Study on Differences in Reading Aloud Preferences Among Library Reading Booth Users and Reading Promotion Strategies Postprint

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] This study explores the development of library reading booths from the perspective of reading promotion, analyzes differences in users' reading preferences in library reading booths through big data analysis, and proposes strategies for reading promotion via library reading booths. [Method/Process] After defining reading booths as a new form of reading promotion, 105,496 reading records from 12 libraries were collected and coded. SPSS 21.0 was employed for descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression model testing. On this basis, qualitative research methods were used to discuss reading promotion strategies for reading booths. [Results/Conclusion] Case analysis reveals that the duration of reading works is significantly negatively correlated with the number of plays; the number of views of reading works is positively correlated with audience plays; classic literature materials, leisure work materials, and thematic education materials have significant positive effects on the number of plays; the audience's play rate is highest for leisure fragment works after viewing; thematic education works have the highest standard deviation; and library type has a significant effect on reading play counts. Accordingly, it is proposed that reading promotion strategies for reading booths can be promoted through three approaches: operators' review of online work classification and service optimization, libraries conducting series of reading promotion activities and guiding deep reading, and reading associations and other societies, as well as readers, actively playing the role of reading promoters.

Full Text

Preamble

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Research on Users' Reading Preference Differences and Reading Promotion Strategies in Library Reading Pavilions

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Abstract

[**Purpose/Significance**] This study explores the construction of library reading pavilions from the perspective of reading promotion. Based on big data analysis of user preferences in library reading pavilions, it proposes strategies for reading promotion through this new medium. [**Method/Process**] After defining reading pavilions as a novel form of reading promotion, 105,496 pieces of reading data from 12 libraries were coded and analyzed using SPSS 21.0 for descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression model testing. Qualitative research methods were then employed to discuss reading promotion strategies for reading pavilions. [**Result/Conclusion**] Case analysis reveals a significant negative correlation between reading work duration and playback frequency; a positive correlation between view count and audience playback frequency; and significant positive effects of classic literature materials, leisure works, and thematic education materials on playback frequency. Audiences exhibit the highest playback rate after viewing leisure segment works, while thematic education works show the highest standard deviation. Different library types significantly impact reading playback frequency. Accordingly, reading promotion strategies for reading pavilions should advance along three dimensions: operators' classification review and service optimization of online works, libraries' development of systematic reading promotion activities to guide in-depth reading, and active engagement of reading associations and other community groups in promoting reading.

Classification Number: G252
Keywords: library, reading pavilion, reading preference, reading promotion

Introduction

With the popularization of CCTV's "Readers" program, reading pavilions have gradually become prevalent in libraries. These pavilions are IoT devices that integrate reading aloud, recording, and reading, allowing users to share their recordings via WeChat and satisfying readers' needs for vocal reading and sharing. Zhu Xi long ago pointed out that reading requires heart, eye, and mouth engagement, with "mouth engagement" referring to reading aloud. "The essence

of reading aloud is the interaction between the objectification of text and the objectification of the reader, a dialogue between reader and text" [1]. Reading aloud enables better comprehension of textual meaning, as the proverb states: "Read a book a hundred times, and its meaning will become clear."

Reading aloud allows individuals to absorb nourishment in a rich spiritual world, "enabling you to be cultivated through dialogue with noble souls, and to experience the beauty of life through grand, elevated, graceful, and magnificent movements" [2]. Previously, only a few libraries such as Shenyang Normal University Library provided reading spaces and audio recording services for readers. Most libraries, constrained by space limitations, could not meet readers' reading-aloud needs. The emergence of reading pavilions has completely changed this situation—a pavilion occupying less than 3 square meters can satisfy readers' reading-aloud demands.

In the era of digital reading, people's reading methods have gradually diversified. "Reading carriers are no longer just traditional text, but a synthesis combining text, images, audio, video, and other elements" [3]. In recent years, libraries have launched diverse reading promotion activities. Professor Fan Bingsi proposed the service consciousness, theoretical consciousness, and management consciousness of reading promotion, arguing that "China's library academia has unified library marketing and new reading services under the term reading promotion" [4]. In this new field of reading promotion, research, integration, and standardization of such activities are highly beneficial attempts [5]. The library reading pavilion is a new phenomenon, with the first model appearing in libraries in October 2017. A search of CNKI on October 13, 2018, found 361 papers with "Readers" in the title, with numerous recent studies on the program. However, no research papers with "reading pavilion" in the title exist. As reading pavilions become more common in libraries, urgent research is needed on their positioning in library reading promotion, current status, and improvement strategies. This study investigates the positioning of reading pavilions from the perspective of library reading promotion, analyzes big data from reading pavilions in 12 libraries to confirm or refute relationships between relevant variables, and proposes specific strategies for improving reading pavilion-based reading promotion.

