

Research on the Reading Status of University Faculty and Staff

— A Case Study of Binzhou University

Yuzhi Cao

Library, Binzhou University, Binzhou, China

Email: 673062586@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Cao, Y.Z. (2019) Research on the Reading Status of University Faculty and Staff. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 7, 225-238.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2019.71019>

Received: December 18, 2018

Accepted: January 20, 2019

Published: January 23, 2019

Copyright © 2019 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

Universities are cultural highlands, and the reading cultural life of faculty and staff should also be rich and colorful. The author investigates and analyzes the reading conditions of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University, draws the conclusions of the investigation, and puts forward constructive opinions on the labor union organizing reading activities of the faculty and staff.

Keywords

University Faculty and Staff, Reading Status, Investigation Conclusions, Recommendations

1. Survey Background and Significance

In recent years, “Reading for all” has become a hot topic. Since 2014, “Reading for all” has been written into the government work report for five consecutive years. With the continuous promotion of the government and many reading groups, various reading activities, such as reading clubs, have been enriched, greatly enriching people’s cultural life. As a cultural highland, the reading and cultural life of university faculty and staff should also be rich and colorful. On October 29, 2018, Jinping Xi emphasized in a collective conversation with the members of the new leadership of the All-China Federation of Labor Unions: “Labor unions must adhere to the socialist core values to lead the workers, deepen the ‘Chinese Dream, Labor Beauty’ theme education, and build healthy civilized, high-spirited, and full-staff employee culture.” [1] With the changes in the main contradictions of the society, the labor unions that are the homes of workers should also timely capture the growing needs of faculty and staff for reading cultural life, and provide inclusive, normal, and accurate services with the cha-

racteristics of labor unions. To this end, this report investigates and analyzes the reading status of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University, and puts forward constructive suggestions for the faculty and staff reading cultural activities organized by university labor unions.

2. Reading Survey Background Introduction and Result Analysis

2.1. Survey Objects, Content and Methods

The author used the questionnaire star system to edit the questionnaire and collected questionnaires online. On October 29, 2018, questionnaires were distributed to all colleges and departments. As of November 2, 2018, 109 questionnaires were distributed and 109 valid questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire recovery rate was 100%. Binzhou University has more than 1300 faculty and staff members, with a sample size of 109, which meets the sample requirements of random sampling. It is representative of the reading situation of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University. The original data was sorted and counted using the questionnaire star system and Microsoft Excel software.

2.2. Survey Results and Analysis

Basic information of the survey object. There were 57 males and 52 females in the survey. The proportion of males and females was roughly the same, and there were slightly more males (see **Figure 1**). There were 46 people aged 31 - 40 among them, accounting for the largest proportion and reaching 42.20%. After that, there were 31 people aged 41 - 50, 23 people under 30 years old and 9 people over 51 years old which accounts for the least proportion (see **Figure 2**). Judging from the nature of the work of the respondents, the proportion of professional teachers is more than half, followed by teaching assistants and party and government workers (see **Figure 3**). From the highest academic qualifications that have been obtained, the proportion of postgraduate is the highest, followed by undergraduate, doctoral students and specialist (only one specialist) (see **Figure 4**). In terms of professional distribution, the faculty and staff of science and engineering majors account for more than 2/3, and the faculty and staff of literature and history majors account for nearly one-third (see **Figure 5**).

Reading time. The proportion of faculty members who read more than one hour per day is one-third (see **Table 1**), and the faculty and staff who are over the

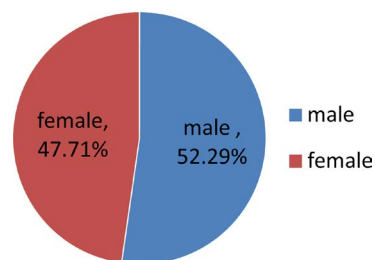


Figure 1. Gender distribution of faculty and staff survey in Binzhou University.

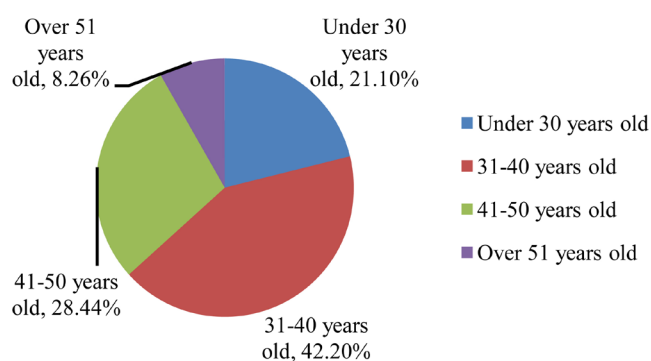


Figure 2. Age distribution of faculty and staff survey in Binzhou University.

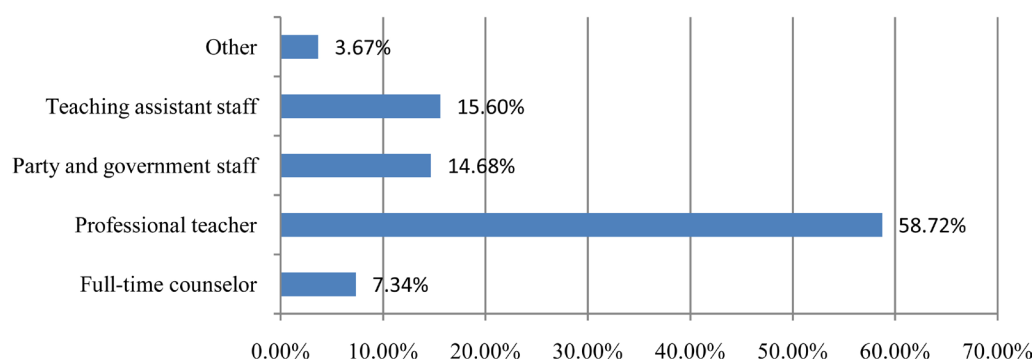


Figure 3. Distribution of the nature of the work of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

