

## Research Review on Government Procurement of Public Library Services in China over the Past Decade: Postprint

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### Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] To summarize the research status of government procurement of public library services in China over the past decade and provide references for further in-depth research. [Method/Process] Literature was collected through keyword retrieval and citation tracing, with relevant themes summarized through reading and analysis. [Results/Conclusion] Research on government procurement of public library services in China started late but has developed rapidly, with continuously expanding research fields and increasingly systematic research outcomes. Future research can be conducted from aspects such as strengthening conceptual analysis, strengthening research on social organization contracting, case transformation research, relevant legislation research, third-party evaluation research, and procurement risk research.

### Full Text

#### A Decade of Research on Government Procurement of Public Library Services in China: A Review

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### Abstract:

[Purpose/Significance] This study summarizes the current state of research on government procurement of public library services in China over the past decade to provide a reference for further in-depth investigation. [Method/Process] Literature was collected through keyword retrieval and citation tracing in the CNKI database, with relevant themes identified through reading and analytical synthesis. [Result/Conclusion] Research on government procurement of public library

services in China started late but has developed rapidly, with continuously expanding research fields and increasingly systematic findings. Future research should strengthen conceptual discrimination, investigate social organization contracting, conduct case transformation studies, explore relevant legislation, develop third-party evaluation mechanisms, and examine procurement risks.

**Keywords:** government procurement; public library; library services

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Government procurement of public library services from social forces represents a crucial pathway for transforming government functions and innovating social governance. It is also a fundamental model for government provision of library services to the public. Since 2010, concentrated practice of government procurement of public library services has emerged in China. Subsequently, the state has continuously issued relevant policies and gradually improved laws and regulations governing government procurement of public cultural services, which has greatly guided and promoted practical implementation. In 2011, the *Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Major Issues Concerning Deepening Cultural System Reform and Promoting the Great Development and Prosperity of Socialist Culture* began guiding and encouraging social forces to participate in public cultural services through establishing entities, funding projects, and providing facilities. The 2015 *Opinions on Doing a Good Job in Government Procurement of Public Cultural Services from Social Forces* clarified that government could procure public library operation and management services from social forces. The 2017 *National “Thirteenth Five-Year” Cultural Development Reform Plan Outline* proposed promoting government procurement of public cultural services at all levels and encouraging social organizations and enterprises to participate in the operation of public cultural facilities and the provision of products and services. The *Public Library Law of the People’s Republic of China*, implemented on January 1, 2018, also explicitly stipulates that the state shall adopt measures such as government procurement to support citizens, legal persons, and other organizations in establishing public libraries. Therefore, this paper collects literature from 2010-2020 on government procurement of public library services from social forces, focusing on the two main actors—government and social forces—and reviews both theoretical and practical research to summarize current research status and deficiencies, and to propose recommendations for future research.

## 1. Conceptual Discrimination

Scholars generally agree that government procurement of public library services is an activity centered around four key terms: “government, society, contract, and evaluation.” This concept can thus be understood as a contractual act between government and various social organizations at different levels to better supply library services, with government providing financial support to social organizations based on performance evaluation and audience outcomes. In

essence, it establishes a principal-agent relationship between government and society through market-based contracts.

The Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, which has emerged in the public library field in recent years, is closely related to government procurement of public library services. In the 2015 *Guiding Opinions on Promoting Public-Private Partnership Models in Public Service Fields* issued by the State Council, PPP is defined as “the government adopts competitive methods to select social capital with investment, operation, and management capabilities. Both parties sign contracts based on the principle of equal consultation to clarify rights and responsibilities, with social capital providing public services and the government paying corresponding fees based on performance evaluation results to ensure reasonable returns for social capital.” Academia also views the PPP model as a “benefit-sharing, risk-sharing” partnership between government and social capital. Therefore, the similarity between government procurement and the PPP model lies in the fact that both achieve optimal supply of public services through contractual agreements between government and society under a principal-agent relationship. The core difference is whether social capital appears in the investment phase. In government procurement, social capital only participates in operation and management, not investment. In the PPP model, social capital and fiscal funds run through the entire project process, playing important roles not only in operation and management but also, more importantly, appearing simultaneously in the investment phase.

