

Conference Paper

People Habitus and Sustainability Through Reading Literature After the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract.

The world has suffered from COVID-19 since 2020. The high rate of death happens everywhere. In addition, nearly all sectors of life have been destroyed, which leads to chaotic situations. Suddenly people have to be able to survive in many ways. Not only must they get through death, but mentally as well. It is the moment when people express how they feel in literary works to balance their emotions with their mental states. This paper aims to describe the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on particular social groups through reading literary works, and how these literary works can positively change people who survived when the pandemic occurred. Qualitative research is the method used in this paper. On employing Habitus theory from Pierre Bordieu on selected fields, media, and practices, we found that some people tend to read literature more during pandemics. They choose the pandemic topic, neither the classic nor the newest literature readings. Having read specific readings, they find salvation and form a sense of hope in dealing with the outbreak. This paper results that through rigorous literature reading, habitus is formed to ensure sustainability post-pandemic (COVID-19).

Keywords: habitus, sustainability, reading literature, post-pandemic

1. Introduction

The new and unexpected global threat prompted by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic posed a grave international public health challenge unlike any other in recent history. Declared an acute and extreme concern by the World Health Organization in January 2020, the disease impeded Sustainability with severe implications for social life. The pandemic originated in November 2019 in Wuhan, China, and rapidly spread worldwide [1].

Significant changes that must be passed by the community form a culture of surprise where people who usually meet each other because of COVID-19 require people not to go out, gather and do activities outside the home. The existence of these differences has an impact on the psychology of some individuals.

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Changes in human activities certainly have an impact on human health conditions, both mental and physical. The big problem is that many people do not pay much attention to their mental or spiritual health, so many experiences decreased immunity due to poor mental conditions. Recreation is one of the spiritual needs of humans. One way to stabilize our mental health is to continue meeting human spiritual needs. In this case, literature has a massive portion of the influence on human spiritual needs. Through literary works, which today are pretty easily accessible, it may become a weapon for people affected by the pandemic to seek entertainment as one of their spiritual needs.

Before the outbreak, reading literature, as if, only belonged to some social levels. Not only literary text, any text that is considered interestingly important for some people in the higher capital culture level as, since 2020, the habitus of readings, including literary reading has changed as well.

A research paper which focuses on social group reading literature, those who have a key role to play in creating a sustainable future, can hold lessons for all; A few countries might find the present paper informative with regard to their own research interests around social groups habits and lives in this era of multiple crises. reading habits to a global perspective; the impact of digitalization is now common across most of the countries around the world. Within Europe, there is currently a rising interest in a reading habit. Reading is the key topic of a large number of different surveys throughout Europe. The Norwegian Publishers Association noted a decline in readers' interest in fiction globally in 2020 but also broader sociological and cultural studies—show a noticeable trend towards efforts to develop and highlight a discourse and a comprehensive overview of the development of reading across Spain, Turkey, and some European countries where reading is strongly supported, show an increase in leisure reading, by putting reading habits of people at the core of the social investment agenda through reading literature.

1.1. Who reads literature?

The Norwegian Publishers Association noted a decline in readers' interest in fiction globally in 2020. However, some countries, such as Spain, Turkey, and some European countries where reading is strongly supported, show an increase in leisure reading. While Mexico and Norway have seen a decline. In several other countries, like Sweden, we witness a considerable trend in favor of the digital format. Given that older readers tend to be the most devoted readers and that women typically read more than men do, the correlation between gender, age, and reading is an intriguing discovery. In some

countries, like Brazil, Thailand, and Spain, reading ability declines with age, whereas in others, like France, Canada, Norway, Denmark, and Iceland, it increases [2].

