Research on the Governance Strategy of “Occupying Seats” in University Libraries

Hai-xia WEI
Library of China West Normal University, Nan Chong, Sichuan, China
573211649@qq.com

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Abstract. Students “occupy seats” in the library is nothing more than to get a good learning environment and show their love for learning. It was a good thing from the original intention of the event. But it hurts the interests of others. Therefore, libraries should not harm students’ enthusiasm for learning, and simultaneously, effective measures should be taken to prevent unreasonable occupancy. This paper describes the phenomenon of “occupy seats”, and analyzes its characteristics, adverse effects, and causes, and puts forward some countermeasures to solve this problem.

Introduction
The library is the school’s literature and information center, which brings together all kinds of documents reflecting the outstanding cultural achievements of mankind. Library is not only a base for cultivating talents, and it is also a good place for self-study. Entering the library is like being in the free world of knowledge, which can give full play to the initiative of learning, constantly explore new areas of learning, and constantly improve the knowledge structure. We should encourage and support it because it is a good thing to study in the library. However, the phenomenon that “occupy a seat” that have brought a lot of negative effects, we should take a correct view and effective governance behavior to deal with it.

The Phenomenon of “Occupying Seats”
Description
The so-called “occupy a seat”, that is, the act of placing an object on a seat as a badge of priority. Generally speaking, library belongs to quasi-public goods and there is no clear seat allocation system, the use of it always followed the principle of “The first come, first served”. But now, the number of people going to the library is more than the seats available in the library. Therefore, reading seats are a scarce public resource. Students in order to obtain good geographical environment seats or guarantee to have a seat when they comeback, so they put something such as books, bags and notebooks in their seats. By doing so, they give others an illusion that somebody is using the seat but nobody actually use it.

In general, for those who will be back in a short time, the scholars think seat system increased the utility of a person and it is efficient. To some extent, it can give students more welfare and most people think that is reasonable. For those who do not return for a long time, resources are wasted, which is regarded as the abuse of seat right.

Characteristics
The phenomenon of “occupying seats” has the characteristics of positioning effect, conformity effect and broken window effect. Most of the time, the seat is occupied to get a habitual position, such as the window edge or the corner in the back. The phenomenon of occupancy is very easy to spread. When the students see other people taking a seat without penalty, they often have the herd mentality of “you take, I also take”, and little by little, the informal system of “taking seats” is accepted by everyone. Generally, during the examination period, the phenomenon of seat occupancy is the most serious. On the contrary, when in the beginning of a semester and during the
holiday time that the seats always sufficient. It is not difficult to find that “seat occupancy” has a stable periodicity.

**Bad Influences of “Occupy Seats”**

“Occupying a seat” causes a waste of resources, which not only brings bad influence to students, but also adds difficulty to the management of the library. “Seat occupancy” means that students who are unable to get a seat can only study standing in the not ideal seat or in front of a bookshelf or aisle. These poor postures make them feel tired and uncomfortable, and it also makes it difficult for students to get in and move out of bookshelves. Poor library reading experience will reduce the number of times students go to the library and even not going to the library. In the long run, this is the biggest adverse effect on libraries. To some degree, the students’ awareness of being late to the library led to the early occupancy of seats can result in greater waste of resources, and what’s more, it is easy for the students to go to the library even later because of their seat guarantee. Therefore, the problem of adverse selection and moral hazard has intensified. Most of the time, the librarians are often embarrassed to see many students standing by while many seats are empty.

**Cause Analysis of the Phenomenon of “Occupancy”**

**The increasing number of students makes the seating resources more and scarcer**

After entering the new century, the implementation of the university enrollment expansion policy has doubled the number of college students. Coupled with the implementation of the reconstruction or new construction strategy of university libraries has also attracted a large number of students. In general, the library now all has free WIFI coverage, equipped with air conditioning, self-service book lending machines, electronic newspaper readers, inquiry machines, access control and other modern electronic self-help devices. At the same time, most libraries equipped with flowers, green trees, sofa, tea chairs and various type of electronic literature and information resources. It is this warm, comfortable and convenient learning environment that attracts many students to study in the library. Especially the application of RFID technology and the implementation of the open library management mode that allowing students can bring their own books into the library make the library reading room can be used as an independent learning classroom, which has attracted more and more students. With the improvement of public cultural services, many university libraries have opened their doors to outside readers under the call of the society. The increasing number of students makes the seating resources more and more scarce.

**The library is occupied too much space by other departments**

The library is defined as a teaching unit and is generally a marginalized area of the school. When school buildings are tight, the library is often occupied by the school network center, fire control center, conference room, academic hall, etc. The space of library reading room is decreasing year by year.

