

# A Study on Nationwide Reading Development in Learning Cities Against the Background of Lifelong Education

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## ABSTRACT

The study explores the nationwide reading development in learning cities against the background of lifelong education, including the realistic background, analysis of the current situation, the value and significance of the research and analysis of countermeasures. The author proposes to strengthen the top-level design, establish a nationwide learning city reading promotion service system, build an urban learning space with reading as the core, create new forms of lifelong education, promote the sustainable development of learning cities and learn from each other with an international perspective.

**Keywords:** Lifelong education, Learning cities, Nationwide reading.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The construction of learning city is an important issue of sustainable development in the world today, which plays an extremely important role in improving individual learning ability and enhancing social inclusion. The Global Sustainable Development Agenda adopted by the United Nations summit in 2015 advocates lifelong learning to achieve global sustainable development. According to it, governments of various countries have taken multiple measures to improve the construction of learning cities and promote lifelong learning. In order to promote the advocacy of the summit, UNESCO has convened four global learning city conferences to share and exchange experience and seek new progress in practice. The COVID-19 epidemic has severely impacted the urban development of all countries in the world, making the problem of unbalanced urban development worse. In October 2021, the 5th

International Conference on Learning Cities is dedicated to accelerating the recovery of social order and building healthy cities through lifelong learning. Members of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities are committed to lifelong learning during the COVID-19 epidemic, contributing to the promotion of human health literacy and the innovative strategies and programs during the current crisis[1]. Many countries around the world continue to relentlessly pursue action strategies for building high-quality learning cities. UNESCO has reported on lifelong learning research, which indicates that more than 1000 cities around the world have placed learning as a strategic priority in urban development[2]. In the late stages of the COVID-19 epidemic, the UNESCO City Platform strengthens cooperation with the global network of learning cities, and actively participates in the new strategy of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC).

## 2. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

The general characteristics of research on the current state of nationwide reading are as follows.

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At the end of 2021, the author searched "nationwide reading" as the key word on CNKI. In general, domestic and foreign scholars' researches on "nationwide reading" have the following characteristics.

First, from the perspective of the distribution of main themes, the keywords of the researches mainly focus on nationwide reading (2230 articles), reading promotion (814 articles), library (731 articles), public library (551 articles), and nationwide reading activities (455 articles) etc.

Second, from the perspective of the distribution of literature sources, the relevant literatures are mainly academic periodicals, focusing on library science and publishing periodical.

Third, from the perspective of the distribution of main subjects, the main subjects of related researches are concentrated on the fields of library information and digital library, publishing, education, news and media, culture, international politics in China, computer software and application.

Fourth, from the perspective of the distribution of literature foundations, the related research foundations are mainly focused on the National Social Science Foundation (215 articles), the Ministry of education of Humanities and Social Science Foundation (17 articles), and provincial Social Science Foundation (23 articles). It can be seen that the distribution of literature funds in this study mainly focuses on the National Social Science Foundation

To sum up, the researches on nationwide reading at home and abroad are in the ascendant. At present, domestic related researches are gradually improved. The domestic scholars have shown their opinions from different perspectives and their research directions are multidimensional. At the same time, the foreign scholars have paid more attention to the cultivation of reading culture, while the research achievements have reached a trend of vigorous development. However, no one has studied nationwide reading in learning cities from the perspective of lifelong education and no relevant articles were found in the literature retrieval by CNKI. It can be seen that this research still has a long way to go. The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People's Republic of China (SARFT) issues *the Notice on Carrying out The Work of Nationwide Reading*, which set clear requirements for the work of nationwide reading. The advocacy of nationwide

reading has also been written into the government work report for many years. This article will conduct a targeted discussion on the development of nationwide reading in learning cities against the background of lifelong education.

### **3. THE VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

#### ***3.1 To Provide Practical References for the High-quality Development of Nationwide Reading in Learning Cities***

In 2020, UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning launched the report *Embracing the Culture of Lifelong Learning*, which proposes to build a lifelong learning society by 2050. Nationwide reading is an important cornerstone for building a lifelong learning society, and the construction of a lifelong learning society is an important part of the global action to implement *the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. It can be seen that nationwide reading is a significant way of lifelong education and a fundamental work for the construction of learning cities, which has been promoted to a global strategy.

*The China Educational Modernization 2035* proposes the strategy to achieve a great education nation of building a learning nation to achieve the goal of educational modernization. And the important cornerstone of becoming the learning nation is the high-quality development of the construction of learning city. Therefore, it needs to establish and improve a sound lifelong learning system, and nationwide reading provides guarantee for the construction of lifelong learning system. In 2020, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council continued to emphasize the task of improving the lifelong learning system and building a learning-oriented society in *the Proposal of CPC Central Committee on formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-term Goals for 2035*. The construction of learning cities has been integrated into the overall layout of China's economic and social development strategy. With the development of nationwide reading in a learning city, the government should build a lifelong learning education system that serves the whole people, promote nationwide reading to go deep into every space of the construction of a learning city, and achieve a better vision of reading cohesion which improve personality, develop manpower, cultivate talent and benefit the people.