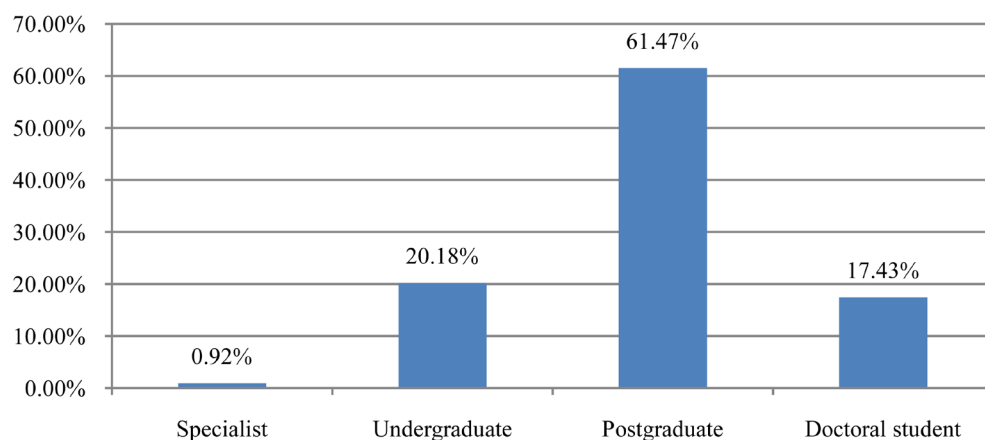


Figure 4. Distribution of academic qualifications of faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

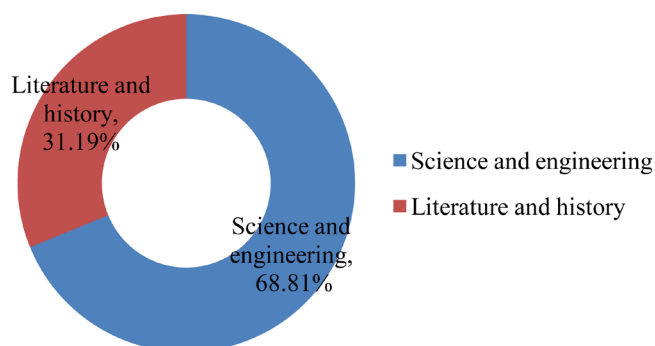


Figure 5. Distribution of professional surveys of faculty and staff in Binzhou University.

age of 51 have the highest reading time of more than one hour (see **Figure 6**). The faculty and staff of this age group generally have less stress in life, their children are already adults, and the professional title assessment is mostly over. Compared with faculty and staff of other ages, they have more time to invest in rich spiritual and cultural life.

Reading motivation. From the perspective of reading motivation, the main driving force for the reading of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University is personal reading habits (see **Figure 7**). The faculty and staff of universities are generally highly educated, and good reading habits that are cultivated throughout the year are the first motivation. The second motivation is the “teaching and scientific research needs”. Teaching and research, as the main work of college

Table 1. Distribution of reading time of faculty and staff of Binzhou College.

option	number of people	proportion
Within half an hour	15	13.76%
Half an hour to one hour	39	35.78%
More than 1 hour	36	33.03%
Rarely read	19	17.43%

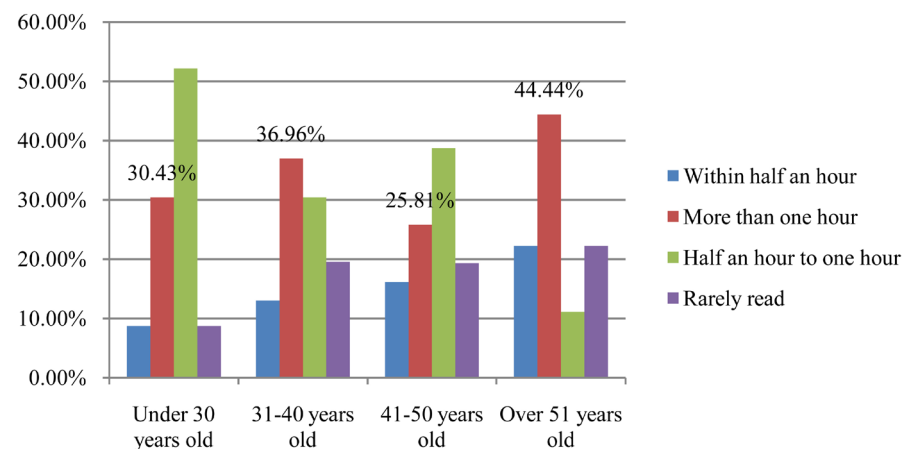


Figure 6. Comparison of reading time of faculty and staff of different ages in Binzhou University.

