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# Students' reading enjoyment and teacher-led activities: considerations for home support during school closures

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## ABSTRACT

This paper presents results on the relationship between reading enjoyment and activities that teachers typically carry out in primary education classrooms and identify those practices suitable for usage at home during school closures. The study employs a large-scale student survey with 951 randomly selected participants from Colima, Mexico and ordinal logistic regression for analyses. Findings revealed positive and statistically significant associations between reading enjoyment and a range of teacher-led activities, controlling for household support. To our knowledge, no previous research has investigated the activities teachers lead in the classroom in relation to reading enjoyment in primary schools in Colima, Mexico. The study seeks to inform policy, teaching practices and parental engagement with reading at home during the school closures due to the coronavirus pandemic and protracted violence in this geographical region.

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## KEYWORDS

Reading enjoyment; primary education; learning at home; school closures; Mexico

## Introduction

Reading enjoyment among school-age children is a hot topic worldwide due to its critical role in learning, curriculum achievement, and promoting positive habits (Lee 2014; Ma, Luo, and Xiao 2021; Saracho 2017; Smith et al. 2012). In this paper, reading enjoyment is understood as reading for pleasure; however, the topic has been studied in the light of other critical areas. For instance, the last two decades have seen a surge of studies concerning how reading enjoyment relates to skills and self-efficacy development, educational attainment, and the role teachers play in all this (Clark and De Zoysa 2011; Goux, Gurgand, and Maurin 2017; Tavsancil, Yildirim, and Bilican Demir 2019). In Latin America, several national and regional initiatives have sought to encourage reading enjoyment among children and their carers (Ceretta Soria 2012). The topic has also gained attention in the most recent large-scale assessments, e.g., the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (OECD 2021), as well as national evaluations in Mexico, such as the National Plan for Learning Assessment (PLANEA, in Spanish) (Bernal Díaz and Zaldivar-Colado 2017; Caracas Sánchez and

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Ornelas Hernández 2019; Secretariat of Public Education 2020). Overall, existing knowledge suggests that understanding how reading enjoyment develops is critical to benefit other areas of students' development. However, research conducted at national and international scales might hinder phenomena happening at sub-national levels. In such cases, it becomes necessary to *zoom in* to understand specific needs and circumstances that promote reading enjoyment in primary<sup>1</sup> education in more local settings.

This paper explores the case of Colima, a Mexican state located in the southwest of the country, between Jalisco and Michoacan, which, similarly to many contexts worldwide, had to close schools during the coronavirus pandemic, and afterwards, given the ongoing armed conflict between competing cartels in the region. This situation has led to school closures beginning in the second week of February 2022 to safeguard the school communities' well-being (Reina 2022). Intermittent school closures continue across Mexico and among neighbouring Colima states because of protracted violence (Agencia 2025).

A few studies preceded this investigation, albeit targeting parallel purposes. For instance, the "reading better" project (Martínez 2007) was a quasi-experimental study consisting of three phases: diagnostic, intervention proposal, and plan execution. In the diagnostic, the researchers found that students from primary and secondary schools (years 7 to 9; ages 13 to 15) in Colima presented low levels of comprehension and could not analyse/synthesise texts or infer new concepts because of a limited vocabulary. Such a study suggested that contextual factors are essential in explaining the differences in reading skills.

Another study related to reading development in the school analysed the role of primary education teachers in nine schools in Colima. The project emphasised the role of teachers as the primary motivators and leaders of learning achievement. The study concluded that although most teachers had clear general notions of education and didactics, they lacked strategies to invite their students to embrace reading habits (Gómez Nashiki 2008). Since then, research concerning reading enjoyment among primary students in Colima has been minimal. Valencia, Carranza, and Sánchez (2021) conducted a survey with  $N=444$  teenagers whose ages were between 10 and 17 years old, using probabilistic sampling in five states of Mexico, including Colima, during the first Mexican lockdown, in early 2020. Their study was primarily concerned with understanding how their participants employ their time at home during the lockdown due to covid-19. Several options were presented to the respondents, including those related to reading, writing, and solving mathematical problems. The study indicates that most respondents prefer reading as an activity to do during school closures. However, the research did not delve into why this is the case and whether reading occurs for enjoyment or as part of formal learning activities.

One thing to note in previous local research focusing on schools and teachers is the less attention paid to what teachers do to promote children's engagement with texts. Such teacher actions may promote positive attitudes towards reading among students, including enjoyment. Moreover, children's views on reading enjoyment are uncommon in academic research, and studies that can provide statistically representative data about such a topic targeting Colima's primary schools are also largely missing in the literature. Therefore, gaining insight into how teachers foster reading enjoyment, as perceived by their students, is fundamental to supporting teachers, parents and carers, mainly in times

of intermittent closure of schools in Mexico and globally due to the health crisis and enduring violence.

