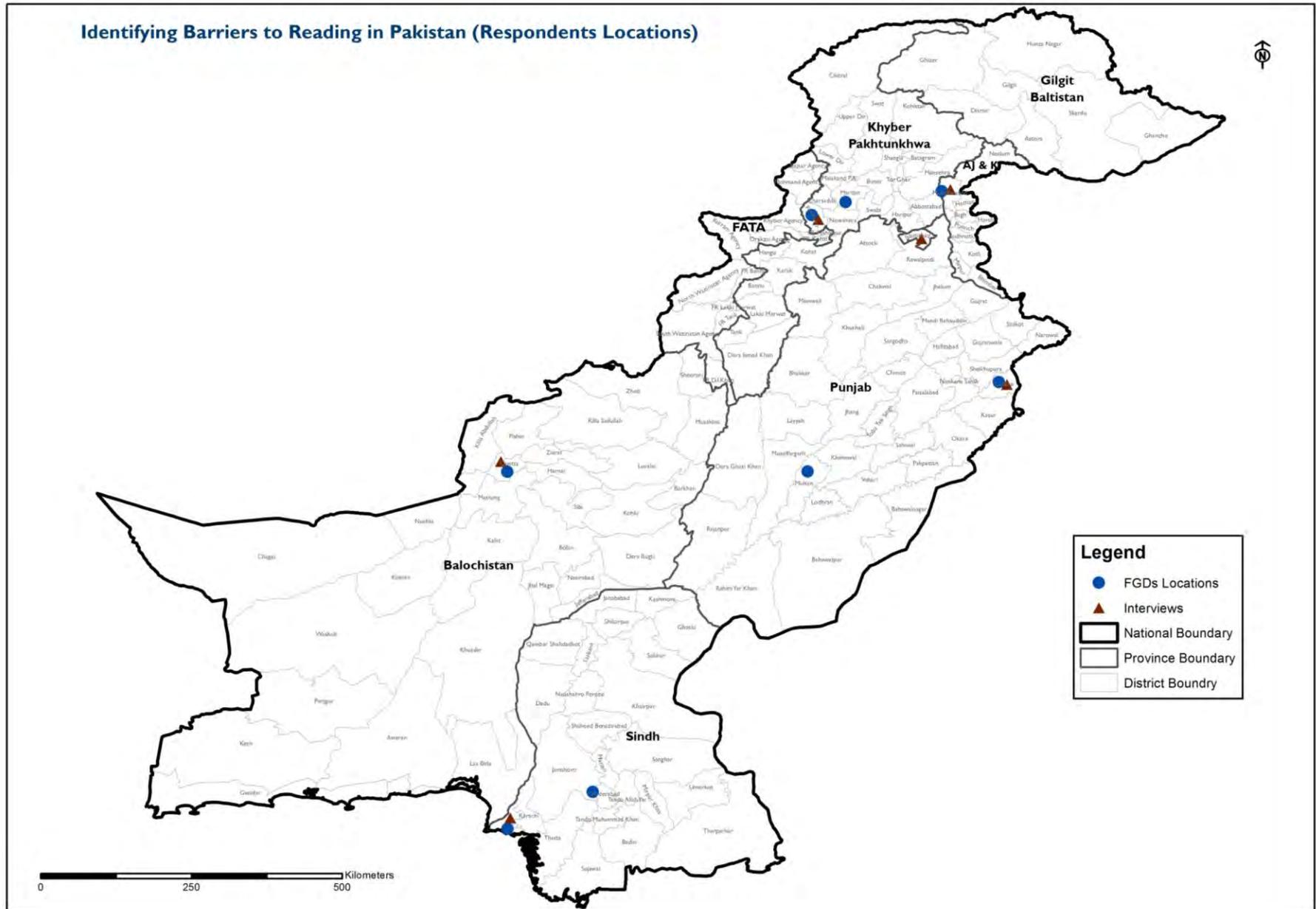
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ACRONYMS

AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
CLC	Children’s Library Complex
DP	Development Partner
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GOP	Government of Pakistan
IBRP	Identifying Barriers to Reading in Pakistan
IEQ	Improving Education Quality
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LIS	Library and Information Science
MSI	Management Systems International
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PLP	Pakistan Libraries Project
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SMC	School Management Committee
SSI	Semi-structured Interview
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VTT	Voice Tel Tech

FIGURE 1: IBRP DATA COLLECTION LOCATIONS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Identifying Barriers to Reading in Pakistan (IBRP) is a special study commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to better understand ways to strengthen the reading culture in Pakistan both within and beyond the school walls. The findings of this study will aid in achieving the USAID Improving Education Quality (IEQ) program's objective to improve reading outcomes in Pakistan and for children in grades 1 and 2, in particular.

This report is designed to provide insight into opportunities and barriers related to the creation of an enabling environment that best fosters the growth of children's reading skills and reinforces a lifelong habit of reading. The dearth of recent and relevant research has constrained the development of thoughtful and effective approaches to support Pakistanis to adopt the habit of reading. The IBRP special study is intended to fill this gap and identify promising opportunities for revitalizing the reading habit among Pakistanis across different regional, gender, age, and language groups.

The primary research questions are:

1. What are the common attitudes and beliefs about reading in Pakistan?
2. What are the barriers to reading among different populations in Pakistan?
3. What are the most promising practices and opportunities to revitalize the reading culture?

This study takes a different approach to the concept of reading than more recent studies commissioned by USAID, which have generally been focused on assessing and diagnosing deficiencies in pupil reading achievement and in the teaching of reading, most commonly through the use of the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA). While these studies use an autonomous model of reading that primarily views it as an individual technical skill, this study uses a socio-cultural model in which reading is viewed as a social practice. In this conception, reading and reading habits are learned not only in classrooms and at home, but also in the social spaces of the broader community as well as in and through media and the Internet. While the socio-cultural model of reading has been acknowledged for quite some time in the development community, especially through reading and literacy projects that include activities in the home or with household members, or through support for educational television, recent studies on reading in Pakistan have not specifically assessed the state of its reading culture.

Drawing from this model, the IBRP Study carried out focus group discussions (FGD), semi-structured interviews (SSI), and a structured survey in five provinces in Pakistan to collect qualitative and quantitative data on Pakistan's culture of reading. A total of 40 FGDs involving 393 participants were held in eight different urban and rural (peri-urban) areas in Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) from October 20-24, 2014. The groups were further divided into four age-based sub-groups: class 4 and 5 students (Primary School Group), class 10 and 11 students (Secondary School Group), recent university graduates (University Group), and parents with children in primary school (Parent Group). Each of these sub-groups was further divided equally by gender.

The FGD methodology involved the participatory development of a community reading map, where group members drew a map identifying places in their communities where reading materials, readers, and non-readers can be found, and then used this map to discuss their attitudes and beliefs about reading, and the barriers to reading and reading culture.

All 393 FGD participants also completed an individual survey that elicited information about their family background and home environment, language use, educational background, and personal reading habits. This allowed researchers to determine any possible demographic bias in the focus group composition and acquire additional information about individual reading habits.

Interviews were conducted with 23 provincial-level government education officials in the five provinces covered in this study, as well as education experts, writers, university lecturers, publishers, and researchers to obtain input related to current reading practices, reading initiatives, and the relationships between the provincial education systems, donors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The study revealed a number of reading culture characteristics and barriers to reading in Pakistan:

- Wealth and education is associated with higher interest in and more time for reading, and increased access to reading materials. Reading is perceived to be most useful for academic pursuits and job-related needs. The Pakistani schooling textbook/exam culture where reading outside the textbook is generally not required and reading skills are not substantially tested is commonly blamed for creating a culture of non-readers.
- Reading for reasons other than academics and career growth is not common due to non-literacy, and lack of access to reading materials, time, and interest in reading outside of school/work requirements. Among readers with access to reading materials and who have interests outside of school, reading is perceived to be useful mostly for news.
- Reading habits outside of school are believed to have declined over the past 10 to 20 years, in part due to schools' textbook/exam-focused culture, the rise of screen culture, the gap between educated/non-educated and rich/poor, and lack of access to reading materials, especially from libraries.
- There is a severe shortage of resources to support others' reading, including a lack of (functioning) public and school libraries, literacy initiatives, relevant and affordable high-quality reading materials in local languages, and home environments where parents and children read together. The low literacy rates among women/mothers appear to correlate with an inadequately supportive reading environment at home.
- While newspaper reading appears to be a common practice among those who read outside of academic and work environments, participants reported the number of public spaces where people gather to read together and the frequency of their use have significantly dropped over the last 10-20 years, an important change in what was formerly considered to be a prominent aspect of reading culture in Pakistan.
- Newspapers, and also TV, radio, and digital media, are by far the most popular and trusted sources of information, especially among the younger generations, for whom screen culture is an undeniable aspect of reading culture.
- Religious leaders are among the most trusted sources of information and religious books are by far the most common reading materials at home. Combined with research demonstrating increasing religiosity in the public school curriculum as well as in the public sphere, religious communities and practices are an integral aspect of reading culture in Pakistan.
- Fiction and non-fiction books, especially children's story books, are among the least read, least accessible, and most expensive materials. Those that are available are considered by Pakistanis to be the least relevant and lowest quality form of reading material.
- There is a marked lack of children's story books in Urdu, the official language of Pakistan and dominant language of instruction, and even more so in other local languages, such as Pashto, Punjabi, and Sindhi.

- The vast majority of books in households were purchased, especially from discount booksellers like bazaar merchants and street vendors. For most families, books are not affordable and they do not have access to books through alternative sources such as school or public libraries.
- Poverty, education, affordability, non-literacy, and low proximity to borrowable or affordable reading materials are the primary barriers limiting access to reading materials. High poverty rates, low literacy rates, and lack of affordable bookstores and school and public libraries across Pakistan means that access to reading materials is a problem for the majority of Pakistanis, and the problem is getting worse.
- Pakistanis with special needs and disabilities, including those with vision, auditory, physical, and learning disabilities, have insufficient recourse to services to enable them to access quality education, and impedes their development of skills and knowledge necessary for them to thrive in the workplace.
- While there are a number of smaller projects throughout Pakistan addressing various aspects of reading culture and literacy, there is no research or body of evaluations currently available that examines the effectiveness of the variety of approaches these projects represent.
- By themselves, the existing projects that focus on reading—outside of teacher training and curriculum development—reach a small proportion of the Pakistani public, and none have explicitly adopted the concept of reading culture as a programmatic goal. Some have adopted practices and approaches that are aligned with several of this study’s findings, including the use of television and media, support for school and public libraries, the production of more affordable, relevant, and accessible books, and community-based and grassroots approaches.

The findings and conclusions of the study summarized above indicate the clear need to respond to both supply-side and demand-side considerations in the effort to revitalize reading habits and the reading culture in Pakistan.

A. Supply-side

I. Libraries:

A. Local support for and ownership of public libraries

- Support efforts, especially at the grassroots and local levels, to establish school/public library hybrids (school libraries that are also public libraries), and improve existing public and school libraries.

B. Professionalize Pakistan’s Librarians

- Offer scholarships for graduate certification/MA degrees in Library and Information Science (LIS) at Pakistani universities in exchange for a two-year, stipend-paid post at one of the donor-supported libraries.
- Strong, internationally linked Professional Associations for information science specialists will contribute to continuous professional development of librarians.
- Foster partnerships between Pakistani universities and international universities with reputable Library and Information Science programs for an exchange of experience and provision of technical assistance to improve the quality of instruction in Pakistani tertiary LIS programs, which should train librarians to apply the following core skills:

- Manage and promote the library collection.
- Support teachers to use library materials as part of their classes.
- Coordinate local volunteer literacy initiatives.
- Support story time, reading challenges, and literary clubs.
- Host cultural events such as the chanting of Sufi poetry and telling of local and regional folk tales and myths.
- Engage community members in use of the materials, whether for themselves or to promote children’s reading habits.
- Manage materials and promote practices that increase access to reading materials for disabled and hearing- and vision-impaired patrons.

2. Reading Materials:

A. Enhance Library Collections

- Libraries should strive to offer on-loan e-readers or tablets and desktop computers pre-loaded with a library of books, videos, and literacy materials. Content can include fiction and non-fiction in various languages of Pakistan, including subjects aligned with local livelihood and development needs. These ICT resources also can be used for research and reference use where Internet is available.¹
- Libraries should loan recent printed non-textbook reading materials in good condition and aligned with the public primary school curriculum. Subjects should span the full range, including languages, social studies, science, math, and other non-fiction books, as well as stories, poetry, plays, and other works of fiction.
- All materials should be coded by reading level to compliment classroom reading diagnostics.
- Materials must be available in local, national, and international languages where possible and must be accessible and relevant to the disabled and vision- and hearing-impaired.

B. Strengthen Publishing Capacity

- Subsidies to Pakistani publishers can aid in developing and supplying the electronic and printed materials described above.
- There is a need for newspapers and magazines in local languages—especially those featuring children’s sections.

¹ See, West and Chew (2014), *Reading in the Mobile Era* (UNESCO). Accessed at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002274/227436E.pdf>

Worldreader (2013), iREAD 2 Baseline Report. Accessed at: <http://www.worldreader.org/learnings>, and Worldreader (2013), iREAD 2 Midterm Report. Accessed at: <http://www.worldreader.org/learnings>

B. Demand-side

I. Policy:

- The adoption by Provincial Ministries of Education of policies that introduce regular reading periods into every school day, as well as the commitment to fund school level libraries, will enhance reading outcomes for students. Authorizing members of the public to use these libraries will foster a habit of reading within families and communities. Mandating teachers to utilize the library and its materials as a regular part of the curriculum and school management committees to organize regular public reading events at school libraries will support better academic results for children.
- Government standards in favor of demonstrated student mastery of phonics and word decoding on annual exams in the early grades will provide focus for reading instruction and students' individual reading practice in the classroom, at home and in the library. Technical assistance should be provided as required to support Provincial Ministries of Education to adopt and implement such policies.

2. Multi-media:

- Revive Sim Sim Hamara (Pakistan Sesame Street) or similar educational programming as well as “edutainment” media modeled on the animated serials, Burka Avengers and Word Girl. Reading materials for classrooms and libraries can also be linked to these productions.
- Support campaigns that provide regular encouragement to parents, especially mothers, to read to and engage in basic literacy activities with their children at home.
- Support educational radio and television programming that focuses on reading and adult literacy. This programming may incorporate topics related to livelihoods, health, hygiene and other development issues. Reading materials for classrooms and libraries can also be linked to these productions.

3. Advocacy:

- Support national information and advocacy campaigns featuring media and sports celebrities, political leaders from all political parties, and religious leaders advocating reading for enjoyment, personal growth, and informed citizenship via TV, radio, newspapers, billboards, posters, and online social networks. A campaign may also include children's and young adult reading challenges and writing contests on subjects of national/regional identity, national/regional history, fiction, poetry, and journalism.
- Support provincial and nationally-elected officials and political parties to promote reading and public support for libraries in their policy platforms and legislative agendas.

I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

Identifying Barriers to Reading in Pakistan (IBRP) is a special study commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that aims to better understand ways to strengthen the reading culture in Pakistan both within and beyond the school walls. The findings of this study will be used to inform potential activities as part of USAID’s overarching Improving Education Quality (IEQ) program.

This report is designed to support several components understood as essential to the success of the objective of IEQ: the creation of an enabling and supporting environment that best fosters the growth of children’s reading skills and reinforces a lifelong habit of reading. There is a dearth of recent and relevant research on the barriers to the reading culture that has impeded and prevented Pakistanis from reading. The IBRP special study is intended to fill these gaps and identify opportunities to apply a thoughtful and effective solution to the underlying obstacles that prevent Pakistanis across different regional, gender, age, and language divides from developing reading skills and habits.

This special study will inform other reading-related activities under IEQ. These include the Pakistan Reading Project (PRP), the Private School Forum, and the UNICEF PIO Grant, which is a project aimed at constructing one new college of education building in 10 Pakistani universities.

Reading Culture in Pakistan

Pakistan has long been a crossroads of peoples and cultures, and reading cultures from all directions have embedded themselves in its history since ancient times. Alexander the Great brought the first university to the region in the 3rd century B.C. The universities and libraries of the Jaulian monasteries were renowned throughout the Buddhist world and are extensively described in the 4th century accounts of the Chinese pilgrim Fa Xian.² In the Buddhist monastery of Jaulian in Taxila, many of the stone inscriptions in Pali during that time were public announcements meant to be read by the members of the community.

With the coming of Islam in the 8th century, the act of reading acquired an additional dimension through a religion that placed the ability to read at the center of religious practice and required a minimum degree of literacy for full participation in spiritual life. The very first word that Allah speaks in the Quran is “read,” and the Prophet Mohammed implored his subjects to learn about the other cultures of the world through reading and travel.

Pakistan’s national language, Urdu, emerged as a distinct language in the 14th century and has a rich literary tradition. This language could itself be described as a crossroads of many languages, including Khariboli, Persian, Arabic, and more recently English. Urdu poetry, in particular, has a long history and is intertwined with an oral tradition of public recitation. Frequent public gatherings where the Sufi poets’ works are recited still attract a large number of participants from a variety of social backgrounds and ages.

Reading and literacy also have an elitist history in Pakistan, however. Prior to and during much of the colonial era, only scholars and administrators were literate. Poetry and literature were transmitted orally. Folklore and folktales, also orally transmitted, offered education in religious precepts and moral values, preserved political understanding and history, and provided entertainment. Every village had hundreds of tales and traditions, faithfully repeated by parents to their children and by storytellers at festivals and public occasions. Some

² Si-Yu-Ki, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, (Tr. Samuel Beal: *Travels of Fa-Hian, The Mission of Sung-Yun and Hwei-Sng, Books 1–5*), Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd. London. 1906

folklore was an essential aspect of religious practice, explaining cosmology and the significance of local shrines and deities. Many of the research participants in this study lamented the decline of their oral traditions and practices. Many researchers claim the loss of these traditions are very much tied to the decline in reading culture in general.³

The colonial era saw an increasing number of people in the region become literate, but reading remained an activity of the few who were educated and had access to books. A public library system in Pakistan was established by British Colonial rulers to assist in administrative affairs, but mostly for the leisure reading of the elite, and not for the common public who were mostly non-literate. However, the British Colonial administration in Punjab established about 16,000 ruler libraries attached to middle schools in the 1930s, where school teachers acted as public librarians in return for special allowances. The problem was that the cost of books that were lost or stolen was deducted from these allowances, creating a disincentive to loan out the books.⁴ Only 12 percent of these libraries remain, and most are not functioning properly. Children used to borrow books from Anna Libraries in their localities, which were local libraries that used to lend books for one Anna (a sub-unit of the Rupee) per day.⁵ A number of library ordinances and policies were passed in Pakistan between the 1940s and 1970s, but few were implemented due to financial limitations and war.⁶

The decades just before and after independence were a time when Pakistani writers and literature—and the culture of reading—came to define both an emerging identity for many, but also marked increasing inequalities in Pakistani society. Pakistan's national language became Urdu despite the fact that only 8 percent of the population spoke this language at the time. Urdu was a language of communication between the people and politicians involved in the movement for partition; successive leaders have encouraged all to learn it to promote nationalism.

Rising from the turmoil of partition emerged a rich culture of popular literature and poetry written in Urdu and other common languages like Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, and Saraiki, contributed by many writers and poets over the last three generations. Numerous book fairs and literary festivals are held all over the country, and many are well-attended by both Pakistanis and literati from all over the world. Many cafes, tea houses, and restaurants in Lahore and Karachi have long histories as renowned meeting places for writers and artists.

The adoption of Urdu nonetheless put many Pakistanis at a severe disadvantage when it came to political representation and schooling. Furthermore, English language—and English boarding schools—eventually became a purview of the elite and lengthened the gap between rich and poor. Although a number of studies have documented the reading habits of Pakistani children and youth since the 1970s, few activities around reading culture have ever been fully implemented.⁷ In the meantime, the public library system and public schooling have suffered as conflict, economic decline, and government dysfunction plagued Pakistan over the last six decades.

³ Banuazizi, Ali and Myron Weiner (eds.). 1994, *The Politics of Social Transformation in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan* (Contemporary Issues in the Middle East), Syracuse University Press.

⁴ Anwar, M.A. (1996). *Public Library Legislation in Pakistan: Textual Sources*. Lahore: Library and Information Management Academy.

⁵ Khurshid, A (1975). *What children read: A survey*. National book council of Pakistan.

⁶ Warraich, N. F. (2013) *The Future of Quiescent Public Library System: A Developing Country Prospective*. Paper delivered at the IFLA WLIC Singapore 2013.

⁷ Khurshid, A (1975). *What children read: A survey*. National book council of Pakistan.

Chaudhery, Q. I. *Journey of Pakistan currency*. Retrieved from <http://www.hamariweb.com/articles/article.aspx?id=23975>

Hussain, I. & Munshi, P. (2011). Identifying reading preferences of secondary school students. *Scientific Research*. Vol. 2 No. 5 (pg. 429-434)

Awais, S. (2013). *The reading preferences of primary school children in Lahore* (Doctoral dissertation). University of The Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

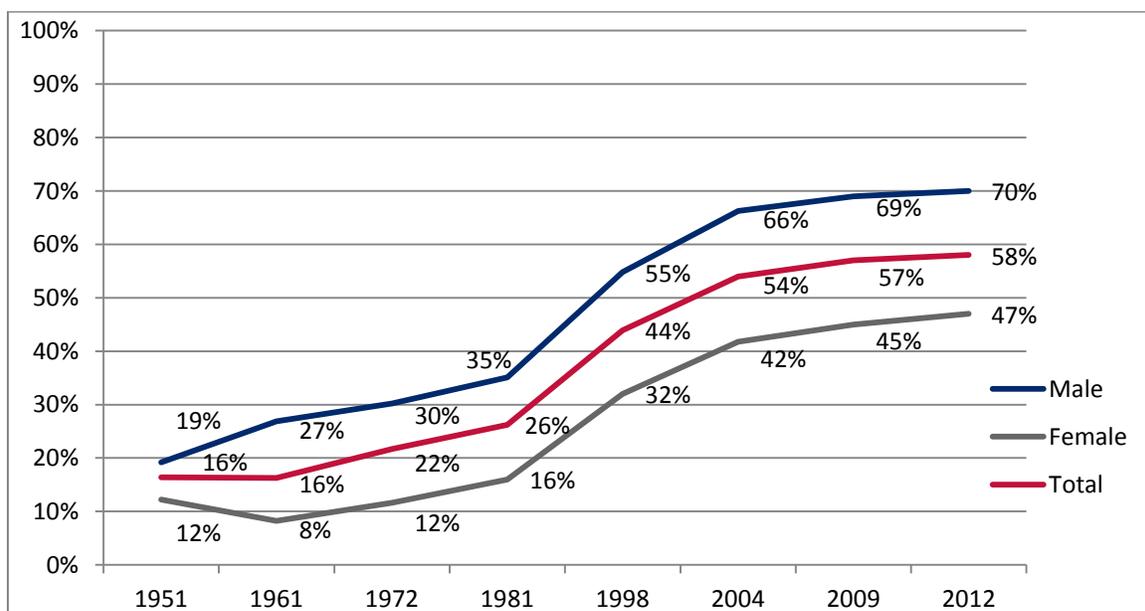
Nonetheless it is important to note that the remnants of a reading culture exist today in Pakistan, and the challenge is how to revive it and bring it into the 21st century.

Reading and Literacy in Pakistan Today

Research shows that children’s reading habits both in and out of school positively affect educational attainment, social mobility, and cognitive development,⁸ and that readers have distinctive advantages economically and socially as compared to non-readers.⁹ Reading skills are not only a foundation for achievement across all academic subject areas, but also a prerequisite for successful participation in most areas of adult life.¹⁰ The European Commission recognizes literacy as a fundamental skill that underpins lifelong learning, contributes to social integration, and facilitates personal development.¹¹

While adult literacy rates in Pakistan increased dramatically over the 50 years between independence and the 1990s, illustrated below in Figure 2, rising from 16 percent in 1951 to 54 percent in 2004. Rates have stagnated over the last 10 years, rising only four points to 58 percent in 2012. Today, more than one in three Pakistanis over the age of 10 cannot read a newspaper or write a simple letter in any language.

FIGURE 2: ADULT LITERACY IN PAKISTAN (1951-2012)¹²



⁸ Sullivan, A. & Brown, M. (2013). Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading. London, UK: Center for Longitudinal Studies, Institute of Education University of London

⁹ Literacy rich environments. Retrieved from <http://www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/literacy-rich-environments.htm>

¹⁰ Cunningham, A. E. and K. E. Stanovich (1998), "Early reading acquisition and its relation to reading experience and ability 10 years later. *Developmental Psychology*, Vol 33, pp. 934-945. Smith, M. C. et al. (2000), What will be the demands of literacy in the workplace in the next millennium?. *Reading Research Quarterly*. 35(3), pp. 378-383.

¹¹ European Commission (2001). *European Report on the quality of school education: Sixteen quality indicators*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

¹² "Pakistan: where and who are the world's illiterates? Background paper for the Education for all global monitoring report 2006: literacy for life; 2005." Paris: UNESCO.

Evidence from international assessments such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) suggest that the median child in low income countries performs worse than 97 percent of the children in high income countries.¹³ Pakistan is no exception. The national-level data of the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) – 2013 shows that, on average, 40 percent of third grade public school children in Pakistan cannot read a sentence in Urdu. In rural areas, only 22 percent of first grade children can identify the names of English letters.¹⁴

The preliminary results from the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) national study, commissioned by USAID/Pakistan in 2013-14, resonates with the ASER findings. Although EGRA scores were better in familiar word recognition and passage reading, children across all provinces demonstrated poor understanding of comprehension (passage and listening) and phonics (non-word reading, letter sound knowledge, and phonemic awareness). This is likely because the teaching of reading is based on rote memorization of words, and the reading of books and other reading materials outside the textbook is seldom required, or generally not possible due to the absence of proper school libraries.