Some of these groups fit into higher socioeconomic categories when it comes to their position in society. According to an article from The Guardian, a poll may reveal a significant class disparity in reading preferences. As an example, in Europe Higher socioeconomic groups read on average more frequently than lower socioeconomic groups, according to a poll of 1,500 individuals in England conducted by DJS Research for Booktrust. In contrast to 42% of DEs, 62% of ABs read daily or weekly, while 27% of DEs never read books themselves. High-level business leaders all across the world have long lauded reading for its advantages, still relating to people with high socioeconomic value. For instance, Warren Buffet, the CEO of Berkshire Hathaway, spends most of his day reading and advises others to do the same. However, individuals in business who promote the advantages of reading virtually always recommend nonfiction [2].

1.1.1. The impact of Covid-19: People of all levels read literature

At a time when the need to read literary works belonged to a certain social class, during the COVID-19 pandemic, this changed. When people experience stress, are alienated by lockdowns, lose their closest people, and even become people with the virus infected, literary reading is one of the options that most people do globally. Literary works, even other literary readings have become the medium for the “healing” choice. This proof can be seen in the context of Pierre Bourdieu’s habitus chart.

From Bourdieu’s Habitus theory, the researcher is going to prove how habitus is not permanent, especially in the decision for reading literature, nor the capital that one’s own also will be neglected during the pandemic COVID-19.

2. Method

Based on the qualitative method, this research uses a sociological approach in order to research a social phenomenon. The research uses the concept of Habitus from Pierre Bordieau to analyze the existence of “sustainability” in particular groups of people through reading literary works during the pandemic COVID-19. The primary data are taken in the period of 2020 based on media articles from multiple countries like literacytrust.org.uk from England and scroll.in from India which correspond to real situations. In conducting this research, the following steps were taken, (1) reading the research objects thoroughly, (2) analyzing the content of the text and narrative that pay

attention to the development (3) analyzing the forms of habitus through the people habits and actions (4) determining the outcome of the transformed habitus on the post-pandemic situation (5) draw conclusions [3].

2.1. Pierre Bourdieu's capital and habitus

Pierre Bourdieu fostered his hypothesis of social capital, with Jean-Claude Passeron, as a feature of an endeavor to make sense of contrasts in instructive accomplishment as per social beginning to show 'that social rejection is a consistent cycle. In his hypothesis, the social and social types of capital depend on, still up in the air, how much financial capital had and consequently stow away or veil the manner by which social progressive systems are imitated. The three types of capital consolidate and are encapsulated, to deliver a people habitus, or set of inclinations, while the field alludes to the field where a particular habitus is understood or conveyed [4].

As for Bourdieu, the thoughts of capital, field, and habitus were eventually implanted in power relations and were significant for convoluted speculation that endeavored to figure out how social disparity copies itself. Many have discussed the convenience of Bourdieu's speculation for a contemporary grant, while others have discussed the amount he drew from the incredible modelers of humanism, because his preparation theory was either as well "Weberian" or that his thoughts depended on those made by Durkheim.

The terms "habitus," "capital," and "field" are all fairly easily defined, but the investigation of how habitus and capital affect a person's or group's standing in a field is primarily concerned with how these three notions influence one another [4]. Habitus is the elements and aspects of someone's life that they are born into, raised in, and surrounded by throughout their life that shape them as individuals. Bourdieu explains that habitus, capital, and field are the components of a given relationship, but the result of how well someone's habitus and capital are received in a field is referred to as their practice; it is about how attuned or comfortable or familiar someone is with the practices that occur within a field. Bourdieu formed an equation to explain this process: $(\text{Habitus})(\text{Capital}) + \text{Field} = \text{Practice}$ (Figure 1) [4].