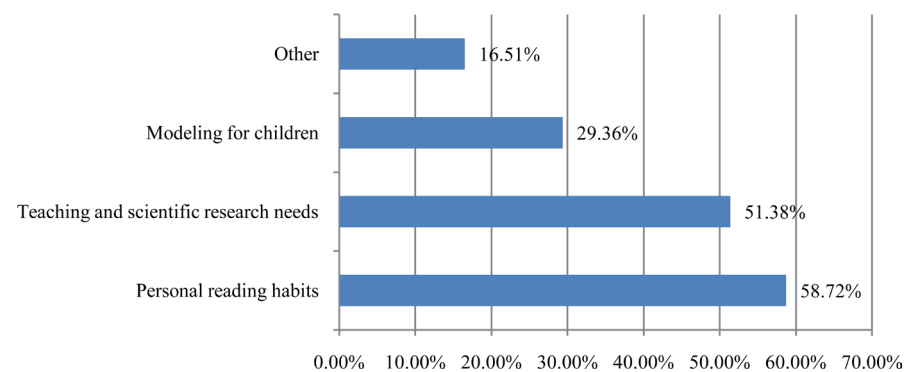


Figure 7. Comparison of reading motivations of faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

faculty and staff, will inevitably occupy a lot of energy, especially young and middle-aged teachers. It can also be clearly seen from **Figure 8** that the reading needs due to the needs of teaching and scientific research are decreasing with age. The “teaching and scientific research needs” of the “under 30 years old” faculty and staff are the strongest. In addition, the faculty and staff of the “31 - 40 years old” age group will also “make a role model for children” as a very important reading motivation, which is the group with the highest proportion among the four age groups. The children of faculty and staff in this age group are younger. It is an important stage in the development of reading habits and learning habits. As a group of teachers, they pay more attention to the education of their children, and they also take advantage of the power of leading by example and role models.

Factors affecting reading. From the survey results, the attitude of faculty and staff towards reading is very consistent, and almost everyone thinks that reading is very necessary. From the factors that hinder reading, the top two are “heavy work tasks” and “more family trivia” (**Table 2**). Among them, the faculty and staff under the age of 30 think that the proportion of the task of heavy work is the biggest factor, reaching 78.26%. The faculty and staff of 31 - 40 years old

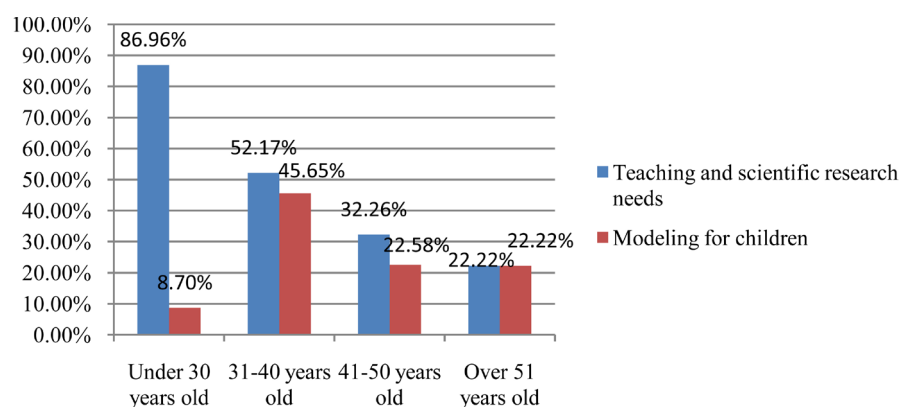


Figure 8. Comparison of the two reading motivations of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University in different age groups.

Table 2. Comparison of the factors affecting the reading of faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

Option	Number of people	Proportion
A. I feel that reading is not necessary or not interested in reading, and my knowledge reserve is enough to control the classroom or meet the needs of the work.	1	0.92%
B. Reading is necessary, but the usual work tasks are heavy and there is no time to study.	66	60.55%
C. The school does not have a good guiding environment for the faculty and staff amateur reading activities, and lacks reading guidance. Reading has no effect.	19	17.43%
D. More family trivia	47	43.12%
E. There are too many entertainment items for recreation, and reading is not attractive to me.	6	5.5%
F. Growing with age, poor eyesight affects reading.	18	16.51%
G. Other	18	16.51%

have the highest proportion of “family trivia”, reaching 63.04%. In addition, growing with age, the impact of poor eyesight on reading is gradually increasing (see **Figure 9**). It is worth noting that the third factor affecting reading “the school does not have a good guiding environment for the faculty and staff amateur reading activities, lack of reading guidance, reading has no effect”, nearly one-third of the faculty members under 30 years old chose this item, far exceeding the faculty and staff of other age groups. This shows that faculty members under the age of 30 have a strong demand for guidance in reading. Most of the faculty and staff under the age of 30 are in the early years of their employment, and they are in the adaptation period of their careers. They have the psychological needs of quickly integrating into group life and professional growth.

Reading method. The faculty’s “most frequently used reading method” and the “favorite reading method” are the opposite (see **Figure 10** and **Figure 11**). The E-reading (including “reading on the computer” and “reading mobile devices such as mobile phones and iPads”), being the “most frequently used reading methods”, accounted for 63.3%, while “paper reading” was the “favorable