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1. Positioning of Library Reading Pavilions and Research Questions

1.1 Rationality Examination of Reading Pavilions in Alignment with Library Philosophy

Libraries' introduction of reading pavilion services must align with library service philosophies and provide reasonable justification consistent with reading promotion principles. Rationality examination assesses whether establishing

reading pavilions conforms to core library values: universal service, equitable service, respect for readers' rights, protection of reader privacy, and voluntary participation without coercion.

Reading pavilions are typically installed in library lobbies, accessible to any library visitor via WeChat QR code scanning. Operators and libraries can set maximum usage time per person per session, generally between 15-60 minutes, with a countdown timer displayed on the screen. This ensures universal service and effective use while preventing excessive occupation that would cause long waiting times for others, demonstrating service equity. Users have the right to choose from various reading themes, with operators providing tens of thousands of reading materials on the platform. Users can also prepare their own content for free reading. Before reading, users can select background music from options including soothing, classical, and modern versions. The process requires only WeChat QR code scanning without additional registration, simplifying procedures while effectively protecting privacy, as user identities are difficult to track even in backend systems. Private works become public after operator review according to national laws and regulations to prevent inappropriate content. Reading pavilions do not cooperate with commercial institutions, display no advertisements, and do not disclose user information to businesses, thus protecting privacy rights. Libraries can guide users through various means such as reading competitions and dubbing contests, but cannot compel usage—users have the freedom to participate or not. Therefore, reading pavilion operation passes rationality examination aligned with library philosophy and should become a beneficial form of reader service and reading promotion in new contexts.

1.2 Reading Pavilions as a New Experiential and Shareable Form of Reading Promotion

Reading pavilions attract readers to libraries, and through WeChat sharing of recordings, can attract more readers to experience the pavilion and promote reading and borrowing of related materials, thereby achieving reading promotion effects. Simultaneously, pavilions can record and preserve audio for WeChat platform sharing to social circles, making reading meaningful, increasing reading interest, and enhancing readers' internal experiences and insights, giving readers a sense of presence and value through sharing. This transforms the perception of reading as solitary dialogue with great souls into a new shareable and exchangeable activity form. Unlike traditional reading sharing meetings such as book clubs, reading pavilions ritualize and publicize individual reading experiences through new media technology, reaching more people without the physical limitations of on-site activities. On network platforms, they can easily break through physical space constraints, enabling reading promotion to achieve greater dissemination effects.

1.3 Reading Pavilions as Essentially "Shallow-Level" Reading

Readers exhibit novelty toward this new reading promotion method. While many participate in reading activities and share them on social media, few maintain sustained enthusiasm. Investigations of multiple libraries show that few readers use reading pavilions repeatedly, and readers are not keen on reading lengthy classic literary masterpieces in pavilions. In current society, fragmented browsing has become mainstream reading. Reading pavilions guide readers through short-duration instant audio experiences, transforming traditional text reading into vocal reading combined with internet media to create emotional experiences for readers and audiences. However, this short, fragmented reading aloud also results in shallow reading—readers and audiences cannot truly achieve deep immersive reading or deeply mine the knowledge between and behind the lines. "The ear differs from the eye; it cannot focus, it can only be synesthetic, not analytical or linear" [7]. As one researcher critically noted about the "Readers" program, "It is precisely due to the loss of depth and rationality, and the relatively thin and non-dialogic context of reading aloud, that the program exhibits characteristics of postmodern culture" [8]. Reading pavilion reading and reading aloud essentially remain shallow-level reading, unable to achieve the deep reading promotion effects of academic lectures. Therefore, libraries can use pavilions in lobbies to guide shallow reading, helping those who dislike reading to fall in love with it. In public libraries with complex reader demographics, some elderly and child readers only need shallow reading, not necessarily deep reading. However, university libraries must supplement with expert academic lectures and other methods to guide deep reading and cultivate students' academic thinking and deep reflection capabilities.

In summary, library reading pavilions represent a new experiential and shareable form of reading promotion aligned with library philosophy, essentially belonging to "shallow reading." Regarding operational preference differences among readers—such as which reading materials are most popular, whether public and university libraries show significant differences in material appeal, and what factors influence audience preferences—few scholars have conducted relevant empirical analysis and research. Therefore, this study uses SPSS 21.0 to analyze data from Yougu reading pavilions in some libraries to examine audience preference differences and provide practical experience for reading promotion activities.