This paper is interested in understanding teacher-led activities in the classroom and their relationship with reading enjoyment, and in doing so, to respond to the following research question:

**RQ1.** What is the relationship between reading enjoyment of primary school children in Colima and teacher-led activities with texts, controlling for household support?

The following sections establish a theoretical and conceptual framework by reviewing the existing literature on reading enjoyment among school children. Teachers' and parents'/carers' roles in promoting reading among children are examined. After this, the methods employed for this research, including the sample, data collection, procedure and analysis, are explained. The paper continues with separate sections dedicated to the results, the discussion, and the conclusions. The study's limitations are acknowledged, and considerations for future research are addressed towards the end of this article.

## Theoretical and conceptual framework

This section explores previous research regarding reading enjoyment among school-children. It also addresses the roles that teachers and parents/carers play in promoting reading enjoyment. A conceptual framework guiding the remainder of the paper is presented.

### *Reading enjoyment among school children*

Reading enjoyment refers to reading for pleasure, and research in the field has consistently agreed on the importance of reading enjoyment in relation to reading attitudes, behaviours and attainment (Clark and De Zoysa 2011; Ma, Luo, and Xiao 2021; Tavsancil, Yildirim, and Bilican Demir 2019). Research from the National Literacy Trust in the United Kingdom found evidence of the indirect relationship between enjoyment and children's perceptions of reading attitudes and behaviours, which were deemed conducive to reading attainment (Clark and De Zoysa 2011). Using the Turkish PISA dataset, Tavsancil, Yildirim, and Bilican Demir (2019) investigated reading enjoyment as a mediating component concerning the association between learning strategies and achievement. They found that higher levels of enjoyment were reported when the students used learning strategies and high-level skills, such as elaboration and control but not memorisation; furthermore, they concluded that reading enjoyment significantly predicts reading achievement (Tavsancil, Yildirim, and Bilican Demir 2019). Another PISA-related study in China concluded that students' perceptions of teacher support significantly predict learning, academic self-concept and reading enjoyment (Ma, Luo, and Xiao 2021).

Although reading enjoyment is typically explored in relation to reading skills improvement, an experimental study with first-grade students in France suggests this might not always occur (Goux, Gurgand, and Maurin 2017). Instead, helping students enjoy reading might help foster positive attitudes towards school without specific improvement in other

areas, such as achievement. Still, reading enjoyment deserves its own place in children's integral development; therefore, its exploration is important and necessary.

A critical gap remains in the literature; while researchers have emphasised the role of reading enjoyment in matters of skills development, few have formally explored teacher-led activities related to students' perceptions of enjoyment. In addition, previous research has instigated further studies, preferably in everyday settings, to understand how teachers can support the development of reading enjoyment among their students. This paper responds to those calls and explores reading enjoyment in a less-commonly researched setting at the sub-national level.

### ***The role of teachers in the development of reading***

Teachers are fundamental in supporting reading enjoyment. According to Jabbar and Warraich (2021), teachers' knowledge of texts suitable for children, pedagogical knowledge, and their role as models promote students' positive attitudes towards the texts, which might lead to reading enjoyment. To this end, it is necessary to have the appropriate infrastructure, such as books and reading spaces, and allocate time to the curriculum. In the Latin American context, the Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (TERCE in Spanish) stresses the essential role of teachers as leaders of literacy processes and promoters of the written culture. According to this organisation, learning is context-situated, requiring meaningful interactions at home and school (OREALC/UNESCO 2016). Nevertheless, in Mexico, communication between parents, carers, and the school is typically unidirectional, i.e., teachers to parents, and occurs at the school day's beginning and end (Macías Bordalba 2019). During school closures due to pandemics and protracted violence, it appears critical that parents gain insight into how best to support their children's reading enjoyment, particularly if contact with teachers becomes limited.

According to Álvarez-Álvarez and Pascual-Díez (2013), there is a misunderstanding of reading as a school activity meant to access knowledge mechanically. Instead, reading can be joyful with adequate teacher support, as their research with primary school children from Spain demonstrated. The authors argued that dialogue between teachers and students, for instance, in dedicated reading groups, can help initiate students' interest in texts. Most importantly, the role of teachers in organising and promoting engagement with texts seems critical in advancing primary students' enjoyment of their reading.