Additionally, based on different service providers and using Savas’s policy classification tool for public service supply, there exist various supply mechanisms between government and market, such as intergovernmental agreements, government sales, and volunteer services. These mechanisms are all reflected in the practice of government provision of public library services but are distinctly different from government procurement of public library services. According to Wang Wen’s analytical framework for library service supply mechanisms, when both the provider and producer of library services are government departments, it constitutes intergovernmental agreement supply; when the provider is the private sector and the producer is the government department, it is government sales; when both provider and producer are private sectors, it is volunteer service. These all differ from government procurement, where the government department is the provider and the private sector is the producer.

Therefore, based on the research of Deng Yinhua and Wang Wen, this paper defines the scope of review as the standard form of government procurement of public library services, where government departments serve as providers and private sectors as producers, with the core being market-based contractual supply of library services. Intergovernmental agreements, government sales, and volunteer services are excluded from this review.

## 2. Data Sources

This study uses the CNKI database as its source, with search terms set as “subject” in an “OR” relationship. The search formula was  $SU=(\text{'government procurement'}+\text{'government procurement of services'}+\text{'government procurement of public services'})*\text{library}$ , with the time range set to 2010-2020, using exact matching. The target literature set was expanded through reference and citation tracing. After excluding irrelevant literature based on the defined research topics, 167 relevant research documents were selected. A preliminary review of these 167 documents reveals that 2015 represents a clear dividing line in research on government procurement of public library services. Literature before 2015 consisted mainly of master’s and doctoral theses focusing on basic concept elaboration and practical dilemmas, while literature after 2015 comprised more journal articles that gradually incorporated public management knowledge for categorical elaboration, with an increase in practical cases.

## 3. Basic Research on Government Procurement of Public Library Services

Early research focused on exploring the connotation, background, significance, and dilemmas of government procurement of library services from social forces. With the development of practice, substantial research has focused on contractors, procurement models, procurement mechanisms, evaluation and supervision, and countermeasures in practice, laying a solid foundation for further development.

### 3.1 Service Connotation

Researchers hold different views on the connotation of government procurement of library services from social forces. Yi Bin et al. [3] believe it is the government’s introduction of market mechanisms to delegate public library services that should be provided by itself to contractors, with payment based on the quantity and quality of services provided. Chen Zhihua [4] views it as the government’s allocation of funds from the social welfare budget to directly fund social service institutions or purchase social services through public bidding. Qi Lingge [5], from the perspective of library service supply, considers government procurement of library services as a new model of library service supply characterized by “government funding, social participation, full competition, and contract governance.” He Wei [6] emphasizes the evaluation role in the procurement process, proposing the concept of “government funding, contract management, and evaluation fulfillment.” The differences among these definitions lie in that the first two view government procurement as a channel for state fiscal funds or an implementation approach, while the latter two view it as a new contractual model between government and society that incorporates third-party evaluation and public participation, aligning with polycentric governance principles. Their commonality lies in recognizing the possibility of government procurement and

the necessity of market participation.

Additionally, some definitions approach from the broader perspective of public service procurement. Liu Xiaoting [7] views government procurement of public library services as an extension of government procurement of public services, while Ma Xiaojun [8] considers it a manifestation of the government's responsibility to meet public library service needs. This indirectly confirms that government procurement of public library services is a specific branch of government procurement of public services. Although different researchers have analyzed and interpreted government procurement of public library services from different perspectives with slightly different definitions, "government, society, contract, and evaluation" are clearly the key elements. Therefore, government procurement of public library services from social forces is a contractual act between government and various social organizations at different levels to better supply library services, with government providing financial support to social organizations based on evaluation and audience outcomes.