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2. Analysis of User Preference Differences in Library Reading Pavilions

2.1 Original Data and Classification Coding

Current market reading pavilions mainly include three models: Yougu, Shushu, and Bokan, all launched around October 2017. They support mobile QR code

scanning, online recording, auditioning, forwarding, and sharing, and all feature text reading and free reading functions. This study selected Yougu reading pavilions for analysis for three reasons: Yougu holds independent intellectual property rights and leads industry development with three types (outdoor, indoor, and mini); As of October 2018, Yougu ranked first in domestic sales with 1,200 units, with many libraries purchasing them, making the sample representative; Its platform hosts over 20,000 works with rich materials, facilitating data acquisition.

The data source comprises detailed backend records from Yougu reading pavilions in 12 Zhejiang libraries, with data collected until June 27, 2018, totaling 105,496 reading records. Each record includes material name, work type, duration, sharing status, playback count, and like count. Sharing, playback, and like counts reflect post-sharing effects on internet platforms, including audience feedback from WeChat forwarding and click operations from any pavilion user, with backend data automatically attributing these to the original pavilion. Basic data are shown in Table 1 .

As Table 1 shows, libraries launched Yougu reading pavilions at different times, serving different populations with varying sample sizes. To facilitate comparative analysis, the 12 libraries were divided into two categories: university libraries and public libraries (see Table 2).

Yougu materials currently include 14 categories: party education, red classics, classic movie lines, Tang poetry and Song lyrics, classic literature excerpts, parent-child/children's content, poetry and prose, joke collections, foreign masterpieces, Yu Guangzhong selections, Mother's Day excerpts, youth-themed works, and gratitude to fathers, plus free reading. For statistical analysis, these were grouped into four categories based on content similarity and sample size: classic literature, leisure segments, thematic education, and free reading (see Table 3).

2.2 Preference Differences Across Material Categories

Sample sizes vary across the four categories, so preference cannot be judged solely by reading, playback, viewing, sharing, or like counts. Indicators were constructed to observe preference positioning:

- Viewing rate = (View count / Reading volume) × 100%
- Playback rate = (Playback count / Reading volume) × 100%
- View-unplayed rate = [(View count - Playback count) / View count] × 100%
- Sharing rate = (Sharing count / Reading volume) × 100%
- Like rate = (Like count / Playback count) × 100%

Higher view-unplayed rates indicate lower audience preference for the reading work. The rationale: Viewing rate shows overall viewing of reading works by category; Playback rate shows category preference from a playback perspective;

View-unplayed rate reflects the ratio of viewed but unplayed works, inversely observing preference differences; Sharing and like rates reflect willingness to share and audience appreciation across categories. Preference data for the four categories are shown in Table 4 .

Table 4 shows classic literature has the largest reading volume, far exceeding other categories, related to its greater variety and quantity. Thematic education materials show the strongest audience attraction in viewing and playback rates (117.98% and 111.55%), while leisure segments rank lowest (41.58% and 46.69%). However, leisure segments have a view-unplayed rate of -12.30%, the only category where playback exceeds views, indicating high audience preference for these works. Free reading shows higher view-unplayed rates, reflecting its free-form nature without specific content or theme preferences. Sharing rates are low across all categories, indicating weak dissemination intention. Free reading shows higher like rates, likely due to stronger originality.

Further statistical indicators (maximum, minimum, mean, standard deviation) are shown in Table 5 . Classic literature shows the highest maximum viewing (670) and playback (948) frequencies, indicating popularity but also high standard deviation and instability, suggesting large gaps between popular and unpopular works. Thematic education also shows high standard deviations (8.1011 for views, 11.8623 for playback), the highest among categories, indicating the poorest sample stability and greatest preference differences among audiences, likely related to value and 立场 preferences. Leisure segments and free reading, while lower in view and playback counts, show lower standard deviations and greater sample stability.

2.3 Material Attraction Differences Across Library Types

Public and university libraries show differences in how their readers' works attract audiences (see Table 6). Public libraries exceed university libraries in reading volume across all four categories, likely due to larger user populations. University libraries only surpass public libraries in viewing rate for thematic education, but show higher playback rates for classic literature, thematic education, and free reading, indicating stronger audience interest in these materials from university readers. Public libraries' leisure segment works show higher playback rates and lower view-unplayed rates, suggesting stronger audience attraction. Sharing rates remain consistently low across both library types. Like rates show significant differences only for leisure segments, with public library readers' leisure works receiving more likes, indicating their audiences prefer these works.