Indeed, one of the indicators of a healthy reading culture can be seen in the presence, maintenance, and use of libraries. There is very little research or information regarding the state of Pakistan's school and public libraries today, but some data from individual provinces suggest that it is very poor. For instance, in Punjab province, which tends to have among the highest education indicators in the country, there are only 178 public libraries in the entire province, and most of them are not functioning or are in disrepair.¹⁵ As of 2010, 16 of 23 districts in Sindh did not have a single public library, but there are 40 libraries in Karachi alone. As of 2011, only 602 of 48,914 public schools in Sindh province had a library, representing only 1.5 percent.¹⁶

The results from the EGRA national study in 2013 also present telling statistics about the use of school libraries. Students who attend schools libraries score no different on the EGRA than those who attend schools without them. While one might conclude that libraries may not have an effect on test scores, based on the results of this study, the authors argue that it is more likely because that teachers and students in schools with libraries did not utilize them because they were poorly resourced, teachers were reluctant to loan books, or because there was little curricular space for extra-textbook reading materials.

A reading culture requires that there be materials to read and compelling reasons to develop reading skills and habits—supply and demand. The affordability and accessibility of reading materials and a reading citizenry—a reading culture—are all in the public interest, and together these supply and demand factors create a self-reinforcing cycle that maintains a supportive environment for children's development of reading skills and adoption of reading habits. This study will identify the principal barriers and opportunities for re-establishing, strengthening, and sustaining a reading culture in Pakistan.

Research Questions

In response to the research purpose and development problem described above, the following research questions were designed to capture the areas where the barriers to reading may be identified. Each of these three main areas is further defined through sub-questions that indicate the precise areas of interest to USAID. The study team, thus, gathered data as required to answer the questions below:

¹³ Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International. 2009. *Early Grade Reading Assessment Toolkit*. RTI Press.

¹⁴ ASER. 2011. *Annual Status of Education Report (2011) Pakistan*

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ *School Education Statistics Sindh by District, 2010-2011*. Bureau of Statistics, Planning and Development, Government of Sindh.

1. What are the common attitudes and beliefs¹⁷ about reading in Pakistan?

- a. What attitudes do Pakistani people hold about reading?
- b. What beliefs do Pakistani people hold about reading?

2. What are the barriers to reading among different populations in Pakistan?

- a. What knowledge do people have about how to support others' reading?
- b. What is the frequency and source of material read?
- c. What proportion is purchasing reading materials?
- d. What proportion report difficulty accessing reading materials nearby?
- e. Where are there gaps to fill for Pakistanis with disabilities and special learning needs to participate in a culture of reading, and how great is the need for services?
- f. What are the most popular and trusted sources of information?
- g. What do the findings for the questions above reveal about the trends in barriers to reading among different populations?

3. What are the most promising practices and opportunities to revitalize the reading culture?

- h. What are other development partners (DPs)/Government of Pakistan (GOP)/private sector partners doing or have recently done to promote literacy and the reading culture?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The most recent studies of reading in the developing world, especially those relying on assessments such as EGRA, conceive of reading as a technical skill, acquired through instruction by properly trained teachers, and distinct from orality and the social and economic environment. This is commonly referred to as an autonomous or cognitive-medical model of reading, and more generally, of literacy. This model, found in the works of Ong (1982), Olson (1985), Goody (1986, 1987) and others, perceives literacy as a neutral skill that is universal irrespective of the cultural milieu, and based on predictable and measurable cognitive processes that unlock higher order social and economic capacities.¹⁸ Because the elements of reading defined by this model are measurable, assessments are used to evaluate the state of an individual's or group's reading ability, diagnose deficiencies, and prescribe interventions most commonly applied to the formal classroom and the institutional systems and personnel that support it.

Because this research mandates an examination of the broader socio-cultural environment in which reading is not only learned, but practiced, this study uses a different conception of reading and literacy. It draws instead

¹⁷ For the purpose of this study, the term "attitudes" refer to the ways respondents construct the value of reading—why reading is or is not important—while the term "beliefs" refer to the assumptions respondents have about the state of reading and reading culture in Pakistan.

¹⁸ Olson, D. (1985). *Literacy, language and learning: the nature and consequences of reading and writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ong, W. J. (1982). *Orality and literacy: The technologizing of the word*. London: Methuen.

Goody, J. (1987). *The interface between the written and the oral*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

from the literature on literacy commonly known as *new literacy studies* and *cross-cultural approaches to literacy*.¹⁹ Reading in this case is viewed as a social practice that is closely related to people's everyday life. In this investigation of reading culture in Pakistan, the authors emphasize that children acquire reading abilities not only in school, but also through exposure to both literate, oral, and interpersonal exchange practices in their home environment as well as in the broader communities through which they circulate. The development of reading skills and habits in this case are the result of a profound social process, embedded in relationships, particularly between children and parents, siblings, grandparents, friends, neighbors, caretakers, and teachers in multiple contexts, as well as in and through media and the Internet.

This study also draws on what is known as *emergent literacy* development. This concept was introduced by Marie Clay in 1966 to describe the behaviors used by young children when reading and writing even though they could not actually read and write in the conventional sense.²⁰ Emergent literacy involves skills in listening and speaking, singing, using objects, pictures, gestures, or any combination of ways in which a child understands and interprets experiences. Research on early and emergent literacy shows that with lots of opportunities to see and engage in meaningful literacy activities through interaction with adults and peers, children become conventional readers and writers.²¹

Both of these alternatives to the autonomous model of reading indicate that there is not just a single form of literacy, but "literacies." This is because there are an infinite number of social contexts in which children live and learn across the world. In light of this, this study pays close attention to the particulars of the social environment in which research participants live in order to draw conclusions and recommendations that will effectively inform the design of an activity attentive to the socio-historical contexts and cultural milieu of Pakistan.

¹⁹ Street, B. V. (1996). Preface. In M. Prinsloo & M. Breier (Eds.), *The social uses of literacy: theory and practice in contemporary South Africa*. Cape Town: Sached Books. pp. 1-9.

Street, B. V. (1993). Introduction: The new literacy studies. In B. V. Street (Ed.), *Cross-cultural approaches to literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 1-21.

Prinsloo, M. & Breier, M. (1996). Introduction. In M. Prinsloo & M. Breier (Eds.), *The social uses of literacy: theory and practice in contemporary South Africa*. Cape Town: Sached Books. pp. 11-29.

Barton, D. (2001). Literacy in everyday contexts. In Verhoeven, Ludo & Snow (Eds.), *Literacy and motivation: Reading engagement in individuals and groups*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 23-37.

Verhoeven, L. & Snow, C. (2001). Bridging cognitive and sociocultural viewpoints. In L. Verhoeven & C. Snow (Eds.), *Literacy and motivation: reading engagement in individuals and groups*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. pp. 1-20.

Gee, J. P. (1990/1996/2007) *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in Discourses*. London: Taylor & Francis (Second Edition, 1996; Third Edition, 2007).

²⁰ Teale, W. H. & Sulzby, E. (1986). Emergent literacy as a perspective for examining how young children become writers and readers. In W. H. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

²¹ Morrow, L. M. (Ed.) (1995). *Family literacy: Connections in schools and communities*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Spreadbury, J. (2002). Building on home and community experiences in early childhood education. In L. Makin & C. Jones Diaz (Eds.), *Literacies in early childhood: Changing views, challenging practice*. Sydney: MacLennan & Petty Pty Limited.

Paratore, J. R. (2005). Approaches to family literacy: Exploring possibilities. *The Reading Teacher*, 59, 394-396.

Purcell-Gates, V. (2000). Family literacy. In M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research*. Vol. 3. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

3. METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

In addition to a standard archival and document review, the IBRP study team utilized two qualitative and one quantitative tool to collect data: focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, and a structured survey.

Document Review – The study team collected and reviewed relevant documents from USAID, the GOP, and other donor programs as well as statistical data, academic research, and other available sources related to reading culture. The relevant documents included research/study reports, policy documents, newspaper and scholarly articles, government statistical data, and published/unpublished reports. The document review also explored promising practices and opportunities to strengthen community reading skills and habits, including the GOP’s current/past programs and policies, and the programs or initiatives of other donor organizations and local/international NGOs that have been supporting reading or literacy directly or indirectly to promote a reading culture in Pakistan. Documents referenced for this study are footnoted throughout.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) – A total of 40 focus group discussions involving 393 (197 male, 196 female) participants were held in eight different urban and rural (peri-urban) areas in Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab, AJK, and KP from October 20-24, 2014. The 40 focus groups were divided into four age-based sub-groups: eight groups of class 4 and 5 students (Primary School Group), 12 groups of class 10 and 11 students (Secondary School Group), 12 groups of recent university graduates (University Group), and eight groups of parents with children in primary school (Parent Group). Each of these sub-groups was further divided into separate male and female groups. The primary and secondary school locations where FGDs were conducted were divided evenly between public and low-cost private schools. The university locations were divided equally between large urban and smaller urban or peri-urban locations. The FGD distribution table is illustrated in Table 1 below.

TABLE I: FGD DISTRIBUTION

Sex	Age Groups	Punjab		AJK	Sindh		KP		Balochistan	Total (40)
		Rural	Urban	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	
Female	Primary									4
	Secondary									6
	University									6
	Parent									4
Male	Primary									4
	Secondary									6
	University									6
	Parent									4

The FGD research was carried out by Voice Tel Tech (VTT Inc.) as a subcontractor to Management Systems International (MSI). VTT recruited 24 facilitators and note-takers (equally divided by gender) who were trained by the MSI research Team Leader, local consultants, and staff over three days from October 16-18, 2014. The FGD tool was field tested on October 17 and revised on October 18, prior to the commencement of data collection on October 20.

The FGD methodology involved the participatory development of a community reading map (see photos below) where group members drew a map identifying places in their communities where reading materials,

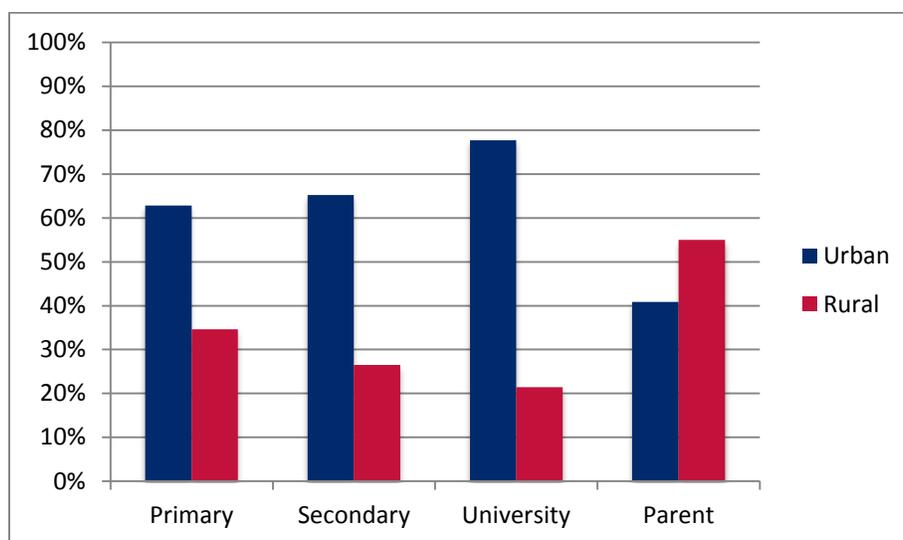
4. SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

The following section uses data from the survey to describe the demographic characteristics of the FGD participants and identify any potential bias in the data. Data relating to reading habits and reading culture are not included here, but in the Findings and Conclusions section. The surveys were administered to all 393 FGD participants, herein referred to as survey respondents.

Location

Sixty-four percent of all survey respondents report living in an urban setting. The original intention of the research was to split the sample evenly between urban and rural. Although sites were chosen collaboratively by USAID and MSI, most of the designated rural areas turned out to be regional urban centers, or areas near the universities where graduates were interviewed. Seventy-eight percent of the university graduates and 65 percent of the secondary group report living in an urban setting. However, only 40 percent of the parent group (who were in many cases the parents of the children in the primary school group) reported living in an urban setting. This means that rural perspectives were more represented by the parent group (see Figure 5 below).

FIGURE 5: URBAN/RURAL DISTRIBUTION OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS



Of those reporting to live in an urban area, 37 percent reported living near a library while only 12 percent of rural respondents reported the same. Interestingly, only 13 percent of the primary school group respondents reported living near a library. This means that while some of these children may, in fact, live near a library because the parent group reported a larger proportion, very few likely visited them and thus were not aware of a library nearby. Of the primary and secondary school respondents that reported living in an urban area, 44 percent reported that they attended a school with a library, while only 11 percent of rural respondents claimed that their school had a library.

Roughly 30 to 40 percent of the other three groups reported living near a library, with the university graduate group reporting the highest proportion, most likely due to their close proximity to a university. Although very little data is available regarding school and public libraries in Pakistan, research and statistics from Sindh and Punjab provinces indicate that less than 2 percent of all primary and secondary public schools have a proper

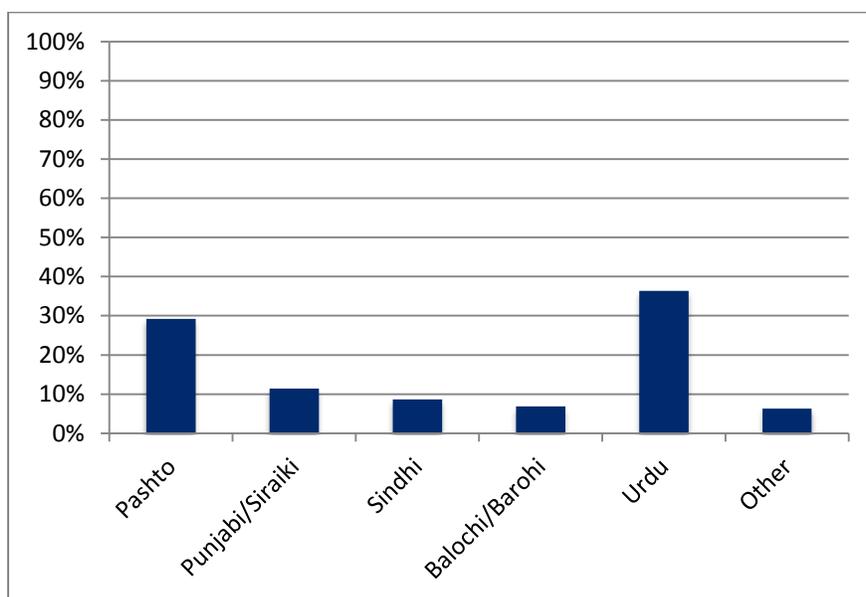
library, and that the existing public libraries (173 are reported in the entire province of Punjab), suffer from a severe lack of funding; few are fully functional or have up-to-date reading materials.²²

The urban-rural divide was also apparent in Internet access, with 55 percent of urban respondents reporting to have Internet access while only 24 percent of rural respondents reported the same.

Language

Thirty-six percent of survey respondents speak Urdu at home while 30 percent speak Pashto at home. Urdu speakers in this sample were disproportionately overrepresented relative to the prevalence of Urdu speakers in the total population of Pakistan. The other third of respondents speak Punjabi, Sindhi, or Balochi, and 6 percent reported speaking other languages such as Pahari, Gojri, Shina, or Hindko. Figure 6 represents the languages spoken at home reported by all respondents.

FIGURE 6: LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS



Half of the survey respondents who reported living in a rural setting also reported speaking Pashto at home. Many of the Pashto speakers reported during the focus group discussions that they do not typically read Pashto, but more often read Urdu or English. None of the respondents reported speaking English at home.

Seventeen percent of the parent group, as opposed to less than 4 percent of the other groups combined, speaks languages at home other than Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi, Sindhi, or Balochi.

²² Anwar, M.A. (1996). *Public Library Legislation in Pakistan: Textual Sources*. Lahore: Library and Information Management Academy.

Warrach, N. F. (2013) *The Future of Quiescent Public Library System: A Developing Country Prospective*. Paper delivered at the IFLA WLIC Singapore 2013.

School Education Statistics Sindh by District, 2010-2011. Bureau of Statistics, Planning and Development, Government of Sindh.

Assets

More than 90 percent of the participants live in homes with electricity and have a mobile phone. At least 80 percent have a refrigerator and a television at home. While 64 percent have a computer at home, only 44 percent reported having Internet access. Only a quarter of those living in a rural setting reported having Internet access. Figures 7 and 8 below represent the home and media assets reported by all respondents.

FIGURE 7: HOME ASSETS OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

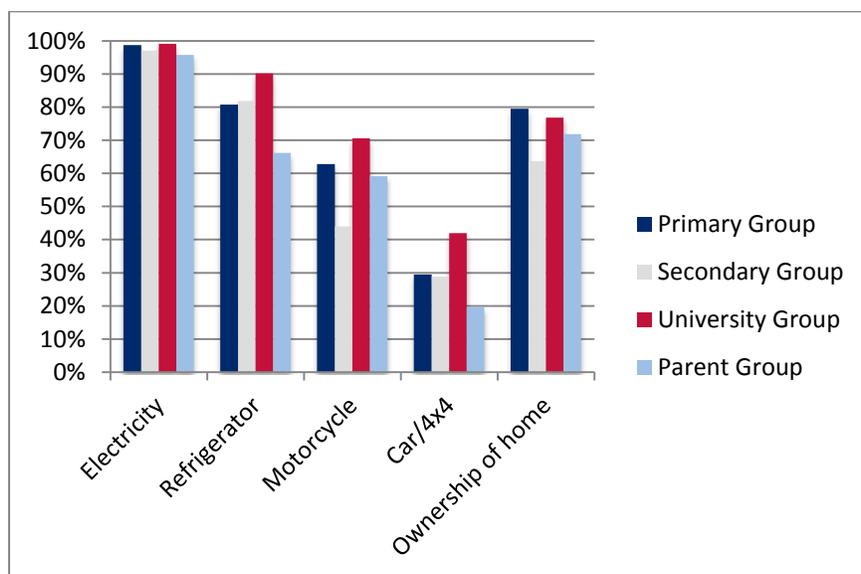
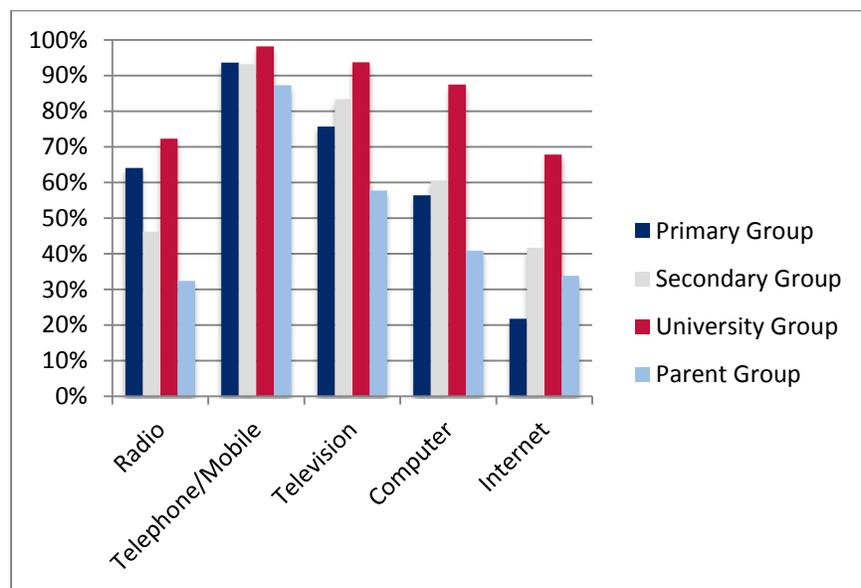


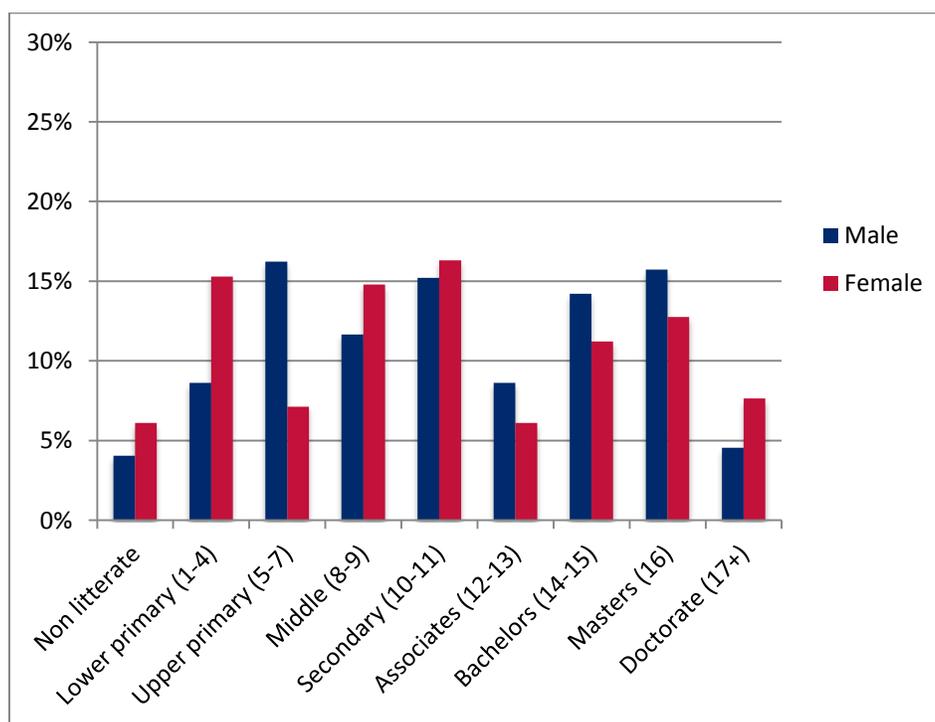
FIGURE 8: MEDIA ASSETS OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS



Education

Because three of the four focus groups were chosen by level of schooling, most of the respondents' education was pre-determined, and by design covers a spectrum of years of education completed. Members of the parent group represented the least educated population in the sample, with 40 percent having less than four years of schooling. Respondents who reported living in a rural area came next, with 30 percent having four years or less of schooling. Females in the parent groups had fewer years of education than their male counterparts by an average of six years. Figure 9 below shows the number of years of education of all respondents.

FIGURE 9: YEARS OF EDUCATION OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS



Approximately half of primary, secondary, and post-university focus group participants reported that their mothers can read and write. About 80 percent of the fathers of primary, secondary, and post-university focus group participants can read and write, while only 40 percent of the fathers of participants in the parents' group could read and write. Both male and female members of the parent group report that only 20 percent of their mothers and 40 percent of their fathers could read and write. Additionally, as anticipated, the number of literate parents is higher in urban settings as compared to rural settings. Figures 10 and 11 below show the literacy of parents of all respondents by age group and by urban/rural settings respectively.

FIGURE 10: LITERACY OF PARENTS OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

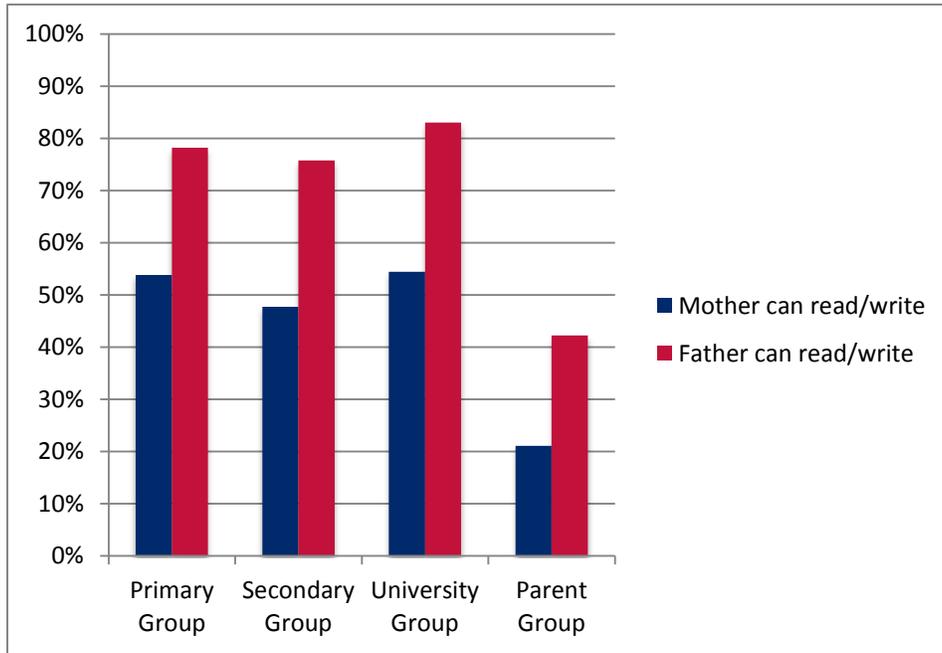
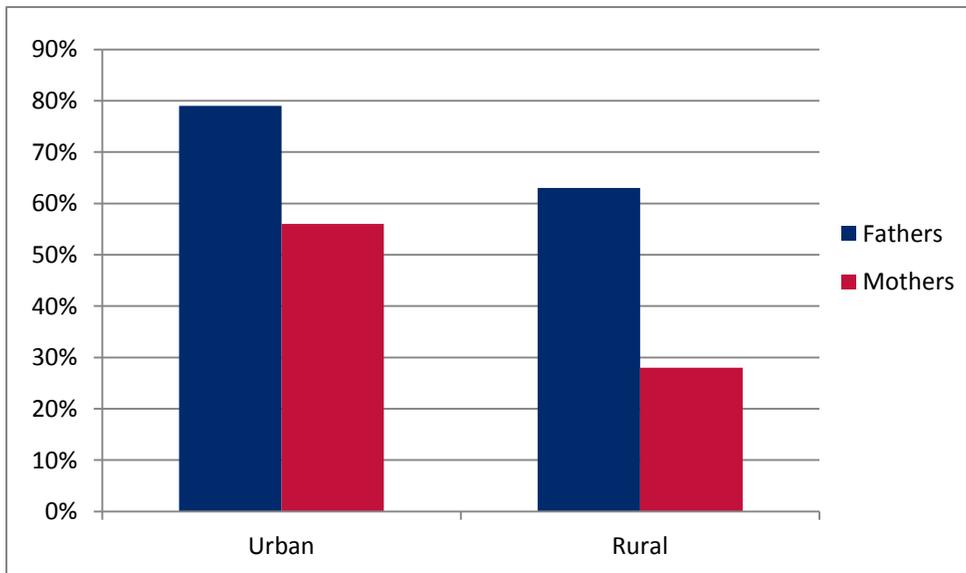


FIGURE 11: LITERACY OF PARENTS BY URBAN/RURAL SETTINGS



5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The sample is statistically biased in important ways. First, the sample is statistically small and non-representative of any demographic or geographic group. While the participants were balanced equally by gender, the sample is considerably more urban, middle class, and educated than the average Pakistani. This means that the perspectives of poorer, more rural, and less educated Pakistanis were not sufficiently represented by the sample. However, while it may have seemed desirable to include more truly rural locations in the sample, participants in focus groups located in these types of settings had relatively little information to offer as compared to those from urban and peri-urban locations. It should also be noted that participants were asked to represent these perspectives as best they could when participating in the mapping exercise.

