Reading Online Romance Novels Is Related To Chinese Readers' View of Love

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Abstract: Chinese online romance novels are novels aimed at female readers, which describe the love between women and men. Many young Chinese readers understand that novels have many conventions of plot, but they still engage with the perfect love between handsome men and beautiful women. This leads to a question: is reading romance novels related to Chinese people's concept of love? We cannot prove that there is a causal relationship between online romance novels and readers' view of love. Although many previous studies have been conducted on the influence of literary works on readers' values, some people read online romance novels as they agree with the views of love in the novels. In addition, we have not found research on the relationship between online romance novels and people's views of love. Our research hopes to make up for the lack of research on online romance novels as a genre. For our research, we collected 175 questionnaires. Using the method of frequency analysis, we analysed the specific characteristics of the participants in the study. After this, in accordance with the recommendations of reliability analysis and validity analysis, we used chi-square analysis and variance analysis to deal with the categorical and quantitative data, respectively. We found that people who read online romance novels look forward to marriage more than those who dislike the genre. People who often read online romance novels are more likely to value having common preferences with their partner when pursuing a romantic connection. People who read online romance novels are more worried that their partners may abandon them as a result of physical disability than those who have not read online romance novels. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that many women who read romance novels have immature views on love.

Keywords: Online Romantic Novel; China; Literature; Social Psychology; View of Love

1. Introduction

Online romance novels are novels aimed at women, which describe love stories taking place between men and women. In China, this genre is becoming increasingly popular. The protagonists in romance novels have perfect appearances and love. Our research investigates whether reading online romance novels is related to Chinese readers' view of love.

A considerable amount of research exists on how literature influences the values of readers and how romance novels depict love. However, we argue that there is insufficient evidence to prove that there is a causal relationship between online romance novels and readers' the view of love. Since many readers may will choose literary works match their own values, which will lead the statistical results of our questionnaire inaccurate.

We have found no research on the relationship between online romance novels on people's expectations and experiences of love. We hope to make up for the lack of academic research on Chinese online romance novels.

As the basis of our study, we collected questionnaires from 175 participants and summarised the basic characteristics of the respondents by frequency analysis. We adopted the suggestions of reliability and validity analysis, and we analysed the classified and quantitative data using chi-square analysis and variance analysis. The results show that people who read online romance novels look forward to marriage more than those who dislike online romance novels. When choosing a partner, people who often read online romance novels pay more attention to whether they have common interests with their prospective mate, compared with other factors: appearance, economic conditions and personality. People who read online romance novels are more worried that their partner will abandon them if they become disabled because of major accidents and diseases. Participants who read romance novels

occasionally are more agree they put everything in love, but do not have the confidence to keep a long-term relationship than those who often read romance novels.

This paper is formed of six parts: abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion, and conclusion. The section on results contains five subheadings, addressing the five types of analysis that were used during this study.

2. Literature Review

In recent years, there has been little research on the relationship between online romance novels and people's values. Most researchers usually focus on the ideas in literatures and the influence of literary works on readers' psychology. Many researchers may believe the relationship between online novels and readers is like the relationship between traditional books and readers.
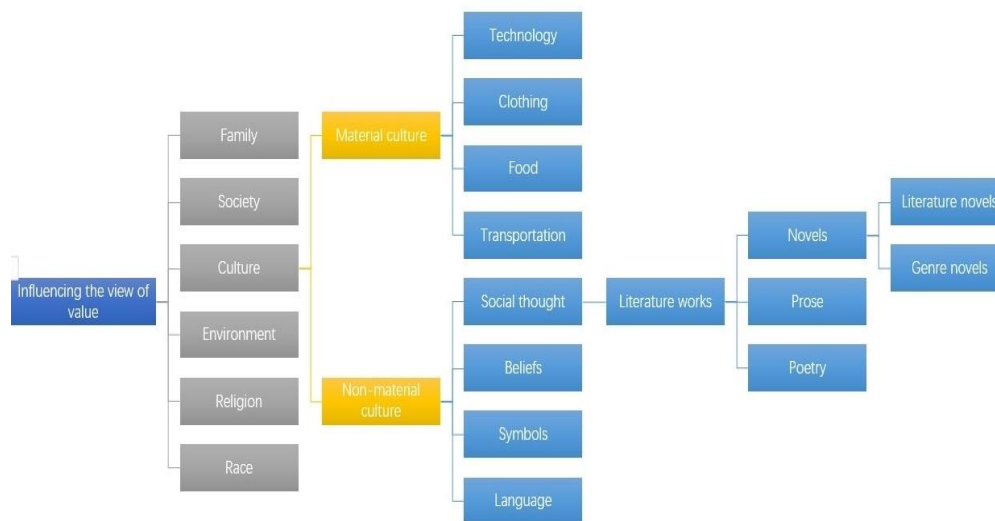

Figure 1: The relationship between the view of value and novels

Factors that affect people's values include family, society, culture, environment, religion, and race. Culture includes material culture and non-material culture. Material culture includes technology, clothing, food, and transportation. Non-material culture includes social thoughts, beliefs, symbols, and language. Literatures express culture. Literary works include novels, prose, and poetry. Novels include literary novels and genre novels. Literary novels can describe real-life and social events. Genre novels are completely fictional novels.

