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Digital Intelligence Empowering High-Quality Development of Nationwide Reading in Liaoning Province' s University Libraries: A Practical Path from “Book-Centered” to “People-Centered”

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Abstract

Objective: To thoroughly implement General Secretary Xi Jinping' s statement that “Libraries are important indicators of national cultural development levels and vital venues for nourishing national spirit and fostering cultural confidence,” and to implement relevant policies from the second National Reading Conference on World Book Day and the “Notice on Organizing 2023 Public Library and Cultural Center Service Promotion Week Activities” issued by the General Office of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. **Methods:** This paper systematically reviews the diverse pathways and multiple measures of information service development in Liaoning' s university libraries. Chronologically organized, it explores Liaoning' s four-decade journey of reform and opening-up in building open, smart, inclusive, and shared information resources from three dimensions: “expanding service content and constructing a media matrix,” “strengthening cultural guidance and fostering digital promotion,” and “consolidating literature support and enhancing industry cooperation.” **Results:** It summarizes the practical pathway for high-quality development of province-wide reading promotion, shifting from a “book-centric” to a “human-centric” approach, thereby providing case support for the construction of a culturally strong nation.

Full Text

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Abstract

[Objective] To thoroughly implement General Secretary Xi Jinping' s directive that “libraries are important indicators of national cultural development levels and vital venues for nourishing national spirit and cultivating cultural confidence,” and to fulfill relevant policies from the second National Reading Conference on World Book Day and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism' s “Notice on Organizing 2023 Public Library and Cultural Center Service Promotion Week Activities.” **[Methods]** This paper systematically reviews the diverse pathways and multiple measures of informatization services in Liaoning' s university libraries. Chronologically organized, it explores Liaoning' s four-decade journey of reform and opening-up toward open, intelligent, inclusive, and shared information resource development through three dimensions: “expanding service content to build a media matrix,” “strengthening cultural guidance to foster digital promotion,” and “consolidating literature guarantee while enhancing industry cooperation.” **[Results]** The study summarizes the practical pathway for high-quality development of the province' s nationwide reading promotion, evolving from “book-oriented” to “people-oriented” approaches, providing case support for building a culturally strong nation.

Keywords: nationwide reading; book-centered; people-centered; high-quality development; media matrix

On World Book Day, April 23, the second National Reading Conference was held in Hangzhou, where Minister of Publicity Li Shulei delivered an important speech emphasizing that “advancing national strength and rejuvenation cannot be separated from reading and learning. We must take reading as the most fundamental cultural construction, vigorously advocate the ethos of reading, and give full play to reading' s vital role in disseminating ideological culture, enhancing national literacy, inheriting national spirit, and cultivating civilized customs...We must focus on meeting people' s reading needs, accelerate the construction of a nationwide reading promotion service system covering urban and rural areas, provide cultural conditions for reading everywhere, anytime, and by everyone, and foster the cultivation of reading habits. We must vigorously advocate the concept of nationwide reading and lifelong learning, creating a strong reading atmosphere throughout society.” [1] Library science expert and renowned reading promoter Mr. Fan Bingsi shared this news on social media, interpreting

it as “a new proposition: accelerating the construction of a nationwide reading promotion service system covering urban and rural areas.” From these two statements, we can easily identify key concepts: cultivating civilized customs, meeting reading needs, accelerating urban-rural coverage, and creating cultural conditions. The introduction of these new policies and initiatives fully demonstrates China’s leap in nationwide reading promotion from a “book-centered” to a “people-centered” approach, forging a high-quality development path that is open, intelligent, inclusive, and shared, transitioning from “book-oriented” to “people-oriented” services.

This paper integrates the content of the “Public Library Service Promotion Week” initiative released by the Chinese Library Society on April 18, 2023, to systematically review and distill new development directions and pathways for library reading promotion. It aims to provide theoretical foundations and practical references for the professional construction of library reading promotion in the new era, thereby achieving data-driven refined management and intelligent operation of libraries while enhancing their social education functions and public cultural influence.

2. Expanding Service Content and Building a Media Matrix

General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that “libraries are important indicators of national cultural development levels and vital venues for nourishing national spirit and cultivating cultural confidence.” The 20th Party Congress report proposed “deepening nationwide reading activities” and “improving the modern public cultural service system while innovatively implementing cultural benefit projects.” [2] From a top-level design perspective, the state has continuously integrated nationwide reading into the framework of national policy and people’s social life. The evolution from “developing nationwide reading” to “strengthening nationwide reading” and then to “deepening nationwide reading” has gradually made reading promotion an indispensable part of political life among the populace. Through continuous improvement of the public cultural service system and innovative development of cultural benefit projects, the state has enriched the connotation of nationwide reading, increased investment in reading facilities, gradually incorporated reading promotion and space construction into legal frameworks, secured government support, and established supervision and implementation mechanisms, providing comprehensive guarantees for the improvement and innovation of public cultural services. As important institutions in public cultural services and the main front for nationwide reading, libraries have played a powerful supporting and driving role in deepening nationwide reading activities, with their service content continuously enriched and expanded to form strong promotional synergy with society.

