

Study on the extracurricular reading effect of Anhui University students during the epidemic closure period

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Abstract: With the rapid development of the Internet and the popularity of mobile internet, there is a wealth of diverse network information resources that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. During the period of epidemic closure, students have the opportunity to fully utilize these network resources for studying and communication. However, due to the impact of the epidemic, some college students are unable to attend classes as usual, thus requiring alternative methods to complete their academic tasks. The objective of this study is to investigate the extracurricular reading situation and the factors that influence college students in Anhui province during the period of epidemic closure, with the aim of providing a reference for relevant educational institutions.

1. Introduction

1.1 Question posed

1.1.1 Meaning of reading

Reading is the primary method for acquiring knowledge and enhancing wisdom. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in preserving and transmitting civilization, as well as improving national literacy. The ancients recognized and valued the significance of reading, as evidenced by their saying, "The book has its own room of gold, the book has its own beauty like jade." For individuals, reading enables the curious to learn and transforms the ignorant into knowledgeable individuals. Engaging with a good book is akin to personally experiencing it, allowing one to perceive its wisdom and thoughts, and broaden one's perspective. Moreover, reading has the ability to calm our hearts, dispel impulsiveness, encourage deep contemplation and exploration, and provide solace and hope during times of frustration. Reading not only contributes to the enhancement of personal qualities, but it also has implications for societal and national development. Throughout history, people from all walks of life have placed great importance on the value of reading. As a culturally-rich country, China possesses deep cultural and historical roots, necessitating its people to view reading as a means of inheriting civilization and comprehending culture. The improvement of individual cultural achievements and moral qualities can foster an overall elevation in societal quality, while the positive scholarly social atmosphere also influences individuals, thereby promoting the sustainable

development of the social system. Similarly, the sound development of society propels the advancement and construction of the entire nation and country, and reciprocally, the nation has an impact on society, creating a virtuous cycle of development.

1.1.2 The influence of epidemic closure on college students

The outbreak of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020 has had a significant impact on the national economy and residents' lives. Due to the repeated impact of the epidemic, many universities have to frequently turn to the mode of school closure, isolation and online courses, and the discretionary university life originally imagined was also forced to press the "pause button" because of the epidemic. During the epidemic period, young students have more leisure time, but they are impetuous and difficult to study. Some students experience anxiety and panic, and negative emotions spread and generate more negative energy. Some students face great psychological pressure on an employment issue, doubt themselves and even lose confidence in the world.

1.1.3 National encouragement and expectation for college students' reading

The outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020 has had a significant impact on the national economy and the lives of residents. As a result of the repeated impact of the epidemic, many universities have had to resort to frequent school closures, isolation measures, and online courses. The discretionary university life that was originally envisioned has also been disrupted due to the epidemic. During this period, young students have had more leisure time, but they have struggled with restlessness and found it difficult to focus on their studies. Some students have experienced anxiety and panic, leading to the spread of negative emotions and generating even more negativity. Additionally, some students are facing significant psychological pressure related to employment concerns, causing them to doubt themselves and even lose confidence in the world.

1.2 Study status.

Since the 1980s, scholars both domestically and internationally have conducted extensive research and discussions on the topic of reading. Pan Yong^[1] provided commentary on the concept of reading evaluation and the elements of the PISA (International Student Assessment Program). It emphasizes the importance of respecting individual subjects in reading education. Yu Mingdi^[2] theoretically discussed the concept of reading effectiveness and the three main factors that influence it: the reader as the main entity, the text as the object, and reading as the mediating process. Shen Lamei^[3] conducted experiments to study the impact of multimedia information presentation on the reading effectiveness of college students. Liu Yuan^[4] examined the reading effectiveness of college students based on different mediums and concluded that reading on paper yields better results than electronic reading. The study controlled for external factors and analyzed the reading effectiveness in an ideal environment. Wang Jian^[5] discussed the impact and strategies of online reading for college students. Qi Zhuolin^[6], in conjunction with a reader questionnaire, evaluated the reading effectiveness from four dimensions: reading purpose and degree of completion, reading quality, and efficiency. The study also examined the factors that influence reading effectiveness from both internal and external perspectives.