### ***Parental support and reading enjoyment***

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, most education systems worldwide closed their schools to contain the disease. According to UNESCO, more than 1.6 billion students saw their education halted overnight (UNESCO 2021a). In Mexico, this number was more than 30 million. Mexico was among the education systems that stayed fully closed for a longer time compared to other contexts that re-opened schools intermittently (UNESCO 2021b). During this time, adults and carers of school-age students had to lead their children's education and do this quickly. Engaging students in reading and continuing learning was particularly challenging, given the rapid shift to diverse modes of remote education, including online synchronous and asynchronous and other teacherless

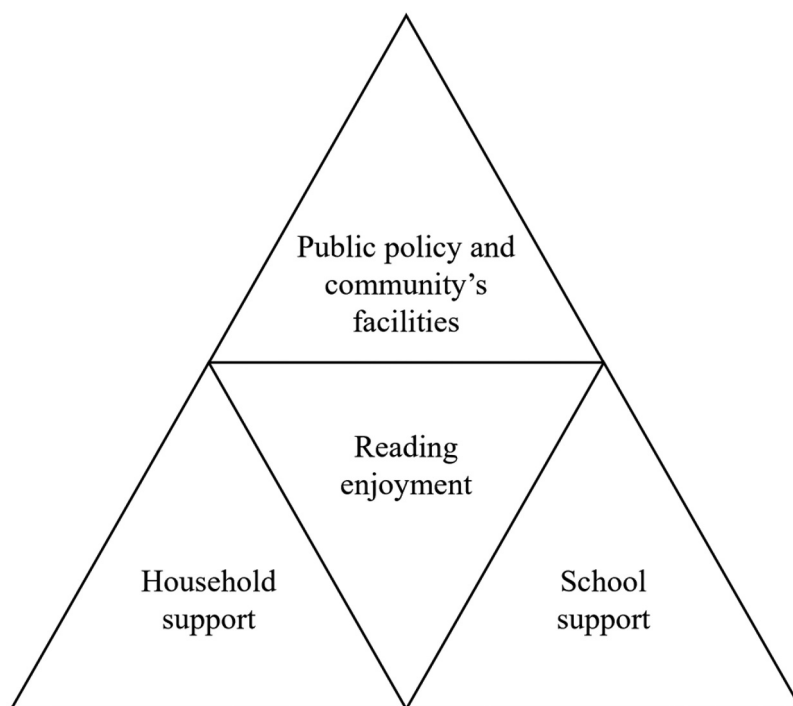
education formats, e.g., using printed booklets (INEE 2022; UNICEF 2020). In that sense, parental participation in children's education during a lockdown is essential.

Several studies have agreed on the critical role of parents/carers in children's literacy development, which includes parental contact with texts of different sorts (Kucirkova and Grøver 2024; Mancini, Monfardini, and Pasqua 2017; van Bergen et al. 2015). Also, cumulative research has demonstrated that children's background characteristics, including the availability of resources and support at home, matter for their reading achievement (Kloosterman et al. 2011; Ni et al. 2021). Research on the relationship between parental support with reading has traditionally been carried out using qualitative case studies, quasi-experiments and correlational studies of original and secondary data. For instance, using qualitative research, Chou and Cheng (2015) followed a group of children in Taiwan for over a year. Parents had to organise reading with their children using wordless books at least four times a week. Chou and Cheng concluded that the participation of parents in the development of reading helped in areas, such as comprehension. In this regard, the researchers noted the essential role of parents' interest in the texts. Following a different methodology, Huang, Lee, and Yeung (2020) undertook a quantitative study in Hong Kong and mainland China using data from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2016. The researchers found that the parents' attitudes towards texts are positively associated with their children's interest in reading.

In Spain, Rus, Sánchez-Casas, and Martín (2019) explored the perspectives of 403 primary school children on their engagement with texts for learning and enjoyment. They concluded that higher proportions of engagement with reading were associated with the extent of parental participation in their children's academic learning. A study with 106 parents of primary students from Yucatan, Mexico, also found that parental engagement with their children's reading was fundamental to developing enjoyment and positive habits towards texts (Valdés Cuervo, Pavón, and Sánchez Escobedo 2009). The literature suggests that parental participation is critical for children's reading engagement and that showing interest and dedicating time matter.