Taking the development achievements of the Liaoning Provincial Higher Education Library and Information Work Committee (hereinafter referred to as “Liaoning Provincial Library Work Committee”) as an example, a series of combination-punch innovative services demonstrate librarians’ continuous re-

flection and exploration in conceptual innovation and service content expansion. These include launching the “Liaoning Provincial University Open Cooperative Education Digital Resource Co-construction Project,” organizing the “University Library Characteristic Resource Database Construction” special project of the Liaoning Provincial Department of Education, initiating the “Liaoning Provincial University Information Sharing Platform Project,” launching the “Liaoning Provincial Higher Education Digital Library” portal website, and establishing the Liaoning Provincial University Library Digital Resource Procurement Alliance. In reading promotion, these initiatives manifest as improvements to talent cultivation mechanisms and the discussion and sharing of case activities.

For instance, in 2015, Liaoning successively held the “Northeast Region University Library Reading Promotion Training Course” and the “Second Liaoning Provincial University Library Reading Promotion Case Competition.” These activities built consensus among university libraries on actively carrying out reading promotion work, enhanced the capabilities and literacy of librarians engaged in reading promotion, promoted exploration and practice in reading promotion activities among university libraries, and pointed out directions for future innovative reading promotion work. In the same year, six reading promotion case projects from Liaoning’s university libraries participated in the national reading promotion case competition, winning two second prizes and four excellence awards, including one special award.

In November 2017, the “Second National University Library Reading Promotion Case Competition and Seminar” invited 300 participants, including library directors, party secretaries, and librarians from 120 universities nationwide, as well as finalists from 30 competing units. This event made positive contributions to promoting innovation in university library reading promotion work and further advancing the role of university libraries in cultural inheritance and innovation, as well as building scholarly campuses and society. During the activities of developing nationwide reading and constructing scholarly campuses, libraries fulfilled their functions of educating people and inheriting culture. Notable examples include Shenyang Normal University Library, Liaoning Normal University Library, and Shenyang Aerospace University Library, which were awarded as National Reading Demonstration Bases and Advanced Units for Nationwide Reading by the Chinese Library Society.

During the three-year fight against COVID-19, librarians also actively collaborated with various data companies to extensively provide online resource services, united in fighting the pandemic, created original songs, and participated in community volunteer services, demonstrating the noble character of “appreciating one’s own beauty, appreciating others’ beauty, sharing beauty together, achieving great harmony, and overcoming difficulties together.”

3. Strengthening Cultural Guidance and Fostering Digital Promotion

The “Public Library Service Promotion Week” initiative also states: “Strengthen the supporting role of libraries in the public cultural service system and cultural benefit projects, safeguard the basic cultural rights and interests of the people, and enhance public cultural acquisition.” [3] In recent years, research system innovations and innovative practice projects have emerged in large numbers among library science initiatives at all levels, profoundly reflecting the “people-oriented” service transformation. Whether considering the three elements of libraries (“books, buildings, people”), the four elements (“books, buildings, personnel, equipment”), or the five elements (“books, equipment, personnel, management, and architecture”), people are always the core element and the primary productive force. In an era where technology reigns supreme and an era where concepts reign supreme, human resources and talent cultivation are forever the “king of kings!”

Under this major premise of people as the core element, intelligent means have continuously improved as modern tools. Various digital resources and utilization methods have emerged, creating a series of remarkable cultural spaces and reading products that have not only promoted the prosperity of nationwide reading promotion culture and academic development but also demonstrated the splendor of Chinese-style modern technological development.

Taking the development of Liaoning’ s university libraries as an example, they have focused on digital development, seized the opportunities of the times, and thoroughly studied President Xi Jinping’ s spirit for the 2021 World Internet Conference Wuzhen Summit, aiming to let digital civilization benefit people of all countries and promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind. From the end of the last century to the beginning of this century, Liaoning has continuously strengthened information network construction and joint procurement alliances in the library field, achieving remarkable results. Please refer to Table 1 .