Based on the aforementioned research, it has been determined that the absence of pertinent survey data accurately reflects the reading impact and factors that influence the reading habits of young college students during the period of home epidemic prevention. Therefore, investigating the effects of extracurricular reading and the factors that influence it among college students in Anhui province during their academic years can provide us with insights into the strengths and weaknesses of college students' extracurricular reading during outbreaks. This, in turn, can encourage college

students to enhance their scientific and cultural knowledge and develop positive character traits. The significance of this research extends to society as a whole and the entire nation, making it the fundamental and starting point for this study.

1.3 Study purpose and significance

1.3.1 Study Purpose

1) To investigate the effects and influencing factors of college students' extracurricular reading during the period of epidemic closure, our objective is to gain an understanding of college students' reading behavior, reading preferences, and reading outcomes. This will allow the competent department of college education to develop a comprehensive evaluation index system for assessing the impact of extracurricular reading during outbreaks. Furthermore, we will offer practical and viable strategies and methods to promote extracurricular reading among college students during outbreaks.

2) Establishing and enhancing the extracurricular reading system for college students. In light of the special reading environment and reading atmosphere created by public safety events, how can we effectively encourage college students to participate in extracurricular reading? This initiative seeks to address the lack of emphasis on extracurricular reading among college students during the epidemic period and comprehensively assess its impact.

1.3.2 Study Significance

(1) Theoretical significance

1) Enrich the reading theory. From the perspective of college students' extracurricular reading during the epidemic closure period, this study discusses the effect and the influence mechanism of extracurricular reading during the closure period, which is conducive to enriching the theory of reading.

2) Develop and construct the evaluation index system of the extracurricular reading effect and influencing factors of college students during the epidemic closure period, and enrich and expand the research on the evaluation system of the reading effect.

(2) Practical significance

1) Provide effective methods and tools for education authorities to objectively evaluate the impact of college students' extracurricular reading during the closure period.

2) In order to enhance the promotional impact of college students' extracurricular reading during periods of closure caused by public safety events, elevate the reading status of college students during the epidemic and other exceptional periods, and improve the reading level and quality of college students in such extraordinary circumstances.

1.4 Research ideas and methods

1.4.1 Research ideas

First: literature search. Through a literature search on the CNKI and Wanfang databases, consulting the relevant literature on college students' reading, reading effects, factors influencing reading, and extracurricular reading under the background of epidemic school closure, the core concept of this study was determined, and the basic framework of this study was preliminarily formulated.

Second: theoretical analysis. According to the ERG theory of Clayton Aldever and the use and satisfaction theory of E · Katz, combined with the characteristics of college students, this research

lays the theoretical foundation and finds the point of research innovation.

Third: the preparation and distribution of questionnaires. The Questionnaire of College Students during the Closed Period was compiled and issued for the questionnaire survey, and college students and teachers in Anhui Province were randomly selected for individual in-depth interviews.

Fourth: the analysis of the survey results reveals the current situation and existing problems of extracurricular reading among college students in Anhui Province. This analysis integrates the data analysis of the questionnaire survey results with a comprehensive analysis of the interview content.

Fifth: put forward the countermeasures. According to the survey results, the causes of the problems were analyzed, and a high-quality promotion mechanism for extracurricular reading among college students during the epidemic prevention and control period was established for the education authorities and universities.

1.4.2 Study Methods

This study is based on the outbreak closure during the influence of extracurricular reading, found under the emergency public security incident college students extracurricular reading problems, is committed to put forward the closure the outbreak closure during college students extracurricular reading countermeasures, through the literature research, questionnaire survey, interview, the status of college students in Anhui province. The present study mainly uses the following research methods:

1.4.2.1 Literature research method

This study is based on the impact of extracurricular reading on the prevention of outbreaks. It focuses on the issues of extracurricular reading among college students during emergency public security incidents. The study aims to propose measures to prevent outbreaks during college students' extracurricular reading. The research methods used in this study include literature research, questionnaire surveys, and interviews with college students in Anhui province.

