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**THE EFFECTIVE EVIDENCE-
BASED HIGH SCHOOL
LIBRARIAN:
A JOURNEY TO DECISION**

ALISON TURRIFF

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of
The Robert Gordon University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

December 2008

VOLUME 1

Declaration

The candidate has not, while registered for this PhD submission, been registered for another award of the University or other academic or professional institution.

None of the original material in this thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

Alison Turriff

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people for supporting me during this study.

Steve – for all his endurance over the last seven years.

Principal Supervisor Professor Dorothy Williams from The Robert Gordon University for all her dedication, commitment, support and enthusiastic encouragement.

Audrey Hendry from the University of Aberdeen for all her invaluable help and advice.

Jane Farmer from the University of Aberdeen for support and guidance in the early stages of this study.

Ross Todd from Rutgers University, New Jersey, who provided useful contacts, inspiration and feedback.

Eileen Schroeder from the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater for her support and help.

Aberdeen City Council for financial support, and my colleagues Bill Burnett (retired), Hugh Roche (retired) and Andrew Jones from Aberdeen City Council for their support and encouragement.

Many thanks to Anne Nichol at RGU University Library, who has been so helpful.

And finally to all the participants who were willing to share their experiences and contribute to this study.

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GLOSSARY

A list of terminology and definitions used in this study is displayed in Table 1.1:

Table 1.1 Glossary

Administration	US term for management team in a school
Chartered Librarian	Scottish term for a qualified librarian who has achieved a recognised professional qualification at university level in library and information studies, and has been awarded the post-graduate Chartered qualification by CILIP
Clerical assistant	An assistant working in the library who is not required to be qualified as a librarian and undertakes clerical duties
CILIP	Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals
CSF	Critical success factors
Ebook	Electronic book
Edatabase	Electronic database
EBL	Evidence-based librarianship
EBP	Evidence-based practice
Faculty	US term for teaching staff
Field Officer	Support post to school librarians undertaken by a working school librarian part-time found in some Scottish authorities
Grad credits	US term for additional postgraduate qualifications
HMIe	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (Scotland)
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IS	Information Studies
LIS	Library and Information Studies
LMC/LRC	Library Media Centre/ Library Resource Centre =school library
LMS	Library Media Specialist = School librarian (US)
Library assistant	An assistant working in the library who is not required to be qualified as a librarian
Library media program	Formal information literacy work organised by the librarian
List serv	Group of librarians who are linked in a common email network and who share opinions and seek advice and support
PI	Performance Indicators
PT/Principal Teacher	Term used in Scotland for Head of subject department
Principal	US term for Head Teacher
Pupil	Scottish term for school student
QIs/Qualitative indicators	Measures that demonstrate value elements
Quantitative indicators	Measures that demonstrate statistical elements
Rector	Scottish term for Head Teacher
School librarian	A qualified librarian who works in a school
SLS	School Library Service giving an overview of support to school librarians and other school staff
SMT	Scottish term for senior management team in a school
Student	US term for school pupil
Teacher-librarian	A teacher who spends part of her/his time managing the library
Technicians	Members of school staff who support the installation, networking and use of ICT with their technical expertise

Alison Turriff

The effective evidence-based high school librarian: a journey to decision.

Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Abstract

This thesis aims to establish how high school librarians in Scotland and America can become effective evidence-based decision-makers. Initial data collection consisted of written questionnaires to elicit background data from librarians on the extent of their evidence-based practice. Three main themes emerged: collaboration; interprofessional relationships and roles; and decision-making. These themes are discussed in more detail. A range of qualitative methodologies was designed and implemented to gain more in-depth information on practice and viewpoints, involving librarians and stakeholders. A draft model was created of the effective evidence-based practitioner in a high school library, based on an interpretation of findings and readings from the literature. After member-checking and validating by stakeholders, a final model was produced. This emergent model focuses not on the role of the school librarian in isolation, but stresses the importance of interrelationships involving the librarian.

The study makes an original contribution to knowledge by giving a better understanding of the effective evidence-based high school librarian in the wider context of education. There is also a contribution to knowledge by adding to the general theory of workplace decision-making and evidence-based practice which is applicable outwith the school sector, and the pragmatic solution-driven model of decision-making is introduced. Key findings give an insight into the complexity of the school library situation, and highlights that ideally there will be positive relationships between school management, school librarian and collaboration. When these come together, it can mean an increase in student achievement, and more effective evidence-based decisions can be made. Findings also demonstrate links between these elements with evidence, national bodies and skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based high school librarian, and identify how the new and complex expectations made of school librarians can be met. Recommendations are made to help stakeholders improve practice.

Keywords: Decisions; Evidence; School libraries; Education; Collaboration; Management

Chapter 1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide an introduction to the study, and to explain its rationale, background, structure and research approach.

1.1 Rationale

The focus is on the interrelationship between several complex issues involved in the high school library environment in two different countries, in a changing and challenging setting. In this area of challenge, in recent years there has been a change in expectation, and an emerging role of the librarian as decision-maker making informed judgements based on the principles of evidence-based practice. There has been a move within the interprofessional environment in several areas: to engage the librarian more with teaching colleagues including more formal collaboration within the school; the emerging decision-making context; the professional framework of the high school librarian as reflective practitioner; and the emergence of evidence-based practice within the high school library. The problem faced by practitioners and their managers is that there are very few guidelines on which to base collaboration, decision-making and evidence-based practice (EBP) from the perspective of what makes an effective high school librarian.

Collaboration as defined by Meads and Ashcroft (2005) is apt:

“Working together. It therefore implies both difference (it is something less than complete integration or unification) and commonality (there is some shared goal or activity which is the focus of collaboration). Collaboration is also about relationships – working together and not just alongside. It implies more than activities which overlap or interact in some way and would normally include some conscious interaction between the parties to achieve a common goal.” pp15-16

This definition fits very well into this study because it emphasises the diverse yet complementary roles of teachers and librarians in high schools, both working towards the same goal of improving teaching and learning, yet with different remits and priorities. Ideally, working together in an effective way allows them to use their own strengths and skills to jointly contribute towards raising student achievement and attainment. The decision-making role is based on the fact that many librarians are encouraged to recognise that working closely with teachers towards achieving the same goal is essential, while at the same time being challenged to plan and make effective decisions

as professionals in their own right with a focus on the library. A strong element of that is currently seen as based on the concept of EBP.

The general term EBP is defined by Brice and Hill (2004) as focusing on:

“Effectiveness and its consequent processes, such as identifying evidence, critically appraising the research, incorporating research into guidelines, and evaluating practice.” p17

This study has been undertaken because it was recognised through experience and knowledge of the profession that the historical situation of high school librarians has changed greatly over the years, and recently new challenges and opportunities have arisen for them. Issues of professional reflection, evidence-based practice and collaboration related to the work of the high school librarian are now becoming more prominent. These issues have emerged as a result of two main factors: expectations have changed and the profession has been grappling with dealing with this change in recent years. There appears to be uncertainty and a lack of understanding, and little support for librarians to understand how to develop into these challenging professional roles being envisaged. There is a lack of guidance regarding what is needed to take on this role and it is difficult to address challenges and to move ahead in the efforts to be an effective evidence-based decision-maker.

Having considered all of these envisaged changes, this study is timely in investigating how such change is being experienced and implemented by librarians. Todd (2007) acknowledges the current situation:

“The emergence of an evidence-based practice approach comes at a time of opportunity, challenge, perhaps even turbulence in the profession..... the changing information landscape itself continues to create dynamic, if not formidable challenges for school librarians, as well as for classroom teachers, administrators, and information technology specialists.... These dimensions are often overlooked, and school librarians struggle for the recognition and contribution that they feel they deserve... [their case] centres on evidence that they make a difference to student achievement as defined by curriculum standards and the learning goals of the school.” p63

A key factor from Todd's quote is the recognition of the element of struggle that school librarians have when trying to deal with these challenges, which this study aims to address by providing a model of effective evidence-based practice. This study examines how the evidence-based approach is tackled in two separate countries with very different models of high school librarian provision, with variations between them providing a way

to compare and contrast. From the late 1990s there has been a national drive in high school libraries to collect evidence to establish levels of provision; to show library improvement and progression; set recommended standards; justify the contribution of high school librarians; and prove how they work to improve the attainment and achievement of students. The main purpose of this study is therefore to add to the knowledge of how a school librarian can become a more effective evidence-based practitioner. Little is known about the elements that are needed in order to do this, so a more specific aim is to understand the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based practitioner, and thus add to the professional knowledge.

It was important to produce an indepth academic study which can effectively add to professional knowledge and understanding, and which combined a review of relevant literature with an analysis of data collected from those involved in the field showing the situations they faced on a daily basis. This would help to provide what Creswell (1998) called "*Understanding, that deep structure of knowledge..... probing to obtain detailed meanings.*" p193. As a way of conveying that understanding, the study sought to develop a model offering a framework for the development of librarians and libraries within high schools to create a more evidence-based environment. This was intended to help high school librarians, their management teams and other stakeholders to discuss what was possible as an effective evidence-based practitioner, and to agree on the support and action needed to achieve that aspiration.

1.2 Definitions

At this stage it is useful to set some more definitions of terminology, because there are varying definitions by authors, and it is important to reduce any ambiguity and to clarify the meanings of major themes arising from this study. A glossary can be found on page vii in order to explain terminology and acronyms used.

In terms of EBP, the definition given by Brice and Hill (2004) on the first page of this chapter looks at the use of relevant evidence, the implementation of implementing research findings into practice and the evaluation of what has been done as a result of that practice: a cyclical and iterative process. However, it does not mention the collection of evidence within the organisation itself, which provides invaluable information, as it can be compared year on year within the school library, as well as with other school libraries.

This can provide useful benchmarking opportunities, and show evidence of real progression.

Booth (2000) defines evidence-based librarianship (EBL) as:

“An approach to information science that promotes the collection, interpretation and integration of valid, important and applicable user-reported, librarian-observed, and research-derived evidence, the best available evidence moderated by user needs and preferences, is applied to improve the quality of professional judgements.”

This relates the theory of the concept of evidence collection to its application in practical terms, and is focused on user requirements, and also mentions research evidence.

Eldredge (2000) considers that EBL is more of:

“An applied rather than theoretical science. EBL merges scientific research with the pressing need to solve practical problems.... provides a framework for self correction as new information becomes available that suggests new directions or methods.”

In this definition Eldredge focuses very much on workplace solutions to local problems, although collection of in-house data is not specifically noted. In a similar way, Crumley and Koufogiannakas (2002) define in more detail evidence-based librarianship as:

“A means to improve the profession of librarianship by asking questions, finding, critically appraising and incorporating research evidence from library science (and other disciplines) into daily practice. It also encourages librarians to conduct research.” p62

This last definition provides what could be considered a more rounded picture of EBL/EBP. The definition of EBP intended in this study relates to these definitions above, which is a mixture of the use of external research evidence and also evidence that is collected inside schools and applied by practitioners. This mix of theoretical and practical evidence is then appraised and applied to solve real problems and deal with real issues by taking action and trying to continually enhance practice and improve student achievement. The evidence can include surveys of users; evaluations of information literacy sessions; reading research reports; mirroring model services; student project evaluation; collecting qualitative data that reflects how the library is used, along with many other methods.

Brice and Carlson (2004) define evidence-based education as:

“Integration of professional wisdom with the best empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction.” p165

This statement emphasises the role of the professionals using their experience, skills and knowledge in conjunction with consulting and applying research evidence to their practice. This could be carried out by teachers and school librarians as part of EBP.

Oatman (2006) reports that one US high school librarian says:

“My entire curriculum is based on prior scholarship and my understanding of how my students learn.”

In the same article, Oatman defines EBP as:

“A kind of three-legged stool. One of the legs rests on the evidence information scientists have produced on the research process. Another leg stands on the librarian’s understanding of how her individual patrons learn best – visually, aurally, by reading, or all three. The third leg consists of data, measurable proof that the librarians’ guidance has a real impact on learning. Keeping this wobbly stool upright is not easy. ‘It’s very intensive on the librarian’s side,’ Schmidt [the school librarian] says, ‘and also on the kid’s side. This is not something you can sleep through’.”

This definition sums up the commitment and work that is needed to implement EBP in a whole-school way. However, even if this is not possible in some situations, elements that make up the whole can be applied in any school, and these will be discussed throughout the study, culminating in the model of an effective EBP practitioner.

When studying the literature, certain themes emerged that were relevant to the study. These included the historical background of school librarianship (which is important in order to set the context for this study and to understand changes and the present situation in school libraries compared to the past); the use of standards and guidelines; staffing issues; collaboration (which was first mentioned in educational and medical literature from the 1970s and appeared regularly thereafter); evidence-based practice (a more recent concept which had started in scientific and medical fields and included the concept of professional reflection); and decision-making (which encompassed sub-themes such as professional language; occupational status and goal-setting.) These themes were also identified in initial and later data collection. More details of literature findings in these themed areas can be found in Chapter 2, while findings from the study are explored in themed Chapters 6-8.

Todd (2008) defines the role of the school librarian in this relationship as an *“instructional partner.”* The interactive relationship between the two parties is paramount

to the success of the collaboration goals. More details of findings arising from the study relating to collaboration and networking issues are to be found in Chapter 7.

Reflection as defined by Johns (2004) is relevant to this study:

“Mindful of self, either within or after experience, as if a window through which the practitioner can view and focus self within the context of a particular experience, in order to confront, understand and move toward resolving contradictions between one’s vision and actual practice. Through the conflict of contradiction, the commitment to realise one’s vision, and understanding why things are as they are, the practitioner can gain new insights into self and be empowered to respond more congruently in future situations within a reflexive spiral towards developing practical wisdom and realising one’s vision as a lived reality. The practitioner may require guidance to overcome resistance or to be empowered to act on understanding.” p3

This definition of reflection describes the process of applying what has been learned from past experience to improve future practice, by analysing previous situations and one’s own role and style, and learning from them. This concept of learning from situations is key to the idea of reflection. The problem-solving aspect is also one that is closely linked with reflection, evidence-based practice and decision-making. More details of findings relating to reflection are to be found in Chapter 8.

Decision-making is defined simply by Zsombok and Klein (1997) as:

“The way people use their experience to make decisions in field settings.....Decision makers are more concerned about sizing up the situation and refreshing their situation awareness through feedback, rather than developing multiple options to compare to one another.” p4

This definition clearly links in experience, consultation and practice, although by not mentioning the examination and application of external research, or collecting data from practice, it is limited in scope and relates particularly to the individual situation, saving time by keeping the focus internally, however losing the benefits of applying evidence from more widespread practice.

1.3 Background

In order to put the study into context, a summary of the present situation in high schools follows. The historical context is outlined in sections 1.3.1 (UK and Scotland) and 1.3.2 (USA). The evolving role of the school librarian is discussed in section 1.3.3.

1.3.1 Early historical background to the development of the modern school library in the UK and Scotland

There have been different outlooks on what is required of libraries in high schools throughout the last few decades. Beswick (1986) describes how in the UK, all new schools had to provide a school library after the Second World War. These would have been used mainly for repository-based activities such as reading and accessing books. There was little definition of the activities to be carried out in the library, and the matter of staffing was not addressed. At this time there was not likely to have been formal teaching of information literacy or information handling. In the 1960s there was more emphasis placed on non-book or audiovisual resources, and more material was being produced specifically for the changing curriculum. This had moved towards the growing education trends of more self-directed learning and group work.

In 1970 the Library Association produced standards for school libraries, which were also relevant to Scotland, naming them library resource centres for the first time, reflecting the multimedia resources held and the emphasis on resource-based learning. From that period on, there has been a great increase in the literature and interest in the area of school librarianship. Dyer, Brown and Goldstein (1970) focus on the need for a school library manager to relate the work of the library in a school to its whole school purpose and specific objectives:

“The fact that the library exists at all means that someone must look after it, and attend to the demands that its presence creates, but with no clearly defined and positive role to play in school life, and long term objectives actively in view, it just drifts along.” p62

They call for the emphasis of library objectives to be on outreach and communication with teaching staff. This focus is evident in other literature of the day. Morris, Russell and Stott (1972) outline recommendations for high school libraries to reflect the changing educational scene.

“A good library, in one form or another, is indispensable to the healthy life of a school.” p1

This important text emphasises the value of the school library to the improvement of high school education, especially with the emphasis on learners learning rather than teachers teaching. The contribution of the librarian to this individual learning mode is recognised. The library is described as having three functions - reference, study and what was called “*recreative reading*” (p3) and would now be called reading for pleasure, with an

acknowledgement that the boundaries between these areas could be blurred. The importance of reinforcing the primary library experience by students is raised as being vital to ensure a positive encounter for them. The need to follow the aims of the school is noted as well as the active support of the Headteacher and teaching staff, still mainstays of recent thinking. Co-operation in planning a relevant library introduction for new staff and students is suggested, with care being taken to involve departmental work as the focus of study. Advance notification of study topics is recommended, so the librarian can provide appropriate material at the right time. Reading for pleasure is another important area in this text, to include fiction, periodicals and resources for hobbies and interests. These are still recognised as significant areas today.

It was stated that the majority of high schools in the UK did not have a full time librarian (Morris, Russell and Stott 1972, p55). At that time the role of librarian was often a part-time task allocated to teachers while undertaking their substantive posts, often known as teacher-librarians. They would not normally be formally trained or qualified as librarians. The problems of inadequate time to carry out the full range of library tasks in this situation are described, with classroom tasks taking priority. The advent of larger high schools and a wider range of different kinds of resources are cited as reasons for some areas to appoint at least one full-time qualified librarian, providing a high quality of service, largely because s/he could devote the whole working week to promoting and developing the library service, unlike the part-time teacher-librarians. The need for an assistant was acknowledged, because the librarian needed to contribute to learning activities in the school by working with teachers and there was a need for clerical and educational technology assistance. A need was expressed for a special qualification of school librarian, rather than a generic librarian qualification, including elements of teacher training such as learning principles and classroom management. This has not developed in Britain to any great extent, although it is the model used in the USA and other countries.

However, reading this more than thirty years later it can be concluded that many of its recommendations would still be relevant to today, for example, the emphasis on proactive collaborative work contributing to learning and teaching; literacy promotion; recognition of the value of preferably qualified staff as well as additional assistance. The economic downturn in the UK in the 1970s may have contributed to the thrust of this

report not being taken forward. The situation in the UK and in particular Scotland today will be presented later in this chapter, and findings of the questionnaire survey in Chapter 4 also represent what was reported to be the situation at that time.

1.3.2 Early historical background to the development of the modern school library in the US

The American Library Association was founded about the same time as the UK Library Association, in the 1870s. In contrast to the historic development of the school library in the UK, Hopkins (2000) reports that Mary Kingsbury was the first appointed professionally trained school librarian in the United States, in 1900. She worked in Erasmus Hall High School in New York. Her appointment marked an important step in the history of libraries in schools. After World War Two, the US school library was viewed by School Libraries for Today and Tomorrow, American Library Association Committee on Post-War Planning, 1945 quoted in Miller (2000) as:

“An integral part of the educational program which it serves.” p42.

The US school library developed from times where integration with the curriculum was seen as pivotal and included technology and a wider range of resources. The model of staff provision was a teacher trained as a school librarian, along with clerical and technological assistance. Rather than the UK emphasis on the library as a repository (until the 1970s, 1980s and even 1990s), the US school library was always more related to learning and teaching principles. To illustrate this, Miller (2000) says that the library:

“Is no longer a location but a school-wide part of the instructional program.” p43

This has been the case for many years in the US provision of school libraries. As will be seen later in this chapter, most school libraries in America developed from being a repository at the beginning of the twentieth century to becoming contributors to student achievement and teaching and learning at an earlier stage than in the UK.

1.3.3 Evolving role of the school library and librarian

The role of the high school librarian has changed radically in the last few years in both countries, moving away from the guardian of the repository to ideally becoming a collaborating partner with teachers in improving teaching and learning, and making decisions to take forward that goal by using evidence-based methods proving how it is being met. The introduction of formal standards and guidelines (whether national or

more local) has helped to change the role, and the move in emphasis towards more student-centred learning has contributed to that change.

Todd (2007) summarises the traditional picture when he says:

“Historically library services worldwide have been based on the assumption that they contribute to the social good, the growth of democracy, and the development of a knowledgeable and creative society... the provision of information can make a difference to the lives and well being of people; that there is a widely accepted relationship between the provision of information and personal and social benefits.” p57

However he recognises that times have changed:

“It might seem perplexing, perhaps confronting, that a focus on evidence-based librarianship has emerged, and that the acceptance of libraries as integral to the life-stream of a nation and its educational process is seemingly in question.” p58

In the mid-70s the Bullock report was published in the UK (Great Britain. Department of Education and Science 1975). This influential document relates the importance of language and thinking to the role of the school librarian, and stresses the importance of promoting reading and information literacy skills. Two years later, new UK guidelines were produced (Library Association 1977), noting the new comprehensive school model, more independent and self-motivated learning and new teaching methods such as group work and team teaching. The role of the librarian was based around contributing to information literacy skills development with students and encouraging self-directed learning. The influx of literacy campaigns and the needs of a multicultural society demanded a wider range of resources suitable for different ability levels, cultures and languages. However UK financial cuts of the 1970s came into force and the priorities of the call for the resource centre model and ongoing costs were reduced. As is often the case with guidelines, they represented good practice and aspirational targets, but sometimes there were practical problems once practitioners tried to implement them. In such a case, practitioners might implement what they could at the time, and then attempt to reach more difficult targets over a longer period of time, collaborating with others and using an evidence-based approach to make a case for their achievement. Further evidence of this incremental approach in current practice can be seen in the findings from school librarians in later chapters.

In Scotland at this time the situation was often that unqualified staff were in post as school librarians. The Stimpson report (Scottish Education Department 1976)

recommended that a qualified librarian be appointed to high schools with more than 600 students; responsibility for the library should be placed with a member of Senior Management Team; and that a committee should be set up to run the resource centre. These are elements often in place today in Scottish high school libraries, and a phased approach was commonly used to recruit qualified librarians as vacancies arose.

In 1980 a UK national school library professional body published a document including a policy statement on how school librarianship could develop by providing services for changed times (School Library Association 1980). However, the economic situation forced cuts in this area, along with others. With the widespread introduction of information technology, things slowly began to change, as the school library became a centre for computers, and the searching and information-handling expertise of the school librarian came to the fore. This diversification helped many school librarians gain more credence with teaching staff, showing how they could contribute to the learning and teaching of students. However it could be said that some teachers may have perceived the role of the librarian as a technician/trainer rather than someone who could contribute to learning and teaching, and that the word teaching was only applied to those qualified as teachers. As reported by Scottish librarian Barbara during an interview in the study:

“We put one of our duties down [in a revision of the generic school librarian job description] as ‘teaching information skills’, but when it was ratified by the heads [a panel representing Headteachers and human resource managers from the authority] they made damn sure that teaching wasn’t in, I think they changed it to ‘provides training in information skills’ or ‘assists with demonstrating’. Something like that. Well, we’re not teachers, are we? Not to them anyways [sic]. But we do teach, whether they like it or not.”

A recent statement by CILIP (2007) outlines why professionally qualified staff should be placed in school libraries, although this is more of a problem in England than in Scotland:

“Many schools provide library services with minimal staffing levels, using staff with inappropriate qualifications or staff without access to relevant CPD activities. School senior managers may feel that they are providing a full, effective and efficient library when, in fact, they are simply making available an open space that lends books and has access to the Internet. Librarians make a core contribution to learning and teaching in a school. They manage and operate a major educational facility and the systems established to exploit it.... A professionally managed library is one of the most important facilities of any school. High calibre, well-motivated and appropriately qualified and experienced staff are essential to ensure that the library makes the fullest possible contribution to the goals of the school.”

Although this is an initial statement outlining the need for professional staff, it is anticipated that this will develop over time to provide evidence of how the value of a librarian in a high school can assist with increasing student achievement. This demonstrates the change of expectation in recent years to the role of high school librarian, from guardian of the repository to someone who contributes to the achievement of students and to teaching and learning in the school.

In 1980 the School Library Association recommended that the time spent by a teacher-librarian (defined as a teacher who spent part of her/his time managing the library. This is a more common model in England and Wales rather than Scotland) on library work should be no less than one quarter of the teaching timetable, but preferably one half. In addition to this teacher-librarian model, today England and Wales often have unqualified librarians in post. A recent article (Roberts 2005) claims that:

“Only a third of [English] secondary schools employ a professional librarian; others rely on unqualified staff or teacher.” p11

Such a situation could have implications for the contribution of the unqualified librarian to contributing to teaching and learning outcomes. If a member of staff is not a graduate or trained as a librarian it could make the situation even more difficult when it comes to collaborating with teachers, who may not recognise how an unqualified librarian can contribute. Where there was a professionally qualified full-time librarian in post (as is more common in Scotland), it is recommended in this 1980 document that they should have at least three years' previous library experience. Although this would limit new graduates from taking up these posts, it would allow for their initial professional development in another kind of library, where there would usually be a whole support network of library colleagues. Adequate clerical and ancillary support was called on for both types of postholders, experienced and inexperienced. Efforts were thus being made to increase the professional, support and management time on library issues, but these were only recommendations and authorities were under no obligation to achieve these. Inevitably authorities chose different models and the result was a wide variation and lack of consistency in staffing arrangements. However, such recommendations were steps towards efforts made over the years to create national levels of provision in high school libraries, which are still non-statutory services in the UK. The non-statutory nature of school libraries means that they can be easy targets when budget cuts are needed, as inevitably statutory services must take priority.

Carroll (1981) states that in 1980 35% of all high schools in the UK employed a chartered librarian and that the educational role of the school librarian was not universally recognised (p193). Carroll (1981) relates (pp82-83) that she was told in a letter by Virginia Berkeley (1980) (who managed Bedfordshire School Library Service, one of the most progressive authorities providing the qualified school librarian model at that time) that there was no national policy for school library provision, and because of decentralised relationships in central and local government, attempts to develop one were frustrated. She also relates that the vast majority of school libraries did not have full-time, qualified staff and that book budgets were being reduced.

The value of central School Library Services is that they provide extra resources through economies of scale; expert advice, support and guidance; in-service courses; and production of suitable resource lists. This lack of central direction reflects the low priority of school libraries in the education world, largely because they are not required as statutory provision. This low priority means that little legislation or funding is forthcoming to improve the situation, resulting in a steadily downward spiral with the only rays of hope being good practice at a local level, albeit on an inconsistent basis.

In a conference address, Scottish Headteacher Eastwood (1984) warns that:

"There is too much talk at the present time of the library merely as a support service."
p24

He also tells librarians that:

*"We will have to fight for greater freedom of access to information of all kinds.....
You will have to go with changes."* p29

In the discussion following his paper, Eastwood confirms to a speaker that the way librarians could bring themselves closer to teaching staff is:

"Probably bribery and flattery! Barriers did exist and this had to do with fear on both sides. The only way forward was through personal contact." p31

This emphasises the need for collaborative work between school librarians and teachers. A report by LISC (Library and Information Services Committee Scotland 1985) reinforces the contribution a good school library can make to supporting curriculum needs and improving learning and teaching. It also acknowledges the failure to make an impact to include the following points:

- Perceived low status of the librarian
- Emphasis on resource provision rather than resource use
- Isolating the librarian from curriculum planning exercises
- Lack of whole school planning for learning
- Lack of a library policy
- Inadequate funding, staffing and appropriate accommodation
- Irrelevant and dated stock

Some of these negative points can still be found today in school libraries, as can be seen from findings during this study, and can result in a lack of recognition of the library contribution to learning and teaching. The more of these elements feature in a school library, the less likely it is that the library will progress and make a positive contribution to the improvement of learning and teaching. Even making a start to tackle one of these areas would help to raise the profile of the library and demonstrate to senior management and teachers that the more the library was used positively towards supporting learning and teaching, the more it can contribute. The formal structure of national or local qualitative documents can provide a route to documenting and progressing evidence of the present situation and demonstrating improvements over time.

From the findings arising in this study, it seems that positive steps include the librarian being involved in whole school issues; contributing at management level; critically evaluating the users' view of the library; regular evaluation of the service; and being prepared to change and be flexible. More details of these elements will be found in later chapters, and aspects of being an effective evidence-based practitioner will appear in the final model. Developing an effective information literacy or multiple literacies (information literacy, digital, textual and technological as defined in AASL (2007) standards) skills programme in consultation with a wide range of teachers and related to curriculum guidelines would be a way to raise the profile of library and librarian.

Formal, accepted national standards for such a framework were not available at the time the LISC (1985) document was published, and progression relied largely on individual determination. However today, an obvious way forward would be link the service to guidelines and formal methods of evaluation and collecting evidence, providing a

structure and rigour for developmental work and improved services relevant to user needs. It is interesting to read some of the recommendations of this report more than twenty years later. Some recommendations have been repeated since 1985 in the literature, yet have been largely unfulfilled in practice and include:

- More effective use of the school library, librarian and finance
- Collaboration between teacher and librarian
- Develop student independence in information handling and provide for all abilities
- The librarian's role in school to act as information specialist
- Policies for whole school integrated use of resources
- Structured participation of the library and librarian in school learning strategies
- Interprofessional training of teachers and librarians
- Librarians should acquire knowledge of the curriculum and an understanding of teachers' objectives and of learning methods
- Colleges of education should promote the use of resources and the school library as an essential part of the training of every teacher

It is disappointing that little progress has been made to meet these on a sustained national basis. One way forward is a national governmental commitment to make school libraries statutory and giving them realistic funding levels similar to the Library Power (AASL and AECT - American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology 1988) and Information Power (AASL and AECT - American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology 1998) initiatives in the US, rather than piecemeal attempts on a local basis which has largely been the case to date. More details of these initiatives can be found in section 2.1 of Chapter 2.

One document (Scottish Library Association 1985) calls for more focus on needs and interests of the learner; a greater range of resources; more advice for teachers on centralised organisation of library resources and a more structured approach to the learning of investigative procedures in the library. These were largely due to new teaching styles and on problem-solving and individualised learning. This new focus reflects the emphasis on the librarian-focused provision in Scotland rather than the

English model of teacher-librarian provision, with experience in organisation, accessing and acquisition of resources.

At this time, Sked (1986) reports that more than half of high schools in Scotland had a professionally qualified school librarian, which is more than the UK figures reported by Carroll in 1981 and Roberts in 2005. Sked reports that no Scottish authority had an explicit policy on library resource centres in schools. A call was made for more collaboration and training between teachers and librarians. This was done in some authorities where some joint training was undertaken on specific topics, such as new qualitative indicators for school libraries. However, joint training on a more sustained level was uncommon. To reinforce the message of collaboration, Beswick (1986) confirms a need for interdisciplinary training and discussion to blur the divide between teachers and librarians. He states that librarians should avoid the stereotypical shy mouse image; the need for them to plan lessons; deal with groups of students and have educational and administrative support to carry out tasks. This adds force to the need for training in classroom management, learning styles and pedagogy for school librarians.

However it could be said that generic librarianship training provided in Scotland does not offer coverage of these tasks. Most librarians in schools gain these skills through experience, often without library colleagues, giving a tendency towards reaction rather than a more planned, proactive approach. This experiential skills acquisition was confirmed by respondents in this study. The fact that Scottish school librarians are not qualified as teachers may cause problems if teachers do not see the relevance of their contribution to the learning and teaching process. In contrast, in America school librarians are teachers first and then train as school librarians, and they already have formal understanding of educational terminology, pedagogy and classroom management.

The situation in the mid 1980s when these reports were produced showed some evidence of collaboration between teachers and school librarians in general discussion, such as at a joint conference in 1986 (Scottish Library Association 1987.) At this conference one speaker (Pignatelli 1987) said that:

“For [school] librarians the answers that have to be found in the classroom are very important. No longer can teachers teach in the classrooms; they must become part of a larger team..... [school] librarians will have to be key members of that team.” p14

Pignatelli remembers that when he was a teacher:

“I was a member of a [school] library committee. The interesting thing was that though it had many members, the person who wasn’t there was the [school] librarian. I didn’t even find this strange....” p16

Pignatelli also states:

“I certainly find it arrogant that people who are not teachers are seen as not to be rated. That was the logic for not having the [school] librarian on the committee: she was not a teacher.” p17

A Scottish Library Association document (1985) notes that teachers were slow to recognise the information-handling expertise of the school librarian. Sked (1986) outlines how new courses were being developed for management teams including modules on the school librarian role in managing resources. However current courses for the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) do not include modules on the contribution of the librarian to teaching and learning. If senior management were made more aware of how the librarian could contribute to the improvement of learning and teaching, and how EBP could be implemented to prove that, then a higher level of work could raise her/his profile and encourage joint strategic and curriculum planning. Ideally, there would have to be cover to allow the sole librarian to work on higher level tasks, and this could prove difficult for some schools. It would be useful to include information to teaching students on the potential collaborative work that could take place with school librarians, as this would provide a basis for teachers to build on when working in school.

Hirst (1986) created a model representing his definition of interaction between teacher, pupil and school librarian. A modified version of Hirst’s model is represented in Figure 1.1:

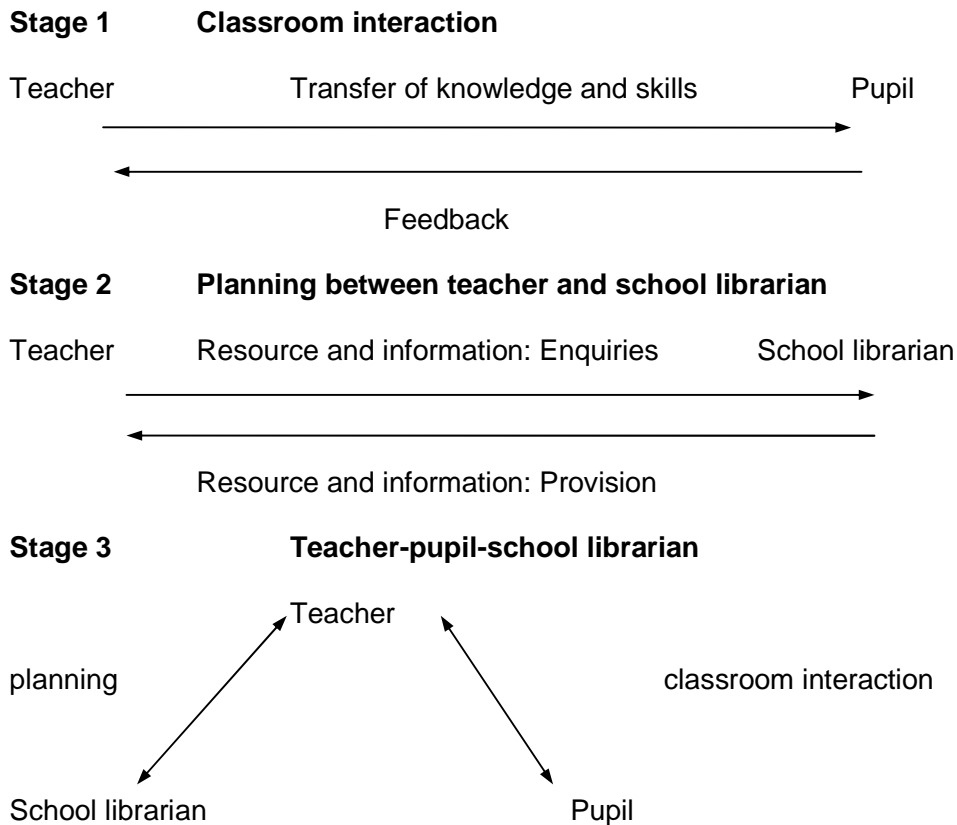


Figure 1.1 Hypothesis of interaction between teacher, pupil (student) and school librarian adapted from Hirst (1986) p40

A surprising point arising from all stages of this hypothesis is that there does not appear to be a connection between the school librarian and the student in this model when examining Scottish practice. The relationship between the teacher and the school librarian is simply reactive and consists of providing resources, with no demonstration of how the librarian could initiate activity, collaborate or contribute to the transfer of knowledge and skill or teaching and learning. This does not reflect much of the recommended day to day experience of student and librarian at this time, when the emphasis is on the contribution of the librarian to the learning process and the promotion of information skills. The omission is not raised by Hirst. Again, this contrasts with the situation in America, where the librarian acts as both teacher and librarian, so this model is more relevant there as the librarian is also the teacher.

King (1989) emphasises the need for the library to be central to learning within the school. This was largely recognised by practitioners at the time but was not officially

recognised in educational literature. For example, the range of Scottish 5-14 documents on a wide variety of subjects produced during the 1980s and 1990s (to cover the primary or elementary school and first two years of the high school curriculum from ages 5 to 14) outline countless elements of information literacy and study skills, with little mention of the importance of the school librarian to deliver these, or identifying who else would have the knowledge. In addition, no librarians or Directors of School Library Services were involved in the production of these documents, nor did they share their experience of skills and when they were likely to be achieved by youngsters. Adding in such experience would have linked the theory more with practice, provided a more rounded picture and put the school librarian forward as someone who could help to put this into practice. King (1989) states that any library attempting to work in isolation from the real needs of its users is doomed to failure. This remains true today and educational libraries are particularly likely to face change, in terms of new subjects in the curriculum, new technologies, a variety of student learning styles as well as different teaching methods and educational structure. Financial cutbacks also make it difficult to provide a range of resources in different media types and for all ages and ability levels. As a non-statutory service the library is particularly vulnerable.

The work of Williams and Wavell (2001) demonstrates how the library and the school librarian could make a real contribution to aspects of learning. In this study based in Scotland, focus groups of teachers and students and case studies of curriculum activities show that school libraries could contribute to learning. Todd (2003), a researcher working in America, reviewed this study and identified the major areas of the impact of the school library as acquiring information and wider general knowledge; skills development in finding and using information; computer skills; reading skills; higher school work achievement; encouragement of independent learning through the reading and study habit; confident use of such transferable skills in and beyond school; developing interpersonal skills, including collaboration.

In the years since these Williams and Wavell findings have been open to the public forum, little national recognition of these has taken place in terms of formal progress. No plans are in preparation to include findings and recommendations in educational progression. As with Todd's findings (2003), the Williams and Wavell study recognises the need for school librarians to engage in evidence-based practice. They cite the use of

observations of student activity and learning; questioning students about their work throughout the process; analysing submitted work to identify learning gains; discussing progress with teachers and examining user records. In a limited way this work has been taken forward by the national body the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland (CILIPS) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education with qualitative documents relating to evidence-based working, such as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (2005) and pre-inspection profiles to be completed by the school librarian (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education 2006). However as these documents are not compulsory, the full message gained by the research is not being taken forward in a consistent way.

A recent article (Kenney 2006) showcases the work of Todd, who states that school librarians can make a difference to student attainment. Todd considers that school librarians often play the victim, and his remedy is for them to be:

"Action-oriented, and I believe that nobody is going to rescue school librarians but themselves..... [they need to think] what steps can I take today that can really enhance the role of my school library in terms of student learning outcomes."

He also believes that school librarians have a real role to play in developing student achievement. Although it is important to provide the resources and technology, Todd felt that to make a difference (Kenney 2006), there needs to be what he calls:

"The transformational actions of the school librarian... instructional intervention."

Although he acknowledges that finding the information is important, he feels that the second stage of interrogating the information, working with it in a deep and meaningful way towards knowledge-based outcomes, is vital to the process and this is not being done at present in a widespread way in school libraries. Streatfield and Markless (2005) talk of the school library in England being "*invisible*" p36. They blame underfunding from central government and schools in neglecting the capacity of the school library to promote reading and learning. They created a toolkit based on self-evaluation similar to Scottish documents already mentioned. The purpose of such a tool is to focus attention on the library, and the role of the school librarian in contributing to teaching and learning. Scholastic (2004) brought together research evidence from various US States to show that:

"The school library is critical to the learning experience and student academic achievement." p1

This useful document collates research from different States by a variety of researchers and provides valuable information regarding the contribution of the school librarian to the learning and teaching process and student achievement, such as relating reading scores to library programmes of study, or impact of library staffing. Main principles include encouraging collaboration between librarians and teachers, and librarians being supported in terms of funding and administration to help them in their work. This kind of collation is a good starting point for Principals as it refers to the literature and research in this specialised area of expertise within the United States, and gives good ideas for future work. An updated version of this research digest was issued two years later (Scholastic 2006). Todd (2006) considers that such compilations are useful because:

“They specify an extensive range of outcomes, particularly related to student achievement as measured by performance on state standardized test scores, and other value-added outcomes, such as students’ personal, social and cultural competencies.”

Such studies will be especially pertinent to Principals who can see the relevance of the link between the work of the librarian and raising student achievement. Recent AASL (2007) standards for learners, quoted by Todd (2008), emphasise the importance of learning outcomes as they outline outcomes such as:

“Inquire, think critically and gain knowledge... draw conclusions, make informed decision..... apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge....share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society.... pursue personal and aesthetic growth.”

School librarians should be able to present a whole range of evidence based on student achievement, from analysing skills demonstrated in student projects; to students showing an improving ability to analyse and evaluate; to their detailed and relevant bibliographies; to student use of high quality websites. Todd (2007) summarises very well what EBP means in a school library:

“The day-to-day work of school librarians is directed towards demonstrating the tangible impact and outcomes of services and initiatives in relation to student learning outcomes. It involves critically analyzing the accumulated data and on the basis of indicators, deriving statements about student learning outcomes..... [EBP] moves beyond intelligent guesswork and clever hunches to establishing a sound basis for making claims about the impact of that practice. In doing so, it moves from a persuasive framework to a declarative framework in building active support for school libraries.” p63

Oatman (2006) discusses the work at a New Jersey school, where librarian intervention helps students to achieve more. Using the principles of Carol Kuhlthau, a US researcher

who worked with Ross Todd, the school librarian developed a labour-intensive programme of information literacy, involving electronic databases and traditional information gathering tools. Students learn not only about the subject, but also what methods of learning suit them best. At the end of each project, students write a two page essay about what the information search process taught them about themselves and their preference in ways of working. Projects are graded collaboratively by teacher and librarian, with marks divided equally between the teacher regarding content, and the librarian on the students' approach to the research process. This reflection on the way they approach research provides valuable input into their future research. Oatman describes the success of the scheme on:

“High-quality research, close observation, and the collection of rock-solid data.”