Chinese romance novels originated from the legendary novels of the Tang Dynasty. The representative works of legendary novels are the Story of Yingying and the Story of Xiaoyu Huo. Most of the audiences of romance novels have been women since the Tang Dynasty. However, Chinese traditional culture does not encourage female learning, so romance novels have not become the mainstream in ancient Chinese literary works. It was not until the mainland period of the People's Republic of China (1911-1949), when Chinese traditional culture was affected by other cultures, romance novels were further developed. Since 1978, because of the reform and opening-up of the People's Republic of China and the development of the Internet, online romance novels have become the mainstream of readers' consumption. The key point of network literature is that there are many oral words, which are easy for people to understand.

Some academics express more negative views of romance as a genre. Ann Douglas argues that romance readers of romance novels merely want to see what women look like in the eyes of men. These novels reflect a fantasy of patriarchy. The research of Culp proves that books can affect the moral values of adolescents [1]. Through the questionnaire survey of the students, the results show that the number of literatures recommended by teachers positively influences on the students.

Puglia [2] argues that romance novels reflect the author's interpretation of society and love. The study is a qualitative study of Charles Dickens's novels. The researcher criticises the idea that the unequal social system can only be made up for love and innocence. In realism style novels, love is a

kind of cover-up and escape from the miserable situation.

The study of Dodell-Feder & Tamir [3] via a meta-analysis of multi-stage random effects has proved that literary works can influence readers' attitudes via medical experiments. When people read novels that depict society from a positive light, their opinions about society will be more positive.

However, we argue it is impossible to determine the causal relationship between reading romance novels and people's view of love. According to previous papers, literary works can affect the psychology of ordinary people [3]. However, literary works are a collection of the author's values, and many readers will choose to read the works that conform to their own values. This problem may affect the statistics of the questionnaire survey. As a result, we chose whether reading romance novels is related to Chinese readers' view of love as the research topic.

3. Method

The question driving our research is: Is reading online romance novels related to Chinese people's view of love? We can divide the topic into two sub-questions: Does reading online romance novels and their plot conventions have anything to do with Chinese people's criteria for mate selection and their self-concept when seeking love?

We made a series of predictions about the partner selection criteria of the participants. Firstly, reading online romance novels may be related to people's priorities when they are looking for a partner. Specifically, people who read online romance novels may pay more attention to their prospective partner's appearance and economic conditions, as the protagonists described in online romance novels are handsome and rich. Secondly, reading online romance novels may be related to people's desire to get married. Thirdly, people who read online romance novels may be less likely to accept close relationships with different sex friends when they are in love than those who do not read online romance novels. Fourthly, people who read online romance novels may care more about their partner's previous experiences of love than those who do not read online romance novels.

Our predictions about the participants' selection criteria for partners are based on the generic conventions of online romance novels. Firstly, we assume that people who read online romance novels may be more likely to see sex as leading to marriage than those who do not read online romance novels, as the marriage scene is a common plot feature of these novels. Secondly, people who read online romance novels may be less convinced by the possibility of platonic friendship between men and women than those who do not read online romance novels. Thirdly, people who read online romance novels may find it more important for their partner to respect their wishes than those who do not read online romance novels. Fourthly, people who read online romance novels may care more about whether their partner is in a romantic relationship for the first time than those who do not read online romance novels. Fifthly, people who read online romance novels may care more about the economic situation of their partner than about their partner's character, in contrast to those who do not read online romance novels.

We made predictions about the participants' self-perception in the context of romantic relationships. Firstly, people who do not read online romance novels may be more worried that their partners in love will not tolerate their shortcomings than those who read online romance novels. Secondly, people who do not read online romance novels may be show more concern that, if they are disabled in accidents, their partners will abandon them. The reason for this may be that the handsome and rich hero of a romance novel would never abandon the heroine. Thirdly, people who do not read online romance novels may be more worried about being abandoned if their partners have a higher social status than theirs. Fourthly, people who do not read online romance novels may feel more anxiety that they cannot keep their relationship fresh than those who read online romance novels.

We predicted that people who like to read online romance novels may have lower self-esteem than those who do not read online romance novels. To investigate this, we set up two questions. Firstly, are people who often read romance novels more likely to agree they are a loser in their life? Secondly, do people who read online romance novels have less confidence in their ability to maintain a relationship than those who do not read online romance novels?

We made further predictions about the participants' self-concept in relation to the generic conventions of romance novels. Firstly, people who read online romance novels may be more likely to believe that they are highly focused on their love relationship than those who do not read online romance novels. Secondly, people who read online romance novels may be more worried that others

dislike them because of their appearance than those who do not read online romance novels. Thirdly, people who read online romance novels may be more worried that others will dislike them because of what they wear. Fourthly, people who read online romance novels may show less belief that their partners could abandon them due to serious academic or career difficulties than those who do not read online romance novels. Fifthly, people who read online romance novels may be less worried their partners could abandon them if they suffer from a serious illness than those who do not read online romance novels.

Our team of researchers conducted a questionnaire survey on 197 randomly chosen participants. The survey collected the characteristics of the respondents; for instance, their gender, age, education and personality type. In addition, we asked the participants for details about their current romantic life. These included the participants' sexual orientation, relationship status (single or partnered), the number of relationships they had conducted and how long these relationships lasted. We believe that the collection of quantitative data leads to more accurate conclusions on this research topic, so we made use of a simple four-level scale, similar to the Likert scale. The values of the four-point scale vary from the lowest to the highest value: disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, and agree. The higher the value, the more the participants agreed.

After obtaining the data, the researchers first used the frequency analysis method, using Statistical Product and Service Software Automatically (SPSSAU) software to study the classified data in the questionnaire survey. Frequency analysis allows researchers to identify key characteristics of the participants. Researchers can work with a large range of questions and response options when using this method. Its formula is:

$$\text{Frequency} = \text{total number} \times \text{frequencies} \tag{1}$$

Following the frequency analysis, the researchers analysed the reliability and factor validity of the collected data in Statistical Product and Service Software Automatically (SPSSAU) software. These two types of analysis were used to ensure the credibility of the data.

