Exploration of Two-Way Interactive Model for Reading Promotion and Information Literacy in Higher Vocational College Libraries

—A Case Study of Tianjin Modern Vocational College

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Abstract: Reading promotion and information literacy education are crucial responsibilities of contemporary higher vocational college libraries. However, the inadequate emphasis and investment in these areas have posed challenges for library operations in higher vocational institutions. This paper discusses how libraries can effectively carry out reading promotion and information literacy education under such conditions, using Tianjin Modern Vocational College as a case study and exploring its practice of the RII (Two-Way Interactive) model.

1. Introduction

Reading promotion and information literacy education are the focal points of current work in higher vocational college libraries. There exists a close relationship between the two, as highlighted in the "14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of the China Society for Library Science (2021-2025)" [1], which explicitly states, "By promoting nationwide reading, popularizing basic knowledge of library science, information science, and information technology, enhance the public's library awareness and information literacy." Libraries serve as the driving force for reading promotion and information literacy, and the "IFLA Statement on Digital Literacy" urges libraries and librarians globally to actively engage in promoting digital literacy, providing high-quality digital resources and services to the public.

These objectives set higher requirements for higher vocational college libraries in the areas of campus reading promotion and information literacy education. As hubs for information resources, libraries not only provide the information users need but also offer systematic solutions through reading promotion activities. Especially in the information society, the modes and platforms of reading are undergoing transformation. Traditional paper-based reading methods are gradually being replaced by electronic and cloud-based models, posing significant challenges to reading culture and learning methods. Therefore, cultivating and enhancing information literacy becomes crucial to help readers adapt to these changes, enabling them to better access, evaluate, and utilize information, thereby improving the quality of reading.

This paper analyzes the characteristics of reading promotion and information literacy education, emphasizing the importance of their integration. Considering the practical situation of higher vocational education, it explores the path of implementing the "Reading Promotion and Information Literacy Interaction" (RII) model in higher vocational college libraries.

2. Current Status of Reading Promotion in Higher Vocational Colleges

From 2014 to 2023, "National Reading" has been consistently mentioned in the government work reports for ten consecutive times, actively advancing the goal of "deepening the promotion of national reading and building a 'Bookish China.'" The construction of "Bookish Campuses" constitutes a crucial aspect of reading promotion efforts.

Campus reading promotion serves as a significant means to inherit and promote outstanding culture, allowing more students to understand and inherit excellent national culture, thereby enhancing national cohesion. It is also a vital avenue for students to acquire knowledge and improve

their own qualities. Particularly for higher vocational colleges, with fewer cultural courses unable to meet students' cultural needs, reading promotion can effectively supplement and improve students' first-hand knowledge, broaden their horizons, enhance comprehensive qualities, and provide robust talent support for the country's development.

Currently, local authorities attach great importance to reading promotion efforts, issuing relevant policies and increasing investment in reading initiatives. This has resulted in a rich, widespread, and sustainable activity system. For example, Tianjin City initiated the "Bookish Tianjin, Star of Enjoyable Reading" competition in 2015, which has been held continuously for nine sessions, covering various levels from undergraduate and vocational colleges to primary and secondary schools. With its high quality and comprehensiveness, it has become a reading brand in Tianjin. Subsequently, various colleges have successively launched a series of "Reading Festival" activities, including stage plays, online reading, expert lectures, calligraphy, excellent reading lists, and essays, receiving active responses from students and achieving positive reading effects.

However, challenges persist in reading promotion efforts in higher vocational colleges. (1) Lack of Interest in Student Reading. Due to students' focus on vocational skill learning, limited awareness of library reading resources, and considering the library mainly as a place for traditional subject learning and knowledge acquisition, students often perceive the library in a theoretical, specialized, and narrow manner. This outdated perception results in a lack of strong interest in library reading, with some even expressing resistance and apprehension. (2) Surface-level and Formal Reading. Some students lack enthusiasm for reading, and reading activities often become superficial, lacking depth. (3) Limitations in Reading Promotion Personnel Composition. Currently, individuals involved in reading promotion in higher vocational colleges mostly consist of library staff and club members. This limited composition leads to a narrow coverage, with limited impact and influence. (4) Passive Reading Habits. Contemporary university students have diverse ways of obtaining information, with various social media platforms widely used among them. The passive reception of a massive amount of information prevents students from actively searching for information, as they are more accustomed to receiving information that is pushed to them. This trend poses challenges to personal reading and learning for higher vocational college students, as well as the reading promotion efforts of college libraries.[2] These challenges require urgent attention and solutions in the context of higher vocational colleges.