The most common ground for the habitus explanation is everyone is an agent that lives in a certain field. Habitus focuses on individual attitudes and dispositions, whereas capital comprises engagement in cultural activities and access to cultural resources. An individual's habitus not only shapes their future life route but also their objective

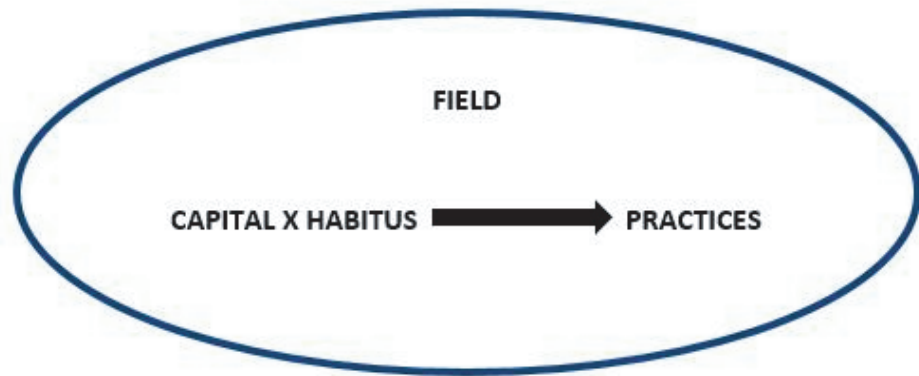


Figure 1: Field's Practices.

previous position in the social structure. This means habitus might change as someone's practices also change.

2.1.1. The capital

For Bourdieu capital can be divided into different forms: social capital, cultural capital, and economic capital. A person's social capital is the sum of their network of people and their collected capital. He defines it as a network of "useful relationships that can secure material or symbolic gains." In other words, an individual's social capital is a combination of the number of people in their network and their accumulated capital. Bourdieu further divides cultural capital into three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized; embodied capital is imbued during socialization, and is ultimately tied to the social location of the individual. The embodied capital represents "external wealth that becomes an integral part of the person." Objectified capital refers to objects – including paintings and sculptures – whose value is determined only by their relationship with cultural capital, in other words, by the goods themselves and their consumption. Individuals with institutionalized capital can convert between cultural and economic capital directly: In the context of culture, this refers to a certificate that confers a conventional value to its holder that is constant, legally guaranteed, and based on cultural competence. Thus, economic capital does not determine the different types of capital, but rather is a function of them. According to Bourdieu, capital can reproduce 'in the same or expanded form', becoming a constituent part of society that facilitates or constrains individual behavior [5].

3. Result and Discussion

As already explained about habitus and capital, people who have higher capital, both cultural and economic, will have a higher level of awareness and appreciation of something.

In the case of how people finally achieve sustainability by reading literature, it is necessary to know in advance the condition of reading culture in general, especially in the time before the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 2).

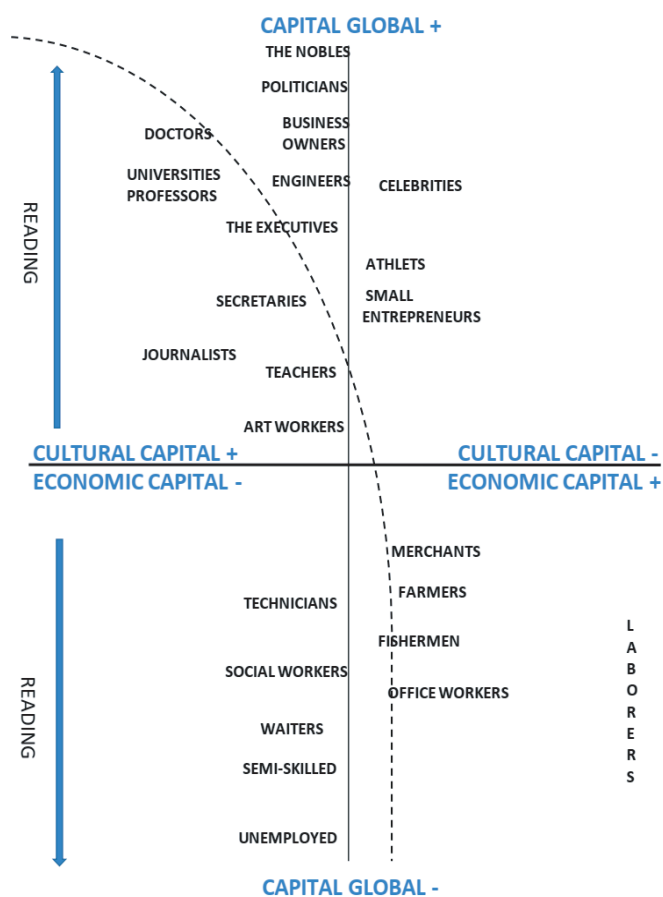


Figure 2: Habitus of Reading Before COVID-19.