### 3.2 Procurement Background and Significance

Research on the reasons for the rise of government procurement of public library services includes several perspectives. Chen Hong [9] divides motivating factors into positive and negative categories. Positive factors include government promotion, contractor emergence, and international experience; negative factors include conceptual barriers, policy and legal obstacles, supervision and control barriers, capacity barriers, and budget constraints. Zhou Yonghong et al. [10] further simplify these to defects in traditional supply models, public service supply model reform, social library operation, and public policy, all of which have laid the foundation for government procurement of library services. Tian Li [11] examines government procurement of public library services within the context of European and American public-private partnership theory and practice, public product supply innovation, and private library development. Zhang Junhua [12] believes that government procurement of library services has changed the supply model and principal-agent relationship of library services, creating pressure for change in public libraries and representing a profound manifestation of changes in state-society relations, public policy transformation, and discourse system evolution. Additionally, researchers generally agree that government procurement helps promote government function transformation, improve resource utilization efficiency, enhance the quality and efficiency of library service supply, and meet diverse public demands. It is evident that early research already demonstrated profound understanding of the background and significance of government procurement of public library services, identifying the necessity and feasibility of utilizing social forces for public library procurement through international and domestic comparisons and historical model comparisons, thereby removing ideological obstacles for future research.

## 4. Development Research on Government Procurement of Public Library Services

### 4.1 Contractors

Current research typically divides library service contractors into for-profit and non-profit categories, focusing on discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each to provide references for government decision-making.

For-profit social forces are primarily companies and enterprises, with procurement methods mostly being independent relational competitive purchasing. Yi Bin et al. [13] believe this option allows government to obtain maximum benefits at minimum cost and should be the preferred choice, while noting that procurement procedure details and consultation participation mechanisms should be further improved. Li Jian [14] suggests that companies can fully utilize their technological and equipment advantages to attract small and medium-sized newly established libraries with sufficient funding but lacking technology, resources, and experience. Lu Hejian et al. [15] argue that the current degree of marketization in China's public cultural service field is not high, market competition remains insufficient, and this has affected the development of socialized operation. Additionally, Lu Hejian et al. [16] point out that in socialized management, enterprise personnel often lack professional backgrounds in library science and have high turnover rates. The above analysis shows that for-profit companies can achieve good professional management in the short term, especially when outsourcing projects are time-sensitive, task-heavy, and pressure-intensive. However, due to enterprise mobility and imperfect competitive markets, long-term government procurement may encounter problems.

Non-profit social forces are private libraries. Numerous scholars have identified their significant positive roles and factors from the perspective of their characteristic service projects. For example, Cheng Yanan [17] believes private libraries supplement public library service projects, expand public library service fields, and promote library development. Ma Yanxia [18] also believes that private libraries, as non-public institutions, can improve service applicability based on market supply and demand mechanisms. However, negative factors should also be recognized, mainly including lack of social capital and personnel [19], shortage of books and periodicals [20], and absence of industry norms and business standards [21]. In summary, government can conduct targeted procurement based on private libraries' own service projects to improve the professionalism of single service items. However, due to weak development capacity, private libraries require government support in funding and sound legal norms. Private libraries play a significant role in government procurement of public library service projects and will become the main contractor type in the future.