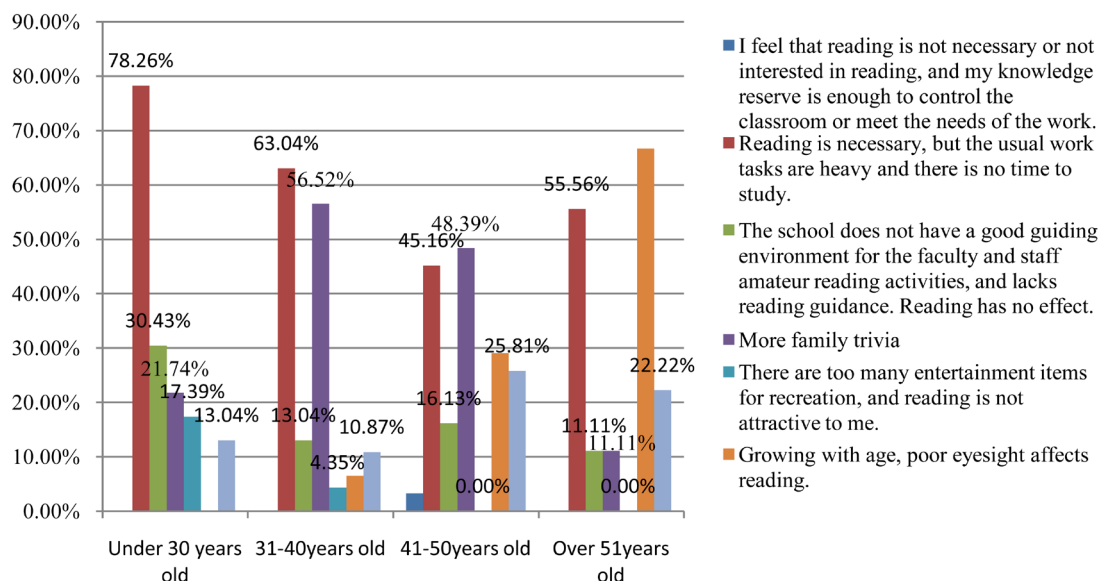


Figure 9. Comparison of factors affecting reading of different age groups of faculty and staff in Binzhou University.

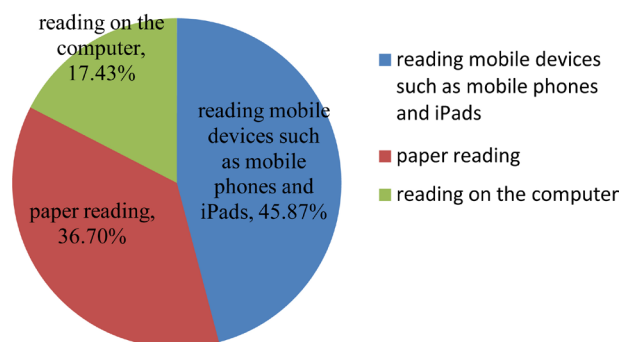


Figure 10. The most frequently used reading methods of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

reading method” for faculty and staff, accounting for more than 70%. It can be seen that the convenience of e-reading and the reading experience of paper reading play an important role in the reading life of faculty and staff.

Reading content. This question is a sorting question. It is required to sort by reading ratio from large to small according to the daily reading content. According to the questionnaire star system, the average comprehensive score is calculated according to the ranking of all the candidates' options. The higher the score is, the higher the overall ranking is. Among them, “books related to teaching and research” account for the largest proportion of the reading content of faculty and staff, “literature and history books”, “leisure, entertainment and health books” and “all kinds of newspapers and magazines” are respectively ranked secondly, thirdly and fourth, and these three proportions are almost the same (see **Figure 12**). This shows that these three categories are the main reading content in the reading life outside the faculty's work.

Reading place. At present, more than half of the faculty's reading places are selected at home, followed by “teaching and researching rooms or laboratories”. The “others” ranked third accounted for about 1/10. Some of the faculty and

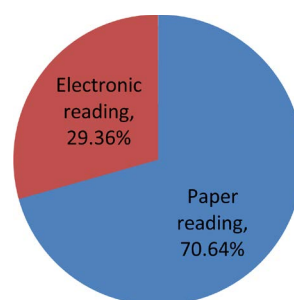


Figure 11. Reading method preferred by faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

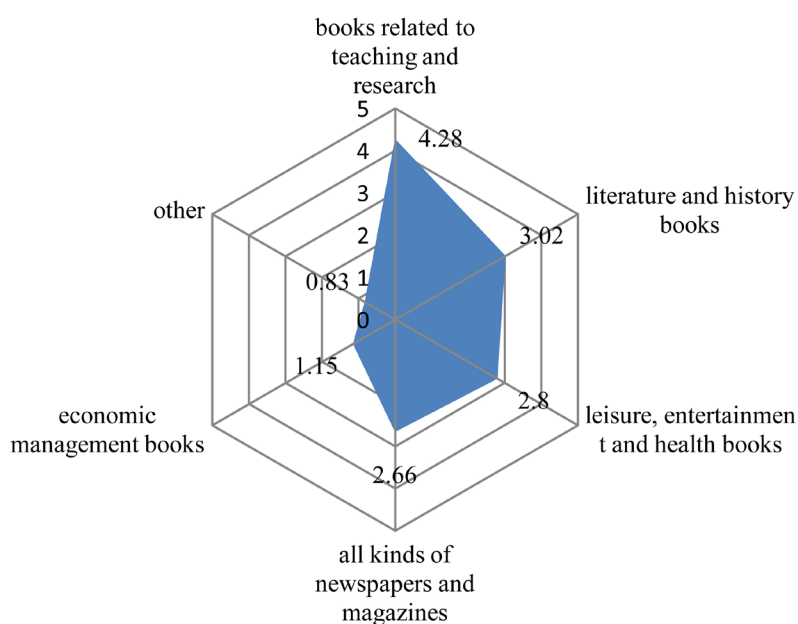


Figure 12. Distribution of reading contents of faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

staff who chose this item filled out “anytime, anywhere”, indicating that their reading place is not fixed. The smallest percentage is the “library”, which is related to Binzhou University Library having not the faculty members’ exclusive reading places (see **Figure 13**). Regardless of convenience or reading environment, the library was not indeed a good place for faculty and staff to read before. Therefore, the library is ranked last, which is in line with the actual situation. In August 2018, the Binzhou University Library began to set up a “Teacher Reading Room” to provide faculty and staff with a quiet and comfortable reading and training facility. In this survey, we also investigated the expected use of it. 65.14% of the faculty and staff clearly indicated that they would choose to read in the “Teacher Reading Room” (see **Figure 14**). This not only indicates the necessity of preparing a “teacher reading room”, but also indicates that the utilization rate of the “teacher reading room” will be guaranteed in the future.