There are three indicators for measurement reliability analysis. They include the stability coefficient, equivalent coefficient, and consistency coefficient. We can measure the authenticity of the data using the Test-Retest Reliability, duplicate reliability method, Split-Half Reliability method and the α-reliability coefficient method. In this paper, a reliability coefficient method is used to analyse the data. The formula of the reliability analysis is:

$$a = \left(\frac{k}{k-1}\right) \times \left(1 - \sum \frac{Si^2}{ST^2}\right) \tag{2}$$

Factor validity analysis is made by factor analysis, and a comprehensive analysis is made via Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value, commonality, variance explanation rate value and factor load coefficient value. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value indicates the suitability of information extraction. The common value can exclude unreasonable research projects [4]. The value of the variance interpretation rate illustrates the level of information extracted from the project. The factor load coefficient measures the corresponding relationship between the dimension and the problem. The formula for validity analysis is:

$$CR = \frac{\left(\sum \lambda^2\right)}{\left[\left(\lambda^2\right) + \sum \theta\right]} \tag{3}$$

Finally, we classified the collected data. The classified data were calculated by cross (chi-square) analysis using Statistical Product and Service Software Automatically (SPSSAU) software, and the quantitative data was calculated by the method of analysis of variance [5]. The formula for cross analysis is:

$$\sum X_{i,j^2} = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E} \tag{4}$$

The formula of the analysis of variance is:

$$DF(factor) = r - 1 \quad (5)$$

$$DF(Error) = nT - r \quad (6)$$

$$Total = nT - 1 \quad (7)$$

The survey originally collected data from 210 participants. When we conducted manual data screening, we found that some participants had repeatedly filled out the same questionnaire. To protect the authenticity and objectivity of the data, we deleted samples with the same Internet Protocol (IP) address and highly similar responses. We screened 197 valid samples with completely unique IP addresses. However, a defect of the methodology is that the researchers did not use the Likert scale, which would have yielded more precise results.

4. Results

4.1 Frequency Analysis

Our research used the method of frequency analysis to analyse the characteristics of the respondents in the questionnaire. These include the interviewees' gender, age, education, personality type, sexual orientation, emotional status, and number of love relationships.

Table 1: Frequency analysis results

Name	Option	Frequency	Presentation (%)	Cumulative percentage (%)
Gender	Female	127	64.47	64.47
	Male	70	35.53	100.00
What's your age?	Below 20 years old	6	3.05	3.05
	21—25 years old	29	14.72	17.77
	26—30 years old	82	41.62	59.39
	31—35 years old	46	23.35	82.74
	36—40 years old	20	10.15	92.89
	41—50 years old	10	5.08	97.97
	Over 50 years old	4	2.03	100.00
What is your educational experience?	Doctor of philosophy	4	2.03	2.03
	College	25	12.69	14.72
	Undergraduate	147	74.62	89.34
	Master/postgraduate	16	8.12	97.46
	Below high school	5	2.54	100.00
What is your personality type?	Introverted	86	43.65	43.65
	Extroverted	104	52.79	96.45
	Neither extroverted nor introverted	7	3.55	100.00
What is your sexual orientation?	Bisexuality	16	8.12	8.12
	Gay	14	7.11	15.23
	Heterosexuality	166	84.26	99.49
	Neither extroverted nor introverted	1	0.51	100.00
6、Are you single?	No	125	63.45	63.45
	Yes	72	36.55	100.00
7、How many times have you been in love?	0 time	19	9.64	9.64
	1-3 times	149	75.63	85.28
	4-7 times	25	12.69	97.97
	＞7 times	4	2.03	100.00
What's the shortest time you have been in a relationship?	(Skip this topic because the participants are single)	19	9.64	9.64
	6-12 months	26	13.20	22.84
	＜30 days	44	22.34	45.18
	＜6 months	93	47.21	92.39
	＞12 months	15	7.61	100.00
What's the longest relationship you've ever been in?	(Skip this topic because the participants are single)	19	9.64	9.64
	1-3years	89	45.18	54.82
	0.5-1year	46	23.35	78.17
	＜one-half year	6	3.05	81.22
	＞three years	37	18.78	100.00
Do you read online romance novels?	I occasionally read online romance novels	109	55.33	55.33
	I have not read online romance novels	13	6.60	61.93
	I have read online romance novels, but I dislike them	6	3.05	64.97
	I often read online romance novels	69	35.03	100.00
Total		197	100.0	100.0

The result of frequency analysis was that, of the 175 samples, 64.47% of the participants were

women and 35.53% of the participants were men. In terms of the respondents' age, 41.62% placed themselves in the "26 to 30" category, accounting for most respondents. In response to the question about their level of education, 147 participants chose "undergraduate," which accounts for 74.62% of the total respondents. 52.79% of the respondents chose "extroverted" when identifying their personality traits; 43.54% of the people chose "introverted." When identifying their sexual orientation, most of the respondents chose "heterosexuality," accounting for 84.26%. When questioned about their relationship status, 63.45% of people reported that they had a partner, while 36.55% of the respondents were single. When asked to report the number of romantic relationships they had engaged in, 75.63% of respondents said they had fallen in love "1-3 times."