### ***School, household, and community facilities in matters of reading enjoyment***

Against this backdrop, it can be argued that reading enjoyment can be nurtured among school-age children via interrelated influences from the school, home, and facilities in the community, many of which are dependent on public policy decisions (Jabbar and Warraich 2021; Moreno-Morilla, Guzmán-Simón, and García-Jiménez 2017). In order to provide a context to the importance of the topic of this paper, in Mexico, the population older than 18 who can read and write printed or digital texts diminished by 10% in 2019 compared to 2015 (INEGI 2019). Inequalities in access to basic education and neglect in different areas of an individual's life, e.g., the school, home, and other social spaces, may play a role in the decrease of literate people. Thus, Figure 1 illustrates a conceptual framework for studying reading enjoyment development among primary school pupils in Colima, Mexico. This paper explores the essential participation of schools through teacher-led activities and the support households provide to children to engage for pleasure with texts. Please note that the study does not address public policy and community's facilities; however, we considered it relevant to acknowledge its influence in matters of reading enjoyment.



**Figure 1.** Reading enjoyment and surrounding influences.

Source: original artwork. Note: This paper does not explore public policy or the community's facilities.

Exploring primary school children's reading enjoyment must take into account that home support typically influences the extent to which students engage with texts in their various forms. If this component is not considered, the associations between teacher-led activities and students' perceptions of reading enjoyment could be biased. Therefore, this paper seeks to address the following research question:

**RQ1.** What is the relationship between reading enjoyment of primary school children in Colima and teacher-led activities with texts, controlling for household support?

## Materials and methods

This section presents the study sample and data collection methods. It also explains the procedure with the variables of interest related to the research question and data analysis.

### Sample

Participants are 951 students from state-funded primary schools. These students are second to sixth graders aged between 7 and 12. [Table 1](#) summarises the number of students in each school grade surveyed. Colima has two educational sub-systems: one federal and the other depending on the state authority. In Colima, the federal system is

**Table 1.** School-grade distribution.

School grade	Frequency
2nd	202
3rd	177
4th	173
5th	192
6th	207
Total	951

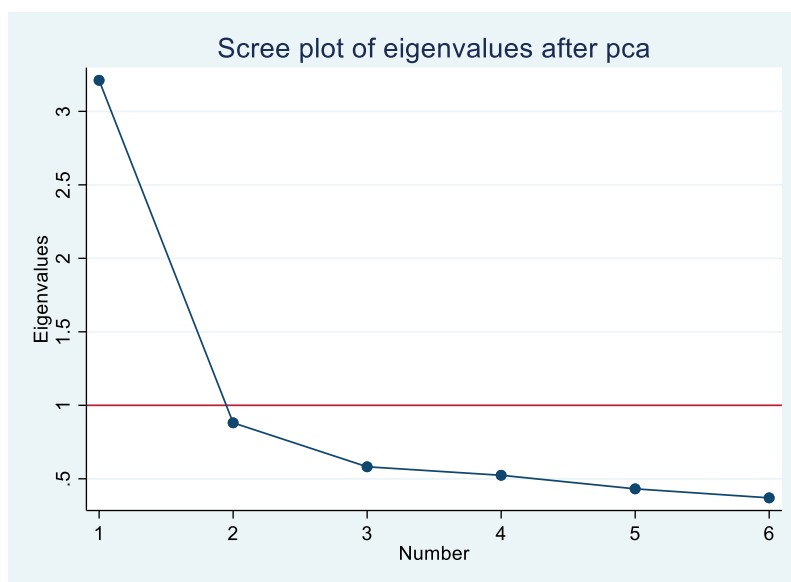
funded by the central government and is the most numerous in terms of schools, staff and students. The federal sub-system has been studied regarding literacy and reading skills development over the last two decades (Gómez Nashiki 2008; Gómez Zermeño and Piña Gómez 2008; Yañez Velazco and Alonso Ruiz 2020). This paper relates to the state sub-system, which is managed and funded by the local education authority; it is comparatively less numerous on all fronts than the federal sub-system. This population has also been less researched regarding reading enjoyment in primary schools. Participants were drawn using a probabilistic and stratified sampling technique from a universe of 4,957 students representing Colima's state sub-system at the primary school level. The sample represents 19.2% of the school population with an error margin of 3.5% and confidence of 99.7%.