3. Overview of Information Literacy Education

Information literacy is a comprehensive set of abilities involving behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and metacognitive aspects, actively participating in the information ecosystem [3]. It primarily refers to an individual's capacity to acquire, evaluate, organize, use, and create information in the digital age. At its core, information literacy encompasses the abilities to identify and obtain information, evaluate and judge, collaborate and communicate, process and manipulate, and generate and create information. These abilities involve utilizing information resources for problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, and innovative high-level cognitive activities [4]. Information literacy encompasses knowledge and skills in various aspects, including acquiring, organizing, evaluating, analyzing, and applying information, as well as awareness and compliance with information ethics and relevant laws and regulations.

For 21st-century university students, possessing strong information literacy enables them to adapt better to the societal changes. Additionally, information literacy promotes the overall development of students' abilities. The cultivation of information literacy is indispensable at every stage of human development. The "Alexandria Proclamation," presented in 2005 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), and the American Library Association (ALA), emphasizes the viewpoint of "Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning" in action in an information society [5]. In an informationized society, acquiring, utilizing, and developing information have become fundamental skills that individuals must master for lifelong learning.

The "Action Plan for Education Informatization 2.0" calls for a comprehensive enhancement of

the information literacy of both teachers and students, shifting from technological applications to the expansion of competency qualities. This aims to equip individuals with excellent information thinking skills to meet the requirements of the developing information society, making the ability to apply information technology to solve problems a necessary basic competency. The "Key Points for Educational Informatization and Network Security in 2020" emphasizes the thorough implementation of the Action Plan for Education Informatization 2.0, explicitly stating the continuous improvement of the information literacy levels of teachers and students.

However, information literacy education faces challenges in its promotion in higher vocational colleges. Taking Tianjin as an example, out of 26 higher vocational colleges in Tianjin, only one formally offers relevant courses. The participation rate in the national information literacy competition for higher vocational colleges is not high, with 12 institutions participating in 2019, 10 in the years 2020-2022, and 11 in 2023, overall less than 50%. It can be said that the emphasis on information literacy education in higher vocational colleges is still far from sufficient.

In higher vocational colleges with insufficient class hours, information literacy education is often carried out through extracurricular activities known as the "second classroom." The term "second classroom" refers to extracurricular education and comprehensive quality cultivation activities that students engage in outside of formal school education, time, and space. It uses the cultural tension of activity form to resolve obstacles faced by the first classroom and provides dynamic support for the deepening and expansion of the first classroom [6]. Due to the general absence of information literacy in the first classroom in higher vocational colleges, the second classroom often serves a dual purpose, fulfilling both the tasks of the first and second classrooms. It must complete the tasks of the first classroom within limited teaching hours based on textbooks and teaching outlines while educating and training students through various forms in the second classroom.

This situation results in several issues in information literacy education in higher vocational colleges. (1) Insufficient Systematic Teaching. The lack of formally offered information literacy courses in higher vocational colleges leads to incomplete teaching outlines, insufficient research activities to complement the teaching, discounted teaching effectiveness, low student emphasis, and low coverage. (2) Lack of Qualified Teaching Staff. Currently, information literacy is mainly handled by library staff, often non-professional teachers. Both teaching experience and research capabilities need improvement. (3) Excessive Utilitarianism. Some schools conduct information literacy education merely to participate in national competitions, limiting the breadth of educational content. This current state of information literacy education in higher vocational colleges presents various challenges and calls for prompt solutions.

4. The Necessity of Combining Reading Promotion and Information Literacy

In summarizing the identified issues in both reading promotion and information literacy education, a clear complementarity between the two emerges.

4.1 Using Information Literacy to Address Bottlenecks in Reading Promotion

The primary issues in reading promotion, including students' lack of interest, superficial activities, limitations of promoters, and passive reading habits, all stem from the limited scope of reading content. This limitation prevents a deep and effective interaction with students, hindering genuine engagement. Library-led reading promotion activities often revolve around literary and leisure works, lacking promotion of academic and professional books. Thus, future university libraries should adopt innovative service measures to involve students in diverse reading processes, facilitating the improvement of their knowledge structure, moral cultivation, comprehensive abilities, and academic goals [7].

Firstly, broadening reading channels by tapping into the potential of online reading is essential. As the mainstream reading method today, online reading offers significant advantages: (1) In the internet era, people heavily rely on the web to access information and knowledge rapidly and conveniently, anytime and anywhere. (2) Online reading provides diverse visual and auditory forms for literary works, such as e-books, audiobooks, and interactive books, enriching readers'

experiences. (3) Unlike traditional printed books, online reading allows direct interaction between readers, authors, and other readers, fostering collaborative creation and enhancing reader engagement.

Secondly, guiding students to find information sources they need and are interested in, along with evaluating and selecting relevant reading content, can stimulate students' proactive reading. This shifts the paradigm from passive information reception to active reading. Reading promoters also transform from merely providing fish to teaching how to fish, breaking free from professional constraints and efficiently completing reading promotion tasks.