4.2 Reliability Analysis

The researchers entered the quantitative problem data related to the participants' view of love into the reliability analysis of the SPSSAU software. If the α-coefficient of the analysis result is higher than 0.8, the reliability is high; if the α-coefficient is between 0.7 and 0.8, the reliability is good; if the α-coefficient is between 0.6 and 0.7, the reliability is acceptable; if this value is less than 0.6, it means the reliability is common; if the CITC value is less than 0.3, you can consider deleting the items for this analysis. In addition, if the deleted α-coefficient is significantly higher than the α-coefficient, the researcher can consider deleting the analysis item and re-analysing it.

Table 2: Cronbach's reliability analysis results

Name	Correlation of correction items (CITC)	Deleted α-coefficient	Cronbach's α-coefficient
I put my heart and soul to every relationship.	0.359	0.806	0.813
I think we should get married after having sex.	0.268	0.810	
I cannot accept the intimacy of my partner's relationship with different sex friends.	0.357	0.806	
I do not believe in pure friendship between men and women.	0.297	0.809	
I hope my partner will allow to me to do anything while I am in the relationship.	0.375	0.805	
I care about my partner's appearance.	0.251	0.811	
I worry people dislike me because of my weight.	0.232	0.812	
I care about whether my partner is in love for the first time.	0.477	0.800	
I care about my partner's romantic history.	0.344	0.807	
I care about my partner's loyalty to our relationship.	0.368	0.805	
I care about my partner's financial situation more than their character.	0.401	0.804	
I worry my partner cannot stand my character flaws.	0.423	0.803	
I am worried I lost my charm because of my bad manners.	0.246	0.811	
I do not have the confidence to maintain a relationship.	0.452	0.801	
I worry people dislike me because of my weight.	0.470	0.800	
I worry people dislike me because of my clothes.	0.466	0.800	
If I encounter serious study/career difficulties, I worry my partner will abandon me.	0.382	0.805	
If I have a serious disease, I worry my partner will abandon me.	0.351	0.806	
If I am in love, and I have physically disabled because of an accident, I worry my partner will abandon me.	0.347	0.806	
If my partner above my social status than me in all aspects, I worry my partner will abandon me.	0.367	0.805	
I worry my partner will abandon me after the novelty of love is over.	0.408	0.803	
I think I am a loser.	0.363	0.806	
Standardized Cronbach α coefficient: 0.812			

According to the results of reliability analysis, the quantitative data reliability coefficient in the survey "Is reading online romance novels related to Chinese readers' view of love?" is 0.813, which shows the data reliability quality of this questionnaire is very high.

The CITC value of these items is greater than 0. 4, indicating that the researchers should keep these questions. "I care about whether my partner is in love for the first time", "I care about my partner's financial situation more than their character", "I do not have the confidence to maintain a relationship", "I worry my partner cannot stand my character flaws", "I worry people dislike me because of my weight", "I worry people dislike me because of my clothes", "I worry my partner will abandon me after the novelty of love is over".

The CITC value here is less than 0.4, meaning that the researchers can either delete these items, or they can keep them. We kept those questions and data. "I put my heart and soul to every relationship", "I cannot accept the intimacy of my partner's relationship with different sex friends", "I hope my partner will allow to me to do anything while I am in the relationship", "I care about my partner's romantic history", "I care about my partner's loyalty to our relationship", "if I encounter serious study/career difficulties, I worry my partner will abandon me", "if I have a serious disease, I worry my partner will abandon me", "if I am in love, and I have physically disabled because of an accident, I worry my partner will abandon me", "if my partner above my social status than me in all aspects, I worry my partner will abandon me" and "I think I am a loser."

These items have a CITC value of 0.2 to 0.3, showing that the relationship between these problems and other problems is weak. Based on the results of our analysis, we decided to delete these questions. "I think we should get married after having sex", "I do not believe in pure friendship between men and women", "I care about my partner's appearance", "I care about my partner's weight", "I am worried I lost my charm because of my bad manners."

In addition, the value of the deleted alpha coefficient of all questions is not significantly higher than the alpha coefficient. This means that after any question is deleted, the reliability coefficient will not increase significantly. Therefore, the deleted alpha coefficient should not result in any problems.

4.3 Factor Validity Analysis

To ensure the effectiveness of the study, we also used the method of validity analysis to study the quantitative data. A KMO value higher than 0.8 shows the validity of the research data is very good, and the data is very suitable for information extraction. A KMO value between 0.7 and 0.8 shows that the validity of the research data is good, and the data is suitable for extracting information. A value between 0.6 and 0.7 shows that the validity of the research data is acceptable and is suitable for extracting information. When the KMO value is less than 0.6, it means that the data is not suitable for extracting information. However, if there are only two question options, the maximum KMO value is 0.5.

In addition, if the corresponding relationship between the problem and the factor is basically consistent with the researchers' expectations of the study, then the validity is good. If there is a serious deviation in the relationship between the analysis item and the factor, the researcher can delete the problem. If the common value of the problem and factor is less than 0.4 or 0.5, the researcher can delete the question.