### **Method and measures**

An online survey was developed to explore the self-perceptions of primary school students regarding reading enjoyment and the activities carried out by teachers that promote it. A self-administering questionnaire was generated based on previous research on the topic (Moreno-Morilla, Guzmán-Simón, and García-Jiménez 2017; Poveda et al. 2000; Rus, Sánchez-Casas, and Martín 2019). The respondents expressed reading enjoyment, our dependent variable in the subsequent analyses, by responding to the following question: to what extent do you enjoy reading texts of different sorts in the classroom? 0 = *Not at all*; 1 = *Little*; 2 = *Somewhat*; 3 = *Much*; 4 = *A great deal*. The main independent variables are concerned with teacher-led activities in the classroom related to students' reading, using 0 = *No*; 1 = *Yes* responses as follows: Recommends visiting the library; Organises book exchanges; Recommends movies about books; Comments on students' reading; Recommends TV shows about books; Organises debates; Organises silent reading sessions; Encourages reading aloud; Promotes learning vocabulary; Requests summaries of texts; Organises writing sessions; Analyse texts with students.

Furthermore, household support for reading at home was collected by asking students the frequency with which their families did six activities: Buy books for your reading; Recommend books for you to read; Show interest in what you read; Discuss tales and readings you do; Mom reads at home; Dad reads at home. The response options for these items are 0 = *Never*; 1 = *Rarely*; 2 = *Sometimes*; 3 = *Frequently*; 4 = *Very frequently*. Household support for reading at home was considered in this research via a latent variable arising from Principal Component Analysis, as it was mainly employed in the subsequent analyses as a control variable. Figure 2 is a scree plot that shows that a single dimension accounts for more variation in the data, i.e., 54% of the total (Fan and Bond 2019). Furthermore, this latent variable





**Figure 2.** Household support dimensionality.

**Table 2.** Validity and reliability of the instrument.

Section of the questionnaire	Items	Cronbach Alpha
Teacher-led activities promoting reading enjoyment	12	.798
Household support	6	.820
Total	18	.837

presented acceptable sampling adequacy ( $KMO = .854$ ). This latent variable has a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1 and ranges between  $-1.52$  and  $1.71$ . In addition, Table 2 shows that the two sections of the instrument have appropriate validity and reliability according to Cronbach's Alpha statistics (Field 2009; Tavakol and Dennick 2011).

The general equation of this research is as follows:

$$Reading_{enjoyment_i} = \log\left(\frac{\pi}{1-\pi}\right) = \alpha + \beta_1 T_i + \beta_2 H_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

In subsequent analyses,  $Reading_{enjoyment_i}$  represents the dependent variable. The independent variables relate to teacher-led activities concerning reading in the classroom (12 items), described in the model as  $\beta_1 T_i$ . Household support for reading at home is represented as  $\beta_2 H_i$ .

## Procedure

The questionnaire was uploaded onto Google forms, which allows for planning, sending, and collecting data. A further advantage of this platform was its access free of charge and data processing in a spreadsheet to minimise errors (Poynter 2010). School supervisors were provided with a sampling frame with detailed

instructions on the number of students per school and grade that they would approach. Also, via email, they received an electronic link to the questionnaire, which teachers would access and let their students respond to individually. Teachers randomly selected students using the attendance register in line with the sampling protocol. Only second-grade students were assisted in reading the questionnaire, and the classroom teacher captured the responses. The rest of the participants were asked to respond to the questions independently. In all cases, informed consent was collected from parents and carers before the survey. This written informed consent form was based on established ethical guidelines in Mexico (Denman et al. 2014). The survey was responded to between 12 February and 15 March 2020. That is, before the first school closures in Mexico due to COVID-19.

### Analysis

The data were analysed in STATA 17. This paper reports descriptive statistics of the dependent variable, main independent variables, and Ordinal Logistic Regressions to investigate the association between reading enjoyment and teacher-led activities related to reading. Bivariate correlations were run to explore initial patterns among the variables, including any signs of multicollinearity (Table 3). Multicollinearity refers to the strong correlation between two independent variables, indicating a strong linear relationship between them, potentially leading to misinterpretation of the results in a regression model. Some scholars suggest that correlations above 0.8 can be problematic, and therefore, decisions on the subset of predictors to be included in a model must be made (Senaviratna, Cooray, and J 2019). This initial exploration shows that reading enjoyment is positively and significantly correlated with several activities teachers lead when working with texts.

As shown in Table 3, reading enjoyment is positively associated with *recommends movies about books; comments on students' reading; recommends TV shows about books; organises silent reading sessions; promotes learning vocabulary; requests summaries of texts; organises writing sessions; and analyses texts with students..* Other teacher-led activities are also positively correlated with reading enjoyment however, these are not statistically significant, including *recommends visiting the library; organises book exchanges; organises debates; and encourages reading aloud.* There is no evidence of multicollinearity among this group of variables; therefore, their use in subsequent regression modelling was appropriate.