**The reform of the education system has led to a shortage of library seats**

The modern education system requires training more practical and innovative talents, and set up all kinds of test to measure the level of the students, such as CET-4, CET-6, college entrance examination, computer grade examination and postgraduate entrance examination. There are also a series of certificate examinations, such as tourist guide certificate, secretary certificate, teacher certificate, regular mid-term and final exams. To face the challenge of the fierce competition both from home and abroad and received the recognition from the society, they have to seize every minute to learn, and use of library literature resources to increase their knowledge. The influx of examiners has led to a shortage of seats.
Governance Strategies of “Occupying Seats” in University Libraries

Understand the governance approach

Ways to increase seat availability. Facing a sharp increase in the number of students, it is feasible to increase the number of reading seats. This will allow everyone to have a seat, which is an ideal strategy for schools to expand or build new libraries. However, this strategy requires a large amount of capital, equipment and book management personnel, which is costly and cannot be realized in a short term, and may lead to new resource waste in the off-peak period of examinations.

There is also the practice of using the free time of meeting rooms, restaurants, auditorium, student activity centers and other places as study rooms. Though reconstruction of self-learning classroom lack of library literature resources and strong learning atmosphere, but for those students whose purpose only on self-study still has a role in the shunt, can reduce the pressure of the library. The practice of increasing the self-learning classroom has the strengths of low cost, flexible operation and easy realization. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a set of management system of the self-learning classroom, which plays a certain role in easing the “occupancy”.

Adopt online reservation system. By using the online reservation system, students can get seats in the reading room in advance and control the phenomenon of “occupying seats” through the maximum reservation time of seats. The student must hold his/her library card and swipe the card on the seat selection machine to select the seat and pick up the number. After successful selection, the seat will be reserved for a certain period of time. When you leave the reading room temporarily, swipe your card on the seat selection machine and select “leave temporarily”, then the seat will be reserved for a certain period of time. If you need to leave the reading room for more than the specified time, swipe your card on the seat selection machine and select “release seat”. The original seat will be released and return to the assigned seat system for other students to choose and use. The reservation selection system can not only improve the seat utilization rate, but also make an appointment the day before, so as to reduce the waiting time of students and effectively improve the allocate seats. The seat selection system can effectively manage the seats in the library and reduce the idle time of the seats, but it is still impossible to solve the number of students that are beyond the capacity of reception, and the system is expensive to purchase.

Periodic clearing. Periodic clearance means that every once in a while, someone will clean up the occupied items in the library reading room and stop occupying the seat. The librarian would empty everything on the desk and leave it alone. If no one claims it after a certain time, it will be treated as garbage. However, there will always be a lot of tedious follow-up work after each cleaning, such as the problem of goods claim, and the problem of wrong cleaning. Regular clearance tends to lead to disputes, manpower consumption and high management costs.

Propaganda and education method. This approach is the most thorough and least costly way to eliminate occupancy if students are able to ideologically recognize that occupancy is immoral and to regulate their behavior. Some people believe that “occupy a seat is only a quality problem, there is no cure except the improvement of ideological level”. The library should publicize the immorality of seat occupation and improve the moral quality of college students. Let them realize that seat occupation is an uncivilized behavior and personal seat occupation is the harm to the interests of others. We should respect the feelings of others and realize the balance of interests from various aspects. On campus, we advocate the idea of allowing seat to be temporarily used by others when we leaving, and also actively advocate that users should return it politely to form a harmonious atmosphere. Particular way is, such as in the school home page, school library homepage announced “no occupying seats” announcement. At the same time, we should display the “no occupying seats” announcement in the electronic display screen and at the gate of the library reading room. In our work, we should also pay attention to some seats consciously. If we find that some seats are idle for too long, we should criticize the occupant who returns to the seats later. However, the method of publicizing education also has its defects. It uses morality to restrain
students’ seat occupying behavior, ignores the inevitability of seat occupying phenomenon and it takes a long time. Therefore, it is easy to become formalized.

**Other method.** There are some other methods, such as number card method, WeChat timing method, desk and seat application method, seat fee system and so on.

**Formulate governance plans**

There are many ways of governance, all of which have their desirable side, but there are also disadvantages. For example, there are some problems such as lack of operability, little practical effect, high economic cost, high labor cost and difficult to solve in a short time. Each library should according to its own actual situation, conduct practical investigation, study and formulate solutions, then reasonably take single or multiple methods combination to solve the problem. The method of governance should be as simple and easy as possible, so as to avoid disturbing students’ enthusiasm for learning due to complex procedures.

**Principles to follow in governance**

In the governance, we should adhere to the principle of combining flexible management and rigid management. We should not only protect students’ enthusiasm for learning, but also warn them about “occupying seats”. In the process of dealing with this behavior, we should fully communicate with students, give priority to ideological education and try to avoid quarrelling and conflicting with the students. Meanwhile, we should be diligent in management, unremitting and stop bad behavior in time. In addition to, timely educate and punish the students who violate the rules and this bad behavior should not be allowed to spread arbitrarily. Students who break the rules in a particularly serious way can be dealt with in a tough way, such as punishment, exposure and notification.

**Conclusion**

To a certain extent, “occupy a seat” indicates that students love learning, which is a good thing and this enthusiasm for learning should be maintained. However, taking a seat always for self is an uncivilized way, which harms the interests of others and it is an act of selfishness and a waste of resources. Therefore, the librarian should guide students to right use seats and use the library. In a word, the harmonious and warm learning environment needs the library and all the students to create together.

**References**