In the same way, nationwide lifelong learning has become a new engine for the development of learning cities, a hub of scientific innovation, a new name card of cities and a new model of governance.

### **3.2 To Provide a Driving Force for the Sustainable Development of Lifelong Education in Learning Cities**

The development of nationwide reading in learning cities is not only a practical measure for a powerful nation of education, but also a precise strategy for ensuring lifelong education that the people are satisfied with. Various times are overlapping each other, such as the post-epidemic era, artificial intelligence era and aging era, and social development issues are severely impacted and the future picture is constantly reshaped. The fundamental goal of the nationwide reading development in learning city is to maximize the learning effect, so as to promote the realization of sustainable development of individuals, society and the country. The development of nationwide reading in learning cities is the cornerstone of lifelong education.

"Inclusion and equality go hand in hand, ensuring equitable learning opportunities for neglected high-risk groups[3]", as stated in the *Medellín Declaration*. The development of nationwide reading in learning cities is closely related to lifelong learning. It is the prerequisite and guarantee for individuals, nations and countries to achieve the sustainable development of nationwide reading people and lifelong education in learning cities. Looking at the Analects of Confucius, which is based on learning, learning for pleasure, learning for ambition, and learning for the foundation. In the themes of ancient Chinese "persuading students to learn" and "persuading students to read", lifelong learning is the meaning of the subject. For example, "Setting your mind for heaven and earth, Setting your life for the people, continuing your unique learning, opening peace for all ages" and "study the objects, gain the knowledge, accumulate the sincerity, upright the mind and chase the perfection". These ancient famous sentences concisely summarize the lofty aspirations of ancient Chinese scholars, and they still have important reference significance for the current new journey of promoting the great cause of rejuvenation.

The construction of a learning cities is not only an important component of the global action to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and an important cornerstone for

accelerating the modernization of education, but also an significant guarantee for the establishment of a sound lifelong learning system as well as a stepping stone to becoming a great learning nation. Shanghai, Hangzhou, Shenzhen and other cities in China are actively involved in the construction of learning cities. Among them, Shenzhen has made outstanding achievements in nationwide reading promotion, setting a model for the construction of learning cities nationwide and even worldwide [4]. Nationwide reading can promote lifelong learning and build learning cities. The construction of lifelong learning system injects vitality into the sustainable development of the construction of learning cities.

## **4. ANALYSIS OF COUNTERMEASURES**

### **4.1 Strengthening Top-level Design**

The learning needs of citizens are integrated into the overall institutional framework of the construction of learning city, and the top-level design program and application practices of the learning society are implemented together. New policies should be adopted to promote healthy lifelong learning and support UNESCO member countries to develop resilient cities by taking nationwide reading as an opportunity and taking learning cities as the orientation [5]. The government and all sectors of the community should play their respective roles and integrate learning, education, work, society and reading. The government should comprehensively promote cultural innovation, institutional innovation, practical innovation, theoretical innovation and innovation in all aspects to inject cultural vitality and innovation drive for the revitalization and development of learning cities. The government should advocate the concept of lifelong learning and nationwide reading, create an atmosphere of good learning and happy reading, and basically realize the universalization of reading awareness, lifelong learning behavior, systematization of learning organization and socialization of learning system.

Reading legislation should be carried out to protect citizens' reading rights. Government behavior should be required, restrained and supervised, and the government should be urged to include reading in the government work plans at all levels in order to protect, promote and implement citizens' right to read. In addition, the government

should promote the joint development of lifelong education and nationwide reading in learning cities. The government and all sectors of society should not only continuously update the carrier, platform and mechanism of nationwide reading promotion in learning cities, constantly transform and improve the environment of reading, learning and innovation, but also enhance citizens' reading consciousness, fully stimulate the interest in reading, and mobilize the enthusiasm of the whole people for lifelong learning. The government should be committed to make reading as the realization of the cultural rights of citizens to provide reading space, resources and opportunities for everyone, and effectively protect the cultural rights of citizens at the level of reading and learning.

#### ***4.2 Establishing a Nationwide Learning City Reading Promotion Service System***

The government should explore the feasibility of mutual and common learning between different regions and readers, improve the degree of integration of mutual and common learning, and realize cooperation and common learning between different regions in order to make cultural resources in different places become educational resources for learning across time and space. In addition, the government also need to promote the development of people centered nationwide reading, to provide quality learning resources and learning services, to create a reading environment as the starting point, and to construct and transform public libraries, physical bookstores as the representative of the urban public space, so as to achieve high-quality, scientific, systematic and digital development.

The public cultural service system needs to be improved. Nationwide reading is a public cultural service with the masses as the main body, aiming to include every citizen in it, thus enriching and enlivening the cultural ecology of the whole city. In learning cities, the nationwide reading should be changed from time to time to boost the digital upgrading of reading and attach importance to the complementary advantages of different reading and learning media. The promotion of nationwide reading is reflected in the promotion, popularization and implementation of the value concept of lifelong learning, and the improvement of public cultural facilities to ensure reading and lifelong learning as a cultural right of citizens and as a basic project for the sustainable development of lifelong learning.