As part of the programme of visits for this study, this process was observed during a debrief session with students from this school after having completed their essays on the process of information searching. It was fascinating to hear students discuss what they had learned about themselves and their research and study preferences. Students presented varying experiences, and each opinion was respected and listened to by all. The whole discussion took place without discussing the topic of the research, which was not relevant for this session, which was simply to focus on the learning process that had been taking place while doing the research. Such an exercise demonstrates how reflection could be easily introduced into student learning. Linck (2004) describes how this same initiative was seen by Ross Todd. He finds:

“A high level of intellectual quality shown in the student’s [sic] work... their learning showed development of deep knowledge .. problem solving, and a high command of the language of the topics.” p10

Todd (2007) states of this study (which he calls the First New Jersey Study):

“The study showed that students’ knowledge of their topics developed considerably through the instructional interventions of the librarian..... Particularly noticeable was their analysis and organization of ideas into structured conceptual groupings, which conveyed a sense of knowledge, coherence and depth.... Students were using the language specific to the topic domain, not just parroting the terms, but describing them and providing clear explanations... progressed in developing deep understanding of their topics, and this matched the cognitive strategies used when searching for information in a range of sources [showing sources of] increasing complexity and depth.... showed strong ability to substantially communicate about their topical knowledge in writing. There was also evidence that students could identify and deal with conflicting facts or viewpoints and were able to construct arguments and explanations in relation to conflicting aspects of topics.” pp68-69

In October 2005, the New Jersey Association of School Librarians named the school's 11th grade research project the library media program of the year. Such a sustained, time-intensive approach may not work in most schools due to the sheer amount of time and commitment involved, but elements of the approach can be valuable when planning information literacy work. For example, real collaboration when planning and assessing curricular work; training about learning styles for librarians; access to appropriate information sources (including quality electronic databases) and allowing students to reflect on what they have learned about the process of research. The findings from such practice can also help other school librarians apply to what they do in their own schools.

The high school librarian undertakes a wide range of duties and responsibilities, and as De Silva and Turriff (1993) acknowledge:

"The [high] school librarian's job is one of the most difficult and challenging in librarianship." p12

At present, the library in a high school generally has three main purposes: it contains resources to support the work of the curriculum in order that staff and students have access to material to help with them with preparation, homework and assignment work and ultimately contribute to teaching and learning; information skills are usually taught, helping users to access and make best use of resources; and there is promotion of literacy and reading. NCET (National Council for Educational Technology) (1990) describes the role of the school librarian in terms of resources management; information management; curriculum development and management of learning. This last concept is a vital part of the role of the modern high school librarian. As a basic provision, adequate accommodation, furniture, shelving and ICT are needed to run the library. A regular and appropriate amount of money is required to purchase and renew an adequate range of material suitable for different age groups and ability levels. Adequate staffing is needed, and this varies in and between each country.

The definition of the word adequate is important in order to set an acceptable or minimum level of service and provision, and various interpretations can result in mismatches between expectation and actual provision. Some countries provide national or State standards or guidelines to give direction for those planning a service and set a level of service or acceptable provision. Sometimes regional, District or local standards are provided, giving a local emphasis on what constitutes a good or minimum level of

service. The value of standards or guidelines can be in the specificity of what is stated, and lack of specificity can be where difficulties can arise. There is more detail of the value of guidelines in Chapter 6, section 6.2; and in Chapter 4 there is discussion of the situation in Scotland in section 4.4.4.1, and of the US in section 4.4.4.2. Generally, Scottish school libraries lack specificity in terms of stated minimum levels of funding and staffing, while some US States have standards with minimum budgets and pro-rata staffing levels dependent on student number. Examples can be seen in Chapter 4, Tables 4.3 and 4.4, where specific State levels are presented.

The idea of comparison between countries for this study was raised mainly through initial personal experience, professional discussion and reading. The models of school librarian provision presented in each country represents different ways of delivering what might be considered the same kind of service – a library in a high school staffed by a qualified graduate information specialist. It was interesting to examine services provided in each country and to determine how decisions were made with regard to the library in the high school, and how evidence was collected and applied to decisions. For example, was it the case that the larger staffing numbers of the USA would mean that more formal methods of decision-making were used, and more time was available to make a wider range of higher level decisions?

To put the Scottish situation into context, the Scottish school library is generally better staffed than was the case in the rest of the United Kingdom. In Scotland high schools usually have a full-time generically trained graduate qualified or Chartered librarian in post all year round, whereas in the rest of the United Kingdom this could be unusual as there are often teacher-librarians running the library, or unqualified (often non-graduate) “librarians”, neither group requiring librarian training, and often not working full-time or all year round. Guidelines for standards and self-evaluation tools mirroring teaching models have been produced in recent years in Scotland and the USA, and it is interesting to discover how these made a difference to the practical delivery of services.

In America the situation is different to that in Scotland, because the model used is that of dually qualified graduate teachers who trained additionally as specialist school librarians. They often head a team of library staff. They work full-time (generally term-time only) in the library resource centre, with information and study skills being their teaching subject,

although some participants did still teach another subject in addition to their library work. They are generally paid the same as other teachers. As a federal republic consisting of individual States, States deliver “national” policy in their own ways, and there is a lack of consistency between them. Some States or Districts produce their own standards and guidelines, to achieve consistency of service delivery across the State or District.

The changing expectations of the role of school librarians, coupled with two distinct and differing approaches to the education of school librarians raised a number of initial questions in this study. The purpose in comparing the two countries was to identify what was considered to be best practice from both countries, and to create one model of the effective evidence-based practitioner. Questions to be considered (and which will be answered in Chapter 10, section 10.1.1) include:

What were the key factors of services offered in school libraries in each country?

The study sought to identify and discuss these in terms of the needs of the users. They may be different in each country, although there was likely to be a common core.

How did these services develop?

The reasoning behind the choice of each model was examined. The curriculum variations, geographical distances and funding may have to play a part in some of these decisions.

Were features of decision-making different?

Where this was the case, it was investigated why and how they were different. Perhaps requirements of users or the working context were different.

Did these features differ in relation to cultural context?

Perhaps the cultural elements of a country affected the needs of the service required for a high school library.

Did models differ between countries?

Taking all aspects into consideration, it will be discussed why different models suit different countries, and to establish if one model can suit both countries. Inevitably, more

questions emerged as the literature review progressed, and more details can be found in Chapter 2.

1.4 Aims

In order to develop an indepth understanding of the work of the professional high school librarian in Scotland and the US the aims were to:

- 1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioner in the high school library environment
- 2 Critically analyse and relate the significant theories emerging from the literature with the empirical findings of a study based on the work of high school librarians in two countries, to develop a model which describes an effective way of implementing EBP in high school libraries

The aims outline the purpose and remit of the study, and show a clear intention to gather information from practitioners, analyse it and create a member-checked model of the effective evidence-based high school librarian expressed in a way that is useful to the academic and professional community, which is then made available to practitioners. This practical outcome was always an important part of the study, and a way to link the work of the practitioner with research.

1.4.1 Objectives

The objectives were set in order to clarify how aims were to be answered, by providing more detailed steps to achieve aims. They consist of:

- a) To establish how decisions concerning high school libraries were made and to identify the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based high school librarian. This would primarily meet Aim 1 and lead into Aim 2
- b) To discover who was involved in the decision-making process in high school libraries. This contributes to Aims 1 and 2
- c) To compare differences between countries about decision-making. This would lead into meeting Aims 1 and 2
- d) To establish if formal decision-making processes were used. This supports Aims 1 and 2

- e) To prepare a draft model of good practice concerning effective evidence-based decision-making in high school libraries. This would draw in material to answer Aim 1 and contribute to meeting Aim 2
- f) Refine the draft model based on feedback from EBP research and data collected and suggest benefits from its use by researchers and practitioners. This would help to meet Aim 2

Aims and objectives will be addressed against methods used in this study (more details in Chapter 3.) The extent to which they have been met will be examined in Chapter 10.

1.5 Research approach

Full details of methodologies used in this study are given in Chapter 3. This study uses mixed methods of collecting data in two separate countries with different models of high school librarian provision. A variety of methods was implemented in order to provide a more rounded picture of practice, the opportunity to compare and contrast and give an element of triangulation, what Lincoln and Guba (1985) call "*overlap methods*" p317. Such an approach using a variety of methods was designed to capture the experience of school librarians, examine their behaviour and identify how they attempted to collaborate and co-operate with others in the school. The views of their managers and Directors of School Library Services were also sought, as they presented a different aspect of the expectation of school library provision. From this information the intention was to identify challenges they faced and develop a model offering guidance to practitioners, demonstrating an understanding of practice and problems, and how professional school librarians and managers could deal with challenges.

An initial basic questionnaire survey was distributed in order to gain some background data, including quantitative details relating to high school libraries and librarians. Once the data was analysed, themes emerged which were used in later qualitative data collection tools. A vignette was created in order to help participants express more objective opinions on a fictional situation, rather than comment on their own practice, which offered them the opportunity to undertake wider reflection. Focus groups were formed to allow participants to share experiences and reflect on practice in a professional discussion situation. Interviews allowed participants to explain how they carried out practice. Reflective or critical incident diaries gave them a structured

approach to describe a situation in detail and to show various stages of a decisional event and how decisions evolved in stages. Follow-up feedback forms were also used, for example after focus group, interview and critical incident diary there were opportunities to reflect on the process and what had happened during and after the event. This offered an opportunity to reflect after the initial response had been received, and also to add thoughts on any more contentious or difficult issues that respondents might be reluctant to raise in a public forum such as the focus group, particularly if a manager or peers were present. Case examples are presented in Chapter 5 outlining a range of situations faced by practitioners, as part of a method of data analysis. Finally, a draft model was produced based on an interpretation of the findings of the study and literature, and member-checking was undertaken in order to allow practitioners, Headteachers and Directors of School Library Services to respond and comment on its validity. A final model was then created based on responses received.

There were problems involved in collecting and analysing data. Gaining adequate numbers of responses was difficult, and perseverance was an important factor. In order to maximise the number of responses, it was considered vital from the beginning to build up relationships with potential respondents, and more detail of this approach is given in Chapter 3 in section 3.10, which deals with research ethics. By showing a long-term interest in individuals and demonstrating that their contribution was valued, it was expected that they were more likely to make returns at different stages and to take part in the use of different methods. In fact only a few respondents participated throughout the study using the full range of different methods, with the majority of those completing the initial questionnaire survey and vignette not participating in later qualitative data collection methods. This could be largely due to the process being spread out over many years, in part owing to a lack of continuity because of a modification of focus when the researcher transferred her studies to RGU after the initial questionnaire survey and vignette stages.

Evidence that was largely qualitative took a great deal of time to code and theme. There were also comparative differences to be considered, due to the international element of the study, with different qualification routes, training of high school librarians, education systems, terminology and levels of government and administration to be established and clarified. By acknowledging varying elements in each country, it was intended that the

impact of the data would be more relevant when creating a model of effective evidence-based practice.

1.6 Structure

There are three main parts to this study.

Part I contains Chapters 1 to 3, outlining elements relating to background work. Chapter 2 introduces the literature review carried out from the start of the study. Details of the methodologies used are outlined in Chapter 3.

Part II contains Chapters 4 to 8, introducing findings from the study. Chapter 4 outlines the findings from the background questionnaire survey, from which main themes emerged. Case examples from both countries are examined in Chapter 5. Chapters 6 to 8 deal with themes which emerged from the background questionnaire survey: Chapter 6 on planning and decision-making processes; Chapter 7 on networking and collaboration issues; and Chapter 8 on interprofessional relationships and roles.

Part III includes Chapters 9 and 10 which deal with conclusions arising from the study. Chapter 9 presents the concept of the draft model, which after member checking with participants was amended to form a final model of the effective evidence-based practitioner. Chapter 10 summarises findings from the study, and assesses how aims, objectives, questions and hypotheses raised in Chapter 1 have been met. It also outlines the way forward and presents recommendations and ideas for future research. The contribution to original knowledge is also discussed.

References are included at the end of each chapter and include works that have been referred to or quoted.

A **bibliography** is given in full at the end of the study, and lists all resources referred to or consulted.

Tables and figures are presented throughout the study. Lists of tables and figures are given in the Contents pages.

Appendices include examples of the data collection instruments created and used with participants.

Fictional forenames have been used throughout when discussing individual participants, in order to preserve their anonymity. All quotations from participants and the literature are indented and italicised between quotation marks. Square brackets such as [] are included to explain abbreviations or otherwise clarify quotations. Grammatical and spelling mistakes made in the original source are acknowledged by *[sic]* after the error.

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Chapter 2 Literature review

The aim of this chapter is to examine the background issues related to research problems and discuss their findings. More detailed information on the use and purpose of the literature review can be found in Chapter 3, which examines the methodologies used in this study.

The purpose of a literature review is varied. As outlined by Gorman and Clayton (2005) it is useful for:

“Reading around in the relevant literature before beginning a qualitative research project”. p73

Such “reading around” helps to identify potential topics or themes to study, and if there is a lack of literature in the subject, it could indicate that research is likely to add to knowledge and research relating to the subject. A literature review is also valuable in order to learn from previous research; to examine where there may be gaps in understanding; and to identify how the current study fits into existing knowledge. An intensive literature search, addressing Aims 1 and 2 (outlined in Chapter 1), revealed a small amount of specific literature, indicating the beginnings of research on the topic, as can be seen by the relative currency of some documents. As acknowledged by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000):

*“Business and management research makes use of a wide range of literature.”
p44*

Bearing this in mind, the literature review included themes of historical background; collaboration; evidence-based practice (EBP); decision-making, encompassing themes such as professional language; occupational status and goal setting. There was some literature to be found in the area of school-based collaboration, but little on school-based EBP or decision-making, so searching was expanded into the literature of other professions, such as health care and social work, because general principles used in one profession can be applied to other professional situations.

As a result of developments in school librarianship over the years, many challenges have emerged. Approaches to meet these challenges have to be feasible and viable. It also means that staff should be prepared to change.

2.1 Standards and guidelines

In the last few years, there has been an increase in the number of formal standards and guidelines which aim to provide an outline of good practice. Early documents such as Investing in Children (Great Britain. Department of National Heritage 1995) outline library standards for children and young people in England. The current situation with high school library provision varies throughout Scotland, largely because as in England it is not a statutory service and therefore education departments do not have a minimum level of staffing, space or budget provision to meet. Marden (2007) states when reviewing a recent research report in English primary and high schools (Booktrust 2007) that:

“School libraries are often under-used and under-valued...failing to fulfil their potential because of limited access or low levels of funding on books.” p12

Marden quotes that 92% of English high schools spent “far below” p12 the CILIP recommendation of £10 per student per year, with an average spend of £2.67.

From performance indicator information collected in recent years in Scotland (CILIPS 2006), average expenditure per student was as follows:

**Table 2.1 Expenditure in Scottish high school libraries per student per year
Adapted from CILIPS (2006)**

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006
Expenditure	£3.67	£3.00	£3.77	£3.77

These figures show a variation in patterns, with figures decreasing in 2004, rising again, and keeping stable over the next two years. The figures have only been collected since 2003, so a clearer pattern will emerge as statistics continue to be recorded. However, from these statistics, Scottish schools appear to be better funded than English schools, although they generally do not meet the minimum recommendation given by CILIP.

De Silva and Turriff (1993) acknowledge the variation in standards and perceived role of libraries in UK high schools and explain some of the problems arising from this situation. Some authorities have qualified librarians, some have Chartered librarians only. The Charter is a national post-graduate qualification for librarians and information scientists assessed at the present time by means of a portfolio submission evaluating and

reflecting on professional practice, wider professional issues and continuing professional development. The advantages of having Chartered librarians in high schools includes not having to invest time in supervising or mentoring them to become Chartered, and although this may seem to be a bonus, it could lead to a lack of commitment to training from basic level developing to post-Charter training and does not stimulate a real two-way learning experience for librarians and managers. The work involved in achieving this standard encourages the development of post-basic training. In addition, management and other colleagues inevitably learn from the pre-Chartered staff as they share their enthusiasm and energy, explore and reflect on wider professional issues, evaluation of aims and objectives and consider good practice and training usefulness as part of their submissions.

This is particularly important to bear in mind with the *Framework of Qualifications* publication by CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals 2004), which uses a model of continuing professional development and regular revalidation of the Charter throughout the career of a librarian. Therefore Chartership is just the start of the developmental process for a school librarian, and self-evaluation indicators and evidence-based work can form a template for their continuing professional development.

De Silva and Turriff (1993) call for a more coherent approach to the development of the high school LRC, with the emphasis on the publication of guidelines from professional associations, including input from practitioners to keep them relevant to the working librarian. However, rather than just producing these guidelines, it should have been emphasised that the wholesale implementation of these was vital, because without this commitment, progress cannot be made.

In 1999 moves were made to campaign for statutory provision in the Scottish Parliament (Scottish Library Association 1999). A proposal to make every authority provide both a central School Library Service and a librarian in every high school was submitted as part of a consultation paper on school improvements (Scottish Library Association 2000a, response paper 2000b). At that time there was coverage in over 90% of schools, with 391 high schools having qualified librarians, and 30 high schools being without a school librarian.

Statutory provision to provide a qualified school librarian in every high school was rejected in a Scottish Parliament debate by 7 votes to 3 (Scottish Parliament 2000). The explanation by the Minister Peter Peacock in this debate is that appropriate quality and guideline documentation was in place at that time, and revised inspections would mean that there would be enough rigour without making the posts of school librarians statutory. He states that:

“Where there is a deficiency in the support mechanisms for learning – libraries are crucial to that – provided by the local authority, I would expect it to be acted on..... At this stage, prescribing particular ways of meeting a current need is not the right approach; we can achieve the same objective through other means.”
Column 970

Costs are quoted in the region of £450,000 for the missing 30 posts, which are based mainly in two of the 32 Scottish authorities. There is unlikely to be any change in non-statutory status in the near future, largely because of the costs implicit in such a decision and because of the defeat of this vote. For example, apart from setting-up costs, if the provision of a qualified librarian were to be made statutory, there would be costs in maintaining these in times of budget cuts and providing for staff absence. In the present financial climate, authorities are likely to be unwilling to proceed with such a measure. There was a recommendation to draw up a Guidance Note to recommend standards of service, although it didn't happen in this format. Rhona Arthur (2007) of CILIPS says:

“The guidance is encompassed within the spirit of Taking a Closer Look [Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum 1999] (and presumably subsequent iterations) and to be inspected by HMI [Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education].”

However the crux of the matter is whether authorities encourage or insist on the use of these documents. Where they do not use them, the rigour and discipline of planning and sustained collection of evidence is lost, until an inspection takes place, when a rapid return is made to meet the deadline. This hardly encourages the considered planning and reflection cycle needed to nurture evidence-based practice and whole-school collaboration between teaching staff and the school librarian. As Scottish librarian Linda said at interview:

“Suddenly an inspection was announced and all hell let loose. I've never seen so much action so quickly. We had to get papers filled in, profiles and CV done, procedures and policy created in record time – no time to think and they just had to be thrown together. I know they reflect pretty much what we do, and we probably should have had it anyway, but getting it together as bits of paper was stressful, and when do we ever have the time? And I wonder if they [Inspectors] even looked at it, looking at all the questions they asked.”

More recently, there has been recognition that gaining statutory status for school libraries is also a problem in England. It is reported in a recent article (Snowley 2007) when an e-petition to the UK government was submitted calling for library provision to be made statutory in English schools, the government response was:

“It is the government’s policy to put as much money as possible directly into schools’ budgets, allowing schools to target resources appropriately and to make their own choices about their school library provision and book resourcing.” p12

Snowley comments that:

“This doesn’t really address the argument that a professionally run service can make those resources go much further.” p12

He calls on CILIP, the School Library Group and School Library Association to work together more closely to give this message to government. Setting a basic minimum standard for all schools would mean that they would have to provide a certain level of service, and all students would have equal opportunity to a school library providing at least a recognised standard level of service. Unfortunately, leaving the decision to individual schools about funding to meet recommended budgetary standards has resulted in a majority of schools not being able or willing to meet those standards.

Two 1999 documents from COSLA and Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum offer national guidelines to help establish a recommended level of service. The COSLA document *Standards for school library resource services in Scotland* (Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities 1999) outlines a basic level of service provision for school libraries and central School Library Service support.

Most authorities used this to establish present levels of service and to plan for future improvements. The document, which established standards in school libraries is based on literature, visits, contributions from practitioners and surveys throughout Scotland collecting examples of good practice and outlining the recommended standard of provision to be:

- a whole school policy on Library Resource Centre, reflecting school development plan priorities
- Library Resource Centre funding to be reviewed and revised regularly
- a member of the Senior Management Team member to be responsible for the Library Resource Centre and its staff

- Library Resource Centre staff to be involved in review, planning and development processes
- all high schools to have a full time Chartered or qualified librarian
- staff development opportunities to be available for Library Resource Centre staff
- a range of resources (including Information and Communications Technology) in the Library Resource Centre, meeting the needs of classes and individual study, supporting the curriculum and reflecting school priorities

Although not compulsory, these guidelines provide basic standards to help schools to establish present provision, give scope to consolidate existing provision and provide a basis for development and progression. However, because these recommendations are not compulsory, and provision of school libraries is not statutory, there can be little incentive for authorities and schools to meet them, especially if extra costs or changes to working practice are involved. For example if school librarians were involved in review, planning and development processes it could have implications for non-contact time, cover and potential regrading salary costs and that could discourage authorities from implementing such methods at a formal level. Thus the disincentives for local authorities to formalise taking on such guidelines can be clearly seen. It is therefore vital that there is national and local action to demonstrate the benefits of implementing these guidelines, with particular emphasis on the contribution to learning and teaching.

It would also be valuable to have a concerted effort to identify how extra funding could be raised nationally or at a local level. The Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (1999) document *Taking a closer look at the school library resource centre* articulates with a national educational document *How good is our school* (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education 1998) and lays out qualitative indicators for school librarians and managers, based on collecting evidence and self-evaluation. As the former document is based on and complements an existing document and generic educational indicators school managers already used, potentially it can be more easily understood by both them and teachers, giving inclusion and a commonality of approach to the way the library establishes how it performs. Common areas such as ethos and teaching and learning, once examined generally in school can easily be applied to the library resource centre, hopefully encouraging take up of the tool for use in libraries, as it just continues the process already underway in school. Many authorities established in-service

sessions jointly with school librarians and their managers in order that they could make a start on regular planning sessions with the ultimate aim to improve the contribution of the school library to the overall educational progression of the school and achievement and attainment of students. There was some initial suspicion about the document, as some librarians saw it as a personal appraisal tool, however the intention was to help the position of the librarian by involving senior management in service success and responsibility, for example if there was a lack of funds or support, it was a whole school problem, not merely a reflection on the librarian.

The initial edition of the document was updated to articulate with the second version of *How Good Is Our School 2* (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education 2003) and is subtitled *Libraries Supporting Learners* (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education 2005). This library document complements and updates the original *Taking a closer look at the school library resource centre* (Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum 1999) and provides a framework to collect and implement evidence showing how the library contributes to learning and teaching. For the first time, three indicators are highlighted as being strictly management concerns, clearly sharing the development of the school library as the joint concern of management and librarian. Many Scottish authorities are at present working with school librarians to develop the use of the document and ensure that practical implementation takes place, such as evaluating the library and producing a Standards and Quality Report.

In 2001 Her Majesty's Inspectorate announced that they intended to provide a much more structured visit to school libraries. From the start of 2002 they required a written library profile and development plan before undertaking a more robust inspection. This treated the library more like a subject department and encouraged more evaluative reporting of how the library contributed to teaching and learning. These measures were part of the current ethos in education of collecting evidence and creating a profile of information about the library and what it offered (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education 2006b). This was accompanied by a guidance document giving advice in completing the profile (CILIPS Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland, Arthur and Milligan 2007). The role of national bodies like CILIPS has been to work with others to develop such guidance for these self-evaluation documents, and therefore to make the process as simple as possible in order to encourage school librarians to

complete them. This kind of documentation is useful to gather information about the library and how it is used, to make more objective decisions and to prepare for inspections. Due to the non-statutory position of school libraries, indicators such as these are not compulsory, but authorities were encouraged by national bodies such as SLIC (Scottish Library and Information Council) and CILIPS to use them as management tools. As stated in the guidance note accompanying the profile (CILIPS Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland, Arthur and Milligan 2007):

“The profile is your opportunity to highlight the ways in which your work contributes to the overall improvement in pupils’ learning and achievement..... Don’t undersell the impact you have in these areas.” p1

However, even a thorough inspection involving much preparatory work from the senior management team and librarian will still normally only result in one or two sentences at most in the final report. This could be due to the non-statutory status of the school library, but a brief report can be demoralising for staff involved after the work undertaken during the preparation for inspection and inevitably casts a shadow over the recognition of the importance of the contribution of the library to the teaching and learning in the school.

The latest version of *How Good Is Our School* has recently become available (Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education 2006a), and work has started on the new school library document to articulate with that. Standards and guidelines continue to be produced, such as those by Scott (2001) who examines how to evaluate and measure the performance of the service of the high school library. Such documents are helpful because they provide examples of good practice and are:

“A real opportunity to judge success and devise practical strategies to bring further improvements.” p2

The real challenge for school librarians now is to look critically at how they can demonstrate that they are effective and reflective decision-makers and evidence-based practitioners. Collaborative working, and collecting and using evidence are key elements of this approach.

In America, government and funding were based at a local level, with little national federal authority, until 1988 when a new national initiative *Library Power* emerged (AASL and AECT American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational

Communications and Technology 1988). Until then, funding was largely local, and citizen participation was a key element of the local government scene. *Library Power* was introduced in the US in the late 1980s. The DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund invested more than £20 million in the project, matched by £12.5 million in private funds from the 19 communities taking part initially. It was designed to restore and revitalise library media services in elementary and middle schools and to integrate the library media programme into the school curriculum. It focused on having a full-time library media specialist with access to professional development; improved collections; and encouraging more use by students.

To illustrate the impact of such initiatives, in Lincoln (Nebraska) Levitov and Schmidt (2000) report that *Library Power* helps to bring together school and District education goals; brings the larger community into the planning process; encourages collaboration between teachers and librarians and leads to partnership working amongst groups such as schools, public libraries, community agencies, academic bodies, local businesses and parent groups. For example, local businesses provide professional expertise to schools and support renovations, while local universities help with teacher training, public libraries provide summer reading programmes and staff training, retired people are encouraged to help with projects and cultural organisations help to support reading in the community. Such experience has been well documented and other States and Districts could then replicate or build on the experience of other authorities. Even if there were no similar funding available to schools, some of the ideas raised by such an initiative could be tested in an area.

As Anton (1988) says:

"Americans also value efficiency in the delivery of public services and accountability for the officials who operate public programmes." p151

Therefore local accountability about funding and programmes in schools is an important part of the culture, with each State and District free to design their own way of implementing initiatives and work with what Anton calls: *"operational autonomy."* p152. There are few national guidelines as such, and a wide variance in provision within and between different States and Districts.

Another initiative in the US is called *Information Power* (AASL and AECT American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology 1998), commonly known as *IP2*, which brings together student standards for information literacy and shows how information literacy can help students meet standards in content areas such as English and mathematics. These guidelines build on a series dating from 1918 and aim to outline good practice in school libraries. Valenza (1999) states that quantitative standards alone do not adequately reflect the impact of media specialists on learning, which she feels could best be proved through qualitative measures. She believes that:

“IP2 can help us to demonstrate how a solid, well-funded school library will help schools achieve their content-area goals.” p36

She believes that “*information literacy*” is unclear to non-library staff, and urges librarians to personalise and simplify through anecdote and illustration why such programmes need financial support, and how they improve student achievement. Along with librarian qualities of enthusiasm, competence and leadership, the value of implementing information literacy projects will be demonstrated.

National guidelines such as *Information Power* were given federal funding via grants-in-aid from national to State and local governments, on the understanding that certain programmes were implemented. Building on these were State guidelines, such as those from Wisconsin (Potter, Lohr and Klein 2002). In this document, the focus is on information and technology literacy, and collaboration. After establishing clear vision and purpose, recommendations for collaborative working are presented. By involving committed and interested local parties, real progress can be made.

2.2 Staffing

The general scenario of staffing in Scottish high school libraries is of a sole librarian, with no assistants, carrying out all tasks, professional and non-professional. Sometimes there is input from voluntary helpers, such as students or parents. These volunteers usually carry out non-professional duties such as covering books, processing newspaper cuttings and dealing with circulation. This enables the librarian to spend time working directly with students and assisting them with information skills and recommendations for reading. However voluntary help by its nature centres on goodwill and cannot always be relied upon. Sometimes there may be some adhoc inhouse support, such as a technical

or clerical assistant who carries out duties such as word processing, installing CD Roms or simple cataloguing. However this assistance is not always regular and can be taken away at any time if there is a change of priorities in the school, or if there is a change of senior management.

Few schools have any permanently appointed assistance, however some authorities have used funds such as the Scottish Executive (now Scottish Government) Excellence Fund or Support for Learning money (national funding to support the curriculum) to supply some part-time support staffing in high schools. Without this help, librarians can find it difficult to concentrate on higher level tasks such as preparing the development plan, meeting other staff to devise an update to the information skills programme or contribute to Principal Teacher (Heads of subject department) meetings. Largely because of this, there is a danger that the librarian can spend most time concentrating on lower level tasks, further demoralising and deprofessionalising her/his role. Even attending an in-service training day can cause problems for staff cover for the school library.

A Scottish study on the perception of the role of the school librarian (Turrieff 1995) reports that none of the school students and half the teaching staff interviewed considered that a qualification was needed to be a school librarian. Scottish reports (Independent Committee of Inquiry into Professional Conditions of Service for Teachers (Scotland) 2000 and 2001) [the McCrone report, consultation and final report] specifies major amendments to teacher duties and pay, and it can be more difficult to organise meetings outwith school hours because there are more restricted formal hours of work for teachers. However, where the librarian was the sole library worker, if meetings are held during the school day it is difficult to leave the library unattended because professional support is then not available for students and teachers. Other guidelines (Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities 1999, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education 2005, Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum 1999) cover staffing requirements for the school library, emphasising the need for professionally qualified staff who have some form of assistance so that they can undertake professional duties and meet staff. A recent article (Marden 2007) reporting on research completed in English primary and high schools (Booktrust 2007) states that only 42% of staff running high school libraries have a library qualification. The situation in Scotland is that there are more professionally

qualified librarians running high school libraries. Over 90% of Scottish high schools have a full-time qualified librarian (Scottish Library Association 2000a).

2.3 The impact of collaboration

It is an important part of this study to examine the evolving role of the school librarian as outlined in section 1.3.3 of Chapter 1, and how to build on that to become an effective EBP practitioner in the high school environment. This includes how decisions are made and the assumption that collaborative working with teachers can make a difference to the work of the librarian by making an impact on teaching and learning, as mentioned by many authors. An important part of this study is to examine if collaboration can make a difference to this work, so the literature on collaboration between professionals was examined. Although there is little to be found in the specific area of high school libraries, initially literature in wider areas was examined, such as health services and social work where there are more sources, in order to establish basic principles and terminology. The benefit of these formal documents is that the purpose and aims are clearly identified.

Professionals are defined as having undergone a long training period which instilled a shared community of ideas and colleagues, and commitment to a code of ethics (or standard of conduct) which allows professional autonomy and judgement based upon trust of clients (Carrier and Kendall 1995). Trust is identified as a vital factor in collaborative working. Schofield (1992) identifies main outcomes of interprofessional collaboration are to improve the professional quality of decision-making and to be more cost-effective.

Bruce (1980) identifies three levels of teamworking in the area of social policy: nominal (where co-operation is merely ostensible); convenient (where work is delegated by the people with perceived higher status); and committed (where there are shared explicit goals). The differences for each level are summarised in Table 2.2, factor by factor:

Table 2.2 Teamworking levels

Adapted from Bruce (1980) pp166-167

Level	Nominal	Convenient	Committed
Co-operation in:			
Relevance	Scarcely affects role	External to role	Part of role
Skill	No preparation or training	Little preparation or training	Need for preparation and training acknowledged
Regularity	Lacks regularity	Is seldom regular	Regular personal contact
Status differences	Wide differences	Differences inhibit co-operation	Differences ignored
Trust	Lacking	Seldom leads to personal trust	Mutual trust
Confidentiality	Problem	Problems partially overcome	No problem
Role perceptions	Stereotypes role images	Limited stereotyping of role persists	No role stereotyping
Interaction	Minimal	Mechanistic interaction	Organic interaction
Communication	Frequent failure	Some failures	Exceptional failures
Services	Parties give conflicting advice	Advice not co-ordinated	Clients receive consistent advice
Preventative care	Co-ordinated care impossible	Possible	Optimum conditions

Although he warns that the committed stage involved investment in time and energy, Bruce (1980) identifies this as the ideal stage to work towards, resulting in enriched work outcomes and an increase in personal development. Where such a commitment is not evident, an educational process is needed to change attitudes to convince members of staff and their managers that co-operation is beneficial. Factors in this table can also be applied to the working relationship between the agencies of teachers and the high

school librarian because it identifies key elements of collaborative working, and the outcomes of working at different levels. At which level would participants identify their own situation? Would there be agreement between members of the school staff? How could school staff work towards a higher level of teamworking?

Bruce (1980) identifies a connection between factors outlined in Table 2.2:

“All these factors appeared to be associated one with another in the same way as the concurrent symptoms of a disease combine to form a medical syndrome.”
p165

As a starting exercise when trying to promote more collaborative working, these individual factors could be plotted by partners to identify existing levels and agree optimum levels to be achieved, leading to creating a plan for moving through the stages. Although committed team members could do this alone, support and guidance from management focusing on real-life work exercises would encourage staff to move forward together in an organised way. It has the added advantage of demonstrating to staff that real problems or issues can be successfully worked through together using different perspectives, building confidence and commitment. Support would include adequate training, staff cover and time to reflect on issues.

Nolan (1995) considers that the truly interprofessional approach involves blurring professional boundaries and requires trust, tolerance and a willingness to share responsibility. However too much blurring could result in a diminution of the distinctive identities of each profession. Elston and Holloway (2001) introduce the concept of a unidisciplinary approach, where members of the profession may feel more secure in their own competence and expertise. Elston and Holloway (2001) consider that appropriate training and education in teamworking provides an opportunity to gain knowledge of each other's work and leads to more effective interprofessional working. Would any of the participants be involved in or welcome such training? Freeth (2001) states that interprofessional collaboration and effective teamworking are required elements to provide a truly user-centred service. It is highlighted that this should be undertaken from an early stage of professional working. She considers that a high proportion of published case studies concentrate on superficially mundane matters – would this be reflected in the focus group and case

study? For sustained collaboration, Freeth considers that each collaborating party should identify benefits to outweigh disadvantages.

Zweizig and Hopkins (1999) produce a table of five different levels of collaboration between teachers and school librarians, ranging from a basic recognition of each other's work to a more sophisticated and collaborative way of working.

Table 2.3 Collaboration between teachers and school librarians
Adapted from Zweizig and Hopkins (1999) p61

Aware	Aware of each other's activities
Parallel	Engage in parallel activities, teachers in class and librarians in library
Co-ordinated	Co-ordinate a division of labour and responsibility for instructional activities in one location
Interactive	Assume equal responsibility for planning and delivering instruction
Shared	Share full responsibility for their own learning and that of students. A professional learning community is established

This range reflects a wide range of collaboration experience and it is likely that outcomes and service will differ depending on the level of collaboration involved in a school. It is particularly relevant as it focuses on the school situation. In terms of the present study it was considered interesting to establish how participants rated themselves on such a scale, and also what teachers and management in their schools thought.

Another similar model for teacher-school librarian collaboration is presented by Montiel-Overall (2005). She describes four levels of working interprofessionally:

- Co-ordinated
- Co-operative
- Integrated instruction
- Integrated curriculum

This is a similar model to that presented by Zweizig and Hopkins, with their first two levels being merged in Montiel-Overall's first level. It is interesting that the former choose

the term co-ordinated for the next level, while the latter chooses co-operative. The terms would have to be clearly defined when investigating the levels, but the word co-operative could be said to be closer to Zweizig and Hopkins first or second level, with the term co-ordinated being assumed to be a higher level than mere co-operation.

In Table 2.4, a more general professional model of collaboration is presented by Armitage (1983).

Table 2.4 Interprofessional collaboration
Adapted from Armitage (1983)

Isolation	Members who never meet, talk or write to each other
Encounter	Members who encounter or correspond with others but do not interact meaningfully
Communication	Members whose encounters or correspondence include the transference of information
Collaboration between two agents	Members who act on that information sympathetically, participate in patterns of joint working, subscribe to the same general objectives as others on a one to one basis in the same organisation
Collaboration throughout an organisation	Organisations in which the work of all members is fully integrated

This useful breakdown gives a guide to the stages in a nurse/doctor relationship, and in this study the stages arising from the school situation will be examined to see if they have elements in common. The two tables are similar, however Armitage's table is slightly more wide-ranging than that of Zweizig and Hopkins, particularly at the very first level where Zweizig and Hopkins outline an awareness of each other's activities, whereas Armitage's first level of isolation ranks lower.

The concept of "*groupthink*" is raised by Janis (1971) who describes an awareness of the danger of groups caught in a cosy collaborative view of themselves, feeling invulnerable and out of touch with the realities of their environment. This concept is revisited by Curtis (1994) who talks about it in terms of strategic planning, where members of the group want to reach the consensus matching the leader, overriding their

motivation to evaluate realistically. Is groupthink evident in the management of high school libraries? Grover (1996) refers to collaboration as:

“A journey, not a destination, with students as the beneficiaries of creative team efforts of library media specialists, teachers and administrators.” p6

In his paper based on a five day institute to develop collaboration in high school libraries, called *Meeting in the Middle*, he identifies the three stages of collaboration as co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration, and that only the latter changed the way of working. He suggests that development time is needed for school teams to get together and work out what they plan to do and how they plan to do it. Grover called these *“collaborative interdisciplinary units”* p3 and emphasises that they must have the support of the school culture, clear goals and resources, and that flexible scheduling is vital to the success of collaborative working.

Henri (1988) describes how Principals and librarians in high schools could use resource-based learning as a focus to develop the library. He considers that greater openness and collaboration between Principals, teachers and teacher-librarians would lead to a greater likelihood of providing a rich and lively learning environment. The obvious subject of collaboration in a high school is through co-operative curriculum planning and teaching strategies. He stresses that the lead and commitment of the principal is essential to other partnership working being successful in school. The teacher-librarian model he describes was one used in Australia and also USA. Does such collaboration happen there?

US-based researcher Ross Todd (cited in Kenney 2006) feels that at present collaboration is done at too low a level, and although librarians are aware that they should be collaborating:

“Nobody has ever asked the teachers if they want to collaborate...is this part of the teaching agenda? Do teachers want to do it?”

Without real belief in collaborative working, there will not be the commitment to progress. If it is considered to be important to collaborate, authorities should encourage joint working and planning between teachers and librarians and give every opportunity for activities to happen.

Loxley (1997) suggests three main categories relevant to a clearer understanding of collaboration: attitude; knowledge and skills. She defines attitude to include a sense of commitment and building up trust and predictability between professionals. Knowledge covers an understanding of the issues. Skills include defining the tasks and managing the processes of interaction. This could be developed to include attitude relating to a sense of openness and flexibility; knowledge to include gaining information on each other's point of view, and skills to include developing a joint vocabulary. These are elements that could be developed by librarians in schools.

Williams and Wavell (2001) identify three main areas essential to develop real learning experiences through school library use:

- Collaboration between teachers and librarians
- Acceptance that effects are not easily identifiable or visible
- Acceptance of information handling skills in the curriculum

This could be the basis of an in-service or an in-school discussion session, where school librarians and their managers could examine these areas, and establish how they can best progress with collaboration to improve the learning and teaching experience to students.

Collaboration is important because it involves sharing resources and expertise, and complementary working gives the opportunity to deliver the best quality service, what Zweizig and Hopkins (1999) call a "*professional learning community*". Where do participants rate their present collaboration level? Were they planning to increase these levels? How will they achieve this?

2.4 Evidence-based practice

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a core element of this study, so it is vital to examine the literature in order to establish basic principles. Working definitions of EBP can be found in Chapter 1. In the healthcare field, Muir Gray (2001) considers that decision-making is made up of three elements: evidence, values and resources. Until recently, evidence was not part of that equation, but with the more common use of applying evidence to making decisions, it is now a major factor in healthcare.

As Eldredge (2004a) says:

“It is only in recent decades, however, that library education has demonstrated a concern for applied research....Fortunately, library and informatics schools in recent years have encouraged applied research and have valued research-based evidence. It is likely that such activities have likely influenced the formation of the current EBIP movement.” p27

In addition to examining research literature, there is also the element of practitioners contributing to it. The more school librarians describe various projects and how they use research to add to EBP, the more it is likely to encourage others. However, as Eldredge (2004b) says:

“The acid test of editorial peer review might be viewed as distinct disincentive to publish.... [there is] a higher probability that research results will appear in the grey literature. This dynamic has likely had an adverse effect in reinventing many research results from reaching a wider audience through publication...the searcher still has a far greater likelihood of finding published rather than unpublished research results.” p40

One simple solution would be to include summaries of research writings (with contact details of researchers for follow-up purposes) in digests available to practitioners in mainstream professional literature or web-based links that are commonly used by practitioners. In this way there would be wider access to a range of research that is being undertaken, and school librarians would be able to share expertise, build on previous findings rather than starting from the beginning, contribute to professional knowledge and add to their own professional development and skills. There is also the problem of accessing the literature if not a student at a university. As Eldredge (2004b) comments:

“Commercial databases are likely to be too expensive for some professionals to access.” p37

There could be a place for national professional associations to help with this problem, for example CILIP already allows access to some professional databases, through its website to registered members. If such schemes were extended it would help to give practitioners an opportunity to share and contribute to research in a much simpler and accessible way.

In the general literature at the time of this study, results indicate that evidence-based documents such as guidelines (at national and local levels, and also at State and District level in America) and performance indicators are being produced to support managers

and librarians in establishing minimum standards in terms of budget, service provision and staffing support within school areas and identifying where evidence can be collected. For example, many librarians actively use these documents to make a case for improving the high school library, giving more weight to the argument than an individual approach, particularly when these documents are linked to national or local educational objectives.

In Scotland, the model was to produce a national document which was created collaboratively by teams of practitioners and Directors of School Library Services from several authorities, and the USA model was for States or Districts to produce largely online documents for use in their own schools. There was little literature found to date evaluating the use of such documents in practice in high schools, which was an area that this study aimed to explore. Some American literature aimed at librarians encouraged the practical use of EBP in schools, for example the *Information Power* initiative involved certain criteria to be met, such as meeting student standards for information literacy and demonstrating how District and school goals were negotiated and met. Little has been found to date aimed at school management on a policy level, for managers to lead this process within schools. Would the EBP initiative be more successful if aimed at this level?

Ghaye and Lillyman (1997) writing in the area of nursing raise the idea that reflective practice could improve the quality of practice by implementing knowledge, thus applying theory to practice and practice to theory. This cyclical approach could result in positive benefits if good practice and relevant theory elements are identified and reinforced.