Second, Pakistanis from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Gilgit-Baltistan are also not represented in this study.

Finally, except for the survey results, which report the individual reading habits and preferences of the FGD participants, the data collected herein represent individual and collective *perceptions* about reading culture in Pakistan, and do not represent statistically verifiable facts.

6. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the section below, findings are reported from three distinct sources: 1) focus group discussions, which express their members' *perceptions* about local and regional reading culture amongst all different demographic groups, 2) individual focus group members, who through a survey, described their own reading habits, preferences, and resources, 3) government officials and education experts, who were interviewed by the report authors.

Tallies from the focus group discussions, which are cited next to their corresponding finding below, reflect the number of groups expressing a particular viewpoint out of the total number (40) in the following manner: (23/40 FGD).

Tallies from the SSIs are cited next to their corresponding finding in the findings and conclusions section below, and, likewise, indicate the number of interviewees expressing a particular viewpoint out of the total number (23) in the following manner: (18/23 SSI).

Results from the survey are presented in tables and figures, and are expressed as percentages within the narrative of the Findings and Conclusions section below.

Finally, as per the conclusions in Section 4: Sample Description, regarding the strong similarities in the way male and female, urban and rural, and groups in the different provinces responded to FGD questions, any significant differences between these groups are highlighted in the findings and conclusions below. Where they are not reported, it is because there were no significant differences in the way FGD questions were answered or discussed.

Research Question 1: What are the common attitudes and beliefs about reading in Pakistan?

Findings

Beliefs

“Beliefs” in this report are defined as the views research participants hold regarding the state of the reading culture in Pakistan and its contributing factors, as well as beliefs held about the mechanics of reading and learning to read.

“People with money are educated...they realize the importance of education and reading...that’s the way the rich are...but others like us try to follow the rich’s path because that’s they the way to success, but we don’t do as well as the rich.”—*A male parent from Balochistan.*

Focus groups, government officials, and education experts interviewed for this study, herein referred to as research participants when referring to all three groups, believe that the wealthy and educated have the requisite reading skills and access to reading materials, and are thus most likely to be the readers in any given community (32/40 FGD, 17/23 SSI). Gathering in groups for reading newspapers and literature in restaurants, cafes, and barbershops was described as once very popular in both urban and rural areas, but is believed to be on the decline due to the rise of media such as TV, Internet, and smart phones, as well as a declining security environment, which discourages people from meeting together in public places (19/40 FGD, 8/13 SSI). The reading of religious materials such as the Quran, however, was believed to be on the increase (26/40 FGD, 9/13 SSI).

Research participants, especially education experts, believe that Pakistan entered a pattern of general economic and educational decline in the 1990s. This was believed to be a period of decline in government capacity or will to properly support public education. This was further exacerbated by the rise of “screen culture,”—TV, computers, and smart phones—which parents and education officials believe to be on the rise at the expense of reading culture, citing the proliferation of television channels, cell phones, and the Internet. They also believe that screen culture was something experienced by all sectors of society except for the extremely poor. The opposite view is taken by secondary students and university graduates who had a positive view of screen culture, and believe that it is an integral part of reading culture, pointing to the same instruments as trusted sources of news and information (32/40 FGD, 17/23 SSI).

Most focus group members believe that non-readers make up the largest segment of the population, and hold the view that this group does not read due to illiteracy, low proximity to and affordability of reading materials, and inadequate time to read (22/40 FGD, 19/23 SSI). Other common beliefs about why the poor make up the largest segment of non-readers include opportunity costs (e.g., children not being sent to school so that they can work or take care of younger siblings), poverty, and a home environment that is not conducive to nurturing reading habits (most often cited as a function of the lack of educated parents and gender attitudes that restrict opportunities for girls and mothers) (20/26 FGD, 17/23 SSI).

Lastly, FGD participants believed that students who come from family backgrounds where neither English nor Urdu is the language spoken at home are disadvantaged (see Figure 6). Similarly, government education officials believe that books and other reading materials in Urdu—commonly a language of instruction—are either in short supply, outdated, or of low quality.

Attitudes

“Attitudes” in this report are defined as the perspectives of research participants regarding the value of reading and its role in society and the lives of individuals.

The value of reading was seen among nearly all of the research participants as a practice that was primarily useful for school or work, and necessary for success and advancement in both venues. When research participants were asked about reading outside of school or work, it was often associated with career growth and reading the news, but reading was seldom described as something done for pleasure. Reading was almost never identified by research participants as beneficial to the development of an individual or the nation, or as having value in and of itself (31/40 FGD).

FIGURE 13: TOP THREE REASONS FOR READING GIVEN BY FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

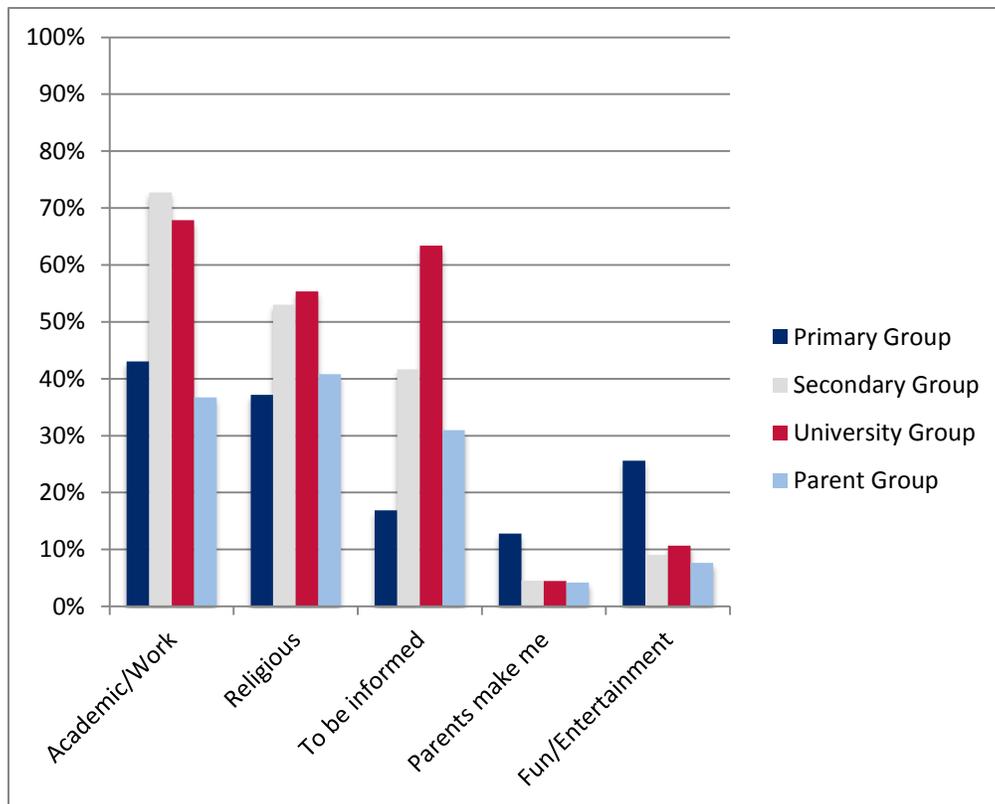


Figure 13 above describes how survey respondents responded to the question: *What factors or influences led you to adopt a reading habit?* Research participants repeatedly asserted that people read for academic purposes and work. To a lesser extent, the same sources indicate that people read for religious reasons or to advance job prospects or career growth. When asked why the respondents do not read books for pleasure more frequently, they typically reported that reading for pleasure was uncommon, although it was the third most common reason given by primary schools students, who were the most likely of all groups to read for pleasure. “Even those who are educated don’t have the time to read...they are landlords and have to take care of their land,” said a female parent from Kashmir. In addition to the widespread view that reading was primarily a practice used at school and work, study participants widely cited unavailability of reading materials, affordability of reading materials, and lack of time to read as reasons why the practice was uncommon.

There was not enough data to report definitively why reading for pleasure appeared to decrease with age as shown in Figure 13, but the authors theorize that the textbook and exam-focused culture of schooling as well as the attitude that reading is for school and work grows more influential as children move through the

school system, and that children increasingly adopt the reading habits and attitudes of their parents as they get older.

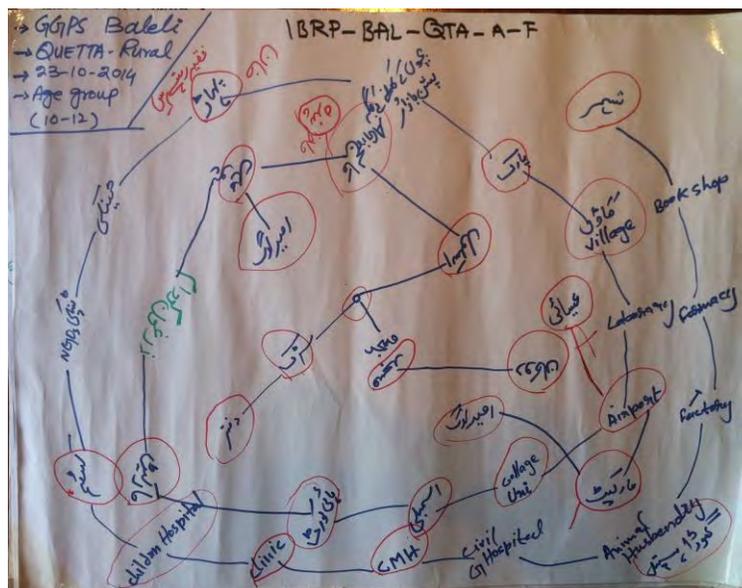
Both FGDs and SSIs explained that schools treat reading as a mechanical practice to be learned through rote memorization of letters and words in order to copy notes, read textbooks, or complete written assignments. Reading for pleasure or for news and information is rarely encouraged in school, and rarely, if ever, were books outside of the main textbook used in any subject (28/40 FGD, 20/23 SSI).

Furthermore, government education officials explained that attitudes about the utility of reading skills—again that it was for school and work—drove what was tested in promotional exams, and explains why teachers do not assess the reading ability of their students outside the recognition of memorized words (19/23 SSI).

Conclusions

1. Most people believe that wealth and education correlate with higher interest in and more time for reading, and increased access to reading materials.
2. The textbook-/exam-focused culture of Pakistani schooling and screen culture are blamed for a decrease in the reading habits of Pakistanis.
3. Reading is perceived to be most useful for academic pursuits and school, and upward mobility. Reading is also perceived to be useful for news. Reading beyond these reasons is not common due to lack of access, lack of time, low literacy skill, and lack of interest in reading.
4. Reading habits outside of school are perceived to have declined over the past 10 to 20 years, in part due to the textbook-/exam-focused culture of schools, the rise of screen culture, an increasing gap between educated/non-educated and rich/poor, and lack of access to reading materials, especially from libraries.
5. Those who come from families where neither Urdu nor English is spoken are seen as at a disadvantage to becoming readers due to the lack of reading materials in local languages. High quality materials in Urdu were also believed to be hard to find.

FIGURE 14: READING MAP DRAWN BY A FOCUS GROUP IN RURAL QUETTA (GIRLS 10-12)



Research Question 2: What are the barriers to reading among different populations in Pakistan?

Findings

a. What knowledge do people have about how to support others' reading?

Participants were asked what conditions people believe are necessary for children to learn to read. They responded that properly funded and resourced schools, well trained teachers, libraries, and supportive domestic environments were necessary, but consistently reported that these were not available in most communities. Few FGD respondents, however, were able to articulate more specifically about the age at which children should start learning to read, or specific teaching approaches or resources that could be used to develop reading skills in nascent readers. Supportive learning environments were described as homes with educated and wealthy adults, and where girls' education was valued equally with boys. They reported that the lack of school and public libraries, community-based literacy initiatives and mentors, and supportive domestic environments limit the ability of community members to support each other's reading and literacy (28/40 FGD, 18/22 SSI).

When asked what, if anything, the study participants might do to help nascent readers in their family or community to develop their reading skills, parents reported that reading to those who are learning to read, especially children, was necessary, but seldom practiced. Only 32 percent of primary students reported being read to at home, and 30 percent of parents reported reading to their children (Survey). The lack of school libraries and librarians and the unavailability of relevant and quality children's reading materials, especially in languages other than English, in addition to more general issues related to effective school curriculum and pedagogy, significantly affect efforts to support children's reading (32/40 FGD, 18/22 SSI, Survey). "Some families do not provide books to children feeling that they will be overburdened since they already have to read religious books," said an adult female graduate from Lahore.

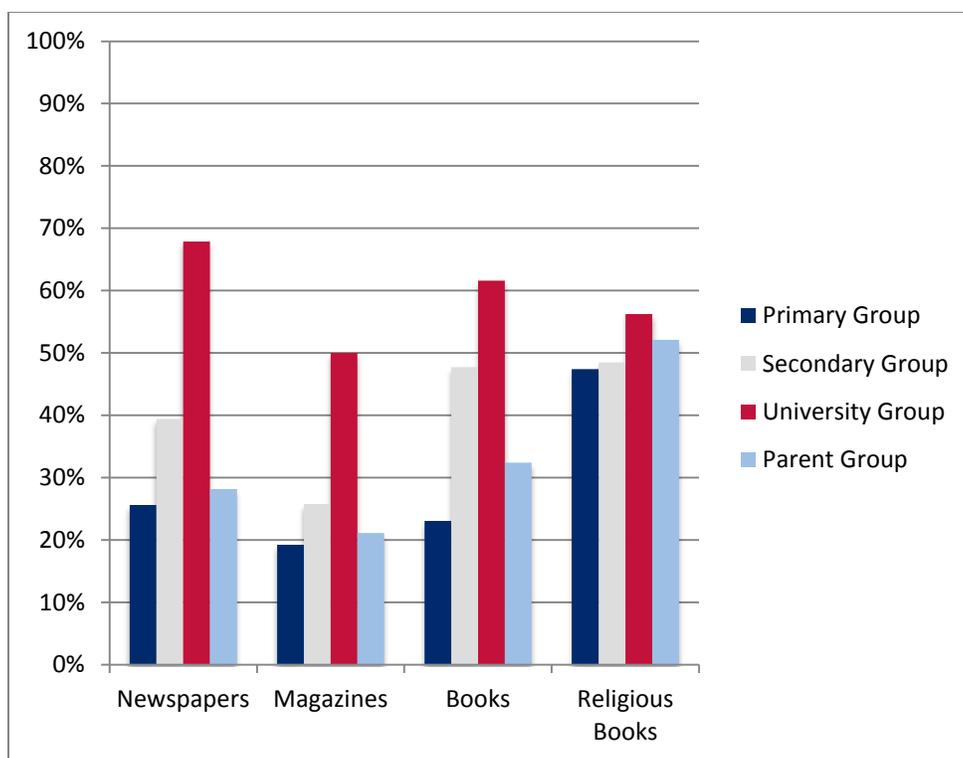
Among primary, secondary, and university focus group participants, approximately half of mothers and close to four out of five of the fathers could read and write. This reflects a research sample that is considerably more educated—or oriented toward educating all of their children—than a more representative sample. The literacy rate reported for women in this sample, while still low, reflects considerable improvement relative to the past: the parent group reported that only 20 percent of their mothers—a different generation—could read and write, and only two out of five of the fathers of the parents could read and write (Survey, see Figure 10).

b. What is the frequency and source of material read?

Research participants were asked to identify the main factors that would lead them to decide to purchase reading material not required for school or work. They reported overwhelmingly that the most common non-school related reading materials were the Quran and newspapers, although TV, radio, and digital media were surpassing newspapers as the most popular media sources of information. Among those who are illiterate or non-readers, other community members, family, friends, and elders are primary sources of information alongside the media sources of television and radio (35/40 FGD). Survey results indicate that both readers and non-readers have cell phones, and texting in both groups is common. Indeed, texting among non-readers, some FGD respondents explained, involved abbreviations and codes learned from others who had some reading skills. These FGD participants presented this practice as evidence that "screen culture" could be a part of, and not antithetical to, the strengthening of reading practices. But in general, respondents viewed media as detracting from the strength of the reading culture. "Media (television) and Internet are major barriers to reading," a female college graduate from Punjab said, "because if people want to know something it is easily available on media or through Internet. . . Even if you do not buy religious books, you can learn things on Madni Channel [religious channels]. Similarly, no need to buy newspaper when the same information is available on Geo [television channel]."

Most research participants also reported having some kind of reading materials besides school books at their homes. These were reportedly most often religious books. Material of a religious nature is by far the most frequently read material, with 71 percent of focus group members reporting reading them at least monthly and 62 percent reading them at least weekly (Survey, see Annex 3). A male parent from Balochistan said, “Religious people—whether rich or poor— tend to read a lot...because religious books are easily available...they are available in the mosque, in a mullah’s house...if there are missionaries in the village, they have religious books at home, while there is a dearth of worldly [mainstream] books.” University graduates were most likely to report themselves as having reading materials at home, distributed almost evenly among religious materials, newspapers, magazines, and books. Secondary students reported having non-religious books and religious books at home in equal measure, while primary school students and parents were considerably less likely to report having newspapers, magazines, and books available in the home relative to religious materials (Survey, see Figure 15 below).

FIGURE 15: READING MATERIALS OTHER THAN TEXTBOOKS AND THE QURAN AT HOME OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS



The most common sources for purchasing reading materials cited by focus group participants were discount or used-book stores and mobile or street vendors. Wealth and education levels, however, were cited by research participants as determining access to reading materials (32/40 FGD, 15/23 SSI).

Three-quarters of university students and half of secondary students reported accessing social media and online news at least weekly. Three-quarters of university students read magazines at least monthly. Just over half of secondary students read newspapers at least weekly (Survey, see Annex 5).

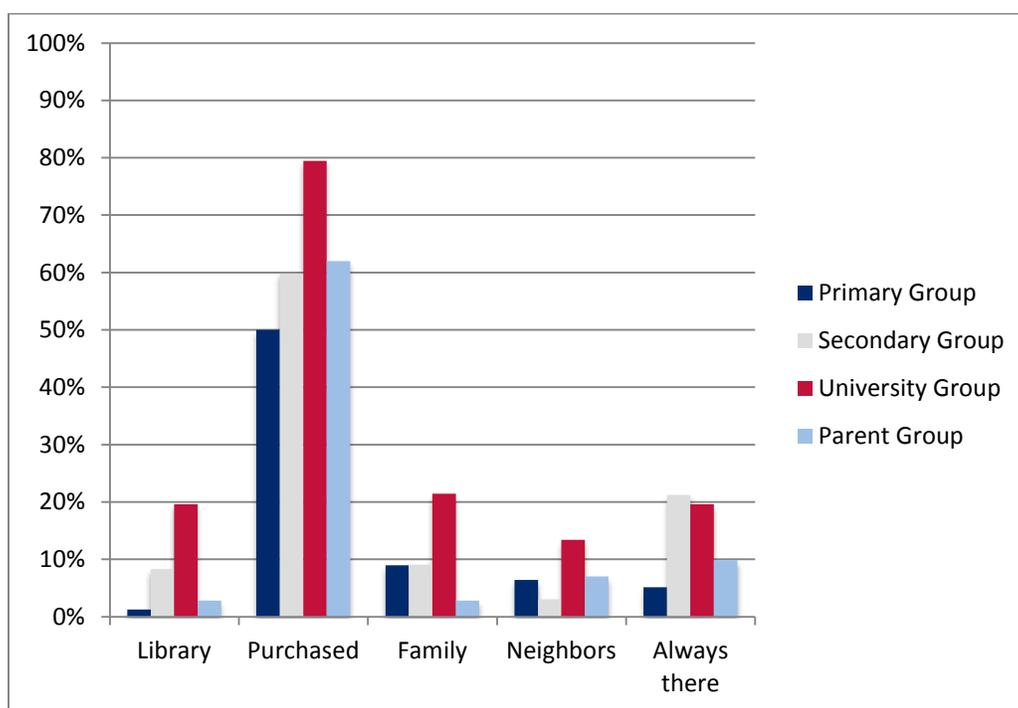
Among primary students, one-third reported reading fiction at least monthly. Only a quarter of primary students reported reading non-fiction with any frequency, and one-fifth access digital media. Just over a third reported reading newspapers at least monthly (Survey, see Annex 5). Just over half of parents reported

reading printed newspapers at least monthly, while a quarter of those read newspapers daily. Only about a quarter of parents reported reading digital media, non-fiction, or fiction with any frequency (Survey, see Annex 5).

c. What proportion is purchasing reading materials?

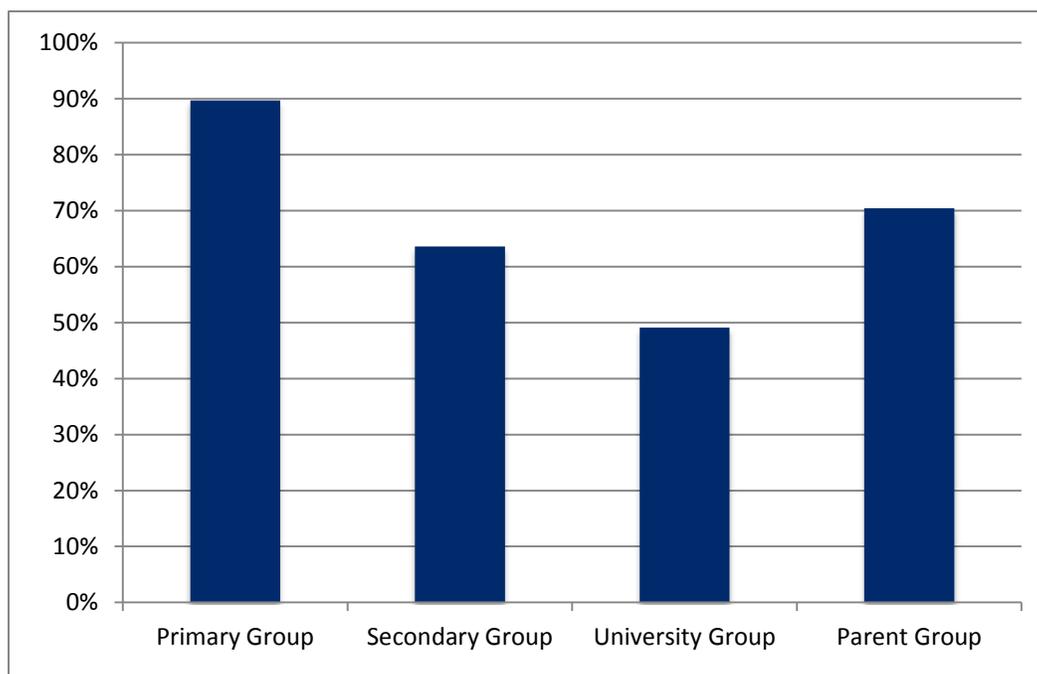
Almost all reading materials in the homes of survey respondents were purchased. More than three-quarters of focus group participants reported purchasing reading materials at bookstores, while around half—mostly secondary school students and university graduates—reported the ability to obtain reading materials at university and secondary school libraries, although few reported actually doing so (Survey, see Figure 16 below).

FIGURE 16: SOURCE OF READING MATERIALS AT HOME OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS



Library use is very low, even among those who live near one. Of all focus group members, 83 percent of primary students, 55 percent of secondary students, 38 percent of university graduates, and 66 percent of parents reported never borrowing books from a library (Survey, see Figure 17 below). It is worthy to note that many libraries are open for only a few hours a day or are poorly maintained, including university libraries. But a university graduate focus group member, when asked if he still checked out books from the university library nearby, echoed the sentiments of his group by exclaiming, “I’ve read enough!” He explained that his schooling was finished and reading was no longer necessary.