### 4.2 Procurement Content

At the micro level, Guan Sisi [22] analyzes business outsourcing, government funding acceptance, and library management and operation procurement to pro-

pose the scope of government procurement and promotion measures. Zhi Juan [23] specifically divides procurement into three major aspects: project-based standard services, operation management services, and full-process outsourcing services. At the macro level, Hu Lianxiang [24] constructs a strategic decision-making model for the scope of government procurement of library services from three dimensions: maturity of the library service market, nature of government procurement policies, and nature of library services. Ma Xiaojun [8] introduces transaction cost economics theory, arguing that transaction cost minimization determines library service supply models, dividing library service supply models into eight transaction types. Overall, micro-level analysis helps guide specific practical problems but is limited to individual cases, easily resulting in incomplete content or uneven classification that cannot be universally implemented. Macro-level analysis places the environment in ideal conditions, such as absolute control over dimensions in strategic decision-making models and neglect of economies of scale and scope in transaction cost theory, which is not conducive to real-world operation. Therefore, when selecting procurement content for public library services, government should proceed from actual needs while comparing supply markets to achieve service optimization with minimal procurement cost.

#### 4.3 Procurement Models

Researchers generally endorse directed procurement as the main model for government procurement. Zhang Qingwei [25] uses directed procurement and bidding as the model foundation before constructing a “triple helix” interactive and reflexive relationship among government, social organizations, and public libraries. Yi Bin et al. [3] further divide government directed procurement into formal purchase, non-competitive purchase, and competitive purchase. Zhu Jingya [26] integrates these into two models: competitive and non-competitive purchase. Chen Hong [27] proposes a diversified model procurement mechanism that, in addition to directed procurement, includes contract outsourcing, user fees, subsidies, vouchers, franchising, procurement and distribution, and venture philanthropy. Additionally, some scholars have introduced the PPP model. Wang Peipei et al. [28] divide the PPP model into four types: cooperative construction, unified improvement cooperation, specific project cooperation, and service outsourcing. Yang Song [29] and Yang Fengquan [30] also discuss in detail the feasibility of the PPP model in government procurement of public library services, arguing that through cooperation with social capital, government can transform from single-source financing to multi-channel social financing and from independent management to multi-stakeholder co-management, representing an innovation in the financing, construction, and management system of public products and services. The above literature draws from public management governance tools, extending government function transformation methods to the public cultural service field, while also reflecting that government procurement of public services in China is still in its initial stage with limited governance tools and insufficient means.

#### 4.4 Procurement Mechanisms

Research on government procurement mechanisms includes two aspects. First, studies on the entire policy implementation mechanism, such as Yang Jing [31], who elaborates on the connotation and theoretical rationale of each procurement link, dividing implementation mechanisms into six aspects: dynamic mechanism, contracting mechanism, incentive mechanism, evaluation mechanism, supervision mechanism, and cooperation mechanism. Second, studies on library service supply mechanisms, which constitute the vast majority of government procurement mechanism research. Ren Jinhong [32] borrows from public governance systems to divide library service supply models under government procurement and constructs an analytical framework for public governance system selection to facilitate understanding of the diversification of library service supply models. Based on Ren Jinhong's research, Wang Wen [2] expands the perspective, using public product theory to divide library service supply mechanisms into five types and eleven mechanisms according to different producers and providers, aiming to propose suggestions for improving library service supply mechanisms from institutional, government, and public library perspectives. Liu Tao [33] further subdivides supply mechanisms, proposing that the formation of a competitive supply pattern for library services results from opening up unique competitive supply mechanisms according to the nature of subjects in each process and link. Through competitive decomposition of library service supply links and effectiveness analysis of various subjects, he proposes implementation paths for competitive library service supply. In summary, current research on government procurement mechanisms still concentrates on supply mechanisms, mostly borrowing public product theory to discuss the effectiveness of various subjects.