These aspects align precisely with the focal points of information literacy education. (1) Information Acquisition and Filtering. In an environment of information overload on the internet, having good information literacy helps readers effectively obtain needed information and discern the authenticity and validity of information. (2) Interpreting Information. Information literacy involves not only retrieving content but also understanding, applying, evaluating, and reflecting on the text. (3) Cultivating Lifelong Learning. The purpose of reading is not only to increase knowledge but also to prepare students for future life. In this digitized age, possessing good information literacy is crucial for adapting to new forms of information dissemination, such as short videos, Q&A, live broadcasts, etc.

Amid the prevalence of online reading, information literacy education provides assurance for this mode of reading. It guides students to expand their reading scope beyond textbooks, encouraging them to read a wide range of materials, including novels, newspapers, magazines, and popular science books. In doing so, students can develop their interests and enhance their understanding and application abilities for different types of information, offering a new dimension to address the bottlenecks in reading promotion.

4.2 Reading Promotion Facilitating Information Literacy

The main issues in information literacy, whether the lack of systematic teaching, insufficient teaching staff, or utilitarian focus, can be attributed to the weak emphasis on information literacy education in higher vocational colleges. This leads to limited investments in teaching resources such as qualified teaching staff and class hours, failing to meet the requirements of information literacy education. Given the current conditions, resolving this problem is challenging within higher vocational colleges, making it crucial to obtain more abundant educational resources through alternative channels.

The integration of reading promotion provides an opportunity to address this issue. (1) Reading is a Vital Pathway for Knowledge Acquisition. Through reading promotion activities, students can access a broader range of information resources, thus enhancing their information literacy. (2) Library-led Activities Foster Efficient Library Use. By organizing a variety of reading promotion activities, libraries enable students to better utilize library resources, mastering skills and methods for efficient library use, effectively enhancing students' information literacy. (3) Promotion for Widespread Impact. The extensive influence of reading promotion can effectively promote and popularize information literacy. This allows more students to seamlessly integrate into the information literacy education process, subtly achieving educational goals.

The internet is referred to as the third classroom for information literacy education, offering extensive resources. Information literacy, in turn, provides methods for problem-solving in online reading. The two interact bidirectionally, enabling the better accomplishment of reading promotion and information literacy education tasks in the higher vocational college environment. This is what the author proposes as the "RII" model.

5. Exploration of the Implementation of the "RII" Model at Tianjin Modern Vocational and Technical College Library

The interactive integration of reading promotion and information literacy not only enriches the content of reading promotion activities, enhancing their appeal and deepening student engagement but also expands the channels and influence of information literacy education, contributing to its

widespread adoption among students. Taking the Tianjin Modern Vocational and Technical College Library as an example, we will summarize and explore the practical application of the "RII" model.

5.1 Establishing "Ethical Credits" for Reading Promotion and Information Literacy Activities

This credit system is applicable to first and second-year students with the aim of fostering reading interest and motivation. Students' participation in each library-organized reading promotion activity is meticulously recorded. At the end of each academic year, credits are uniformly calculated based on competition levels and performance, providing students with a tangible incentive for active involvement in reading. By earning credits, students are encouraged to prioritize reading, effectively promoting the construction of a literary campus and fostering a conducive reading atmosphere. This initiative contributes to enhancing campus cultural standards and enriching campus cultural life.

5.2 Infusing Information Literacy into Reading Promotion Activities

During the reading promotion process, students are encouraged to read diverse genres, spanning literature, history, science, art, and other fields. This approach assists students in broadening their knowledge base, expanding their perspectives, and enhancing overall competence. Emphasis is placed on combining prescribed reading lists with autonomous selections, extending the scope of reading beyond books to various information materials beneficial to students. This aids in cultivating students' self-directed learning abilities. Through independent reading, students learn how to sift through information, analyze and solve problems, effectively merging reading and information literacy. Additionally, students are required to critically evaluate and reflect on the materials they read, fostering critical thinking skills.

5.2.1 Freshman Series of Reading Promotion

This series targets first-year students, aiming to familiarize them with the city and the institution. The library organizes the "My Beloved Campus and City" series, encompassing units such as "Cuisine," "History," "Culture," "Scenery," and "Consumption." In addition to assigned readings, students are tasked with independently searching for relevant information to supplement and enrich their reading content. Utilizing library resources and various online channels, students combine information from the specified reading list with additional sources to develop diverse travel itineraries.

Throughout the activity, students swiftly familiarize themselves with Tianjin and the school's official website. They compare the official website content with online news, learning to effectively discern information. In formulating itineraries, students compare information from different travel, cultural, and other websites, as well as information and strategies provided by platforms like Ctrip and Meituan. Considering factors such as time, cost, transportation, and weather, students integrate their readings, culminating in the creation of optimal travel plans. Outstanding plans are further discussed in a salon, facilitating the exchange of excellent strategies.