Ordinal Logistic Regressions yield proportional Odds Ratios (OR) and can be interpreted as follows: for one unit increase in a given predictor variable, i.e., 0 to 1, the odds of an option in the dependent variable will be as many times as OR indicates, compared with the rest of the options combined, while maintaining everything else constant (UCLA 2023). Findings are presented in two models; the first model addresses the variables related to teacher-led activities related to reading. The second model incorporates household support as a control. This approach was considered appropriate to examine whether and to what extent controlling for household support might affect the relationship between teacher-led activities regarding reading (Pardo Merino and Ruiz Díaz 2005; Plonsky 2015). Doing so enhances the

**Table 3.** Kendall's tau<sub>b</sub> bivariate correlations of key variables in the model.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Reading enjoyment	-												
2. Recommends visiting the library	.047	-											
3. Organises book exchanges	.029	.332**	-										
4. Recommends movies about books	.100**	.279**	.231**	-									
5. Comments on students' reading	.095**	.232**	.256**	.282**	-								
6. Recommends TV shows about books	.073**	.226**	.248**	.388**	.245**	-							
7. Organises debates	.049	.271**	.327**	.280**	.281**	.300**	-						
8. Organises silent reading sessions	.250**	.051	.030	.059	.088**	.049	.063*	-					
9. Encourages reading aloud	.022	.103**	.097**	.059	.150**	.058	.088**	.055	-				
10. Promotes learning vocabulary	.198**	.089**	.067*	.137**	.190**	.065*	.102**	.312**	.229**	-			
11. Requests summaries of texts	.138**	.122**	.227**	.159**	.264**	.191**	.209**	.210**	.164**	.261**	-		
12. Organises writing sessions	.143**	.159**	.216**	.191**	.278**	.184**	.259**	.153**	.213**	.240**	.478**	-	
13. Analyses texts with students	.211**	.152**	.171**	.170**	.265**	.133**	.186**	.190**	.174**	.303**	.333**	.417**	-

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

exploration of teacher effects on reading enjoyment and avoids confusing such a relationship with other potential influences, such as the support students receive at home.

## Results

As shown in Table 4, more than half of the research participants expressed that they enjoy reading texts of different sorts in the classroom Much/A great deal (57.6%). Table 5 presents the frequency and percentage of respondents who said their teacher conducts a series of activities related to reading. Notably, promoting learning vocabulary and organising silent reading sessions are among Colima's most common activities teachers do to connect children with texts, with 90.3% and 81.5% responding positively to these items. Less than half of the survey participants mentioned that their teachers organise book exchanges, recommend TV shows about books, or organise debates.

To respond to our research question: What is the relationship between reading enjoyment of primary school children in Colima and teacher-led activities with texts, controlling for household support? Ordinal Logistic Regression was employed. Table 6 presents two models; the first model includes 12 teacher-led activities related to reading, and

**Table 4.** Descriptive statistics of reading enjoyment.

Survey item	Response options	Yes
To what extent do you enjoy reading texts of different sorts in the classroom?	Not at all	93 (9.8)
<i>Reading<sub>enjoyment</sub></i> , see Equation (1) above.	Little	151 (15.9)
	Somewhat	160 (16.8)
	Much	302 (31.8)
	A great deal	245 (25.8)
	Total	951 (100.0)

per cent in parenthesis.

**Table 5.** Survey items regarding teacher-led activities related to reading.

	Survey items	Yes
Please tell us whether your teacher does or not the following activities when they teach you: $\beta_1 T_i$ see Equation (1) above.	Recommends visiting the library	579 (60.9)
	Organises book exchanges	452 (47.5)
	Recommends movies about books	561 (59.0)
	Comments on students' reading	700 (73.6)
	Recommends TV shows about books	445 (46.8)
	Organises debates	457 (48.0)
	Organises silent reading sessions	775 (81.5)
	Encourages reading aloud	566 (59.5)
	Promotes learning vocabulary	859 (90.3)
	Requests summaries of texts	691 (72.7)
	Organises writing sessions	684 (71.9)
	Analyse texts with students	712 (74.9)

$N = 951$ ; per cent in parenthesis. Respondents were able to respond to each item (Yes/No).