In the field of librarianship, Booth and Brice (2004) outline how librarians can use EBP by researching the literature to inform decision-making because it improves the quality of services to clients, while acknowledging it was not regarded as common practice in the wider profession. Sackett and Wennberg (1997) consider that:

"The issue is which way of answering the specific question before us provides the most useful, valid answer." p1636

In addition, answers to one question may lead to more questions that need to be answered before reaching the final answer. Sackett and Wennberg (1997) outline five stages of EBP in the field of medicine:

- identification of a problem or question
- finding, as efficiently as possible, the best evidence to answer the question
- appraising the evidence for validity and usefulness
- applying the results to a specific population
- evaluating the outcome of the intervention

Booth and Brice (2004) relate the first two stages to information practice, and identify the last three as integral to good information management. This study will investigate if librarians work through these stages to inform decision-making and cast a critical eye to their own practice, and how far the concept of EBP has been put into practice by the high school library sector.

There was little literature found discussing the implementation of EBP in schools. Todd (2001a) writes more specifically about school librarians internationally, and he considers that EBP focused on the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions, by using research evidence, professional expertise and reasoning to implement effective learning interventions. He considers that EBP is critical to the sustainability of the profession and that school librarians should collect evidence to demonstrate that their libraries are integral to learning. This study will investigate if they were collecting and analysing evidence. He recommends that librarians be trained in research methods in their own professional education as a basis for implementing EBP in schools. Is this being done? What could librarians do to progress EBP? Using the available guidelines and indicators would help librarians to produce practical documents that could evidence the impact of the library and librarian.

An initial working assumption in this study was that the high school library was likely to be more complex than in many other environments. This was based on a consideration of the types and range of contexts of decision-making and the nature of the interprofessional working environment. This preliminary theory was part of the rationale of the study and allowed questions to be raised to inform the study and help with interpretation of results. It could be argued that the high school librarian needed to be more actively involved with decisions directly affecting education and the learning process than, for example, the situation with medical librarians or clinical decision-making, where EBP was more developed and where it has been more extensively

written about and discussed. In a recent blog written at a conference summit in Arizona, Chen (2007) talks of how she:

“Marveled at the similarities between Evidence-Based Learning in the medical field and our [school] library profession.”

It could be debated that in the high school library, the librarian had a more complex set of frames of reference, more likely to deal with both information and library decision-making frameworks and learning/education frameworks. S/he will also be actively involved in motivating adolescent students, promoting interactive learning, personal and social education and developing the reading habit, closely involved with considering learning in its broadest context. In contrast, the medical librarian dealt with educated adults and did not have this same breadth of educational role although s/he was focused on teaching medical students to be independent learners. Thus existing research on EBP may not adequately reflect the full complexity of the situation facing school librarians. This study will develop not only an understanding of what is known about EBP and how library practitioners experience EBP, but will also contribute to our understanding of the professional interaction between the professions of high school librarian and teacher.

2.5 Decision-making

In examining decision-making it was important to consider the types and nature of decision-making theories presented in the literature. The literature review was invaluable in order to establish basic stages within various models of decision-making when constructing survey questions. To date, little material has been found on decision-making specifically within high school libraries and where it does appear it tends to relate to other topics such as EBP and the development planning cycle. Therefore at this stage, literature on more general decision-making was examined in order to identify general principles, theories and models. Practical examples of their own decision-making related by participants are outlined in Chapter 6, section 6.8.

Freund (1968) reports that Weber defines the modern type of organisation of corporate groups as bureaucratic and rational, to include a hierarchical arrangement of technically qualified people working to impersonal rules to achieve organizational goals. A negative result of this is that individuals may have reduced creativity and adaptability because they are trained to follow rules within a limited working capacity. Court (1999) describes

how modern organisations are moving towards greater flexibility, with some companies such as British Telecom passing responsibility and autonomy down to lower levels. In schools, there is more collaborative decision-making with semi-autonomous groups being created, such as working committees, self evaluation teams and quality circle groups. This allows staff more opportunity to be creative and participate in decision-making.

Writers such as Chun (1998) outline main models of decision-making theory, such as rational; political; process and anarchy models. Two factors affecting models are goal ambiguity/conflict and technical uncertainty of goal achievement. How do librarians make decisions, and who is involved? Which principles of decision-making do school librarians follow? Do they relate decision-making to goal setting? Are they aware of formal models of decision-making? How could they gain this knowledge?

As Chun says that completely rational decision-making is impossible on a practical basis, the most objective way forward seems to be to make decisions to include some aspect of meeting regularly updated formal goals and keeping to a structured approach. This model could certainly apply to school libraries, and demonstrates the importance of keeping policy documents relevant and current, in order that decisions are not unstructured happenings, but based on pre-planned policy. As demonstrated in Table 2.5, Chun produces a useful summary of factors to be considered when making decisions in a rational way.

Table 2.5 Rational decision-making

Adapted from Chun (1998) p164

identify all available alternatives	predict what consequences would be produced by each alternative	evaluate these consequences according to goals and preferences
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These elements require information - first of all information on present alternatives, then information on the future consequences of acting on each alternative, then information on moving from present to future, in terms of what values should be considered to achieve the best results. Chun considers that following these steps is unrealistic, as no one ever had all this complete set of information to hand. Simon (1976) suggests that

humans are only "*boundedly rational*" p81, meaning that we were limited by our own cognitive capability and our organisational constraints. He further describes three barriers to completely rational decision-making:

- there cannot be a complete knowledge of all relevant facts and consequences
- the difficulty of attaching value to anticipated and imagined consequences
- all possible alternatives can never be identified

However, elements of rational decision-making could be used in schools. Although it could be said to be impossible to identify all alternatives, it would be possible to identify many or several alternatives. By collaborating with other people in school, the librarian would be able to gain a variety of perspectives which would provide a wider range of alternatives.

To deal with the inevitability of the drawbacks of rational decision-making, March and Simon (1958) introduce the concept of:

"Satisficing – the requirement that satisfactory levels of the criterion variables be attained." p169

This means that people in organisations make decisions by selectively including the most salient features rather than trying to meet all the elements of the model, thus in practice choosing a solution that may exceed some criteria and fail to meet some more, resulting in a best alternative arrived at by following routines in a pragmatic way to simplify and progress decision-making.

Allison's (1971) Politics Model, where many people and nations were involved in the decisions, all with their own different goals and conflicting preferences - what Allison calls: "*the pulling and hauling that is politics*" p144. So the outcome or result, what Allison calls resultant, may be a compromise that takes participants in a different direction to the one they may have intended, but moves them on from alternatives. Politics could be said to be in use in schools all the time, and the strength in this model is to recognise the elements involved, what their goals are, and to relate the desired outcome for the library to the aims of an ally within school.

Lindblom (1993) raises the concept of "*trial and error*" p29, where decisions are made on the basis of trial, error and re-trial over time, leading to a gradual change, part of the

problem by part of the problem. This was like the issue described by Weiss (1980), who talks of the concept of “*knowledge creep*” and “*decision accretion*”. Decisions are made on the basis of dealing with small, present and isolated problems rather than relating them directly to policy. The benefit of this is that gradually changes will be made, but the main problem is that the lack of vision does not allow for long term planning and directed change. This method of making decisions could be familiar to school librarians and it could be a useful and practical way of gradually working towards the desired outcome.

In an early work Lindblom (1980) describes the concept of “*mutual control and adjustment*” p54 which involves an exchange similar to bargaining or trading, the play of power (including persuasion or threats) and moving forward with one’s own goals while paying heed to the wider environment. The example he cites involves transport policies, which, while striving to reach their own goals, must articulate with wider energy policy and financial concerns. The concept is still viable within the high school, where there are different perspectives from various members of the establishment. Lindblom (1993) later develops the concept of “*mutual adjustment*” p67, which he outlines as being when people co-ordinate with each other without a dominant common purpose and not led by central management. He believes that this is a valid model to use when making decisions and among partisan political leaders. Thus each party gives and takes to suit their own needs, while indirectly helping someone else to get closer to what they want. This is reinforced by March and Simon (1958), who say that when both parties in the decision-making process agree goals, then:

“Differences in opinion about the course of action will be resolved by predominantly analytic processes, i.e., by the analysis of the expected consequences of courses of action for realization of the shared goals.” p156

However they state that when goals are not shared:

“The decision will be reached by predominantly bargaining processes.” p156

Lindblom (1980) discusses alternatives to progressing a policy that has failed, and this could also be applied to a decision. He suggests creating a new policy [decision] which does not raise the objections of the original or pressing for reconsideration by offering a trade for something wanted by others. As Lindblom says, the person progressing the issue:

“Will use information, discussion, and research specifically to develop his next moves in winning his conflict.” p32

This process of examining the reactions to the original element, finding out more alternatives and identifying persuasive factors would be a useful way to progress a decision in an incremental manner.

In Table 2.6, there is a summary of different models and definitions of decisional roles as discussed by Mintzberg (1980).

Table 2.6 Decisional roles
Adapted from Mintzberg (1980) p93

entrepreneur	initiate and design of controlled change	disturbance handler	dealing with involuntary situations and change partially beyond the manager's control
resource allocator	oversee the system of organisational allocation of resources	negotiator	major non-routine negotiations with other organisations or individuals

These decisional roles form a crucial part of the manager's work and involve him in the strategy making processes in the organisation. Mintzberg describes the range of decisions as being on a continuum, from voluntary initiatives to involuntary reactive ones.

2.6 Occupational status

Corney (1993) discusses the problems of general practitioners and social workers collaborating and identifies two major barriers of stereotyping people from other professions and a lack of knowledge about each other's roles and skills. She proposes that each profession should have some training in these areas at basic professional education level. This would help to address some of Becher's (1994) problems of tribes described in Chapter 7, section 7.1.

With a generic librarian qualification in place, Scotland does not have a specific school librarian qualification, so school librarians are not likely to gain this knowledge formally, but rather experientially on the job. In the US there is sector-specific librarian training and teacher-librarians have formal coverage of teacher roles, because they train and

practice as teachers first. Their basic training as teachers does not seem to cover the work, role and skills of the school librarian, and this is gained mainly in the practical school situation when they were teachers, or when they started training to gain a school librarian's qualification. There could be negative effects if each profession does not have an understanding of what the other undertakes. If this knowledge of each other's skills is not apparent, how can it best be imparted at the practitioner stage other than through experience? Rather than relying on varying experience and adhoc timescales, perhaps by formally addressing this at in-service sessions and in collaborative working groups these negative messages could be more efficiently reduced. Bruce (1983), while examining the role of social workers in schools, suggests that teachers and social workers would find it easier to work together if they did some parts of their training together and also to have some joint in-service sessions. In terms of school librarians, this already largely happens in the United States, and more infrequently in Scotland. It would be interesting to take forward a more widespread scheme between librarians and teachers in Scotland.

Recent guidelines and standards such as *How good is our school: libraries supporting learners* by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (2005) in Scotland help by attempting to clarify the roles of both the school librarian and management, and what ought to be expected of the librarian post. The responsibility of management is clearly laid out, and there is a shared agenda in delivering an effective school library service. No matter how committed the librarian is, and how good the facilities are, without sufficient budget, support and evaluation, the library may not deliver its best to users. In the same way, no matter how excellent the physical aspects of the library are, if there is not a shared vision between librarian and management with regard to collaboration and role, the library may yet again not meet its full potential. However, this is a complex situation, and any assumption that such documents are being implemented extensively can be challenged, because at this stage individual schools are using them differently, resulting in different expectations and standards, as can be seen from findings in later chapters. It is nevertheless important to create such documents because they outline a minimum standard of provision, and even if it is realised that not all authorities will use them, at least they create an agreed level of provision which will prove useful to many school librarians and their managers, and provides a standard to aim towards. Until authorities and schools progress from the position of using recommendations on a selective basis

and actually implement such guidelines whole scale, they will be unlikely to move on, and certainly not in a concerted way.

Where there is an overall acceptance and application of guidelines, there is likely to be more standardisation of practice, provision and expectation. For example, in Wisconsin guidelines (Potter, Lohr and Klein 2002) quoted in Chapter 4, section 4.2.2.3 Table 4.4, there is a clearly laid out standard library staffing complement that schools in that State must meet, as well as a standard range of tasks in relation to the delivery of academic standards and technology (Wisconsin 2004), as displayed in Chapter 7, section 7.3, Table 7.2. As can be seen in later findings, the experience of participants varies widely. For example, in Chapter 5, when outlining case example, the difference in the expectation of their whole school contribution meant that Michael (section 5.1.2) and Stephanie (section 5.1.4) had very different budgets, support and roles in terms of collaboration and service provision.

Elston and Holloway (2001) identify potential barriers in interprofessional working between medical and nursing professions, arising from the traditional educational backgrounds and socialisation process leading to different identities. The danger of stereotyping of professions is also raised, as are the barriers of power, status and gender. Does the status of teachers and librarians differ to the extent that such stereotyping could apply? As for the gender issue, more female workers will be found in librarianship and nursing than in high school teaching and medicine, which again could be said to make these female-based professions less highly regarded.

Corney (1993) reports that a number of studies show that the degree of participation of team members is directly related to occupational status and that several writers state that it is usually the less powerful groups who pushed for collaborative approaches, largely because they feel that this would give a better service to the client. Huntington (1981) identifies the concept of the higher occupational status getting and the lower giving – does this reflect the situation between teachers and librarians? In her example, she notes:

“Frequently, social workers in collaborating with general practitioners feel they give but do not get... while they feel doctors ‘get’ but do not ‘give’.” p147

Wilkinson (2008) shares her opinion of the problem:

"Because libraries represent an overhead to their institutions, they are prone to a 'master-servant' relationship." p19

This could represent the difficulty often faced, when the "servant" librarian does tasks to help the "master" teacher, who is the one who makes demands. Is there a way to change this relationship to a more equal or equitable footing?

Turriff (1995) reports that some Headteachers identify the librarian as equal to other non-teaching professionals, such as educational psychologists, however the librarian is the only one based full-time in the school, while the other experts visit or are attached to the school and are not managed by the Headteacher, which makes their situations quite different.

To follow this train of thought, Bruce (1983) introduces the idea that teachers in schools would like to have their own in-house social worker because they want:

"To control her activities, decide her priorities and get quick responses. Very few social workers, however, want to work in such a subordinate capacity; on the whole they prefer freedom to decide their own priorities and equality of professional status." p167

Will school librarians in this study show this feeling of subordination and lack of professional freedom and status within the school? Swigger (1999) calls for more professionalisation of the career of school librarian, with longer programmes of study and giving direct credential for school librarianship, rather than linking it to teacher status:

"Stop denigrating school librarians' work, stop apologising for it, and stop clamouring for the right to do someone else's work instead. Librarians are librarians, teachers are teachers – different names, different work." p45

Perhaps this could be progressed by formally recognising the contribution of the school librarian to teaching and learning, clarifying roles of the work carried out by different professionals, and by encouraging and taking forward collaborative work between professions. This study shows examples of adhoc encouragement and leadership by the Headteacher resulting in higher status of the librarian within the school, but a more formal commitment to do this would be helpful to appreciate the value of the different roles, and encourage staff to carry out work that makes the most of each other's strengths. Findings relating to occupational status and collaboration can be found in Chapter 7.

2.7 Goal setting

Goal setting was a formal element mentioned in many management textbooks. It was important to examine this topic for this study because it was a way of linking the implementation of formal practitioner guidelines to improving practice. Geneen (1984) considers that running an organisation is done in the opposite way to reading a book – starting with the end and then doing everything needed to reach that. This could be said to reflect the principles of formal documentation such as policy creation, where the aims of the library reflect school aims and user needs, they are made clear to all and then the purpose and work of the library is to meet those aims.

Curtis (1994) states that goal setting is a powerful management tool which focuses effort and improved performance which can energise a positive, results-oriented managerial philosophy. He stresses the importance of choosing the right goals within the core values, and that success is a journey, not a destination. Curtis identifies that there are three main ways of setting goals: they can be assigned; be set participatively; or can be self-set. How do school managers choose goals and track their progress? A useful role for managers would be to incorporate goal setting into the normal work of the school librarian, perhaps as a precursor to producing the development plan or Standards and Quality report. By involving wider school users with the priorities of library work, there will be more ownership of and relevance to what the library achieves and to what the librarian is there to do.

2.8 Hypotheses

Certain hypotheses were identified during the study. They generally emerged from the literature and findings, and were linked to the research problem. The basic hypotheses were identified as:

- High school librarians are now working on more complex developmental work in collaboration with teaching staff
- High school librarians use formal decision-making methods
- There is a difference in library provision due to the educational background, conditions and qualifications of Scottish and US high school librarians (dually qualified in US)

Information relating to these hypotheses will be discussed throughout the study, and examples from participants demonstrating these features will be presented. Final conclusions relating to these will be drawn in Chapter 10, section 10.1.2.

2.9 Summary

This chapter has contributed to the study by reviewing the literature and revealing how the role of the school librarian and the expectations from the profession has changed over the years. The new demands present challenges in integrating the library within the life of the school and for the librarian to follow the principles of evidence-based and decision-making practice, collaborating, collecting evidence, consulting and undertaking research and evaluating and reflecting on practice.

Previous literature has largely focused on promotion or advocacy of the role of high school librarians in isolation, outlining what they can do to improve their situation. The problem is that working only with practitioners would not normally be expected to have much impact on the views of stakeholders, who have a different and wider perspective and an element of power that can effect change. These stakeholders have a wider overview, greater influence and more financial control and are in the position to set standards, create documents, make policy and collate and disseminate qualitative information at a local and national level. It is recognised in this study that stakeholders have an influence, and by creating an environment to encourage more evidence-based practice, it is more likely that there will be a real and positive effect on the situation of the librarian in a high school and there is an opportunity to increase their contribution towards student achievement. This present study identifies gaps and raises wider questions to be answered. In what conditions and environment do school librarians work? What skills and qualities should they have? How do they collaborate? Do they follow a model of effective practice?

In order to move forward, there is a need to recognise the research gap that exists in the literature. For example, there is little research to help us to understand about required skills and qualities of the school librarian, and this has been covered in this study. This is an important aspect, because it is a specialist job not suited to everyone. By exploring the skills and personal qualities required, it should help managers when appointing school librarians because they will match up the person to necessary tasks and

approaches, for example a commitment to collaborative working. Considering skills and qualities will also help managers to be aware of training that might be required for them to develop. In trying to understand what challenges really mean this study asks what EBP is in reality and in practice.

In previous literature, there was little coverage of the wider picture: this study makes the connection between the librarian and the wider contexts: firstly, considering the position of the librarian within the educational environment of the school and its users; secondly, reflecting on how the librarian relates to the profession of school librarianship locally and nationally, and thirdly, setting the school librarian as an evidence-based professional practitioner working in an educational environment. This wider approach to the contextual situation is addressed in this study by consulting a variety of stakeholders in addition to those in posts of school librarian; by examining the situation in two different countries with very different models of librarian provision and education; and by taking the example of the high school librarian as an effective evidence-based decision-maker perhaps the findings can be applied more generally to librarians in the workplace.

New guidelines and standards provide useful structure to shaping the new role of the high school librarian, and this involves new ways of thinking and working. For example, the self-evaluation approach found in a recent suite of Scottish documents, both for general school use such as *How Good is our school 2* (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education 2003) and companion school library documents such as *How Good is our school: Libraries Supporting Learners* (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education 2005). Meaningful collaborative working between teachers and school librarians is an essential element of this change. This involves each party being aware of the potential contribution of the other, and working together to maximise a joint contribution. Freeth (2001) states that effective teamworking and interprofessional collaboration are required elements for a truly user-centred service, while Grover (1996) highlights the importance of the school culture in supporting collaboration, and that leadership teams must provide an example for others to follow.

Writing from other professions has also been consulted, as often lessons learned there are relevant to the teacher/librarian situation in a high school situation. For example, the work of McCartney, Ellis and Boyle (2006) in the field of speech and language therapy

provided interesting evidence of the mutual trust in collaborative work needed between therapists and teachers, and their definition of the “*good enough*” level of collaboration is a pragmatic acceptance of a minimum level of working, hopefully to be built on and improved. Reading literature from other professions provided a useful insight into how other professions have dealt with similar issues, and helped to form recommendations into the context of school libraries.

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Chapter 3 Methodology

The aim of this chapter is to present the methodology used in this study, as described by Huberman and Miles (2002) when they say “...*all researchers need to be concerned with describing their procedures.*” pxi. The main approach chosen to obtain information was to adopt a mixed methodology, because this allowed for complementarity; to obtain a wide coverage of data; and to allow for triangulation to check validity of the data. Using mixed methodology suited the nature of the research problem, by trying to grasp the indepth experience, factors and approaches taken by today’s high school librarians and stakeholders. Initially three countries were considered for the study (Scotland, USA and Finland), however after distributing the questionnaire survey, it was clear that there were problems concerning Finland. The first was a lack of respondents to the questionnaire survey, in spite of using personal contacts and a snowball sampling approach to make best use of contacts. The second problem was a language barrier, because investigating initial sources of information proved that information was not always available in English, causing difficulties in establishing background information for Finland’s educational and school library provision. At the early stage of questionnaire survey it was decided to eliminate Finland from the study.

Two countries remained (Scotland and the USA) and they provided very different models of professional high school librarian and library provision. It was interesting to compare these differences and identify and bring together best practice from both countries. An appropriate mix of quantitative and qualitative methods was chosen to answer the nature of the problem outlined in Chapter 1.

Strengths and weaknesses of each method were considered before implementation. Each method was chosen carefully to obtain required information. To ensure that data was valid, triangulation was implemented in two ways. The first approach was to use qualitative and quantitative methods: a variety of complementary data collection techniques such as background reading, interview, focus group, critical incident diary, vignette and questionnaire. The second approach was to use a variety of respondents, such as high school librarians, senior school managers and Directors of School Library Services. The range of respondents was important, because aims required feedback from different stakeholders and a depth of understanding of experience from librarians on the ground. Similar trends emerged from each source, indicating validity of findings. A

draft model of effective EB practice was produced, which was member-checked by respondents such as school librarians, Directors of School Library Services and school managers. This was then amended to create a final model.

Finch (1990) highlights the need for the researcher to validate analysis at all stages of the research, from planning, through data gathering, to presentation. As the researcher is part of the research because of the analysis role undertaken, Finch calls the researcher “an instrument of the analysis.” p130 and it is important for the researcher to be as objective and consistent as possible when requesting, coding and analysing data. As Patton (1990) comments:

“Action researchers are involved in the modest task of generating information that can be used for program improvements and decision making.” p211

Indeed the main purposes of this study include making a difference to librarians in high schools; helping them face new challenges; and providing a model to clarify how using EB methods can improve practice. The study is not intended to show information from a representative sample of high school librarians, but to provide a reflection of situations at the time for the respondents who participated, according to their own personal views, knowledge and work experiences, and from this provide a model of effective EB practice, which was intended to be broadly applicable for use by others. In order to provide a more rounded picture, corroboration was sought by using different methods and various sources. A researcher carrying out similar work with a similar audience range would be expected to gain similar results, however it is acknowledged that the level of personal opinion gained through the qualitative approach means that this study provides a snapshot of the situation at the time it was undertaken. The use of two countries is intended to help by providing a broader model than if just one country was involved. This is especially important as the two countries had such different approaches to professional school librarian provision.

Initially contact was made with national professional bodies (such as the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals and School Library Association in the UK and the American Association of School Librarians in the USA) to give contextual information, gather general data about each country (including national guidelines) and determine how they believed the use of evidence was undertaken in relation to the high school library. This proved to be useful to set the study into context, show differences

between provision in each country and to provide basic information about formal expectations of professional bodies regarding services provided by librarians in high schools. Bodies were also asked to identify authorities and Directors who might want to take part, as an early recruitment phase. An element of quantitative information started the study, to set the context and provide basic background data. It can also be used to compare and contrast situations while identifying themes of concern or note, to follow up in more detail by using qualitative methods later in the study. Qualitative methods were chosen to give a richer picture of practitioner concerns, priorities and problems on the ground, and to confirm or contradict hypotheses. By using multiple approaches and by seeking information from school librarians and stakeholders, the intention was to present a more rounded picture, and obtain corroborating evidence.

Reliability is an important strand to the research process, meaning that another researcher would produce the same results, or similar results would arise on different occasions. This can be difficult to establish particularly where qualitative approaches are involved, such as interviews. One researcher played a personal role in the design, collection and analysis of the data and to counter bias as much as possible, efforts were made to implement methods with the same care. For example in focus groups, the same structured questions were applied consistently, even when using different methods of focus groups – in person; by videoconference and by Instant Messaging. A log of progress was kept throughout the study, which kept track of actions and thoughts. This was useful to read at the end of each week, to keep an awareness of objectivity.

Methods were conducted as rigorously as possible to ensure reliability. In this chapter, each method used is outlined, related to the purpose of using the method, how it ties in with aims and objectives, piloting, specific sampling used, details of any specific permissions, design of data collection instruments, data analysis and validity.

One aspect of this study is the role of practitioner as researcher. This has benefits, in that the researcher had an indepth understanding of the work of high school librarians, and understood the problems faced by them, the possible isolated nature of the work of a sole practitioner and how the job had changed over the years and become more challenging. This understanding has helped when designing research methods, because topics covered reflect the full range of work undertaken, and this is complemented by the

updating from current practitioners on their thoughts and opinions. It was important to organise what lessons had been learned around the experience from practitioners rather than the opinions or beliefs of the researcher. The awareness of researcher role was vital, to express what others have said by letting issues emerge from the findings rather than impose the thoughts of the researcher.

Data helps to make the model relevant and current, reflecting reality. Previous contacts were also able to be used in this study as a result of contacts made as a practitioner. These contacts numbered more in Scotland than in the US, but still provided a useful source of potential participants and base to the snowball sampling approach. There was also an element of empathy between researcher and participants, as there was an understanding of the job, its challenges and constraints. There was a common language between researcher and participants, which helped to establish common ground and to reduce misunderstanding of concepts.

A more negative effect of the dual role of practitioner and researcher is that there could be seen to be a more sympathetic approach to the high school librarian. However this is countered by also having the experience of the overview role, where the wider perspective is acknowledged. It is further mitigated by following good practice in terms of keeping the research objective and balanced, which can be seen by including stakeholders other than the school librarian, sharing a wider remit and to take care to let issues emerge, by identifying evidence rather than being unduly influenced by the opinion of the researcher. Maintaining objectivity during data analysis is considered to be vital for practitioner researchers by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000). It was important for the researcher to maintain a check and to be aware of possible bias that could occur through her own beliefs. One of the ways of doing this was to maintain a log of progress throughout the study, which was always kept up to date and kept track of actions and thoughts.

There was value in being a researcher-practitioner, such as allowing the researcher to reflect on practice in a different way, but caution was also taken to limit negative possibilities. One positive aspect to this approach of researcher-practitioner outlined by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) is that negotiating research access in the direct workplace is unlikely to be a problem if research is being done in one's own workplace.

Another positive element is that there will be an existing knowledge of the organisation. However these factors can be countered by the problems of gaining access to similar workplaces and a possibility of bias arising by accepting present provision as the norm, for example by not asking what they call “*basic questions*” (p224) because the feeling would be that the answers were already known, or expected to be known through the researcher’s familiarity with the organisation, therefore assumptions may be made. Another problem that could arise was identified by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) is an issue of status, where it could cause a conflict to ask what might be considered inappropriate or difficult questions of more senior, and indeed, more junior colleagues. This could be easier when approaching people in another organisation, where the researcher would have more of an objective role. However, if the researcher has an awareness of potential problems, then any negative elements can be reduced.

Cohen and Manion (1985) note the need of the researcher to take on the role as observer but also to have an involvement with subjects studied. This was borne in mind when designing and implementing the research. Pollard (1985) describes the difficulties he faced as a participant researcher in an ethnographic study when he was a teacher, raising problems such as ethics when dealing with his colleagues, and difficulties of exhaustion and frustration. This was tempered by his enthusiasm with data collection and resulting fascination with the patterns that emerged, in addition to how he tried to:

“attempt to construct a deeper understanding of the events and social relationships in which I daily participated.” p232

What he says has relevance to qualitative work undertaken by a participant researcher, and the main principle is to maintain an awareness of possible problems and to ensure that any bias or ethical problems are reduced or eliminated. For example, Pollard (1985) uses the term “*going native*” (p219) to explain a concept where over-empathetic identification with participants and a lack of detachment can colour judgement to the extent that needs of the research fail to be met. He had an additional dilemma in early stages of his research when he played a semi-covert role with teaching staff colleagues, who thought he was only studying the pupils, when in fact he was also observing staff behaviour. This caused him to be uncomfortable with his relationships with colleagues, and raises questions about ethical concerns. However, later in his research, teaching staff colleagues were told that his research was to cover staff behaviour, and Pollard felt happier that covert research had ended. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) suggest

that covert research can be used by practitioner researchers to gain data from colleagues who may have a different status to the researcher, which could cause difficulties in gaining data. They say that trustworthy data will be determined by three factors: existing relationships with potential participants; management style of the workplace; and time and opportunity available to build up trust and confidence of potential participants.

3.1 Overview of methods used

An outline of methods used is given in Table 3.1 below:

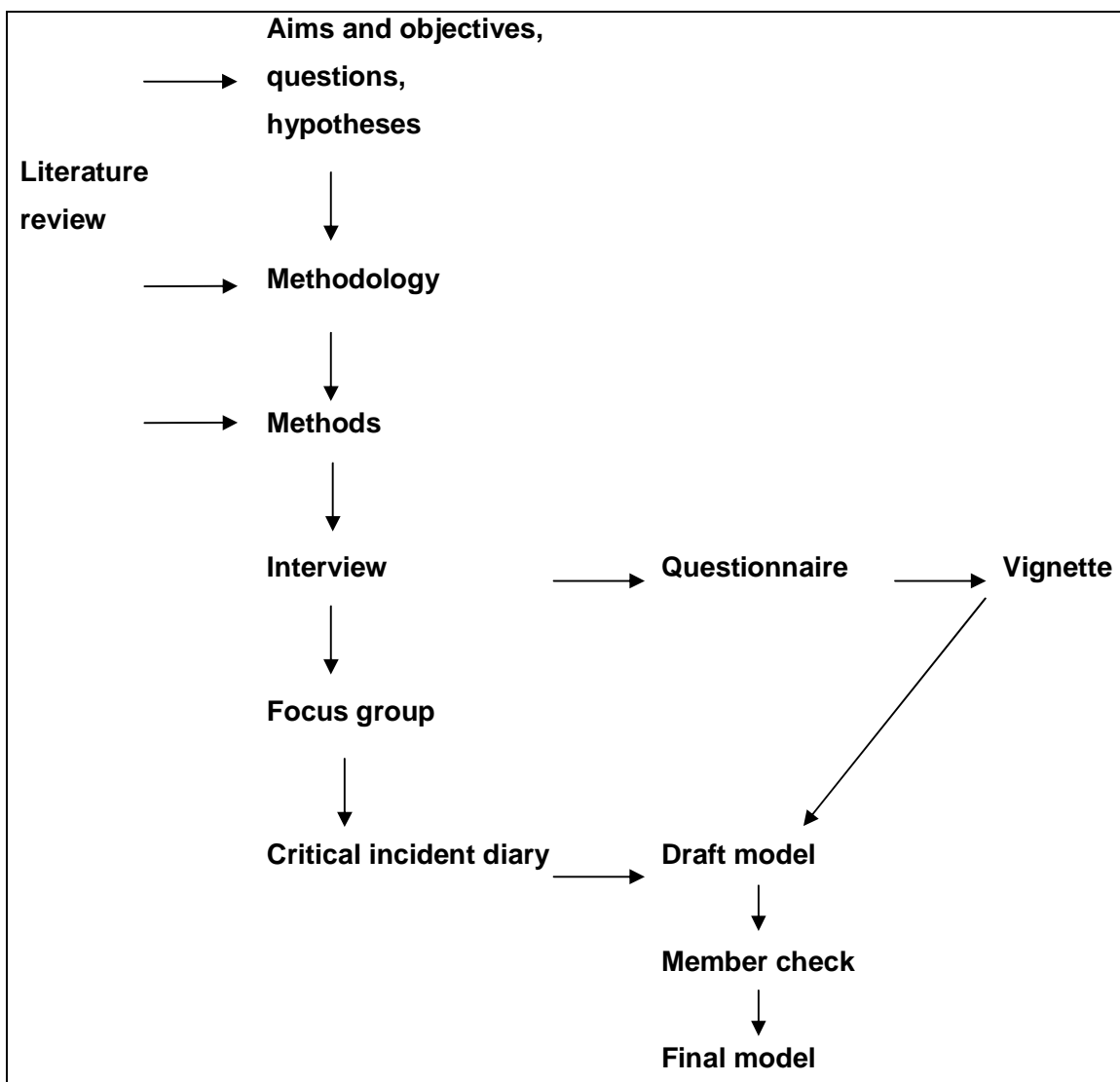


Table 3.1 Methods used

Table 3.1 shows the methods used in the study, and also the relationships between methods, which is a vital part. The literature review fed into three main elements: constructing basic research elements such as aims and objectives, research questions and hypotheses; finding out more about general methodology principles and the selection of methods (depending on the nature of data to be collected.) Once each method was implemented, data collected and analysed, findings from each fed into future methods selected. Each subsequent method acted to consolidate and complement previous methods. Finally all data fed into the draft model, and after a member checking phase, a final model was created. The table reflects the logic and sequence of working throughout the study, and the interrelationship between key elements.

3.2 Research design

3.2.1 Aims and objectives

Aims and objectives of the research were identified at the start of the study, after negotiation with the Principal Supervisor, in order to develop an indepth understanding of the work of the professional high school librarian in Scotland and the US. Aims and objectives can be found in Chapter 1, section 1.4, and the extent to which they were met is discussed in Chapter 10, sections 10.1 and 10.2.

3.2.2 Rationale for research approach

Once areas of interest had been established, it was important to consider what information was needed, and which methods of data collection would best collect this. As intended, data collection exercises used complementary approaches to give a rounded and in-depth picture of provision. The purpose of using mixed methods was to gather a range and depth of information to meet Aims 1 and 2, for example background data through quantitative tools, then through more qualitative methods (such as vignettes, interviews, focus groups and critical incident diaries) identify themes relevant to the study and explore participant views and experience. Out of the understanding gained and from emerging themes gathered from data collection, a draft model was created, outlining good practice in the use of evidence in decision-making by high school librarians in both countries, which would meet Aim 2. This draft model was then member-checked by various practitioners and managers with an interest in the field to provide further validity, and revised to form a final model, which also met Aim 2. It was

anticipated that this model could help practitioners and managers to move forward in terms of planning and implementing an improving quality service.

Freund (1968) describes how Max Weber evolved his sociological notion of the “*ideal type*” p60 in research, “*the sum total of concepts which the specialist in the human sciences constructs purely for purposes of research*” p60. Thus Weber considers that no system could reproduce all reality, and no concept can fully demonstrate the diversity of phenomena. Therefore we have the ideal type, which is the result of selection from data by the researcher, and which has characteristics of the data. The choice of word “*ideal*” may be misleading, but to clarify, it does not represent an exemplary model, but a pure model which does not exist in reality. While not looking for an ideal type in this study, the plan was to gather depth of detail of real practitioner experience drawn together across a range of experience and after analysis and comparison, report on actual practice at the time and identify ways of progression and improvement by creating a model developed from good practice, not a theoretical model. This model provided a range of factors with regard to creating the environment for an effective evidence-based school librarian, however it was not expected that any one person or situation could meet all those elements as it was a pure model rather than an exemplary one, and it was not representative. However once these elements had been identified, it was intended that raising awareness of them could help librarians and their managers strive to include as many as possible into their professional practice.

As already stated, it was considered that there was great value in obtaining complementary information from both quantitative and qualitative methods. They offer different perspectives to research – quantitative methods could be said to be outside looking in, an objective reality, while qualitative methods could be said to be inside looking out, giving indepth personal experience. Cohen and Manion (1985) describe this difference. They say that quantitative methods are objectivist (or positivist), in that they view:

“The social world like the natural world – as if it were a hard, external and objective reality... The methodological issues of importance are thus the concepts themselves, their measurement and the identification of underlying themes.” p8.

They define qualitative methods as being subjectivist (or anti-positivist) in that they view the world as:

“Being of a much softer, personal and man-created kind.... The principal concern is with an understanding of the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world.” pp8-9

This clarification outlines the differences between quantitative and qualitative methods: quantitative methods establish basic background details, which helps with comparison between situations and allows various statistical calculations, such as the library expenditure per student and the number of study places as a percentage of the school roll. However there is also real value in qualitative methods, as these give much more understanding, insight and depth into actual practice and experiences, which was the ultimate aim of the study. The interpretation of the qualitative data helped by giving a real understanding of phenomena and experience expressed by respondents. These two different approaches to data collection are outlined below, and in more detail for each method later in this chapter.

3.2.3 Quantitative data collection

This was useful for broad and generalised findings, in that it could be used to compare standardised responses and to fit the experience of people into predetermined response categories. This meant that large amounts of information could be easily coded, compared and analysed, and a picture be quickly built up. As the purpose of this initial data collection was to collect basic factual data and then identify themes to study more qualitatively and in more depth, questionnaire survey was chosen as an initial method, consisting of questions requiring certain quantitative answers and also more open-ended questions allowing respondents to identify themes of interest to them and to give more detail. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) advise that response rates, validity and reliability can be maximised by:

- *“careful design of individual questions*
- *clear layout of the questionnaire form*
- *lucid explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire*
- *and pilot testing” p279*

These recommendations were followed in this study. The questionnaire survey was designed in order to gain the most relevant information for the study, the layout was arranged thematically in order to be helpful and logical, and pre-pilot testing and pilot testing took place to make sure any ambiguity or confusion was reduced. The questionnaire survey was self-administered and sent and returned either by post or email, depending on the preference of the respondent. At the time of the distribution of

the questionnaire in 2002, some respondents did not have email access. A full explanation was given of the purpose of the data collection to potential respondents, and the final outcome of the model of good practice was mentioned, and that they would have an opportunity to see this, which was intended to be an incentive.

More details on the method of questionnaire survey are described in section 3.6 of this chapter, its findings can be seen in Chapter 4, and themed issues arising from qualitative methods are explored in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. Early data collection identified certain themes which would be explored in more depth at a later stage, and pointed to the importance of more qualitative factors to this study, such as skills and qualities of school librarians. Data was analysed manually, with coding and categorisation used for pure quantitative data. Basic frequency tables of questionnaire responses were generated, and these are included in Chapter 4. These are useful because they set the scene, quantify the facilities on offer in surveyed schools, and comparisons can easily be made.

3.2.4 Qualitative data collection

More qualitative methods were useful when studying selected issues in depth and detail, giving a wealth of insight into cases studied, although it was acknowledged that they would reduce generalisability. Attention to detail and organisation of applying the methods were vital parts of the process, as Patton (1990) says:

“In qualitative inquiry the researcher is the instrument. Validity in qualitative methods, therefore, hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing fieldwork.” p14

Bearing this in mind, every effort was made to reduce bias by the researcher, for example questions were consistently applied by using a standard schedule, and outlines of these can be seen in Appendices. Although qualitative data was more difficult and time-consuming to analyse than quantitative data, its value-added feature was in the range of practice and perception from respondents which enriched and deepened the study because of the very individual nature of responses.

As so much of this study focused on the opinion, practice, experience and perception of respondents, such qualitative data formed an important part of the research. In this study, qualitative data came from vignettes, focus groups, critical incident diaries,

interviews and brief follow-up questionnaires. Discussion of individual qualitative methods used can be found in section 3.7 of this chapter. Results from this qualitative data formed the main data collection, which can be seen in more detail by theme in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Various methods of obtaining qualitative information were considered, and Patton's (1990) identification of three main methods of obtaining qualitative data was found to be useful:

- in-depth, open ended interviews could be used to discover things we cannot directly observe and they consisted of direct quotations from respondents on their feelings, thoughts, attitudes and perceptions
- direct observation was used to describe details of activities and practice undertaken by respondents
- written documents such as questionnaires, reports and official documentation were a useful source of excerpts

For practical reasons, the second option was considered to be difficult to undertake comprehensively in each country, but the other two options were used to gather data. To add breadth and depth to the study, additional qualitative data was collected from interviews and focus groups (either by videoconference, Instant Messaging or personal visit) and, where possible, observation. Written documentation included a critical incident diary.

Yin (2003) identifies five important qualities of a researcher: ask good questions; be a good listener; be adaptive and flexible; have a firm grasp of issues and to be unbiased by preconceived notions. Three main sources of evidence are used in case examples – documentation, interviews and direct observation. Although this research did not use case studies, there are still useful aspects from Yin's research to this study: the strengths and weaknesses of each method were considered – for example documentation has the strength of being stable yet the weakness of reporting bias; interviews have the strength of being insightful, but the weakness of reflexivity from participants; direct observations have strengths of being in real-time and contextual, but have weaknesses of being time-consuming and selective.

3.2.4.1 Case example

As qualitative data was such an integral part of this study, case example was chosen as a complementary way of analysing and presenting data brought together from other qualitative methods such as interviews, vignettes and focus groups; draw out patterns in a layer of analysis; and provide a novel way of showing what the data revealed. More detail of other analysis used in this study is outlined when discussing the use of individual methods. To clarify, case example is a new term coined for this study, and unlike a case study, is not in itself a method. It was used as an interim stage of data analysis in the first phases of data collection (questionnaire surveys and vignettes) as a way of understanding issues and to form later data collection methods. By analysing and presenting data in the way it does, it aims to give an understanding of complexity and difference, illustrate a variety of practice and show how skills and qualities are important factors. A range of case examples can be seen in Chapter 5. These provide a stepping stone to creating the model, by looking at the wide range of experience and situations, and summarising what was presented. Case example is not defined as an in-depth case study, although borrowing from that method, but a very simple way of illustrating the variety and range of experience discovered during the study. Theories from case studies were adapted to provide an analytical approach to this concept of case example. Dey (1993) states that in:

“Qualitative analysis there is a strong emphasis on describing the world as it is perceived by different observers.” p36

This mood of perception by individuals and showing the range of experience are elements illustrated by case example in this study. Creswell (1998) describes it well when he talks of capturing *“The ‘essence’ of the experience.”* p150 when describing the purpose of data recording. Creswell (2003) describes an *“Understanding of ‘lived experiences’.”* p15, which summarises and reflects the nature of this study. He also identifies the need for a long term approach, involving developing meaningful relationships with participants, which was borne out in this study by personalising approaches and contacts with respondents, as described in section 3.9. Using multiple methods also provides a triangulation of results and helps to reduce bias from only using one method, and Creswell (2003) considers that more pragmatic assumptions of knowledge are made when using both quantitative and qualitative methods. These were important factors to take into account when choosing case example as a way of analysing this research.

Stake (1995) describes how in a case study a researcher:

“Explores in depth a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals. The case(s) are bound by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time.” p15

Although this specifically describes a case study design and not the approach to data analysis of case example as used in this study, it is considered that there is a similarity in the illustration of range and depth of experience provided by using case example as an interim stage of analysis.