2.4 Analysis of Variables Affecting Preference Selection

2.4.1 Variable Selection and Research Hypotheses Since audience samples vary across libraries, reading volume cannot reflect audience preferences for materials or serve as the sole factor influencing others' decisions. Playback

volume is a more effective indicator of audience attraction and helps expand pavilion influence. Therefore, this study uses playback volume as the dependent variable for preference analysis.

Based on prior analysis, independent variables include: reading work duration, view count, material type, and library type. Duration is a multi-categorical variable (0-1 min, 1-2 min, 2-3 min, 3-4 min, 4+ min, coded 1-5). View count is a numerical variable. Material types are dummy variables for the first three categories (classic literature, leisure works, thematic education), with free reading as the reference. Library type is a dummy variable (university vs. public, with university as reference).

Four hypotheses were proposed: - H1: Longer reading works significantly increase playback frequency - H2: View count has no significant effect on playback frequency - H3: Material type has no significant effect on playback frequency - H4: Library type has no significant effect on playback frequency

2.4.2 Model Selection and Regression Results (1) Model Selection: A multiple linear regression model was used:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1\chi_1 + \beta_2\chi_2 + \beta_3\chi_3 + \beta_4\chi_4 + \beta_5\chi_5 + \beta_6\chi_6 + \varepsilon$$

Where Y = playback frequency; $_1$- $_6$ represent work duration, view count, classic literature, leisure works, thematic education, and library type; β_1-β_6 are regression coefficients; α is the constant; is the error term. Analysis used SPSS 21.0.

(2) Regression Results: Table 7 shows adjusted $R^2 = 0.853$, indicating good model fit with independent variables explaining 85.3% of the dependent variable. The F-statistic is significant ($p < 0.001$), confirming at least one significant coefficient. All variables show p-values far below 0.05, with $_3$ significant at the 5% level ($p = 0.014$) and others at the 1% level, indicating high correlation with playback frequency.

- $_1$ (duration) coefficient = -0.074, showing significant negative correlation with playback frequency. Shorter works have higher playback rates, rejecting H1. Audiences prefer short works and lack patience for long works.
- $_2$ (view count) coefficient = 1.153, showing significant positive correlation, rejecting H2. Each 1.153 increase in views corresponds to one additional playback, validating Table 4 results. View count significantly increases playback intention.
- $_3$, $_4$, $_5$ (material types) all show significant positive effects, rejecting H3. Leisure works have the highest coefficient (0.290), indicating strongest audience preference impact, though this may reflect lower expectations and pure leisure-seeking behavior. Free reading shows significant negative correlation (-0.189 constant), consistent with its higher view-unplayed rate.

- $_6$ (library type) coefficient = -0.069, significant ($p < 0.001$), rejecting H4. University library works have stronger influence on playback frequency than public libraries (except for leisure segments), likely because university readers (teachers, students) have deeper cultural knowledge and understanding, creating more compelling recordings.

2.5 Case Study Conclusions and Limitations

2.5.1 Conclusions: Reading work duration negatively correlates with playback frequency; view count positively correlates with playback frequency; classic literature, leisure works, and thematic education materials have significant positive effects on playback frequency; classic literature has the largest reading volume; leisure segments show the highest post-view playback rate; thematic education shows the highest standard deviation, indicating large preference differences; free reading shows high view-unplayed rates and significant negative correlation; library types significantly impact playback frequency, with university libraries having greater influence except for leisure segments.

2.5.2 Limitations: Yougu reading pavilions use mobile QR code scanning without user identification, preventing precise user preference research by demographic. Total user volume per library cannot be verified, preventing effective analysis of reading volume proportions. Playback frequency is influenced not only by the six studied factors but also by readers' social networks, potentially creating bias between data results and actual conditions.

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3. Reading Promotion Strategies for Library Reading Pavilions

Examining reading pavilion positioning theoretically and analyzing 100,000+ records from 12 libraries, libraries should maximize pavilion roles from a reading promotion perspective. Reading pavilion promotion shares characteristics of being "event-based, fragmented, and interventional" [9], differing from traditional library literature lending. However, it has two distinctive features: (1) It maintains library quietness, unlike some foreign reading promotion activities that bring concerts into reading rooms [10]; (2) It represents a hidden interventional service. While traditional library philosophy requires value-neutral service—"librarians should not compromise professional neutrality due to private interests or personal beliefs" [11]—reading promotion is an interventional service for special groups that has gained acceptance through its pursuit of universal equality. Reading pavilions' intervention is special: through online material selection and themed activities, they create hidden intervention for all potential users via IoT. This both addresses the "noisy" nature of reading promotion activities and raises theoretical questions about hidden interventional techniques and value judgments, warranting future research.