This initiative allows first-year students to read substantial information to quickly gain a comprehensive understanding of the campus and the city. Simultaneously, they learn information retrieval, information analysis, information evaluation, and application skills, subtly integrating information literacy into the educational process.

5.2.2 Reading Festival Series

The reading festival is a significant event for reading promotion in higher vocational colleges. The library conducts activities such as "Reader's Enunciation," "Star of Enjoyable Reading," and "Library Challenges."

In the "Library Challenges" activity, students explore the book resources and characteristics of the library through various checkpoints, learning how to quickly find the required materials. Simultaneously, they become familiar with database resources offered by the library, understanding how to utilize these databases to solve life and study challenges.

In activities like "Reader's Enunciation" and "Star of Enjoyable Reading," students are not only

required to read the books themselves but also to explore the background of the books, including historical, cultural, and writing contexts, authors' backgrounds, and the evolution of book reviews. Teachers guide students on how to analyze and identify the information they need and where to find it, promoting a comprehensive understanding of the chosen books.

Through these activities, information literacy elements are seamlessly integrated into reading promotion. Students gain a more comprehensive understanding of the selected books, enhancing their information awareness and abilities.

5.3 Integrating Information Literacy into Reading Promotion Activities

The library, in conducting information literacy activities, incorporates elements of reading, making efforts to expand teaching resources and make them more relatable to life, thereby stimulating student interest. Simultaneously, while developing information capabilities, students can engage more effectively in reading, elevating their overall competence.

In higher vocational colleges, information literacy education is often conducted as part of the second classroom, and the internet, as a crucial platform for both reading and information resources, is referred to as the "third classroom." The inherent connection between the second and third classrooms in information literacy becomes evident. On one hand, the enhancement of information literacy relies on the support and application of resources from the third classroom. On the other hand, the challenges posed by online reading, such as information overload, disparate information quality, and information security, necessitate the assurance of information literacy to achieve high-quality, efficient reading. Therefore, the importance of conducting combined training in the second and third classrooms is increasingly prominent in information literacy education in higher vocational colleges.

The library, in combining current affairs with information literacy, adopts an effective approach. This not only helps students enhance their interest in learning but also aids in a better understanding of the current societal development, fostering students' sense of social responsibility and civic consciousness.

For example, on August 24, 2023, when Japan began discharging nuclear wastewater, this topic instantly became a highly popular subject among students. To provide students with a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of this issue, the library organized the "Fate of Nuclear Wastewater" themed activity. (1) Teacher Training on Information Awareness.

Teachers train students in information awareness, constructing the correct reading demands. Understanding this issue requires students to read materials covering various aspects, such as history, related events, what nuclear wastewater is, its hazards, the dilution capacity in the ocean, and relevant international organizations. (2) Student Selection of Reading Directions.

Once students choose their reading directions, they must use retrieval techniques to find the relevant reading resources. This could include both physical books in the library and electronic resources, as well as information from various websites, apps, and online platforms. (3) Evaluation, Screening, and Analysis of Information. Given the vast and varied nature of online information, students need to use information literacy to evaluate, screen, and analyze information. This involves recognizing low-quality violent opinions and false information, selecting correct and genuine information for reading and learning, and drawing accurate conclusions. (4) Application of Information. In the application stage, students, working in groups, discuss and formulate conclusions. Each group then uploads their findings on online platforms, spreading positive energy, criticizing violent opinions and false information, and resisting the dissemination of harmful information. This not only strengthens application skills but also enhances information ethics, contributing to the creation of a healthy online environment.

Through this activity, students gain a widespread understanding of the issue, not only exercising their information literacy but also expanding their reading scope. Simultaneously, spreading positive energy not only helps students better adapt to the demands of societal development but also cultivates a positive, healthy, and happy life attitude.

6. Conclusion

Information literacy and reading promotion are both primary responsibilities of contemporary libraries in higher vocational colleges. Reading, as a vital means of acquiring knowledge and enhancing wisdom, serves as a crucial avenue for preserving civilization and elevating students' literacy. Reading promotion aims to actively engage students in a variety of reading activities, fostering a positive social trend of loving, diligently, and skillfully reading books. The enhancement of information literacy enables students to more effectively access, evaluate, and utilize information, thereby better adapting to the developmental demands of an information society.

Therefore, the integration of information literacy education and reading promotion not only improves students' reading abilities and information literacy but also cultivates their lifelong learning capabilities and innovative spirit. This, in turn, contributes to the overall development of national quality, promotes students' comprehensive growth, and represents an essential path towards transitioning from being a networked nation to becoming a networked powerhouse.

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