FIGURE 17: PERCENT OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS WHO RARELY OR NEVER BORROW READING MATERIALS FROM A LIBRARY

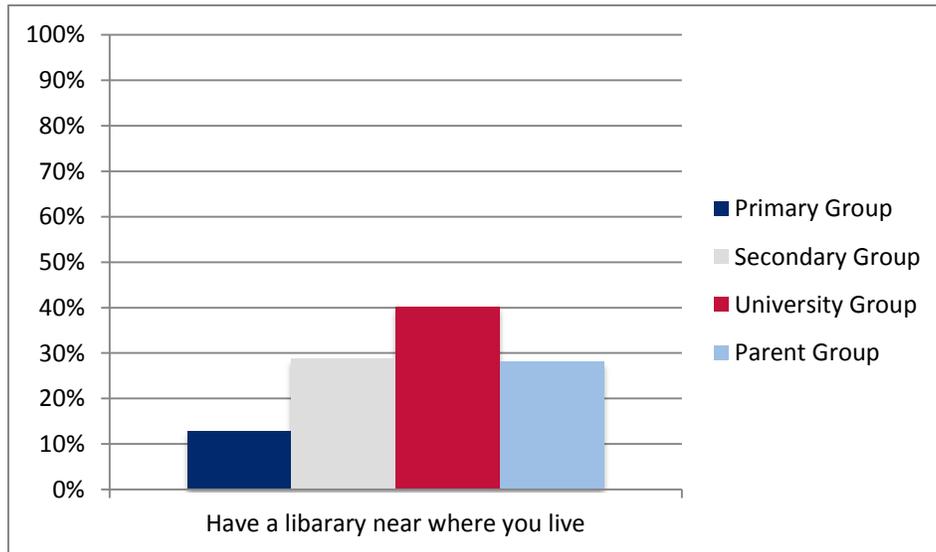


d. What proportion report difficulty accessing reading materials nearby?

Research participants report that poverty, lack of affordability, and proximity to libraries are the principal factors that impact access to reading materials. “When people are not rich, they will prioritize elimination of poverty over education,” a female college graduate from Lahore said. “If children from poor families are sent for work to auto workshops, they will not have the time to read.” Education officials and experts attribute the low number of public and school libraries to a severe lack of funding. Non-salary discretionary funds for schools are intended to be used for libraries and books among other things, but are most commonly used to repair crumbling infrastructure and purchase chairs and desks for an increasing student population (30/40 FGD, 19/23 SSI). Between 50 percent and 60 percent of focus group participants, except for university graduates, purchase books, as opposed to 8 percent or less obtaining them from other sources such as libraries or family/friends/neighbors (Survey, see Figure 16).

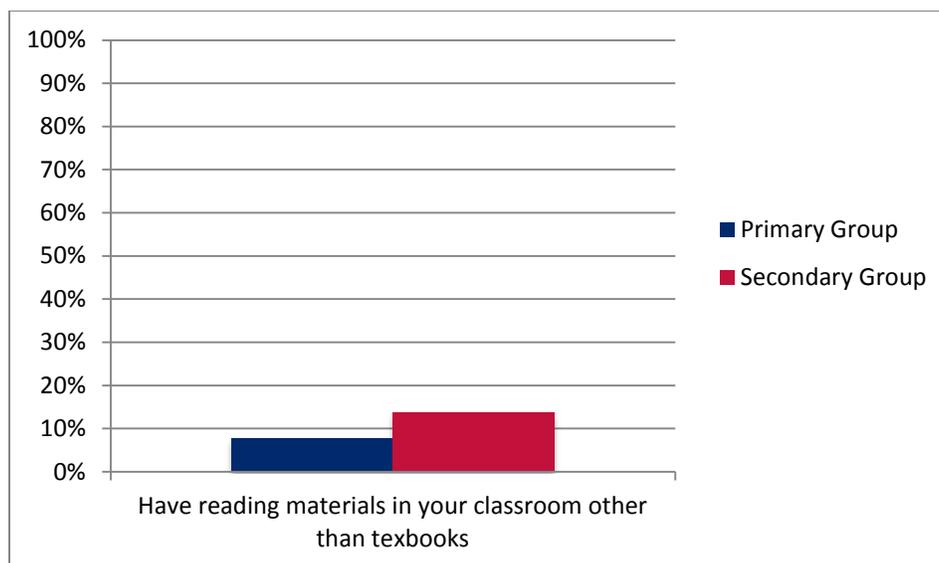
Education experts also reported that the lack of reading materials in Urdu and other local languages lowers both accessibility and reading achievement, especially in the early grades (19/23 SSI). Just over 10 percent of primary school students and just under 30 percent of secondary school students and parents reported living near a library. University graduates reported the highest rate of library proximity at 40 percent, due to the fact that most who participated in focus groups lived near a university with a library, although almost 50 percent reported never borrowing reading materials (Survey, see Figures 16 and 17). The number of people reporting living near a library in this sample is likely to be much higher than the average sample of Pakistanis, due to the higher percentage of research participants living in urban settings.

FIGURE 18: LIBRARY PROXIMITY TO INDIVIDUAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS' HOMES



Just under 8 percent of primary school students and 14 percent of secondary school students reported having reading materials other than textbooks in their classrooms (see Figure 19 below). Thirty-seven percent of primary school students and 32 percent of secondary school students reported having a school library—although “library” was likely interpreted by participants very loosely, and a single shelf of books or a small cupboard kept under lock and key might have been considered a “library.” Although there is little research about the presence and functioning of school libraries across Pakistan, it is known that only 1.5 percent of all public schools in Sindh province have a functioning library. Access to libraries in actuality is far more restricted than is suggested by the data collected for this study.

FIGURE 19: READING MATERIALS IN THE CLASSROOM OF PRIMARY- AND SECONDARY-AGE FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS



The Internet is described as a source of reading materials by one-third of secondary school students who reported accessing reading materials via the Internet—through social networking and online news—on a daily or weekly basis. One-quarter of parents reported accessing reading material via the Internet. Access to the Internet is highest among university graduates at 68 percent, and more than half reported accessing online reading materials on a daily basis (Survey, see Annex 5).

There were insignificant differences—10 percent or less—between the ways males and females, and different age groups, answered survey questions regarding access to reading materials. However, focus group discussions consistently acknowledged additional barriers for girls and mothers from families with traditional attitudes towards gender (30/40 FGD). FGD participants explained that this was the case in families that did not send girls to school or allow girls out of the home.

e. Where are there gaps to fill for Pakistanis with disabilities and special learning needs to participate in a culture of reading, and how great is the need for services?

Most focus group participants did not know of any programs that served students with special needs, and most also reported that local schools were unable to address their needs. Although a small number of focus group participants were aware of programs or institutions that serve children with special needs or disabilities, no one knew of programs or services that specifically address reading and reading culture (15/40 FGD).

Only one small group interview was conducted with government officials knowledgeable about services for children with special needs. They were able to describe programs that specifically address the needs of students with visual, audio, physical, and cognitive disabilities through the use of reading aids such as audio books, Braille books, and hearing aids. However, availability of these resources is severely limited and officials estimated that less than one-quarter of students with special needs in this particular province were being served by the school system. The National Book Foundation operates a Braille printing press in Karachi that provides Braille books—all in English—at subsidized prices to visually impaired readers throughout the country. In the larger urban centers, a limited number of libraries offer special facilities to assist disabled people with reading and study needs (1/23 SSI).

f. What are the most popular and trusted sources of information?

Focus groups were requested to identify the sources of information that were most popular and considered by Pakistanis to be the most trusted. Participants reported that most Pakistanis got their information from newspapers, radio, and television. Digital sources such as the Internet and smart phones were also used, but to a lesser extent, mainly because of barriers to access (35/40 FGD). Focus groups reported that religious and political leaders were the most influential public figures in the community and this influence often affected the content of material read by the wider public. Most FGD respondents talked about the multiple references in the Quran that amounted to a religious mandate to read, but that this mandate, in practice, was limited to reading the Quran. The more rural groups were especially influenced by religious figures; 16 out of 20 rural FGDs reported that religious figures were the most influential, while only 11 of 20 urban FGDs said the same. Teachers, professors, family, friends, elders, and the educated class were also reported to be influential (30/40 FGD).

Despite semi-structured interview participants identifying the internet and other digital sources as detriments to reading culture, 78 percent of recent university graduates and 50 percent of secondary school students reported accessing social media and online news at least weekly and did not perceive it as detrimental to reading culture (17/23 SSI, Survey, see Annex 5).

Conclusions

1. There is a severe shortage of conditions necessary for children to learn to read or to support other's reading, including a lack of (functioning) public and school libraries, non-formal literacy initiatives, affordable and relevant high-quality reading materials, and home environments where parents and children read together. The low literacy rates among women/mothers were perceived as having a particular impact on the maintenance of a supportive reading environment at home.
2. While the reading of newspapers appears to remain high among those who read outside of academic and work environments, the number of public spaces where people gather to read together and frequency of their use have significantly dropped over the last 10-20 years, a significant change in what was considered to be a prominent and more visible aspect of reading culture in Pakistan.
3. Newspapers, but also TV, radio, and digital media, are by far the most popular and trusted sources of information; “screen culture” is an undeniable aspect of reading culture, especially among the younger generations.
4. Religious leaders are among the most trusted sources of information, especially in rural areas, and religious books are by far the most common reading materials at home. Combined with research demonstrating increasing religiosity in the public school curriculum as well as in the public sphere, religious communities and practices are an integral aspect of reading culture in Pakistan.
5. Fiction and non-fiction books, especially children's story books, are among the least read materials—especially among rural and poor communities—and are among the least accessible, most expensive, lowest quality, and least relevant to Pakistanis. There is also a lack of children's story books in Urdu and other local languages.
6. The vast majority of books reported in households were purchased, especially from discount booksellers like bazaars and street vendors. However, for most families, books are not affordable and they do not have alternative sources for accessing books, such as school or public libraries.
7. Poverty, non-literacy, time constraints, content language, affordability, and proximity to borrowable or affordable reading materials are the primary barriers limiting access to reading materials. Increasing poverty rates, low literacy rates, and the lack of affordable bookstores and school and public libraries across Pakistan means that access to reading materials is limited for the vast majority of Pakistanis, and the problem is getting worse.
8. Pakistanis with special needs and disabilities encounter particularly high barriers to accessing a quality education, which puts them at especially high risk of illiteracy. Those that require particular accommodations to become readers - particularly the sight and hearing impaired - are under-supported by services and adapted materials to best enable them to adopt the habit of reading.

Research Question 3: What are the most promising practices and opportunities to revitalize the reading culture?

Findings

a. What are other DPs/GOP/private sector partners doing or have recently done to promote literacy and reading culture?

Government education officials and education experts interviewed consistently reported that no ongoing or new reading initiatives by major donors or government bodies have been developed that specifically address reading practices and reading culture (23/23 SSI).

Some government officials were aware of the USAID-funded Pakistan Reading Project (PRP) and Sindh Reading Project (SRP),) but were not aware of any activities that had been implemented prior to the date of the interviews. Only one interviewee had worked directly for a PRP implementer (5/23 SSI).

Two government officials associated with pre- and in-service teacher training institutions in KP spoke about the previous USAID project, Pre-STEP. The respondent associated with the pre-service institution praised pre-STEP for increasing his trainees' knowledge of teaching reading. However, his graduates were not obtaining jobs in government schools because of a lack of open positions and a preference, on the part of those doing the hiring, for applicants with Master's degrees in the subject area, but no formal training in teaching (2/23 SSI). This finding is of particular relevance to the PRP activity.

Of the three large donor organizations that researchers contacted—the World Bank, the Department for International Development UK (DFID), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)—DFID and JICA were engaged in reading-related activities. DFID is in the process of developing a reading assessment system for classroom teachers. JICA is engaged in a non-formal education and adult literacy campaign in Punjab province.

The following projects were listed by government officials and education experts as those using promising practices in reading and literacy. However, all are smaller, more localized projects with little to no donor support. An analysis of their various target beneficiaries, geographic focus, and strategies are included in Annex 6. The promising practice is listed below for each entry:

Children's Library Complex (CLC): Based in Lahore, the CLC is a children's library and computer center supported by the Government of Punjab and is used by school children and their parents to borrow books and access digital media resources. It also has three branch libraries in different districts. Government officials, education experts, and school principals and teachers in Punjab spoke very highly of the CLC and reported that it was widely utilized.

Promising practice: Government support of a children's library with a mix of books and media to attract young readers and families.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Literacy Project: This project in Punjab targets out-of-school children and mothers through the distribution of high quality and relevant books that teach reading and life skills.

Promising practice: Use of high quality, attractive, and locally-relevant literacy books focused on health, hygiene, and livelihoods targeting women and mothers.

Pak Tea House: This tea house was a famous gathering place for Pakistani writers and poets from the 1940s to the 1970s. It was recently purchased by the Government of Punjab, rehabilitated, and is now the site of multiple literary readings and groups.

Promising practice: Public investment in literary spaces.

Sim Sim Hamara (Pakistan Sesame Street): This was a USAID-funded project to bring a high quality and popular educational television program to Pakistani children. The series was produced by a Pakistani puppetry and arts organization in partnership with the Children's Television Workshop and filmed in Urdu; all the episodes were scheduled to be translated into local languages as well. The show included Elmo and a host of new Pakistani characters. It was canceled because non-compliance with contractual requirements. A number of research participants recall the few episodes that were aired and thought very highly of them, and were very sad about its cancellation.

Promising practice: Popular, high quality educational television to build reading skills and habits.

Private Libraries: There is not much data on private libraries in Pakistan, but a number of research participants mentioned them as evidence that there is interest in libraries among Pakistani philanthropists.

Promising practice: Potential private philanthropy for libraries.

The Library Challenge: The Library Challenge was an off-shoot of the USAID-funded Pakistan Earthquake Reconstruction and Recovery Program, a project in response to the 2005 earthquake in AJK and KP province. The project facilitated local groups to raise their own money, design, build, and stock public libraries in towns affected by the earthquake.

Promising practice: Grassroots, community-based support for libraries.

Education Morning: Education Morning is a fortnightly newspaper published in Sindhi from Hyderabad, Sindh, and is distributed to public and private schools. It has two sections, one for teachers and educational practitioners and one for students in class three and above. The articles for teachers address subjects in pedagogy and education policy, and the pages for children include articles about current events, careers, comics, and short fiction.

Promising practice: High quality newspaper for children and teachers.

The Bookgroup: Founded in 1990, The Bookgroup is a non-profit organization whose mission is to develop and publish high quality, colorful, and interesting Urdu language children's books. It provides these books at affordable prices to schools throughout Pakistan. By mid-2012, the organization had published more than 210 titles in Urdu as well as in Sindhi, English, Pashto, and Seraiki.

Promising practice: Affordable children's books in local languages.

Pakistan Libraries Project (PLP): PLP is a national initiative funded by Relief International focused on creating and institutionalizing an ongoing effort to develop community-driven libraries in Pakistan's schools.

Promising practice: Grassroots, community-based support for libraries.

National Book Foundation: Established in 1972 as a service rendering educational welfare, the foundation supports writers, promotes writing and reading among children and adults, and makes books available to the Pakistani public at affordable prices through 81 bookstores located at railway stations, airports, and motorway rest stops as well as stores in major cities and rural areas.

Promising practice: Affordable and accessible books in local languages.

Books on Wheels: The project is a joint venture of the National Book Foundation and the Cabinet Division of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) Secretariat. It was conceived to promote reading habits among students in FATA by providing a mobile library and subsidized discount bookstore that travels throughout FATA and KP holding book fairs at colleges and universities.

Promising practice: Promoting reading in hard-to-reach communities.

Reading Room Project: The Reading Room Project gives low-income Pakistani schoolchildren in Karachi access to learning resources via the Internet by providing schools with computer labs and computer learning applications.

Promising practice: Use of Internet in promotion of reading habits.

Alif Laila: Alif Laila was founded in 1978 to promote solutions to Pakistan’s educational challenges and determine effective paths to literacy. The project operates a number of programs, including the Book Bus, which was Pakistan’s first children’s library, and the Book Rickshaw. A number of Book Buses and Rickshaws operate throughout Pakistan.

Promising practice: Mobile libraries.

Bunyard Foundation: Bunyard runs stationary and mobile literacy projects in Punjab focused on girls, mothers, child laborers, and school drop-outs.

Promising practice: Focus on girls/mothers and other marginalized populations.

Conclusions

1. While there are a number of smaller projects throughout Pakistan addressing various aspects of reading culture and literacy, there is no research or body of evaluations currently available that determine the effectiveness of the variety of approaches these projects represent.
2. By themselves, the existing projects that focus on reading outside of teacher training and curriculum reach a small proportion of the Pakistani public, and none have explicitly adopted the concept of reading culture as a programmatic goal.
3. The practices and approaches that are aligned with several of the findings of this study are the following:
 - Use of television and media,
 - Support for school and public libraries,
 - The production and distribution of more affordable, relevant, and accessible books directly to families and schools, and
 - Community-based and grassroots approaches.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are presented as the primary avenues that stakeholders in literacy and reading can take to effectively reinvigorate the reading culture in Pakistan. They are drawn directly from the conclusions above, and guided by the theoretical frame described in Chapter 2. The recommendations are classified as demand-side or supply-side based on the assertion that activities to increase the demand for reading materials must be accompanied by efforts to increase their supply, and vice versa, or else risk the activity doing more harm than good.

The supply-side recommendations respond to conclusions that identify access and affordability as barriers to reading culture, and respond with increasing the number of school/public library hybrids, ensuring that these libraries have well trained, community-oriented librarians, ensuring that these libraries have high quality materials for children, teachers, and adults, and increasing the capacity of for- and non-profit publishers to better serve children from different geographic and language communities throughout Pakistan.

The demand-side recommendations respond to conclusions that identify the textbook-/exam-driven culture of Pakistani schooling, the lack of a supportive home or social environment, and the decreasing visibility of Pakistani reading culture as barriers to reading culture, and respond with improving provincial reading policy, broadcasting educational multi-media, and supporting regional and national advocacy campaigns. The

recommendations in this section also acknowledge the prominence of screen culture and attempt to take advantage of it.

A. Supply-side

I. Libraries:

C. Local support for and ownership of public libraries

- Support efforts, especially at the grassroots and local levels, to establish school/public library hybrids (school libraries that are also public libraries), and improve existing public and school libraries.

D. Professionalize Pakistan's Librarians

- Offer scholarships for graduate certification/MA degrees in Library and Information Science (LIS) at Pakistani universities in exchange for a two-year, stipend-paid post at one of the donor-supported libraries.
- Strong, internationally linked Professional Associations for information science specialists will contribute to continuous professional development of librarians.
- Foster partnerships between Pakistani universities and international universities with reputable Library and Information Science programs for an exchange of experience and provision of technical assistance to improve the quality of instruction in Pakistani tertiary LIS programs. LIS programs should train librarians to apply the following core skills:
 - Manage and promote the library collection.
 - Support teachers to use library materials as part of their classes.
 - Coordinate local volunteer literacy initiatives.
 - Support story time, reading challenges, and literary clubs.
 - Host cultural events such as the chanting of Sufi poetry and telling of local and regional folk tales and myths.
 - Engage community members in use of the materials, whether for themselves or to promote children's reading habits.
 - Manage materials and promote practices that increase access to reading materials for disabled and hearing- and vision-impaired patrons.

2. Reading Materials:

C. Enhance Library Collections

- Libraries should strive to offer non-loan e-readers or tablets and desktop computers pre-loaded with a library of books, videos, and literacy materials. Content can include fiction and non-fiction in various languages of Pakistan, including subjects aligned with local livelihood

and development needs. These ICT resources also can be used for research and reference use where Internet is available.²³

- Libraries should loan recent printed non-textbook reading materials in good condition and aligned with the public primary school curriculum. Subjects should span the full range, including languages, social studies, science, math and other non-fiction books, as well as stories, poetry, plays and other works of fiction.
- All materials should be coded by reading level to compliment classroom reading diagnostics.
- Materials must be available in local, national and international languages where possible and must be accessible and relevant to the disabled and vision- and hearing-impaired.

D. Strengthen Publishing Capacity

- Subsidies to Pakistani publishers can aid in developing and supplying the electronic and printed materials described above.
- There is a need for newspapers and magazines in local languages—especially those featuring children’s sections.

B. Demand-side

I. Policy:

- The adoption by Provincial Ministries of Education of policies that introduce regular reading periods into every school day, as well as the commitment to fund school level libraries, will enhance reading outcomes for students. Authorizing members of the public to use these libraries will foster a habit of reading within families and communities. Mandating teachers to utilize the library and its materials as a regular part of the curriculum and school management committees to organize regular public reading events at school libraries will support better academic results for children.
- Government standards in favor of demonstrated student mastery of phonics and word decoding on annual exams in the early grades will provide focus for reading instruction and students’ individual reading practice in the classroom, at home and in the library. Technical assistance should be provided as required to support Provincial Ministries of Education to adopt and implement such policies.

2. Multi-media:

- Revive Sim Sim Hamara (Pakistan Sesame Street) or similar educational programming as well as “edutainment” media modeled on the animated serials, Burka Avengers and Word Girl. Reading materials for classrooms and libraries can also be linked to these productions.
- Support campaigns that provide regular encouragement to parents, especially mothers, to read to and engage in basic literacy activities with their children at home.

²³ See, West and Chew (2014), *Reading in the Mobile Era* (UNESCO). Accessed at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002274/227436E.pdf>

Worldreader (2013), *iREAD 2 Baseline Report*. Accessed at: <http://www.worldreader.org/learnings>, and Worldreader (2013), *iREAD 2 Midterm Report*. Accessed at: <http://www.worldreader.org/learnings>

- Support educational radio and television programming that focuses on reading and adult literacy. This programming may incorporate topics related to livelihoods, health, hygiene and other development issues. Reading materials for classrooms and libraries can also be linked to these productions.

3. Advocacy:

- Support national information and advocacy campaigns featuring media and sports celebrities, political leaders from all political parties, and religious leaders advocating reading for enjoyment, personal growth, and informed citizenship via TV, radio, newspapers, billboards, posters, and online social networks. A campaign may also include children's and young adult reading challenges and writing contests on subjects of national/regional identity, national/regional history, fiction, poetry, and journalism.
- Support provincial and nationally-elected officials and political parties to promote reading and public support for libraries in their policy platforms and legislative agendas.

ANNEXES

Annex I: Statement of Work



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO READING IN PAKISTAN: A SPECIAL STUDY

AUGUST 2014

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO READING IN PAKISTAN: A SPECIAL STUDY

Contracted under Order No. AID-391-C-13-00005

Monitoring and Evaluation Program (MEP)

ACRONYMS

DoS	Department of State
IMEC	Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Contract
IP	Implementing Partner
KII	Key Informant Interviews
GoP	Government of Pakistan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSI	Management Systems International
RFA/P	Request for Applications/Proposals
SOW	Statement of Work
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Identifying Information about the Program

This Statement of Work (SOW) outlines the rationale and description of a study to better understand ways to strengthen the culture of reading in Pakistan. The findings of this study may be used to inform the design of an activity under the Improving Education Quality (IEQ) project, which seeks to achieve improved literacy outcomes for children in early primary grades across Pakistan. This report is designed to support several components understood as essential to the success of the objective of IEQ: the creation of an enabling and supporting environment that best fostered the growth of children's reading skills and reinforced a lifelong habit of reading. Although the objective of the envisioned activity as a complement to other reading-related activities under IEQ was clear, there is a dearth of recent and relevant research on the barriers to the reading culture that has impeded the design of an activity that will apply a thoughtful and effective solution to the underlying obstacles that prevent Pakistanis from reading.

This research will be conducted at a time when numerous development partners and provincial governments are increasingly seeking to harmonize efforts to deliver high quality instruction in early grades to ensure the foundational skill of reading is mastered in a timely and efficient manner. This study will therefore meet two needs: it will provide the information USAID requires to develop an appropriate activity to support the revitalization of a reading culture throughout Pakistan, and it will fill a critical gap in recent literature on a high priority area in the Pakistani education sector.

B. Development Context

I. Problem or Opportunity Addressed

Pakistan ranks among South Asia's lowest performing countries on many education indicators and will not achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of universal primary education by 2015. This poor academic attainment begins at the earliest grades with the most foundational skills, including a low mastery of reading skills in primary school that persists through adulthood. In the mid-2000s, Pakistan's adult literacy rate was 54 percent compared to 53 percent in Bangladesh, 57 percent in Nepal, 66 percent in India and 92 percent in Malaysia. Pakistan's poor performance in education persists despite a vast body of research that demonstrates a clear link between education and poverty alleviation, attainment of long-term development goals, and sustainable economic growth. In other words, the relative lack of educational attainment in Pakistan does more than just minimize job opportunities; it is also a key contributor to the nation's ongoing political and social instability.

Reading directly affects an individual's academic achievement, beginning in the early grades. A 2013 study by Sullivan and Brown showed that children who read more often also scored higher on tests of mathematics skill, spelling and vocabulary.²⁴ Their research was in line with others that show children's leisure reading habits positively affect educational attainment, social mobility and cognitive development.

²⁴ Sullivan, A. & Brown, M. (2013). Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading. London, UK: Center for Longitudinal Studies, Institute of Education University of London

Research indicates that readers have certain distinctive qualities as compared to non-readers, including an adventurous and curious spirit and a higher level of self-respect that is extended to peers and teachers.²⁵

Reading skill is not only a foundation for achievement across all academic subject areas, but also a prerequisite for successful participation in most areas of adult life (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Smith, Mikulecky, Kibby, & Dreher, 2000).²⁶ The European Commission (2001) recognizes literacy as a fundamental skill that underpins lifelong learning, contributes to social integration and facilitates personal development.²⁷ In 2006, the European Union specifically endorsed mother tongue communication skills, including literacy, as the first of eight key competencies that every individual requires in order to become self-actualized, personally fulfilled, able to engage actively in his or her role as a citizen, well integrated socially, and able to compete in the labor market (Education Council, 2006).²⁸

Research shows that literacy across all segments of society is foundational to the development of the individual, cohesion of the community and growth of the nation. Average literacy levels are directly correlated with a country's level of economic development. Low national averages for educational achievement and literacy levels present a significant challenge to improvement on a wide range of social and economic development indicators. High average rates of literacy are linked to stronger social cohesion at the community and national level, higher labor returns and greater economic growth rates.²⁹

In light of the clear evidence linking literacy to a wide range of social and economic development indicators, it is clear that Pakistan's national development must be built on the foundation of a literate society. Recent data across numerous sources paint a picture of the dismal state of literacy in Pakistan, clearly indicating the challenge inherent in raising literacy levels across all segments of society.