1.4.2.2 Questionnaire survey method

This study primarily utilizes the questionnaire survey method, with college students in Anhui province serving as the subjects of the questionnaire. The random sample consists of college students, teachers, and education supervisors in Anhui province. The questionnaire survey is directed towards diverse college students who are involved in extracurricular reading. The objective of the study is to quantitatively analyze the current issues pertaining to college students' extracurricular reading.

1.4.2.3 Interview method

In this study, college students, teachers, and education supervisors conducted random sampling interviews to understand the real situation regarding their attention to college students' reading and organization during the epidemic period. The aim was to analyze the causes of the problems from the perspective of qualitative research.

2. Investigation and analysis of the effect and influencing factors of extracurricular reading among college students during the epidemic closure period

2.1 Investigation design and implementation

2.1.1 Survey Subject Design

In this study, a total of 81 college students from Anhui province were selected as participants. The Statistical Questionnaire of College Students during the Closed Period was utilized, and a total of 61 questionnaires were successfully retrieved, resulting in an effective recovery rate of 75.3%. The basic situation of the present survey study is shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Basic information of Statistical Questionnaire of College Students during the Closed Period

project	class	percentage (%)
	man	18.52
sex	woman	81.48
	amount to	100
	Literature and history class	75.31
specialty	science and engineering	24.69
	amount to	100

2.1.2 Design of the survey tools

This study is based on the analysis of extracurricular reading among college students during the period of epidemic closure. To ensure the scientificity, rigor, and objectivity of the questionnaire, current research on college students' extracurricular reading was analyzed during the early stage of questionnaire preparation. A field investigation was also conducted in the university library of Anhui University. Additionally, reference was made to the analysis of new media era college students' fragmented reading and its social influence, as well as research on the development of college students' quality through network literature reading. The study is also based on the background and model of college students' reading behavior factors and research on college students' paper reading, mobile reading, and paid reading behaviors. The literature questionnaire design for this study specifically focuses on extracurricular reading of college students during the closed period. The questionnaire is divided into three parts:

- 1) The first part consists of some basic information, such as gender, grade, and major.
- 2) The second part is a survey of all dimensions of reading, including frequency, time, quantity, and method.
- 3) The third part is a subjective judgment survey of college students on reading during the closure period. It includes questions about the meaning of reading during the closure period, whether the participant engaged in reading activities during the closure period, and reasons for disliking reading.

The questionnaire structure is shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Basic structure of questionnaire recovery

structure	intension
Reading method in school	
reading method	It refers to the mastery and application of various reading methods of college students during the closure period
Selection and mastery	

of reading methods	
Reading willingness at school	
The category of reading	It refers to whether college students are willing to take the initiative to read and develop good reading habits during the closure period
Selection of reading categories	
Reading habits in school	Refers to whether the reading frequency is within a reasonable range
Reading frequency	
Read the quantity	Whether the number of readings can correspond to the leisure time during the school closure
read notes	Refers to whether the reading is effective

2.1.3 Investigation and Implementation

In this study, a total of 81 college students in Anhui Province were randomly selected through an online questionnaire. To ensure the credibility of the questionnaire, the survey was conducted anonymously, allowing subjects to provide honest and objective answers to both objective and subjective questions. Additionally, the anonymous questionnaire survey ensured that the subjects' personal information would not be leaked, thus protecting their privacy. A total of 81 questionnaires were issued in this study, with 61 deemed valid, resulting in a recovery rate of 75.3%. The questionnaire results were analyzed as follows.

2.2 The extracurricular reading effect of college students during the epidemic school closure period

In terms of reading time and frequency, more than 45% of the participants read for more than one hour, once or twice a week, with an average reading time of 1.5 hours per week.