Table 3: Factor validity analysis results

Name	Factor load factor								Common Degree (common factor variance)
	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6	Factor7	Factor8	
I put my heart and soul into every relationship.	0.085	0.104	0.304	-0.034	0.008	0.733	0.053	-0.063	0.656
I think we should get married after having sex.	0.132	0.199	0.037	0.132	-0.049	0.035	0.064	0.887	0.871
I cannot accept the intimacy of my partner's relationship with different sex friends.	0.148	0.527	0.007	0.553	-0.07	0.074	0.009	-0.424	0.796
I do not believe in pure friendship between men and women.	0.041	0.049	0.026	0.079	0.793	0.036	0.027	0.027	0.642
I hope my partner will allow to me to do anything while I am in the relationship.	0.358	0.405	0.009	-0.036	0.06	0.382	-0.167	-0.004	0.471
I care about my partner's appearance.	-0.218	-0.11	0.607	0.47	0.099	0.169	0.057	0.035	0.691
I worry people dislike me because of my weight.	-0.066	0.109	0.211	0.282	-0.2	0.065	0.581	0.186	0.557
I care about whether my partner is in love for the first time.	0.243	0.514	0.044	0.061	0.275	0.338	-0.181	0.128	0.568
I care about my partner's romantic history.	-0.056	0.707	0.059	0.098	0.131	0	0.136	0.195	0.589
I care about my partner's loyalty to our relationship.	0.68	0.044	-0.045	0.04	-0.116	0.239	0.211	-0.028	0.583
I care about my partner's financial situation more than their character.	0.094	0.239	0.103	0.136	0.61	0.128	0.043	-0.092	0.494
I worry my partner cannot stand my character flaws.	0.059	0.275	0.653	0.095	-0.035	0.191	0.173	0.126	0.598
I am worried I lost my charm because of my bad manners.	0.163	-0.007	0.007	-0.027	0.157	0.067	0.706	-0.026	0.555
I do not have the confidence to maintain a relationship.	0.511	0.17	0.256	0.16	0.249	0.153	-0.292	0.004	0.552
I worry people dislike me because of my weight.	0.222	0.124	0.046	0.426	0.302	0.184	0.151	0.157	0.42
I worry people dislike me because of my clothes.	0.549	0.205	0.153	0.211	0.053	-0.038	0.306	-0.051	0.512
If I encounter serious study/career difficulties, I worry my partner will abandon me.	0.333	0.006	0.725	-0.076	0.184	0.077	0.013	-0.061	0.686
If I have a serious disease, I worry my partner will abandon me.	0.05	0.146	-0.368	0.442	0.16	0.451	0.3	0.107	0.686
If I am in love, and I have physically disabled because of an accident, I worry my partner will abandon me.	0.286	-0.015	0.125	0.673	0.173	-0.182	-0.018	0.135	0.632
If my partner above my social status than me, I worry my partner will abandon me.	0.234	0.485	0.182	-0.191	0.282	-0.142	0.389	-0.001	0.611
I worry my partner will abandon me after the novelty of love is over.	0.352	-0.089	0.106	0.036	0.22	0.537	0.082	0.109	0.5
I think I am a loser.	0.597	-0.003	0.047	0.096	0.151	0.083	-0.011	0.157	0.422
Characteristic root value (before rotation)	4.559	1.538	1.459	1.262	1.133	1.079	1.065	1.002	-
Variance interpretation rate % (Before rotation)	20.72%	6.99%	6.63%	5.74%	5.15%	4.90%	4.84%	4.55%	-
Cumulative variance explanation rate % (Before rotation)	20.72%	27.72%	34.35%	40.08%	45.23%	50.13%	54.97%	59.53%	-
Characteristic root value (after rotation)	2.133	1.769	1.766	1.628	1.59	1.57	1.452	1.184	-
Variance interpretation rate % (After rotation)	9.70%	8.04%	8.03%	7.40%	7.23%	7.14%	6.60%	5.38%	-
Cumulative variance interpretation rate % (After rotation)	9.70%	17.73%	25.76%	33.17%	40.39%	47.53%	54.13%	59.52%	-
KMO value	0.747								-
Barthes spherical number value	793.863								-
Df	231								-
p value	0								-

Note: the blue numbers in the table indicate that the absolute value of the load factor is greater than 0.4, and the red numbers indicate that the degree of commonness (common factor variance) is less than 0.4.

The results of validity analysis of the data we collected show that the common values of all research questions are higher than 0.4, and the KMO value is 0.747. The variance explanation rates of 8 factors greater than 0.6 are 9.695%, 8.040%, 8.029%, 7.402%, 7.229%, 7.138%, 6.601%, 5.384%, respectively.

The explanation rate of cumulative variance after rotation is 59.517% > 50%. This shows that researchers can effectively extract the information from the research project. Furthermore, the factor load coefficient is consistent with the expectation, which shows all data of this questionnaire survey is valid [6].

4.4 Chi-Square Test

The chi-square test is suitable for studying the difference between classified data X and classified data Y. Researchers should calculate whether there is a significant difference between X and Y ($p < 0.05$ or 0.01). If it is significant, researchers then compare the percentage in parentheses to describe the differences in the specific options [7].

We set "Do you read online romance novels?" as X, and we set "What qualities do you value most in a partner?" and "How much do you look forward to marriage?" as Y. The reasons we chose chi-square analysis is that in the survey "Is reading online romance novels related to Chinese reader's view of love?" only these two questions can generate classified data about readers' conception of love.