Currently, reading pavilion promotion has two paths: (1) Operators, libraries, and reading associations jointly attract more participants, driving collection utilization; (2) Readers use new media platforms to share and disseminate recordings, promoting materials more widely. Specific strategies include:

3.1 Operators' Classification Review and Service Optimization

Operators should aim to guide readers toward classics and improve cultivation, sentiment, and aesthetic taste. "Reading aloud is only the reader's presentation of the text; the text's brilliance far exceeds the reader's" [12]. Materials should align with contemporary themes, promote mainstream values, and connect with social hotspots and holidays. Platforms should "prevent inappropriate or vulgar content" [13] and prohibit violent, pornographic, or extreme religious content according to laws. Children's materials must never promote war in any form.

Case studies show Yougu platforms have large classic literature volumes with varying popularity. Thematic education materials show clear hotspot and timeliness tendencies, cooling down after festivals. They involve obvious value preferences, creating large audience differences and the highest standard deviation. Therefore, operators should select superior classic literature works that withstand historical tests and resonate emotionally. Thematic materials should align with contemporary themes and holidays, updated regularly for immediacy and timeliness. Though free reading shows high view-unplayed rates and negative correlation with playback frequency, it offers readers freedom of choice and relatively high like rates, making functional optimization necessary. Public libraries should enrich leisure works. Research also shows shorter works attract audiences more strongly, so platform works should not be too long. Operators could create model reading services as references and launch WeChat reservation services to reduce waiting times, increasing reader autonomy.

3.2 Libraries' Development of Systematic Reading Promotion Activities and Deep Reading Guidance

Libraries should use reading pavilions to improve reading ability and willingness while promoting collection utilization, achieving dual goals of education and resource use. Jinan University Library launched themed book exhibitions for CCTV's "Readers" program; Sun Yat-sen University prepared poetry cards for pavilion users. Libraries can develop diverse activities: reading contests, film dubbing competitions, voice memory preservation, themed exhibitions, and lectures.

- **Reading contests** can be held online via pavilion platforms, combining holiday themes (National Day, Victory Day) or traditional festivals (Spring Festival, Mid-Autumn) to promote patriotism and excellent national culture. Celebrity themes can commemorate writers, thinkers, politicians, or scholars.

- **Film dubbing competitions** can use famous movie clips with video content for interactive, comparative appreciation.
- **Voice memory preservation** can involve graduation season activities where graduates leave messages or preserve college memories, with 优秀作品 archived in school history museums.
- **Themed exhibitions** can display top 10 works from pavilion data, driving collection reading by placing related books near pavilions.
- **Lectures and seminars** can invite experts for in-depth interpretation, pushing shallow reading toward deep reading.

3.3 Reading Associations and Readers as Reading Promoters

Reading associations can assist libraries in contests, dubbing competitions, and exhibitions, and organize activities aligned with their missions: theoretical societies for thematic education materials, literature societies for classic literature, host/eloquence societies for audio storage. All activities can combine online and offline approaches—online recording, display, and voting; offline live recitations and sharing sessions. Libraries can also delegate daily pavilion management to volunteer associations.

Readers can freely choose materials to experience diverse emotions or read beautiful passages in libraries and record them in pavilions to share with family and friends. After recording, readers should promptly share works on social media to increase view counts, playback frequency, and likes, attracting more audiences and promoting reading. Readers thus become reading promoters for society, contributing to scholarly campus and society building.

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Author Contributions

Wang Yongsheng: Framework design, case analysis, writing and revision
Xu Guxiong: Data processing and case analysis
Yin Xiaomin: Original data collection and organization

English Abstract

Research on Users' Reading Preferences Differences and Reading Promotion Strategy of Library Reading Pavilion

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Abstract: [Purpose/significance] This paper explores the construction of reading pavilions in libraries from the perspective of reading promotion. Based on big data analysis, it examines user preference differences and proposes reading promotion strategies. [Method/process] After defining reading pavilions as a new reading promotion form, 105,496 reading data pieces from 12 libraries were coded. Descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression were conducted using SPSS 21.0, followed by qualitative research on promotion strategies. [Result/conclusion] Results show significant negative correlation between work du-

ration and playback frequency; positive correlation between view count and playback frequency; significant positive effects of classic literature, leisure works, and thematic education materials on playback frequency; highest playback rate for leisure segments after viewing; highest standard deviation for thematic education works; and significant effects of library type on playback frequency. Strategies should advance through: operators' classification review and service optimization, libraries' systematic promotion activities with deep reading guidance, and active engagement of reading associations and readers as promoters.

Keywords: library, reading pavilion, reading preference, reading promotion

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