

Average Chinese reads 8 books in 2016



Students from a primary school in An County in southeast China's Jiangxi Province hold books donated to them by China's Publishers Association on April 14, 2017. [Photo/people.com.cn]

The average Chinese read 7.86 books last year, including 4.65 printed books and 3.21 eBooks, according to an annual poll released by the Chinese Academy of Press and Publication on Tuesday.

79.9% of China's population was identified as readers in 2016, which remained fairly similar compared to the 79.6% from the previous year, the 14th National Reading Survey shows.

The poll shows that the Chinese still preferred printed books to eBooks, as 51.6 % of the surveyed said they preferred to "hold a printed book" in their hands, while 33.8 % said they liked reading via mobile phones better. 9.8 % said they preferred to read online, and 3.8 % said they loved reading via e-book readers.

Xu Shengguo, Director of China Academy of Press and Publication Research Institute, said going back to hard-copy books is a worldwide trend, which has appeared in countries such as the U.S., the UK and France.

"Although digital reading is quick and convenient, it's only suitable for fragmented reading practices, while reading hard-copy books are conducive to in-depth reading," Xu said.

68.2 % of the surveyed said they had read on digital devices (including online, mobile phones and electronic readers) last year, up 4.2 % from the figure of 2015.

66.1 % read on mobile phones last year, a sharp increase of 6.1 % compared to

2015. The figure has been growing for eight consecutive years.

7.8 % said they read on an e-book reader, and 10.6 % said they had read on an iPad.

62.4 % of the adults surveyed said they read through WeChat, a popular Chinese messaging app, in 2016, a 10.5-percentage-point rise compared to the year earlier.

The annual survey was conducted nationwide, covering a sample size of 22,415 people from 52 cities.

Globally, French people read 15 books a year on average in 2013, according to figures released by the Paris Book Fair. Their U.S. counterparts read 12 books a year on average, according to pewinternet.org.