In general, the types of capital that can be measured are known as "hard capital." The simplest illustration of this is economic capital; the more money someone has, the more economic capital they have. The richest people are at the top and the least wealthy are at the bottom of a field that only values economic capital. The capital that affects attitudes within the industry is more what symbolic capital means. Knowing the laws of the game is necessary for both distinction and well-informed habitus, but the distinction is only awarded to those who occupy the highest positions in their respective fields According to Richardson, cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, i.e., in

the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the institutionalized state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee [4].

In the simplest understanding, the more capital someone has, the more that person is likely to gain awareness of the importance of higher education, including reading any related text. People in the field of higher capital usually deal with more complexity of thoughts regarding their professions. In these positions, these people will always need updated information and knowledge to improve their professional abilities. While people in the lower capital have fewer needs for reading. It doesn't mean they don't need reading at all but they prefer to focus more on how to live their lives day by day, instead of gaining more knowledge.

3.1. Reading habitus after COVID-19

Habitus develops through a societal, as opposed to an individual, process, resulting in patterns that are durable and transferrable from one context to another, but that also change in reaction to particular situations and over time. Habitus "is not stable or permanent, and can change under unforeseen circumstances or over a long historical period." It is not the result of free will or a product of structures; rather, it develops over time as a result of a kind of interaction between the two: dispositions that are shaped by past events and structures, that influence present practices and structures, and, most importantly, that affect how we perceive them. This is how habitus is formed and passed down: "without any deliberate pursuit of coherence without any conscious concentration" [6].

In the catastrophe of global economics during Covid-19, everything turned into a chaotic situation. Starting from the lockdown, the closing of almost all businesses, a food crisis, and a high death toll, all of sudden a new poverty happens globally and all world leaders are forced to find solutions to overcome the problem.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), In view of information from World Health Organization (WHO), the COVID-19 pandemic triggers 25% increment in commonness of tension and misery around the world. In the main year of the COVID-19 pandemic, worldwide commonness of nervousness and melancholy expanded by a monstrous 25%, as per a logical brief delivered by the World Health Organization

(WHO) today. During the pandemic, the brief also summarizes who has been affected and how access to emotional well-being administrations has changed as a result of the pandemic. Psychosocial support and psychological well-being have been integrated into COVID-19 response plans by 90 percent of nations studied, but significant gaps and concerns remain.

Due to the pandemic, there has been a significant social disconnect that is contributing to the increase. Individuals had to demonstrate their ability to work, seek help from friends and family, and participate in their networks. Stressors causing anxiety and misery include depression, anxiety about illness, dying, and death of oneself or friends, and sorrow after loss. Among well-being laborers, depletion has been a significant trigger for self-destructive reasoning [7].

Therefore, people need to strive from this agonizing situation. Surprisingly, some of them have chosen to read more. Research compiled by the writing and proofreading service Global English Editing shows that 35% of people in the world have read more books than usual since COVID began [8]. This impacts how habitus has also changed in reading needs, regardless of which the capital people are from.

As a result of the Coronavirus, the millennial generation reads 40% more books, including literature (Figure 3). However, younger generations are proven to read as well. A report also includes results from the National Literacy Trust survey, which examined children and young people's reading in 2020, in addition to their study of children's and young people's reading during the COVID-19 lockdown. 4,141 children and youth aged 8 to 18 participated in the UK's literacy survey during the lockdown between May and early June 2020, while 58,346 participated in the UK's annual literacy survey between January and March 2020. It is concluded that children and young adults are reading and enjoying reading more during the lockdown.