The participation of the “Shuxiang 38” Reading Activity. The “Shuxiang 38” reading activity is a Female reading-themed reading activity jointly organized by

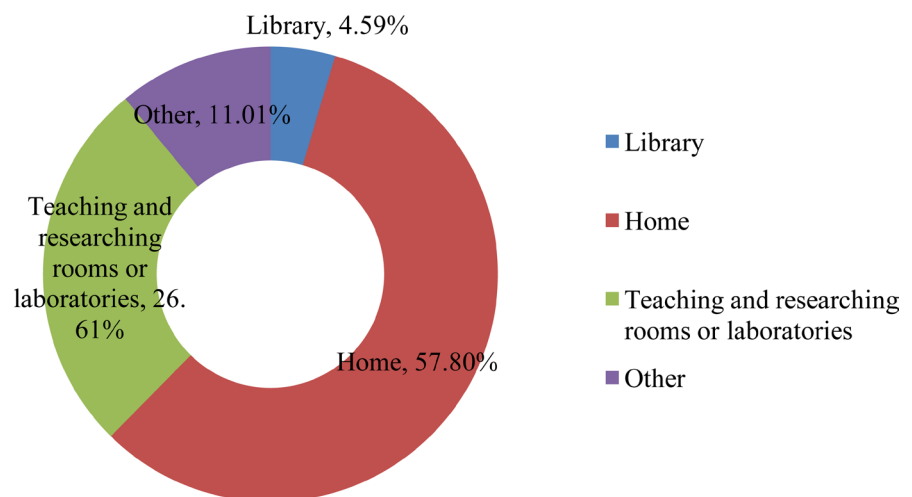


Figure 13. Distribution of faculty reading places in Binzhou University.

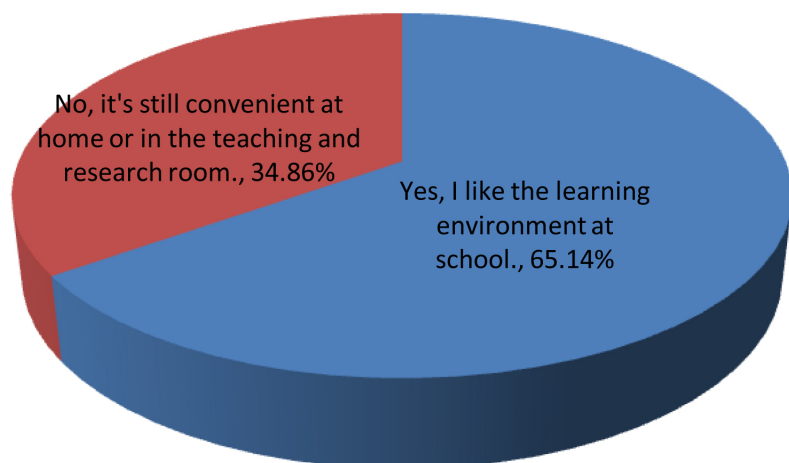


Figure 14. Expectations of the use of exclusive reading places by faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

Hongqi Publishing House, China Women's Newspaper and People's Daily. Since its launch in December 2012, it has issued notices through labor unions, women's federations and other channels every year. The Binzhou University Labor Union organized the participation of female faculty and staff from the fourth session in 2015. However, from the survey results, the effect is not optimistic. The number of people who did not participate in accounted for 82.69% (see **Figure 15**), of which 44.19% of the female faculty and staff "want to participate, but the teaching and research tasks are heavy and there is no time to participate." More than one-third of the female faculty members "do not know of this activity" (see **Figure 16**). It can be seen that the labor unions have not done enough in the promotion of the activities. Among the 52 female faculty members surveyed, only 9 people participated in this reading activity, and all of them participated in the essay activities. It can be seen that the forms of activities involved are also relatively simple.

Participation in off-campus reading activities. More than half of the faculty

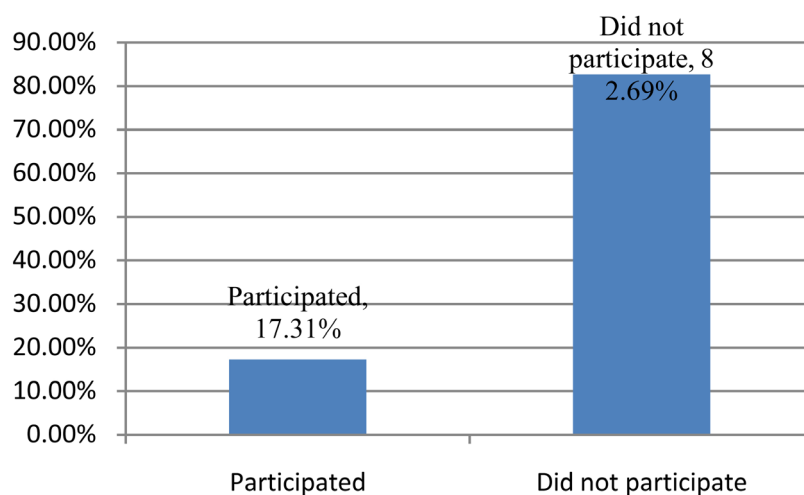


Figure 15. Female faculty and staff of Binzhou College participated in the reading activity of Shuxiang 38.