Status of Literacy Skills for Children in Pakistan

An individual's level of literacy is directly dependent on the reading skills developed in childhood. A variety of literacy assessments administered over the past decade have demonstrated that while there have been some gains in recent years, in many countries children are still not mastering basic reading skills in the primary grades. Pakistan is no exception. The national level data of Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, 2014) shows that 40 percent of third grade public school children in Pakistan cannot read a sentence in Urdu, the national language. In rural areas only 22 percent of first grade children can identify the names of English letters. If the data is disaggregated to the provincial level, it gives even a worse picture. For instance, while in Punjab only 25 percent of first grade public school children can sound out English letters, this rate dips even lower to 8 percent in Sindh. The report also shows another alarming trend that is about having no change in students' performance for the last three

²⁵ Literacy rich environments. Retrieved from <http://www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/literacy-rich-environments.htm>

²⁶ Cunningham, A. E. and K. E. Stanovich (1998), "Early reading acquisition and its relation to reading experience and ability 10 years later. *Developmental Psychology*, Vol 33, pp. 934-945.

Smith, M. C. et al. (2000), What will be the demands of literacy in the workplace in the next millennium?. *Reading Research Quarterly*. 35(3), pp. 378-383.

²⁷ European Commission (2001). *European Report on the quality of school education: Sixteen quality indicators*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

²⁸ Education Council. (2006). *Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competencies for lifelong learning*. Brussels: European Union.

²⁹ OECD (2009). PISA 2009 assessment framework: Key competencies in reading, mathematics and science. Retrieved from: <http://www.oecdbookshop.org/display.asp?K=5KSJ0TG84Q7B&LANG=EN>

years. ASER 2013 data when compared with 2011 and 2012 shows constant aggregate numbers of all the provinces.³⁰

National study of Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) was conducted by USAID in Pakistan in 2013/14 to test the reading achievements of children in grade-3 and grade-4 in three languages; Urdu English and Sindhi. Urdu, which is the medium of instruction in a majority of government schools in Pakistan, shows worse results that resonate with the results shown by ASER in Pakistan. Using EGRA tools that were developed using age appropriate local content of Pakistan, on average, children answered slightly more than 70 percent of the listening comprehension questions incorrectly, or not at all, which shows their lexical command of Urdu is very low. Children answered close to 80 percent of the items in the letter sound test incorrectly that shows their phonetic awareness in Urdu or their ability to see a relationship between sounds and letter symbols is minimal. Children read, on average, 55 percent of the items in the connected word passage incorrectly. This means two things; one, it reinforces the fact that they struggle to decode to get "through" a word from right to left, two, though, it tells us that they are brilliant, the words they do know, they have been memorizing as best they can as sight words. Children answered more than 90 percent of the comprehension questions incorrectly. This shows us three things: one that they don't understand the meaning of the words they can read by sight (because their vocabulary in Urdu is limited), two that there are many words that they can neither sight read nor decode, and three that their teachers are almost never providing them with high-quality instruction in comprehension. (Extract from the provincial reports of EGRA, 2014 and Report of EGRA results analysis by Rebecca Rhodes, Education Officer, E3 USAID Washington).

School Language Issues

Pakistan has a multilingual society where roughly 72 languages exist and all of them are living.³¹ Among these large number of languages Punjabi is spoken by 48 percent of the Pakistani population, Sindhi 12 percent, Saraiki (a Punjabi variant) 10 percent, Pashto (or Pashtu) 8 percent, Urdu 8 percent, Balochi 3 percent, Hindko 2 percent, Brahui 1 percent, Burushaski and others 8 percent and English (official language and the language of Pakistani elite and the most government ministries).³²

The reason underlying Urdu becoming Pakistan's national language despite having only 8 percent of the population speaking this language is mainly related to the fact that it was taken as a shared identity of the South Asian Muslims. Urdu was a language of communication between the people and politicians involved in the movement of Pakistan. The leading political party Muslim League also promoted Urdu to be the national language for the same reasons. However, English became the de facto national language because many elites were fluent in English. The language of instruction for best schools remained English because it made the entry to higher education easier in UK, U.S., and Australia. Urdu was made the language of instruction by Zia-ul-Haq during his government to promote nationalism (Blood, 1996).³³ It shoes that language had always been a politically interested topic and decisions made for choosing language of instruction are not based on any educational research.

The use of language as medium of instruction has always been confused in Pakistan, even after the education is devolved. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government had recently announced that the new admissions in 2014 in grade one will use English as a medium of instruction and incrementally increasing

³⁰ Annual Status of Education Report (2014). ASER Pakistan 2013. Lahore, Pakistan. South Asian Forum for Education Development Secretariat, Idara-e- Taleem-o-Agahi

³¹ Ethnologue : *Languages of the World. Pakistan* [Country Profile]. Retrieved from <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/PK>

³² General Intelligence Agency: *The World Factbook* [Pakistan]. Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html>

³³ Blood, P. R. (1996). *Pakistan: A country study*. DIANE publishing

the grade level every year. However, there are lessons to be learned from the government of Punjab that introduced English as a medium of instruction in 2009 and in 2013 the decision was partially reversed due to lack of teachers' capacity. Now in 2014 English is being introduced from Grade and in grades up to three Urdu would be reverted back as the medium of instruction. British Council is assisting the government of Punjab in rolling out its "English as a medium of instruction" plan and has planned to train 300,000 teachers. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government passed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Promotion of Regional languages Authority Act in 2012 with a recommendation that gradually regional languages spoken in the province should also be taught. The government made as a compulsory subject in primary schools in majority Pashto speaking districts. For the 2013/2014 school they also introduced four regional languages (Seraiki, Hindko, Kohistan and Khohar) to be taught in pre-primary classes where children use these languages as mother tongue. However, the implementation of the plan lagged partially because of the confusion related to proposed changes.³⁴

Researchers conducted on students' performance related to language of instruction proved that the best language to be used for education (at least in early grades) is the language that children are most familiar with. Using mother tongue as medium of instruction results in high language proficiency, values the language of each individual and respects the individual background, linguistic heritage and culture.³⁵

Much research and implementation in using mother tongue instruction in early childhood and primary education is done by UNESCO. UNESCO therefore it encourages these practices since 1953 (UNESCO, 1953).³⁶ However, what is seen in practice in majority countries is the monolingualism in official or dominant language (Arnold, Bartlett, Gowani, & Merali, 2006; Wolff & Ekkehard, 2000).³⁷ When children in young age are given the opportunity to learn in mother tongue they are more likely to stay in school and succeed (Kosonen, 2005)³⁸ and it also makes it easier for parents to learn about their children's learning and participate (Benson, 2002).³⁹ Mother tongue based education benefits especially the disadvantaged groups including children from the rural community (Hovens, 2002).⁴⁰

When compared mother tongue instructions with the second language system, the studies show that children learning in mother based instructional system perform better on mathematics and also show better improvement on learning second language because they are able to attain additional linguistic competencies in their first language. Their participation in other activities is more significant and frequent in learning process and they also feel more confident.⁴¹

³⁴ Education reform in Pakistan (2014). International Crisis Group. Belgium. Retrieved from [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/pakistan/257-education-reform-in-pakistan](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/pakistan/257-education-reform-in-pakistan)

³⁵ Ginkel, A. V. *Using an additional language as the medium of instruction: Transition in mother tongue-based multilingual education* [presentation slides for webinar]. Retrieved from <http://www.mlenetwork.org/content/using-additional-language-medium-instruction-transition-mother-tongue-based-multilingual-edu>

³⁶ UNESCO (1953). *The use of the vernacular languages in education. Monographs on Foundations of Education*, No. 8. Paris: UNESCO.

³⁷ Arnold, C., Bartlett, K., Gowani, S., & Merali, R. (2006). *Is everybody ready? Readiness, transition and continuity: Reflections and moving forward. Background paper for EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007*.

Wolff, H., & Ekkehard (2000). *Pre-school child multilingualism and its educational implications in the African context*. Cape Town: PRAESA. (Occasional Papers, 4).

³⁸ Kosonen, K. (2005). *Education in local languages: Policy and practice in Southeast Asia. First languages first: Community-based literacy programmes for minority language contexts in Asia*. Bangkok: UNESCO Bangkok.

³⁹ Benson, C. (2002). Real and potential benefits of bilingual programmes in developing countries. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 5 (6), 303-317.

⁴⁰ Hovens, M. (2002). Bilingual education in West Africa: Does it work? *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 5 (5), 249-266.

⁴¹ UNESCO (2008b). *Mother Tongue Matters: Local Language as a Key to Effective Learning*. Paris: UNESCO

Tamim (2014) found in a study that one of the major factors diminishing the transformative impact of education and limiting access is use of languages in the education system of Pakistan that has a multilingual environment. The study found that hegemony of English, its discriminatory distribution through schooling and devaluation of local languages are the major contributing factors.⁴² Such studies deny the use of English as medium of instruction in Pakistan that is widely spreading, particularly in private schooling because of the perceptions that place high value to English because of being an international language of information and technology. Miller (2005) says that experiences they got from India have clearly shown that the reason being many parents wanting their children to learn in English is that they usually don't recognize a difference between learning in English medium and learning English in a mother tongue based curriculum. If they have this understanding, they would surely prefer mother tongue based programs.⁴³

Teaching Issues

The trajectory of a child's reading progress at the end of first grade generally holds steady throughout primary school. Thus, poor reading performance requires early intervention.⁴⁴ Because of inadequate training and limited exposure to global best practices, teachers in Pakistan are unprepared to make those interventions. Few Pakistani teachers are familiar with continuous classroom assessment techniques that measure the skills critical to building skilled and independent readers; and most are unable to effectively facilitate "sustained silent reading" or "reading buddy" activities, create other opportunities to learn, take advantage of computer-based reading software or audio-visual materials, provide remediation, or interact with parents in ways that offer progress reports or advice for helping their children do better (IEQ PAD, pg. 8)

Ofsted (2004) comparative study of effective and ineffective schools shows that the reason of high reading scores in effective schools was better teaching. These schools were good at identifying reading difficulties at very early stages and device relevant strategies to improve reading scores. Teaching of phonics was better in these schools to ensure that pupils develop their skills of decoding early on. Most of these effective schools had libraries where students were having an opportunity of enjoying guided reading in early stages. The key step taken by these effective schools was to intelligently identifying the students' weaknesses and tackling them honestly, knowledgeably and strategically. They also gave importance to parents' involvement and role of head teacher in achieving these targets successfully.⁴⁵

Among several other teaching- learning issues, multi-grade teaching is another challenge faced by teachers in Pakistani schools where only one teacher teaches more than one grades together in a classroom. In the South Asian context, many teachers are forced to teach multi-grade classes with more than 40 students in a class (Jhingran, 2012).⁴⁶

UNESCO (1989) Asia region report explains that multi-grade teaching is common in many rural public schools of Pakistan because of lack of physical facilities and teachers. This is common in those areas where the population is thin and the number of students in each grade is so small that more than one

⁴² Tamim, T. (2014). The politics of languages in education: issues of access, social participation and inequality in the multilingual context of Pakistan. *British Educational Research Journal*, 40: 280–299. doi: 10.1002/berj.3041

⁴³ Miller, S. (2005) *Language and Education: Meeting the Needs of Linguistic Minorities* in Delhi. IOE dissertation.

⁴⁴ Gove, A., and P. Cvelich, page 6.

⁴⁵ Ofsted. (2004). *Reading for Purpose and Pleasure: an evaluation of the teaching of reading in Primary Schools*. London. HMI 2393.

⁴⁶ Jhingran, D. 2012. "A study of the school based factors affecting reading achievements in primary grades". Dissertation, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi. Retrieved from http://jmi.ac.in/upload/Research/ab_2013_es_djhingran.pdf

teacher provision is not possible for the administration. However, such kind of arrangement meets the minimum education requirements with a lot of compromise on the quality. The government had made an effort reducing the content by producing only two text books for multi-grade classes; one with the language subject, social studies and science and Islamiat and the other with Mathematic concepts. However, there is no formal in service of pre-service training on multi-grade teaching in Pakistan. Following such a system poses many threats to quality teaching- learning. Many learning areas are neglected in this way, teacher made learning materials are inadequate, teachers face time management issues and devoting extra time to areas of difficulty and practice becomes impossible.⁴⁷

The 2013 ASER found an astonishing reality that 48 percent of the sampled government schools in rural areas had grade-2 sitting with other grades, whereas in urban schools there were 22 percent grade-2 children sitting with other grades. The reason behind having multi-grade teaching was either teacher absenteeism or the shortage of teachers.⁴⁸

The strategies that Jhingran (2012) identified to improve reading achievements includes increasing instruction time for language teaching, organizing language learning effectively, improving teachers capacity in understanding and using teaching strategies, relating textbooks and curriculum to real life, adopting active learning pedagogies, promoting a better understanding of the importance of language learning in early grades. Researches also show that 30 percent of the instructional week should be given to language art and 21 percent to mathematics. However, in Pakistan 25 hours are dedicated to language learning which is the least time as compared to other E9 countries where India and other countries have 30 hours and China and Mexico give more than 40 hours to language.⁴⁹

“Reading, however, is a complex process that has several constituent sub-skills (see the table below). Early grade reading instruction should balance phonics and drill-type activities with meaning-based activities. Decoding must be taught systematically and emphasize revision and practice to ensure the ability to automatically recognize words. In developing countries, language teachers tend to focus on content and encourage memorization rather than skills development. South Asia is no exception” (Jhingran 2012, p.247).

Stage	Name	The learner
Stage 0: Birth to grade 1	Emergent literacy	Gains control of oral language; relies heavily on pictures in text; pretends to read; recognizes rhyme
Stage 1: Beginning of grade 1	Decoding	Grows aware of sound and symbol relationships; focuses on printed symbols; attempts to break code of print; uses decoding to figure out words
Stage 2: End of grade 1 through grade 3	Confirmation and fluency	Develops fluency in reading; recognizes patterns in words; checks for meaning and sense; has a stock of words known on sight

Source: UNICEF (2002)

⁴⁷ UNESCO (1989). Multi grade teaching in single grade primary schools. Bangkok, Thailand. UNESCO Prinipal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0008/000845/084515eo.pdf>

⁴⁸ Annual Status of Education Report (2014).ASER Pakistan 2013. Lahore, Pakistan. South Asian Forum for Education Develoment Secretariat, Idara-e- Taleem-o-Agahi

⁴⁹ UNESCO (1997).*The quality of learning: Teaching the 3Rs in the first three grades in E9 countries*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001147/114754eo.pdf>

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) on the instruction of congress in 1997 with U.S. Department of Education established a National Reading Panel to evaluate the existing research and evidences to identify the best method of reading for children. The panel's analysis states that the best method to teach a child to read is the one that incorporates; explicit instructions in phonemic awareness, systematic phonetic instruction, methods to improve fluency and ways to enhance comprehension.⁵⁰

The situation in Pakistan is just opposite where teaching of reading is not based on phonics in government schools. In some of the private schools phonic method is being used to teach reading but mainly in English and in elite schools, whereas the low fee private schools have the same quality issues as that of government schools. Nawab (2012) found in a study on teaching English language in a rural district of Pakistan that language teaching is done using the translation method. It shows lack of teachers' capacity in language teaching, memory driven exams, over-crowded classrooms and lack of ongoing support. The study recommended training language teachers separately from the other subject teachers to know the basics of teaching a language.⁵¹ Some of the local private organizations are making an effort to introduce phonics in teaching Urdu language but their efforts are not yet recognized by the government and not even scientifically tested for their effectiveness.

The use of phonics in teaching reading has a cyclic history. The historically popular methods of teaching reading were all phonic type methods. These methods were replaced in early twentieth century as a consequence of universal education. Some self-appointed gurus and people who perhaps had not much educational knowledge decided to replace the phonic type methods with the "whole word" by sight methods like the ones Chinese use and known as "look-say". This method was also replaced later with the meaning-based sight word method, in which children were introduced to a few words and were taught their meaning and later they were made to read stories where these words were used repeatedly. This method was also replaced later by the whole-word method that was also known as "whole-language" or "real-books" based on a theory that children can teach themselves and read naturally. However, in 1990s, based on the very low function literacy scores the researchers and research agencies supported by political will launched a campaign in U.S. to rescue children from whole word reading and reverting back to the phonic based systems so that children learn to decode in early ages. Decoding is a natural process that happens while reading so quickly that it cannot be recognized.⁵²

Not only these technical issues but there are some other teaching issues that relate to motivating students and stimulate them towards reading and help them improve reading skills are also improvement for improving students' performance in reading. The daily classroom activities in a reading class highly effect in polishing students habits of reading. "Knowing that students gain motivation from reading about relevant topics, we can choose the text we use more strategically. Knowing that students engage better when they are taught to interact and are given sufficient time to read during class, we can plan more efficiently and use time more wisely" (Hall & et al. 2011, p. 63)⁵³

A supportive classroom environment plays an important role in motivating students to develop a habit of reading because the technical reading skills can equip them with the necessary skills but it doesn't

⁵⁰ National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2013). *National Reading Panel* [Panel analysis summary]. Retrieved from <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/research/supported/Pages/nrp.aspx/>

⁵¹ Nawab, A. (2012). Is it the way to teach language the way we teach language? English language teaching in rural Pakistan. *Academic Research International*, 2(2), 696-705. Retrieved from: http://ecommons.aku.edu/pakistan_ied_pdcc/9

⁵² McGuinness, D. (2004). *Early reading instruction: What science really tells us about how to teach*. MIT Press, USA

⁵³ Hall, A. H. Burns, L. D. Edwards, E. C. (2011). *Empowering Struggling Readers: Practices for the Middle Grades*. Guilford Press, New York.

guarantee that they will also develop a habit of reading regularly and appropriately. “Demonstrating support means listening to and affirming students’ knowledge and perceptions. When they say they are board, we should listen. When they complain that activities are difficult, we should acknowledge their discomfort. When they wonder why they are being asked to read a particular text or complete a certain activity, we should take their questions seriously” (Hall & et al. 2011, p. 59)

“The more often teachers engineer classroom reading experiences that give students choice, variety, goals, strategies, collaboration and real world connections, the more likely students are to value reading both in and out of school” (Hall & et al, 2011, p. 63).

In today’s world of technology and every day improving gadgets the education seems to be somehow showing an orthodox way of delivery. To make education attractive for kids it’s important to harmonize it with the growing technology. Literacy teaching would also need to be made hi-tech to meet the needs of the participants and fit into their daily life and meet their standards of interest. Losh (2014) beautifully capturing this mismatch by portraying a classroom scene: behind the lectern stands a professor, deploying course management systems, online quizzes, wireless clickers, PowerPoint slides, plagiarism detecting software and in the seats in front the students are armed with smart phones, tablets, music player and networking that shows a mismatch and a kind of was between the two on learning. Post-secondary education trends indicate towards the need of changing technologies used in education and using the ones that can work, for example open online courses, gamification of subject matter, remixing pedagogy and a virtual world of learning.⁵⁴

School Environment Issues

The overall school environment starting from the curriculum, number of subjects, student-teacher ratio, time allocated for teaching different subjects etc. is also a challenge when it comes to teaching reading. A UNESCO (1997) study conducted on 3Rs of first three grades in E9 countries shows that most of the E9 countries have 6-10 subjects in early grades with Pakistan having eight subjects after Nigeria that has 10 subjects whereas India the neighboring country has six subjects in early grades. The student-teacher ratio in Pakistan is one of the highest three among E9 countries with 41 students after India with 48 students and Bangladesh 63 students. The variations in Pakistani schools sometimes raise this numbers to more than 70 and 80, especially in the urban areas. Overall instructional time per year in Pakistani schools is highest among the E9 countries with 910 hours per year as compared to India that has 840 hours that remains the same in all three grades. However, Bangladesh has 486 hours for grades one and two and 700 hours for grade three. According to some social scientists the more time allocated produces better results. However, the researches on literacy achievements show that there is least correlation of learning with the time allocated for instructions. More critical then is not the amount of time but how it is spent.⁵⁵

The most recent Pakistani education curriculum developed in 2006 emphasized on the basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing but the older curricula were not that specific in defining the fundamental language skills.⁵⁶ However, the practice shows an opposite trend where reading is not being given a place in school routines and curriculum. For being a non-examination/non-assessment area reading and reading time is always compromised. “We have to cover the courses and complete home work of almost all (eight/ten) subjects. It takes too much time to read a book other than a

⁵⁴ Losh, E. (2014). *The war on learning: Gaining ground in the digital university*. MIT Press

⁵⁵ UNESCO (1997). *The quality of learning: Teaching the 3Rs in the first three grades in E9 countries*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001147/114754eo.pdf>

⁵⁶ UNESCO (2011). *World data on education (7th edition): Pakistan*. International Bureau of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/services/online-materials/world-data-on-education/seventh-edition-2010-11.html>

textbook/course book. Similarly, we have to go for home tuition and prepare for getting through final examination thinking scarcely about extra reading—novel, poetry, history, magazine and/or newspaper” say students of the schools where reading scores are low (Hussain & Munshi, 2011).⁵⁷

The education system for about 20 years from now had been discussing the problem of reading at schools. The Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) also shows that the low achievements of students in reading. An important approach towards overcoming this issue would be to improve the technical reading skills that can provide access to reading. However, it will not have any impact on student’s interest for reading. Recently attention is being given to not only improving the ability to read but also improving their desire. The school systems implement some strategies to ensure this shift from ability to desire but that involves both in school and out of the school environment.⁵⁸

The International reading Association (2010) has worked on the literate environment standard, as a part of their professional standards, that narrates that “a literate environment fosters reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, instructional practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and the appropriate use of assessments.” The association’s standard 2010 committee used following assumptions while developing standard and its elements and their elements:

- An effective literate environment offers both visible and “invisible” support (i.e., psychological, social, emotional) to learners as they expand their literacies.
- The goal of the literate environment is to create a flexible border between the world outside the classroom and school to the world within (i.e., making the curriculum permeable to the social context). Learning should extend beyond the walls of the educational context to explore the potential for acts of literacy that affect the world outside.
- Learners require a literate environment that affords them the opportunity to engage in meaningful ways by providing time, accessibility, tools, choice, and support.
- Student learning is positively impacted by positive teacher dispositions, such as high expectations, a carefully crafted physical environment, and a safe, low-risk social environment.
- To meet the needs of learners, a co-constructed literate environment must continually change as interests and focal points for learning shift over time.⁵⁹

The Access Centre (2014) has also worked on the literacy rich environments and according to them, “the literacy-rich environment emphasizes the importance of speaking, reading, and writing in the learning of all students. This involves the selection of materials that will facilitate language and literacy opportunities, reflection and thought regarding classroom design, and intentional instruction and facilitation by teachers and staff.”⁶⁰ A classroom environment where children have more chances to get exposed to literacy material and activities that involve them in literacy would be helpful to foster a

⁵⁷ Hussain, I. & Munshi, P. (2011). Identifying reading preferences of secondary school students. *Scientific Research*. Vol. 2 No. 5 (pg. 429-434) DOI:10.4236/ce.2011.25062

⁵⁸ Dobert, H. Klieme, E. & Sroka, W. (2004). Conditions of School Performance in Seven Countries: A Quest for Understanding the International Variation of PISA Results. Waxmann Verlag GmbH, Germany. (p. 293).

⁵⁹ International Reading Association (2014). Standard 2010 - Standard-5: Literate environment. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org/General/CurrentResearch/Standards/ProfessionalStandards2010/ProfessionalStandards2010_Standard5.aspx

⁶⁰ The Access Center (2014). *Literacy rich environments*. Retrieved from <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/21825>

reading habit in them right from the beginning. Such habits not only make them good readers in early ages but also result in developing their lifelong learning attitudes. Tyson (2013) also made an effort and tried to list down the elements of a literate classroom environment. His list includes but is not limited to classroom libraries with variety of text and genres, posters, charts (co-created with students), word walls, labels, literacy work stations, writing centers, computers, displayed students work, displayed books and information, bulletin boards and plenty of opportunities to read write, listen and speak.⁶¹

Explaining a literacy rich environment Malone (2007)⁶² says that the indicators on such an environment show that children listen attentively, respond to teachers instructions, help peers who have trouble in understanding, participate in classroom discussions and contribute, show interest in what others say, actively participate in large and small group interactions, contributing ideas and opinions.

Factors Affecting Reading Outcomes

Successful readers are more likely to come from families where the parents read or are otherwise able and willing to engage with their children on reading assignments. Having books at home makes a difference too. Parental expectations are also important. Research indicates that, in developing countries, parents do not expect their children to read before the fourth grade when, in fact, children with reading problems in first grade are already on a trajectory to be poor readers in the future. Given the limited reading skills of so many Pakistani children, parents looking at their children's peers to make judgments on how well their own children are reading are likely to be among those parents who fit within the low expectations category (IEQ PAD pg. 8).

The classroom life is not the life in isolation. It always is made up with thousands of micro episodes, many of which occur outside of the classroom, with families, friends and the overall environment. Therefore if any learning is linked to only one source that would not be realistic and beneficial. If a child is good at reading it might not always be because of a teacher or a parent but it can be because the child was influenced by another person, an author, or the style of teaching he experienced.