1. Children's enjoyment of reading has increased during lockdown (from 47.8% pre-lockdown to 55.9% post-lockdown), having reached a 15-year low before lockdown
2. More than a quarter (27.6%) of children and young people say they are enjoying reading more during lockdown
3. A third (34.5%) of children and young people say they are reading more during lockdown [9]

Reading has provided refuge for many young people and even children during the Covid-19 pandemic, supporting their mental well-being and enabling them to dream about the future. Most young adults understand the value of community and connection

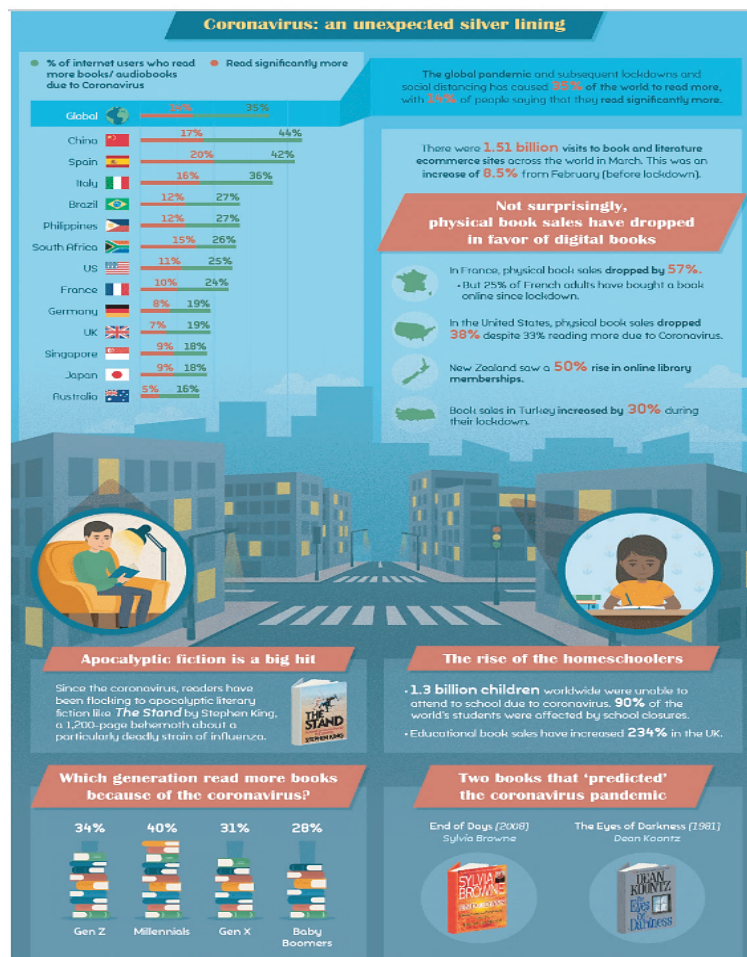


Figure 3: A Poster of Sample from Reading Data After COVID-19 [8].

with others through reading. The young adults felt less alone when they found people with similar interests and passions online, even while reading books, and seeing such friendships depicted in fiction added a new dimension. By encouraging young readers to question their own sense of 'normal' in the face of the 'new normal', the book empowers readers to understand Covid-19 both as a normal phenomenon and as a potential for hope for the future.

Considering the surviving acts of the pandemic in general, based on Shyam Bhat's argument on the importance of books and reading during the pandemic, the importance of reading during the pandemic is clear: reading can help people cope with stress and provide creative solutions when times are uncertain. During stressful times, reading habits and genre preferences may change, as people seek comfort in certain books. The impact of the Coronavirus and the lockdown on creative industries is still relatively early, but the early part of the pandemic showed some striking patterns in media consumption.