#### 4.5 Evaluation and Supervision

Overall, researchers generally agree that current evaluation and supervision mechanisms for government procurement of public library services are immature, characterized by government internal evaluation and lack of third-party evaluation. For example, Zhang Xiaohong [34] points out that more than half of government procurement of public services from social organizations in China lacks standardized third-party evaluation, and 100% lack auditing from professional third-party institutions. Gao Fengxin [35] believes current supervision of procurement services is dominated by government supervision and professional supervision from finance, auditing, discipline inspection, and supervision departments, while public and media supervision, library industry supervision, and judicial supervision are relatively weak. Zhai Jianxiong [36] points out that public libraries still conduct closed internal evaluations dominated by cultural authorities at all levels and self-evaluation by public libraries, with evaluation content mainly focusing on daily operation conditions and internal business management indicators, while indicators reflecting library service effectiveness are relatively few. Therefore, assessment methods should focus more on service

quality and effectiveness, and evaluation methods should emphasize social evaluation. Specifically, establishing a supervision and evaluation system based on content effectiveness and establishing specialized evaluation institutions have become the 主张 of many scholars. For example, Zhang Yanyan et al. [37] propose value-for-money evaluation, third-party KPI-based evaluation, and satisfaction index evaluation. Li Jian [38] demonstrates through empirical analysis that participation by third-party evaluation institutions and the public is an important way to improve evaluation effectiveness. Conversely, Zhang Xing [39] discovers through field research that using only third-party performance evaluation is insufficient to resolve performance dilemmas encountered in government procurement of public services. Using symbiosis theory, he argues that internal motivation is important and proposes that constructing a mutually beneficial symbiotic interest relationship is the driving force for achieving public value and capacity improvement. Yi Bin et al. [40] point out that as government shifts from “running culture” to “managing culture,” it lacks self-supervision, and with weak external supervision, evaluation methods are unscientific, making government supervision problems increasingly prominent. Whether government supervision responsibilities are in place is the key to testing the success of socialized operation of reading spaces [41], so government should establish access, public resource utilization, and exit mechanisms [42].

## 5. Case Studies on Government Procurement of Public Library Services

### 5.1 Government Procurement from Enterprises

Government procurement from enterprises for public libraries mainly adopts bidding models, with procurement content mostly involving internal operation and management, and increasingly relies on professional technology, making enterprises important supporters of core library operations and managers of library service branches. For example, Wuxi New District Government and Chengdu Wuhou District Library successively procured management and operation services from Addison Electronics Technology (Wuxi) Co., Ltd. through bidding [43]; Invengo Company was responsible for constructing and managing 17 self-service libraries in Guangzhou through government procurement [7]; Shanghai Afadi Intelligent Label System Technology Co., Ltd. was responsible for system construction of Wenzhou’s 24-hour self-service library “City Study” [44]; Jinghu District Government of Wuhu City procured operation and management services for Jinghu District Library from Anhui Rulin Library Consulting Service Co., Ltd. through bidding [45]; Ribuke Parent-Child Reading Club participated in some service content of the “Beilei Action” parent-child reading activity at Daxing District Library in Beijing through government procurement [46]; Guangzhou Nansha District Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television, Press and Publication entrusted Guangdong Dayin Cultural Development Co., Ltd. to provide overall outsourcing services for libraries in its jurisdiction [47]; Hefei Baohe District Government entrusted Zhiben Company to provide daily library

operation, online platform construction, and special group services for Binhu Century Community Library in its jurisdiction [48]; Shulu Community Party-Mass Service Center in Anhui Province also entrusted Zhiben Company with the overall operation and management of Shulu Community Library and Party-Mass Service Center [48]; Chengdu Longquanyi District Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau procured overall services for Longquanyi District Library from Juli Cultural Service Center through bidding [49]; Chengdu Library separated its circulation and reading windows and entrusted some business to Juli Cultural Service Center [49]. From these typical cases, it can be seen that enterprises are becoming increasingly important in core library operation and management due to their advanced technology, and the emergence of diverse forms such as self-service libraries has provided opportunities for enterprises to play their role. However, attention should be paid to strengthening supervision and evaluation to improve procurement service quality due to the profit nature of enterprises.