Table 4: Chi-square test analysis result

Questions	Options	Do you read online romance novels? (%)				Total	χ²	p
		I occasionally read online romance novels	I have never read an online romance novel	I have read online romance novels, but I dislike them	I often read online romance novels			
What qualities do you value most in a partner?	Common interests	36(33.03)	2(15.38)	0(0.00)	27(39.13)	65(32.99)	17.667	0.039*
	Appearance	11(10.09)	5(38.46)	0(0.00)	6(8.70)	22(11.17)		
	Behavior	53(48.62)	4(30.77)	5(83.33)	29(42.03)	91(46.19)		
	Partners' Financial situation	9(8.26)	2(15.38)	1(16.67)	7(10.14)	19(9.64)		
Total		109	13	6	69	197		
How much do you look forward to marriage?	I do not want to get married.	5(4.59)	4(30.77)	1(16.67)	6(8.70)	16(8.12)	33.003	0.000**
	I desire to marry.	27(24.77)	2(15.38)	1(16.67)	31(44.93)	61(30.96)		
	I kind of desire to marry.	63(57.80)	6(46.15)	1(16.67)	29(42.03)	99(50.25)		
	No idea, I do not care about marriage.	14(12.84)	1(7.69)	3(50.00)	3(4.35)	21(10.66)		
Total		109	13	6	69	197		

* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

The results show significant levels of difference between "What qualities do you value most in a partner?" and "How much do you look forward to marriage?" ($P < 0.05$).

The items, "Do you read online romance novels?" and "What qualities do you value most in a partner?" showed a significant difference at 0.05 level (chi=17.667, paired 0.039 < 0.05). Through the percentage difference, we found that 39.13% of people who often read online romance novels want to have common interests with their partner. The ratio is significantly higher than the average of 32.99%. Meanwhile, 38.46% of people who have not read online romance novels focus on their partner's appearance, which is significantly higher than the average of 11.17%. The proportion of people who have read online romance novels, but dislike online romance novels, who value their partner's character is 83.33%, which is significantly higher than the average level of 46.19%.

"Do you read online romance novels?" showed a significant level of difference from "How much do you look forward to marriage" (chi=33.003, 0.000 < 0.01). The percentage difference shows that the proportion of romance readers who yearn for marriage is 44.93%, which is significantly higher than the average of 30.96%. The proportion of people who occasionally read online romance novels and expressed a desire to marry was 57.80%, which was significantly higher than the average level of 50.25%. Meanwhile, 50.005% of people who have read online romance novels, but dislike them, stated that they did not care about marriage. This is significantly higher than the average of 10.66%.

4.5 Analysis Of Variance

Based on the results of reliability analysis and validity analysis, we deleted the following options, "I

think I should get married after having sex", "I do not believe in pure friendship between men and women", "I care about the appearance of my partner", "I care about my partner's stature" and "I am worried about my lack of attractiveness because of poor manners".

One-way ANOVA can be used to analyse the relationship between classified data and quantitative data [8]. Analysis of variance can analyse the differences among multiple options in a questionnaire [9]. However, a t-test can only compare the differences between the two options. We set "Do you read online romance novels" to X. We then set the following options to Y: "I put my heart and soul to every relationship", "I cannot accept that my partner is intimate with their friends", "I want my partner to allow me to do anything", "I care if my partner is in love for the first time", "I care about my partner's romantic history", "I care about my partner's emotional loyalty", "I care about partner's financial situation more than their character", "I am worried that my partner cannot tolerate my character flaws", "I am worried people dislike me because of my stature", "I am worried that people dislike me because of what I wear", "If I have serious study/career difficulties, I worry that my partner will abandon me", "If I have a serious disease, I worry that my partner will abandon me", "If my partner is better than me in all aspects, I worry about they will abandon me", "I worry that I will be abandoned after the novelty of love is over", "I think I am a loser", "I do not have the confidence to maintain a relationship" and "If I have disabled caused by an accident in a relationship, I will worry partner will abandon me".

Table 5: Analysis of variance results

	Do you read online romance novels? (Mean ±standard deviation)				F	p
	I occasionally read online romance novels (*n*=109)	I have never read an online romance novel (*n*=13)	I have read online romance novels, but I dislike them (*n*=6)	I often read online romance novels (*n*=69)		
I put my heart and soul to every relationship.	3.23±0.93	2.85±1.21	3.17±1.33	2.81±0.99	2.777	0.042*
I cannot accept the intimacy of my partner's relationship with different sex friends.	2.72±1.00	2.38±1.04	2.50±1.22	2.81±1.00	0.760	0.518
I hope my partner will allow to me to do anything while I am in the relationship.	3.12±0.98	2.54±1.13	2.50±1.22	2.99±1.08	1.815	0.146
I care about whether my partner is in love for the first time.	2.96±0.98	2.69±1.25	3.00±1.10	2.86±1.07	0.367	0.777
I care about my partner's romantic history.	3.11±0.98	2.62±1.33	3.17±1.17	3.06±1.03	0.926	0.429
I care about my partner's loyalty to our relationship.	2.77±0.95	2.69±1.03	2.50±1.22	2.77±0.97	0.170	0.917
I care about my partner's financial situation more than their character.	3.13±0.99	2.77±1.24	2.67±1.03	2.87±0.97	1.439	0.233
I worry my partner cannot stand my character flaws.	3.28±0.93	2.54±1.27	3.17±1.17	3.28±1.01	2.270	0.082
I do not have the confidence to maintain a relationship.	3.08±0.99	2.54±1.13	2.50±1.64	2.64±1.07	3.293	0.022*
I worry people dislike me because of my weight.	2.86±1.10	2.69±1.25	2.50±1.38	2.96±1.05	0.482	0.695
I worry people dislike me because of my clothes.	2.98±1.05	2.54±1.27	2.67±1.37	3.14±1.02	1.459	0.227
If I encounter serious study/career difficulties, I worry my partner will abandon me.	3.18±0.93	2.54±1.05	3.17±1.17	3.06±1.04	1.711	0.166
If I have a serious disease, I worry my partner will abandon me.	2.90±1.00	2.38±1.26	2.67±1.03	2.87±1.00	1.063	0.366
If I am in love, and I have physically disabled because of an accident, I worry my partner will abandon me.	3.06±1.01	2.38±1.12	2.50±1.38	3.19±0.90	3.025	0.031*
If my partner above my social status than me, I worry my partner will abandon me.	3.20±0.89	2.54±1.20	2.50±1.38	3.09±1.00	2.648	0.050
I worry my partner will abandon me after the novelty of love is over.	3.08±0.98	3.00±1.15	2.67±1.03	2.97±1.20	0.386	0.763
I think I am a loser.	2.55±1.16	2.46±1.39	2.17±1.33	2.70±1.18	0.526	0.665