For relief from the constant tension of Covid or to absorb the worries and concerns brought on by the epidemic, readers may also turn to literature. Isolation and loneliness, global disasters, and fantasy literature with a completely independent universe into which the reader may escape are themes that particularly resonate with readers at the moment. However, there they find sustainability in readings, including literature readings, regardless of the field and habitus that have shaped someone’s practices long before the pandemic Covid-19 [10].

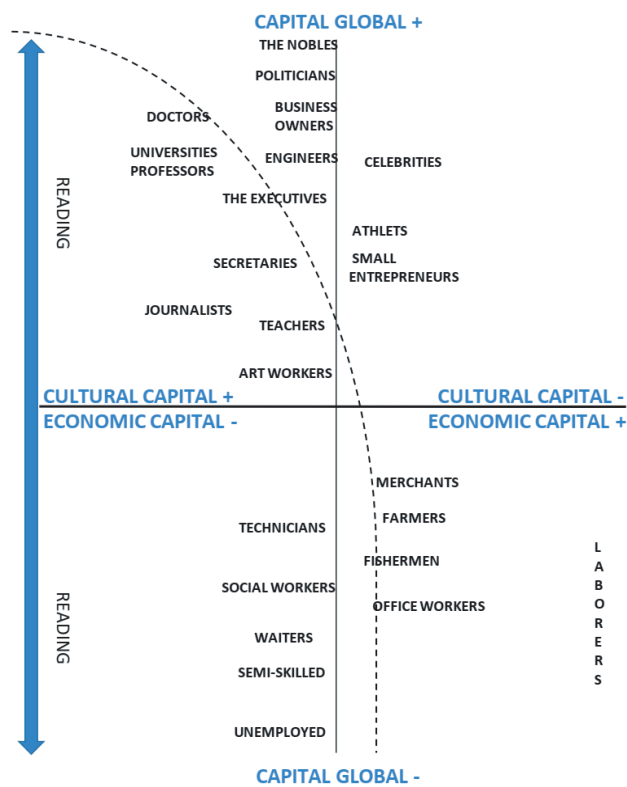


Figure 4: Reading Habitus After Covid-19.

Figure 4 explains the result of awareness of sustainability during the pandemic Covid-19 has shaped new habitus. Since it is not stable nor permanent, those who belong to the higher capital culture and economy, experienced the same as lower capital culture and economy, i.e., they got lockdown, lost their loved ones, suffered from Covid-19 itself, and some lost their fortune. Suddenly, people from all capital cultures and capital economies come to the same perspective; they need to survive and escape from the outbreak of desperation. People often have to adjust their lifestyles during times of crisis. The way they consume media was one of the first obvious shifts during the COVID-19 shutdown.

As already mentioned, a survey is conducted which shows how 35% of the world’s population have read more. There was an increase in how people visited sites of books

and literature, regardless their social statuses. The new habitus remains sustain after the pandemic Covid-19.

4. Conclusion

Habitus, as Bourdieu proposes, reflects how human has been brought something since childhood. Regarding the pandemic Covid-19, habitus should change as no matter what field people are in, they need to adjust to the new situation in order to survive the outbreak.

While fiction or any kind of reading, helps people to come up with perception, both natural perception and imaginary perception. It helps us reflect on life as what it is or even beyond it. By reading any readings, people actually have already gained a self-reflection of what they are.

If we deal with literary works, they will drive to the knowledge of basic human desire to express oneself, to take interest and attention in fellow human beings, to the world of reality in which they live, and to the world of fantasies that are imagined as the real world, and desires. The basis for loving form is formed. The values refresh the spirit of life that has been declining and we enjoy literary works. So great is the function of literary works as recreation in the current pandemic period. We can't just assume that the recreational process is not proper. Even literary works in the recreational function get an immeasurable value for their role in increasing the comfort of human life, which can affect the condition of immunity.

Researchers examine the habitus of people in several countries to serve as a reference for how people's habits in dealing with this pandemic can be seen from the enthusiasm and the way people enjoy literary works.

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