## 5.2 Government Procurement from Private Libraries

Unlike the technical services provided by enterprises, private libraries can provide personalized services for specific groups through their unique collection resources. Government selects specific private libraries according to different public needs, so procurement from private libraries mostly adopts directed procurement. For example, Beijing Municipal Bureau of Culture entrusted Beijing Jincal Art Library to conduct elderly calligraphy research classes and disabled calligraphy exhibitions [7]; later, Beijing Municipal Bureau of Civil Affairs and Bureau of Culture purchased public welfare service projects for private cultural venues from Beijing Jincal Art Library and Huazang Library [7]; Dongchen District No. 1 Library Dongzongbu Branch in Beijing directed-procured Youbei Parent-Child Library for parent-child reading services, including daily parent-child reading story meetings, weekly picture book journey reading extension activities, and monthly parent salon lectures [50]; Chaowai Street, Dongcheng District, Beijing entrusted Youbei Parent-Child Library to provide book lending and activity organization services through government procurement [51]. After Youbei successfully completed the entrustment from No. 1 Library and Chaowai Street, Beijing Central Business District, Fanchang County in Anhui Province, Beibei District in Chongqing, and others also entrusted Youbei Parent-Child Library to conduct library operation and management services in their jurisdictions [50]; after Jianjiang Library was awarded the title of Rural Library, the local government signed an agreement with it to determine specific entrusted service items [50]; Dongcheng District Tiyu Road Street in Beijing procured professional operation, daily management, and book purchasing services for its library from Pika Library [52]. Private libraries are widely recognized and praised by readers for their public welfare nature and unique services, but except for Pika Library, private libraries generally lack self-sustaining mechanisms and require substantial government financial support. How to escape this dilemma and achieve a balance between service provision and independence has become an issue that private libraries need to consider in the future.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 6.1 Research Conclusions

**6.1.1 Late Start but Rapid Development** Although research on government procurement of public library services in China started late, it has developed rapidly (see Figure 1 [Figure 1: see original paper]). Existing research shows that studies in the past decade have covered almost all aspects of this field, focusing on five major areas: contractor nature, procurement content, procurement models, procurement mechanisms, and evaluation and supervision. Procurement content mainly focuses on library operation and management services, supplemented by specialized services from private libraries; procurement models identify directed procurement and bidding through classification of competitive and independent relationships; procurement mechanism research concentrates on supply mechanisms, mostly borrowing public product theory to discuss the effectiveness of various subjects; evaluation and supervision vigorously advocates third-party evaluation to replace internal government evaluation, continuously promoting comprehensive evaluation oriented toward reader perception effects.

**6.1.2 Continuously Expanding Research Fields** Research on government procurement of public library services began in library science and has gradually introduced research paradigms and tools from public management, economics, and other disciplines as it deepens, expanding the research field. For example, public choice theory, polycentric governance theory, and new institutional economics are used to analyze the necessity and feasibility of social organizations, with multi-angle analysis of various stakeholders to discuss how government procurement of public cultural services can promote maximum resource allocation, optimal efficiency, and enhanced service object perception under multi-party governance. As China continuously formulates and implements relevant policies on government procurement of services, theoretical research on government procurement of public library services has increased on the basis of extensive practice, including elaboration on effective service supply under the supply-side model and analysis of the transformation mechanisms involved, revealing the transformation logic that promotes fairness, effectiveness, and publicness in library service supply and pointing out directions for further practice. Overall, through literature review, research on government procurement of public library services has formed four theoretical achievements: mechanism research, model research, service research, and relationship research, with clear sub-category classification under each direction and comprehensive coverage of research content. For example, mechanism research includes operation mechanisms and supply mechanism research, while model research includes procurement content, procurement methods, PPP models, and volunteer models. This demonstrates that research directions are gradually forming and research content is gradually improving.