Eisenhardt (2002) describes the process of building theory from case study research as being a *“strikingly iterative”* one p28, and this iterative approach to the analysis of qualitative data has been a factor of this study. She also states that theory building from cases can generate novel theory, and contradictory or paradoxical evidence can give creative insight, and this has relevance in this study for the creation of the model. However Eisenhardt warns against making theory too complex because the rich amount of data could mean that there is a temptation to build a theory to include everything. As Yin (2003) states, a case study: *“Allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events.”* p2, which case example is meant to outline in the way it analyses data. He outlines four elements of a good case study design – construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability, which have some relevance to case example. Construct validity involves using multiple sources of evidence, establishing chains of evidence and having key informants reviewing a draft case study report. Internal validity is used at the data analysis stage, where patterns are matched, explanations are built, rival explanations are addressed and logic models are used. External validity uses theory in single case studies and replication logic in multiple case studies. Reliability demonstrates how the study may be repeated with the same results. Although this literature describes a case study design theory, these were considered to be valid principles applied to case example as a way of analysing and presenting data, as used in this study.

Dey (1993) states that in analysing qualitative data, researchers:

“Need to be more systematic in considering the fit between our ideas and our data” p256.

This could be done by comparing criteria in categorising and linking with the data and discussing negative and borderline cases as well as typical examples. By carefully cross-referencing observations from a range of sources and considering the quality of sources, confidence in the validity of our account can be improved. This was emphasised by East (1990) who states that: *“Good research is founded on reliable data”* p9, and this was a major consideration in the present study.

One common criticism of using case studies is that it is difficult to generalise from one scenario to another, and this can also be true of case example. Yin recommends generalising results to theory as this would provide the way to examine other cases. Although reports were written up individually, the benefit of a number of case examples is that an overview report could identify elements to apply to theory. Yin recommends the multiple case study approach as common conclusions arising from more than one case result in a degree of generalisability, which is undoubtedly stronger than for one single case study. The case examples discussed in Chapter 5 are summarised and conclusions are drawn which feed into the final model. This model was never intended to be representative or an exemplary model, but to present a range of factors in a pure model.

3.3 Sampling

The two countries selected were chosen because they provided very different approaches to professional staffing in high school libraries. By examining these two different models there would be an element of contrast in the study. This approach could show findings that were similar, or they could provide very different results, which would add depth and richness to the findings. A wider base of experience will give the model a wider relevance. Such results would affect the design of the final model of effective evidence-based practice and give it a wider perspective. The contrasting approach from two ends of the spectrum was intended to ensure a broad range of experience and to reduce bias that could be introduced if only examining one particular approach. The two countries chosen were selected because the researcher had contacts there, and this would reflect the convenience method of the snowball sampling process used when contacting individuals later in the study. However, findings from these two countries cannot just be taken in isolation, as they both contain elements that reflect practice and provision in other countries, and findings from this study can equally be applied to similar

practice and provision in other countries. Thus the final model should have a wider potential application arising from the research design.

In Scotland the model is of a qualified, graduate, generically-trained librarian, while in the USA the model is of a trained teacher who works as a school librarian and trains via an experiential school library-focused course, generally while in post. By examining the data from two such differing approaches it would be possible to compare and contrast the situations between countries and thus provide a broader picture of experience which could then provide a wider range of examples of good practice. Collecting data from all high school librarians would be termed a census, and would not be practicable in terms of this study, but, as noted by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000), this study was designed:

“To reduce the amount of data you need to collect by considering only data from a sub-group rather than all possible cases or elements.” p150

The respondents chosen were not intended to act as a representative sample of high school librarians, but to provide a snapshot of the situation at the time of data collection from those individuals, and an indepth examination of their practice and experiences. This concept deals with what Patton (1990) calls:

“Information-rich cases... one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research....[which] will illuminate the questions under study.” p169

It was intended that this detailed examination would provide the wealth of data required which would provide real insight into situations, skills, qualities, problems and strategies of the effective evidence-based practitioner.

3.3.1 Snowball sampling

As discussed by Routio (2007), sampling is a practical way of limiting the cases studied. For the purpose of this study, snowball sampling was selected to gather data. This is a non-probability method. It consists of making initial contact with a small group relevant to the project who meet the study criteria and asking these people first of all to take part, and secondly to establish contacts with others in the same field who they considered might be likely to be interested in responding. As outlined in a document produced by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (2007) snowball sampling is a way to select participants for their:

“Particular knowledge, skills or characteristics that are needed as part of a committee and/or consultative process.”

According to the Department of Sustainability and Environment (2007), snowball sampling is a way of determining stakeholders, increases the numbers of participants in process and builds on resources of existing networks. It also emphasises the importance of the choice of initial contacts.

Snowball sampling is a method of purposive sampling, and does not provide a random approach. Cohen and Manion (1994) define the purposive sampling approach as when:

“Researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgement of their typicality. In this way, they build up a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs.”

Cohen and Manion (1994) identify snowball sampling as when:

“Researchers identify a small number of individuals who have the characteristics that they require. These people are then used as informants to identify others who qualify for inclusion and these, in turn, identify yet others – hence the term snowball sampling.” p89

Bryman (2001) notes that snowball sampling is normally used in a qualitative research strategy rather than a quantitative approach, and that it very unlikely to be representative of the population (p99).

For this study, members of the initial small group were identified at an early stage by communicating with national professional bodies and academics asking for relevant authority contacts, then following up contacts within that authority. Although it is a form of convenience sampling and not a random method, it was decided that with such a specialist study, while potential respondents could be identified by lists or memberships of appropriate bodies, it would be more valuable and productive to identify interested potential respondents, so that a relationship could be built up with them over a sustained period and increase the rate of response. This produces what might be called a layering effect, in that initial contacts are built up as time goes on.

It was understood that the method would not be representative of the population, and there could be an element of bias as there could be a more positive slant on the subject as it would involve people responsive to or interested in examining the subject. However,

in summary, it was suited to the qualitative nature of the research, as noted by Bryman (2001):

“There is a much better ‘fit’ between snowball sampling and the theoretical sampling strategy of qualitative research than with the statistical sampling approach of quantitative research.” p99

Another viewpoint is that from StatPac (2001):

“Convenience sampling is used in exploratory research where the researcher is interested in getting an inexpensive approximation of the truth.”

This method of convenience sampling was considered useful to obtain results from a group of experienced practitioners, and where a key aim was to draw on rich experience rather than to attempt a representative sample, and not to depend upon the rationale of probability theory. It was chosen to attract those who had an interest in the topic, it was anticipated that they would be more likely to respond to initial data gathering and also commit to responding over a period of time, by different methods. Snowball sampling was also useful as it proved difficult to obtain commitment from enough potential contacts to participate as the research progressed, and personal contact and networking seemed to be efficient ways to encourage participation, while bearing in mind the potential situation of bias.

3.4 Contacts and permissions

3.4.1 Approaches to Education Directors

An initial starting point in November 2001 was to ask national bodies and academics to identify authorities or individual managers likely to show an interest in such a study. A permissions phase was started from December 2001 when letters requesting authorisation to approach staff about this study were issued to Education Directors or similar postholders in six authorities in Scotland, and six Districts in two States in America. These two States were chosen as they had similar population sizes to Scotland, discussed more fully in 3.6.1. Individual contact details were confirmed either from reference resources or from webpages issued by the appropriate body. This was a useful step, as some details given by national bodies were out of date.

A telephone call made in advance ensured that the present incumbent was named correctly in the letter, and that there had been no change of personnel, which had happened in one case. In this instance the new contact was approached. The written

request included details of the study and its aims, with an assurance that confidentiality would be maintained and that a summary of results would be sent to each participant, including the final model. Most authorities agreed unconditionally.

However, two authorities in Scotland and one in America requested fuller details to be completed on a standard permissions proforma, with one of the Scottish authorities requesting copies of all papers to be sent to staff and a copy of the research on completion. Some library staff did not work under Education Directors, so that there was some time delay in establishing who was able to sanction the request. In America, approaches were made to Education or Library Directors, through Boards of Education and Superintendents. Ethics were important when collecting data, as participants had to be reassured that data would not be used in any other way other than what was outlined, and that their anonymity would be protected. Ethics are explained more fully in section 3.9. As Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) state:

“Once promises about confidentiality and anonymity have been given, it is of great importance to make sure that these are maintained.” p137

This was a main principle of the study, because it provided an assurance to respondents and was intended to encourage frankness. Patton (1990) comments that the *“researcher’s search for truth”* p211 was always at the forefront of a study.

This ties in very well with Aim 2, to produce a model based on respondents’ experience and opinions, and it was considered that genuine confidentiality assurances were more likely to reassure participants and make them more open in their responses.

3.4.2 Approaches to Directors of School Library Services

Once permission was granted, a recruitment phase was started from April 2002. Approaches were made to Directors of School Library Services for two purposes: to ask for their co-operation and to encourage them and their staff to take part in the study.

The initial approach was made by email to the Directors in each authority explaining about the study and its aims, and asking for their co-operation and suggestions for librarian contacts in their area. If they agreed to take part, a more formal accompanying letter was sent with the initial data collection tools to the Directors and one to the school librarians. This explained the aims of the study and the reasoning behind it. This also

explained what would come out of the study and that they would receive a summary of results and access to the final model. As recommended by Simmons (2001), confidentiality was assured to encourage frankness, and respondents promised that no detailed information would be accessible to others. In addition, it was emphasised that their contributions were valuable and essential because of the nature of the survey, in order to encourage potential respondents to participate in the study.

3.4.3 Accompanying letters

As outlined in the previous section, letters were designed to give potential respondents an outline of the study, encourage their participation, describe what they would be expected to do and how results would be given to them. A standard offer to clarify any detail was given.

The letter in Appendix A was sent to Education Directors, that in Appendix B to Directors of School Library Services, and that in Appendix C to high school librarians. The same format was used for all, with changes indicating the audience. For example, the high school librarian letter was phrased in a more personal way, talking of “your responses” and stating that their contribution was valued. This was done to encourage response. An added incentive was for them to take part in forming a model of good practice, which would be sent to them at the end of the study. As can be seen from the letters, the aims were not the same as final ones. The important issue of identifying skills and qualities of an effective practitioner was a concept that emerged during qualitative data collection, and was added to aims to reflect the change in emphasis of the study as time progressed. Table 3.2 presents a grid of response stages, noting dates of letters sent, reminders sent and responses received. The grid for librarians’ responses is represented below, and similar ones were created for other cohorts participating in the study:

Table 3.2 Grid collating response to permission letters

Name	Authority	Letter sent	Reminder	Agreement received
John Smith	X-shire Scotland	3.4.02		11.4.02
May Brown	X-inois, US	3.4.02	3.5.02	14.5.02

This was a simple way to manage the data, to see at a glance various stages of response, and to eliminate making mistakes, for example reminding people for a return when one had been already received. Such a mistake might be seen as demonstrating that the study was not being managed well, and also could damage the personal approach to the research, in that the response people had spent time on was not valued enough to be recorded accurately.

3.5 Literature review

Creswell (2003) identifies some main reasons for completing a literature review – it allows the researcher to share in other authors' ideas; it provides a framework for the importance of the study and a benchmark for comparing with other studies. A literature search was started in 2001 to provide background to the topic and to establish areas to address when designing the questionnaire and collecting data. This continued throughout the period of the study. More details of the literature review and its findings can be found in Chapter 2.

Initially, searches were made of local library catalogues at Aberdeen University, Robert Gordon University and Aberdeen City Council Curriculum Resources and Information Service. National online catalogues and databases, search engines on the Internet, abstracting and indexing services were consulted, with references in monographs, journals, electronic books and journals examined. After an intensive initial search, regular reviews of literature were undertaken to identify new journal issues, titles and sources, to continue for the duration of the study. Although main initial search areas were decision-making and school librarianship, the search broadened into related topics of relevance, such as organisations; teamworking; interprofessional working; general management techniques and education and political systems of Scotland and United States.

As time progressed, more electronic sources became available and fewer hard copies were to be found. Sometimes there were technical problems in accessing electronic sources, and follow-up telephone calls to university library or IT staff were needed to resolve these problems, which sometimes meant there was an element of disjointed or delayed access. It was useful to manage, record and follow up such transactions in an organised way, otherwise these links may not have been progressed, so ongoing notes

were made, and could be referred to, for example the name of the technician who had solved a problem and the date contact was made would be useful if a similar problem occurred again. Using electronic sources meant that there was generally more access to journals that may not have been physically available in local libraries in the past. Sometimes access was through a website directly to only an abstract or to the whole article rather than the journal issue in its entirety. Abstract access could delay the process, as a separate order with payment sometimes had to be made to pay in order to see the whole article. Whole article access was of benefit to gain immediate access to the article of relevance, but an element of serendipity was lost, as sometimes browsing through a journal issue can result in other interesting leads, for example sometimes journals have an issue devoted to articles on a related theme, or an interesting editorial.

Electronic books were included in the review of literature, and these presented other challenges, for example they could be accessed for only four hours at a time through the university licence, so forward planning was needed to allow uninterrupted access to them. The review was also useful in identifying prominent authors and researchers in the field. Many of these people were approached about their current research in order to identify forthcoming publications, to establish contact and to exchange information about research progress.

Creswell (2003) recommends several steps to constructing a literature review, starting with identifying keywords; searching catalogues; obtaining fifty key references; designing a literature map identifying where research sits in the larger body of knowledge; drafting summaries and writing up conclusions. Bearing these in mind, it was important to be organised and keep records of what had been searched and to keep an accurate note of references consulted, for recording purposes and for future retrieval. On one occasion early in the study, notes recording what had been searched in the abstract literature were lost, and the search had to be repeated, in order to ensure that full coverage was carried out, which wasted time. After that, accurate notes were taken and carefully kept.

For management topics, search terms included decision-making, interprofessional working, teamworking, collaboration and evidence-based working. For librarianship topics, search terms included school libraries and school librarianship in general and in the two countries. Keywords varied between search engines and abstracts, so a list of

keywords and synonyms was created (see section 3.5.2). As different or new terms arose, retrospective searching was systematically carried out on all previously searched sources. This was important to ensure that searching was organised and consistent.

Useful links and alternative keywords in relevant articles were followed up. Initially, information such as keywords of the main content of texts, websites and bibliographic details was recorded on cards, which provided flexibility of arrangement and ease of reference. As the literature sources grew in number, notes from original information were organised into subdivided subject folders. Some topics needed to be recorded in more than one folder, for example an article on US and Scottish practice (or a reference to it) would be in two different country folders. By carefully recording data in this way, any piece of information could easily be found for follow-up and checking, and the source of any resource was identified.

Particular care had to be taken with regard to authors who have written several texts with similar titles, and also to ensure that editions were noted correctly, as changes occurred between editions, particularly in references quoted. Managing the information was an important task, with notes written up systematically and incorporated into the literature review regularly. This became more important as the study progressed, because three different local libraries were used, in addition to Internet sources and inter-library books and articles, and the amount of information from a variety of sources kept growing. The use of computer indexing systems was investigated in the third and fourth year of study, and initial training took place, but when comparing the two, the manual system was selected because it was simple, worked well, there was full control over what was done, it had already been established in this study and it was familiar.

Ongoing literature searches were undertaken every three months to ensure that new sources of information could be identified, read and notes created. This was managed by entering target dates in a diary every three months to update the literature review. Current awareness bulletins such as the weekly IASL Information Service Bulletin from the Planning Exchange covering education, management and local government were checked regularly. Key authors were identified in each area, such as Lindblom (policy making); and Allison and Weiss (decision-making). Following up references in original sources gave access to more material. It was useful to look at various editions of

writings, as thoughts and terminology could change and develop as time progressed, and these were interesting to observe and note. For example, Creswell talks in 1998 of the “*essence of the experience*” p150, which develops in his 2003 book to “*lived experiences*” p15. This demonstrates a development of research, argument and thought by authors. Email-based discussion lists such as LM_NET and IASL-LINK were joined so that discussions could be accessed regularly and contributions made. Additionally, this was useful to identify individuals to be approached for the survey, particularly in the USA where there were fewer personal contacts at the start of the study. It was important to remember that the key study involved perceptions and practice of school librarians, because sometimes following up tangents led to areas which were not strictly relevant. To keep the study focused and information manageable, the outline of the study was followed with regular reference to aims at the start of sessions.

The use of the Internet identified key players who could be reached by email, such as Directors of School Library Services in two States in America, which proved useful when establishing contact and to progress with the concept of snowball sampling. However, the widespread use of email was not so well established in 2001/2002 when permissions were first sought, and sometimes people were approached by letter, which inevitably delayed events.

Initial literature searching did not find a great deal of information about decision-making in relation to school librarianship, in either of the countries. This was seen as encouraging, because it meant that the qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the respondents would represent a significant contribution to knowledge.

3.5.1 Information sources consulted

Catalogues

- Aberdeen University
- Robert Gordon University
- Curriculum Resources and Information Service Aberdeen City Council
- National Library of Scotland
- British Library
- Library of Congress

Databases

- BEI (British Education Index)
- ERIC
- ISI Web of Science
- LISA (Library and Information Studies Abstracts)
- SSCI (Social Science Citation Index)

Journals

- American Libraries
- International Journal of Public Sector Management
- Library Association Record (British) (changed to CILIP Update April 2002)
- Local Government Studies (British)
- Managing Service Quality (British)
- Public Administration
- Public Administration Review (British)
- School Librarian (British)
- School Libraries In View (British)
- School Library Journal (American)
- Scottish Libraries (now Information Scotland)
- Times Education Supplement (British)

Email discussion lists

- IASL-LINK (International Association of School Librarianship)
- LM_NET (American School Library Association)

Internet resources

- American Library Association
- American Association of School Librarians
- Departments of Education in various States
- International Association of School Librarianship
- Library Association (British) (changed name to CILIP April 2002)
- School Library Media Research (American)

Other sources

- Book Trust
- COSLA (Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities)
- EIS (Educational Institute of Scotland)
- Planning Exchange (British)
- School Libraries Group (British)
- Scottish Executive (from 2007 Scottish Government)
- Scottish Library Association (changed name to CILIPS April 2002)

3.5.2 Keywords and themes

The terms used consistently are noted below. Various combinations were used depending on the source to be searched. Different terminology was in use in different countries, for example secondary schools in Scotland; and high schools in the USA. Terms used are outlined in Table 3.3 below:

Table 3.3 Terminology used in searching

Management	Librarianship	Education	Political systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making • Management • Local authorities • Local government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School librarianship • School librarians • Library media specialists • School libraries • Library media centers/centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scotland • United States of America • Secondary schools • High schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scotland • United States of America

3.6 Quantitative methods - questionnaire survey

Questionnaire survey was used to gather basic background data from individual librarians in high schools (two different versions were used, and the Piloting section at 3.6.1 gives an explanation of why these were created) and also Directors of School Library Services. These questionnaire surveys were also in two different formats, one for librarians and one for Directors, in order to gain different information. There is an

explanation in section 3.6.2 about why a second version was made for Directors of School Library Services.

Although questionnaire surveys gathered quantitative information, which was needed to establish factual elements, they also included qualitative data, which was collected in order to identify themes of interest. The intention was that these would be followed up in later wholly qualitative collection tools.

3.6.1 High school librarian's questionnaire survey

Purpose

The questionnaire survey (Appendix M for US and Appendix N for Scotland) was introduced early in the research in order to note basic statistical data, identify common themes and areas of concern from school library practitioners. It was chosen as an effective way of gathering together background data which would then be simple to code and compare. As there were areas for additional comments from participants, it was envisaged that themes would emerge which could then be useful to investigate in more detail by following up with more qualitative methods.

Aims and objectives

Results from the questionnaire survey to high school librarians in both countries contributed towards Aim 1, and Objectives a,b,c, and d.

Aim

- 1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioner in the high school library environment

Objectives

- a) To establish how decisions concerning high school libraries are made and to identify the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based high school librarian
- b) To discover who is involved in the decision-making process in high school libraries
- c) To compare differences between countries about decision-making
- d) To establish if formal decision-making processes are used

This method was an initial data gathering exercise, where decision-making practice was examined, finding out who was involved and what processes were used. Findings would be explored in more detail through qualitative methods.

Specific sampling

In the USA, there was such a variation in terms of population size that it was decided to select States of approximately the same size as Scotland for the survey in order to have some commonality. Six Scottish authorities and six Districts in two States were selected on the basis that the two States had a similar population size to Scotland. This was considered to be a useful factor for comparison in terms of services likely to be offered by each country (or State). As already outlined, snowball sampling was used once initial contacts were made, and this was a useful and effective way to expand the participant population, particularly as many personal contacts had been used in the pilot phase.

Specific approaches/permissions

As described in 3.4.1, contact was made with education departments in six Scottish authorities and Districts in two US States for permission to approach their Directors of School Library Services about distributing questionnaire surveys with school librarians. The aim was to gather responses from 30 librarians from each country. The positive anticipated results of the study were communicated to them, that participants would be contributing to a wider professional study to enhance their own professional development, and they would be given access to a model of good practice based on findings. Confidentiality assurances were made that no authority or individual would be identified. Directors were asked to help by identifying potential respondents and giving details of school librarians in their authorities who might be interested in participating.

From the Scottish authorities contacted, all agreed to participate and approaches were then made to Education Directors for permission to proceed. Directors of School Library Services were then approached for assistance. They were asked to help with names and contact details of high school librarians in their authorities. All six Directors replied, showing an interest and also agreed that their librarians in schools could take part. Two Directors asked for one librarian in each authority not to be contacted because of personal issues at the time, and this was respected. One of these librarians had later heard that the survey was underway with colleagues, and contacted the researcher to

ask if she could take part, and although she was then given the questionnaire survey, she did not respond. Assuming that not all would respond, every contact was followed up. Approaches being made to 39 librarians in Scotland, and 27 responded. This was considered to be a fair response rate considering that there were no personal links with any individual school librarian at that time.

In one US State the Education Director passed on the request to participate directly to all high school librarians in the State. In the second State the request was passed onto the State school librarians' network group at the suggestion of the Education Director. In the US, 47 potential respondents were approached, and 19 of those agreed to participate from the two States. This was not such a good response rate as with Scottish participants, and this could be due to lack of personal contacts with individuals, who were approached by someone they didn't know from outwith their country, whereas with the Scottish situation most Directors of School Library Services already knew the researcher. When it proved difficult to get enough respondents to commit to participate, a wider request was distributed via the international web-based school librarian online network LM_NET, and three more participants from those States came from that group, including two had originally been approached via the State contacts already described but had not responded, and one who was not on the State list of school librarians. This person was not a new member of staff, and had been in post for three years, so it seemed that State records were out of date.

Similar follow-up procedures were used for US respondents as already detailed for Scottish respondents. Some school librarian job titles in America especially were confusing, ranging from Director of Library Services to Library Technology Supervisor to Media Specialist, so it was sometimes difficult to differentiate between titles and schools. For example, three American elementary school librarians were identified by mistake and agreed to take part. They were thanked for their interest and asked for a high school contact, as this was a study of high school libraries. It was decided to correspond with each potential respondent on a personal and individual basis, rather than by grouping together addresses, bearing in mind Creswell's (2003) comment about developing meaningful relationships. The decision to work on this basis involved much more time, but the reason for doing this was to encourage response by creating more of a personal relationship with each respondent – a grouping of email addresses would seem more

impersonal, whereas a personal approach was hoped to provide more opportunity for a response and lead to a longer term commitment in contributing to the research.

This personal relationship was demonstrated when people shared personal information – for example two US respondents said that they had Scottish roots or were interested in working in Scotland. Each piece of personal information was followed up in some way – for the former example a discussion ensued on genealogy and a link was given about the relevant clan and the place origin related to the family name, in the latter case a link was given on where to find library work in Scotland. These discussions continued for some months. In addition, whenever responses were received, in the acknowledgement reply elements of note from their responses were commented on in a positive way. Sometimes if there was a query to follow up from their information, they were asked for more details so that the query could be answered. The purpose of this personal touch was to make respondents feel that their responses were being read and valued. From a more long term viewpoint, it was considered easier to organise interviews or further qualitative methods when a relationship and mutual link had been established. Bryman (2001) warns that:

“The researcher may develop an affection or sympathy, which was not necessarily present at the outset of an investigation, for the people being studied.” p22

One way this was dealt with was to keep personal discussion with respondents separate from discussion about the study. In the examples given above, any discussion on the topics of interest was answered in a separate email message. In addition, there was an awareness of the need to be objective, maintain a distance and have a non-biased viewpoint, even when respondents talked of individual difficulties and problems.

Where there were some existing personal contacts with Directors of School Library Services, for example in Scotland, there was a higher response rate from Directors who provided contact details of their librarian staff, as might be expected. American Directors tended to respond fairly well and made recommendations about potential respondents. A Director in one State District provided a list of other Directors (media supervisors) and high school librarians, while the study was raised at a meeting of the State association of school librarians and many of them made contact, showing willingness to participate. Some high school librarians in both countries played a dual role in supervising other

school librarians on an area basis. It was decided that they should only complete the Director documentation, because they had an overview role.

The start was slow, and although the snowball element did increase contact identification and response, often giving the same names, it was towards the end of May 2002 before all contacts were approached. Unfortunately, the school session ended at that time in America for a period of three months, so it was important to follow up every contact immediately and there was little opportunity for reminders until September, when they returned to school. The whole process of gaining permission and identifying potential respondents took a great deal longer than anticipated, and in retrospect it would be vital to build in firm dates for each stage, working back from immovable deadlines, such as the early summer holidays in the USA. In particular, the follow up period could have been reduced, as this wasted time before moving onto the next stage. If someone was not going to respond to one reminder it was unlikely that they were going to respond to a second, a third or a fourth, and the time between reminders tended to be approximately one month, which could have been reduced to a week or two.

Directors in America and Scotland provided lists of school librarians, which proved useful as a checklist and to approach people who had not been previously identified. Some information was out of date and email addresses were incorrect, however, a response to the originator provided some corrections, and other information was found either by searching the web or by correcting obvious mistyping errors from the original lists such as missing letters from a name. Two Scottish authorities could not supply email addresses and for those staff, initial contact was made by telephone to obtain participation agreement and email addresses, followed by a formal letter. Three respondents had problems with received email format, and one did not have an email address, so a hard copy of text was posted to them – in addition a disc was provided to help answer the documents quickly by computer like the other respondents, rather than writing out responses, which would have been more time consuming. It was essential to make the response process as simple as possible in order to get maximum numbers of responses. One US respondent completed the questionnaire twice, and on both occasions lost the responses due to a technical fault, and she was not prepared to do it again. She was thanked for her efforts as it was recognised she had tried to take part.

Questionnaire design

Questions were produced with the aim of obtaining required information for the study, considering content outlines above. As Burton (1990) says, it was vital to relate questions to study objectives. Sequencing of questions is important as they should be logical and flow well, not jump from one topic to another and back again. This failing had been identified in the pre-pilot stage, and had been amended in the final structure. Careful wording was vital in order to present unambiguous questions, for example an initial question established the number of students in school, when it was more appropriate to enumerate the number of students only within the appropriate age range examined in this study – aged 11-18. Another initial question asked what new services respondents would like to offer. Limiting this to three was intended to encourage the respondents to focus and prioritise the most important services to them rather than establishing what could be seen as a wish list with no particular rank of importance.

Leading questions which may make the respondent feel that he was being led into a particular response were avoided. Over-long questions or questions with two concepts were avoided as the aim was for them to be clear and unambiguous. Bottomore and Rubel (1963) give the example of Karl Marx's *Enquête Ouvriere* (a questionnaire of 100 questions sent to 25,000 Socialists) where the final question is:

“What is the general, physical, intellectual, and moral condition of men and women employed in your trade?” p218

This is an extreme example of a complex question with several concepts to answer. Each concept needs to be addressed separately for complete clarity. There is no definition of each concept, so there may have been confusion about what was meant. The word 'trade' is not defined – what are limitations in terms of geography and context, for example? The question should perhaps have asked the respondent for his opinion, as he could not know the answer as the question was asked.

Open and closed questions were both considered. Closed questions were useful to elicit basic factual information that could be easily coded, but may have been too restricting for respondents, who may have felt forced into the format of the structure. However these are suitable for gathering basic quantitative information, such as how many students aged 11-18 were in the school. Open questions were more appropriate for encouraging the views and opinions in their own words, which was invaluable from a

qualitative point of view. However it was acknowledged that open questions would take more time to code and transcribe, but the value of the information meant that this had to be done. Within this study both kinds played a part and were applied for their strengths. Some questions were left open, to be later coded into categories depending on the responses which were not known at the design stage, for example school rolls varied from small Scottish schools to large schools in America. To have set out categories before knowing the range of school rolls would have meant that either there would be an enormous number of categories or the extremes within categories could have been very different, for example schools with rolls of 12 and 199 could be entered into the category 1-200. However, once actual rolls were known, they could be formed into more representative categories and responses inserted into categories and grouped more logically and helpfully for analysis purposes. In this study they were categorised as small (up to 700 students), medium (701-999 students) or large (1000 students or more).

Fairly straightforward questions encouraging respondents to note down factual information started the questionnaire. Where possible, closed questions and tick boxes were used to make the task of completing and coding answers easier for participants. These were followed by open-ended questions where respondents could elaborate more, describe their practice and experience, and give more detail, making a logical move from the more restricted predetermined format to the more open-ended format. Respondents were encouraged to contact the researcher if more explanation was needed, and three respondents did this – two from USA and one from Scotland. Their queries required clarification of estimating percentages in Section G. Advice was given to estimate over a period of a whole school year, but there was obviously some concern about the ability to do this, with these respondents and some who left questions blank.

When closed questions were used, vertical format was usually preferred because confusion could arise in horizontal format as people may have ticked the wrong box. However, entering lines around boxes seemed to clarify the format and horizontal questions presented in this way did not cause confusion when piloting.

Piloting

The school librarian questionnaire survey was initially pre-piloted with librarians in two Scottish high schools, one US school librarian and also with two Scottish educational

librarians and one Director in the USA in September 2001. They were amended in light of their comments on content, structure and wording, and piloted with three school librarians in each country between January and March 2002. Pilot respondents were not included in the main sample, as they had already seen the draft tool. The use of initial personal contacts for piloting meant that more contacts were needed for the actual questionnaire survey, which proved difficult at times. In retrospect it could have been more useful to approach people outside these two States for piloting purposes, so that known personal State contacts could have been used for the actual questionnaire survey, and these personal networking links could have encouraged snowball sampling within their own State while committed to taking part at the same time themselves. Initial piloting of the questionnaire survey produced useful feedback.

Apart from simple comments such as making boxes bigger, comments were made suggesting rewording or extra questions to clarify information and avoid bias, for example with a question on how well supported the librarians felt by senior management, it was said by one pilot respondent that the direct line manager was supportive, but this did not always influence decisions made by senior management. A question was added to make the distinction. After final comments where it was clear this was a very difficult area and respondents were uncomfortable and unwilling to answer, this question was removed. It was hoped that this topic might arise in the more qualitative nature of other data collection methods to follow, and raised by respondents if they felt it to be relevant. There were comments on subject arrangement of questions, and amendments were made to the structure so that related items were together and more logically arranged. Piloting was invaluable to identify problems, and this is emphasised by Burton (1990) who recommends piloting to establish clarity, understanding and order of questions and it was intended to provide a more robust tool. Simmons (2001) proposes as a guide a proportion of between 1-2% as a pilot sample, so the proportion of 10% exceeded that, however with the relatively small number of up to 60 school librarians being surveyed, it was considered that one or two in each country could be open to bias and it would be more prudent to widen the sample. The purpose of the pre-piloting as a first step before piloting was to ensure instructions were clear, questions were in a logical order and to identify any major areas of ambiguity, omission and duplication. In retrospect, it would be better practice when examining the situation in two countries to have carried out initial trialling or pre-piloting in both countries, and

culture, language and terminology problems could have been identified at this stage. However, modifications were made in light of the responses of the pilot, which took place in both countries. For example, one comment was that American librarians did not use “pupil”, but preferred “student”. Another term not widely recognised in the US was “line manager”, as they used the term “supervisor”. The questionnaire survey was amended to include the word supervisor. It was decided to offer two separate forms of the librarian questionnaire survey, to avoid the problem of language confusion, changing terms such as pupil and term (used in Scotland) to student and semester (USA).

Questionnaire structure in detail – school librarians

(Appendix M for US and Appendix N for Scotland)

The questionnaire was designed to elicit information to establish:

- background data on school and services offered, budget and space
- what the librarian does
- if there are any extra staff or assistance
- how user needs are identified and methods used
- how potential new services and constraints are identified
- how decisions are made about service delivery

It was based on 7 areas to establish what was available in school libraries :

- A Student numbers
- B Staffing
- C Collection of resources
- D Seats
- E Services
- F Decision-making
- G Policy

Section A aimed to establish what kind of school was being examined, numbers of students and age range appropriate to the study. This was important to establish school size, and to establish if the size of the school affected decision-making. This section consisted of an open question asking how they would describe their school and three boxes for respondents to simply add in the numbers, asking for quantitative information.

Section B was included to establish the staffing levels available in the library. This could affect decision-making because if there were more staff perhaps there was potentially more opportunity for the librarian to be involved in higher level work. The first question asked for quantitative information on the number of individual staff. The second question outlined details of up to three library posts, establishing the title of the post, how many hours were worked in the library, teaching a subject and whether the post was term time only or all year round. This was to establish if the post was wholly spent in the library, or divided between the classroom and the library, and also to establish the nature of conditions of service. Participants were invited to add details of more than three posts if appropriate by duplicating boxes provided. The qualification required for the job would establish the level of the post. Quantitative information was put in boxes for ease of completion. Tick boxes were provided to establish if volunteer helpers were available, and whether they were parents, students or unemployed/retired people. A space was available for other options to be identified. Boxes were provided to list tasks undertaken by these helpers and to estimate weekly time spent by these helpers in the library.

Section C was to establish how much was spent in the library in the last year and per head of student population, using boxes to gather information. The amount of money spent in the last year would indicate typical annual expenditure, and whether the position had changed. The number of items in the library would indicate size and coverage.

Section D established the number and type of seats, indicating library size, and whether this was sufficient for all activities. Boxes were provided for the information.

Section E invited them to identify 6 core services and itemise services offered, with tick boxes for easy completion. A list of services was given to indicate what was offered. A question allowed them to prioritise 3 potential new services, how they were identified and what may prevent them being offered. This allowed them to identify major focus.

Section F focused on decision-making and how and why services are offered. There was an opportunity to outline the process of making decisions (from a pre-selected list) and how a new service is set up. The question was open, inviting a qualitative response in the area of decision-making, rather than restricting answers by using preset categories.

Section G identified time spent on policy, planning and communication issues, both actual and optimum. They were asked of their guideline awareness, with a ranked question about the influence of guidelines to themselves and their supervisors. Information about practice when working towards these guidelines and the use of development planning was sought (including whole school work).

Respondents established in the questionnaire survey what they considered core services, ways of working and concerns. Each section had a guide explaining the remit and clarifying why questions were presented. From questionnaire results, key themes and services identified at that time were established. Questionnaire results informed the vignette which was developed to highlight and investigate in detail key themes identified by practitioners. This was useful for triangulation purposes and also to consolidate the iterative approach. Findings of the questionnaire survey can be found in Chapter 4.

Data analysis

Response time varied, between a day and six months, in spite of reminders. A grid was devised outlining dates when tools were sent out, when responses were returned and reminders were sent. This was important to keep control of the responses and to establish the progress with each participant. An example of the format is shown in Table 3.4, using real names and places (although in this example fictitious names are used).

Table 3.4 Sample layout of questionnaire response grid

Name/place	Qu're sent	Reminders	Qu're returned	Thank you sent
John Smith Scotland X-shire	April 5 [2002]	May 5 [2002] June 5 [2002]	June 21 [2002]	June 23 [2002]
Jack Jones USA X-inois	April 16 [2002]	May 16 [2002] Jun 16 [2002] [HOLIDAYS] Sep 7 [2002] Oct 7 [2002]	X	X

When responses were returned, a personal email was sent acknowledging this, thanking them for their contribution and making at least two comments on what they had said, for example to the American who was code-named Sue Ellen:

“Thanks for returning the questionnaire – I appreciate the time you spent on this. It was interesting what you said about how you work towards the State guidelines. I can see that your practice of sending in an annual report detailing what has been done in the past year and setting out your new goals for the next year will really help focus school management on the library role across the whole school.”

This was considered to be important because as well as genuinely thanking them for their efforts in responding and noting the value of what they had said, a positive reply might make them more inclined to respond to future data collection stages.

When responses were returned, appropriate keyword headings were written into the margins of response returns as they emerged, such as Collaboration or Decision-making. This was the initial open coding phase. These later formed thematic chapters 6-8 and their section headings. These written response headings were coded initially on an Excel spreadsheet. This was suitable for statistical data but proved more challenging with recording the amount of detail given in qualitative responses. Instead of recording details, keywords were inserted representing topics, and when that topic was being investigated, the original response was consulted again. Data was then transferred to the SPSS program, but there were various problems with that. No training in the software had taken place before the analysis of data, and most of the information about the software was gained through reading a book on SPSS. Training was largely available during the day, and as a full-time employee elsewhere, this was not easy to attend. However the version of software available on the computer was not the same as the one in the book, which caused some difficulty.

As the researcher was working on the survey as a part-time student alongside other full-time employment, most of the work was done at home on a laptop rather than on a university computer with a permanent licence for the program, and the need for a licence to install the software on the laptop for home use meant that regular monthly upgrades of the licence and regular re-installation of the program had to be done otherwise the data could not be accessed. By the time there was a change of university, the main data had been recorded and was not amended again at the new institution. Before leaving the

first university, the survey results from SPSS were printed and used as a guide to draw out themes and more indepth data was followed up from original responses, which was a lengthy process, but involved close working with original data collection forms, which was invaluable. In retrospect, timely and flexible personal training and immediate data recording when the training was newly completed would have been helpful, as well as reconciling administrative problems regarding the software licence for home use.

Validity, trustworthiness and member-checking

It has already been stated that generalisability was not intended to be an outcome of this study, and this study features a snapshot of practice, experience and opinion of practitioners at the time, and as such, it is not intended to be representative of all high school librarians in Scotland and the USA.

Approaches to designing, distributing and analysing the questionnaire survey were carried out in as systematic and consistent way as possible. Patton (1990) discusses the need to be methodical in reporting and recording responses. He also says:

“Triangulation of methods will most often revolve around comparing data collected through some kind of qualitative methods with data collected through some kind of quantitative methods.... Triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data is a form of comparative analysis.” p464-5

For this reason, it was important to offer complementarity by choosing different methods to establish responses that verified or contradicted responses. Other methods followed up the findings from the questionnaire survey, and themes of interest or concern were consolidated in more detail in later qualitative methods, which included an element of member-checking (directly in the response to the draft model and more indirectly through the implementation of later qualitative tools, where issues were discussed by participants, for example the training issue in the use of decision-making, which first arose in the questionnaire survey and was raised via vignettes and focus groups).

This identification and confirmation of data provided verification or otherwise of responses in the survey. Any unusual data was followed up, for example, one US school librarian indicated that her library materials budget was very large, but in fact she had included her salary in that figure.

3.6.2 Directors of School Library Services questionnaire survey

Purpose

The purpose of this questionnaire survey (Appendix D) was to establish various elements of information from those staff with an overview of high school libraries in their areas. This would provide another perspective from the information being gathered from high school librarians at the same time. The opinions of Directors might also help to confirm or not the situation reported by high school librarians, although it is appreciated that they would be looking at the situation from differing viewpoints. The approach of this questionnaire survey was largely qualitative. The main outcome of this questionnaire survey to Directors of School Library Services in both countries would be to draw out their own opinions, knowledge and experience. As there were areas for additional comments from participants, it was envisaged that themes would emerge which could then be useful to investigate in more detail by following up with more qualitative methods.

Aims and objectives

Results from the questionnaire survey to Directors of School Library Services in both countries contributed towards meeting Aim 1 and Objectives a, b, c, and d.

Aim

- 1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioner in the high school library environment

Objectives

- a) To establish how decisions concerning high school libraries are made and to identify the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based high school librarian
- b) To discover who is involved in the decision-making process in high school libraries
- c) To compare differences between countries about decision-making
- d) To establish if formal decision-making processes are used

Specific sampling

As outlined in the section on questionnaire survey to school librarians in section 3.6.1, Districts in two States with similar populations to Scotland were chosen, as a way to compare and contrast data. The letter accompanying the questionnaire survey (Appendix B) indicated approximately how long was needed to complete the questionnaire, which was included to encourage response rate. The questionnaire sent to Directors of School Library Services in Scotland and Districts in two US States was briefer than that for the school librarians, as different information was required, covering more of an overview than detail in one school. The aim was to gather responses from three Directors from each country, and this was achieved.

Specific approaches/permissions

Permission was asked of the Directors of School Library Services at the same time as they were asked to encourage school librarians to take part. This saved time, showed that the survey was complementary and had some cohesion and logic. Three Directors in Scotland agreed to participate. Two US education officials and one Director of School Library Services completed the Director of School Library Services questionnaire.

Questionnaire design

Different questionnaire surveys were designed for the two groups of school librarians and Directors, because different information was required from each cohort, for example the Directors had more of an overview of all school libraries rather than just one library, and the questionnaire survey was designed to be complementary to that of the school librarians. The questions reflected more of the overview role of the Directors. An initial instruction was that questions should be answered with regard to high school libraries (for students aged 11-18 years) under their jurisdiction.

Piloting

The Directors of School Library Services questionnaire was initially informally pre-piloted to three Scottish Directors of School Library Services in December 2001, then piloted with one Director of School Library Services in each country in March 2002. This phase established some wording changes, for example it was not clear to three respondents during the pre-pilot and pilot that they were being asked about circumstances in their area, even with the starting instruction that they should talk about school libraries under

their jurisdiction. To clarify matters further, additional wording was amended in questions to reflect this. For example the original question 8 was: To the best of your knowledge, do all school librarians offer a core range of services? After queries from two pre-piloted and one piloted Directors, this was amended to its original intention as: To the best of your knowledge, do all school librarians **in your area** offer a core range of services? [Bold emphasis was not in questionnaire survey.] As there were areas for additional comments from participants, it was envisaged that themes would emerge which could then be useful to investigate in more detail with more qualitative methods.

Questionnaire structure in detail – Directors (Appendix D)

The first section asked four questions related to policy matters in general. The first was to identify by ticking a box if there was a State, regional or national policy for their high school librarians to follow, along with a box if they didn't know. There was also another category for a free response where they could add in anything else they thought was relevant. The purpose was to find out if they knew of such policy. Question 2 asked who is involved in developing policy at local and national levels, if this was ideal and what they thought was ideal. Both of these sections offered a free response and intended to establish their reflections on this matter. Question 3 asked the same of local policies. Question 4 asked how much they thought such policies should influence services offered in school libraries, with 3 boxes indicating completely; in certain areas; and not at all. This was to clarify the influence of policy.