“Improving the teaching of reading may similarly need to seek numerous small contributions, rather than one single miraculous and universally successful strategy” (Wragg, et al. (2013), p. 244)⁶³

When it comes to factors outside of the classroom, the most important and the most overarching factor that determines children reading habits is the socio-economic status of families that children belong to. Parents' education as well as their financial status does impact their learning levels. The ASER (2014) Pakistan reports shows that Children belonging to families in “richer” quartile have high learning levels in Urdu/Sindhi/Pashto/English and Arithmetic as compared to those from “poor” quartile families. It shows that the socio-economic status of families does impact their learning levels (ASER Pakistan report, 2014)⁶⁴

The involvement of overall community therefore becomes highly important in improving children's learning levels, especially when it comes to societies with multi-lingual culture. Not only the families but

⁶¹ Tyson, K. (2013). *The elements of a literacy rich classroom environment*. Retrieved from <http://www.teachthought.com/literacy-2/the-elements-of-a-literacy-rich-classroom-environment/>

⁶² Malone, S. (2007). *Learning outcomes, indicators, activities and resources for language education in MTB-MLE programs, years 1-3.SIL International*. Retrieved from <http://www.mlenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Language%20Ed%20Outcomes%20to%20Indicators%20to%20Activities%20to%20Resources.pdf>

⁶³ Wragg, E. C. Wragg, Haynes, G. S. & C. M. Chamberlain, R. P. (2013). *Improving Literacy in the Primary Schools*. Routledge.

⁶⁴ Annual Status of Education Report (2014).ASER Pakistan 2013. Lahore, Pakistan. South Asian Forum for Education Development Secretariat, Idara-e- Taleem-o-Agahi

overall society plays its role in establishing a literate culture. In a multilingual society like Pakistan where mother tongue is not the language of instruction it becomes even more important to bring the general public in confidence to understand what teaching in mother tongue means and how it impacts learning of their children. A UNESCO (2008)⁶⁵ study in Papua New Guinea, the education reform was preceded by public consultation to introduce the indigenous languages into formal schooling for many years before getting it approved from the government and putting into practice. It helped in bringing the general community on board and prepare them to accept the educational facts that are scientifically proven.

To become a lifetime reader depends on love developed for reading (Sanacore, 2002).⁶⁶ However, when it comes to students, research says that the students initially would need some guided reading to develop this love and interest for reading. If children don't find any progress in their learning or don't even find the material of their interest they may lose interest in reading as well (Ofsted, 2004).⁶⁷

Outside classroom environment is highly important because it creates a support system around a child enabling him to take interest in reading rather than imposing something as one the responsibilities that children fulfill based on the expectations of their elders, families and teachers. For developing an interest in reading they need to feel what they enjoy and get out of their reading activity.

“Reading can change your life, it can inform, motivate, inspire and elevate; but it must be reading you do for yourself, at your own pace, in your own way, and that has a bearing on your own background, interests, values, beliefs and aspirations. Reading that is forced on you in a mechanistic way and formally assessed may have the reverse effect, the major purpose becoming pleasing the teacher and passing tests, and a preoccupation with form rather than substance” (Woods, 2001, p. 74-75).⁶⁸

As school instruction and technical skills learned at school help children perform better outside the school, the home reading culture impacts their performance at schools and improve their test scores. This may include reading to a child some books, newspapers etc. But this kind of home-school relationship does have a link to parents' education status and to some extent their economic status. Sullivan and Brown (2013) found that mothers who struggle in their reading are likely to have problem in reading to their children and also less likely to read in their leisure time. They also found that children of mothers who didn't answer questions during their reading had scored significantly low. This also impacts in overall developing children's reading habit. Their research concluded that parents' illiteracy presents ongoing problems for their children's learning throughout childhood. However, parents who are literate, how much their literacy is function is also an important aspect to consider while talking about the subject of their children's performance.⁶⁹

A literate home doesn't only mean having some reading and writing material on hand but also the ways and opportunities to use them, especially by the younger family members. According to experts for a literate home it is important to set up a specific family reading area, which is good to give a message to children that reading has an important value in the family and anyone in the family regardless of age can go there and read. The reading material placed in that area can be of variety and not only in English but

⁶⁵ UNESCO (2008b). *Mother Tongue Matters: Local Language as a Key to Effective Learning*. Paris: UNESCO

⁶⁶ Sanacore, J. (2002). Struggling literacy learners benefit from lifetime literacy efforts. *Reading Psychology*, 23, 67-86.

⁶⁷ Ofsted. (2004). *Reading for Purpose and Pleasure: an evaluation of the teaching of reading in Primary Schools*. London. HMI 2393.

⁶⁸ Woods, P. (2001) 'Creative literacy', in A. Craft, B. Jeffrey & M. Liebling (eds). *Creativity in Education*, London: Continuum, pp. 62-79.

⁶⁹ Sullivan, A. & Brown, M. (2013). *Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading*. London, UK: Center for Longitudinal Studies, Institute of Education University of London

in some regional and national language as well. Parents also need to develop some routines or set time to help children their reading habits gradually.⁷⁰

Reading Culture in Pakistan

Right from the beginning of the Pakistan coming into being the Pakistani history of literature remained rich and many writers produced historical literature that even today is read and liked by many. In the beginning of Pakistan the non-Muslim writers like Prem Chand, Jadu Nath Sarshar, Rajinder Singh Bedi, and Krishan Chandar promoted many Urdu short stories. After the partition writers like Bedi, Chandar, Manto, Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, Abdullah Hussain and Intezar Hussain got fame. The writers that impacted the successive generations of Urdu writers after that were like Qudratullah Shahab, Ashfaq Ahmad, Bano Qudsiya, Altaf Fatima, Naseem Hijazi, Rais Ahmad Jaafari. In poetry, in the twentieth century, the most famous and the influential writer was Mohammad Iqbal (Called Poet of East later) and after him the other three most famous poets were Josh Malihabadi, Faiz, Ahmad Faiz and Noon Meem Rashid. Munir Niazi and Ibn Insha are those poets who resisted against the 1960's military regime's efforts to win over literary circles. They all were followed by a generation of Urdu poets like Ahmad Faraz, Nasir Kazmi, Mutaqa Zaidi, Parveen Shakir, Kishwar Naheed and Rashid Amjad. Interestingly, some interesting pieces of comic poetry and prose were produced by military officials like Zamir Jafari, Mohahhad Khan and Siddique Saliq.

Presently almost every university is having Urdu department and promoting individual writers and research work. Urdu as a language of instruction and journalism was a significant development. A huge variety of Urdu dramas, films, television shows, plays, newspapers, magazines etc offer a wide variety of literature for everyone that also produce big names of drama writers like, Agha Hashar, Imtiaz Ali Taj, Fatima Surayya Bajiya, Anwar Maqsood, Amjad Islam Amjad, Munnu Bhae and Haseena Moeen (Haider, 2006).⁷¹

Some members of the Pakistani diaspora take the opportunity of writing in English that is the official language of Pakistan and connected back in the colonial era of British rule pre-partition. The most renowned of these English writers are Alamgir Hashmi, Daud Kamal, Shahid Suhrawardy and Muneeza Shamsie.⁷²

When it comes to English writing not much progress is made in past as compared to the writers in the neighboring country India. However, in the recent era Pakistani writers have received global attention and the reason behind that is Pakistan's current security and situation, extremism and political instability. This all keeps Pakistan in news and the writers get attention in global media. However, this has limited the fields that he writers chose to use their pen on. Shah (2009) shares in his reposted The Guardian article that these days one can hardly find a piece of writing that has no politics.⁷³

Although they are not many, there are a few emerging writers that have really grabbed the attention of the world towards their creative writing. Among them the most prominent are Mohsin Hameed (the

⁷⁰ Literacy rich environments: Literacy development begins at home, with a literate environment. Retrieved from <http://www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/literacy-development-begins-at-home.htm>

⁷¹ Haider, M. I. (2006). Culture and customs of Pakistan. Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport, USA (p 58-60).

⁷² *Pakista - tum hi to ho*. Retrieved on 30th June, 2014 from <http://www.pakistantumhetoho.com.pk/Literature>

⁷³ Shah, S. (2009). Pakistan's Writers in Demand (reposted from The Guardian). Retrieved from <http://pakteahouse.net/2009/02/19/pakistans-writers-in-demand/> on 30th June, 2014

writer of the best seller *Reluctant Fundamentalist*), Mohammad Hanif, Kamilla S hamsie and Daniyal Mueenuddin.⁷⁴

Other than the two major languages of Urdu and English Pakistan also has a rich history of literature in local language like Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, Pashto and Saraiki. Among the Punjabi classical writers, the most famous are Fakhar Zaman, Afzal Ahsan Randhawa, Najam Hussain and Najm Hosain Syed. The famous Pashto writers are Khushhal Khan Khattak, Ghani Khan, Hamza Baba and Rahman Baba. The notable figures in Sindhi are Sheikh Ayaz, Zaib Sindhi, Tariq Alam Abro and Hassam-ud-Din Rashidi. The Sindhi literature is very rich and considered one of the oldest literatures. Balochi is the language of the Province Balochistan and also spoken in some other countries like, Iran, Afghanistan, India, Gulf States, Turkmenistan and East Africa. The writers who contributed in Balochi literature are Saba Dashtiyari, Ata Shad, Gul Khan Nasir and Zahoor Hashmi. Saraiki, the language of Southern Punjab is privileged to have the notable poets that produced masterpieces of poetry mostly coming from the Sufism and some of which was actually used in singing. The prominent names from this soulful literature are Ghulam Fareed, Sachal Sarmast, Shakir Shuja Abadi and Sain Ahmad Khan. Sufi poetry in Punjabi is equally deep and soulful and the most famous poets of Punjabi are Sultan Bahu, Bulleh Shah, Waris Shah and Khwaja Ghulam Farid. Both Punjabi and Saraiki poetry are centuries old but still favorite of people as it was written for today.⁷⁵

This historical overview of the literature and writers that existed in Pakistan and right before the Pakistan's existence and its comparison with present shows a clear difference of reducing number of influential writers and the kind of fame they received. Not only the number of writers has reduced but also the overall interest in reading has changed. Khurshid (1975) reported a survey conducted right after the partition under UNESCO directions that studied the reading habits of children and youth between the age of five and fifteen. The purpose of this study was to provide the writers, publishers and the libraries with the required information that can guide them in providing materials of interest for children's reading in Urdu. It reported that majority of these children read short length materials with bold text and usually at nighttime. A large number of children used to borrow books from Anna Libraries in their localities. Anna Libraries were those local libraries that used to lend books on a rent of one Anna per day.⁷⁶ Anna was the Pakistani currency at that time and one Anna was equal to four paisas. In one rupee there were sixteen annas and sixty-four paisas.⁷⁷

Another study conducted by Hussain & Munshi (2011) on reading preferences of secondary school students shows that many children prefer reading Islamic religion books to learn about the dos and don'ts of their religion, science, traveling stories, literature and romance, autobiographies, novels, newspapers and magazines. However, the study also revealed that children are seldom guided by their elders in choosing their reading material. Schools also rarely conduct any literacy competitions or events that can motivate them to read and select their materials. Mostly they remain busy in completing their course books therefore don't get time to read otherwise. Teachers and parents also are more concerned with completion of their course books and getting high scores in exams. The libraries either don't exist or if there are some these are not in a good condition and the books are either scarce or in a very bad shape.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Emerging from Obscurity: *The rise Pakistani Literature*. Retrieved on 30th June, 2014 from <http://theculturetrip.com/asia/pakistan/articles/emerging-from-obscurity-the-rise-of-pakistani-literature/>

⁷⁵ *Pakistan - Tum hi to ho*. Retrieved on 30th June, 2014 from <http://www.pakistantumhetoho.com.pk/Literature>

⁷⁶ Khurshid, A. (1975). What children read: A survey. National book council of Pakistan

⁷⁷ Chaudhery, Q. I. *Journey of Pakistan currency*. Retrieved from <http://www.hamariweb.com/articles/article.aspx?id=23975>

⁷⁸ Hussain, I. & Munshi, P. (2011). Identifying reading preferences of secondary school students. *Scientific Research*. Vol. 2 No. 5 (pg. 429-434) DOI:10.4236/ce.2011.25062

“We do not have a proper library in school. Our school library consists of two or three almirahs in a classroom, staff room and/or science laboratory having a few old torn off books which are not issued to us. We spend library period in school without reading even a newspaper. Access to newspaper is limited to teachers only and in some schools it is rarely available” (Hussain & Munshi, 2011).

Study conducted by a Ph.D Scholar of The University of The Punjab, Lahore in Library and Information Department shows that Primary school children usually like to read the locally published materials and more of them are in English language. The main reason of this extra reading they do is improving their vocabulary (Awais, 2013).⁷⁹

For having a reading culture, the existence of books is fundamental, both in schools and in community. The literature on libraries and books in Pakistan does not give a good picture. In Pakistan, fewer than 7 percent schools have any kind of book collection for students reading and majority of primary schools don't even entertain the idea of having a library. Although some of the middle/high schools do have libraries but their materials are outdated and the facilities are not in use. Even the schools and teachers are not trained on using libraries and developing reading habits in children.⁸⁰ According to Gambrell, et al. (2007) teachers can introduce the literacy skills and content specific reading skills to children but unless students are provided with access to interesting reading material they will never get to full potential of being a reader.⁸¹

Time is also an important factor to gradually develop reading habits in children. Where the availability of interesting material is important for children, the time factor is also important to allow them to explore the material of their interest and enjoy reading it. A U.S.-based assessment also found that students exhibit more positive attitude towards reading and show higher level reading achievements, when they interact more with books and spend more time in reading.⁸² Schools having libraries often time allocate very little time in making children learn how to use libraries. They usually don't remember the last time when they had learned about using a library and finding the material of their choice (Ofsted, 2004).⁸³

Like the school libraries, the public library scenario is also not that encouraging in Pakistan. Most of the book access that youth has is mainly relying on the institutional libraries established in colleges and universities. The history of public libraries shows a bright start of this culture but unfortunately it could not keep the pace. Looking back in 20th century it shows that right from the British rule Lahore (now in Pakistan) had been the center of library movement. The vice chancellor of the University of the Punjab (UoP) in Lahore, James, C. R. Ewing selected Don Dickinson (1876-1960) as the university librarian to teach modern library methods and from there the things changed. Dickinson introduced Dewey Decimal Classification scheme in the library. From there India widely followed this scheme in its other libraries. Dickinson also established the Punjab Library Association (PLA) in 1951 in Lahore and the first All India Library Conference was also held in Lahore in 1918. It show that this city and this part of the sub-

⁷⁹ Awais, S. (2013). *The reading preferences of primary school children in Lahore* (Doctoral dissertation). University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/6956097/The_Reading_Preferences_of_Primary_School_Children_in_Lahore

⁸⁰ Relief International (2010). Pakistan Libraries Project: Empowering minds, promoting a culture of reading and learning. Retrieved from <http://www.pakistanlibraries.org/about.php#first>

⁸¹ Gambrell, L.B. Malloy, J.A., & Mazzoni, S.A. (2007). *Evidence-based practices for comprehensive literacy instruction*. In L. Gambrell, L.M. Morrow, & M. Pressley (Eds.), *Best Practices in Literacy Instruction*, 3rd edition (pp. 11-29). New York: Guilford Press.

⁸² National Assessment of Educational Progress Report. (2002). *1992-2002 NAEP Report*. Princeton, NY: Educational Testing Service.

⁸³ Ofsted. (2004). *Reading for purpose and pleasure: an evaluation of the teaching of reading in Primary Schools*. London. HMI 2393.

continent had enjoyed serving as a hub of library professionals under British rule. Although the city of Lahore is still a culturally rich city but it has unfortunately suffered a lot in its library culture due to ethnic riots and migration of people.⁸⁴

After the partition a number of colleges and universities have been established that are having their libraries established. There is no updated directory of libraries available but an older version of 1996 of Directory of Libraries of Pakistan shows that there were 302 public libraries in the country. The general trends in declining reading culture of reading show, there would not have been much improvement in this list. In 1957 Pakistan Library Association (PLA) was established which is the national body of the libraries in Pakistan. PLA is responsible for looking after the interest of the professional librarians and work for improving the libraries of both formal and informal sectors.⁸⁵ However, the PLA website doesn't have the updated info and also fails to show the updated list of public libraries in Pakistan. The literature review shows that after some old survey in 90s there is no recent survey conducted for the libraries in Pakistan that leaves a huge gap in this field and limits further researches.

Recently the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are transforming the libraries use in Pakistan and making it easier for the users to access materials from around the world. Although the new technologies are instrumental in making the material access efficient but still there is a lot that the educational institutions and the government needs to do to meet the market needs and provide quality services.⁸⁶

Development Partners' Contributions

Every major donor and many smaller donors that are active in Pakistan support primary education projects. Among the largest donors are the World Bank and the Department of International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom. These two donors, in some instances together and in other instances individually, and in some instances jointly with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), are investing large sums in structural reform. Many of the activities they are undertaking are consistent with what USAID is doing with regard to in-service education. Specifically, there are shared interests in: (i) supporting government efforts to improve teacher training, adopt standards and measure teacher performance based on standards, and promote education assessment; and (ii) improving the quality of private sector education.

UNICEF, the European Union, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), and CIDA are also making significant investments in the education sector. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) will join the existing donors if its targeted provinces, Sindh and Balochistan, are able to develop strategies that garner support from the donors.

All of the donors are, at a minimum, seeking to improve equitable access to quality education at the primary level. Most are constructing schools, training teachers, supporting the development of instructional materials, and helping to develop the standards and promote the systemic reforms that underpin equitable access to quality education. (PRP RFA)

⁸⁴ Ameen, K. (2006). Marketing of Library and Information Service in Pakistan: A profile. In Gupta, D. K., Koontz, C., Massisimo, A. & Savard, R. (eds). *Marketing library and information services: International perspectives*. Germany: K. G. Saur Verlag GmbH, Munchen.

⁸⁵ Pakistan Library Association (2013). About us. Retrieved from <http://www.pla.org.pk/>

⁸⁶ Shahzad, K. (2012). *Use and Impact of ICT in Libraries*. LAP Lambert Academic Publishing

For many years, the Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education/UNESCO Bangkok has supported educational development efforts that see the language(s) of the learner as resources, not as problems. The Bureau's Asia-Pacific Program of Education for All (APPEAL) has been supporting twelve countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam, Malaysia, Lao PDR and Afghanistan) to implement pilot projects on literacy programs using mother-tongue/bilingual teaching and learning. The projects aim to provide quality education to ethnic minority children, youth and adults. Action research has been undertaken to find out whether using mother-tongue and bilingual education can help learners to learn faster and actively participate in literacy classes, and whether such an approach can help to reduce drop-out rates and increase retention rates.⁸⁷

UNESCO Bangkok organized the international workshop "Improving the Quality of Mother Tongue-based Literacy Programmes" from 18 to 22 June of 2007 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in cooperation with UNESCO Dhaka to facilitate cooperation and mutual learning among project leaders and other participants involved in designing, implementing and coordinating mother tongue-based literacy and learning programs. This was the fourth such workshop organized over the past five years, and each time participants were requested to submit detailed reports in advance.

Relief International (RI) also made an effort to revive the reading culture in public schools of Pakistan by establishing school libraries through its Pakistan Libraries Project (PLP). The project created an effective model of collaboration between the government, national NGOs and foundations, individual schools and donors around the world. Through this initiative (2008-2010) they established over 300 libraries throughout Pakistan. Mainly the primary schools were focused during this project but the plans were developed to extend this activity to middle and high schools also where in many cases libraries are present but with outdated materials and underutilized. The project also had launched some reading campaigns and built the school capacity to developing a reading culture and using school libraries.⁸⁸

Alif Laila, a private organization in Pakistan, started out with the setting up of a children's lending library in a gaily colored double Decker bus in 1978. This happened to be the first exclusively children's library in Pakistan. Parked on a green patch of land in the heart of Lahore, the bus is neatly stacked on both the upper and lower levels with shelves of books. This stationary bus has become one of the landmarks of Lahore. Boys and girls from different schools utilize the library in addition to many private members who like to come and enjoy the beautiful atmosphere of the library.⁸⁹

Pakistani Response

The national Ministry of Education and Training has recognized the need for quality basic education, and over the years, has worked with donors and outside actors to develop their capacity to deliver quality basic education. In 2010, the Higher Education Commission, which is the certifying body for all public universities in Pakistan, established new associate and bachelor degree programs in education. These new programs fit within newly adopted standards for teacher certification that will strengthen education quality at all levels. The GoP provides incentive schemes and financial support to strong candidates wishing to enter the teaching profession or improve their credentials. These credentials will qualify education professionals for higher civil service grade levels and increased remuneration commensurate with their qualifications.

⁸⁷ UNESCO (2008). *Improving the quality of mother tongue based literacy and learning: Case studies from Asia, Africa and South America*. Bangkok, Thailand: UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education.

⁸⁸ Relief International (2010). Pakistan Libraries Project: Empowering minds, promoting a culture of reading and learning. Retrieved from <http://www.pakistanlibraries.org/about.php#first>

⁸⁹ Alif Laila Book Bus. Retrieved from <http://www.aliflaila.org.pk/bookbus.html>

Additionally, provincial governments have expanded upon these advances in diverse ways, such as through the development of a comprehensive education sector strategy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, completion of a situational analysis to inform an education strategy in Balochistan, and the consolidation and coordination of in-service and pre-service teacher development under local directorates in Sindh, Punjab, and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The Government of Pakistan's participation in the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) launched in 2000 has resulted in a dramatic increase in girls' enrollment and access to education. Girls' exposure to literacy instruction has consequently improved, although the persistent challenges of repetition and dropout have yielded diminished literacy outcomes. Pakistan has attempted to align with the objectives of the United Nations Literacy Decade launched in 2003 by focusing advocacy and investment efforts around the initiative's goal to achieve at least 50 percent literacy in all countries by 2012. Further literacy support has come through UNESCO's Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), launched in Pakistan in 2006 to reform curriculum, build literacy capacity and pilot community learning centers across Pakistan.

However, government's efforts on establishing a reading culture in Pakistan usually seem to be limited to arranging a few exhibitions and literary competitions/events. The status of Pakistan Library Association shows the lack of involvement of any government body in organizing library data and synchronizing them with the rapidly increasing technology. The literature review also revealed that there is scarcity of research on this subject, especially in recent times that can help identify exact situation of pleasure and purposeful reading status in Pakistan. The general observation, decreased number of writers, books and lack of public libraries and updated materials show that the culture of reading in Pakistan has declined over time and no significant national efforts are made to improve it.

The presence of a strong reading culture in Pakistan is recognized by USAID as an integral support to achieving its objectives for early grade reading outcomes. However, the culture of reading in Pakistan appears to suffer from a number of challenges that are impeding children's reading success. In Pakistan, these factors are present and may be affecting student reading outcomes.

The proposed special study on finding the barriers to reading will help in finding the core issues that will further help identifying the areas that can be prioritized and strengthened to revive and improve the culture of reading in Pakistan. The findings will be critical in informing the designs for activities that use the potential opportunities to work on the barriers identified through this study.

II. Target Areas and Groups

USAID is interested in understanding the barriers to reading culture across all provinces, languages, age groups, gender groups, urban and rural settings, and socioeconomic strata. However, the Mission recognizes a smaller sample will be necessary due to time and resource constraints. The current research study will include data collection from key stakeholders in the development of literacy skills and habits in Pakistan, including provincial and federal education department, teachers, students, parents, development partners, and members of the general community. Capturing the views, perspectives and experiences of a broad stakeholder range will help to ensure that the most critical barriers to reading are accurately identified, thereby best enabling USAID/Pakistan to support the revitalization of the reading culture in Pakistan. Further details regarding the stakeholders to be sampled during the course of this study are described in the methodology section of this document.

C. Development Hypothesis

Any activity resulting from the findings of this study will be designed to contribute to USAID/Pakistan's Mission Strategic Framework Development Objective 4 – Improved Opportunities for Learning and

Work. The Improving Education Quality (IEQ) project and the various activities within it – potentially including an activity informed by this study – meet this Development Objective by providing the providing children in primary grades with the skill of literacy. The ability to read well, including reading at grade level in each primary grade, sets the foundation for learning. In early primary grades, children develop an initial ability to read. This is followed in later primary grades by an expansion of fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and speed, which in turn facilitates the retention and comprehension of instructional material as it is increasingly delivered through the medium of the written word. As children grow to adulthood and enter the workforce, those who were unable to develop strong reading skills are at a significant disadvantage in obtaining even the lowest paying jobs. Illiteracy represents a major obstruction to DO4’s objective, as well as USAID’s broader objective to support development across sectors.

D. Intended Results

USAID/Pakistan intends this study to accurately identify barriers to reading beyond the walls of the primary school. Research has demonstrated the benefits to children learning to read when others in their environment – their older siblings, peers, adults in their community, and especially their parents – are not only able to read, but have modeled a habit of reading. This modeling underscores the value of reading for the child, thereby supporting adoption of this habit themselves for reinforcement of their skill and establishment of the foundation for lifelong learning. The presence of skilled readers in the child’s environment ensures there is assistance at home and in the community to help build the child’s skills in the critical early years. Finally, a culture of reading generates demand that the market will attempt to meet for reading materials of all kinds. Together, these factors create a self-reinforcing cycle that maintains a supportive environment for children’s development of reading skills and adoption of reading habits. This study will identify the principal avenues for USAID investment to help re-establish, strengthen and sustain this supportive environment in support of the Mission’s development objectives.

The IEQ results framework contains three Intermediate Results (IRs) and numerous sub-IRs. The finding of this report support IR3: national culture of reading reestablished. More specifically, it will contribute to each of the sub-IRs. This study will inform the best approach for affecting change in each area, and identify any additional areas that may have been overlooked. In addition to revealing the most critical intervention areas for the revitalization of the culture of reading, it will identify where the sub-IRs below fit into that hierarchy. USAID/Pakistan may revise the IEQ strategic framework on the basis of the findings of this study. The sub-IRs and their description as currently stated in the IEQ strategic framework are listed below:

- i. **Heightened awareness of the benefits of reading.** IEQ will support activities that increase national enthusiasm for reading. Increased enthusiasm for reading should lead to greater demand for high quality reading programs in the public and private sectors, improved status of educators, and better motivated teachers and administrators.
- ii. **Pakistani organizations undertaking activities that promote innovation, adoption of best practices, sustainability of reforms, and education research and advocacy.** IEQ will help to enrich the national dialogue on the quality of education. This is intended to contribute to the consensus building, and advocacy. Eligible bidders could include university and other policy think tanks, NGOs, government agencies, private sector education purveyors, communities, and partnerships including any combination of the previous actors.
- iii. **Improved sustainability of constructive reforms, and an increased number of organizations committed to improving education quality and networking with each other.**

IEQ will support policy reforms and the strengthening of NGOs and local civil society organizations that contribute to the revitalization of the culture of reading in Pakistan.