From the reading initiative, the purpose of reading and whether to write reading notes overall, the reading effect is good. The proportion of active reading was 80.33%, and more than 73% of the subjects would read to expand their knowledge. In addition, more than 60% of the subjects would write reading notes on the content they read.

From the above data, it is not difficult to see that the college students, during the closure period, read about their interests and took relevant notes. This indicates that the external factor of the closure has had a favorable impact on the reading habits of college students.

2.3 Influencing factors affecting college students' extracurricular reading during the epidemic closure

2.3.1 Reading method

Through the analysis of the questionnaire results, this study found that college students were more inclined to utilize the Internet for reading, accounting for 47.5%. This finding suggests that with the advancement of new media, reading is increasingly transitioning to a digital format. This type of reading is not constrained by temporal or spatial limitations and can effectively enhance the knowledge base of college students.

2.3.2 Willingness to read

The participants' inclination towards reading indicated that reading was acknowledged by all as

an important matter. Furthermore, 58.02% of the participants expressed their belief in the significance of reading extensively to enhance their cultural knowledge. Hence, our findings reveal that the majority of college students did not cease reading during the epidemic, but rather engaged with various genres of books, such as martial arts, military philosophy, and others.

2.3.3 Reading Habits

This study discovered that reading habits have a significant impact on reading. A total of 75% of the participants reported reading books on a weekly basis. This consistent reading frequency aids in retaining a coherent memory of the book's content, thereby fostering a greater enthusiasm for reading among college students and mitigating the knowledge gap caused by the closure of the epidemic.

3. Existing problems and causes analysis

3.1 Existing problems

3.1.1 Stage time aspect

The era of epidemic-induced school closures has become a thing of the past for college students in Anhui and even for the entire country. Thanks to the correct decision-making and strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee, China has successfully overcome the critical epidemic period and entered the post-epidemic era. However, certain studies examining the impact of extracurricular reading and the factors that influence college students during the period of school closures due to the epidemic were unable to be carried out.

3.1.2 Cognition of college students

In the survey, 58.02% of respondents believe that it is important to engage in extensive reading and enhance their cultural literacy. Meanwhile, 39.51% of participants feel that they should focus on reading certain classic books that are relevant to their professional expertise. Additionally, 22.47% of respondents express a preference for reading books that they personally deem valuable. These findings indicate that there is a need for some college students to enhance their comprehension of reading.

3.1.3 Reading time, motivation and purpose

As can be seen from Figure 1 and Figure 2, during the epidemic closure period, most college students read for 1-2 hours every day. However, most of them were reading to rest, entertain themselves and pursue their interests and hobbies. They basically did not participate in online reading activities organized by the school, and their reading motivation came more from within themselves rather than from the school.