* *p*<0.05 ** *p*<0.01

X is categorised as classified data while Y is quantitative data. 'One-way ANOVA was conducted into the relationship between X ("Do you read online romance novels?") and the following items which were set as Y: "I put my heart and soul to every relationship", "I do not have the confidence to maintain

a relationship", and "if I have disable because of accidents, I worry my partner will abandon me". The results show that there are significant differences among these three questions ($p < 0.05$).
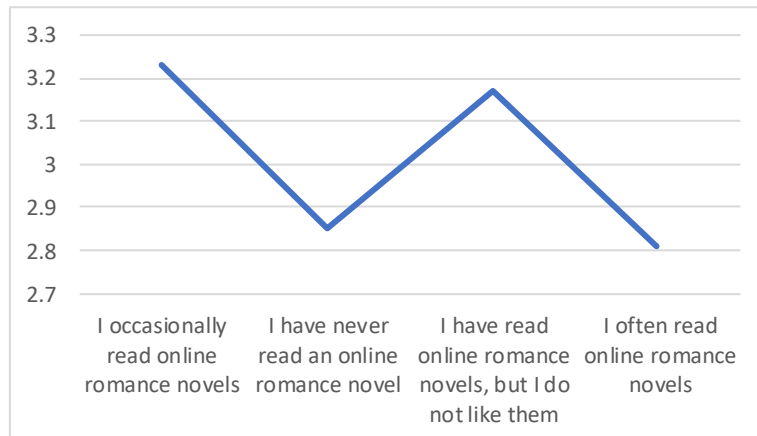

Figure 2: The variance analysis line chart between "Have you ever read online romance novels?" and "I have always been fully committed to every love relationship."
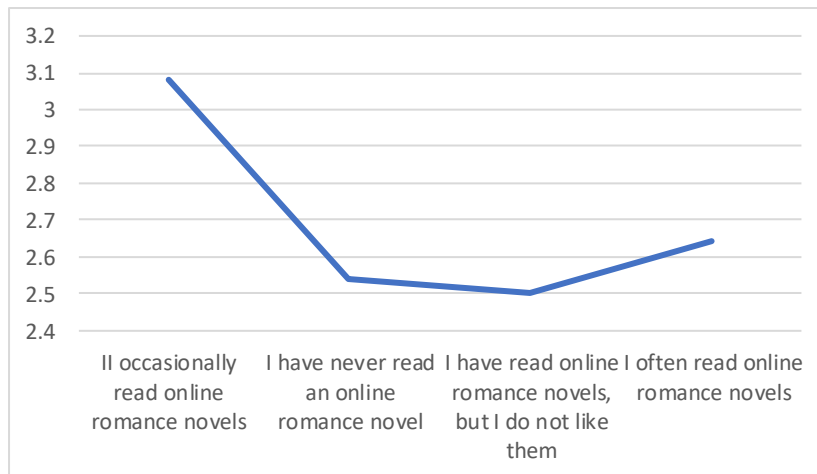

Figure 3: The variance analysis line chart between "Do you read online romance novels?   "And" I do not have the confidence to stay in a relationship"
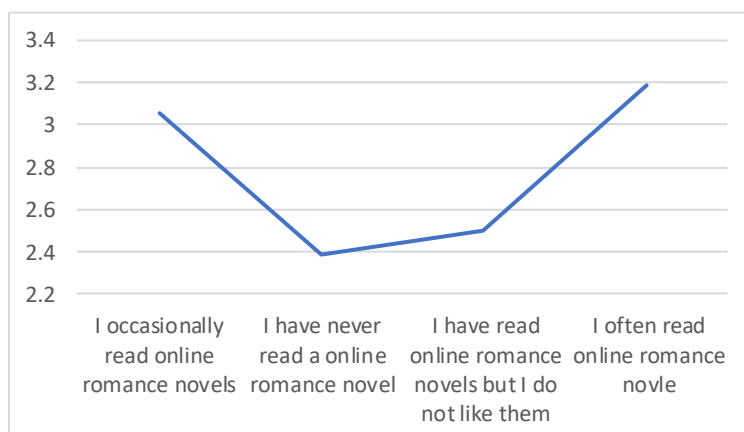

Figure 4: The variance analysis line chart between "Do you read online romance novels?" and "If I have a physical disability caused by an accident, I worry that my partner will abandon me"

"Do you read online romance novels?" in relation to "If I have a physical disability caused by an accident, I worry that my partner will abandon me" shows a significant level of 0.05 (Found 3.025 paired 0.031). The specific differences show that people who occasionally read online romance novels

are more likely to agree with this statement than those who have not read online romance novels. People who often read online romance novels are also more likely to agree with the statement than those who have not read online romance novels.