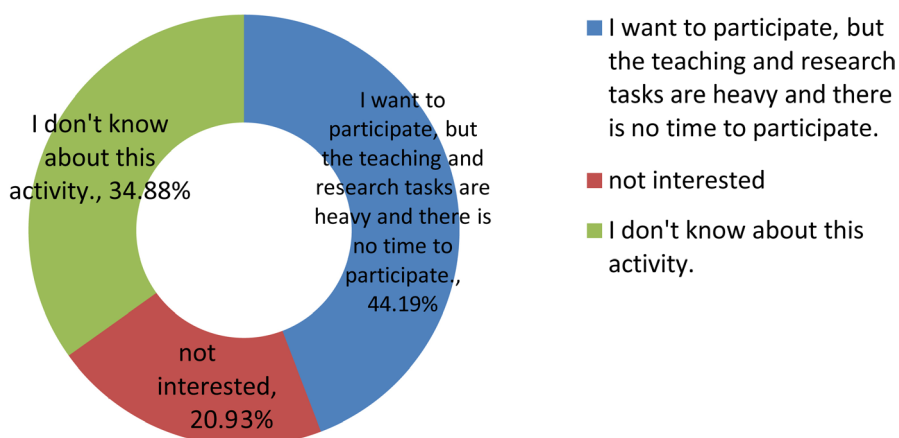


Figure 16. Reasons why female faculty and staff of Binzhou University did not participate in the "Shuxiang 38" reading activity.

and staff have participated in off-campus reading activities. The top two reading activities are “Reading Class lectures” (27.52%) and “Parent-child reading clubs (Parent-child story)” (24.77%) (see **Figure 17**). It can be seen that these two types of reading activities are the types that faculty members prefer. Among them, the “31 - 40 years old” faculty and staff participated in the “Parent-child reading clubs (Parent-child story)” at the highest ratio, and the proportion of other age groups participating in this reading activity was significantly lower. The age of the group participating in the “Reading Lecture” is characterized by high on both sides, low in the middle (see **Figure 18**). The faculty and staff in the middle section of the 31 - 50 age group have the most family chores (see **Figure 19**), and their own time is less. Therefore, the proportion of reading activities that participate in such pleasing and self-enhancement is relatively small. In terms of the reasons for participating in off-campus reading activities, the

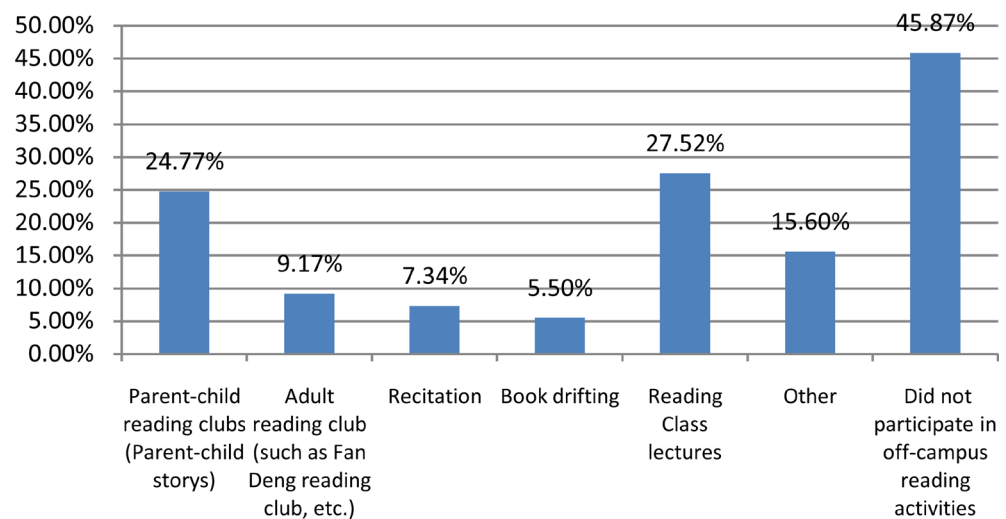


Figure 17. Distribution of off-campus reading activities attended by faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

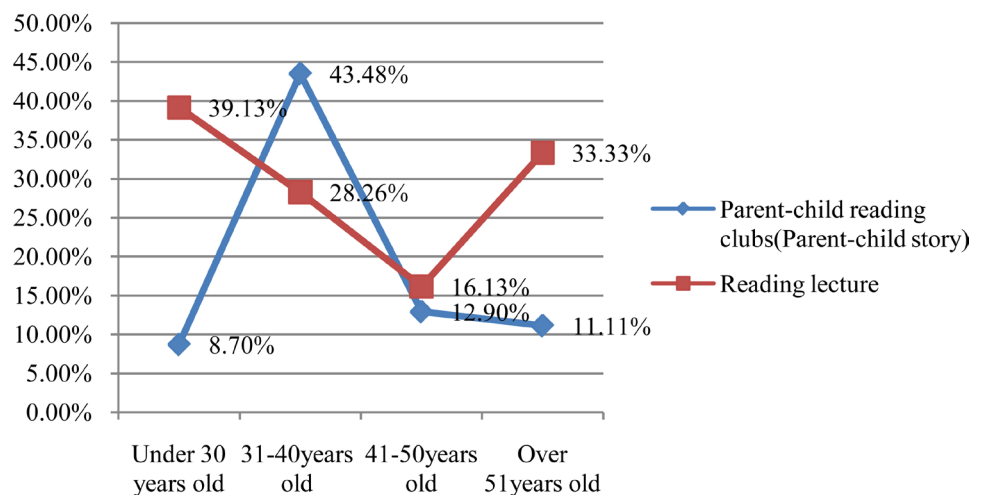


Figure 18. Distribution of participation in Parent-child reading clubs (Parent-child story) and reading lectures at different ages of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University.

three highest proportions are “willing to communicate, learn and grow with different people”, “interested in the content of the activities” and “hope to lead the children to develop good reading habits” (see **Figure 19**). Among them, the 31 - 40 age group chooses the “hope to lead children to develop good reading habits” the largest proportion (see **Figure 20**), again indicating that teachers of this age group attach great importance to children’s reading education and are willing to spend more time with their children to develop reading habits.