The next section concerned decision-making. Question 5 asked how much autonomy school librarians have at present when making decisions about what services to offer. Box options were complete autonomy; some consultation with others is expected; or have no autonomy. Question 6 asked how much autonomy they felt school librarians should have, with boxed options as in question 5. These two questions were meant to establish where they considered school librarians were at this point in time, and where they should be headed. Question 7 offered a free response to what they thought influences the decision-making of school librarians with regard to services offered in the school library. There was a sub-question on what they thought could help school librarians with their ability to make decisions, with a free response area. These were intended to provide their reflections on present and future decision-making of colleagues.

The next section related to service delivery. Question 8 asked what they considered to be a core range of services in a high school library, with a free response area. Question 9 asked for them to estimate the percentage of school librarians in their area offering a core range of services, to the best of their knowledge, with a comment section. These two questions aimed to establish what they considered were core services, and whether they were being provided. Question 10 asked if they thought that core services should be offered in all high school libraries nationally, with Yes/No boxes and a comment section. Question 11 asked who decided about the range of services to be offered in school libraries, with a free response. Question 12 asked who should be involved in decisions on these services, with a free response. Question 13 asked if they believed that there was adequate consultation in their schools generally about the range of library services on offer, with a free response. Question 14 asked them to outline the ideal decision-making process for service provision in high school libraries in their areas. These questions would establish their perceptions of consultation in place in high schools and responses could be compared with those made by school librarians.

Data analysis

Keyword headings were written into the margins of response returns as they occurred in the answers, as described in the previous section. These headings were entered onto a grid showing who said what (Table 3.5). When introducing people's own words and linking the answers from one respondent, it was important to keep track of all respondents while maintaining their anonymity, therefore a grid was devised linking the real names with alphanumeric codes and different methods of response, for example the VS1 (Vignette Scotland number 1) respondent could also be coded as QS4 (Questionnaire Scotland number 4).

Responses from the same person were linked with the same unique fictional code forename in order to preserve their anonymity, for example Scottish Director Daisy was given the code DS1 (Director Scotland 1) and Chantal was DA1 (Director America 1). This proved invaluable when checking quotes and comparing results from a variety of data collection methods. Without such a system it could have been very confusing to accurately record responses, and important links between method responses could have been lost. Once this coding system was set up, then data collected from respondents could be collated, analysed and themes of interest were extracted. An initial example of

coding grids follows in Table 3.5. This was created in order to note at a glance themes had emerged, and who had said them, for ease of follow up at a later date. There was also a section raising questions for future consideration:

Table 3.5 Sample grid of data analysis of Directors questionnaire survey

Theme	Name	Question
Emphasis on traditional core services	DS1 Daisy Scotland DS7 Noreen Scotland	Are librarians working at an operational level? Should there be more emphasis on librarian's strategic role?
More formal consultation needed in schools	DA3 Ian US DA1 Chantal US DS1 Daisy Scotland	Consider for element of model?

As a first stage of analysis, original questionnaire survey responses were open coded, by having keywords written in the margin according to topics raised by respondents. These headings were word processed and arranged by themes, so there was a collation of all responses relating to each concept, and who raised each concept. There was then an element of axial coding, where relationships between categories were identified, for example the use of formal guidelines within the process of evidence-based practice. This stage was followed by selective coding, where categories were divided into subcategory headings, for example within the category collaboration there emerged subcategories of collaboration inside school and also outwith school.

Validity, trustworthiness and member-checking

As with the questionnaire survey for school librarians, Directors were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Bias issues were similar to those reported in the school librarian section. Further member-checking would take place when all the data was collated to form the model, as the model was member-checked to verify that practitioners agreed with it.

3.7 Qualitative methods

Qualitative methods were chosen in order to complement and expand the understanding of the knowledge gained from the background questionnaire survey. This approach gave a real feeling of the depth and detail of responses made by school librarians, their managers and Directors of School Library Services. The non-standardised nature of the responses meant that the analysis was more time-consuming and difficult than analysing purely quantitative data, but it was considered vital to obtain and explore this qualitative data as it formed the basis of the experience and thoughts of respondents, which was core to this study. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) describe qualitative data very well when they define it as being:

“Based on meanings expressed through words.” p405

They add that this data needs to be classified and analysed through conceptualisation. This was carried out in this study by implementing a variety of coding techniques in order to analyse and organise responses, which will be outlined in more detail under each method.

3.7.1 Vignettes

Purpose

After gathering basic background data in the questionnaire survey, a vignette (Appendix L) was considered to examine more qualitative data such as attitudes, culture and the normative standards of respondents, in a non-threatening way. The vignette was formed with topics and headings based on issues identified in the questionnaire survey responses, and the same version was offered to both high school librarians and Directors of School Library Services. The technique involved outlining a scenario with people in what was presented as a fictional situation and asking respondents how they would deal with it, and to make comments on what they were told about the situation.

Bryman (2001) highlights the value of such a method as being it *“reduces the possibility of an unreflective reply”* p154. Finch (1987) believes that because imaginary people and situations are involved it put a certain distance between the questioning and the respondent and results in a less threatening context, especially in a sensitive area where respondents may feel that negative answers make them feel judged by the interviewer.

A basic introduction to the vignette outlined the method and why it was used was included in the first paragraph of the vignette. The vignette aimed to establish:

- feelings of how library services fit into school
- identification of support needed
- constraints on offering services
- breakdown of tasks
- professional activity undertaken
- probe into decision-making perceptions

Aims and objectives

The results from the vignette to high school librarians and Directors of School Library Services in both countries contributed to meet Aim 1 and Objectives a, b, c, and d.

Aim

- 1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioner in the high school library environment

Objectives

- a) To establish how decisions concerning high school libraries are made and to identify the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based high school librarian
- b) To discover who is involved in the decision-making process in high school libraries
- c) To compare differences between countries about decision-making
- d) To establish if formal decision-making processes are used

A main outcome of this vignette to librarians and Directors of School Library Services in both countries would be to draw out their own opinions, knowledge and experience.

Specific sampling

The vignette sampling was carried out as described in the section on questionnaire survey sampling and involved basically the same cohort who had answered the questionnaire survey. Therefore respondents were invited from six Scottish authorities and six Districts in two States with similar population size to Scotland.

Specific approaches/permissions

The same method used in questionnaire survey was used for permission to approach staff with the vignette. Permission was sought at the same time for both methods, in order to not approach the same people a second time, saving them the trouble of responding again. A total of 27 Scottish high school librarians responded, from 39 who were invited to participate, and 22 US high school librarians out of 47 who were approached. Three Scottish Directors of School Library Services, two US education officials and one Director of School Library Services also took part.

Vignette design

Unlike the questionnaire survey, which had different versions, one version of the vignette was offered to high school librarians and Directors. This was because both groups were looking at a generalised and fictional situation, and could respond in a similar way. The situation in the vignette had to be believable and appropriate for respondents to feel able to comment on the scenarios, otherwise it would bear little relation to their experience.

Piloting

Piloting was carried out with two school librarians and one Director of School Library Services from each country. Initially during the pilot study, feedback reflected that the vignette seemed to duplicate some information in the questionnaire and the tone was negative. It was therefore amended to remedy these points and to highlight more cultural differences. For example a more balanced picture of the fictional librarian was represented, when it had been more negative in the draft, where there were no redeeming features presented by the librarian. The initial vignette had outlined a female librarian, and there were two comments from the pilot that this was sexist, so a male librarian was used in the final version. The pilot group seemed to enjoy the approach of the vignette and some commented that the technique of critically examining someone else's situation made them think of their own situation more objectively. The comments on fictional librarian Bill's situation seemed straightforward in the first section, as they brought their own experience to bear on advising Bill. However, in the second section, some respondents seemed confused about general questions such as: *How do you think that school librarians decide about what services to offer?* It seemed that they found it difficult to generalise after using their own experience in the first section. This

was resolved by inserting a statement clarifying that from question 11 they were to use their own general impressions, rather than their own practice.

The vignette structure in detail

The scenario of the vignette was set out in an introduction. The questions were all open in nature, because the value of the response was to obtain opinions and ideas, without restricting respondents. This would make coding lengthier, yet as a qualitative study the value of participants' answers would make this worthwhile. The first ten questions allowed respondents to comment on a fictional yet realistic situation. The first part of the first question allowed comment on the comprehensiveness of the range of services, while the second part encouraged identification of core services omitted, both open questions. Two main areas were identified in the questionnaire survey as core services omitted in vignette, namely literacy promotion and collaboration. This was done in order to identify if the lack of these apparently core areas would be noticed by practitioners.

The second open question examined ideas on how the post could be more valued. The third question was open and called for three positive and three negative aspects of working in a sole post. The fourth question asked for three support strategies for the postholder in an open question format. Question 5 was also open and called for three areas of difficulty to the job of school librarian. Question 6 asked respondents to identify the optimum frequency of staff development activity, with five categories of frequency and an open box for responses not fitting into those five areas. There was also an open question calling for three current useful topics of staff development. Question 7 examined the optimum frequency of general librarian meetings in 5 categories of frequency and an open box for other categories, and three areas for useful discussion were sought in open question. Question 8 had an open question on improving career progression and an option to state whether there was good career progression in their opinion. There was an opportunity to comment on the choice made. Question 9 concerned updating library policy and meeting targets in an open format. Question 10 was an open question to identify why the Book Review Club failed and how it could be salvaged.

The next set of questions was preceded by advice that the following questions should be answered more from general impressions than from one's own experience. As already

raised, this was inserted after pilot results showed difficulty in generalising these responses. Question 11 was open and was concerned with decision-making of school librarians on services provided. Question 12 offered a choice of whether respondents felt that school librarians could improve their decision-making skills, and if so, how this could be done. There was also a related open question to establish whether supervisors need to improve their skills in decision-making.

Question 13 asked if school librarians would appreciate more help with making decisions, and if so who could help. Question 14 was open in format and asked how school librarians make decisions. Question 15 was an open question and considered who was involved in making decisions affecting the school library. The final question was open and identified how decisions were made formal and how they were promoted to users.

Data analysis

A grid similar to the one in Table 3.4 for questionnaire survey was created to record the stages of response to the vignette. In this way it was clear to see at a glance which respondents needed to be approached again for a return. As a first stage of analysis, original vignette responses were open coded, by having keywords written in the margin according to topics raised by respondents. These headings were word processed and arranged by themes, so there was a collation of all responses relating to each concept, and who raised each concept.

There was then an element of axial coding, where relationships between categories were identified, for example the use of formal guidelines as part of the process of evidence-based practice. This stage was followed by selective coding, where categories were divided into subcategory headings, for example within the category collaboration there emerged three main subcategories of collaboration: inside school (with both managers and teachers) and also outwith school. An analysis grid was created in order to accurately record the topics raised by respondents to the vignette. The sample analysis grid for vignette is given in Table 3.6 below.

Table 3.6 Sample data for vignette analysis

Name	Theme	Comment
Freda US	Decision making - influences on school librarians	Based on needs they see – direct observation [basic]
Jack US		Professional journals, other librarians, other teachers in schools [outreach]
Barbara Scotland		Factors outwith librarian's control, school situation, law affecting children [outside library and school]
Michael Scotland		Status, many people get tired of fighting apathy in others and become apathetic themselves [negative]

Factors which were deemed to be basic were likely to be included in the draft model, also those with a wider school or national perspective. However comments displaying apparently negative behaviours were unlikely to feature in the model, as these were not likely to represent effective practice.

Validity, trustworthiness and member-checking

Similar issues raised in the questionnaire section were appropriate for the vignette. For example, generalisability was not intended to be an outcome of this study, as it features a snapshot of personal practice, experience and opinion of practitioners and their managers at the time. A range of methods was used to give an element of complementarity. Every effort was made to be consistent in terms of design, recording and analysis. It was recognised that the bias of the researcher could be a factor, and efforts were made to be as objective as possible, and not to lead respondents into giving “expected” or “right” answers. When explanations were requested from vignette respondents, the initial answer was to ask the respondent what they thought the question could mean, and very often they had recognised what was being asked for, but just needed reassurance that what they had identified was in fact a reasonable response.

Checking was carried out initially if responses were returned with information that seemed inconsistent or incorrect, and a follow-up check was made that the response was as had been intended. Out of nine follow ups that were made, three respondents had made errors, and these answers were amended to reflect the corrected responses. Consultation with respondents took place when all the data was collated to form the model, as the model was member-checked to verify that practitioners agreed with it, and their responses and suggestions for amendments were incorporated into the final model.

3.7.2 Interviews

Purpose

Patton (1990) summarises the use of this method when he says that:

“The purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone’s mind. The purpose of open-ended interviewing is not to put things in someone’s mind.... but to access the perspective of the person being interviewed.... [which is] meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit.” p278

This fits in very well with the intention to find out about the views and opinions of respondents in this study. Interview would also allow an exploration of themes that had emerged from earlier data collection. Interview schedules for each cohort are to be found in Appendix E (Librarians) and Appendix F (managers/Headteachers). A follow-up questionnaire was distributed two days after interviews, and this is presented in Appendix G. The interviews were completed at a later stage in the study, before, during and after focus group work. It was a useful way to follow up themes that had emerged during the study, and people could be asked in more detail about something they had mentioned at an earlier stage.

Aims and objectives

The results from the interviews of high school librarians and their managers/Headteachers in both countries contributed towards meeting Aim 1 and Objectives a, b, c, and d.

Aim

- 1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioner in the high school library environment

Objectives

- a) To establish how decisions concerning high school libraries are made and to identify the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based high school librarian
- b) To discover who is involved in the decision-making process in high school libraries
- c) To compare differences between countries about decision-making
- d) To establish if formal decision-making processes are used

The main outcome of interviewing high school librarians and their line managers in both countries would be to draw out their own opinions, knowledge and experience.

Specific sampling

The original cohort who completed questionnaire survey and vignette were first approached to participate in this stage. Out of 27 Scottish librarians, five took part, along with four of the 22 US librarians. Two managers of school librarians from each country took part. This low response could be due to the fact that three years had passed since the original approach, and some people had moved jobs, retired or were no longer interested in contributing. In addition, some participated from outside this group. Contact had been made with new potential respondents as the study progressed, mainly through personal contact or during visits. This helped to widen the study, by offering differing views from the original cohort. Three more librarians from Scotland and three from US participated, along with two managers from Scotland and one from USA. Therefore eight Scottish school librarians and four managers gave their views, along with seven US librarians and three managers. There was an element of snowball sampling, as once a manager was approached, s/he was asked to approach his/her corresponding librarian, and vice versa.

Specific approaches/permissions

All the people approached for interview were already in authorities who had given permission at earlier stages of the study. They were approached informally, by email or telephone to ask if they were interested in taking part in this stage. An outline of what was involved was discussed with them, and an explanation of the purpose of the interview.

Interview schedule design

In this study, semi-structured questioning schedules were used. This allowed for some standardisation of questions, but also allowed for follow up to areas of interest as necessary. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) identify that a semi-structured approach offers both exploratory and explanatory evidence, but more frequent opportunity for explanatory data p245. As Creswell (1998) states, it is important to have “adequate recording procedures” p124. The content reflected:

- experience/behaviour questions outlining what a person has done
- opinion/value questions establishing what people think
- feeling questions reflecting emotional response
- knowledge questions about factual information

These elements were introduced into the design of the interviews. Streatfield (2000b) confirms the importance of easing into the interview and grouping questions together logically. He also recommends a variety of closed and open-ended questions to provide a fuller picture.

The quality of the data depended on the way the interview was undertaken and all efforts were made to ensure that data consisted of high quality evaluative information, by asking appropriate open questions, listening to respondents, and accurately recording and presenting their responses.

Streatfield (2000a) considers that interview should focus on asking questions, listening, ensuring a full answer had been given, recording and analysing answers. A major decision at initial stages was that open questioning would be used wherever possible when probing opinion and perception of respondents because it was considered that too much guiding into pre-determined slots would be counter-productive by reducing the possibility of them raising their own ideas. Patton (1990) identifies three main methods of open-ended interview, which were all examined for appropriateness:

- *informal conversational interview* where questions arise spontaneously. Although it offered flexibility, this method was not considered to be suitable for this study because it could result in omissions in data gathering

- *general interview guide approach* consisted of a checklist of areas to be covered, without specific questions. Although this was systematic and covered all areas, information may not be recorded if respondents did not raise certain sub-issues. For this reason, this method was not considered suitable for this study
- *standardised open-ended interview* has a set of standard questions. Although this allowed little flexibility for spontaneity, all respondents were asked for the same information and standardised information could be recorded

It was decided that a combined approach should be undertaken, based mainly on the standardised open-ended interview, but allowing for elements of flexibility. If new topics arose in later interviews, there was always the opportunity to revisit respondents with these, particularly as the initial idea had been to establish a relationship with them. Confidentiality was assured to all respondents. They were also offered a summary of the study and the model on completion. Although the same basic structure was presented to respondents, it was useful to return to them with new aspects raised in previous interviews with other respondents, making the data gathering a progressive exercise.

Piloting

Interview schedules were piloted with two school librarians and one manager from each country. Their comments helped to make the sequence of questions more logical and themed, and also to clarify meaning. For example, it was suggested during piloting that evidence-based policy-making was a term used by teaching staff, rather than evidence-based decision-making, so the manager interview schedule was amended to include this term.

Structure of interview schedules

School librarian interview schedule structure

The questions were largely open, so that librarians had an opportunity to write freely about their opinions, without being led into pre-organised categories. It was important

that they were able to answer freely, with their own ideas, rather than be influenced by information from the researcher.

The schedule began by asking what school librarians considered to be the major contribution of high school librarians to the work of high schools. This was intended to establish if they had a wider perspective of the work of the high school librarian. The next question asked about skills and qualities they felt were needed for the post of high school librarian. This was asked in order to determine the range of factors they considered to be important to do the job well.

The third question asked who else should be involved when the school librarian made decisions. This was asked in order to establish their own opinions on collaborative working within the school, and to get their ideas about staff they might work with. The fourth question concerned how the librarian could use evidence to make decisions, in order to discover their practice on the use of evidence (both internal and external) and if they raised the use of research when decisions were made.

A final opportunity was then given for them to add any other comments, although this is not noted in the original schedule. This was important to finish on a positive note, to give them an opportunity to add in their own thoughts and to demonstrate that their opinions were valued.

Manager interview schedule structure

Questions were largely open in nature, to allow them a free response without any guidance. This interview started by asking for an example of a recent decision about the library, who was involved and what stages there were in the process, in order to establish decision-making practice and the process used. They were asked for an interpretation of evidence-based policy/decision-making in order to confirm their understanding of the concept. Policy-making was mentioned as it was raised in piloting that this was a more familiar term.

They were then asked if evidence and research had been considered as part of a library decision, to establish if these elements had been factors that had been considered. They were asked if school librarians used evidence when making decisions, if they could give

examples and if they could envisage problems with such an approach. This was intended to establish if they appreciated or encouraged the wider perspective.

The next question concerned how they thought school librarians could use evidence in decision-making and what kind of training might help. This was to pursue how far they had reflected on the idea. They were asked about guidelines or standards used in the library, what had not been implemented and what barriers existed. This question intended to establish their awareness of guideline/standard use. They were asked for their vision of the high school library in the next ten years, in order to share their ideas.

A final opportunity was then given for them to add any other comments, although this is not noted in the schedule. This was important to finish on a positive note and demonstrate that their opinions were valued.

Data analysis

In this study a digital tape recorder was used to record interviews. This saved the distraction of trying to write, ask questions and pay attention to responses at the same time. Although writing up each transaction took several hours, it gave great insight into the responses, and the value of hearing actual words and phrases used in addition to the hesitation and tone of voice made it an important part of the process. Interviews were word processed and printed, and as different topics emerged, appropriate keywords were annotated on the print outs. The analysis was completed in a grid format as discussed in previous methods, and as shown in Table 3.7 below, writing down themes, comments and a note of respondents.

As the importance was bringing together related topics, some of the analysed data is included in themed chapters 6, 7 and 8, while some is introduced into Chapter 5, which is presented in the format of what is termed in this study as case examples. After interviews took place, a personal email was sent acknowledging their contribution, thanking them and making at least one comment on what they had said. This was intended to demonstrate to them that their participation and contribution was valued. In addition, it was hoped to encourage them to participate with future data collection stages.

Apparently positive and negative comments were noted equally, so that they could be considered in the draft model. A factor displaying a negative comment was not likely to feature in the model, whereas factors attracting positive comments were likely to be included in the model, as they were more likely to reflect effective practice.

Table 3.7 Sample of interview grid analysis

Name	Theme	Comment
Barney, HT US	Collaboration with faculty	Without this the library is not fulfilling its purpose [key]
Norman, HT US		She (Libn) could be more outgoing [negative]
Karen US libn		Helps out with photographing school events [wider school role]
Harry , HT Scotland		She (Libn) has a narrow focus, needs to involve different groups, I need to draw her out [negative]

Validity, trustworthiness and member-checking

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) say that:

“The use of interviews can help you to gather valid and reliable data that are relevant to your research question(s) and objectives.” p242

The main aim of the interview process was to gather data reflecting the practice and perceptions of the school librarians and their managers regarding how decision-making was carried out relating to library work. The benefits of interviews for collecting data was for consistency – there was a standard set of questions and everyone was asked the same, however there was also flexibility to follow up tangents of interest that participants raised and a final opportunity for them to raise anything else they wanted. Recording the interview meant that there was less distraction for the researcher and data could be reviewed and checked at any time after the event, so that there was no misunderstanding or ambiguity. Interviews were conducted on a one to one basis and as private as could be arranged at their workplaces. They were offered the opportunity to talk more privately when the interview was arranged. All managers were interviewed privately as they had offices; however it was not always possible for librarians to leave

the library. Some librarians were happy to speak in the library. Appreciating that some participants may find the interview too intrusive, not private enough or it might be difficult for them to answer direct questions, or they might have more thoughts later, a follow-up questionnaire was sent on a day or two later, when people had the chance to add opinions once they had time to reflect on issues.

Where possible, interviews were carried out personally. However, due to practical difficulties, some interviews in America were carried out by email, Instant Messaging or videoconferencing. Simmons (2001) highlights that email interviewing has positive points, including the practicality of carrying out cross-national research, the convenience of participants answering in their own time and they were self-transcribing. Instant Messaging technology allowed for real-time interviews, although it could seem somewhat disjointed. Time zone differences had to be considered when planning real-time interviews. Disadvantages of non-personal methods include a lack of non-verbal cues, which can be invaluable to decide when to clarify questions, and they can be said to be more suited to obtaining quantitative data.

3.7.3 Focus groups

Purpose

The focus group briefing and questionnaire is presented in Appendix H; the follow-up questionnaire in Appendix I. Focus group, or directed group discussion, was valuable for participants to share opinions and interact with each other. Slater (1990) suggests that:

“If you want social interaction and a range of responses revealed, use group discussions.” p116

This method was chosen because it was considered a good way to gain valuable qualitative data from practitioners, managers and Directors of School Library Services, a mainstay of this study, as well as giving them an opportunity to interact. Gorman and Clayton (2005) say that an advantage of focus groups is:

“A variety of perspectives and explanations may be obtained from a single data-gathering session.” p143

Slater (1990) makes the distinction between group interview and discussion:

“Groups are not called discussions idly. They are NOT group interviews.... Groups are thus characterized by breadth of free-ranging exploration.” p113

As Yates (2004) defines, focus groups can be seen as a form of group in-depth interviewing, however he warns that the method must be managed well to ensure that participants keep on track and certain participants do not dominate discussion. There could also be a danger of someone with seniority affecting contributions from others. It was therefore vital to manage the discussion well, ensure everyone could contribute and keep discussion on track with a structure of questions and timings. Gorman and Clayton (2005) emphasise the importance of managing the event:

“A well-managed group discussion can minimize such possible problems and extract data which makes a substantial contribution to many types of research project.” p144

As the element of gaining respondents' views and exchanging opinions on those views were both identified as being important to this study, focus group discussion was a useful method. There needed to be an appropriate mix of participants who were willing to talk and share experience.

Aims and objectives

Results from the focus group with high school librarians, their managers and Directors of School Library Services in both countries contributed towards Aim 1 and Objectives a,b,c, and d.

Aim

- 1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioner in the high school library environment

Objectives

- a) To establish how decisions concerning high school libraries are made and to identify the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based high school librarian
- b) To discover who is involved in the decision-making process in high school libraries
- c) To compare differences between countries about decision-making
- d) To establish if formal decision-making processes are used

The main outcome of focus groups with high school librarians, their managers and Directors of School Library Services in both countries would be to draw out their own opinions, knowledge and experience and to allow interaction.

Specific sampling

Approaches were made to librarians, Directors and managers met during personal visits, with an element of snowball sampling, where interested colleagues of those could also take part. Three focus groups took place; one in person in America, one by videoconference in Scotland and one by Instant Messaging in America.

Specific approaches/permissions

A personal telephone or email approach was made to potential participants. Many of them said that they were interested in taking part for the experience of a focus group, as well as their interest in the subject. It was difficult to plan a convenient time and date for focus groups to suit everyone, including the national ICT host, however this was finally agreed.

Focus group design

In advance of the event, briefing information was sent to all participants to tell them the purpose of the focus group, what was to happen, topics to be covered and a reassurance about confidentiality. It was considered useful to provide this information mainly for reassurance, as no-one in any of the sessions had taken part in a focus group before. In addition to the novel format of focus group, some participants were going to experience a new method of communication in addition to the focus group in person, which included videoconference or Instant Messenger. The briefing paper was intended to make the experience simple and anxiety-free. A standard schedule of questions (Appendix H) was created. This standard schedule was applied in three different ways: in person, by videoconference and by Instant Messaging.

Follow-up questionnaire

This is presented in Appendix I. The follow up questionnaire was very brief and contained three sections – was there anything they wanted to add; were there any surprises arising from the focus group; and did the experience of the focus group discussion have any impact on their thinking and work practice. This was intended to

collate any reflections they had had after the event, and was expected to produce highly qualitative results. In addition, due to the intense nature of the experience, and even the fact that responses were being recorded, some people might have been unwilling to be completely open, and the presence of colleagues and managers may have inhibited participants. To counter this, these follow-up questionnaires were emailed to participants after the event to allow them to continue their thought processes in privacy. This was emailed to participants a day or two after the event (as far as practicable) along with personal thanks for their contribution, mentioning at least one point they had made in order to further personalise their contribution. The follow-up questionnaire gave an opportunity for participants to reflect on the experience and to record their views on the topics discussed, the experience of sharing practice and the medium itself. It also provided a more private way of responding to topics they might not have liked to share in a public forum. It was difficult to listen and react at the same time as managing the event, which was why some form of feedback after the event allowed participants the chance to communicate reflections they had at the time and afterwards. Participants also seemed to value that the researcher followed up a point they made which was not picked up at the time, but after analysis the researcher identified these points.

Piloting

Focus group was piloted face to face with a small group of two school librarians and their managers in Scotland. This was to test question content, the method and process of undertaking and recording the discussion. A digital tape recorder was used instead of taking notes, as this could have been distracting for participants. The main outcome was that timing was difficult, because participants strayed from the subject, and it was decided essential to manage the process by indicating timings for each question so that all content could be covered appropriately, and reminding them of when the opportunity to answer would finish. After the pilot, at the beginning of each section in the actual focus groups an indication was given of timing limits, with a warning two minutes before the allocated time finished for each question. It was intended that the method taking place in person would be used for all groups, however as time progressed, there became an awareness of new ways of doing this through Instant Messaging and videoconferencing. These variations are discussed in more detail later in this section. These were piloted briefly as a technical exercise, but not in an actual focus group, mainly because of time constraints and access problems. In retrospect it would be useful

to test a brief focus group pilot with each process, as there was a problem of question synchronicity. This did not feature during the technical tests, but it was apparent during videoconference and Instant Messenger events. This caused some confusion over which question was being answered. Caution was taken with recording the discussion, so that it was recorded to a standard that was useful for analysis. There were problems with the videoconference, but an extra-cautious approach using three methods of recording responses was useful when analogue tape recording was inadequate, but no data was lost because discussion was also recorded on videocamera and videotape. This would have been identified in piloting.

The follow-up questionnaire was not originally planned, but it was noted that after the pilot focus group some members contacted the researcher after the event and asked to add in extra comments that they had not mentioned at the event and on reflections wanted to add to their original contribution. It was therefore recognised that it would be important to add such a method to allow participants to contribute their reflections a day or so after the event. This method was piloted with two of the participants from the pilot sessions of the focus groups in each country, and the questions appeared to provide the opportunity for them to express what they wanted to say.

Focus group schedule structure

The first question concerned the purpose of the library, with a hypothetical question asking them what would happen if they had no school library. This was intended to start the process of reflection and discussion. The second area of decision-making began by discussing decisions about the library – who was involved; how goals were set; what type of decisions were best made collaboratively; and the most important element to think about when making library decisions. If there was a decision-making team, they were asked if anyone had executive power; what difficulties they would expect when making decisions; and how similar the decision-making process in the library was, compared to the rest of the school. These questions were intended to open up the area, encourage discussion and give examples of practice. It would also be interesting to see if respondents in different roles and in different schools would give very different answers, or if there would be agreement. The third area concerned collaboration. They were asked if there was a decision-making team, how they collaborated and how it could be improved. This was to encourage them to think of present and improved practice. The

next two questions concerned identifying areas of collaboration in curriculum planning, technology and teaching; and examining benefits of collaboration they had noticed. The next three questions concerned a decision-making team. They were asked to discuss roles between team members, to identify if this was useful. They were asked how easy it was to talk about professional issues; and how teamwork could be improved. These were included to encourage discussion of role and team effectiveness.

The fourth area was about evidence. They were asked to think about research or evidence and to identify how the librarian used this; how did s/he keep up to date with it; what they considered was the purpose and difficulties of using it; and did the school management use it. This was to allow them to discuss as a group this subject and identify existing practice. There was a discussion about skills and qualities needed for the librarian to use evidence effectively, which would be interesting to collate, especially for Aim 1. The last section was concerning the dual role of librarians in high schools, and to discuss the benefits and disadvantages of being both a teacher and a school librarian. This would be useful to gauge their thoughts and allow for a sharing of experience.

Data analysis

Patton (1990) states that:

“There is typically not a precise point at which data collection ends and analysis begins. In the course of gathering data, ideas about possible analysis will occur. Those ideas constitute the beginning of analysis: they are part of the record of field notes.” p377

This was the case in this study. Focus group sessions were word processed and printed, and keywords added as subjects emerged. This data was analysed and themed as represented in Table 3.6, with coded names of those raising or discussing points. The follow-up questionnaire also provided feedback. People enjoyed the interactive experience of professional development, and the opportunity to take time to speak on professional matters. This was themed in the same way as described in Table 3.6, each theme attached to a (codenamed) respondent. Three different methods of recording and analysing data from focus groups in this study are outlined below.

in person

This method was used in the first US session. A main advantage was the instant personal contact with the group and the researcher was able to see non-verbal cues and act on them immediately, without time delays or synchronicity confusion about the question was being answered. A digital tape recorder produced excellent sound quality and gave an opportunity to review the event by tape and computer, but needed to be tested in advance of the event to ensure that all voices were picked up. It was relatively easy to manage the event and organise a venue and time to suit participants. Transcription took approximately three weeks, working during evenings and weekends. The advantage was that data was handled so closely that it became very familiar. Data was themed and coded as already described, shown in Table 3.6. However, there was no video evidence to review so the researcher may have missed non-verbal cues after the event, so it would be useful to video the event as well as tape recording it.

by videoconference

This was used in the Scottish focus group. It was a valuable method when participants were not in the same location and where travel could be expensive or time-consuming. A national host such as JANET (Higher Education) or Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (education) had to technically link together the sites with what was called a bridge, so advance trials had to be carried out to establish technical connections would operate on the day. Technical support was also needed at each site during the event, in case there was a problem. National hosts usually provide the service in one country free of charge, but for international links it could be prohibitive due to cost, as most hosts expected participants to pay. Any time difference could make it difficult to provide facilities and technical support at reasonable hours to suit all institutions. It was important to record the videoconference event in order to analyse the discussion. This was by analogue audiotape, videotape by the host and videocamera of the TV screen. In this case, the sound quality of the videocamera was superior to the audiotape recorder, although a digital recorder would normally be better than an analogue recorder, which is why pre-testing of the equipment is recommended. Multi-recording is recommended in case one method resulted in poor sound quality. There was usually a time delay which could cause confusion when people spoke at the same time or to establish whether they were answering a previous question or verbalising unrelated thoughts they had. In retrospect it would have been easier if speakers in a time delay situation such as

videoconference prefaced the answer with the question number identified by the researcher. It could be difficult to manage more than three groups or more than three people in each group, and the more people on screen means that it could be more difficult to pick up all non-verbal cues.

A method of noting when people wanted to contribute was vital, otherwise the moment could pass and contributions could be missed. A simple method was agreed in advance that people would raise a hand, then the researcher managing the event could give them an opportunity to speak. It was useful to see faces and body language to pick up non-verbal cues, because the researcher could react instantly to these cues and intervene to encourage a contribution and thus better manage the event. With single participants there was more opportunity to observe reactions, when there was a full screen on one person rather than distance shot on several people. Warnings were given two minutes before the allocated time slot for each question ended. Members of the pilot group had said that the professional development experience was attractive to them, and this was mentioned in the initial approach as an incentive. In focus groups participants could ask questions of each other, which was useful as they were following up on what other participants were saying and identifying areas of interest to them, for example in the Scottish focus group James asked:

“I was just wondering if you don’t mind me posing a question whether any of my colleagues today, you know, had a different or similar experience, sort of supplementary question.”

Time was made for his colleagues to answer him, which was important because it was an area of interest to him. According to Westley (1994), managers who are included in strategic conversations tend to feel included and energised. The mutual stimulation would be more likely to encourage creativity and reinforce the existing ideology. Participants in this study reported that the focus group was a stimulating experience that made them think and say things they had not voiced before, which came out of the sharing of experience and asking questions of each other. For sole librarians, this sharing of ideas with peer professionals was not a common experience in their jobs. Some participants reported that the experience had challenged them to follow up details of practice in other schools or to progress work in own school. It also provided staff development for participants, and the opportunity to spend time with their managers and colleagues discussing subjects they rarely talked about at any length. One point to

consider was that not all establishments had access to videoconference equipment. Some suggestions included using local businesses and colleges and one participant negotiated using business facilities of a local school parent. In summary, the focus group needed careful planning and preparation to ensure everything was ready, and that everyone had appropriate information in advance regarding the purpose of the exercise, as well as more practical details like the date, time, format and feedback method.

by Instant Messaging

This was used with a second US group. Participants needed access to the Internet with one kind of software at the same time. The software was usually available as a free download, and had to be tested in advance. There was no need for the researcher to transcribe as participants did that during the event, which saved a great deal of time. Once the session was typed up, it was easy to review the text content on computer. Responses were colour coded by participant. It was cheap to run, particularly for international sessions. However, it involved the schools getting special permission to install software due to virus concerns, although schools were reassured that it was only installed for a few days and taken off after the event. One potential participant was unable to take part because her school did not sanction the use of the software, and she was unable to travel to another site. It could be difficult to schedule a time suitable for everyone, and again the time difference needed to be considered. Although the researcher may be flexible, participants in other countries might not be open to carrying out the session in the evening or during the night. For the Instant Messaging focus group, transcription was done by participants as they typed in their answers at the time, which saved a great deal of time in transcribing, and efforts could be concentrated on the analysis. However this meant that there were some spelling mistakes, and some confusion over time delayed answers, where it was unclear which question people were answering. To clarify this, it was necessary to refer back to participants after the event. In retrospect it would have been easier if speakers in a time delay situation prefaced the answer with the question number identified by the researcher, as recommended with the videoconference session.

Once again, warnings were given two minutes before the allocated time slot for each question ended. People were interrupted in real-time outside the event but again there should be an agreement that they typed in the information that they were busy and again

when they were back in the session. In this case follow-up opportunity was useful to catch up with thoughts and reflections and where people might have missed a topic or answers from colleagues. Once all original responses from all styles of focus group were word processed, each document was read carefully, and every time a theme emerged, a written note was made in the margin, for example from the Scottish focus group by videoconference there follows in Table 3.8 a section spoken by school librarians coded S5 (code name Fiona) and S4 (code name James), and the researcher (coded R).

Table 3.8 Sample of analysis notes from focus group

<p><i>S5: I would say that most of the important decisions, anything which really affects the role of the library or making changes are made collaboratively there's always be done in consultation with my line manager with other members of staff, with pupils, whoever is seen as most appropriate to consult with, on the other hand I have to say that one of the things I like about working in the school library there is a lot of autonomy in making decisions about the day to day running of the library</i></p>	<p><i>Decision</i></p> <p><i>Collaboration</i></p> <p><i>Decision</i></p>
<p>R: Thank you, S4?</p> <p><i>S4: I think a lot depends on the level of support that one gets within the school, the head Teacher, Senior Management or from local Education Resource Service, whoever it may happen to be. If you are in the position that if you want to take decisions but you can't get information relevant to these decisions or you're not part of the process whereby you can find out it comes under a communication issue relevant criteria for making the decisions. That can be disadvantageous. Whereas if you're in the position where you're kept well in touch with things so I certainly again agree with everyone else when they say I feel that with the decision making process can't be taken in isolation from things like, you know, communication or just from the librarian or library resource centre manager or whatever but also to that individual not just for the school but more also sources outwith the school and I think that very much determines whether you're making the correct decisions if you have the correct information.</i></p>	<p><i>Support</i></p> <p><i>Decision</i></p> <p><i>Communication</i></p> <p><i>Decision</i></p> <p><i>Communication</i></p> <p><i>Decision</i></p> <p><i>Communication</i></p>

Open headings were made for each theme, such as decision and collaboration, and written on returns. Each heading and subheading was annotated with each occurrence of the theme, who said it, (using codename) and where it could be found. This was a very time consuming process, but it was important as it gave depth and richness to data.

Validity, trustworthiness and member-checking

Questions had to be carefully formed to elicit data required and for triangulation. It was vital to manage the event well to ensure that everyone had an opportunity to contribute, so the researcher had to be alert during the process to identify through non-verbal signals such as body movement and facial expressions who might want to speak. It was important to build up relationships with potential participants in advance, particularly where follow-up activity was planned.

Burton (1990) suggests that a mechanism for feedback be provided, either by providing a final questionnaire on how easy it was to complete the original collection tool, or by interviewing respondents as soon as possible after completion. Stressing the confidentiality of the use of data and what will result from its collection would help to reassure those who may be uneasy at sharing information. It was important to give participants feedback so that they felt valued and that their participation and sharing of professional experience was respected. It was decided in this study that a brief questionnaire allowing maximum flexibility to respondents to answer in a personal way would encourage them to submit a response after completing the focus group. This method was chosen because it was likely to elicit the most amount of personal disclosed information, and it was hoped that more information would be disclosed in the follow up exercise. This follow-up opportunity two days after the event was useful to record thoughts after the event as Burton outlined, but also allowed respondents to discuss topics they might be unwilling to share in a public forum with managers or colleagues. Feedback from participants at the time of the focus group or in the follow-up questionnaire was very positive, and showed how they viewed and valued the experience. From the second US focus group Karen said: *“This has been fun and interesting.”*, while Karri added: *“This has been a lot of fun.”* Donna said: *“I think it’s a great idea, and I hope we can do more of it.... I just have to convince the powers that be.”*

From the Scottish focus group, school librarian James said: *“It was enjoyable and challenging, I enjoyed meeting my virtual colleagues elsewhere.”* On specific ways forward, there was some comment after taking part in focus group. In the second US focus group, librarian Karri reflected that she:

“Will speak to my Principal about planning decisions – although I need to start thinking myself, he needs to join in at a later stage so we make sure bigger school impacts are considered.”

US school librarian Donna identified in the same focus group the *“Need to tell my Principal that what we do in the library is outstanding.”* Several participants identified the intellectual discussion as of value to be repeated. Responses were typed and added to analysis grid as already outlined, building up data from a range of methods.

3.7.4 Critical incident reflective diary

Purpose

The critical incident diary features in Appendix J; the follow-up questionnaire in Appendix K. The purpose of using the diary was to present participants with a structured approach to record the progress of a decision made over time, to give an insight into thought processes and challenges. A follow-up questionnaire was offered to allow a further opportunity to contribute ideas after reflecting on submitting the critical incident diary, and was sent out when a diary return had been received.

Aims and objectives

The results from the critical incident reflective diary and follow-up questionnaire to librarians and Directors of School Library Services in both countries contributed towards meeting Aim 1 and Objectives a, b, c, and d.

Aim

- 1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioner in the high school library environment

Objectives

- a) To establish how decisions concerning high school libraries are made and to identify the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based high school librarian

- b) To discover who is involved in the decision-making process in high school libraries
- c) To compare differences between countries about decision-making
- d) To establish if formal decision-making processes are used

A main outcome of using the critical incident reflective diary and follow-up questionnaire with school librarians was to draw out their opinions, knowledge and experience.

Specific sampling

Initially focus group participants were approached to take part. Critical incident reflective diaries were returned from eight Scottish librarians and six US librarians. Two journal articles were published on the personal visits to US school libraries, noting differences between high school library provision in the two countries, and the reflective diary was offered to readers in the articles. One US and eight UK librarians showed an interest and were sent the diary, but only one English librarian contributed a return, and this was not included in this study as it was from a country outwith the sample. There was possibly more confidence from using the diary from focus group participants as they had taken part in previous study data collection and may have gained in confidence from participating in the diary method because they knew the kinds of questions being asked and had already undertaken a focus group experience.

Specific approaches/permissions

No new permissions were sought for this stage. In addition to respondents who had already taken part, potential new respondents were self-selecting.

Critical incident reflective diary design

This method consisted of a structured critical incident reflective diary, and a brief follow-up questionnaire. The diary started with an introduction to the method, an explanation of why it was being used, and instructions on how to complete it were given. Contact details were given if assistance was needed.

Follow-up questionnaire

The follow-up questionnaire was useful by providing a way of reflecting on using the diary. It asked some very simple questions.

Piloting

This method was piloted with two librarians in each country. There were some problems, largely relating to confidence, in using this tool. At the pilot stage the diary was called a “critical incident diary”, as reflected in the literature, but participants did not easily identify with the term and they reported that they felt it was daunting. After discussions with the pilot participants investigating what was daunting, it was discovered that there were two main problems: the first was the actual term critical incident diary and the second was the process of recording data. In order to try to solve the first issue, the tool was renamed “reflective diary” which seemed to be more acceptable and less intimidating.