In contrast, the following response options, set as Y, show consistency, and there is no significant difference. Those response options include "do you read online romance novels?" to "I cannot accept that my partner is intimate with friends", "I hope our partner to allow me to do anything in the relationship", "I care if my partner is in love for the first time." I care about my partner's love experience." "I care about my partner's emotional loyalty", "I care more about my partner financial situation than their character", "I worry my partner cannot stand my character shortcomings in the relationship", "I worry people dislike me because of my stature", "I worry people dislike me because of what I wear", "if I encounter serious academic or career difficulties. I will worry about being abandoned by my partner, "if I have a serious disease, I worry my partner will abandon me", "if my partner is better than me in all aspects, I worry my partner will abandon me", "I worry my partner will abandon me after the freshness of love", "I am a loser".

5. Discussion

Our study addresses the question: "Is reading online romance novels correlated to Chinese readers' view of love?" This central quest can be divided into two sub-questions. Firstly, do Chinese people's criteria for choosing partners and their self-recognition in the context of romantic relationships relate to reading online romance novels? Secondly, whether the fixed generic conventions of online romance novels reflected to readers' mate selection criteria and self-perception?

We found that reading online romance novels does indeed is related to Chinese people's view of love. Most readers of online romance novels in China are women. This genre of novel is characterised by love stories that are unlikely to happen in reality; instead, they reflect certain values of contemporary Chinese society.

Some of our predictions were valid, and some were not. In line with our predictions, the results show that reading online romance novels is related to participants' desire to find a partner, and whether they wanted to get married. Specifically, responses suggest that romance readers are more likely to desire marriage than people who dislike romance novels.

Our findings did not confirm our predictions. People who often read online romance novels do not care about partner's appearance, they more valued having common interests with their partner. However, what we did not expect was people who do not read online romance novels put a greater value on their partner's appearance. People who have read online romance novels, but dislike them, are more likely to prefer partners who have a good moral character. In addition, some values that we think are hard for ordinary people to accept but are so common in romance novels do not affect readers' the mate selection criteria of the participants.

We predicted that reading online romance novels would be related to participants' self-perception in a romantic context. The sole response option to pass the data test was, "If I am physically disabled because of an accident, I worry that my partner will abandon me" Participants' responses showed that people who read romance novels are more worried that their partners could abandon them due to a physical disability than those who do not read romance novels.

We further predicted that values common in romance novels may be unfamiliar to the average person would be correlated to the interviewees' self-perception. Only two of our hypotheses were valid. One finding is that people who occasionally read online romance novels are more likely to agree that they put their heart and soul into their relationships than those who often read online romance novels. Another result is that people who occasionally read romance novels are more likely to agree that they do not have the confidence to maintain a relationship than those who often read romance novels.

Conventions of plots in online romance novels include car accidents and cancer. Online romance novels are written for women, but the novels ignore the friendship between women and encourage women to compete to gain the love of men. Many novel readers and writers do not have love experience, and their views of love and marriage are impractical. However, romance novels are very popular among people of marriageable age in China. If the values of romance novels represent the views of most young Chinese women on love, it shows that those people's view of love is uncompleted. We do not know if the views of love can explain why the divorce rate in China is as high as 50%. Perhaps China should pay more attention to people's mental health.

The disadvantage of this study is that the researchers did not base their questions on a detailed analysis of online romance novels to establish the views of love that characterise this genre. This leads to an incomplete set of questions and options in the questionnaire. In addition, the Likert five scale was not used in the study to collect quantitative data. Since the author is undertaking this kind of research for the first time, there is not enough standardisation in collecting quantitative data. If other researchers are interested in this topic in the future, we hope they can correct the disadvantages of this study. A related question that merits further research is whether online romance novels affect people's love lives in actual terms. This would be an interesting topic of research, as online romance novels are becoming more and more popular among young people in China.

6. Conclusion

Online romance novels are targeted at female readers and describe love stories between women and men. In recent years, more and more people engage with online romance novels, as people yearn for crafted exteriors and impeccably love. Our research question is whether reading online romance novels is related to Chinese people's view of love.

We conducted a questionnaire survey of 175 people. The researchers used the method of frequency analysis to understand the characteristics of the participants. According to the recommendations of reliability analysis and validity analysis, the researchers used chi-square analysis and variance analysis to deal with the classified and quantitative data in the questionnaire. The readers who occasionally read online romance novels were more likely than the readers who frequently read the novels to agree that they put their heart and soul into the love relationship but have no confidence to maintain a long-term relationship.

We found that people who read online romance novels look forward to marriage more than those who dislike reading online romance novels. People who often read online romance novels are more likely to seek partners who share common interests with them. People who read online romance novels are more worried about their partners abandoning them if they become disabled than those who have not read online romance novels.

The significance of this paper is to confirm that many women who read romance novels have an unrealistic view of love. There may be a correlation between the incomplete views of love and the high divorce rate in China. The deficiency of this study is that our research methods could not precisely measure the respondents' view of love and that the Likert scale was not used. Those disadvantages mean that the research is not sufficiently standardised. We hope that future researchers can find an authoritative scale to measure the participants' view of love. Future researchers also could also collect a greater quantity of responses.

7. Statements and Declarations

7.1 Funding

The authors funded all the studies.

7.2 Conflicts Of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest. The research also received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors. The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

7.3 Availability Of Data And Material

The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article and its supplementary materials.

7.4 Code Availability

Not applicable.

7.5 Ethics Approval

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

7.6 Consent To Participate

I give my consent for the publication of identifiable details, which can include the photograph and or details within the text to be published in the above Journal and Article.

7.7 Consent For Publication

I give my consent for the publication of identifiable details, which can include the photograph and or details within the text to be published in the above Journal and Article.

7.8 Authors' Contributions

Not applicable. The paper only has one author.

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