Worth mentioning is the Chinese book cataloging business training hosted by the CALIS Online Cooperative Cataloging Center in 2009, which was attended by over 150 representatives from across the country. Through this series of training exchanges, the Liaoning Provincial University Document Information Center completed the popularization and promotion of member library participation in CALIS union catalog, unified authentication, data submission, document delivery, resource integration, and resource discovery services. This serves as powerful evidence of modern library development’ s leap from a book-collection focus since modern times to human resource development and talent cultivation.

From the above, we can see that Liaoning has done solid work in literature resource procurement and construction to meet the needs of the times. From talent cultivation to space construction, libraries throughout the province can truly be described as “library buildings being renewed daily, intelligent libraries blooming one after another.” Before 2018, the systematic projects and devel-

opment concepts centered on literature services were particularly prominent, forming the material foundation and developmental resources for the province's nationwide reading promotion. It is also not difficult to see the determination and actions of Liaoning's university libraries to synchronize their building construction and intelligent development with the "Double First-Class" university construction during the "13th Five-Year Plan" and "14th Five-Year Plan" periods. This series of construction projects has enabled university libraries to stride forward toward digitalization, intelligence, and modernization. Many universities have successively launched main-branch library systems, large-circulation models, and intelligent, humanized operation modes, allowing library building construction to gradually reach an ideal state, with opening hours continuously extended and library functions fully realized, increasingly presenting the paradisiacal vision of libraries that readers idealize.

4. Consolidating Literature Guarantee and Strengthening Industry Cooperation

All things that gain their roots thrive; all endeavors that follow their proper path succeed. Aligning with the spirit of the times, conforming to development trends, and riding the favorable winds of reform and opening-up, Liaoning's public cultural information service development has exerted tremendous efforts in literature guarantee and industry cooperation, laying a solid foundation for shifting from a literature-centered to a talent cultivation-centered approach and heralding the arrival of spring for "people-oriented" high-quality development. Please refer to Table 2.

All data cited in this paper come from the Secretariat of the Liaoning Provincial University Library Work Committee, which I obtained while participating in the copywriting for the 40th anniversary promotional video. I would like to thank Secretariat member Liu Huimin and directors of various member libraries for their assistance.

As early as spring 1995, the compilation of the *Union Catalog of Foreign Periodicals in Liaoning Provincial Universities (1992-1996)* was launched, collecting over 5,000 foreign periodicals from more than 40 countries and regions held by 53 university libraries in Liaoning Province. This achieved unified standard cataloging and management business norms for periodicals within the province, cultivated a group of periodical management business backbones, demonstrated new achievements and concepts in contemporary library development, and laid a solid foundation for high-quality development of Chinese libraries.

In 2004, the Library Work Committee completed the compilation and publication of a series of books including *Advancing Liaoning Provincial University Libraries*, *Statistical Integration of Liaoning Provincial University Libraries*, *Collected Papers on Library and Information Science in Liaoning Provincial University Libraries*, and *Summary of Library and Information Science Research Achievements in Liaoning Provincial University Libraries*, comprehensively

demonstrating the development process and fruitful achievements of Liaoning's university libraries over two decades. In the same year, the Library Work Committee jointly held an academic symposium with the Provincial Library Society on "Revitalizing Northeast China's Old Industrial Base—The Historical Responsibility of Library Workers," reflecting Liaoning librarians' heroic sentiment and new historical responsibility to serve the heavens and stand on the earth in serving the revitalization of Northeast China's old industrial base.

The completion of all these works has demonstrated the open, inclusive, and shared concepts of our country's library informatization process, laid a solid literature foundation for nationwide reading promotion in China, and gradually broken free from the constraints of instrumental rationality, shifting information service and promotion concepts from "books" to "people" and initiating the process of intelligent services through human-centered approaches. "There will be a time when the wind breaks the waves; we will hang up the cloud sail to cross the blue sea." In today's era of rapid development of digital economy and intelligent knowledge services, Liaoning's university librarians will continue to uphold innovation while preserving tradition, consistently maintaining both the scientific spirit of modern digital information technology and the profound humanistic sentiments of long-accumulated knowledge services. They will provide important literature information support for national digital technology and information innovation development, for the comprehensive revitalization of Northeast China's old industrial base and Liaoning Free Trade Zone, and for the high-quality modern development of "Double First-Class" construction and educational undertakings in Liaoning's universities. They will continuously expand and upgrade new pathways for knowledge services, practice the scientific maximization of library functions, and strive to display and promote Chinese civilization, build a community with a shared future for mankind, and enable all humanity to share knowledge and jointly create value.

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