- iv. **Increased opportunities for reading and learning to read.** IEQ will provide support to non-formal literacy instruction, potentially including basic literacy support to out of school youth at risk of violent extremism to facilitate their entry into the workforce.

II. RATIONALE FOR SPECIAL STUDY

A. Purpose of the Special Study

This study is designed to inform support to strengthening the reading culture in Pakistan under the Improving Education Quality (IEQ) PAD. Its annexes collectively indicate that the activity could potentially achieve this objective through various community-level events such as the establishment of book clubs, mobile libraries, public awareness raising campaigns and more. Most frequently it is mentioned in conjunction with a national media campaign intended to promote reading. However, no research was available at the time of the PAD design to suggest why the culture of reading had declined in Pakistan, what the greatest impediments were to its revival, or what media messaging could help to overcome attitudinal barriers (if they exist). The Mission requires additional and current information to better understand the existing needs and barriers to the revival of a reading culture in Pakistan, and indeed what the components of a Pakistani reading culture could be. At minimum, USAID anticipates that a robust reading culture would include a large majority of the population both able to read, and habitually reading both for pleasure and for practical purposes, to include lifelong learning.

The purpose of this study would be to explore the reasons behind barriers to reading in the Pakistani culture as a whole and to identify potential areas that can be strengthened to strengthen reading skills and habits in the public across different regional, gender, age and language divides. This purpose does not include determining the previous existence of a reading culture in Pakistan or the history of its decline, and USAID does not request the study team to explore these aspects of the topic.

B. Audience and Intended Use

The main findings of the study will be shared with USAID/Pakistan, OAPA, E3, ASSIST, the government of Pakistan, development partners and the implementers of the Pakistan Reading Project and other related USAID-funded activities.

C. Study Questions

This section presents the core study questions based on the previous section. The questions are designed to capture the areas where the barriers to reading may be identified. Each of these three main areas is further defined through sub-questions that indicate the precise areas of interest to USAID. Suggested methodologies to answer each question are listed in Annex 1. In addition, illustrative study instrument questions have been provided in Annex 3 to further elucidate the specific research interests of USAID. The study team should gather data as required to answer the questions below:

- 1) **What are the common attitudes and beliefs about reading in Pakistan?**

- a. What attitudes do Pakistani people hold about reading?

- b. What beliefs do Pakistani people hold about reading?
- 2) What are the barriers to reading among different populations in Pakistan?**
- a. What knowledge do people have about how to support others' reading?
 - b. What is the frequency and source of material read?
 - c. What proportion is purchasing reading materials?
 - d. What proportion report difficulty accessing reading materials nearby?
 - e. Where are there gaps to fill for Pakistanis with disabilities and special learning needs to participate in a culture of reading, and how great is the need for services?
 - f. What are the most popular and trusted sources of information?
 - g. What do the findings for the questions above reveal about the trends in barriers to reading among different populations?
- 3) What are the most promising practices and opportunities to revitalize the reading culture?**
- a. What are other DPs/GoP/Private Sector partners doing or have recently done to promote literacy and the reading culture?

III. STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A. Data Collection Methods

The study will use a snapshot mixed methods design. The research team will probe the outcomes and results as deeply as feasible within time and resource constraints. To facilitate analysis, the team will collect and report data in a way that enables disaggregation across multiple dimensions including, but not limited to, setting (urban/rural), age group, gender, socio-economic status (SES), mother tongue and region. The study will rely on both quantitative and qualitative evidence to answer the study questions and draw these data from both primary and secondary sources. Potential sources of secondary data include GoP, USAID, other DPs, researchers and other subject experts, relevant documents and literature, and/or government records/documentation.

The study expects to employ the following data collection methods.

Document review – The study team will collect and review all relevant documents from USAID, GoP, DPs, and other sources identified during the study. The relevant documents may include, but are not limited to, research/study reports, policy documents, articles and published/unpublished reports.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA) –Several of the above study questions will require more in-depth discussion with participants to probe fully. USAID anticipates the study team will organize 40 FGDs of 8-12 participants each to gather responses to these questions. Groups will represent different genders, ages, regions, and rural/urban settings in the five Pakistani provinces/territories of Punjab, AJK, Sindh, KP and Baluchistan. The selection of these provinces/territories is based on ensuring a representative selection of sociocultural diversity across Pakistan, within security constraints.

Four age groups were selected to represent children likely to be able to read (10-11 years), teenagers (15-16 years), youth who are not parents and are old enough to fall in the post-university bracket, and so are likely to be job seeking or working (23-25 years), and adults who are likely to be working and raising children (35-45 years). The FGDs of these age groups will further be divided by sex. All focus group questions will be asked of every FGD sub-group.

Some questions may best be answered using PRA. In this methodology, focus group participants are provided a specially designed grid to use in formulating a joint response to complex questions. This approach enables each individual’s response to be recorded while also capturing the larger trends across groups.

The following grid shows the FGD group organization in the selected provides/territories under selected age groups.

Sex	Age groups (Years)	Punjab		AJK	Sindh		KP		Balochistan	Total (40)
		Rural	Urban	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	
Female	10-11									4
	15-16									6
	23-25 (not parents)									6
	35-45 (parents)									4
Male	10-11									4
	15-16									6
	23-25 (not parents)									6
	35-45 (parents)									4

Survey – USAID requests that an orally administered questionnaire be used for certain questions. This survey will be administered to focus group participants and will provide descriptive statistics that, while not statistically representative of the larger population, provide an illustrative numeric description of characteristics and preferences within the sample group. These statistics will add a further layer of detail and understanding in interpreting the qualitative findings of the study. Certain questions lend themselves to a Likert scale format, while others may work better as multiple choice.

Biographic data will also be collected through this survey. In addition to yielding further insight into the biographical characteristics of the participants in the study, this data can potentially be used to draw insights from associations (if not statistically strong correlations) between certain demographic data and trends in responses. The biographic information collected will include gender, age (10-11 year, 15-16 year, 23-25 year [not parents], 35-45 year [parents]), setting (urban/rural), SES, mother tongue and

region. USAID requests the study team to use a simple method to determine the literacy ability (literate/not literate) for any focus group participant having attained less than a secondary level of education. Proxy indicators will be used to assess SES.

The survey will be orally administered enumerators who will record responses on a form. The instruments will be developed and administered in local languages to ensure the respondents understand all the questions well and respond to them accordingly.

Key Informant Interviews (KII) – The study requires information gathered from experts and other key stakeholders who are the most directly involved with the broader issues that a particular question seeks to explore. For these questions USAID anticipates the study team will conduct KIIs using an interview protocol and prompts to elicit relevant information from the interviewee. This question guide will be composed of open-ended questions that explore the challenges and barriers related to policy, planning, system, governance and implementation, particularly in the area of special needs education for literacy. Key informants could include researchers, relevant government department officials, DPs, the Ministry of Special Education officials and others as appropriate.

B. Data Analysis Methods

Qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods will be applied to process the gathered data. Quantitative data will be synthesized and reported in the form of descriptive statistics. Where possible, correlations or associations between qualitative and quantitative data will be identified and described. Qualitative data analysis will be used to identify patterns and themes in participant responses.

C. Methodological Strength and Limitations

This mixed method study will be helpful in exploring barriers to reading across diverse variables including age, province, gender, urban/rural setting and more. The use of a mixed method design including FGDs and PRA will allow in-depth information gathering on overall community behaviors, trends and issues. Methods such as KII and survey data collection will gather information specific to individuals, while also enabling the collection of detailed data from a limited number of subject area specialists and key stakeholders.

Since this study represents a snapshot of Pakistani society as represented by a limited stratified sub-set of the population, the sample is not fully representative of the diversity across Pakistan. The relatively small sample, which is a result of time and resource constraints, excludes rigorous analysis along certain highly relevant dimensions such as literacy level or SES because participants in the focus groups are not separated out along these variables. The sample also includes children of age 10-11 and children this young may struggle to understand and adequately respond to the questions posed during the focus group session; to mitigate this issue, USAID anticipates that primary school teachers may be recruited and trained to administer the survey to the children in this age bracket. Information gathered from parents or guardians about their own children's reading habits may be biased. Pakistanis over the age of 45 are omitted from this study; this age group lived during a period that some claim was more encouraging of reading as a habit, and the loss of their insights into this time is a significant limitation to the insight the study offers.

Not every province is represented in the sample as a result of the aforementioned constraints. The omission of a province was decided after comparison of socioeconomic conditions and cultural realities in each province; those that were dropped were found to be most similar to others of higher priority or feasibility owing to accessibility, security, strategic interest or other factors. The FGDs and PRA will

include both literate and illiterate participants that may limit participation of illiterate people who may not feel comfortable speaking up in front of their more educated peers.

D. Existing Data

The existing data includes education policy, government system and policy related documents, reports from UNICEF and UNESCO on reading culture, and IEQ documents for the potential RP related information. USAID/Pakistan will assist the study team to access these materials.

E. Study Process

The evaluation process consists of four main stages:

Stage 1: Initial planning and preparation by the study team (two weeks). The study team members will finalize the SOW in collaboration with USAID during a team planning meeting. Following USAID approval of the SOW, the study team will conduct a team planning workshop. The study team will identify and obtain key documentation and conduct a thorough desk review, with support from USAID as necessary. US-based study team members will review these documents from the U.S. before coming to Pakistan. The study team will conduct a workshop for training the enumerators and researchers on conducting FGDs, PRA and administering open ended questions through KII. The team will also develop the question guides for FGDs, PRA and open-ended questions for KII and the survey instrument and get them approved by USAID. Prior to beginning survey and other data collection, the study team will provide an in-brief to USAID and other key stakeholders detailing the evaluation approach and timeline at the end of week two.

Stage 2: FGDs, PRA, KII and survey data collection (three weeks). Following USAID approval of the instruments, the study team will begin to collect data over a two-week period. Key informant interviews, FGDs, PRA and survey all will be conducted simultaneously by two local researchers and 20 enumerators already trained by the study team. Two of these three weeks will be dedicated to data collection, while the third will be set aside for data cleaning.

Stage 3: Data analysis and reporting (10 weeks). Data analysis will begin immediately following data collection and carried out simultaneously for all data types; two weeks will be required for quantitative survey data analysis, while qualitative data analysis will require three weeks. Following completion of fieldwork and analysis, the study team will prepare and deliver a debriefing presentation to USAID. The study team will incorporate comments from the presentation(s) into a draft report. After a thorough technical review, the evaluation team will deliver the draft report to USAID and other stakeholders if appropriate for review and comment. Once the study team receives comments on the draft report, it will incorporate the comments, send the report to the study team home office for a final technical review, editing, and branding, and then deliver the final report to USAID at the end of week sixteen.

IV. TEAM COMPOSITION

A. Evaluation Team Positions and Skills

The contractor will hire a subcontractor for data collection and its own staff, which may include the following:

Contractor Team:

- **National/International Researchers:** The contractor will hire two national and two international researchers. National researchers for mainly collecting and supervising data collection and international researchers for data analysis. These researchers require expertise in applied research particularly focusing education. Experience in conducting researches related to reading would be an added value.
- **Supervisors:** The study team will need to hire two supervisors to supervise data collection through sub-contractor. The supervisors will need expertise in data collection and overseeing some data collection, particularly in the education field.

Sub-contractor team:

- **A Team Leader:** The leader of the evaluation team will require expertise in the areas of applied research particularly in education and preferably in reading. This expertise, in addition to a strong background in evaluation and research methods, will enable the team leader to fully comprehend the nuances of the questions and responses to be explored through this study. S/he also must have good oral and written communication skills. USAID considers this to be a key personnel position and must approve her/his selection.
- **Enumerators:** Total twenty enumerators would be required to collect data from five provinces using all the instruments in two weeks. The enumerators will need expertise in education data collection and having experience of dealing with different age groups and using different methods of data collection.

In addition to this study team and sub-contractor, the consultant will work closely with all the potential stakeholders, including USAID, implementing partners, beneficiaries (grantees), host government and others.

Disclosure of conflict of interest: All evaluation team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest, or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the project being evaluated.

V. EVALUATION MANAGEMENT

A. Logistics

In terms of logistics, this assignment requires inputs and actions from the evaluation partners as summarized below:

USAID/Pakistan

- The Program Office's Performance Management Unit (PMU) along with Education team will facilitate the preparation of the study SOW in accordance with USAID standards and good practices, review the instruments and the draft report, and provide technical inputs on the contractual matters.
- The education team will provide relevant information and, as required, visit field activities if possible and facilitate getting permission letters from the host government/school administration if/when required.

FGD, KII and Survey Participants

- The participants are expected to cooperate with the study team by providing data through surveys, meetings and/or interviews.

The Consulting Firm (MSI) and Sub-contractor (TBD)

- The consulting firm along with its sub-contractors will provide support for travel, lodging and other arrangements related to study team's work and will take the lead in scheduling meetings with participants to collect data.

B. Scheduling

The complete process, including finalization of the SOW, review of documents, developing survey and interview tools, data collection and analysis, and report writing and finalization will require approximately 16 weeks.

Activity	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12	W13	W14	W15	W16
Planning, document review	■															
Scheduling, instrument development, in-brief, KII (USAID), SOW finalization		■														
Data collection – survey, FGD, PRA and KII			■	■	■	■										
Researches reading notes						■										
Data analysis and debrief to USAID at the end of second week of analysis							■	■	■	■						
Draft report										■	■	■	■			
Review of draft report													■	■	■	
Revision of draft report after reviews															■	
Submission of final report																■

C. Budgeting

Tasks	Level of Effort (days - the consultant may propose additional staff)				
	National Researcher-I	National Researcher-II	International Researcher-I	International Researcher-II	Subcontractor
Planning, Document Review	5	5	5	5	
Scheduling, instrument development, in-brief, KII (USAID), SOW finalization	5	5	5	5	
Sub-contractor/enumerator training on tools					6
Data collection - survey	10	10			18
Field work – interviews, FGDs, PRA	10	10	15	15	18
Data analysis	5	5	15	15	
Initial findings debriefing	1	1	1	1	
Report writing	10	10	20	20	
Submission of draft report			1	1	
USAID review and comments	2	2	2	2	
Revisions/ home office review			2	2	
Final report submission to USAID			2	2	
Total	48	48	68	68	32

VI. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

A. Deliverables

1. Briefing(s) to USAID, if required other stakeholders regarding preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations after conclusion of fieldwork
2. Draft report to USAID
3. Final report to USAID
4. Power point Presentation
5. Two page briefer
6. Processed notes

B. Report Content

USAID/Pakistan anticipates the study report will follow to the extent possible the guidelines and standards stated in ADS 203.3.1.8 for documenting evaluations. The following structure is provided as guideline for the report.

The report will contain:

- Title page
- Table of Contents;
- Table of tables and figures;
- List of acronyms
- Acknowledgements or preface (optional);
- Program summary
- Map showing the location of program activities
- Executive summary, which will be 3-5 pages in length that summarizes key points (project purpose and background, key evaluation questions, methods, findings, etc.)
- Introductory chapter;
- The Development Problem and USAID's Response (1-3 pages): This section will describe the development problem USAID wants to address. This will include USAID's response to the problem, the development hypothesis and theory of change, results framework, and project implementation (including the current status of the project or activity);
- Purpose of the mid-term evaluation and evaluation questions (1-2 pages): This section will include the purpose of the Study and state all questions;
- Evaluation Design, Methodology and Limitations (1-3 pages): A written design which includes key questions, methods, main features of data collection instruments; an explanation of why these methods were chosen, with additional information in the annex as necessary; limitations of the methodology and how these have been accounted for; and data analysis plan;
- Findings and Conclusions: If there are a large number of findings, there will be a synthesis or summary of findings for each question that establishes the connection with the conclusions that follow.

- Recommendations
- References; and
- Annex
 - Evaluation Statement of Work
 - Evaluation Methods and Limitations
 - Data Collection Instruments
 - Bibliography of Documents Reviewed
 - List of individuals and agencies contacted and places visited
 - Meeting notes of all key meetings with stakeholders.
 - Disclosure of Any Conflicts of Interest
 - Statement of Differences (only if applicable)
 - Evaluation Team Bios

SOW Annex I: Table of Study Questions by Data Source, Collection, and Analysis Methodologies

Evaluation Question	Type of Answer/ Evidence	Data Collection		Sampling/Selection	Data Analysis Methods
		Method	Sources		
Q1: What are common attitudes and beliefs about reading?					
a: What attitudes do people hold toward reading?	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statistics; Quantitative analysis • Identification and description of trends and themes using qualitative coding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Focus Group Discussion 	Survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of sampled FGD participants Focus Group Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant community members sampled for discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of Focus Group Discussion and Survey participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency tables and cross-tabs of survey data, with disaggregation • Identification of trends and themes across data sources • Linking qualitative data to quantitative survey analyses to explain quantitative findings
b: What beliefs do people hold about reading?	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and description of trends and themes using qualitative coding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group Discussion 	Focus Group Discussion Relevant community members sampled for discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of Focus Group Discussion participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of trends and themes across data sources
Q2: What are the barriers to reading among different populations?					
a: What knowledge do people have about how to support others' reading?	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and description of trends and themes using qualitative coding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group Discussion 	Focus Group Discussion Relevant community members sampled for discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of Focus Group Discussion participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of trends and themes across data sources

Evaluation Question	Type of Answer/ Evidence	Data Collection		Sampling/Selection	Data Analysis Methods
		Method	Sources		
b: What is the frequency and source of material read?	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and description of trends and themes using qualitative coding • Descriptive statistics; identification and description of overall trends; objective assessment with respect to evaluation question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group Discussion • Participatory rapid assessment 	Focus Group Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant community members sampled for discussion Participatory Rapid Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRA of FGD participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of Focus Group Discussion/Participant Rapid Assessment participants 	Identification of trends and themes across data sources
c: What proportion is purchasing reading materials?	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statistics; Quantitative analysis • Identification and description of trends and themes using qualitative coding • Descriptive statistics; identification and description of overall trends; objective assessment with respect to evaluation question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Focus Group Discussion • Participatory rapid assessment 	Survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of sampled FGD participants Focus Group Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant community members sampled for discussion Participatory Rapid Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRA of FGD participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of Survey, Focus Group Discussion & Participant Rapid Assessment participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency tables and cross-tabs of survey data, with disaggregation • Identification of trends and themes across data sources • Linking qualitative data to quantitative survey analyses to explain quantitative findings

Evaluation Question	Type of Answer/ Evidence	Data Collection		Sampling/Selection	Data Analysis Methods
		Method	Sources		
d: What proportion report difficulty accessing reading materials nearby?	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statistics; Quantitative analysis • Descriptive statistics; identification and description of overall trends; objective assessment with respect to evaluation question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Participatory rapid assessment 	Survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of sampled FGD participants Participatory Rapid Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRA of FGD participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of Survey & Participant Rapid Assessment participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency tables and cross-tabs of survey data, with disaggregation • Identification of trends and themes across data sources • Linking qualitative data to quantitative survey analyses to explain quantitative findings
e: What are the most popular and trusted sources of information?	Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and description of trends and themes using qualitative coding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group Discussion 	Focus Group Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant community members sampled for discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of Focus Group Discussion participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of trends and themes across data sources
f: Disabilities and special learning needs – where are there gaps to fill and how great is the need for services?	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective assessment with respect to evaluation question, with illustrative examples • Identification and description of overall trends, with illustrative examples; Objective assessment with respect to evaluation question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review • Key informant interviews (open ended questions) 	Literature review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program data records • Published/unpublished researches and reports Key informant interview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers, relevant GOP, DP, private sector officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of Key Informant Interview participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of trends and themes across data sources

Evaluation Question	Type of Answer/ Evidence	Data Collection		Sampling/Selection	Data Analysis Methods
		Method	Sources		
Q3: What are the most promising practices and opportunities to revitalize the reading culture?					
b: What are other DPs/GOP/private sector partners doing (or what have they recently done) to promote the reading culture?	Descriptive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective assessment with respect to evaluation question, with illustrative examples • Identification and description of overall trends, with illustrative examples; Objective assessment with respect to evaluation question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review • Key informant interviews 	Literature review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program data records • Published/unpublished researches and reports Key informant interview: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant GOP, DP, private sector officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposive/ Convenience sampling for selection of key informant interview participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of trends and themes across data sources

SOW Annex 2: Reporting Guidelines

According to ADS 203.3.1.8 (Documenting Evaluations), evaluation reports must meet the criteria below. USAID/Pakistan expects these principles to be respected to the extent possible within research studies and resulting reports:

1. Evaluation reports must represent a thoughtful, well-researched, and well-organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not work, and why.
2. Evaluation reports must address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work. The evaluation report should include the evaluation statement of work as an annex. The technical officer (who is the COR when the evaluation is conducted by a contractor) must agree upon, in writing, all modifications to the statement of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline.
3. Evaluation methodology must be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists, and discussion guides will be included in an annex in the final report.
4. When evaluation findings address outcomes and impact, they must be assessed on males and females.
5. Limitations to the evaluation must be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
6. Evaluation findings must be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay, or simply the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise, and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
7. Sources of information must be properly identified and listed in an annex.
8. Recommendations must be supported by a specific set of findings and should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action

SOW Annex 3: Illustrative Instrument Questions

Q1: What are common attitudes and beliefs about reading?

1) What attitudes do people hold toward reading?

- a. Rate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. When I read, it's because: A. it's necessary for my studies or work. B. it will improve my language skills. C. I want to be informed about news and other developments. D. it's fun and relaxing. E. other (explain)
- b. What factors or influences contributed to your development of reading skills? (for those who can read)
- c. What factors or influences led you to adopt a reading habit? (for those who choose to read)

2) What beliefs do people hold about reading?

- a. What conditions do people believe are necessary for children to learn to read?
- b. How does religious outlook influence beliefs about reading, if at all?

Q2: What are the barriers to reading among different populations?

1) What knowledge do people have about how to support others' reading?

- a. If you have people in your life who are learning how to read, what do you do, if anything, to help them develop their reading skills?
- b. What do you do, if at all, to encourage others in your life to read regularly?

2) What is the frequency and source of material read?

- a. How often do you access material of each type (social networking, online news, other websites, e-books or magazines, audio books, podcasts, religious books, fiction books, non-fiction books, printed magazines, printed newspapers) - daily, several times a week, several times a month, once a month, several times a year, once a year, less than once a year?
- b. What are the reasons why you don't read books for pleasure more frequently?

3) What proportion is purchasing reading materials?

- a. How often do you purchase reading materials that are not required for your (or your family member's) schoolwork?
- b. Do you find the price affordable for the following: smart phone with data plan, access to computer with internet, printed newspaper, printed magazine, printed book?
- c. What are the main reasons that would lead you to decide to purchase (or not purchase) reading material not required for schoolwork?

4) What proportion report difficulty accessing reading materials nearby?

- a. Is there a library within easy access of your home? If so, how often do you visit?

- b. In your community, is there a place that sells or otherwise makes the following available: data plan for smart phone, computer with internet, printed newspaper, printed magazine, printed book
- c. How many books do you have at home?

5) What are the most popular and trusted sources of information?

- a. What types of people (excluding your family) do you trust to share important information with you?
- b. What types of media do you access the most?
- c. What do you do to find out about opportunities or upcoming events?
- d. What do you do to get news or information that could be helpful to you?

6) Disabilities and special learning needs – where are there gaps to fill and how great is the need for services?

- a. What policies, laws, funding and educational resources are available to support literacy for people with hearing or sight impairments?
- b. What is the capacity in Pakistan to provide appropriate reading materials to people with sight impairments?
- c. What resources exist to train teachers or parents to support the literacy of children with dyslexia, dysgraphia, ADHD and other learning disabilities?

Q3: What are the most promising practices and opportunities to revitalize the reading culture?

1) What are other DPs/GOP/Private Sector doing or have recently done to promote the reading culture?

- a. Which efforts seem to have been most successful? What contributed to their success?

