

# Information Literacy Education in the Multidimensional Aid Model of Financially Challenged Students in Colleges and Universities

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**Abstract**—How to construct a multidimensional model of assisting financially challenged students in colleges and universities has become the current research focus and focus of the academic circle. This article takes "information poverty alleviation" as the starting point, points out the relationship between information literacy education and the "financial aid — competence boosting — strengthening the will" multidimensional model of poverty alleviation, focuses on how to carry out information literacy education for financially challenged students in the family in the context of the multidimensional poverty alleviation model, and hopes to enrich the research on the poverty alleviation models in colleges and universities.

**Keywords:** colleges and universities, multidimensional aid model, information literacy education, financially challenged students

## I. INTRODUCTION

The current poverty of financially challenged students in colleges and universities is not only economic poverty, but a kind of "multidimensional poverty" composed of economic difficulties, academic difficulties, psychological poverty and lack of skills [1]. With the development and application of information technology, information has become one of the main resource forms to promote social development, and information activities and information consumption have become one of the main social activities and consumption forms of people. Therefore, "information poverty", as a new derivative of economic poverty in the information age, has also become a new and common form of poverty among the financially challenged students in colleges and universities.

The industry has put forward a multidimensional model of "financial aid — competence boosting — spirit fostering" for how to comprehensively assist the current financially challenged students in universities. The author believes that in the multidimensional poverty alleviation model, focusing on information to alleviate poverty and achieve equality for all in front of information should be an integral part of material poverty reduction and spiritual poverty reduction.

## II. INFORMATION POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FOCUSES ON IMPROVING INFORMATION QUALITY

Information poverty is not only reflected in the lack of information rights, but also includes the limitation of comprehensive information capabilities. Therefore, information poverty alleviation must rely on sound laws to protect the "poor" of the right to information, and carry out information quality education to break through the "dilemma" of comprehensive information capabilities. And colleges and universities are precisely the necessary places to carry out and strengthen the information literacy education of college students.

The Outline of the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) issued in 2010 clearly states that "it is necessary to encourage students to use information means to actively and autonomously learn, and enhance the ability to use information technology to analyze and solve problems." [2] This kind of ability is called "information quality" in academia. In 1989, an authoritative report on IL issued by the Information Literacy Chairman's Committee under the American Library Association (ALA) defined IL as the most widely used one to date: "Literacy is defined as an individual's ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, synthesize, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand." <sup>1</sup> Information literacy education is an educational activity aimed at improving people's information literacy. For today's college students, the information qualities that should be possessed mainly include information awareness qualities, information ability qualities, and information moral qualities.

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<sup>1</sup> Information Literacy: Definitions, Competencies, and Standards. 'According to the Final Report of the American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy (1989), information Literacy is defined as an individual's ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, synthesize, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand.' [EB/OL]. <http://infolit.org/definitions/>

III. INFORMATION LITERACY EDUCATION UNDER THE  
MULTIDIMENSIONAL ASSISTANCE MODEL OF FINANCIAL AID  
— COMPETENCE BOOSTING — SPIRIT FOSTERING

Judging from foreign advanced experience and development trends, "To achieve educational goals, schools need to incorporate the cultivation of information literacy into the entire educational process of the school, integrate them into the curriculum content, architecture and teaching arrangements, and use the cooperation among teachers, librarians, technical personnel, and administrative personnel, and so on to realize the goal." [3].

China's information literacy education started late and developed slowly. It can be said to be a "depression" in college education. As a disadvantaged group, economically disadvantaged students are in the "heavy disaster area" of information poverty. Therefore, for the financially challenged students, in addition to the normal curriculum education in colleges and universities, the multidimensional mode of "financial aid — competence boosting — spirit fostering" should be integrated into the information literacy education and practice in the aid work, which will effectively help to change the status quo of "information poverty" of this group.

A. *Efforts should be paid to stimulate the information consciousness of financially challenged students and form a positive cycle of actively acquiring information in the "financial aid" work*

"Information awareness" in information literacy refers to people's understanding of the meaning and value of information, their understanding of their own information needs, the level of expression, and the degree of desire to meet the needs. The information consumption behavior of financially challenged students begins with their information needs. When the information needs are gradually met, the process of information possession, information processing, and information regeneration, that is, the information consumption process, will be carried out [4]. Therefore, it is necessary to seize the opportunity of "financial aid" and take the first lesson of information literacy education in universities, so that students with difficulties can obtain a profound and pleasant information consumption experience.