The second issue was more complex and showed a lack of confidence in the ability to complete the tool. The pilot librarians checked that what they were doing was “right” as they felt that what they were recording should be more complex and theoretical rather than related to their everyday work. They needed reassurance that the kinds of things they were raising were indeed appropriate and valued. This reassurance was therefore built into the instructions given at the beginning for the main group of participants, giving examples of the kinds and levels of topics that might be included, and a personal email or telephone assurance of what was expected was given before the tool arrived.

It was hoped that examples would not have to be given as it was not desirable to lead participants into “safe” areas of discussion, and in fact two people did raise a topic that had been given as an example (bid for money for computers.) This could have meant that some more personal and original ideas may not have been raised in this study, but it was largely unavoidable because it was evident during piloting that some guidance and reassurance was required. However once the diary had been used, respondents would no doubt gain in confidence and feel more able to use the method covering new topics.

Critical incident reflective diary structure in detail

The diary began with details of the respondent name, post and school, for identification purposes. As there were a smaller number of respondents than with questionnaire survey and vignette, there was less need to code respondents. They were asked to note the decision or topic they were tracking, and say how the topic had been identified; when it was identified and who was involved in this. This gave clear indication of the topic and its derivation. There followed five identical sections which could be repeated.

This was considered to be useful for respondents who wished to word process the document, who could easily customise the format to suit the size of their responses, however many completed it in pen. Each section was headed key date, and information required was the date something happened; what happened; who was involved; why they were involved; what progress had been made and what the difficulties were. With such a wide range of potential topics it was difficult to provide for every eventuality, however these headings were considered to be generic enough to meet most needs. After five key dates were completed, there was an opportunity to repeat as needed.

The next section involved reviewing the decision-making process. Respondents were asked what the final decision was; if they were happy with it; what the compromises were; how the decision was implemented; how it was communicated to people; was the decision reviewed (if so, when and how; who was involved; what was the result of the review) and if not, why it was not reviewed. The final questions were reflective. The first part was that they were asked if they were starting to make the decision again, would they undertake it in another way. This was to establish if they had learned from the process in retrospect. They were then asked what they had learned from making this decision, which was intended to show the learning that had been made; and the last part how the diary had been useful, which again provided an opportunity for reflection. There was a space available for other comments they wanted to raise.

Follow-up questionnaire structure in detail

Respondents were asked how useful they had found the diary, and the next question asked them to add in comments they had about using it, to establish the clarity of using the tool. This was followed by a question asking about thoughts that had occurred after having submitting the diary, to provide a reflection opportunity. They were then asked if they would be likely to use a similar format again, and for what purpose, to establish if they had found it to be a useful tool for practice, and what they might use it for. The final question asked if practice had changed as a result of using the diary, to identify any insights into the introduction of using such a tool. There was a final comments area.

Data analysis

If a response was not forthcoming to the diary, a follow-up email was sent after two weeks, then a month later, both stressing how important their thoughts were and

emphasising an incentive of how the final model would be shared with them before the wider public. This resulted in eight returns, five from Scotland and three from US. As described before, each return was annotated whenever a theme had been mentioned. As demonstrated in previous methods, a grid was constructed to list topics raised, along with their code names. This made it easy to see at a glance what people had said. Any response that was unclear was checked with the respondent as soon as possible. The follow-up questionnaire was annotated and added to the grid in the same way. An excerpt of data analysis of critical incident tools is shown below in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9 Sample of critical incident diary analysis

Name	Theme	Method
Nell SCOTLAND Ellen US	Planning time needed (Boys' reading initiative)	Critical incident diary Critical incident diary
Nell SCOTLAND Ellen US	Collaboration	CI follow-up questionnaire Critical incident diary
Nell SCOTLAND	Review period	Critical incident diary
Iona SCOTLAND Mary SCOTLAND	Library not a priority for management	Critical incident diary Critical incident diary
Iona SCOTLAND	Time consuming	CI follow-up questionnaire
Iona SCOTLAND	She does have power	Critical incident diary
Linda SCOTLAND	Simple solutions needed	Critical incident diary

When responses were returned, a personal email was sent acknowledging this, thanking them for their contribution and making at least two comments on what they had said, for example to the Scot who was code-named Linda:

“Thanks for returning the critical incident diary – I appreciate the time you spent on this. It was interesting what you said about getting to see the development plan in advance for the whole school. It must make such a difference to your work to see that so that you can base yours on what everyone else is working to.

And I can understand that some staff might not like this, but at least with the backing from your managers the whole school approach of what the library does is emphasised.”

The follow-up questionnaire was also useful for providing reflective comments. For example, Scottish school librarian Nell stated in a follow-up questionnaire that after using the critical incident diary:

“I would like to continue writing things down and somehow formalising it all.”

By working through a process analysing her thoughts and approach to decision-making she found this to be a useful way to logically think through a problem.

Validity, trustworthiness and member-checking

As already outlined, a follow-up questionnaire was provided to respondents of this method, as it was thought useful to give them the opportunity for reflection time to add any extra comments since they responded. This brief questionnaire can be found in Appendix K. It was emailed to participants two days after receipt of the critical incident diary (as far as was practicable), along with a thank you message, mentioning at least one positive comment relating to their diary return. This was included to demonstrate to participants that their contributions were valued and to include a personalisation of the experience and their contribution.

3.8 Reflections on the effectiveness of methods used

All methods used in this study were chosen at the time in order to gain the information to meet the stated aims and objectives. It was important to constantly be reminded of this connection and not to lose sight of the main purpose, and this was done by referring to aims and objectives regularly and matching proposed methods and potential questions in the methods to these outcomes. In retrospect after such a protracted period of study, certain decisions about the choice of methods, questions or the timing might be changed if the process was to be repeated at this stage, but at the time that these methods and questions were considered, designed and implemented, what was considered to be the best method and the questions best suited to gain the answers to meet aims and objectives were used. At that point, it was not known what issues might be raised by respondents, nor what difficulties might arise from using certain methods, and indeed methods were chosen to allow issues to emerge.

Mixed methodology was implemented in this study. The range of methods chosen veers towards qualitative techniques, apart from the initial questionnaire survey which was a mixture of basic quantitative data and some qualitative data. This initial quantitative information was useful as background, to set the scene and provide statistical comparisons. Choosing mainly qualitative methods was a conscious decision as the focus of the study was intended to be on largely personal thoughts, experience and opinion, and to provide a contrasting approach by using a suite of methods, where one method fed from another, extended existing findings and provided deeper insight into issues. This focus on qualitative methods involved much more time in recording, analysing and categorising data than would have been the case with more quantitative data, but was invaluable because of the richness and depth of the information expressed by respondents.

The mix of methods was effective in that it provided a range of tools that elicited different information, for example the critical incident diary gave an opportunity for respondents to write down each stage of a process and provide a way to track a decision and who was involved at each stage. This would have been difficult to collect in a method such as focus group, where the strength is in inter-respondent discussion and the detail would have been more difficult to relate in a group discussion. The strength of the focus group is that it provided a way for respondents to discuss and challenge their own perceptions with other professionals. This could not have been done in the same way in a single interview, where the stimulus of others would not have existed. By appreciating and applying the strengths of each method, different aspects were drawn out from respondents, and an element of complementarity was evident. As a whole, the range of mixed methods used in this study were effective in meeting the aims and objectives.

More detail is provided below when reflecting on each method.

3.8.1 Literature review

The literature review had many strengths: it set the scene; established background information; identified possible themes to explore; identified key authors and literature in the field; examined the use of EBP in other fields; and introduced possible innovations and new lines of research. As would be expected, this was the basis of the whole study.

After the initial extensive search, the regular three-monthly search was important to maintain. It provided a different focus to the detail of the findings, and showed links between findings and writing. It also provided a welcome change of pace for the researcher and refreshed the study by providing new ideas. After the update of the literature review, there was then an opportunity to go back to the data and collection tools with a new perspective.

Weaknesses of the literature review as a method included the amount and variety of material and various ways to access to literature. In the past, a literature search could be done in one room in a library, using published indexes, abstracts, journals and monographs. It was time-consuming as searches had to be repeated for each year and issue if an annual digest was not yet available. The quality of material was obvious, because of the academic rigour involved in getting an item published. Now there has been such a massive explosion in the amount of literature that it is difficult to ensure that all relevant items have been read and that they are of good quality. Material can be accessed physically as before, but in addition there are now many more ways to access, such as through Internet search engines, databases, websites, author sites, professional sites, student-restricted sites, electronic books and journals and library catalogues. Anyone can now publish on the Internet, so the academic rigour behind literature publication is not always so obvious, and more checking and corroboration is needed. However electronic searching means that there is an opportunity to do one search to cover all years rather than searches for each year of publication, which saves time. As had been suggested by the findings, a digest of key professional issues bringing together research, practice and grey literature in mainstream journals would be of use.

3.8.2 Questionnaire survey

The strength of the questionnaire survey was that it was a useful starting point to help establish basic background detail. The quantitative data was categorised and coded to show comparators, similarities and differences. Qualitative data gave a hint to the wealth of information that would be discovered and explored in more detail by using other methods. In particular it began the process of identifying key themes that emerged later and were of importance to the respondents. These helped to form the model or framework of effective evidence-based practice. Weaknesses were that the mix of quantitative and qualitative data made it difficult to code and categorise results on one

format, so two formats were needed to summarise the data collected, which involved moving between two collations and original documents for qualitative data. However this meant that the data was constantly being accessed, leading to more familiarity with it.

The questionnaire survey was a convenient method to use, being cheap to administer and with no effect of researcher bias. However there had to be a limit on the number of questions to guard against what Bryman (2001) calls "*respondent fatigue*." p131. In addition, there was no direct way for respondents to be helped if there was a problem with a question. Some respondents did make contact when there was a problem, but there is always the possibility that some did not clarify a misunderstanding. In retrospect, there were some problems for respondents in accessing and saving the data due to technical difficulties at that time, and if it were to be done now there would be an opportunity to put it on a website which would address these problems. Also different questions may now be asked, for example the policy questions provided such a range of percentages on time spent and optimum time spent on certain issues that the answers were not helpful, other than to highlight the wide variation in perception and possible confusion. Perhaps more questions could have been asked at this stage on the identification of skills and qualities thought to be needed to be an effective evidence-based practitioner, although this was followed up in more detail in later more qualitative tools.

3.8.3 Vignette

The vignette was designed in order to explore the thoughts and opinions of respondents about what they considered to be providing a good service. It was noted from questionnaire survey returns that some respondents said one thing was ideal, yet they did something different from that, for example some suggested it was best to review policy every two years, but they actually did it every five years. This started the process of trying to identify their opinion of best practice rather than their actual practice, which is why a fictional situation was developed, as it seemed easier to be critical with an objective situation rather than a subjective situation, and it was a less threatening approach. This objective viewpoint proved to be a strength of the method as respondents seemed keen to comment on the fictional situation and suggest improvements, without the feeling that they might be judged about replies concerning their own situation. One weakness of it was that the answers regarding an objective

situation might not reflect how they would act in their own situation, but this was acknowledged when the vignette was chosen.

3.8.4 Interview

Interviews were useful to directly ask questions to confirm and develop certain themes that had emerged from earlier data collection tools. Strengths were that any misunderstanding or uncertainty about the questions could be followed up immediately, and issues could be explored as they were raised by respondents. Interviews could also seem to be more user-friendly as respondents did not have to write anything down. A weakness could be that some respondents might find an interview daunting and might say what they think interviewers want them to say, rather than what their situations were. Also the fact that the interview was recorded might consolidate this feeling. However, assurances were made at the first approach to potential respondents that all information was confidential and would not be able to be attributed personally to any one individual, which provided a reassurance to respondents. It was important to be fully attentive to what the respondent was saying, so interviews were recorded using audio recorders. This meant that transcription had to be carried out later, but eliminated the distraction of taking notes. Questions were open so that respondents could reply fully and encouraged to relate their own experience freely, without restrictions of closed questions. Some very interesting information was gained from interviews, and respondents seemed to respond well to the method and were open to sharing their views.

3.8.5 Focus group

Focus groups were introduced in order to engage a range of respondents in a focused professional discussion exploring key themes arising from previous data collection tools. None of them had taken part in such a group before, so the idea was eagerly taken up by all participants who seemed stimulated by the opportunity to take part in something new to them, and also to have a chance to discuss aspects of their work and service with others. Once again this was something that they did not often have the opportunity to do, and most respondents reported that it provided useful staff development for them, they enjoyed the experience and intended to follow up certain aspects after the event. Strengths of the method were that people had a unique opportunity to focus on reflecting on professional issues with fellow professionals. Weaknesses included that one individual could dominate, however this was managed by the researcher by means of a

structured schedule, observation and active management of contributions from individuals and time management of questions. Another weakness could be that individuals might be unwilling to share thoughts in a group forum, and this was addressed by including a follow-up questionnaire to capture issues they did not discuss in public, and also reflective thoughts after the event.

3.8.6 Critical incident reflective diary

This was a new method for all who took part, and was intended to provide an indication of stages of a decision in a situation. This was the most difficult method to be implemented. The term critical incident diary seemed to be daunting for respondents, and more follow-up had to be done with this method. The term was changed to reflective diary, which seemed to give more confidence. Almost everyone who took part asked for advice and guidance, and asked for an exemplar. This was not originally provided because the researcher did not want to lead respondents in the choice of a topic or how it was followed through. However as there seemed to be a lack of confidence in completing it, two exemplars were provided showing a brief scenario and a more long-term scenario, and two respondents completed returns using one of these scenarios. The lack of confidence was initially surprising, but on consideration there were several factors that helped to explain this situation.

Firstly, this was a completely new tool for them to use, so they had to become familiar with it and learn how to use it. Secondly, school librarians often have a lack of time to reflect on professional matters compared to other librarians who may have more managerial and strategic duties away from the customer, so reflecting on a process could be a new skill for them, compared to professional librarians from other sectors who have this non-contact time. Thirdly, a lack of professional colleagues and opportunities for discussion was often the model seen in high school libraries in this study, and if working in a profession-specific team was not normal for them, it could be difficult to suddenly test out their skills and opinions.

Respondents often needed reassurance that they were choosing the “right” subject, or completing the diary “correctly”. The lack of prescription may also have been a factor that sapped confidence, because they would be familiar with many more limitations in their work, whether it was curriculum restrictions, money limits or internal authority or

school parameters. Many of them were not used to having a completely free choice of subject. The strength of this method was that it noted each stage of a decision, and who else was involved, which provided valuable information using real examples. A weakness was that the format and even the name seemed to unsettle respondents, who asked for more guidance and support.

3.8.7 Follow-up questionnaires to interviews, focus groups and diaries

These were provided largely as a result of respondents contacting the researcher after the interview stage, and asking to add more information. Perhaps they had thought of something else after the event, or they did not want to say something in front of peers or managers. The information was useful, and it was decided to include a brief follow-up questionnaire also to the focus group and diary respondents. The follow-up questionnaire was provided a day or two after the original event so that it was closely linked with that experience. The strengths of this method is that it allowed a reflective addition to the main tool. The weakness could be that it was seen as yet another thing to complete, but this was minimised by presenting it in a positive way by giving them another chance to add any comments, and by keeping it very brief.

3.9 Model building and testing

Purpose

The draft model is presented in Appendix S; Appendix T shows the annotated draft model, Appendix U the comments received on the draft model; Appendix V is the final model. A diagrammatic version of the model is in Figure 9.1. The purpose of creating a model was to represent how effective evidence-based practice in a high school library could be described, what skills and qualities were required; the nature of appropriate factors to be considered and what support and guidance was needed. In this way an audit could be made of the situation, and a plan could be made to improve individual and cultural effectiveness.

Aims and objectives

Results from all methods with high school librarians, their managers and Directors of School Library Services in both countries contributed towards Aim 2 and Objectives e) and f).

Aim

- 2 Critically analyse and relate the significant theories emerging from the literature with the empirical findings of a study based on the work of high school librarians in two countries, to develop a model which describes an effective way of implementing EBP in high school libraries

Objectives

- e) To prepare a draft model of good practice concerning effective decision-making in high school libraries
- f) Refine the draft model based on feedback from EBP research and data collected and suggest benefits from its use by researchers and practitioners.

Model design

Cohen and Manion (1985) describe:

*“Sometimes the word **model** is used instead of, or interchangeably with, **theory**. Both may be seen as explanatory devices or schemes having a broadly conceptual framework, though models are often characterized by the use of analogies to give a more graphic or visual representation of a particular phenomenon. Providing they are accurate and do not misrepresent the facts, models can be of great help in achieving clarity and focusing on key issues in the nature of phenomena.” p17*

In this study, the word model is not used to represent only theory, as the model represents the best of the practice reported by the literature and from respondents and was therefore largely based on practice. The model created was intended to give a more visual representation of the framework of best practice, to describe the outcomes of the study and to enhance the dissemination of understanding. It was considered a key part of the results to commit to produce a model which would represent the effective evidence-based high school librarian and library. The idea of a model, leading from theory into practice, had been planned from the start, as a practical way of drawing together best practice, the expertise and knowledge of school librarians, their managers and Directors of School Library Services and cascading this information back to practitioners. All potential respondents had been informed of this aim, and all who participated will receive the final model.

In order to meet aims and objectives already outlined, a draft model was created to outline an effective way of implementing EBP in high school libraries, based on findings from this study. This was intended to be of practical use to practitioners and their line managers, presenting essential elements to be considered when creating a culture of evidence-based practice. The model was created towards the end of the study, based on results from the data once it had been recorded, organised, themed and analysed. Certain relationships between themes arose from the data, and these were compiled into an initial model of effective evidence-based practice.

Validity, trustworthiness and member-checking

Member-checking was always planned to be an important part of the model construction as it was intended to ensure that stakeholders agreed with the summary of findings and recommendations made and to give the model credibility in the eyes of those involved: practitioners, managers and strategists. The model was a vital part of the thesis, because a practical outcome that would help practitioners to move forward and become more effective evidence-based decision makers was a major reason for undertaking the study. The draft model was created based on the results arising from this study and from the literature, including elements of good practice. It was presented to various respondents in each country for their comments. The draft model was amended to take account of all responses, which resulted in the final model.

The draft model that was created for this study was sent to participants for their comments and amendments. Member-checking was invaluable because respondents had contributed to the original data collection, were involved in the profession, and were expected to have a real insight into good practice, thus giving validity to the model. The question schedules for each group can be found in Appendices O - R. Four groups were member-checked: National bodies (Appendix O); Directors of School Library Services (Appendix P); School librarians (Appendix Q) and Headteachers (Appendix R). Responses from these groups are outlined in Chapter 9, collated and the model was amended to take account of their opinions. The final model can be found in Appendix V and diagrammatically in Figure 9.1.

3.10 Ethical issues

At all times in this study there was an overt approach to finding information, and respondents were not knowingly misled about what was being requested from them, and informed consent was sought after clarifying the purpose and outcomes of the study. To generalise the comments of Patton (1990) on interviews to all methods used in this study, but particularly the qualitative ones:

“Interventions..... affect people.... lays open thoughts, feelings, knowledge and experience, not only to the interviewer but also to the interviewee. The process of being taken through a directed, reflective process affects the persons..... and leaves them knowing things about themselves that they didn't know – or least were not aware of – before....thoughtfully reflecting on an experience, a program, or one's life can be change-inducing.” p353-354

This therefore made the process and the data highly personal at times, and it was essential not to abuse this trust. The nature of this study was based on responses from practitioners and stakeholders, so without their enthusiastic and generous responses, there would be no data to analyse. Assurances about confidentiality were made, and would be kept. It was made clear to potential respondents that their data would not be tracked back to them, and this was an important issue for some people who were in difficult situations. They were informed about methods used to record data, and that when analysing information, coded names were to be used when reporting responses from individuals, in order to anonymise their answers and prevent their identification. All who took part were offered the final model, and this will be passed onto them.

Building up the personal relationship with potential respondents and showing that their responses were valued was important because it was hoped that this would encourage them to respond at various stages, and efforts were made to personalise and acknowledge their responses at all times. For example, they were always emailed or written to individually, never on a group basis, and something they mentioned in a response was always included in the acknowledgment return, thanking them for taking part and showing that what they had to say was respected.

3.11 Presentation of findings

Presentation summary

The presentation of findings was tied in with analysis and emergent themes of analysis. For this study, data from quantitative and qualitative methods was included. For

quantitative parts of the questionnaire survey, background data and statistics were collected, categorised and analysed. More qualitative data raised issues and themes which were explored in more depth in future data collection tools. Overall findings from the questionnaire survey can be seen in Chapter 4. In more qualitative methods, as data was transcribed, coded and analysed, keyword headings were written on transcriptions, and transferred to a grid system as already demonstrated, and as outlined in Table 3.10 below in a grid form keeping together details of themes. Some people mentioned the same theme more than once, when using different methods.

This grid method was developed and built up over time and eventually themed chapter headings and sections were formed for presentation of data, depending on the nature of the information emerging, and these can be seen in Chapters 5-8. Following the iterative nature of the study, the general analysis grid was constantly amended and reorganised over the rest of the study.

There was a great deal of data to collate and organise, and it was important to be systematic, accurate and organised, otherwise data could be detached from its source coding, causing extra work in locating it and matching it against a participant's actual response.

Using such a grid allowed a clear view of emerging themes, and a useful reference to relevant respondents and data collection tools. At any stage it was simple to check themes on grids, and return to original data for more detail. As time progressed, more tools were used, more data was collected, and analysis grids were built up and developed. Themes emerged from this data analysis, and main themes formed chapter headings. These can be seen in Chapters 6-8. Case example in Chapter 5 demonstrates how a variety of factors operate on the ground. However, this is used in this study as an analytical tool rather than a data collection method.

Table 3.10 Sample of general data presentation grid

Theme	Source	Respondent
DECISION MAKING Training in decision making	Focus group Scotland	James FGS
	Questionnaire Scotland	James S4
	Focus group Scotland Questionnaire Scotland Interview	Fiona FGS Fiona S5 Fiona SI27
	Literature UK - letter in journal	Krasner (2007)
	Questionnaire Scotland Director School Library Service	Daisy DS1
	Interview Scotland school librarian	Deena SI3
	Literature – book (Law)	No Child Left Behind (2002)

Computer software was considered in order to collate and analyse data, and training was undertaken in systems halfway through the study, but it was decided that a manual collation of data would be used. Although it was recognised that a manual system would take a great deal longer to organise and collate, it gave the researcher complete control over the process, in-depth knowledge of data handling and analysis at every stage, as long as rigorous coding and storage of data was undertaken. When clarification was needed, it was simple to refer back to original documents.

Many copies of data were made at various stages, both printed and computerised, and clear labelling and dating of files was needed in order to ensure the most up-to-date version was in use. Copies of all original data were kept, a current master copy of analysis and themed work was kept, and a working copy was in use. The master copy

was updated after the working copy was amended. The original copies were never amended, so that all original data was always available.

Presentation summary

Complete lists of figures and tables can be found in the Contents section. Figures were provided for more graphical representations of information. Quantitative data was presented in tabular form, in order to clearly present the data and allow for categorisation and comparison. Results from quantitative data in the questionnaire survey were presented in their own right in Chapter 4. Results from more qualitative data gathered from other methods were presented thematically in chapters 6–8, and key themes which emerged from the findings dictated those chapter headings. A full bibliography is included in Contents, along with a list of Appendices. A glossary is provided in the Contents section to clarify terminology and acronyms used in the study. A thematic approach was used throughout the study in order to explore similar issues from different perspectives. From the questionnaire survey data, it was clear that it was not a simple matter of having adequate resources, library assistance and a supportive senior management team to provide the best service, as sometimes people who did not have these factors still worked very effectively. Results from qualitative methods provided more complex findings.

The final part of the presentation of data was the creation of a draft model. This was member-checked for two reasons, first in order to verify that respondents acknowledged it as a reasonable model describing the effective evidence-based practitioner and secondly to give them the opportunity to amend it to reflect their opinions. The final model takes account of feedback from respondents and summarises a consensus of opinion.

Main principles of the study were to be organised and systematic when dealing with data and literature. A main purpose was to collect, analyse and present a wide range of data over a sustained period. This led to the creation of a model that was checked with practitioners and those with an interest in the profession, to produce a final model of effective practice. It was important to accurately record what respondents had said, to protect their confidentiality, to analyse and present findings in a robust manner. At all stages careful reporting of the data from respondents who shared their thoughts,

experiences and opinions was a key priority. By working in a methodical way, the integrity of the data was intended to be preserved as much as possible, leading to more valid results.

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Chapter 4 Background questionnaire survey

This chapter investigates the results of the questionnaire survey, which was introduced early in the research in order to identify common themes and areas of concern from school library practitioners and Directors of School Library Services. As discussed in Chapter 3, after initial trials of the questionnaire surveys, different versions were designed for these two groups, in order to gain the most appropriate information from each group. In addition there were separate questionnaires for Scottish and US librarians, taking into account different terminology and systems, for example as there were no States in Scotland, Scottish schools did not have State guidelines. Questionnaire forms can be found in Appendices M (US Librarians); (N Scottish librarians) and D (Directors of School Library Services). Each section had a short explanatory guide clarifying why questions were being presented.

From the results of the questionnaire survey the common key themes and services identified by practitioners at that time were established. Questionnaire results informed the vignette (presented in Appendix L) which was later developed to highlight and investigate in more detail what had been identified by practitioners as key themes in the questionnaire. Appendix J includes the critical incident or reflective diary. This was distributed to those librarians visited, interviewed, or in the focus groups. A limited number of follow-up questions were given to those who completed the critical incident or reflective diary (Appendix K).

This chapter reports on the results of data collection from the survey. Data is presented in terms of quantitative background information and some qualitative responses. Overall evidence emerged and some specific quotes and examples are given. Coded names of individual respondents were used in order to preserve their anonymity. Some of the responses demonstrated a range of practice from case examples, which were presented in more detail in Chapter 5.

4.1 Participation

Chapter 3 gives more details of how contact was made with potential participants, as part of an outline of methodology. Once direct contact was made with librarians in high schools, an explanation was given of the nature of the study and what was required of participants. They were asked to complete a questionnaire and vignette. The positive

results of the study were also communicated to them, which were that participants would be able to contribute to a wider professional study, furthering their own professional development and that they would be given first access to a model of good practice. Confidentiality assurances were made, and also that no authority or individual would be identified. To that end, when reporting data, coded names were used for all participants. A grid was created which linked in coded names with real names, in order to avoid confusion.

To make comparisons between the two countries simpler, when dealing with financial information, dollar amounts were converted into pound equivalents, at the rate of \$2 per £1 sterling as an approximate figure. Comparative price levels between the two countries were sought. These are defined by OECD (2007) as the ratios of purchasing power parities for private final consumption expenditure to exchange rates. To put it simply, to buy the same representative basket of consumer goods and services in the United States at the time of writing (June 2007) would cost 100 units compared to 118 units in the UK. This difference should be borne in mind when comparing monetary figures in this study. However the International Labour Organization (2007) caution the comparison of cost of living data between different countries because convergence in the rate of change of prices do not imply convergence in price levels. Also these figures are national averages and do not reflect differences between living in a high cost urban environment and a lower cost rural community. Nevertheless, the figures given provide a general guide that prices in the USA tend to be less than in the UK and that US school librarians generally have more spending power compared to Scottish school librarians.

4.2 Background

Questions in this section were set to determine basic background details about the working environment of the high school librarian, allocation of funds, staffing structures and seating levels. This would help to put the role into context, show similarities and provide comparisons.

4.2.1 School rolls

Respondents were asked how many students were in their schools, and after collecting responses, results were banded according to whether school rolls were defined in this study as small (up to 700 students), medium (701-999 students) or large (1000 students

or more). Figures from this response would help to determine the amount of money spent per student, by dividing the library budget (collated in Table 4.6) by the number of students.

Table 4.1 Student roll figures of sampled schools

School roll	% schools sampled – Scotland (n=27)	% schools sampled – US (n=22)
Small	25.9 (n=7)	27.3 (n=6)
Medium	48.2 (n=13)	13.7 (n=3)
Large	25.9 (n=7)	59.0 (n=13)

As can be seen in Table 4.1, a quarter of Scottish schools surveyed were termed as small schools of under 700 students. Almost half of the schools had a medium to high roll of over 701 students, with a quarter of schools having large rolls of 1000 students or more. Sizes in Scottish schools ranged widely from 360 to 1480 students, representing typical school sizes in Scotland.

The average Scottish roll was 863 students, with 41% of sampled schools falling under this average figure. US school rolls ranged from 325 to 2569 students, a wider range than Scottish schools surveyed. There was a similar distribution of school roll in both countries, however US schools surveyed included a greater number of larger schools, at 59% compared to the Scottish figure of 25.9%. The average US roll was 1209, with 54.5% of US sampled schools falling under this figure.

4.2.2 Staffing

The questions in this section aimed to establish basic conditions of postholders and to give background information on staffing issues. Options were given in order to make banding of statistical information simpler. In order to hold a school librarian post, all US librarians in high schools had to qualify and practice as teachers before becoming librarians, whereas Scottish librarians did not require to be teachers for their posts. An element of teaching was evident amongst US staff, and they were often known as Library Media Specialists (LMS) or library teachers.

Respondents were asked to identify if they had any assistance in delivering library services. Results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Assistance for librarian

Assistance	% respondents Scotland (n=27)	% respondents US (n=22)
% of schools with assistance	85.1 (n=23)	90.9 (n=20)
% of schools with assistance over 17 hours per week	41.0 (n=11)	50.0 (n=11)

4.2.2.1 Scotland

Of the 7 smallest schools, 15% had assistants. These schools were all in the same authority, reflecting the decision of that authority that all school librarians would have assistance, regardless of student roll. In addition, 85.1% of sampled schools had additional help from students or technical assistants for an average of 3.7 hours each week. More than 4 out of 10 librarians had more substantial assistance of over 17 hours each week. With this extra help, there was potential for school librarians to be freed from certain clerical or non-professional tasks, allowing them to spend more time with students and teachers. Where there was no assistance, librarians would be responsible for undertaking these clerical duties in addition to their professional duties. And as can be seen, almost 6 in 10 Scottish librarians did not have this substantial help.

Duties carried out by library assistants were largely clerical. Duties carried out by student helpers included issue desk work; shelving; simple enquiries; photocopying; reporting problems; ICT and web work; mounting displays; suggestions for additions to stock. The technical help consisted mainly of network support duties, although other library duties could be included as required.

4.2.2.2 United States

Of the 6 smallest schools, 9% had assistants, compared to 15% of the Scottish sample of small schools. 90.9% of US schools sampled had some form of student/parent help

during term time, with a wide range of provision, of between 2 and 44 hours each week, with average help of 13.6 hours each week. No US schools surveyed had technical or clerical help. Three schools had two librarians in post and two of these also had assistants. Two schools of 3000 students each had 8 members of library staff (3 librarians and 5 aides each). Although the staff in these two schools dealt with a large number of students, proportionately this was still at a higher level than most schools. There was great potential in these two schools in setting up a team of library staff to appropriate levels of duties, keeping professional librarians occupied with professional duties, while aides could help with more clerical and administrative work.

Duties carried out by library assistants were largely clerical. Duties carried out by parent/student helpers included shelving; covering books; updating the bulletin board; processing books; issuing items; running errands; dealing with IT queries; watering plants; delivering fine notices; stocking paper in printers; withdrawing items; inventory recording and instructing other users in the use of the library.

Everhart (2001) carried out a US wide survey of library staffing, and found that few States required fulltime certified library media specialists regardless of school size, but she names 6 States that do require this at high school level. Some States allocate a librarian for a certain number of students, for example she quotes that Maryland requires a librarian for every 200 high school students, while Missouri requires a librarian for every 800 high school students. This wide variation means that there are very different levels of service provision to school students and staff. She describes how some States have site-based management (SBM), which means that a local area committee of principals, teachers and librarians make decisions about school libraries and staffing and there are no professional librarians in post, but aides staff the libraries. She claims that: *"In some cases, it creates weakened media centers."* p34.

In Everhart's report, ten States report that principals may choose to replace school librarians with technology specialists or co-ordinators since no State requirements exist to protect librarians. This could be of concern to the profession because if it is accepted that a person who is not professionally qualified as a school librarian is in place, then the expected skills of that profession might not necessarily be met.

Olson (1999) states that Chicago started a nationally funded *Library Power* (AASL and AECT American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology 1988) grant programme, with schools receiving matched funding for school library development. As part of this scheme they agreed to staff their libraries with at least a full time librarian, agreed to flexible scheduling and to encourage collaboration between the library media specialist and teaching staff. With such funding involving reciprocal commitment, real progress could be made. To support library media specialists in Chicago, six regional posts had been created, filled by experienced school library specialists, to assist with development and improvement projects and to motivate staff in school libraries. Out of almost 560 schools, 100 had no certified library media specialists at that time. Olson (1999) declares that:

".....where you find underachieving readers, you'll find inadequate libraries." p26

In this belief, she makes the case for ensuring that all school libraries should have qualified library media specialists working with teachers to deliver a service to promote achievement and support the school curriculum. In Chicago, this was expected to be a long process, but at least it had started. Olson (2000) quotes the case of California, where there had been a concerted effort to improve school libraries in the Norris School District. As its Superintendent Al Sandrini states:

"The resources themselves aren't the real key. The real key is putting that librarian and that teacher together to create those lessons and create that learning environment" p46

This acknowledgement that it is not just the resources that add significance, but how they are used and exploited by staff working together to further the learning of students, is an important key to the management contribution to promoting the value of the school library. Sandrini also emphasises the importance of what an enthusiastic librarian could do working in collaboration with teachers:

"...that building [the school library] is nothing but bricks and mortar. It's those people in there that make it what it is, and we don't forget that." p47

He also understands the lack of awareness some teachers have with regard to the contribution of the school librarian:

".. in all candor, many schoolteachers do not understand upon graduation from college and getting their credential the true impact of what the school library can be. So they need to be educated as well." p47

By following his suggestion, this input could be informal or more formal. Principals could encourage the librarian and teaching staff to work together and explore joint working to support the needs of the curriculum and constantly develop the information handling skills of students. More formally, there could be input into professional training of both professions to explore what could be achieved by teachers and school librarians collaborating. According to a report from the United States (US Department of Education 1998), 96% of public schools had library media centres and 68% of those had State-certified library media specialists. However about half of the schools surveyed did not have a full-time State-certified library media specialist, which could be seen as detrimental to student achievement.

4.2.2.3 Comparison

In many US schools, library staffing is allocated on a prorata basis by student number, therefore US schools with larger rolls tend to have higher staffing levels. In Scottish schools, the situation is generally that each school has a standard post allocation, regardless of roll or special identified need. Some Scottish authorities have library assistants in addition to librarians, but this was also regardless of roll and based on a standard post allocation for each school.

US and Scottish school librarians have different levels of support, with American school librarians more likely to have extra staffing levels for longer periods of time. This means that US school librarians have much more chance of help with clerical or non-professional tasks than their Scottish colleagues, allowing them potentially to spend more time with students and teachers on professional tasks. As Miller & Shontz (1998) state after a US-wide survey:

“Twice as many high-service LMSs [Library Media Specialists] have full-time paid clerks. Non-high service schools made more use of adult volunteers.” p29

“High service” is defined in this article as offering a large number of services (at least 17 out of 22 identified for the survey described in the article) with better materials budgets than others.

Scottish librarians are more likely to be sole workers in the library, and are therefore more likely to undertake non-professional tasks than their American counterparts,

because there is no-one else to do the work. They are also not required to be qualified as teachers, and possibly the combination of these factors gives them a different status from US colleagues to school users. Naylor (2001) says:

“To achieve higher status and appreciation, librarians and information specialists in the United Kingdom need to overcome history and complex cultural stereotyping. Early solutions to chronic ‘under-valuing’ are unlikely to be found. The higher esteem for libraries and librarians in the USA was because the Americans’ nearest equivalent to a national library was the Library of Congress, a great institution at the heart of their government, which inspires a special regard among those who have been elected to the responsibility of government.” p213

In a position statement on staffing school library media centres, the American Association of School Librarians (2001) call for at least one full-time Library Media Specialist in each school building at all grade levels, with professional and support staff necessary at all grade levels, with each school employing at least one full-time technical assistant or clerk for each Library Media Specialist. There has to be a District Library Media Director to provide leadership and direction. The demands of this statement are not being met in all American schools. In one State, guidelines outline a prorata allocation of library staffing, where the number of library staff would depend on the number of students, as illustrated in Table 4.3 (adapted from Missouri 2001, page 4.3):

Table 4.3 The Missouri School Improvement Program Standards for certified personnel (p4.3)

Students	Minimum FTE	Students	Desirable FTE
1-200	.20	1-150	.20
201-400	.40	151-300	.40
401-600	.60	301-450	.60
601-800	.80	451-600	.80
801-1000	1.00	601-750	1.00
1001-1200	1.20	751-900	1.20
1201-1400	1.40	901-1050	1.40
1401-1600	1.60	1051-1200	1.60
1601-1800	1.80	1201-1350	1.80
1801-2000	2.00	1351-1500	2.00

Continue the pattern for more students.

In Table 4.3, Missouri set out guidelines for the minimum and desirable number of certified staff in school libraries. This can be compared with a similar table from Wisconsin in Table 4.4 (adapted from Potter, Lohr and Klein 2002, p23):

Table 4.4 Wisconsin School Information and Technology Staffing Guidelines (p23)

Enrollment	Professional staff 1	Support Staff 2	Technical staff 3
1-299	0.5 - 1.0	1.0 - 1.5	0.5
300-799	1.0 - 2.0	2.0 - 3.0	0.5
800-1399	2.0 - 2.5	3.0 - 3.5	0.5 - 1.0
1400-2100	2.5 - 3.0	4.0 - 4.5	1.0 - 2.0

1 Library media and instructional technology professional (teacher-certified) staff – library media specialists and/or technology integrators, computer resource teachers, technology training specialists and so forth. A certified library media specialist is essential in every school.

2 Library media centre clerical/aide and computer lab/learning centre assistants

3 Technical support staff or computer technicians

As can be seen from the Wisconsin figures in Table 4.4, their staffing levels are higher than those of Missouri as presented in Table 4.3, however Wisconsin posts include staff with wider responsibility. The Wisconsin figures also specify the defined role of all library staff involved.

By providing clear guidelines about what was expected in schools, some States outline a basic level of service that is designed to be based on the number of students. These guidelines also refer closely to AASL statements and guidelines, giving a national focus and an effort to meet nationally agreed guidance.

4.2.3 Time spent by postholders as school librarians

Respondents were asked to identify how long they had been a school librarian. As can be seen in Table 4.5, while 29.6% of Scottish librarians in the sample had worked for three years or less as a school librarian (compared to 26.3% of US librarians), more than

half had worked for four years or more (compared to 73.6% of US librarians), indicating that a majority of respondents in both countries had a degree of experience in post.

Table 4.5 Length of time as school librarians

Period spent as school librarian	% respondents – Scotland (n=23)	% respondents – US (n=19)
Less than 1 year	8.7 (n=2)	0.0 (n=0)
1-3 years	26.0 (n=6)	26.3 (n=5)
4-6 years	26.0 (n=6)	26.3 (n=5)
7-9 years	13.1 (n=3)	10.5 (n=2)
10-12 years	13.1 (n=3)	10.5 (n=2)
13 years or more	13.1 (n=3)	26.3 (n=5)

4.2.4 Collection of resources – expenditure and stock levels

Respondents were asked how much money they received for school library expenditure. These figures were divided by student roll to obtain a per capita figure. These results were arranged into three bandings for ease of comparison. To make comparison simpler, budget figures are given in pound sterling equivalents, assuming the rate of \$2 to the £1.

Table 4.6 School library expenditure

Per capita budget band	% respondents – Scotland (n=27)	% respondents - US (n=22)
Lower budget rate (£3.00 and under)	59.3 (n=16)	4.5 (n=1)
Medium budget rate (£3.01- £4.99)	22.2 (n=6)	31.9 (n=7)
Higher budget rate (£5.00 and over)	18.5 (n=5)	63.6 (n=14)

4.2.4.1 Scotland

As can be seen in Table 4.6, the majority of Scottish respondents were in a lower banding, with 6 out of 10 spending under the average of £3.12, with a range of per

capita between £0.58 and £8.33. (These figures relate to expenditure in 2002). 40% of the librarians sampled spent more than the average per capita amount. The average total budget was £2543, with a range between £500 and £5500.

To compare with these amounts, figures from a national quantitative survey (CILIPS 2006) indicate that the average Scottish high school library expenditure in 2006 was £3.77 per student per year (see Table 2.1 in Chapter 2 for more details).

In this study, there was a major variation in the budgets between school libraries sampled, probably not aided by the lack of a national standard, meaning that Headteachers could allocate as they choose. They did not have to relate library expenditure to student roll or a percentage of overall budget. Such a variation would undoubtedly make it difficult for Ruby, the Scottish school librarian with a budget of £500 (a per capita or expenditure per student of £0.58) to provide an acceptable minimum level of service, equal to what Michael can spend, a librarian with eleven times that amount at £5500. Although it would be possible to develop services without much money (for example by developing reading groups and promoting information skills), and such a small budget might be sustained for the short term, eventually and inevitably the resources were likely to become increasingly unsuitable to meet the needs of users. Ruby reported that the amount of £500 was actually an increase from the previous year. The unit cost of resources remained the same for everyone, and with such a small budget it would be difficult to purchase a suitable range of updated materials relevant to the current curriculum.

The recommended level of secondary school library resource additions from the UK Library Association in 1996 was set at £14.09 per student per year, with an optimum figure of £16.91 per student per year (Tilke 1998), and although this is a useful guide, it should not simply be considered in isolation, as the issue of quality must be considered alongside this figure. In addition, this figure was set a number of years ago and current equivalent costs should be considered. No respondent reported a level of funding equivalent to the minimum standard, and the closest to it was Scottish librarian Michael, who received £8.33 per student. In comparison, Roberts (2005) states that in a survey carried out in England at the same time as this study revealed that the mean spending in

high school libraries was £6.62 per student per year, which is still more than the Scottish average.

National guideline documents such as the *COSLA standards* (Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities 1999) and local guidelines (for example Grampian Regional Council 1991) do not suggest a set figure or per capita amount or percentage of school budget as such, but suggest a vaguer term such as an *“adequate budget”* p5, which is not defined. This is not helpful because it lacks specificity and is open to various interpretations. What is adequate funding to a Headteacher may not be adequate to an English teacher trying to improve literacy or to a librarian trying to increase student skills in information literacy. There could therefore very easily be a different expectation from the librarian or teacher concerning what the library should and could offer, and what is possible with actual funding and staffing levels. Offering a more specific figure, perhaps tied into student roll or percentage of whole school budget, would help by ensuring that funding and staffing met realistic levels in order to fund at least a minimum service. However, as the school library is a non-statutory service in Scotland, it is acknowledged that it could be difficult for authorities to work to a firmer figure, as inevitably statutory services in schools will have priority in difficult financial times.