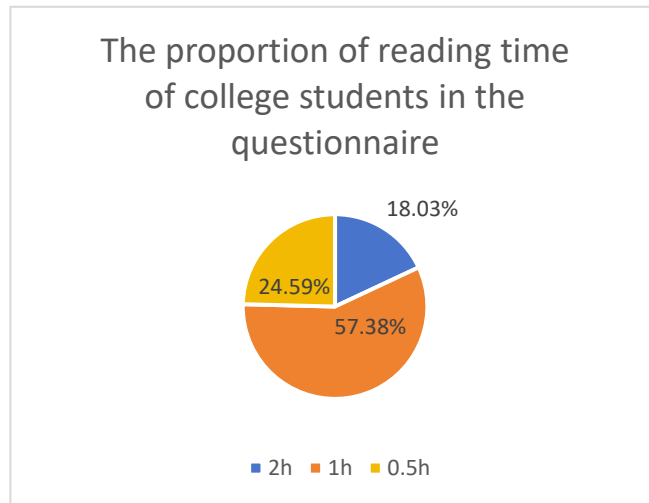


Figure 1: Pie chart of the reading time of college students in the questionnaire

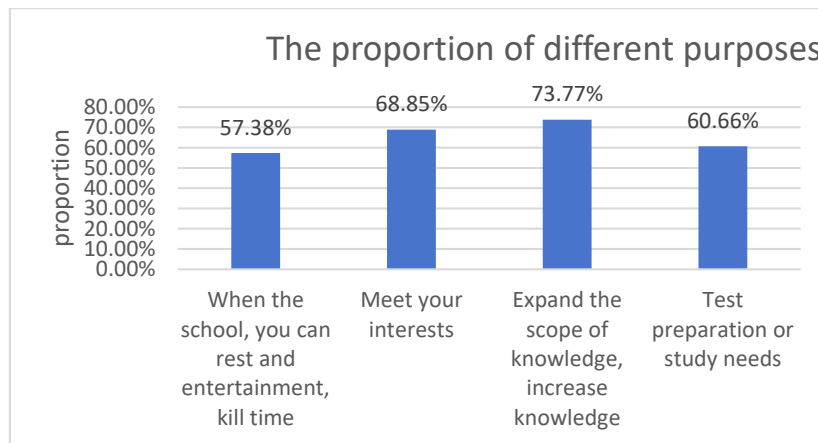


Figure 2: Histogram of the reading purpose ratio of college students

3.1.4 Reading activities organized by the school

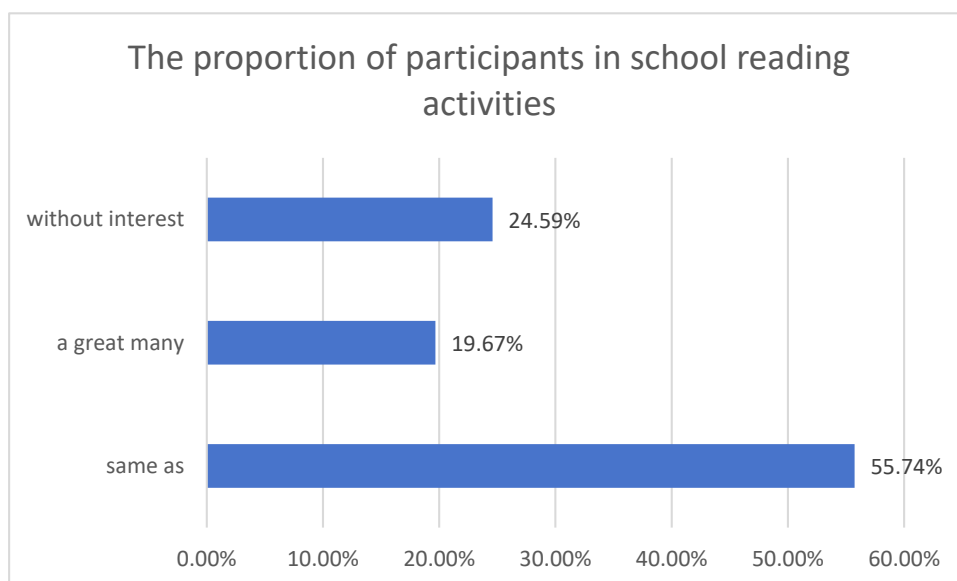


Figure 3: Bar chart of the proportion of college students participating in school reading activities

As can be seen from **Figure 3**, during the epidemic closure period, only 19.67% of students participated in more reading activities, 55.74% of students participated in the average, and even 24.59% of students thought they were not interested. It can be seen that during the epidemic closure of the school, the organization of reading activities for college students is not perfect, the gap is large, and it is difficult to carry out.

3.2 Cause analysis

3.2.1 Personal level

Most college students allocate their time to reading based on their individual preferences, such as hobbies, leisure, and entertainment. However, it is imperative to enhance the cognitive abilities of college students in order to facilitate their transition from reading books for personal enjoyment to engaging with professional literature recommended by educational institutions. This shift will not only broaden the range of genres they explore, but also elevate the caliber of the books they engage with, ultimately enhancing their personal reading accomplishments.