The factors of the labor union successfully holding reading activities. In the opinion of faculty and staff, the primary factor for successfully holding faculty reading activities is “the content is close to the life of faculty and staff”. The second factor is “appropriate time and place” and the third factor is “novel form” (see **Figure 21**).

Suggestions for the labor union to organize reading cultural activities. In the

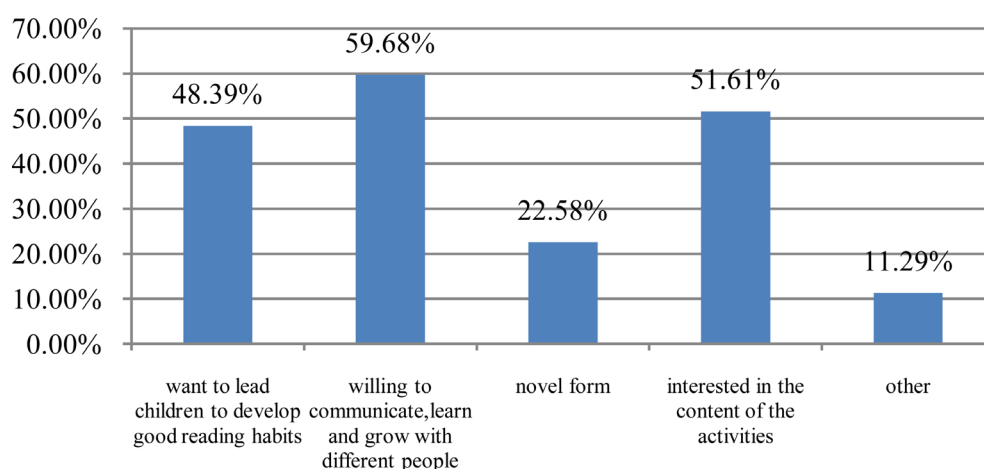


Figure 19. Distribution of the reasons for the faculty and staff of Binzhou University to participate in off-campus reading activities.

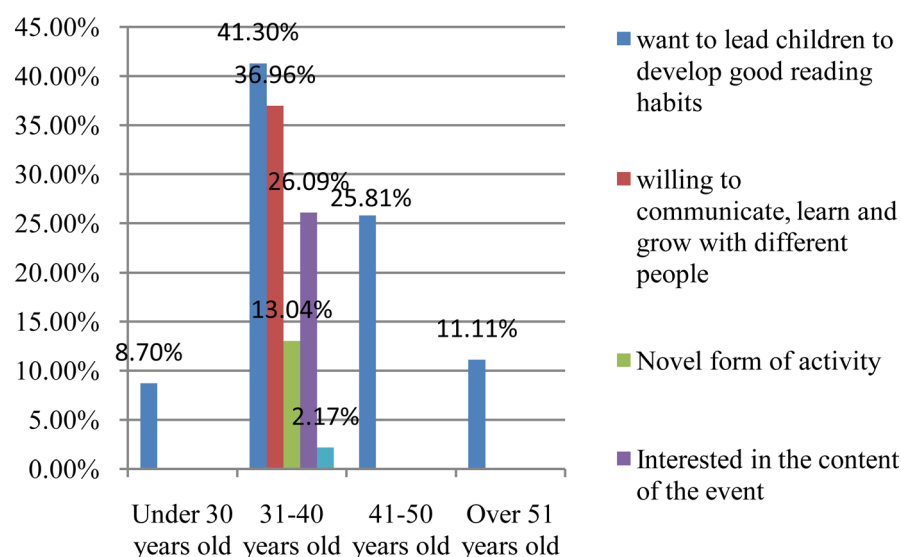


Figure 20. Age distribution of faculty members attending off-campus reading activities at Binzhou University.

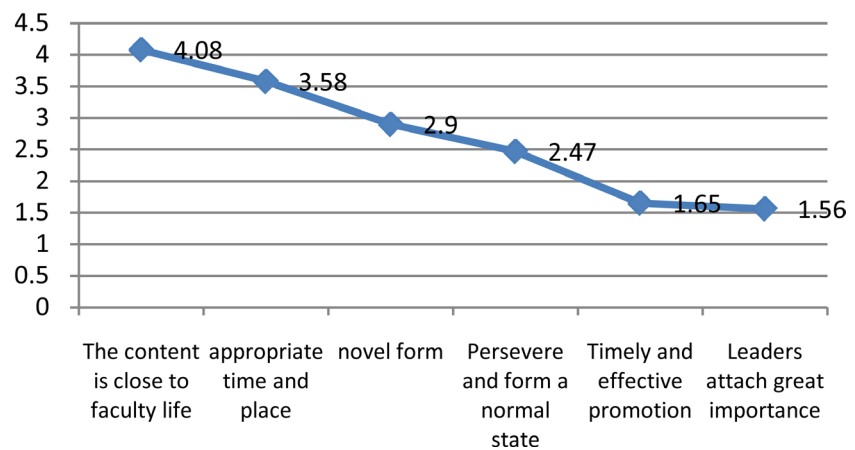


Figure 21. Ranking of factors affecting the successful holding reading activities by the faculty and staff of Binzhou University

final open-ended topic “What good advice do you have for the organization of faculty and staff reading cultural activities?”, through the statistical summary of more than 20 recommendations, the two points that faculty and staff are most concerned about are hoping to hold a faculty reading club and normalizing reading activities.