1) *Cultivating students' awareness and habits of actively acquiring information, and releasing effective information needs:* Some students still have the habit of "passively receiving information" and "verbally transmitting information" in high school. They have needs but don't know how to express it. This is also one of the reasons for the phenomenon of "waiting, relying, and asking", leading to weak information awareness. With the rapid development of education informatization, colleges and universities are more likely to release text notices on the Internet and in the form of publicity columns, and students must take the initiative to read. To build the correct path for students to release information needs, it is important to consistently convey an important idea: free information will not fall from

the sky. Whether it is in the "Admissions Notes" sent by universities before admission, or the process of funding policy briefings and selection of scholarships after admission, schools should strive to promote the practical experience of improving students' dilemmas through proactive access to information (such as selection of scholarships). It is also necessary to continuously strengthen students' understanding of the value of information, trigger positive behavioral results, and then form a virtuous circle, consciously increase the awareness of information consciousness, and extend this consciousness to learning and life.

2) *Passing positive information and correct ideas to guide reasonable information needs:* Some financially challenged students are afraid and unwilling to apply for financial aid because of low self-esteem. The school can guide students to correctly understand the background and concepts of various funding policies of the party and the country, school and society through various forms of publicity, such as posters, public accounts, and special web pages; they must inform students with specific cases that the acquisition of scholarships is an important guarantee for learning, living, and growing. In order to maintain life, financially challenged students can only squeeze study time for part-time jobs, which easily leads to "multidimensional poverty" such as life, learning, and psychology, making their own learning and life even worse. Schools need to encourage students to boldly express reasonable information needs, cherish learning opportunities, be grateful for funding from all parties, work hard to change their future destiny, and actively give back to society.

3) *Providing comprehensive information and clear procedural guidelines to maintain ongoing information needs:* The "information explosion" caused by the rapid development of information technology has also brought many negative effects such as "information anxiety" when providing information convenience. "Information anxiety is a black hole between data and knowledge. It arises when information can't tell people what they need to know." [5] There are many funding projects and complicated procedures. If the information released is not comprehensive and the considerations are incomplete, financially challenged students with insufficient information skills are at a loss in the complicated information, and they will easily fall into information anxiety and weaken the information needs: some miss the selection opportunity, and some even give up the application.

Therefore, in addition to providing comprehensive and clear information and procedural guidelines for colleges and universities, funded managers must also master the methods of modern reference services. When students have questions about information, schools need to fully and accurately understand their needs, and can further analyze and explain this requirement, provide accurate information services, and guide students to grasp "what information they need and how

to obtain information", helping students successfully complete the first experience of using information quality to get rewards.

*B. It is needed to improve the information ability of financially challenged students and create effective practice opportunities and environment in the "competence boosting" work*

Information ability is the ability of society members to flexibly use various methods when carrying out various activities in the information society, especially the ability to discover and use social information resources through modern information technology, mainly including the ability to acquire, process, express and communicate information. The Prague Declaration proposed by the Information Literacy Meeting of Experts held in September 2003 identified information ability as "the prerequisites for effective participation in the information society and the basic human right of lifelong learning". For "competence boosting" of financially challenged students, the escort of information ability education can't be ignored to cultivate their ability for lifelong learning.

*1) Creating good conditions and bringing down the economic threshold for improving students' information ability:* Spoken English and computer skills are the basic abilities of college students and the basic means to effectively obtain information. Financially challenged students come from remote mountainous areas and poor areas. They lack corresponding learning tools and exercise opportunities, and their ability is often weaker than other students. In this regard, college funding work should allocate certain funds as funding for improving the information ability of financially challenged students, and can also provide free tuition or training for financially challenged students through the forms of study groups and student associations; it can also make full use of the advantages and resources of the library, actively organize financially challenged students to participate in the work of the library, and help them get more opportunities to improve their information ability while working hard to support their study.

*2) Establishing a service platform to promote students' information ability in practice:* From a sociological point of view, poverty is more than a simple economic hardship. It includes the relationship between material resources, knowledge, technology, members of society and some social institutions faced by the poor. In the highly competitive modern workplace, part-time and employment information mainly comes from the Internet and interpersonal networks. In terms of how to discover and utilize social information resources, in addition to having information retrieval capabilities, the interpersonal communication capabilities are also crucial. Therefore, the school should actively build a service platform for financially challenged students, such as carrying out campus cultural activities and psychological

education activities, increasing management and entrepreneurial positions in work-study programs and helping students improve their interpersonal skills, in order to continuously expand social support networks and information channels to get more part-time jobs and employment opportunities.