**Table 6.** Ordinal logistic regressions for reading enjoyment with main predictors and controls.

Dependent variable: Reading enjoyment	(1) Odds ratio	(2) Odds ratio
<i>Teacher-led activities related to reading</i>		
Recommends visiting the library	.926 (.122)	1.01 (.137)
Organises book exchanges	1.00 (.131)	.957 (.127)
Recommends movies about books	1.18 (.159)	.979 (.136)
Comments on students' reading	1.11 (.169)	.962 (.149)
Recommends TV shows about books	1.15 (.152)	1.07 (.144)
Organises debates	.864 (.113)	.840 (.112)
Organises silent reading sessions	3.39 (.577)***	3.17 (.539)***
Encourages reading aloud	.784 (.099)	.797 (.102)
Promotes learning vocabulary	2.67 (.626)***	1.98 (.471)**
Requests summaries of texts	1.04 (.167)	.986 (.160)
Organises writing sessions	1.17 (.189)	1.08 (.180)
Analyse texts with students	1.72 (.279)**	1.53 (.254)*
<i>Household support for reading at home</i>		2.36 (.167)***
N	951	951
Pseudo R2	.054	.108

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ . Standard errors in parentheses.

the second model controls for household support for reading at home. As shown in model 1, the organisation of silent reading sessions is significantly associated with 3.4 times for students to perceive a higher category of enjoyment in reading texts of different sorts in the classroom. Similarly, promoting learning vocabulary is significantly associated with 2.7 times for students to perceive higher reading enjoyment. This model further revealed that teachers who analyse texts with students are associated with a 70% likelihood for their students to perceive higher reading enjoyment. Notably, recommending visiting the library, organising debates and encouraging reading aloud were found to correlate negatively with perceptions of reading enjoyment. However, none of these variables is statistically significant.

Model 2, which incorporates household support for reading at home as a control variable, shows that, as expected, the additional help students receive related to reading is positively and significantly associated with students' perception of reading enjoyment. Interestingly, teacher-led activities with texts that were found to be associated with perceptions of reading enjoyment are robust to the addition of household support to

the model and maintain their positive relationship with reading enjoyment, albeit to a lesser extent.

In other words, with household support in the model, several teacher-led activities were able to explain less of the variance for reading enjoyment, restating the importance of household control in the analysis.

## Discussion

The development of reading enjoyment among school-age pupils is a topic that has gained substantial attention globally. In Latin America, its nurturing and research have many decades of expansion. In Colima, Mexico, several programmes have been instigated; however, the results have been mixed and limited in scope. This is the first representative study of students' reading enjoyment in the state sub-system. The international literature suggests that the development of reading enjoyment occurs in various social realms, including the school, home, and the broader community (Jabbar and Warraich 2021; Moreno-Morilla, Guzmán-Simón, and García-Jiménez 2017). This study focuses on the contribution of structured practices and activities primary teachers carry out, given their potential for guiding parents during school closures due to the coronavirus pandemic and protracted violence in this geographical region.

Overall, the evidence suggests a series of activities that could be embraced at home to support students' reading enjoyment, mainly offering children quiet spaces for reading, encouraging them to learn new words and expressions and accompanying them in exploring texts. The results revealed that the most important predictor of reading enjoyment is concerned with teachers organising silent reading sessions. Previous research in the context had not identified what practices and classroom interactions might contribute to higher levels of reading enjoyment (Gómez Nashiki 2008; Gómez Zermeño and Piña Gómez 2008), and, in that sense, this paper contributes necessary knowledge. Notably, the positive statistical association between silence sessions and reading enjoyment is larger than that accounted for household support with reading. However, it remains unknown whether reading in silence in the classroom is perceived as beneficial because it takes place alongside classmates or in the presence of an adult. The literature maintains that school-age children typically show an interest in learning activities where they receive positive support from adults and other peer classmates (Rus, Sánchez-Casas, and Martín 2019; Valdés Cuervo, Pavón, and Sánchez Escobedo 2009). Therefore, it is critical to understand that reading in silence at home might need additional commitment from parents and carers rather than solely creating the space for it.

Promoting learning vocabulary and the analysis of texts with the students are two teacher-led activities that previous research has identified as critical for students' reading enjoyment (Chou and Cheng 2015; Clark and De Zoysa 2011; Huang, Lee, and Yeung 2020; Jabbar and Warraich 2021; Tavsancil, Yildirim, and Bilican Demir 2019). These findings are further congruent with the curriculum at the primary school level in Mexico, where school-age children consolidate knowledge about language and expand their vocabulary throughout this level of education (Caracas Sánchez and Ornelas Hernández 2019; Secretariat of Public Education 2020). Slightly different from reading in silence, these two learning activities require additional support from parents and carers to help children navigate vocabulary acquisition. Still, the two are suitable for home-based learning.

Further orientation might be necessary to make these activities conducive to reading enjoyment.