3. Investigation Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1. Investigation Conclusions

The faculty’s teaching and research work is under great pressure, and there is less time for real enjoyment of reading. From the perspective of reading reasons, “teaching and research needs” ranked second, second only to “personal reading habits”. Judging from the factors affecting reading, the number of people who choose to study because of the heavy workload of ordinary work is the most. From the reading content, the number of choosing “books related to teaching and research” ranked first is far ahead of other options. From this, it can be seen that the work of the faculty and staff of Binzhou University is not commonly recognized by society: low work pressure and more free time.

The 31 - 40 years old faculty and staff are very concerned about the reading education of their children. From the perspective of reading reasons, the proportion of faculty and staff in the 31 - 40 age group who chose to “take a role model for children” is the highest in all age groups. Among the participating off-campus reading activities, the age group has the highest proportion to choose the “Parent-child reading clubs (Parent-child story)”.

Most faculty and staff hope that the school will set up a dedicated teacher reading space. At present, the “home” is the main reading place for faculty and staff, but “home” is not an ideal place to read. At home, there are often many trivial things that are difficult to read quietly. Therefore, most faculty and staff hope that the school has a teacher-only reading place and said that they would often read here. Some faculty members specifically mentioned in the last reading

question of the reading activity that “the teacher reading room is very meaningful and hopes to be realized”.

Due to insufficient development of reading cultural activities, the promotional methods need to be improved. By browsing the Binzhou University Labor Union website, the reading-type cultural activities for faculty and staff are very limited, and the “Shuxiang 38” reading activity for female faculty and staff is unique. However, from the perspective of participation rate, it is still relatively low, and the type of participation is also unitary. Many of them are “not aware of this activity”. It can be seen that the propaganda effect of the labor union is not satisfactory. In addition, from the faculty and staff participating in the reading activities outside the school, it can be seen that the faculty and staff have a high enthusiasm for reading activities. The labor union should seize the spiritual needs of the faculty and staff, and actively create conditions to meet.

3.2. Recommendations

According to the actual life and work of the faculty and staff, organize reading activities to meet their spiritual needs. The faculty and staff, especially the young and middle-aged faculty, are under great pressure in their work and life. Reading activities should pay attention to the psychological demands of the faculty and staff, and focus on decompression and pleasure reading activities, such as travel reading. In addition, reading therapy has been relatively mature in developed countries. In recent years, reading therapy has also quietly emerged in China. By inviting experts in this field to teach faculty and staff how to use reading to alleviate psychological pressure and confusion, it will also be fascinating to faculty and staff.

Integrate the favorable resources in the school, and carry out the faculty reading club and parent-child reading club in due course. Schools have far superior advantages over other units in terms of both teacher resources and student resources. It is possible to integrate the resources of retired employees and old faculty members who have sufficient time, and regularly carry out faculty reading sessions. In addition, the College of Teacher Education at Binzhou University has pre-school education and elementary education, and the labor union can contact the relevant student associations to regularly conduct parent-child reading sessions for the faculty and staff's children. This not only facilitates the teaching staff, but also increases the opportunities for students to exercise.

Jointly build a dedicated reading space for faculty and staff, and choose to carry out reading salon activities. The establishment of a quiet and comfortable faculty-only reading space not only provides a relatively independent reading and training place for faculty and staff, but also serves as a place for faculty and staff to regularly carry out salon activities. Labor unions can work with libraries to create reading spaces that not only maximize their mutual strength, but also brainstorm and organize high-quality reading culture activities.

Start with the reading activity of female faculty and staff with the reading ac-

tivity of “Shuxiang 38”. The annual “Shuxiang 38” reading activity has been held once a year, and has formed regular activities, being rich in content and diverse in form. The Binzhou University Labor Union started its publicity campaign from the fourth session, and the three performances that have already participated in have been improving. Female faculty and staff occupy a pivotal position in family building, family style formation and family education. Labor unions can use the popularity and mass base that the “Shuxiang 38” reading activity has formed to start from the reading activities of female faculty and staff members, such as the establishment of “Shuxiang 38 Reading Club. In this way, it will receive relevant guidance and support from the organizing committee of “Shuxiang 38” reading activity. This is not only conducive to the characteristics of the labor union work of Binzhou University, but also conducive to providing a warm spiritual home for female teachers and staff, thus driving female teachers and staff to build a more active and healthy family reading life.

Establish a more convenient communication and contact with the faculty and staff, and truly be a faculty member and a caring person. At present, the notice of the activities of the Binzhou University Labor Union is communicated through the chairman of the labor union of each branch. The chairman of the labor unions of each branch is also served by the deputy secretary or deputy dean of each department, and the labor union’s many activities are not assessed. The presidents of the branches of the clubs tend to pay more attention to routine teaching and research or management tasks in various departments and colleges. Some information will inevitably be missed or ignored. From the perspective of faculty and staff, there are too many top-down notices, which inevitably lead to being bored. The author believes that the labor union can also establish a We-Chat group or QQ group directly facing the faculty and staff, which can both increase the information transmission path and further close the relationship with the faculty and staff.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- [1] Zhu, Y. (2018) Jinping Xi Talked with the Members of the New Leadership of the All-China Federation of Labor Unions and Delivered an Important Speech. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2018-10/29/content_5335515.htm