*3) Speeding up the construction of informatization and creating a friendly and convenient information culture environment:* The improvement of college students' information literacy is not only a technical issue, but also a close integration of the cultural heritage and connotation of human spiritual awareness with modern information technology [6]. If college students can live in a social environment with a relatively high level of informationization, they can have more superior conditions in all aspects of the selection of information, subsequent processing and even the use of it to solve practical problems and the use of information will be more efficient. The application of information in funding work should strengthen the construction of information management system for funding work. On one hand, it is necessary to optimize management resources and improve management efficiency. On the other hand, it is necessary to promote the standardization of work and avoid unfairness caused by human operations. The application of information in funding work should also create an environment and atmosphere where everyone cares about participating in information quality education, improve the information quality of managers, update management concepts, and improve management methods to meet the requirements of cooperating with other departments of the school to promote the information quality education process in actual work.

*C. It is necessary to correct the information ethics of financially challenged students and reduce the risk of moral anomie and psychological problems in the work of "spirit fostering"*

Information ethics is an ethical code that people should abide by in information activities. It is the sum of behavior codes that regulate the relationship between information creators, information servicers, and information users. Whether the "spirit fostering" measures include information moral education and whether strict and proper requirements for the information morals of financially challenged students are not only related to their academic success or failure, but also have a long-term impact on them.

*1) Efforts should be paid to closely combine information moral education with world outlook, life outlook, values and integrity education so as to improve the information moral cultivation of financially challenged students:* Due to the induction of poverty, financially challenged students will spend more time and experience paying attention to poverty and thinking about how to get rid of poverty. This may make their beliefs and ideals stay at a lower, specific, and practical level, thereby directly restricting the financially

challenged students' choice behavior and internal motivation, and affecting the formation of their world outlook, outlook on life, and values [7]. Under the role of virtuality, openness, and freedom in the network society, the weak links in the original concept have been strongly impacted. In the confrontation of various social ideological trends, financially challenged students are more likely to produce wrong behaviors due to moral contradictions and misplaced values of moral values. To strengthen the ideological education of financially challenged students, it is necessary to introduce the concept and content of information moral education into ideological and political education, correctly handle the relationship between reality and virtual reality, make scientific and reasonable use of network resources, improve their ability to identify and resist negative information, and develop the ability to judge morally and avoid moral confusion in the mixed network information.

2) *Efforts should be paid to solve the psychological problems caused by information in time to ensure the effectiveness of information moral education:* The virtual nature of the network has become a hotbed for some financially challenged students to escape from reality: psychological problems such as inferiority, anxiety, depression, cultural decoration, and narrowness caused by the pressure of life in the real world of financially challenged students can be alleviated online; low-cost online socialization enables them to communicate with others (especially the opposite sex) to conduct more free exchanges, gain respect, equal network status, and a sense of satisfaction that is difficult to obtain in reality. If the original psychological problems can't be effectively channeled, it will also develop into serious psychological crises such as Internet addiction syndrome, malformed online dating, online autism, and personality disorders. These problems not only weaken the active and healthy enthusiasm and pursuit of life of financially challenged students, it may even become a catalyst to break the moral bottom line, resulting in moral anomie and illegal behavior. Therefore, it is necessary to combine the mental health and safety education of financially challenged students, actively promote information moral education, strengthen students' self-control and immunity to harmful information, form a kind of good morality and self-discipline spirit, and effectively prevent Internet addiction, network fraud, and Internet crime and so on.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The information literacy education under the multidimensional assistance mode of colleges and universities is mainly based on the information literacy education courses of colleges and universities. Aiming at group characteristics of financially challenged students, it is the process of combining the aid measures of "financial aid — competence boosting — strengthening the will" with the concept of information literacy education, so that the

information literacy courses can be continued, the teaching theory can be fulfilled and the teaching content can be supplemented. A person with good information quality is equivalent to having an intangible wealth. No matter before graduation or after work, he can actively acquire and use all kinds of information he needs to show his advantage in the fierce social competition.

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