Date	Province	City	Participants Age Group and Gender	Venue and Public/Private Segregation	Exact Location
20-Oct-14	KP	Mardan	Participant Age (15-16) Students of 9th-10th Grade (Female)	Government Girls High School no 1 (Public)	College Chowk, Main Mardan Road, Mardan
20-Oct-14	KP	Mardan	Participant Age (23-25) University Graduates (Male)	Abdul Khan University (Law Department)	College Chowk, Main Mardan Road, Mardan
20-Oct-14	KP	Mardan	Participant Age (23-25) University Graduates (Female)	Abdul Khan University (Law Department)	College Chowk, Main Mardan Road, Mardan
20-Oct-14	Sindh	Jamshoro	Participant Age (15-16) Students of 9th-10th Grade (Male)	Government Boys Higher Secondary School (Public)	Sindh University Colony, Jamshoro
20-Oct-14	Sindh	Jamshoro	Participant Age (15-16) Students of 9th-10th Grade (Female)	Government Girls Higher Secondary School (Public)	Sindh University Colony, Jamshoro
20-Oct-14	Sindh	Jamshoro	Participant Age (35-45) Parents (Male)	Government Boys Higher Secondary School	Sindh University Colony, Jamshoro
20-Oct-14	Sindh	Jamshoro	Participant Age (35-45) Parents (Female)	Government Girls High Secondary School	Sindh University Colony, Jamshoro
20-Oct-14	Punjab	Lahore	Participant Age (10-11) Students of 4-5th Grade (Male)	OAK Grammar School (Private)	Nawaz Chowk, Bahrian, Township, Lahore
20-Oct-14	Punjab	Lahore	Participant Age (10-11) Students of 4-5th Grade (Female)	OSWA Grammar School (Private)	Bahrian, Township, Lahore
20-Oct-14	Punjab	Lahore	Participant Age (23-25) University Graduates (Male)	AFC Restaurant	Muskeen Pura Stop, Jehangir Road, Near Faysal Bank, Mughulpura, Lahore
20-Oct-14	Punjab	Lahore	Participant Age (23-25) University Graduates (Female)	AFC Restaurant	Muskeen Pura Stop, Jehangir Road, Near Faysal Bank, Mughulpura, Lahore
21-Oct-14	KP	Peshawar	Substitute Fgd - Students of 9th-10th Grade (Male) - Rural	Ahmad Public High School (Public)	Ahmad Public High School, GT Road, Taru Jaba, Peshawar
21-Oct-14	KP	Peshawar	Participant Age (15-16) Students of 9th-10th Grade (Female)	Salam Education Academy (Private)	Near Jaabir Flats, Abdara Road, Peshawar
21-Oct-14	KP	Peshawar	Participant Age (15-16) Students of 9th-10th Grade (Male)	Alfarooq High School (Private)	PCS Board Tajabad, behind Deens complex opposite Railway line, Jamraud Road, Peshawar
21-Oct-14	KP	Peshawar	Participant Age (23-25) University Graduates (Male)	Boys Hostel Agriculture University, Peshawar	Agriculture University, Peshawar
21-Oct-14	KP	Peshawar	Participant Age (23-25) University Graduates	Girls Hostel Agriculture University,	Agriculture University, Peshawar

Date	Province	City	Participants Age Group and Gender	Venue and Public/Private Segregation	Exact Location
			(Female)	Peshawar	
21-Oct-14	Sindh	Karachi	Participant Age (15-16) Students of 9th-10th Grade (Male)	Ghazali Public School (Private)	Block 'F', Ziauddin Hospital Road, Behind Hyderi Market, North Nazimabad, Karachi
21-Oct-14	Sindh	Karachi	Participant Age (15-16) Students of 9th-10th Grade (Female)	Ghazali Public School (Private)	Block 'F', Ziauddin Hospital Road, Behind Hyderi Market, North Nazimabad, Karachi
21-Oct-14	Sindh	Karachi	Participant Age (35-45) Parents (Male)	Ghazali Public School	Block 'F', Ziauddin Hospital Road, Behind Hyderi Market, North Nazimabad, Karachi
21-Oct-14	Sindh	Karachi	Participant Age (35-45) Parents (Female)	Ghazali Public School	Block 'F', Ziauddin Hospital Road, Behind Hyderi Market, North Nazimabad, Karachi
22-Oct-14	Punjab	Multan	Participant Age (10-11) Students of 4-5th Grade (Male)	Government. Muslim (Primary) High School (Public)	Nishtar Road, Multan
22-Oct-14	Punjab	Multan	Participant Age (10-11) Students of 4-5th Grade (Female)	Government Iqbal Girls High School (Public)	Hussain Agahi, Multan
22-Oct-14	Punjab	Multan	Participant Age (23-25) University Graduates (Male)	Scout Regional Headquarters	Qalma Chowk, Multan
22-Oct-14	Punjab	Multan	Participant Age (23-25) University Graduates (Female)	Scout Regional Headquarters	Qalma Chowk, Multan
23-Oct-14	Balochistan	Quetta	Participant Age (10-11) 4-5th Grade (Male)	Government Boys Primary School, Rahim Gul Balelli (Public)	Rahim Gul Balelli, Quetta
23-Oct-14	Balochistan	Quetta	Participant Age (10-11) 4-5th Grade (Female)	Government Girls Primary School, Rahim Gul Balelli (Public)	Rahim Gul Balelli, Quetta
23-Oct-14	Balochistan	Quetta	Participant Age (35-45) Parents (Male)	Amiri Tajmahal Marriage Hall.	Block One, Street Number 6, Hazara Town, Quetta
23-Oct-14	Balochistan	Quetta	Participant Age (35-45) Parents (Female)	Amiri Tajmahal Marriage Hall.	Block One, Street Number 6, Hazara Town, Quetta
23-Oct-14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	Participant Age (15-16) 9-10th Grade Students (Male)	Government Boys High School (Public)	Miani Bandi, Muzaffarabad, AJK
23-Oct-14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	Participant Age (15-16) 9-10th Grade Students (Female)	Government Girls High School (Public)	Miani Bandi, Muzaffarabad, AJK
23-Oct-14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	Participant Age (35-45) Parents (Male)	Village Airport	Muzaffarabad, AJK

Date	Province	City	Participants Age Group and Gender	Venue and Public/Private Segregation	Exact Location
23-Oct-14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	Participant Age (35-45) Parents (Female)	Village Airport	Muzaffarabad, AJK
24-Oct-14	Balochistan	Quetta	Participant Age (15-16) 9th-10th Grade (Male) - Urban	British Private School & Academy-Boys Section (Private)	Sariab Road, Quetta
24-Oct-14	Balochistan	Quetta	Participant Age (15-16) 9th-10th Grade (Female) - Urban	British Private School & Academy-Girls Section (Private)	Sariab Road, Quetta
24-Oct-14	Balochistan	Quetta	Participant Age (23-25) Graduates (Male) - Urban	Balochistan University	Brewery Road, Quetta
24-Oct-14	Balochistan	Quetta	Participant Age (23-25) Graduates (Female) - Urban	Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University	Brewery Road, Quetta
24-Oct-14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	Participant Age (10-11) 4-5th Grade (Male) - Urban	Bright Future Model School - Private	Near Zero Point, Muzaffarabad, AJK
24-Oct-14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	Participant Age (10-11) 4-5th Grade (Female) - Urban	Bright Future Model School - Private	Zero Point, Muzaffarabad, AJK
24-Oct-14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	Participant Age (23-25) Graduates (Male) - Urban	Sangam Hotel near Domial	Muzaffarabad, AJK
24-Oct-14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	Participant Age (23-25) Graduates (Female) - Urban	Sangam Hotel near Domial	Muzaffarabad, AJK

Annex 2: FGD Data Collection Tool

Identifying Barriers to Reading in Pakistan (IBRP)

A Special Study

Focus Group Discussion Protocol

(Age groups: 10-12 years and 15-16 years)

FGD Group Male; Female

Location (city) _____

Date _____

Moderator _____

Note-taker _____

Facilitation:

Research team: 1 moderator, and 1 note-taker.

1. Introductions and informed consent

Assalam-o-alaikum, thank you for coming here today. We are grateful that you are giving us your time.

Before we begin, we will introduce ourselves. [The moderator and the note-taker should introduce themselves]

We work for an organization called Management Systems International and we are here to conduct research on the reading habits of Pakistanis in different parts of the country, as well as explore the barriers to increasing reading in Pakistan. We are interested in your ideas and opinions so that any projects designed to increase reading in the community will have your input.

However, you should know that neither this research nor your answers to our questions will in any way determine if a project will be implemented here. The benefit of this research is to ensure that any project that does get implemented, are designed well and with local people's input.

This focus group discussion will take about 2 hours. We have {these items} for you in order to make your participation more comfortable.

We would like to audio record these discussions and take notes. The recordings and the notes will not be shared with anyone outside the research team and your names will be kept confidential. We hope this makes you feel comfortable to express your ideas freely.

Your participation in this discussion is voluntary and so if you do not feel comfortable, then you are welcome to excuse yourself at any time during the research.

Do you have any questions?

Do you agree to participate and allow us to record the conversations?

Thank you.

2. Introduction of the activities

In this step, the facilitators will describe exactly what activities will be done over the course of the next two to two hours.

We are going to ask you to do three things with us today. The first is to draw a map of your community, and some of the different people and places that are in it. We will guide you through the process of drawing the map by asking some specific questions about where certain things are. So don't worry, you do not need to be an artist to draw the map.

Second, we will ask you to use the map to tell us about the barriers to reading in your community.

Then last, we will ask you for ideas about how to increase reading in your community.

3. Mapping places and people

In this step, group members will begin constructing their map.

Materials: Flip chart-size paper, colored markers or chalk/white board with colored chalk/white board markers. A dirt floor with branches, leaves and stones also works.

The map should be drawn using three different colors: one for drawing/identifying places (Part 1), one for drawing/identifying people (Part 2), and one for drawing/identifying reading culture (Part 3).

Now, we would like two volunteers to help draw the map. You don't need to be an artist, but you should feel comfortable drawing with markers.

Ok, we are going to use three colors to draw this map. We're going to start with Blue (or any other color) to draw the places

Part 1: Constructing the map: Places	
Questions	Prompts & Probes
1. Draw the approximate boundaries of the community and the primary landmarks and roads.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roads, waterways, and other major landmarks.
2. Where are the public places found in the community? For example, where the ...(probes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools, libraries, health clinics, recreation centers, transportation hubs.
3. Where are the places where people gather, such as...(probes)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mosques, community centers, markets, parks/squares, laundry areas, mills, and other social spaces where people typically gather together.
4. Where are the areas where people work, such as... (probes)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Farms, mines, shops, restaurants.• Make sure they include those that sell books, newspapers, or other reading

	materials.
5. Any other important places to identify on the map that we haven't talked about yet?	

Now we're going to identify where people live and gather. Let's use the color Green (or any other color different from the previous).

Part 2: Constructing the map: People	
Questions	Prompts & Probes
6. a) Identify the places where people live? b) Identify the different social groups found in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask about different social groups based on the following (and let the group define them): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ different ethnicities ○ different religions and sub-sects, ○ amount of education, ○ rich and poor
7. Where are the places where people gather together?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask about both common gathering places and monthly or annual events. • Ask about characteristics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ gender ○ age ○ religion ○ ethnicity ○ education ○ rich and poor
8. Where or from whom do most people get information, such as news, announcements, and events?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask about the following sources for both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Neighbors/friends ○ Religious leaders ○ Politicians ○ Teachers ○ Parents ○ Books, newspapers, magazines ○ Television ○ Internet web sites
9. a) Who are the most influential members of the community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that influence in this case means those who have the power to change people's minds or behavior in the community. • Suggest teachers, politicians, Imams, others?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the most influential on children (besides their parents), and who is most influential on adults.
--	--

Now we're going to identify the reading culture. Let's use the color Red (or any other color different from the two previous).

Part 3: Identifying Reading Culture	
Questions	Prompts & Probes
10. Where in the community are there printed reading materials like books, magazines, and newspapers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to places identified already on the map, and ask if there are books in places that have not yet been drawn on the map. For each place, identify which groups of people visit them.
11. Look at the places where people gather: Are there spaces where people gather to read or talk about things they've read?	
12. Look at the different groups of people we've identified (from Q6): Of these groups, who are the "readers" and "non-readers?" Perhaps some of the groups are "mixed."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important step: Identify the different "reader," "non-reader" and "mixed" groups from those on the map. Allow members to define "readers" and "non-readers." If members say that everyone reads because everyone reads the Quran or Bible, then ask them to identify non-reader groups as those who only read these things and nothing else. By defining groups this way, there may be new groups to add to the map.
13. Who has access to smart phones with data plans, such as iPhone, Samsung, or HTC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May need to explain what a smart phone is...a phone with Internet. For what purpose are these used? Differentiate by group.
14. Who has access to computers with internet?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For what purpose are these used? Differentiate by group.

4. Barriers to Reading

In this step, FGD members are asked to use the map to identify existing barriers to reading.

On a separate sheet of flip chart paper, list the barriers as they are discussed below.

Barriers to Reading	Prompts & Probes
1. Look at the current locations of books and other reading materials in the community: Who has the most and least access to books?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the different social groups and identify the reasons why access is high or low, such as location, money, attitudes, or beliefs.
2. Look again at the current locations of books and other reading materials in the community: a) Which are the most/least affordable. b) Which are the most/least useful.	
3. Look at the groups that were identified as “readers.” Ask what are the reasons why people in these groups read.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine location, gender, religion, attitudes/beliefs, wealth/poverty, and education as potential factors.
4. Look at the group that were identified as “mixed.” Ask what are the reasons why some people in this group read while others don’t.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine location, gender, religion, attitudes/beliefs, wealth/poverty, and education as potential factors.
5. Look at the group that were identified as “non-readers.” Ask what are the reasons why people in this group do not read.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine location, gender, religion, attitudes/beliefs, wealth/poverty, and education as potential factors
6. Are there people who know how to read, but don’t read very much or at all? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguish here between literacy (knowing how to read) and actually reading. Ask why so many people know how to read, but don’t read for pleasure.
7. Do you know any students with special needs? If yes, do they get any special services to help them with reading?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special needs includes people with physical impairments (hearing, vision, physical handicap), dyslexia, dysgraphia, ADHD, and other learning disabilities). Special services might include extra teachers, books in Braille, hearing

	aids, wheel chairs and ramps.
8. Are there any other barriers to reading that we haven't discussed yet?	

5. Addressing Barriers

In this final step, FGD members will be asked to design an initiative to address the identified barriers to reading and increase the number of readers in the community, both children and adults.

Please take a look at your map now. You have provided a lot of information about your community. Your task now is to tell us some of your ideas about how to increase the number of readers in your community. We understand that the lack of access to books may be one of the biggest barriers to reading, but we also want to know what would motivate people to want to read books if they were available. We want to know what kind of books you would include in your project, as well as which social institutions and community members would help the most.

Use the map to explain your ideas.

Addressing Barriers to Reading	Prompts & Probes
1. First, let's list some of the benefits of reading? Why is reading important?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic benefits (doing well in school)? • Personal benefits (relaxation, creativity)? • Political benefits (being an informed voter)? • Social benefits (reading with others, shared knowledge and experience)? • Economic benefits (employment)?
2. How can access to books and other reading materials be improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on those with the least access to books. • Look at all the different groups of people: Which solutions would suit each group best? • Are there solutions in addition to increasing the number of libraries or bookstores?
3. a) What is necessary to have in the community for CHILDREN to motivate them to read more often, or to learn to read? b) What is necessary to have in the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a) and b): Focus on increasing MOTIVATION: What will make people WANT to learn to read, or read more often, or buy books just read for pleasure or self-improvement.

<p>community for ADULTS to motivate them to read more often, or to learn to read?</p> <p>c) What is necessary to have in the community to help those who want to learn to read or improve their reading skills?</p> <p>d) What is necessary to have in the community to help those who want to teach others to read?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For c): Focus on what resources are necessary in addition to libraries and booksellers. • For d): Focus here on the process of learning to read and the teaching of reading (If you wanted to teach someone else to read, what would you need?)
<p>4. How can the number of readers in the “non-reader” and “mixed” groups be increased?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review specific barriers for each group (location, gender, religion, attitudes/beliefs, wealth, age, and education) • Are there priority groups? • Is it possible for one group to assist another? • Which influencers are key? • Which sources of information are key? • Why are there some who know how to read, but do not read anyway?
<p>5. Let’s look back at our list (from Q1) of the benefits of reading: did we address all of them in our solutions?</p>	
<p>6. Let’s now look back at our list of barriers to reading (from section 4): Did we address all of them?</p>	
<p>7. Reflection on map:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Do you think this map is accurate? Why or why not? Was there anything surprising about the map you drew? Was there anything we missed or forgot to put on the map that is important to the reading culture here in the community? 	<p>This is an opportunity not only to reflect on the map, but also document any alternative or opposing perspectives that may not have been voiced.</p>

Annex 3: Survey Tool

Identifying Barriers to Reading in Pakistan

Focus Group Member Survey

FGD Group Male; Female

Survey Serial # _____

Location (city) _____

Date _____

Moderator _____

Note-taker _____

1	What is your age?	_____ (write in years)
2	What kind of setting do you live in?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Urban b. <input type="checkbox"/> Rural
3	What language do you speak at home?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Pashto b. <input type="checkbox"/> Punjabi/Siraiki c. <input type="checkbox"/> Sindhi d. <input type="checkbox"/> Balochi/Barohi e. <input type="checkbox"/> Urdu f. <input type="checkbox"/> Shina g. <input type="checkbox"/> English h. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (indicate): _____
4	How many years of education do you have?	a. _____ (write in # of years)
5	(Only for children groups) What language is used most often at your school? <i>(Mark all that apply)</i>	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Pashto b. <input type="checkbox"/> Punjabi/Siraiki c. <input type="checkbox"/> Sindhi d. <input type="checkbox"/> Balochi/Barohi e. <input type="checkbox"/> Urdu f. <input type="checkbox"/> Shina g. <input type="checkbox"/> English h. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (indicate): _____
6	(Only for children groups) Do you have a library at your school?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes b. <input type="checkbox"/> No
7	(Only for children groups) Do you have reading materials in your classroom other than textbooks?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> No b. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes c. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know
8	Do you have a library near where you live (NOT including a school library)?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes b. <input type="checkbox"/> No

9	At your house, do you have:	No	Yes	Don't Know		
a	a radio ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
b	a telephone or mobile phone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
c	electricity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
d	a television?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
e	a computer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
f	Internet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
g	a refrigerator?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
h	a motorcycle ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
i	a car or 4 by 4?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
j	Do you (or your parents) own the place you live in?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
10	Do you have reading materials at home besides school books? <i>[If No or Don't Know Skip to Q13]</i>	a. <input type="checkbox"/> No b. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know				
11	Which type of reading material do you have at home? <i>(Tick all that apply)</i>	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper b. <input type="checkbox"/> Magazines c. <input type="checkbox"/> Books d. <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Books e. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (indicate): _____ f. <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know				
12	Where did the books in your house come from? <i>(Tick all that apply)</i>	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Library or borrowed b. <input type="checkbox"/> Purchased c. <input type="checkbox"/> Family members d. <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors or friends e. <input type="checkbox"/> Parents always had them f. <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know				
13	When I read, it's because: <i>(Tick the top 3 reasons.)</i>	a. <input type="checkbox"/> It's necessary for my studies or work. b. <input type="checkbox"/> For religious study. c. <input type="checkbox"/> I want to be informed. d. <input type="checkbox"/> My parents (or other household members) make me. e. <input type="checkbox"/> It's fun, entertaining, or relaxing.				
14	How often do you access the following materials:	daily	weekly	monthly	yearly	never/ almost never

a	social networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	online news	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	e-books or e-magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f	religious books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g	fiction books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h	non-fiction books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	printed newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j	printed magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	How often do you or your household members purchase reading materials other than school books?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	How often do you or your household members borrow reading materials from a library/store?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	How often do you read for pleasure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Does anyone read aloud to you at home?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> No b. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes				
19	Do you practice reading aloud to someone at home?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> No b. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes				
20	Can your mother read and write?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> No b. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes c. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know				
23	Can your father read and write?	3. <input type="checkbox"/> No 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know				

Annex 4: Semi-structured Interview Tool

Identifying Barriers to Reading in Pakistan (IBRP)

A Special Study

Semi-Structured Interview

Date _____ Name of Interviewer _____

Position _____ Gender: M F

Location _____

1. Introduction and informed consent:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us today. We know you are busy so we are grateful for your time.

My name is _____ and I work for Management Systems International. We are conducting research on reading in Pakistan on behalf of USAID, which is assisting the Government to improve early grade reading achievement throughout the country. In particular, our study is focused on describing the existing reading culture in different communities, and the barriers to reading for all, and not just children in school. By reading culture, I mean the variety of attitudes, beliefs, and practices that Pakistani's have regarding reading not only for school and work, but for all aspects of life, including reading for pleasure.

This interview should take about 45 minutes to an hour. In our report, your name will not appear, nor will we quote you or attribute any information directly to you without your expressed permission first. Your participation is completely voluntary, and so if you choose now or at any time to withdraw from the study, your decision will be honored without consequence. I do hope that you will do the full interview with me, however, because you have an important perspective on our topic.

Do you have any questions about our study before we begin?

- 1. How long have you been in this position?**
- 2. What position did you have prior to this one?**
- 3. Tell us about some of the practices around reading that people hold today in this region. For instance:**
 - a. To what extent are people reading for pleasure?**
 - b. To what extent do people gather to read together or talk about things they've read?**
 - c. To what extent are parents reading to their children?**

- d. **To what extent is there pride in or knowledge about Pakistani literature or contemporary writers?**
 - e. **What is the role of religion in the reading culture of today?**
 - f. **In what ways have schools had an impact on reading culture in Pakistan?**
 - g. **Of the practices you've described, what variations have you observed across different groups of people in Pakistan?** (Probe for class, ethnicity, religious sect, geography...)
4. **In what ways have reading practices changed over the last 10 to 20 years?**
 5. **What are the biggest challenges in attempting to improve reading culture in this region?**
 - **Probe for:**
 - Gender
 - Cultural norms
 - Poverty
 - Government Resources
 - Parents
 - Religion
 6. **In what ways has the ministry/your organization supported reading recently in Pakistan?**
 - **Probe for:**
 - Financial support/budget allocation
 - Policies
 - Training
 - Technical support
 - Sector planning
 - Support for adults?
 - Support for people with special needs/disabilities?
 - Support for “reading culture?”
 7. **What reading projects or initiatives are you currently managing for your region or section?**
 8. **What support do you currently have to address barriers to reading culture?**
 - **Probe for:**
 - Sources of support
 - Collaborations
 - Cross-sector integration
 - 18th Amendment (decentralization) impacts on programming
 9. **What additional support do you wish you had to improve reading culture?**
 - **What would you do with this support?**

- 10. Of the projects and initiatives to support reading that you are familiar with, what aspects have been successful? Why?**
- 11. Of the projects and initiatives to support reading that you are familiar with, what aspects have been unsuccessful? Why?**
- 12. Is there anything else we should know about improving reading culture that we haven't discussed?**

Annex 5: Frequency of Access to Reading Materials

How often do you access the following materials?																									
Material	Daily					Weekly					Monthly					Yearly					Never/Almost Never				
	TOT	Prim.	Sec.	Univ.	Par.	TOT	Prim.	Sec.	Univ.	Par.	TOT	Prim.	Sec.	Univ.	Par.	TOT	Prim.	Sec.	Univ.	Par.	TOT	Prim.	Sec.	Univ.	Par.
Social Networking	29%	5%	23%	57%	23%	13%	6%	14%	21%	6%	9%	1%	13%	13%	3%	3%	0%	5%	2%	1%	44%	82%	44%	5%	62%
Online News	32%	9%	33%	54%	21%	32%	6%	17%	27%	3%	3%	1%	5%	4%	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%	1%	45%	78%	42%	12%	69%
E-books/E-magazines	11%	1%	11%	21%	10%	15%	5%	15%	26%	7%	9%	0%	9%	18%	7%	3%	0%	5%	4%	0%	57%	88%	58%	27%	70%
Religious Books	38%	33%	42%	38%	32%	24%	26%	28%	22%	20%	19%	19%	20%	23%	11%	6%	1%	4%	11%	6%	11%	15%	6%	4%	27%
Fiction Books	4%	4%	5%	4%	3%	18%	29%	22%	13%	3%	17%	9%	23%	21%	10%	7%	0%	6%	17%	3%	49%	53%	39%	40%	76%
Non-fiction Books	5%	3%	7%	6%	4%	11%	12%	14%	13%	4%	8%	1%	8%	16%	3%	7%	0%	9%	13%	1%	60%	77%	54%	44%	79%
Printed Newspapers	33%	9%	30%	56%	28%	21%	17%	26%	22%	17%	10%	12%	11%	10%	10%	2%	3%	2%	2%	0%	30%	54%	30%	8%	41%
Printed Magazines	11%	3%	12%	13%	14%	23%	12%	27%	32%	13%	18%	12%	17%	29%	10%	4%	3%	6%	4%	1%	39%	65%	33%	18%	55%

Annex 6: Analysis of Promising Projects

Project Name	Project Type					Target Population					Geographic Area	Project Approach							
	Reading	Literacy	Libraries	Advocacy	Schooling	Girls/Women	Children	Young Adults	Adults	Hard-to-reach		Media/Internet	Participatory	Mobility	Access	Affordability	Languages	Pedagogy	Relevance
Children library Complex	✓		✓				✓		✓		Punjab	✓			✓	✓			
JICA Literacy Project	✓					✓	✓				Punjab				✓	✓		✓	
Pak Tea House	✓	✓							✓		Punjab					✓			✓
Sim Sim Hamara (Pakistan Sesame Street)				✓			✓	✓	✓		Pakistan	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Private Libraries			✓				✓	✓	✓		Pakistan						✓		
The Library Challenge			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		AJK and KPK		✓						
Education Morning	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		Sindh	✓					✓		
The Bookgroup			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		Pakistan					✓			✓
Pakistan Libraries Project (PLP):			✓			✓	✓	✓			Pakistan				✓				
Read Foundation	✓	✓					✓				Pakistan						✓		
Books for Asia:	✓					✓	✓				Pakistan		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
National Book Foundation	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		Pakistan			✓	✓				
Books on Wheels	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		KPK			✓	✓				
Read Room Project:	✓				✓		✓				Pakistan	✓							
Alif Laila:	✓						✓				Pakistan			✓	✓				
Bunyard Foundation:		✓					✓				Punjab	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Allama Iqbal Open University -FM			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		Lahore & Karachi	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Virtual University			✓								Pakistan	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Geo TV Zara Sochiye (Alif Bay Pay Yaqeen)				✓			✓	✓	✓		Pakistan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alif Ailaan			✓				✓	✓	✓		Pakistan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sudhar	✓							✓	✓		Punjab		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Khoj		✓					✓	✓	✓		Punjab		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adult Basic Education Society		✓					✓	✓	✓		Punjab		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Urdu Science Board:	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		Pakistan					✓			
Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL)	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		Pakistan					✓			