As the library in a school is part of a larger organisation, generally Senior Management Teams allocate a certain amount of money to the librarian for spending on school library resources and facilities. In most cases the budget allocation is not in the control of the librarian, as the final decision is made by the Senior Management Team. However in some schools there are invitations for bids for funding to be made for certain projects, which gives the librarian an opportunity to actively make the case. This is the case in some schools, where a certain percentage of the budget is given as a set amount, and a smaller percentage may be held back for general project bidding. By bidding in this way the librarian can influence management to gain more funds. Frances stated that she got more money because:

“A case for more was made and accepted.”

Christine said that she received:

“Per capita £1000; £2000 extra bids.”

Tim outlined how his budget was formed:

“£1400 per capita; £2000 fire loss [to replace items lost in a fire]; £1500 additional resource (Scottish Office monies with a “deprivation” tag attached to it.) The money was spent on software (edutainment).”

When respondents had identified reasons for a decrease in budgets, these were due to local government budgets where schools received less money than normal; or because new management made different budget decisions. For example, Rita thought that she got a decreased budget because she:

“Applied for less extra monies.”

Bearing this experience in mind, in order to gain most money it would be recommended to apply for as much relevant funding as possible, linking into potential curricular and literacy activity. Reasons given for increased budgets were given as new senior management; making a case for increased budgets; increased use of paper and printer ink because of a whole school network; money from government initiatives; and a long term need for library physical improvements.

Alanna explained how she got an increase in budget:

“The LRC is in desperate need of investment and updating. I took up this post at the beginning of 2002 and since then 15 new PCs have been purchased and £3000 of new stock has been ordered. The LRC will also be painted and new furniture will arrive in the summer holidays.”

The number of resources held in the library can be used as a measure of how well the library meets standards. The minimum level was set by the Library Association in 1996 (Tilke 1998) at 13 items per student, with 15.6 as a more effective measure. By this measure, 22.2% of libraries sampled met the minimum standard, while 74% fell below the minimum standard, with 3.7% meeting the more effective measure and 3.7% not responding to the question. The average figure for Scottish resources was 7937, with a range between 4300 to 15500 items. The average number of items added in the last year was 525 items, with a range from 100 to 1500.

4.2.4.2 US

The average US school library budget surveyed was £8679.18, which was almost 3.5 times that of the Scottish budget, with a range between £1000 and £17500 (Scottish was between £500 and £5500). The average per capita was £8.56, which was 2.75 times the Scottish figure, with a range between £3 and £20 (Scottish was between £0.58 and £8.33). There was a major variation in the budgets between each school library, and a

major difference between Scottish and US budgets. This average was more than the expenditure noted in a US wide survey in 1997-98 (Miller 2000) where the median was £5956. Even at this time, this figure was still more than double the amounts spent in Scottish schools. The amount of money available was likely to affect the range of services which could be offered. With more money, there was potential to provide more services. As Miller & Shontz (1998) state, what they define as “*high-service*” p28 schools spend on a national average £4.40 more per student on resources than non-high-service school libraries. “*High service*” school libraries are defined by them as providing at least 17 out of 22 identified services.

Although there were no US standards as such regarding expenditure on library resources, some respondents mentioned that there were minimum State standards for budgets, which schools would have to achieve. This would help the librarian gain the minimum level, although it would ideally need to be regularly reviewed and possibly index-linked to maintain its value. In addition, other fundraising was common, such as bookfairs, parent-teacher group contributions, charity donations from family and staff (including will donations) and birthday books (where in one school parents contributed £12.50 or so each year to celebrate their child’s birthday, and a bookplate with the child’s name displayed was inserted into a new book). This meant that the average library budget in this study was 2.75 times that of the Scottish average, and would allow US librarians to spend much more money on resources and services. Olson (1999) reports that the national average school library budget in 1998 was £9.37 per student, which is similar to the amount found in this study. She also reports that in Chicago in 1999, a further fundraising campaign was launched to raise £10 million for school libraries, which amounted to £17,500 for each school.

A digest of research into the impact of librarians to the learning and teaching process and ultimately student achievement (Scholastic 2004) shows the importance of the librarian’s role. One main principle leading to this is that:

“Library media specialists are supported fiscally and programmatically by the educational community to achieve the mission of the school.” p2

When respondents had identified reasons for decrease in budgets, these were due to previous excessive spending; falling economy and attacks on the US; and a reduction in State contribution. Reasons given for increased budgets included an increase in federal

funds for materials; to meet State standards; appropriate budget requests; increase in student use and collaboration; and an increase in student roll.

Using the UK minimum levels of 13 items per student and 15.6 as a more effective measure, 45.4% of US schools in this survey met the minimum standard, which was double the Scottish level, while 54.5% fell below the minimum standard. 40.9% of US schools sampled met the more effective measure, which was eleven times more than that of Scotland. US schools surveyed had a higher number of resources in the library, with an average of 12937 which was 61% higher than the Scottish figure, which was 7937. The range was between 3200 and 30000 items, which was a vast difference. The average number of items added in the last year was 815, 64% higher than the Scottish figure which was 525. The range was between 164 and 3000 items, again showing a wide spread of provision.

Although there was no US minimum figure for stock levels, some States or Districts in the US set a minimum resource level. Glick, Margolis and Olson (1998) report that there was wide variance in amounts of money given to school libraries. They quote that administrators in the State of California gave \$158.5 million for school libraries in 1998, while:

“In Chicago, as in many school districts nationwide, principals still have the discretion to not allot a single cent to their libraries.” p31

Hartzell (2001) is a former school principal with a more pessimistic view of budget cuts:

“If you wonder why funds for libraries and librarians are so easily cut, the answer is this: because they can be. No impassioned defenders rise to protect library media programs the way they rise to save treasured curriculum programs, teaching positions, or athletics. Without significant opposition, school boards and legislators are free to vote for library reductions, and administrators working on budget spreadsheets can strike their delete buttons – all unhindered by public or professional outcry.... Many, perhaps most of them [teachers and administrators] do not understand the value and educational potential of libraries and librarians. It isn't that they don't like them, and they certainly aren't out to “get ‘em”. Mostly, it's just a matter of indifference – and people regard as expendable those things about which they are indifferent..... Libraries and librarians are largely invisible to them.”

Hartzell identifies three problems causing this situation:

- Lack of input about the work of school librarians in teacher training
- Librarians' work is seen as one step removed from students
- Librarians haven't made themselves as visible as they could

However he proposes ways to increase the visibility of the school librarian:

- Make the role of the school librarian visible to those with power to make a difference
- Change the perceptions of the work of the school librarian by teachers and administrators
- Build a power base to influence the training of teachers and administrators and future school librarians
- Take on wider activities that are not part of the job description

Although he estimates that with a long and sustained effort large cuts might be banished in five years, he considers that it could take up to twenty years to affect the training issue. On reflection, this could be seen as a relay race, with librarians working together in taking up the baton to progress on a united front and to make real changes in perception of their role with regard to their contribution to educational achievement, on local and national levels. On a more pessimistic note, Chen (2007) reveals in a blog at a conference summit in Arizona that a presenter will speak:

“On library advocacy and fundraising with the presentation ‘Just because they love you doesn’t mean they’ll fund you.’ Ouch! But so very true.”

Advocacy therefore seems to be an important way forward, and if national bodies and area groups take on the role of co-ordinating such work, this will present an organised and consensual front to those who make funding decisions, and give strength and direction to individuals in schools.

4.2.4.3 Comparison

In this study, US school libraries tended to have more funding than Scottish schools. Almost two thirds of US librarians had budgets in the high band, compared to 18.5% of

Scottish school libraries. However meeting standards of resource provision only represented quantity, and was not an indication of the quality of the resources, so these figures should be taken in tandem with other more qualitative indicators, for example that resources are regularly purchased, stock checked and withdrawn and that there is a stock editing policy and stock quality checks. Later study visits suggested that US schools were more likely than Scottish schools to have access to electronic databases, but this did not mean that they compromised by having lower resource levels of hard copies. The extra funding in US schools meant that they could have both.

4.2.4.4 Seats

This section provided information about seating levels in the school library, which would give an indication of potential usage and range of activities. For example if a library had only 30 seats it would not be able to support both whole class activity and individual students. This would have an effect on how the library could be used.

Table 4.7 represented findings on levels of seating, related to roll, in school libraries surveyed.

Table 4.7 Seats in school libraries

Number of library seats	% of respondents – Scotland (n=27)	% of respondents – US (n=22)
Meeting 10% of roll	0.0 (n=0)	13.6 (n=3)
Exceeding 10% of roll	11.0 (n=3)	27.2 (n=6)
Considered to be sufficient by respondents	7.5 (n=2)	36.3 (n=8)

4.2.4.4.1 Scotland

In the UK, minimum seating level was recommended at 10% of the school population by the Library Association in 1996 (Tilke 1998). In the Scottish sample, just over a tenth exceeded that level. Percentage of seats in the school libraries ranged between 2.6% to 11.1% of the school population, with an average of 6.6%. Actual numbers of seats ranged between 24 and 100, with an average of 56.

More than 9 out of 10 respondents reported that the seating levels in their libraries were insufficient. Some librarians reported having to turn students away from the library at times due to a lack of seating. If school libraries could aim to seat the minimum level of 10% of school roll, there would be more opportunity that the library could be used for additional activities. However, providing this level of seating would not address every issue. Rita had an interesting opinion which raised another problem for her:

“Possible [sic] too many [seats], because when they are all filled then there are too many students for one librarian to look after. Adequate if another member of staff is present.”

Rita worked in a small school of 574 students but had no assistance at all in the library. She had seats for 8.5% of the student roll but seemed happy not to increase the number of seats because she considered that this would give her more problems in terms of supervision.

4.2.4.4.2 US

40.8% of US participants met or exceeded the UK minimum standard. It is interesting that more than a third of US respondents with less than the UK minimum level of seating considered that they had sufficient number of seats for activities taking place in the library. This could reflect the fact that US libraries tended to be much bigger and had more seats than Scottish school libraries, but in terms of proportion of school rolls, both countries had a similar range of results.

To reinforce this, percentage of seats in the library ranged from 2% to 16% of the school population (Scottish figures were 2.6% to 11.1%), with an average of 8.6 (Scottish figure was 6.6%). US schools surveyed reported the number of seats in libraries to range between 40 and 300, compared to Scottish figures ranging between 24 and 100, with an average of 90, more than half as much again of Scottish figures.

4.2.4.4.3 Comparison

Almost four times the number of US school libraries than Scottish schools surveyed met or exceeded the minimum standard of seats set by UK standards. There was also a different use of the school library by each country – in America school libraries tended to be part of a larger learning centre with adjoining rooms and study support. On later visits made during the study, many of the US school libraries examined indicated that many

had room for two or even three classes at a time (60 or 90 students), and many had adjoining suites of rooms for different activities, such as computer rooms, audiovisual preparation rooms and conference facilities, with accompanying collaboration between librarians, teachers and technicians. Such a model could be said to encourage collaboration because these staff were situated in or adjoining the library. Scottish libraries visited tended to be smaller and more self-contained.

As with the budget available to buy resources, number of seats was only an indication of quantity, and did not demonstrate how the library was used. So much depends on the layout and position of the library, and what activities took place there. For example, a library may have less than 10% of roll seating provision, but the librarian may deliver a full timetable of activities, including collaborative group work and information literacy and technology instruction.

The librarian might also carry out more activities outwith the library, in classrooms or computer rooms, for example. Another library may exceed the 10% seating standard, but there may be little use of the facility and the librarian during the school day, for whatever reason. It would be recommended that the actual number of seats related to the proportion of the school roll be taken into consideration along with the range and quality of activities that happened in and outwith the library.

4.3 Services

School librarians were asked about the kinds of services and facilities on offer in school libraries. They were given an opportunity to answer this in their own words, to avoid leading respondents by providing key phrases or subject headings. This provided a range of topics, outlining core services.

4.3.1 Core services

School librarians were asked to identify six core areas they felt should be offered by all school libraries. Their free text headings were collated into common headings, as presented in Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8 Recommendations for core services in all school libraries

Services offered	% of libraries offering this service – Scotland (n=27)	% of libraries offering this service – US (n=22)
Library skills	88.8 (n=24)	59.0 (n=13)
Computer instruction	88.8 (n=24)	63.6 (n=14)
Resources to support the curriculum	62.9 (n=17)	54.5 (n=12)
Reading promotion	62.9 (n=17)	86.3 (n=19)
Resources about careers and jobs	40.7 (n=11)	9.0 (n=2)
Book borrowing	37.0 (n=10)	45.4 (n=10)
Assisting users	33.3 (n=9)	54.5 (n=12)
Reference service	33.3 (n=9)	31.8 (n=7)
Study area	29.6 (n=8)	13.6 (n=3)
Inter library loans	18.5 (n=5)	0.0 (n=0)
Good access	14.8 (n=4)	59.0 (n=13)
Working with teachers	14.8 (n=4)	77.2 (n=17)
Author visits	7.4 (n=2)	0.0 (n=0)
Automated catalogue	7.4 (n=2)	36.3 (n=8)
Cataloguing & classifying	3.7 (n=1)	4.5 (n=1)
Experts in technology	0.0 (n=0)	72.7 (n=16)

4.3.1.1 Scotland

As shown in Table 4.8, the two core services most frequently named by Scottish respondents were library skills and computer instruction, which were identified by the majority. Resources to support the curriculum and reading promotion were identified by more than 6 out of 10 respondents. Perhaps surprisingly, working with teachers, or collaboration, was only identified as a core service by 14.8%. However some respondents did refer to collaboration in other parts of the questionnaire. No Scottish participants identified that the librarian was seen as an expert in technology.

4.3.1.2 US

As can be seen in Table 4.8, American school librarians in this study identified different priorities from Scottish colleagues, with more emphasis on technology and working with teachers. More than 7 out of 10 US respondents highlighted their role as experts in technology, which demonstrated the different perception and role they played as ICT experts in school. Resources about careers and jobs did not feature highly as this role was not the responsibility of the US librarian, as later visits during the study proved that there was separate provision for careers information in the wider school remit. Working with teachers featured highly with more than 7 out of 10 participants.

4.3.1.3 Comparison

These results indicated the difference in services provided by US and Scottish schools. There were some interesting contrasts between the two countries. As shown in Table 4.8, the two main services of reading promotion identified by 86.3% of US respondents compared to 62.9% of Scottish respondents and working with teachers at 77.2% of US participants, five times the amount identified by Scottish respondents. Collaboration with teachers was obviously recognised by practitioners as a major part of the work of a US school librarian, while this rated with a much smaller number of Scottish respondents. Internet/ICT skills were identified by 63.6% of US and 88.8% of Scottish respondents. Good access to resources featured with 59% of US respondents, and only 14.8% of Scottish respondents. Library skills were identified by 59% of US respondents, compared to 88.8% of Scottish respondents. Inter library loans and author visits did not feature at all with US respondents, while Scottish respondents rated them at 18.5% and 7.4% respectively. Having a study area featured with 13.6% of US librarians, compared to 30% of Scottish and resources for careers and jobs only scored 9%, when this was a much larger part of the work of Scottish librarians as it rated 41%. Having an automated catalogue was mentioned by 36.3% of US respondents, and only 7.4% of Scottish respondents.

Smith (2001) reports:

“Central to all media programmes and perhaps the ethos behind media centres in many American schools is the collaborative teaching approach. This approach, supported by extensive research, concludes that information and technology skills are learned most effectively in a resource-based environment with the media specialist working in partnership with educators in all areas, administrators and community resources.” p5

In this study, US librarians demonstrated that collaboration with teachers was core to their work, while Scottish librarians placed more emphasis on teaching library skills. One element that was mentioned by 72.7% of US librarians was the importance of being acknowledged as experts in the use of technology, including a range of media including computers and other hardware, which was not mentioned by Scottish respondents.

It could be that they didn't see a role in the application of technology or that they did not differentiate between the application of existing services and they may have seen ICT as embedded in processes and services.

As was clear from later visits in Scotland, the role of advising on the technology of a range of media and hardware would generally be taken by a senior technician, while the librarian tended to concentrate on advising on the use of computers and the application of software.

4.3.2 Services offered

After respondents were asked to identify their own ideas for core services without prompting, as reported in Table 4.8, the next section offered a list of possible services they presently provide, to act almost as a checklist. There was a comment section to add in other topics. In the pilot of the questionnaire, certain headings were identified by respondents, used to create the headings in Table 4.9. However in the full survey, respondents introduced different headings, which were represented in Table 4.9.

Ideally the headings in Tables 4.8 and 4.9 would have been the same, but this did not happen in practice between the pilot group of three in each country and the wider sample group. In future studies, it would be recommended that the pilot group be larger.

Table 4.9 Services offered by sample libraries

Service	% respondents offering service – Scotland (n=27)	% respondents offering service - US (n=22)
Resources to support the curriculum	100.0 (n=27)	100.0 (n=22)
Advice on resources	100.0 (n=27)	100.0 (n=22)
Requests from own resources	100.0 (n=27)	95.4 (n=21)
User recommendations of resources for purchase	100.0 (n=27)	95.4 (n=21)
Teaching library skills	96.2 (n=26)	100.0 (n=22)
Resources about careers and jobs	96.2 (n=26)	81.8 (n=18)
Requests from other libraries	92.5 (n=25)	0.0 (n=0)
Computer instruction	92.5 (n=25)	95.4 (n=21)
Resources for staff development	92.5 (n=25)	95.4 (n=21)
Internet instruction	88.8 (n=24)	90.9 (n=20)
Author visits	70.3 (n=19)	22.7 (n=5)
Book review schemes	40.7 (n=11)	59.0 (n=13)
Reading Club	11.1 (n=3)	0.0 (n=0)
Video filming facility	7.4 (n=2)	50.0 (n=11)
Interactive whiteboard	7.4 (n=2)	27.2 (n=6)
Digital projector	7.4 (n=2)	63.6 (n=14)
Study skills	7.4 (n=2)	0.0 (n=0)
TV/video/audio	7.4 (n=2)	13.6 (n=3)
Information services for teachers	3.7 (n=1)	13.6 (n=3)
Preparation of curricular worksheets	3.7 (n=1)	13.6 (n=3)
Hire of video cameras to teaching staff	3.7 (n=1)	50.0 (n=11)
Homework club	3.7 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)

4.3.2.1 Scotland

From Table 4.9 it can be seen that all Scottish schools offered resources to support the curriculum; advice on resources; requests from resources and user recommendations for purchase. This emphasis on resource based services was not unexpected, as resources were a mainstay of the library. Teaching library skills and offering careers/jobs resources also featured highly, as did offering requests from other libraries; computer instruction; offering resources for staff development; Internet instruction, and, to a lesser extent, author visits. The instructional side of the librarian's role featured highly in this sample. Other library related services such as book review schemes and reading clubs were mentioned by fewer respondents. Some technical and equipment related services and curricular related services were each mentioned by one or two participants.

4.3.2.2 US

Once again, US emphasis was on technology, and acknowledging the role of the school librarian as an expert in that field. Resources to support the curriculum and giving advice on resources featured with 100% of US respondents. Requests from resources and user recommendations for purchase scored 95.4% from US respondents. No-one identified obtaining resources from other libraries, homework club or study skills as services.

4.3.2.3 Comparison

The fact that US staff tended to have more money and space than Scottish librarians meant that they were able to buy more equipment, and use connecting facilities to house and exploit it. US school librarians also appeared to be acknowledged as ICT experts in school. Another difference was that 22.4% of US librarians offered author visits, compared with 70% of Scottish librarians. In Scotland there was a nationally subsidised scheme to offer, fund and organise author visits, whereas American librarians would tend to source and fund such visits on an individual basis. No US respondents identified obtaining resources from other libraries, homework club or study skills as services offered, although a minority of Scottish respondents identified these areas. Resources to support the curriculum and giving advice on resources featured with all respondents. Requests from own resources and user recommendations of resources for purchase scored very highly in both countries. Scottish librarians tended to offer more traditional resource based and reading services, such as requests from other libraries where they did not hold requested resources; author visits and Reading Clubs.

4.3.2.4 New services under consideration

Participants were asked to identify up to three new services they may offer in the next 12 months. Responses were in their own words so that they would not be led by pre-selected headings, then collated and categorised, as outlined in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 New services under consideration to be offered in the next 12 months

Proposed service	% respondents considering offering new service – Scotland (n=25)	% respondents considering offering new service – US (n=22)
Formal computer/Internet instruction	20.0 (n=5)	9.0 (n=2)
Reading club	20.0 (n=5)	9.0 (n=2)
Author visits	16.0 (n=4)	13.6 (n=3)
After school clubs	16.0 (n=4)	4.5 (n=1)
Library webpages	12.0 (n=3)	27.2 (n=6)
Automated system instruction	8.0 (n=2)	4.5 (n=1)
Audiotape lending service	8.0 (n=2)	0.0 (n=0)
Book review scheme	8.0 (n=2)	9.0 (n=2)
More popular magazine and newspapers	4.0 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)
Scanning service	4.0 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)
Information skills	4.0 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)
Improved integration of LRC & curriculum	4.0 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)
Reading promotion	0.0 (n=0)	9.0 (n=2)
Student assistant program	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Storytelling	0.0 (n=0)	9.0 (n=2)
More team teaching/collaboration	0.0 (n=0)	22.7 (n=5)
Installing classroom libraries	0.0 (n=0)	9.0 (n=2)
Technology loan	0.0 (n=0)	27.2 (n=6)
Interactive whiteboard	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Offer staff sessions on new online databases	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Offer web construction course	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Technology instruction	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Networked catalogue	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Text book circulation	0.0 (n=0)	9.0 (n=2)
e-book circulation	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Promote award winning books	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Social events	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Investigate distance learning support	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
More computer seats	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Digitize year book for web page	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Web reviews of books	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)

4.3.2.4.1 Scotland

This list featured topics already raised in Table 4.9 (formal computer instruction; reading club; book review scheme) which could mean that respondents were influenced by seeing these topics in a list, however other topics had not been mentioned before and were raised independently by respondents. Reading clubs and Internet/computer instruction rated twice as much as with US colleagues, and after school clubs did not feature in US responses, which was probably because many US children were bussed to and from school and there was little after school activity, unlike in Scotland. Areas mentioned were largely to be expected as part of services delivered by a resource-focused school library.

4.3.2.4.2 US

Creating library webpages, increasing the loan of technology and more collaboration were important to approximately a quarter of US participants. Certainly having extra money was a factor that meant US librarians were in a better position to purchase more technology for lending. It was notable that US librarian Samuel said:

“Due to tight budget we will probably not be adding any new services in our media center in the next 12 months.”

It was interesting that he had not mentioned that he could add new services that would not cost anything, as many of the others suggested strategies that might not cost any extra money, but perhaps a reallocation of their time, such as creating library webpages or collaborating with teaching staff on information skills programmes.

4.3.2.4.3 Comparison

Once again, the emphasis on technology issues and collaborative working with teachers was evident with US librarians, and these did not feature so much with Scottish respondents, for example 12% of Scottish librarians were interested in creating library webpages, compared to 27.2% of US librarians. Many Scottish schools did not have webpages yet, whereas many US schools had whole school pages, making it easier to add in library pages to an existing site. It could be said that Scottish librarians showed an emphasis on more traditional library-related activities. It could be more difficult for Scottish respondents to allocate time to spend on new projects as they tended to have less staffing support than in US libraries. They also tended to have less money for new

projects than American colleagues, which would affect projects that involved an element of funding.

4.3.3 Reasons to offer new services

Respondents were asked why they had decided to consider offering these new services, as it was considered to be interesting to see to what extent users were consulted; how much was their own opinions; and if there was any influence from literature and research. They responded in their own words, as presented in Table 4.11, rather than be influenced by pre-selected choices.

Table 4.11 Reasons why new services were to be offered

Specific reasons	% respondents citing specific reasons - Scotland (n=22)	% respondents citing specific reasons – US (n=22)
Own opinion	63.6 (n=14)	40.9 (n=9)
Observation	22.7 (n=5)	13.6 (n=3)
Working with staff	22.7 (n=5)	0.0 (n=0)
Outside influences	9.0 (n=2)	18.1 (n=4)
No reason given	9.0 (n=2)	0.0 (n=0)
School circumstances	9.0 (n=2)	13.6 (n=3)
Requests from users	9.0 (n=2)	13.6 (n=3)
Related to library goals	4.5 (n=1)	13.6 (n=3)
Staff survey	4.5 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)
Student survey	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)
Idea raised by this study	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)

4.3.3.1 Scotland

As can be seen from Table 4.11, most Scottish responses indicated that although user identification, reacting to requests and observation by the librarian were factors, the opinion of the librarian was the major factor in deciding which services to offer. This demonstrated the perceived importance by respondents of the value of the experience of the librarian. However, as can be seen from Table 4.9, no respondents indicated that they used research or literature to get ideas, and only one respondent mentioned relating new services to library goals. Cher provided a typical answer:

“Because it makes sense.”

This explanation was presumably related to her perceptions of what was appropriate in her situation.

Renee reported that she offered the services she did because:

“Partly expectation and partly because they are representative of a modern school library.”

How she identified what was representative of a modern school library was not stated. In this climate of collecting evidence through qualitative indicators, it would seem to be valuable to collect concrete evidence through formal methods like user surveys. Findings contrasted with expectations of Inspectors to schools who expected to find such evidence relating library development with priorities of users. Relating initiatives to whole school needs and priorities and providing the evidence was considered to be a useful way of achieving success, as demonstrated in guidance on how to compile profiles (CILIPS 2007). This provides advice on compiling standardised information in preparation for formal inspections.

4.3.3.2 US

US responses indicated that although State or school initiatives, user identification and reacting to requests were factors, the opinion of the librarian about what was needed was the major factor in deciding which services to offer. 4.5% identified that this study had given ideas to consider for future use. An example of a typical comment was that from Cameron who considered that she provided the services she did:

“Because they are needed.”

This would probably be a result of her awareness of what was requested and keeping a communication channel open with users, rather than by a more formal method of recording needs. Sue Ellen used additional means:

“For a variety of reasons. I try to offer what teachers, students and administrators ask. Sometimes I hear about new services and then I ask if they’d like them.”

When she talked about hearing about new services, although this was not defined, it is likely that this could be through discussion with other colleagues or other librarians, or in literature or research she had read, or perhaps stimulated at a conference or training session.

4.3.3.3 Comparison

18.1% of US librarians identified outside influences as being important to them, compared to 9% of Scottish respondents, perhaps showing that as US librarians tended to have extra staff they were more likely to be able to concentrate more on professional

tasks and outreach. More US respondents showed a wider approach to library provision, and identified that they would consider more options than Scottish librarians, such as relating to library goals, outside influences and user requests. It was interesting that 22.7% of Scottish respondents said that they worked with staff, compared to none of the US colleagues. Perhaps US respondents did this on such a regular basis that they did not consider it to be a formal method, just a normal way of working.

4.3.4 Reasons why services may not be offered

Respondents were asked to consider why the services they had identified might not be provided within the next 12 months. This aimed to identify the practical problems encountered in the implementation of new services.

Table 4.12 Why proposed services may not be provided

Reasons stated	% respondents identifying reasons - Scotland (n=23)	% respondents identifying reasons - US (n=20)
Lack of money	65.2 (n=15)	30.0 (n=6)
Lack of time	60.8 (n=14)	65.0 (n=13)
Lack of teaching staff involvement	47.8 (n=11)	40.0 (n=8)
Not enough priority in school	30.4 (n=7)	15.0 (n=3)
ICT problems	13.0 (n=3)	5.0 (n=1)
Laziness on librarian's part	0.0 (n=0)	5.0 (n=1)

4.3.4.1 Scotland

As can be seen in Table 4.12, the main two problem areas were a lack of money and time to take forward new services. However, the support of teaching staff was also an important factor in the success of introducing a new service. If the proposal was not allied closely enough to school priorities, it was also likely to fail. The solution would appear to be to relate ideas for new services to identified user need as part of school priorities; by consulting staff and other users; and relating initiatives to planned implementation and funding.

4.3.4.2 US

The most common reasons offered why services may not be offered included lack of time; lack of money; lack of involvement with staff and lack of management commitment. However two interesting responses featured from US librarians – Sheena thought that she would not start a new service because of what she called her “*laziness*”, which could be related to a lack of time; while Bertie recognised that he would not introduce something if it were not needed in school. It could be questioned that if there was no need for it, why he would consider introducing it. Perhaps if it were an idea that he had raised, he could investigate its viability by asking staff and students for their opinions, thus progressing the idea based on some identified need and evidence.

4.3.4.3 Comparison

As can be seen from Table 4.12, lack of money was not such a crucial reason for projects to progress with US librarians – twice as many Scottish respondents as US librarians gave that reason. Lack of time was a major problem for most respondents from both countries, even if US librarians did have more staffing support. Perhaps by relating activity strictly to school and library priorities there would be more opportunity to deliver what was needed.

Twice as many Scottish librarians considered that projects might not be provided because of lack of priority in school, which would give an indication of their perceptions of the library’s role in the life of the whole school. Perhaps if Scottish libraries were better staffed, there would be more opportunity for them to venture more from the library and make more of an impact in whole school activities. US librarians were less likely to have ICT problems. The lack of teaching staff involvement was a serious concern to the work of the librarians of both countries and highlighted a capacity issue with the collaboration of staff in schools.

4.3.5 Decision-making in providing new services

In this section respondents were asked why new services they had identified in Table 4.10 were to be offered. This followed on from a previous question where they were asked to say why they identified new services, and where they had a free opportunity to respond, unhindered by pre-selected headings.

This present question gave them a range of pre-selected choices, with an option for them to add other means. The reason for doing this is to allow them to highlight methods they may not have already identified. They also had a comment section to add any other points.

Table 4.13 Identifying services for users

How services users need are identified	% respondents identifying method – Scotland (n=27)	% respondents identifying method – US (n=22)
Ongoing observation	100.0 (n=27)	100.0 (n=22)
User requests	100.0 (n=27)	100.0 (n=22)
Ideas from professional literature	100.0 (n=27)	95.4 (n=21)
Discussion with school management	96.2 (n=26)	86.3 (n=19)
Meetings with heads of department	92.5 (n=25)	77.2 (n=17)
User comments	81.4 (n=22)	86.3 (n=19)
Survey of users	62.9 (n=17)	72.7 (n=16)
Attending curriculum meetings	55.5 (n=15)	81.8 (n=18)
Specific observational study	29.6 (n=8)	40.9 (n=9)
Suggestion box	29.6 (n=8)	22.7 (n=5)
LM_NET	0.0 (n=0)	9.0 (n=2)
Ideas from professional conferences	0.0 (n=0)	4.5 (n=1)

4.3.5.1 Scotland

The most popular methods were traditional, in terms of observation; reading professional literature; meetings with heads of departments and management; user requests and surveys. The more proactive methods such as observational studies and eliciting user suggestions were not so widespread. Scottish respondents were more likely to discuss ideas with school management and meet heads of departments.

4.3.5.2 US

It was interesting that 95.4% of US respondents reported that ideas from professional literature helped them to identify what users needed, because no one suggested that method as a way to identify potential new services, as can be seen in Table 4.11. Perhaps this was seen as part of normal professional awareness-raising to generate ideas, but it was not recognised as a formal way of providing what users needed.

4.3.5.3 Comparison

Results between both countries were largely similar, however US respondents were more likely to use objective methods such as observational studies and surveys. They were more likely than Scottish librarians to attend curriculum meetings, indicating they were more likely to be embedded in curriculum-related planning. Scottish librarians were more likely to attend meetings with departments than US colleagues. The international listserv for school librarians LM_NET was mentioned by 9% of US respondents and no Scottish respondents. LM_NET allowed librarians to share problems, offer solutions and give support. Again, this could be an issue of lack of time for Scottish librarians to spend on such a method, and perhaps a lack of awareness of its existence. 4.5% of US respondents mentioned getting ideas from conferences. Another example of these methods varying from what was given in Table 4.11, was observation in the free choice section in Table 4.11 rated at 22.7% for Scottish respondents and 13.6% from US respondents, where in the pre-selected choices from Table 4.13, they rated at 100% in each country. This could be because they hadn't considered this as an option until they saw it in the list, but then identified with it. This could also show a lack of self-awareness.

4.3.6 How a new service was set up

This question was set so that participants could outline the process they used, without prompting, so that they would identify their own ideas. There was no response from 22.2% of Scottish and 18.1% of US respondents, which could indicate a lack of confidence in expressing or analysing this, or lack of self-awareness of how to do the task. There was evidence of some degree of planning stages being considered.

4.3.6.1 Scotland

51.8% of Scottish respondents mentioned some degree of planning in their deliberations, for example Cordelia, who described the process she used:

“..consultation with staff to clarify objectives, and with management to ensure support and perhaps some funding.”

Typically in this group there was identification of an idea, discussion with useful individuals, funding consideration and promotion. Just over a quarter of Scottish participants mentioned some kind of evaluation of the process of setting up a new service.

4.3.6.2 US

33.3% of US respondents mentioned some kind of evaluation of the decision, either as a stage of the process or as part of development planning. A typical response was from Deirdre:

“Brainstorm ideas, talk to students or staff, talk to administration, offer service, survey at end.”

4.3.6.3 Comparison

When considering new services, respondents seemed to start with an idea and then look at practical stages to implement and promote it, often involving other staff and students and ensuring funding was available. Half of the librarians in Scotland and 61% of US librarians sampled considered a basic planning and communication stage, and a quarter considered an evaluation stage.

Evaluation was important because it added in more information to the cycle of decision-making and helped the series of stages to progress more smoothly by considering all information available and planning according to that rather than changing one step at a time. However only 25.9% of Scottish respondents mentioned some kind of evaluation of the decision, either as a stage of the process or as part of development planning. One typical example is Scot Fiona, who described her usual process:

“Idea is discussed with colleagues and a brief drawn up. Discussed with line manager and resource implications considered. Consultation with staff and students about their expectations of service. Detailed plans made including timescale for implementation. Pilot it.”

No-one in either country mentioned earlier stages of the planning process, which would be defining the issue, considering a variety of options and choosing the most appropriate option. This extra planning stage was useful because it could eliminate the frustration involved when implementing an option and changing it if it did not work, because the path for each option had already been considered, and the best option selected. A later

evaluation stage where longer term decisions were made based on a trial of the strategy was also useful, and this was mentioned by a quarter of respondents from both countries.

The description of decision-making school librarians apply in this study was experiential and incremental and could be called a pragmatic solution-driven model. They used their own knowledge and experience to identify and implement a strategy or solution to move away from the negative aspects of their situation. They could then change direction and add steps as and when the strategy did not give the desired result. Usually only one option was identified and applied. Typically, other options were not considered. This process was simple and widely used, however building in the incremental element could mean that time and possibly money was wasted in following an inappropriate path. By spending the time planning in advance and monitoring success, it could be less costly in terms of money and time in the longer term. By considering other options, and examining the consequences of what might happen if each was applied, there would be an opportunity for a more reflective, balanced approach.

4.4 Planning, management and communication

This area was included to identify how much time librarians felt they were spending on aspects of planning, management and communication tasks, and if there was a mismatch between actual time spent and optimum time. Although it was appreciated that this could be difficult to itemise, it was interesting to see what participants would suggest. From the Scottish participants, 3.7% did not respond, compared to 4.5% of US participants. A typical comment was that of Scot Frances:

“This is very difficult to quantify and I cannot vouch for accuracy. An awful lot of these activities are done informally.”

US librarian Brad, who did not answer this section, reported:

“It is ongoing – I have no idea.”

Perhaps it would have been more useful to specify hours spent on these tasks over a set period such as a term or semester instead of percentages, as it could have been easier for participants to estimate. These could then be compared with overall working hours to form a percentage level.

Without such specificity many participants found it difficult to estimate percentage time spent on tasks. However this issue was not raised during piloting, where individuals seemed to find it easier to establish a percentage of time spent on tasks.

4.4.1 Planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers

Respondents were asked to the percentage of their time they spent planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers, and how much they would ideally spend on this task.

Table 4.14 Actual and optimum time spent on planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers

Actual % time spent each year planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers	% respondents		Optimum % time spent each year planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers	% respondents	
	Scottish (n=20)	US (n=21)		Scottish (n=19)	US (n=19)
0-5%	45.0 (n=9)	33.3 (n=7)	0-5%	26.3 (n=5)	10.5 (n=2)
6-10%	20.0 (n=4)	28.5 (n=6)	6-10%	15.8 (n=3)	26.3 (n=5)
11-20%	15.0 (n=3)	23.8 (n=5)	11-20%	26.3 (n=5)	21.0 (n=4)
21-30%	15.0 (n=3)	9.6 (n=2)	21-30%	15.8 (n=3)	36.8 (n=7)
Over 30%	5.0 (n=1)	4.8 (n=1)	Over 30%	10.5 (n=2)	5.3 (n=1)

4.4.1.1 Scotland

Most Scottish respondents to this question felt that they should spend more time on planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers. All felt that the optimum time should either be the same or more than they were spending on this area. There were some vast differences in Table 4.14 between actual and optimum time spent, and also between respondents, for example Christine spent 10% of her time but felt the optimum should be 35%; Elma spent 20% and thought she should spend 30%; Jean

spent 40% but said she should spend 60%; Shirley spent 1% and felt she should spend 10%; Jenny spent 5% and said she should spend 20%. This variation reflects the difficulty in calculating time; that some tasks are seen to be carried out simultaneously; some librarians have assistance; and the different way work is perceived. Each week Christine had help for 4 hours; Jenny for 2.5 hours; Shirley and Jean for 12 hours; while Elma had full time help. So even with this range, librarians felt that they could do more.

It was commonly agreed amongst respondents that there was insufficient time for higher level developmental work, and this appeared to be unaffected by whether librarians had assistance or not. This issue of non-contact time was an important factor, as Scottish librarians did not in general have officially allocated non-contact time to carry out higher level developmental work. There was also the factor that many librarians perceived that teachers did not have time, as Barbara quoted:

“Teaching staff are always busy and just ask quickly in passing about sending pupils to do a project. Very rarely do teachers arrange to come and discuss their requirements. I do contact them if a project is for a whole year to ascertain the exact information required by pupils.”

According to many responses in this survey, the impetus for collaborative work appeared to come from the librarian.

4.4.1.2 US

Most US respondents to this question felt that they should spend more time on planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers. As shown in Table 4.14, all of them felt the optimum time should either be the same or more than they were spending, except for Sheena who spent 25% of her time and thought she should spend 10%. There were some vast differences between actual and optimum time spent, and also between respondents, with the range of actual time spent between 3-60%, and the optimum between 2-70%. Those massive variations reflected the difficulty in calculating the time spent on duties and also the different way work is perceived. Derek estimated that he spent 60% of his time, but that it should be 70%, and Deirdre spent 10% but felt she should spend 50%. Most people ranged between 5-15%. Sue Ellen said that:

“My job is to work with students. I spend my time with them. They are the most important part in my day. They are the reason I’m there.”

A US wide survey covering the period from 1997-98 showed that in high schools, 85% of participants said they collaborated with teachers, while 58% helped teachers to develop, implement and evaluate learning (Miller and Shontz 1999). This mismatch is interesting, and perhaps a clearer definition of terms such as collaboration needs to be presented.

4.4.1.3 Comparison

US librarians in this survey tended to spend more time on planning curriculum and instructional materials with teachers than Scottish colleagues. This reflected the way they generally worked much closer with teachers in terms of implementing the delivery of the curriculum in the library and also that they tended to have more time for higher level tasks and generally had more staff support.

4.4.2 Planning and management time

Respondents were asked to identify the percentage of their time was spent on planning and management issues, and how much they would ideally spend on this task.

Table 4.15 Actual and optimum time spent on planning and management issues

Actual % time spent each year on planning and management issues (development planning, performance indicators, developing policy)	% respondents		Optimum % time spent each year on planning and management issues (development planning, performance indicators, developing policy)	% respondents	
	Scottish (n=20)	US (n=21)		Scottish (n=19)	US (n=19)
0-5%	35.0 (n=7)	42.8 (n=9)	0-5%	26.3 (n=5)	21.0 (n=4)
6-10%	15.0 (n=3)	19.0 (n=4)	6-10%	21.0 (n=4)	26.3 (n=5)
11-20%	15.0 (n=3)	33.3 (n=7)	11-20%	10.5 (n=2)	36.8 (n=7)
21-30%	10.0 (n=2)	0.0 (n=0)	21-30%	21.0 (n=4)	5.2 (n=1)
Over 30%	0.0 (n=0)	4.7 (n=1)	Over 30%	10.5 (n=2)	5.2 (n=1)

4.4.2.1 Scotland

Most Scottish respondents to this question felt that they should spend more time on planning and management issues. As can be seen in Table 4.15, 96.2% felt that the optimum time should either be the same or more than they were spending on this area, except Dorothy who spent 20% but interestingly thought she should only spend 5%. There are some vast differences, for example Christine spent 10% and felt she should spend 30%; Shirley spent 1% and thought she should spend 10%; while Jean spent 20% but thought she should spend 40%. This large variation reflected the difficulty in calculating the time spent on duties, that some tasks were seen to be carried out simultaneously and also the different way work was perceived.

4.4.2.2 US

As indicated in Table 4.15, most US respondents to this question felt that they should spend more time on planning and management issues. Most of them felt that the optimum time should either be the same or more than they were spending on this area, with a range between 2-50%. Letitia spent 50% and thought that the optimum was also 50% for her. Most people ranged between 5-15 %. The large variation reflected the difficulty in calculating the time spent on duties and also the different way work is perceived.

4.4.2.3 Comparison

US respondents tended to spend more time on planning and management issues than Scottish colleagues. This could be due to them tending to have more time to spend on higher level tasks, as they generally had more staff support.

4.4.3 Communicating with supervisor

Respondents were asked to identify the percentage of their time they spent communicating with their immediate supervisor, and how much time they would ideally spend on this task.

Table 4.16 Actual and optimum time spent communicating with supervisor

% actual time spent each year on communicating with immediate supervisor	% respondents		% optimum time spent each year on communicating with immediate supervisor	% respondents	
	Scottish (n=20)	US (n=21)		Scottish (n=19)	US (n=19)
0-5%	65.0 (n=13)	71.4 (n=15)	0-5%	57.9 (n=11)	57.9 (n=11)
6-10%	15.0 (n=3)	23.8 (n=5)	6-10%	21.0 (n=4)	36.8 (n=7)
11-20%	10.0 (n=2)	5.0 (n=1)	11-20%	10.5 (n=2)	5.3 (n=1)
21-30%	5.0 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)	21-30%	0.0 (n=0)	0.0 (n=0)
Over 30%	5.0 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)	Over 30%	10.5 (n=2)	0.0 (n=0)

4.4.3.1 Scotland

As can be seen in Table 4.16, there was more variation in Scottish responses. Most Scottish respondents to this question felt that they should spend more time on communicating with their line managers but could not find the time due to pressure of other duties. 96.2% of them felt that the optimum time should either be the same or more than they were spending on this area, except Dorothy who spent 15% but thought she should spend only 2%. Jean spent 30% of her time but felt she should spend 50%. Rachel spent 1% and felt she should spend 5%. Renee estimated that she spent 50% of her time each year communicating with her supervisor, and thought it should be 40%, which raised issues over the practical time a member of senior management in a school had free to deal with library issues.