It is evident that in order to facilitate children's reading enjoyment via silence sessions, learning vocabulary and the analysis of text, a degree of cultural capital and resources are needed. This means that parents who work long hours and those lacking space at home for reading activities might be disadvantaged. Following the school closures due to the coronavirus and protracted violence in Colima, this situation might have worsened as parents also had to stay indoors until allowed out, potentially with little awareness of how to help their children's reading. With such limitations in mind, this research suggests that parents and teachers could use teacher-led activities positively associated with reading enjoyment during social distancing periods and education at a distance as they require minimal adaptations that most households in Colima might be able to accommodate. Previous research, mainly in health crisis contexts, e.g., the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone and Liberia, restates that learning activities at home, with the support from teachers, are favourable for developing positive habits that benefit the students' learning (Hallgarten, Gorgen, and Sims 2020). Furthermore, even in the context of no crisis or school closures, previous research has established the complementary and synergic nature of children learning at home and school (Moreno-Morilla, Guzmán-Simón, and García-Jiménez 2017; Poveda et al. 2000).

In contrast to existing literature, this research did not find evidence in support of teaching practices, such as recommending visiting the library, organising book exchanges, recommending movies based on books, commenting on the students' reading, suggesting TV shows related to texts, or organising debates (Ceretta Soria 2012; Owolabi et al. 2021; Rus, Sánchez-Casas, and Martín 2019). A possible reason for these findings is the relationship between these instances and mandatory learning tasks, which might discourage children from genuinely enjoying texts. This is not to say that libraries or debates do not support reading enjoyment; instead, the way these activities are presented to pupils might be driving these results. Thus, it is critical to continue exploring this context, potentially via qualitative approaches to understand the nuances of how teachers leverage their teaching in relation to libraries, printed books, and other forms of contact with texts.

## Conclusion

Insofar as this investigation has shown, a series of activities might support learning at home during school closures with the appropriate guidance from teachers. Further, the support for reading at home explains a significant proportion of the variance in reading enjoyment. These results were expected, as mounting evidence, primarily from school effectiveness and school improvement, has consistently found that context factors, including household characteristics, are excellent predictors of student achievement (Reynolds et al. 2014; Scheerens 2015; Shields et al. 2021). Recent research in rural China further supports the results and suggests that household environments strongly predict children's reading skills development (Wang et al. 2020). It is worth noting that the support parents and carers provide to children with regard to texts is essentially related to adults' engagement with texts and the interest they show in their children's reading. Therefore, our results align with recent

research (Bao et al. 2020; Rus, Sánchez-Casas, and Martín 2019), concluding that household involvement in schoolwork and reading is critical for student engagement with textbooks.

We shall acknowledge that in order to do so, it is essential that adults are interested in enhancing their reading first and possess resources to recommend books to their children. Dialoguing texts, which implicitly relates to household support, also requires time, which Villalpando Aguilar (2014) found fundamental in her research with lower secondary students in Jalisco, Mexico. The researcher determined that socio-cultural assets are associated with people's capacities to access books and, further, with the age at which they begin engaging with the texts. In future research, it would be important to understand the extent to which socio-economic factors among Colima's households are related to children's reading enjoyment, alongside other lines of inquiry listed below.

### ***Limitations and considerations for future research***

It is acknowledged that the variables explored might not explain large amounts of variance in our dependent variable. This situation, as mentioned, might indicate the prevalence of contextual, socioeconomic, and cultural characteristics in the development of reading enjoyment among Colima's primary school children. In that sense, we recommend further research to collect critical information on the students' background to examine the association of such covariates alongside those explored in this paper. We also acknowledge the inherent limitations of self-administered surveys. In particular, the presented results were provided by children, many of whom were supported in completing the questionnaire. The researchers had no control over the time and physical facilities for data collection. Still, an afterwards analysis suggests that the participants responded to the questionnaire in 15 min on average, in line with a pilot conducted during the instrument validation.

Unfortunately, students' age and sex were not collected, which could have been included in data modelling to explore differences in reading enjoyment. Also, the results of this research arise from a cross-sectional study, and hence, no intention to claim causality was made (Field 2009). Thus, future research should consider collecting data on these matters and, where possible, secure a longitudinal study of reading enjoyment with a representative sample of students. This research would be enhanced by including data that considers whether the effects of home and school are distributed differently across different groups. This exploration might include students' gender, age, and socioeconomic status, among others not collected in this study. Moreover, it becomes critical to approach this knowledge using multi-level models to explore differences among schools, school districts, and so on. Such a review might provide much-needed insight into where to dedicate financial resources for effective intervention.

### **Note**

1. In Mexico, primary education includes grades 1 to 6 (ages 6 to 12).

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