**6.1.3 Increasingly Systematic Research Findings** Through literature review, it can be found that research before 2015 mainly focused on the practice of government procurement of public library services from social forces, discussing typical cases such as Addison Electronics Technology Co., Ltd., Youbei Parent-Child Library, and Pika Library, with insufficient theoretical research mostly concentrated in master's and doctoral theses. This was the exploratory stage of government procurement of public library services. After 2015, based on extensive practice, theoretical research on government procurement of library services increased, including elaboration on effective service supply under the supply-side model and analysis of transformation mechanisms, revealing the transformation logic that promotes fairness, effectiveness, and publicness in library service supply and pointing out directions for further practice. Overall, research on government procurement of public library services has formed four theoretical achievements: mechanism research, model research, service research, and relationship research, with clear sub-category classification and comprehensive coverage. Research directions are gradually forming and research content is gradually improving.

## 6.2 Research Recommendations

**6.2.1 Confusing Use of Related Concepts: Strengthen Conceptual Discrimination** There are multiple models for social forces' participation in public library management, among which those involving principal-agent relationships include government procurement service models and PPP models. Since these models were introduced to China not long ago and their practices overlap in development, they are highly similar and easily confused in current research. For example, case analyses of the same case appear in some literature under government procurement research and in others under PPP model research. Therefore, future research should strengthen discrimination of related concepts and clarify research scope.

**6.2.2 Insufficient Thematic Research on Social Organizations: Strengthen Social Organization Contracting Research** Due to their unique voluntary and public welfare characteristics, social organizations will become the main force in government procurement of library services in the future. However, the development of social organizations in China faces numerous difficulties. Currently, there is relatively little specialized research in academia on social organizations undertaking government procurement, especially those undertaking public library services. Research in this area would help government select the most suitable contractors, improve service supply efficiency, and accurately meet public needs. Therefore, future research should strengthen investigation of social organization contracting.

**6.2.3 Concentrated Use of Cases: Strengthen Case Transformation Research** Through case review, it can be found that existing research cases

mainly concentrate on Wuxi New District's procurement from Addison Electronics Technology Co., Ltd., Dongcheng District No. 1 Library's procurement from Youbei Parent-Child Library, and Dongcheng District Tiyu Road Street's procurement from Pika Library, with earlier procurement times. After 2015, practice in government procurement of public library services in China began to increase substantially. Therefore, future case research should explore more cases and strengthen analysis and in-depth investigation.

**6.2.4 Incomplete Laws and Regulations: Strengthen Legislation Research** Currently, China has not yet issued specialized laws for the field of government procurement of public library services, and no relevant laws and regulations distinguish government procurement from government purchasing, resulting in unclear definition of procurement scope, arbitrary supervision mechanisms, and performance evaluation mechanisms, creating risks of procurement failure. Moreover, current legal research on government procurement of public library services remains weak. Therefore, future research should increase investigation of relevant legislation to promote the introduction of relevant laws and build a comprehensive legal system.

**6.2.5 Single Performance Evaluation Method: Strengthen Third-Party Evaluation Empirical Research** Current cases show that evaluation is still dominated by cultural authorities at all levels and closed internal evaluation by public libraries. Although an increasing number of scholars endorse introducing third-party evaluation, there are no complete case tracking studies of third-party evaluation, lacking empirical investigation. Therefore, future research should strengthen empirical research on third-party evaluation to promote the use and construction of third-party evaluation institutions in practice.

**6.2.6 Insufficient Research on Procurement Risks: Strengthen Risk Research** There are numerous cases of failed government procurement of public services. As an important component of the public service system, public library services should also be prepared for risks despite their relatively short history of government procurement. Currently, there is little research on risks under the standard form of government procurement of public library services. The lack of risk awareness and preventive measures may lead to procurement failure to some extent. Therefore, future research should conduct more risk identification and assessment, analyze risk sources, find optimization paths, and establish a comprehensive risk analysis framework for government procurement of public library services.

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**Author Contributions:**

Gao Fan: Research design, paper writing and revision;  
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*Note: The journal submission guidelines following the references have been omitted as they are not part of the academic paper content.*

*Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.*

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