The government needs to promote the transformation and upgrading of the public cultural service system and the optimization and improvement of the construction of learning cities. In addition, readers' habits and needs of multi-carrier, multi-media and multi-channel reading also need to be paid attention to. And the complementation and integration of paper books and digital resources, online and offline channels should be done well.

#### ***4.3 Building an Urban Learning Space with Reading as the Core***

In order to build a learning city, the nationwide reading is the foundation and fundamental measure. It is necessary to provide a space for books gathering, a space for creativity and exchange of ideas, so as to construct an open and popular learning space. The network reading makes the reading scene more diversified. It is necessary to build innovative, exquisite and international creative city reading space, to improve the level of supporting service facilities, and to create a nationwide reading sample of learning city with brand influence.

It is crucial to create a ubiquitous reading environment that can adapt to "everyone can learn, everywhere can learn, all the time can learn", so that farmers can participate in learning without leaving their hometowns and posts, directly serving farmers, rural areas and agricultural production. Community education and lifelong learning can satisfy diversified learning and development needs of social members, promote everyone to become talents. It also plays a role in various aspects, such as continuing education, community education, senior education, skills training, new technology promotion, advanced cultural dissemination and employment and re-employment, and it can improve the livelihood of the people, safeguard social harmony and promote the construction of lifelong education system. It plays an important role in promoting equality and universal benefits in education and meeting the people's lifelong demand for high-quality education. The government should firmly uphold the importance of reading promotion in the lifelong learning system and the construction of a learning society. The government should always adhere to the idea of people-centered development and be guided by the new development concept of innovation, coordination, green, openness and sharing, so as to form the

driving force, advantages and characteristics of the nationwide reading development in learning cities.

#### ***4.4 Creating New Forms of Lifelong Education***

The government should break the distance between the elite and the public, gather the power of the people, society and all walks of life, persistently and jointly build large-scale cultural projects and form a normalized and systematic mode of operation. It is necessary to deeply implement the innovation-driven development strategy, deploy innovative applications of digital technologies such as the Internet, big data and artificial intelligence, create digital reading promotion platforms and learning carriers with intelligent all-media resources, and cultivate and grow new lifelong education industries. In addition, it is significant to deliver high-quality reading resources to the vast number of rural areas, islands, mountainous areas and communities, break through the limitations of time and space, provide better educational services and opportunities for people of different education levels, ages and professions, and promote educational equity.

According to the requirements of epidemic prevention and control, the government should take into account the actual situation in the city, adapt to local conditions, use the Internet + nationwide reading as the theme of activities, and carry out a combination of online and offline education and training as well as reading promotion services for the whole society. Besides, it is necessary to strengthen the theory and practice of lifelong learning for all, promote vocational education and talent development, promote rural revitalization and sustainable development, and promote the construction of a learning society.

#### ***4.5 Promoting the Sustainable Development of Learning Cities***

The government should create a lifelong learning system suitable for the sustainable development of learning cities and the diverse needs of the people. The government have to promote scientific, systematic, digital and high-quality reading for citizens to help them learn for life. The government should enhance the charm of the times by vivid expression of national reading, expand the effective supply of national reading cultural products, and form a high quality and characteristic brand of learning city construction.

The government need to base on the strategic requirements of promoting the in-depth development of nationwide reading and the construction of a scholarly society, promote the construction of a learning society in which "everyone learns, everywhere learns and always learns", build a learning city and promote the model construction of urban civilization through nationwide reading. The government should make comprehensive use of new technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, block chain, big data and cloud computing to establish a public service platform for lifelong learning for all, which integrates teaching, management and services, and gathers, integrates and promotes all kinds of high-quality courses and learning resources at home and abroad.

#### ***4.6 Learning from Each Other with an International Perspective***

The government should analyze the new ideas and consensus of the international community on the construction of learning cities and construct the governance system of learning city. Nationwide reading promotion in learning cities helps ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities. By spreading and exchanging good practices of learning cities around the world, collaboration and knowledge sharing can be strengthened. Cities such as London in the UK, Osaka in Japan, Namyangju in South Korea, Solocaba in Brazil, Asberg in Finland and Mexico City continue to explore the construction of sustainable learning city, providing useful path reference for the construction of learning city in other countries [6].

In line with the international community, China is actively building a world-class system for integrating lifelong education with the development of nationwide reading in learning cities.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The development of nationwide reading in learning cities can improve the education system that serves lifelong learning, enrich lifelong education resources, and constantly meet the diversified learning needs of different social groups. Guided by the development concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, China has learned from global experience to build a learning society and a lifelong education system, promote the innovative development of learning

cities, and share the wisdom of the development of nationwide reading in learning cities against the background of lifelong education. In addition, the government need to strengthen exchanges and cooperation at home and abroad to help achieve the sustainable development goals by 2030 and the goal of building China into a great education nation by 2035. The government should create an atmosphere of learning and learning for the pleasure of reading in the whole society, gather strength, resources and wisdom from different fields and levels, effectively promote the comprehensive implementation of the construction of a learning city, and promote the improvement of urban civilization and cultural soft power.

### **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

This paper is independently completed by Jialian Wang.

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