3.2.2 School organization

Based on the stage restrictions of the epidemic era, including the post-epidemic era, schools fail to offer any reading activities that cater to the interests of college students in offline reading. As a result, there is a deficiency in reading education and promotion.

3.2.3 Social aspects

Based on the findings of the questionnaire, it is evident that 34.43% of college students prefer reading e-books over paper books, whereas 34.7% have an equal preference for both formats. Additionally, the high cost of reading and the scattered nature of reading materials are identified as factors contributing to the low interest in reading among college students.

4. Conclusion and countermeasures

Based on the questionnaire survey, this study examined the status of extracurricular reading during the period of epidemic closure. By analyzing the data from the questionnaire survey and the interview records, the study identified the problems and causes of college students' extracurricular reading during the epidemic period. This chapter will draw the main conclusions of the study and propose targeted countermeasures, based on the research findings from chapters 3 and 4.

4.1 Conclusion

4.1.1 The epidemic school closure affects the reading time and reading quality of college students

Through the use of questionnaire surveys and interviews, it was discovered that the majority of students engage in reading activities only once or twice a week, for a duration of less than one hour each time. The closure of educational institutions due to the outbreak has had a dual effect on college students' reading habits. On one hand, it has provided them with increased free time, enabling them to engage in reading and find solace. On the other hand, the relaxed atmosphere has diminished students' motivation and enthusiasm for reading. Additionally, the control exerted by the school and teachers has further contributed to students' lack of initiative, resulting in a decrease in both the quantity and quality of their reading.

4.1.2 Epidemic school closure to enhance the recreation and entertainment of college students' reading

Outbreak-related closures have resulted in a rise in the amount of free time available to college students, and many of them have opted to engage in recreational reading. Among the various genres available, novels have gained significant popularity among college students. Based on the findings of a questionnaire, it was observed that 63% of college students derive enjoyment from romance, martial arts, and detective novels, while 45% have a preference for entertainment, animation, and other leisure books. In general, college students tend to be inclined towards genres that offer leisure and entertainment when selecting their reading material.

4.1.3 The pressure brought by the epidemic school closure increases the utility of students' reading

The intensifying competition in contemporary society has amplified the academic and employment pressures on students, particularly during the epidemic period. The rate of unemployment in society has consistently reached unprecedented levels, resulting in numerous college graduates grappling with joblessness. Consequently, the objective of college students' reading has increasingly shifted towards practicality, with practicality now being the foremost consideration. Many college students read with specific objectives in mind, such as preparing for postgraduate entrance exams, public exams, and other relevant professional literature, which have become the preferred choice for a significant number of college students.

4.2 Countermeasures

Drawing upon an analysis of the underlying causes of the issues in the present state of extracurricular reading during the period of school closures, this chapter presents a set of guidelines aimed at improving extracurricular reading among college students post-epidemic.

4.2.1 Select the appropriate book list and make a reading plan

Students should clearly identify their interests and goals and select appropriate reading lists to concentrate on and derive enjoyment from the reading process. Furthermore, they should effectively manage their extracurricular time and diligently follow through with their planned activities.

4.2.2 Improve the bad reading tendency and improve the reading taste

In order to address students' negative reading habits, schools can promote engaging reading activities and direct students towards improving their reading preferences. Additionally, schools can establish designated areas for college students to read and offer a wide range of book resources, while also recommending daily reading materials. To tackle the issue of poor reading habits, libraries can enforce mandatory measures to limit students' book choices and guide their behavior.

4.2.3 Create reading communities and create a good reading atmosphere

For society, a reading community can be established to attract more individuals to engage in reading. This can be achieved through the establishment of reading discussion groups and the organization of reading activities. Within this community, individuals can share their reading experiences and recommend noteworthy books, thereby fostering greater enthusiasm and interest in reading. Additionally, the implementation of a reading reward system, which includes the presentation of relevant reading medals and bonuses, can further incentivize and motivate

individuals to read.

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