Scottish librarian Michael reported his perception:

“Most discussion with departments are [sic] on an informal basis; they seem to be much more forthcoming on this footing.”

This reflected the commonly reported view amongst participants that there appeared to be little time for planned meetings, both from their own point of view and their perception of the time of teachers.

However with this emphasis on informal meetings, it could be said that more formal planning and implementation could suffer, leading to adhoc decisions and a waste of time and money. As Rita reported in her experience it could be assumed that having assistance could have enabled the librarian to spend more time on higher level tasks. She commented that:

“If I had a library assistant, then the percentage of my time that I could spend on management tasks would realistically increase. In a previous position this was the case and a higher percentage of my time could be spent on management issues. I spend a reasonably high percentage of my time on non-professional tasks.”

However, as summarised at the end of the Scottish case examples in Chapter 5, not everyone used this extra time for higher level tasks.

Barbara agreed that her higher level task time spent was:

“... all minimal! I have no time where my immediate supervisor comes and meets with me to discuss anything.”

Shirley thought that:

“I spend very little [time] planning, my days are very busy dealing with staff and students, and finding the time to sit and think and plan instead of always reacting to situations is very difficult. I have no non-contact time unlike teachers, and often have to squeeze any planning into in-service days etc.. or do parts of it at home.”

It would seem to be useful for formal time to be allocated on a regular basis for librarian and manager to plan, discuss progress and reflect on the future. Without this time investment, particularly when the librarian worked alone, there could be a danger of feelings of isolation taking over and the focus of the whole school relevance of the library being diminished.

4.4.3.2 US

As indicated in Table 4.16, most US respondents to this question felt that they should spend more time on communicating with their line managers but just could not find the time due to pressure of other duties. The range was between 0-20% for both actual and optimum time spent, which raised issues over the practical time a member of senior management in a school had free to deal with library issues. Laura did not think that she herself spent any time on this activity, and she estimated the optimum also as 0%. This could be said to give an indication of the collaborative working relationship between Laura and her manager. Shirona said that:

"I do not have direct supervision. It is up to me to initiate projects and carry them out. The principals have not directly contacted me about library services. I approach them with ideas and plans for their approval. The Library Media supervisor's training and professional development available through the Dept of Educ. has provided the much needed direction and guidance."

This was not typical, as most participants reported supervision, guidance and support.

4.4.3.3 Comparison

Generally, US respondents tended to spend more time on communicating with their line managers than Scottish colleagues. This could be due to them tending to have more time to spend on higher level tasks, as they generally had more staff support. There was more variability of results from Scottish respondents. Positive regular communication on a formal basis was seen as good practice in general management terms because it could provide support, guidance and motivation for staff, especially when the library was such a small department compared to the whole school body.

4.4.4 National, State and local guidelines

Respondents were asked their opinions of the degree of influence national and local guidelines had on their own practice. Typically, these guidelines were written by teams of interested parties such as librarians, Directors of School Library Services, educationalists and relevant bodies, either nationally, locally or in the case of US, by practitioners in a State. They gave direction and examples of good practice, and may have included case studies and statistical and qualitative goals. State guidelines did not apply to Scotland, so this question was not posed to Scottish participants.

Table 4.17 Influence of guidelines on the practice of respondents

	% respondents identifying high level of influence		% respondents identifying some influence		% respondents identifying no influence	
	Scottish (n=26)	US (n=21)	Scottish (n=26)	US (n=21)	Scottish (n=26)	US (n=21)
National guidelines	26.9 (n=7)	52.4 (n=11)	65.4 (n=17)	23.8 (n=5)	11.5 (n=3)	23.8 (n=5)
State guidelines	n/a	80.9 (n=17)	n/a	14.3 (n=3)	n/a	4.7 (n=1)
Local guidelines	19.2 (n=5)	42.8 (n=9)	38.5 (n=10)	9.5 (n=2)	38.5 (n=10)	23.8 (n=5)

4.4.4.1 Scotland

From Table 4.17, it can be seen that of all Scottish respondents, 92.3% considered that national and 57.7% that local guidelines influenced them to some extent. For the other respondents, it could be that either there were no local guidelines, or they did not know about them. National guidelines could be perceived as more influential because they were recognised by school inspectors and fit in to national evidence collection measures (such as the annual quantitative indicators collected by Scottish Library and Information Council), whereas local guidelines may be seen as more informal.

4.4.4.2 US

From Table 4.17, it was evident that 76.2% of US respondents considered that national guidelines influenced them to some extent, compared with 95.2% who considered that State guidelines influenced them, and 52.3% who considered that local guidelines influenced them. For those who were not aware of them, either there were no State or local guidelines, or people did not know about them.

From this data it can be seen that the vast majority of respondents acknowledged that all guidelines did influence their practice to some degree, with State guidelines being the most relevant, except to one respondent. 86.3% of US respondents were able to itemise how they worked formally to various guidelines. Patricia gave a typical response:

“Keep national standards matched to state standards; keep my State standards listed and marked on lesson plans; use these [local guidelines] for review on lessons, purchases.”

Rhona mentioned other ways of using guidelines:

“The library is evaluated using state indicators each spring; the library must meet local guidelines each school year. It is evaluated by principal.”

Some appeared to find the structure and discipline of incorporating them into their planning to be beneficial, for example Freda stated:

“It makes me verbalize what I do often intuitively.”

This formalisation and allying of practice with standards can give confidence that the librarian is working at an agreed level and allowed for reflection and evaluation of practice.

4.4.4.3 Comparison

Twice as many US respondents considered that national and local guidelines had high influence for them. Scottish respondents were more likely to consider that these guidelines had some degree of influence on them, with national guidelines being more relevant to them. US respondents therefore appeared to tailor their library provision towards more generic goals and guidance, particularly State guidelines.

This was not unexpected, as the model for guidelines in the US tended to be more State-led, while Scottish guidelines tended to be led by national bodies.

4.4.5 Influence on guidelines of supervisors

Respondents were asked to assess how influential they thought that guidelines were to their supervisors.

Table 4.18 Influence of guidelines on the practice of the line managers of respondents, as identified by respondents

	% indicating high level of influence on supervisor		% indicating some influence on supervisor		% indicating no influence on supervisor	
	Scottish (n=26)	US (n=21)	Scottish (n=26)	US (n=21)	Scottish (n=26)	US (n=21)
National guidelines	11.5 (n=3)	4.8 (n=1)	34.6 (n=9)	52.4 (n=11)	53.8 (n=14)	42.8 (n=9)
State guidelines	n/a	28.6 (n=6)	n/a	61.9 (n=13)	n/a	4.8 (n=1)
Local guidelines	11.5 (n=3)	28.6 (n=6)	23.0 (n=6)	14.3 (n=3)	61.5 (n=16)	38.0 (n=8)

4.4.5.1 Scotland

It can be seen from Table 4.18 that more respondents felt that guidelines were not influential on the practice of their managers, with national guidelines being slightly more influential than local ones. It could be that as the managers are outside the profession, they were not so involved with the guidelines. However from the sample, it was evident that 46.1% of Scottish librarians sampled thought that their managers were influenced by the basic national guidelines, and 34.5% influenced by local guidelines and therefore had some understanding of how these documents affected the work of the librarians and services they managed. Respondents were asked to describe how they worked towards these guidelines.

From Scottish participants, there was no response from 22.2%. PIs were used by 38.5%. In terms of local guidelines, Scottish respondents answered more individually, as might be expected. Michael introduced performance indicator monitoring structure into the development planning process; Jacqueline used guidelines for areas she was not doing or felt was not efficient, and adapted them for her own practice; Stephanie was involved in planning meetings with local colleagues and organisations; Frances worked on them in in-service training sessions and incorporated them into the development planning process. Generally however, librarians followed an authority wide direction, and if there were in-service courses promoting the use of guidelines, and if assistance was available to librarians in schools, there was more chance of them being used. Overall, some librarians used the guidelines proactively and tried to take them forward in school.

4.4.5.2 US

From the result in Table 4.18, it was clear that librarians did not consider that their line managers were influenced to the same degree as them. 57.2% indicated that national guidelines were of some influence, but only 4.8% of that being of a high level. State guidelines featured as being most influential, with 90.5% indicating these had an influence of their managers, with more than a quarter indicating this at a high level. Local guidelines were highlighted as being of influence by 42.9%, with a quarter showing this at a high level. As expected, State guidelines were of most influence. These were often related to funding issues and State requirements, so inevitably this made them more

influential and part of normal working practice. Patricia indicated on her lesson plans which guidelines were relevant, Rosa wrote her library curriculum based on the State guidelines, Freda worked to State guidelines in terms of meeting periodical and fiction book requirements, Betty attended then made presentations on State guidelines and Caroline developed correlation documents for the State Academic Standards and for the Information Literacy Standards. Many librarians created an annual report as part of State guidelines.

4.4.5.3 Comparison

It was clear that the use of guidelines was an important part of the work of many librarians in schools. Librarians in both countries considered that guidelines had some, but not generally high, influence on their line managers. National and State guidelines were considered by more than half of US librarians to be of more influence to their managers, while a third of Scottish librarians felt that national guidelines were of some influence to their line managers, with local guidelines scoring with over a fifth of them. US librarians felt that State and local guidelines were of high influence to their managers. US librarians worked in a slightly different way to Scottish colleagues as they were also teachers, so they related the recommendations of guidelines to planning and teaching curriculum activities.

The value of guidelines was that if they were produced with a range of practitioners and kept updated, they could save individual librarians a great deal of time as they provided a standard, negotiated structure of good practice for them to record, plan and evaluate their work. As working tools, they were inevitably more valuable on a daily basis to school librarians than their line managers, however it was useful for a manager to know what they contain, as they often articulated with curriculum guidance.

4.5 Development planning

Respondents were asked how useful they found development planning to their work.

Table 4.19 Usefulness of development planning to own work

Usefulness of development planning	% of respondents – Scottish (n=26)	% of respondents – US (n=21)
Not at all useful	0.0 (n=0)	0.0 (n=0)
Of limited use	3.8 (n=1)	4.8 (n=1)
Of some use	42.3 (n=11)	71.4 (n=15)
Extremely useful	53.8 (n=14)	23.8 (n=5)

4.5.1 Scotland

Table 4.19 shows that 96.1% of Scottish respondents found that development planning was useful to some extent. Some reported that it helped them to move away from day to day issues and to focus their thinking, reflection and work and gave real results in development and marking achievements, and some found it useful to gain funding from school initiatives. Lesley gave a reason why she found that development planning was of limited use to her:

“Just a paper exercise, would rather be doing.”

However, positive reasons for using development planning included a comment from Rita, which reflected the general feeling from others:

“They help me to focus on the bigger picture rather than getting bogged down in the problems of day to day running of the library.”

59.3% of Scottish respondents indicated that they did contribute to development planning. Therefore more than half of respondents in this study were involved in whole school development planning, with others involved to some degree. By becoming involved in whole school planning, the librarian demonstrated that the library was a whole school venture, not just another department, and that it was there to serve all departments and staff of the school. A comment section was then made available. Some respondents obviously saw their role as a whole school one and felt that they were perceived as a Department head.

Lesley said that she was involved in development planning because she was:

“Considered Head of Department therefore involved at all stages.”

Michael contributed to whole school development planning and said that:

“Library has played an important part of the development plan over the last couple of years; has been singled out as an area of strength in the school for two years running.”

Some of those people who did not contribute to whole school development plan still tried to work to it. For example, Rita reported:

“I do not contribute but I do try to mirror the school development plan wherever appropriate, in the library. I may contribute in the future as the headmaster and myself are working towards a whole school information skills policy.”

Myra was also not involved, and said that what she did was to:

“React to whole school plan.”

This reactive role rather than a proactive role was a common finding, and lack of time was the main reason given for behaving in a reactive way.

4.5.2 US

As can be seen in Table 4.19, 95.2% of US respondents who responded found that development planning was useful to some extent. Some found that it helped to move away from day to day issues and to focus their thinking, reflection and work and gave real results in development and marking achievements, and some found it useful to collaborate with other librarians. Jack felt that goals changed too often, and this limited the use of development planning to him. Sheena also felt it was limited because in a prison high school library she was under the control of the Department of Corrections in dealing with students. Samuel felt that it was of limited use because he got little time for development planning and was unable to do this. 71.4% said that they contributed to whole school development planning, with 28.6% saying that they did not contribute.

A comment section was then made available. Of the 28.6% US respondents who said they did not contribute to whole school development planning, they all felt part of the planning process generally, for example by sitting on whole school committees; attending planning meetings; working with curriculum co-ordinators and other whole school activities. A typical response was that from David, who did not contribute to whole school development planning:

“We have recently been working on our curriculum. I do sit on the committee, but it is more so I will know what is going on. I would like to plan some workshops for the teachers in order to make them more aware of what we have and how to use what we have.”

David committed to participating in another way by promoting the service more to staff, even if he was unable to play a full part in the whole school development planning process, perhaps because of restrictions in the school regarding what was appropriate to his role.

4.5.3 Comparison

Results from both countries were very similar, and development planning was clearly seen as a useful tool for the vast majority of school librarians to use. The majority of all respondents played some part in whole school development planning, showing the wider appreciation of the role of the school library. There was still a small minority element of librarians who considered that development planning took up time, and the value of spending this time on the process was not apparent to them. This could be countered by more in-service sessions, demonstrating the benefits, listening to the experience of others who valued it and perhaps by giving them more time, support and guidance in its use.

4.6 Conclusions

From these results it was clear that US librarians tended to have more money, resources, space and staff in the library. With the money that they did have, they also had more spending power. Because they tended to have extra staffing, they were potentially able to take time away from day to day tasks and spend more time on reflecting, collaborative planning with teachers, planning the development of the library and working in a more proactive way. However not everyone took this opportunity, and some librarians felt more comfortable working on an operational basis.

It was important that managers of librarians considered the support that was available to school librarians, and to decide if librarians in schools were to be deemed as managers. This would be reflected in guidelines, job descriptions and person specifications. If they were considered to be managers, they should have time and support to manage, with non-contact time to carry out higher level tasks. As an English school librarian states in a recent article (Roberts 2005):

“Some schools try to save money by employing just one person to run the library, but they have to realise it is a false economy. Clerical assistance is vital if schools are to get their money’s worth out of a qualified librarian.” p14

Alternative ways to give librarians more opportunity to manage, develop and reflect should be considered. If this time is not made available to them it is unlikely that the library can develop to keep pace with the curriculum and offer a full proactive, professional service. There was a huge variety of provision and circumstances between schools in the same State, between States and between countries, and it was difficult to outline a typical school library because there was so much variance.

Guidelines and minimum levels of staffing, resources, accommodation and budget were a starting point to establish a standard, but in this survey it can be seen that many school libraries did not meet existing minimum levels of provision. In a difficult financial climate it was unlikely that minimum levels could be achieved unless they were set at a low level, which almost made the exercise meaningless, unless there were plans to raise standards and levels incrementally. If the minimum levels were to be increased, more money was needed, in addition to a national, State or authority-wide commitment. This could be tied in with important values of developing critical thinking skills of students and raising awareness of how the librarian in a school can make a real difference in raising the attainment and achievement of students. The collection and promotion of evidence was invaluable for librarians to prove how they contribute to these goals.

4.7 Directors of School Library Services

Everhart (1998) provides a useful summary of responsibility of US directors when she states:

“Directors of school library media services at the state level can be a vital link between the practicing school library media specialist and their state department of education. They can provide a variety of services including: developing and overseeing standards, coordinating statewide initiatives, securing funding, offering professional development opportunities, collecting data, furnishing consulting services, evaluating programs, enforcing staffing requirements, and generally keeping school libraries forefront in the minds of legislators and others serving as advocates.”

She finds that the typical US State has a Director of School Library Services who spends 50% time on supporting school Library Media Specialists with guidelines and other documentation. States with a full-time post provide a mean of 4.2 documents for these staff, compared to 2.5 for States with part-time provision, and 1.4 for States with no director. There is no indication of the quality or relevance of such documents, merely the

number, but it would be useful if a further study were undertaken to establish these elements of what was produced.

The situation in Scotland was that there was no statutory provision for school library services, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 2. Generally either standalone services delivered a service, or there was provision from a joint public/school library service. Unlike England, where schools paid to receive such services, services in Scotland tended to be free at the point of delivery.

The reason for collecting information from Directors was to identify how their overview provided them with information relating to school libraries, and whether and how their view might differ from practitioners in schools. This met Aim 1, where this cohort can contribute to the debate on the skills and qualities needed to be an effective EBP practitioner in the high school library. They were involved in this because they generally wrote the job descriptions and person specifications and recruited and may supervise library staff in schools. This group also contributed to Aim 2, aiding with the creation of the draft model, and where they gave feedback on the model.

All Directors knew that there were national and local guidelines, and the two US respondents were aware of State guidelines. Generally, they considered that policy relating to school libraries did involve the profession (such as Directors and national school library bodies), but not always school librarians themselves. One Scottish respondent described how qualitative indicators did involve school librarians at the testing stage, after Directors had been involved in drawing up the draft. All felt that national, local or State guidelines should apply in certain areas, rather than completely.

One US respondent stated that such guidelines were tools to be applied as and when required, not to be applied without consideration for individual situations. All thought that there was an expectation at present that school librarians should consult with others, and they thought that this should remain in the future. The major factor for all respondents on how the school librarian made decisions concerning the school library was the needs of the users. One Scottish respondent Daisy suggested:

“Appropriate training would be helpful in guiding librarians towards making best decisions.”

Core ranges of services included cataloguing, classification, information skills, Internet use and buying appropriate resources. These were quite traditional library-based services. Daisy also said:

“I have to say that some, no, well, let’s say most of my school librarians are very comfortable with these traditional services and rather more uncomfortable with the higher level responsibility that is now demanded [planning at a strategic level]. They don’t want that responsibility, not interested. It’s not just wanting an easy life, I feel they don’t have that confidence, don’t think it’s their role, don’t want to do that.”

Daisy highlighted a problem that could reflect the feeling of professional isolation. Although some librarians had assistants, it could be said that they would not be sharing professional practice in the same way as two librarians would do, when they can test their knowledge base with others doing the same job at the same level. If it was acknowledged that a librarian and assistant had a common focus at an operational level, perhaps that was the level where time was spent in some instances, rather than at a more strategic level. As none of the Scottish schools surveyed here had more than one professional post, possibly this higher level of planning could be witnessed among jobshare librarians, where they had a professional bond, and planned the service together, even if they did not work together at the same time. This would be interesting to investigate in a further study. Scottish Director Noreen also considered that there was an emphasis on traditional interests:

“They like doing what they know, without a doubt.”

The US respondents mentioned developing the critical thinking skills of students as being a major factor of the work of the school librarian. All agreed school libraries in their areas offered such core services. One Scottish respondent raised the idea that core services should be based on the national qualitative document (Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum 1999) and a US respondent felt that State guidelines should form the basis of services. Sharon, a Scottish respondent, said:

“To be honest, some headteachers don’t know enough about the job of a school librarian to decide or advise on the services to be offered in their schools. Remember some have virtually no background in working with a school librarian. They should call in specialist help from directors. Headteachers are too busy in school managing a whole range of staff to get involved with all of them to any degree.”

All agreed that there was not always adequate consultation about what services were to be offered in schools. US respondent Ian suggested:

“There should be a more formal way of consulting and involving staff and students.”

If formal consultation were to be included in guidelines and standards, and these measures were to be encouraged within an authority and at school level, this should be achievable. More detail about guidelines can be found in Chapter 2, section 2.1 (literature review) and Chapter 6, section 6.2 (findings from this study).

The Directors of School Library Services reinforced the importance of guidelines, perhaps to be used as a tool when needed rather than applied whole scale. US Director Chantal said:

“My job is to keep them [Principals] on track, tell them where they should be heading and encourage them to get there, with the idea that they initiated it all. Some need help in stages when they are at that stage – it can be too much all at once for some Principals.”

The collaboration element of the job of a school librarian was seen to be vital. US Director Ian noted:

“Collaboration is all. If they [school library media specialists] can’t succeed at collaboration, they can’t succeed.”

It would seem important for Directors to identify their priorities for good practice for their geographical area of responsibility within national, State or District principles, and through advocacy to provide encouragement, guidance and support for their school staff to meet those priorities. For authorities without Directors of School Library Services, it would be important for some other person to take on this advocacy role, otherwise there will be no authority-led direction, leading to more fragmented services in schools and a lack of focus at a corporate level.

4.8 Conclusions on questionnaire survey results

The main aims of using this method were to identify common themes and areas of concern from school library practitioners and Directors of School Library Services. This was completed successfully. Areas of concern were highlighted from responses, and included in a vignette which was then sent to librarians and Directors for comment and opinion. The main results from the questionnaire survey showed the importance of giving school librarians suitable levels of staff support, time and money so that they could devote more of their time to higher level tasks, rather than more basic duties. US respondents tended to have higher levels of this support than Scottish colleagues.

Collaboration and consulting users were also recognised as important elements to the work of a successful school librarian, as can be seen from the responses. The data suggested that school librarians could not always wholly control their decision-making, as it was often in the hands of school managers. However closer collaboration and discussion with the manager could help to clarify the role of the school librarian, and how s/he was expected to work with teaching staff.

The value of national, State or locally agreed guidelines constructed by relevant parties was also highlighted by respondents. Ideally, these can help to give focus and direct discussion for the professional librarian and line manager in a high school within the framework of the authority. It appeared from this study that librarians perceived that some managers were not as aware as they could be of the importance of these tools. 53.8% of Scottish respondents and 42.8% of US respondents did not consider that their line managers were influenced by national guidelines; 61.5% of Scottish respondents and 38% of US respondents did not consider that their managers were influenced by local guidelines. It could be that they felt removed from such guidelines as they were generally specialist and library-based rather than the more familiar educational documents they knew. Scottish guidelines such as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (2005) reflected the style, structure and content of a wider curriculum document, but nevertheless it was a separate document aimed at school library measures and how they articulated with the wider educational document.

However it was encouraging that only 4.8% of US respondents felt that their managers were not influenced by State guidelines. This could be due to the fact that managers had more opportunity to be involved in the creation and implementation of such wider guidelines, as they reflected State standards and practice for whole school curriculum initiatives. So it would seem to be invaluable to widen the scope of school library guidelines and articulate them more fully within whole curriculum guidelines. This would then make the school library elements part of whole school quality measures in one document which school management were familiar with using, and including the same terminology they were already comfortable with in the whole school document.

Ideally these would consist of quantitative and qualitative features, to give a more rounded picture than one of these features on its own. There was a role for central

services to lead in promoting and assisting with the use of these guidelines, and to encourage school librarians to work within school with teaching and management colleagues, and with their peers in other schools. In what can be a professionally isolated post, this would help to share expertise; give guidance and support; encourage positive discussion; share the load of joint work; provide a teambuilding experience; and raise confidence. It was encouraging that even when ideal elements were not in place, there were still some positive individuals who could use their optimistic outlook and constructive practice to take control and make the library experience better for users. This indicated that the skills and qualities of the school librarian played a major factor in the success of the library, and it was not just an issue of the environment or funding. This will be followed up in the next stage of the research, particularly in Chapter 8 where there is a discussion of roles and skills.

Generally, Directors had expectations that school librarians should take on a different role, with more management and strategic work rather than operational tasks. However, lack of support and training need to be addressed to allow this to happen fully. The survey showed that there was a wide variation in practice, with some individual school librarians doing more than others, with the answer to the best model of practice being complex. A model of good practice for the evidence-based school librarian is presented in Chapter 9. The basic model created from the findings of this study was member checked by interested parties, and the final model is the amalgamation of the findings and amendment from those involved in the process.

This questionnaire survey has helped to extend knowledge in the area of how school librarians work: how they make decisions; how they collaborate on an interprofessional level; and how they use evidence. Standard guidelines are beginning to emerge to provide a national or local focus on good practice in self-evaluation and the use of evidence. There is a need to provide support and training for high school librarians to demonstrate practical use of such guidance, and managers in schools have a role in encouraging collaborative working.

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Chapter 5 Case example

The aim of this chapter is to show the range of experiences and situations of school librarians and libraries examined in the study. Case example was chosen as a way of analysing data because it allows indepth description of certain situations, allows for comparison between situations and the identification of common themes. Cohen and Manion (1985) define the purpose of case study:

“To probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalizations about the wider population to which that unit belongs.” p120

This data collection in what could be called a natural environment gives information about individual cases, and comparing several of these gives valuable information about commonalities and differences. It also shows typical and atypical situations. Case examples in this chapter outline situations in some schools from the survey where there was an element of interest, what Patton (1990) calls *“a comprehensive, primary resource package.”* p387, for example a school librarian who was not given a great deal of money, but was able to provide wide ranging services, or who placed particular emphasis on collaborative work, or someone who had a generous budget and staffing support, but did not demonstrate an obviously collaborative approach. All information collected from respondents was written up and analysed. Their comments were included to illustrate their thoughts and beliefs.

As Patton (1990) says:

“The purpose of classifying qualitative data for content analysis is to facilitate the search for patterns and themes within a particular setting or across cases.... Case analysis involves organizing the data by specific cases for in-depth study.” p384

Each case example can stand on its own, but the interest is in comparison between case examples, showing some element of commonality or difference. From these case examples the intention is to present examples of typical school libraries and to comment on the situations.

5.1 Scotland

Many librarians were mostly occupied with day to day duties, and found it difficult to get the time to carry out higher level tasks such as planning and collaborating. When they had a library assistant or some other form of assistance, it provided an opportunity to

spend time on these management tasks. Generally, key higher level tasks of librarians seemed to include time to reflect, plan and evaluate; collaborating with teaching staff; and developing services according to identified user need. However not everyone used this opportunity to carry out higher level duties.

Having a library assistant appeared to give school librarians in this study the thinking time needed to carry out these higher level tasks, although not all librarians used this opportunity as they seemed to be more involved with day to day tasks. It was therefore important that whenever this time is provided, that it be consciously used for higher level tasks, and that involved being included in development planning and working with guidelines, which many participants said gave them focus and a long term viewpoint. Some contrasting examples will now be examined.

5.1.1 Lesley

Lesley was in a small school; had a low budget; had a low level of sourcing; had high assistance levels and had low levels of collaboration.

From analysing the data from the survey, Lesley was the person with most help in a small school. As she had most help, it could be said that Lesley had most opportunity to gain from having an assistant, and could potentially carry out more high level work such as collaboration and reflection. However this was little evidence of this. She had a small budget of £2.62 per student, and a stock in the low range of 9000 items. She rated curriculum support as a major service core to the secondary school library, along with library skills, information skills, Internet skills, interlibrary loans and recreational reading. She offered a reasonable range of basic services in the library.

For the next year she planned two projects – colour coding fiction by genre and providing introduction leaflets for parents and 1st year students, which were ongoing topics she had identified, both fairly operational tasks. She did not suggest why new services may or may not be offered, which could give us a real insight to the thinking behind the idea. For example did she think that colour coding was needed because this tied in with an initiative from the English department who wanted to ensure all students read a variety of genres; or did it fit in with a national reading project to promote fiction of different genres; was there an additional support needs reason to make it easier for less

able students to find genres by colour; or had she seen the idea in another school library; or had she read about the benefits of this in an article; or did she just suddenly have the idea to do this? If we knew why she thought of starting this we would be more able to assess the development of the project, who was involved, how it was planned, implemented and evaluated. Without such information it is difficult to say any more about it. On the matter of providing introduction leaflets, similarly we have no more information about why this was planned, or the thought processes behind it. Was it something she was asked to do; or did she identify the need after running a parents' evening in the past and felt that written information would be useful; or had she heard that it was done elsewhere?

Lesley did not attend curriculum meetings, take user comments, have a suggestion box or survey users. Although she may have involved users informally, in the area of collaboration there was little formal evidence of involving staff and students. She was unable to identify time spent on planning, which could mean that she found it difficult to estimate, or that she could not identify formal planning activity. Although she felt that national and local guidelines had some impact on her practice, she did not consider that they had any influence on her line manager. There is insufficient information about discussions she may have had with her line manager on discussing such guidelines, but that could prove to be a useful first step in progressing with guidelines. She found development planning to be of limited use and said that it was:

"Just a paper exercise, would rather be doing."

This could be said to indicate a lack of priority on strategic and reflective issues. However in the area of whole school development planning, she felt that she was:

"Considered Head of Department therefore involved at all stages."

As she has not mentioned involving users or acknowledging that time was spent working with her line manager on strategic planning, it is difficult to identify how she was involved in whole school development planning. From what she reported, there was little evidence of her working on collaborative or professional tasks, reflecting fully on the service required and being fully integrated in whole school planning. With the benefit of having a library assistant, there was a real opportunity for Lesley to collaborate more with staff, identify user needs, gain more funding and spend more time formally planning

and evaluating library services. In this way she would be able to develop a service that could clearly be seen as being tailored to the identified needs of all school users.

5.1.2 Michael

Michael was in a small school; had a high budget; high assistance; high whole school focus and had high levels of developmental work.

Although he was in a very small school of 360 students, Michael reported that he had a library assistant for 20 hours a week. He also had student helpers for up to 10 hours a week. Michael had designed a contract with helpers outlining what work they were to do, and the benefits to them of being a helper, which demonstrates an element of planning and involving users in the library. He showed an interest in developing his ICT role, without the main reading and resources elements being diminished. With a budget of £8.33 per student he had much more money than Lesley, yet with a stock of 5400 he had a smaller library. With 40 seats, over the 10% recommended level, he still found it difficult at times to accommodate everyone, which indicated that the library was being well used. He identified main core services as good reading stock, curriculum stock, collaborative discussion, professional advice on books, Internet access and training and good access. In addition to the basic services one might expect, the inclusion of collaborative discussion shows an interest in working with staff and a wider perspective. In the vignette he commented that in the fictional library described:

“The range of services is adequate, if uninspiring. Very little interactive use of new technology; more use of Intranet and Internet technology might raise his profile..... Make your services work for your target audience, target individuals to trial them & attract attention that way. If you succeed, people will come to you rather than you having to go chasing them.”

His response shows that he considers the use of technology is one way to increase the profile of the library and make it relevant to user needs. He delivered a wide range of services, including author visits, book review scheme and he even brought in his own video camera to lend. In the questionnaire he said that he offered services:

“To help pupils and/or staff. If it doesn’t fulfill one of these criteria, it doesn’t happen.”

This demonstrates that he tied in service provision to user needs. He said in the vignette that status affected the decision-making of others:

"Many people get tired of fighting apathy in others and become apathetic themselves."

However he also thought that school librarians and their managers could both improve their decision-making skills:

"Generally everyone [sic] could improve on their decision making skills. Some [managers] are worse than others."

He considered that school librarians could improve their skills in this area by:

"Exposure to other professional areas where people are forced to take risks and make difficult decisions, eg school management level (!), finance sector, business community etc. etc."

He therefore focuses on taking a wider role, joint working with other professions and risk taking, presumably within a safe environment and with guidance. Successful use of such a strategy would give confidence and an opportunity to try out techniques in advance of a real situation.

Although he did not welcome help about making decisions in the library:

"I personally would not relish help in this department, but I feel many of my colleagues would disagree with me."

In the vignette response he said that he enjoyed being able to work on his own initiative, being able to try new things and the:

"Feeling that you are a professional rather than an 'employee'."

He was keen on different and outgoing projects, citing new services he had considered, such as emailing the librarian for advice and assistance within 48 hours; looking for an innovative reading club; and extending community access to library resources. He identified that he wanted to stir up interest and keep moving and expand services. Such initiatives signify a proactive and developing professional thinking ahead, planning and keeping the library relevant to the needs of users and even involving a wider range of users.

He felt that status of the librarian was a discussion area of interest to school librarians and that there was little opportunity for career progression:

"Certainly not within schools..."

Without a career grade for school librarians, they can either remain in post and appreciate that there is little chance to progress, or look for advancement in another area of library work.

Michael considered that main problems in implementing growing services would be lack of time, money or access; or Internet failure. He stated that he identified what users needed by all means listed, except attending curriculum meetings. This shows that he is in touch with what users want. The planning process for delivering a new service stemmed from him thinking of the idea, making a case and including it in the development plan. Although this ties in new other developments with the formal process, he did not mention at this time looking at options or evaluation. When identifying how much time he spent on planning and communication, he spent 2-5% planning programmes (with an optimum of 5%); 2-5% planning and management issues (with an optimum of 5%); and less than 1% on communicating with his line manager (with an optimum of 2-5%).

Generally he felt that he was spending a reasonable time planning and consulting on the first two issues, but felt that he needed more time with his line manager, who he tended to go to when he had problems, rather than on wider communication issues. He felt that national guidelines were of some influence to him and local ones of high influence, whereas he did not think that they influenced his line manager at all. He did not mention if his line manager and he had discussed such guidelines. He said that he found development planning extremely useful to help him as it:

“Focuses the mind, concentrates on certain ideas to help develop ideas to a full conclusion.”

This shows that he has awareness of working through a clear thought process. He contributed to whole school planning and said:

“Library has played an important part of the development plan over the last couple of years; has been singled out as an area of strength in the school for two years running.”

Michael appeared to have developed several strengths by having a library assistant. He showed an all-round perspective of his wider role within and outwith school. He demonstrated innovative approaches, he seemed to be proactive, aware of what users wanted and collaborated with teaching staff on curriculum matters. He seemed to plan

well and be realistic about what could be achieved. He would have liked to spend more time with his line manager discussing a wider range of issues than simply problem solving. He seemed very positive and keen to develop the whole school focus he had built up. It would be interesting to see if he would move on from school librarianship in the future, or whether he would commit to stay and develop his own school library.

5.1.3 Jacqueline

Jacqueline had a medium budget; had medium levels of assistance; had medium resource levels and had high collaborative work with a whole school focus.

In the survey, Jacqueline said that she had a library assistant for 25 hours a week and worked in a small school of 600 students. She had a budget of £4.16 per student and a stock of 7200 items. The 46 seats in the library were adequate for user needs, yet under the 10% recommended minimum. The six core services she highlighted were book borrowing, ICT, careers information, out of class access, information skills and staff/student interaction. There was little mention of curricular support. She reported a good range of services offered by her library. She identified as potential new services an activities club for Secondary 1-3 students; instruction in the new automated system; and author visits. These arose because they were promoting or developing existing services. They might not be provided because of lack of money, time or popularity. Jacqueline identified that services were offered due to:

“Demand and request of pupils and staff, what’s happening in school, Departmental topics and activities, discussions with fellow professionals/literature, Needs of pupils and areas lacking.”

She identified all listed methods to identify what users need, apart from specific observational study, user survey and user comments. She described how she set up a new service:

“Note-taking, Discussion and Plan on paper; investigate financial implications; Report or Bid to Line manager/Depute if required; Promotion throughout school via register classes, bulletins, letters home, posters, leaflets etc; Name taking scheme and numbers attending; Further reminder of start date to pupils interested.”

Although this shows an organised approach to the task, Jacqueline did not specifically mention identifying options or evaluating new services. However in the vignette response, she shows signs of incremental decision-making and adjustment:

“Negotiation and Juggling. If one thing doesn’t work, re-word it and try it a different way, until you get what you want.”

Also in the vignette response, she stated that school librarians make decisions based on mainly domestic factors:

“Observation, thought, best decision for pupils and library. Pro-active. Environment they work in – school, pupils, staff. Practical evidence, feed back, discussion.”

She also named extra potential sources of inspiration from the wider environment:

“Literature; Fellow professionals; previous successes; Suggestions and recommendations.”

She said that she valued help from:

“Fellow Professionals, including teaching colleagues’ support.”

This indicated an openness to involvement from other school librarians and teachers within her school. In the questionnaire survey, she said that she spent a great deal of time collaborating (although this had not been mentioned specifically as a core service) – 30%, with the same figure as the optimum time spent on this task. She spent 5% on planning (with an optimum of 10%); and spent 2% communicating with her line manager (with an optimum of 5%). She considered that national and local guidelines were of some influence to her, with national having no influence on her line manager, although local guidelines would have some influence. She found that development planning was useful to her because it:

“Reminds me of the areas in need of development that are not always considered on a day to day basis.”

She said that she contributed to whole school planning. It seems that having the library assistant has allowed her to develop collaborative relationships in school to identify and target user needs, and to work with other librarians in schools to share practice and discuss new ideas. This collaboration is clearly vital to the way that she works and linked to what the school library can offer its users.

5.1.4 Stephanie

Stephanie was in a small school; had a low budget; had medium assistance levels and low seating levels.

Stephanie worked in a school of 523 students. She had a library budget of £2.86 per student. She did not identify resource levels. She had a library assistant for 20 hours a week and 4 hours a week of student help. 36 seats in the library were below the recommended levels of 10% of roll, and she found that they were insufficient. As core services she identified information skills, access to ICT, careers information, lending facility, access outwith school day and curriculum links. She offered a wide range of services, including digital projector and author visits. In the vignette she said that in general in school libraries she thought that these tended to be based on:

“What was here when I arrived?/ What do SMT [management]/ depts. [departments] expect?”

She planned to offer after-school clubs, improved integration of library and curriculum and library webpages. She did not state how she identified the need for these services. She thought that they may not be provided because of lack of time, involvement from staff, money or school priority. It could be argued that if tasks were tied in to identified need and priorities, there would be more likelihood of success. She said that she offered services because they were there when she arrived, in response to user needs or from advice from colleagues or senior management. She identified most methods of identifying need from the list except specific observational study, suggestion box and user comments. She stated that the process of setting up an idea involved:

“Idea – consultation with staff/pupils – preparation – funding (if necessary - SMT [management] input/approval – delivery.”

This logical plan omitted examining other options and evaluation of the project. She said in the vignette response that the decision-making skills of school librarians could be improved by:

“More consultation with staff & pupils.”

She also considered that help could come from:

“Professional bodies, colleagues, trainers.”

Stephanie identified in the questionnaire that she spent 10% of her time in planning curriculum programmes (with an optimum of 25%); 10% on planning issues (with an optimum of 20%) and 5% communicating with her manager (with an optimum of 10%). She therefore felt that she needed to spend much more time on reflective and planning tasks. Although it is acknowledged that it is difficult to quantify such tasks, it would seem

unrealistic to expect a senior manager in a school to spend half a day each week with one member of staff. She said that there was a:

“Tendency to get bogged down in day-to-day, trivial (often disciplinary) issues.”

Stephanie felt that local and national guidelines had some influence on her practice. She felt that national guidelines would have a high level of influence with her manager, whereas local guidelines would have some influence. She found development planning of some use to her own work. She did not contribute to whole school planning:

“Have some input, but at the periphery.”

By having a library assistant her emphasis seemed to be on developing curriculum links. She also favoured working with colleagues and involving users in the life of the library. Linking in more formal methods of identification of needs and evaluation of activities would give her more data to inform and justify her decisions. This could be important to help her gain more funding and staffing, as it would demonstrate to managers that the focus of library activity was tied into specific needs throughout the school and to support the curriculum.

5.1.5 Elma

Elma worked in a large school; had a medium budget, high assistance and low levels of resourcing.

In the larger school scenario, Elma had most help, with one full time assistant during term time and 3 hours of student help each week. With a per capita spend of £4.03 (£4240 in total) she had a budget above average in this study. She had an average stock of 5659 items. With a seating level of 70 she found this insufficient and this number was below average with her roll of 1050. The six core services she highlighted were lending service, curriculum support, computers, information skills, resource based learning and reader advice. She provided a wide range of services, although not a book review scheme, and Internet instruction was unofficial. She was keen to add new services of Internet training; quiz nights and after school clubs with teacher support. She identified these areas from her own observation that Internet use was patchy and students were not taught how to use it; and because she wanted to make use of after school library opening time. She said that reasons to prevent these initiatives taking place would be because of timetabling or school transport problems.

She used most methods listed to identify user services, except specific observational study, suggestion box, discussion with school management and attending curriculum meetings:

"These are generally services which are satisfying a demand."

In the vignette she said that school librarians made decisions based on:

"Gut feelings!"

This is an interesting comment as it implies a non-rational approach to decision-making, based upon her knowledge, experience and what had been done in the past. This can be complemented by more formal measures to provide a more rounded picture of user needs and service provision required. She thought that school librarians used:

"PIs [performance indicators].....sometimes questionnaires."

By using these methods she was bringing together her own experience, observation and instincts along with more formal methods.

In the questionnaire survey she said that her process of delivering a new service involved:

"Preliminary discussion with line manager, who would pass it to SMT [management] for discussion & hopeful approval – Does it need extra funding or not. Influence whether it could be instantly implemented or not."

She estimated that she spent 20% on planning programmes (with an optimum of 30%); 20% on planning issues (which she felt was about right) and 2% on communication with her manager (with an optimum of 5%). In the vignette response she stated that:

"Most [school managers] do not understand the total role of an LRC [school library]."

In the questionnaire survey she felt that national and local guidelines were of some influence to her practice, but of no influence to her manager. She found development planning of some use, and she said that she contributed to whole school development planning:

"In theory!"

This response indicated that she felt that this was an exercise without much substance, perhaps the development plan was not fully consulted on by staff within the school, or perhaps there was little response from management. Elma demonstrated that she was able to complete some higher level tasks such as development planning, although there

were still areas where she could spend more time, such as more formal identification of user need, collaboration with teachers and her line manager and applying guidelines.

5.1.6 Ruby

Ruby was in a medium-sized school; with low levels of assistance; very low budget and high collaboration.

Ruby worked alone in the library of a school of 850 students, and had been in post for more than 13 years. She had a budget of only £500, which was an increase from the previous year, but was the lowest in this study at £0.58 per student. Her library held 8000 items and seated 70 students, less than the recommended minimum level of 10%, but she said that they were sufficient. She highlighted important core services as curriculum support; learning skills; advice on resourcing needs; ICT support; information service; and staff development materials. She identified most of the main services listed, except a book review scheme. She worked closely with staff to produce curricular worksheets and also published learning skills presentations on the school network. She identified most methods to identify user needs, except specific observational study, user comments and a suggestion box. She found it difficult to complete percentage amounts spent on professional activity, but rated planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers as high; planning and management activities as less significant; and communicating with her line manager as not a significant amount. She said that time spent on these activities:

“Varied greatly from session to session and at different times of the year.... Difficult to judge.”

She was aware of national but not local guidelines, and found the national guidelines to be of some influence to her work. She considered that they held no significance to her line manager. She tried to work towards guidelines:

“I translated the Closer Look document [Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum 1999] into a Starter Discussion (Powerpoint presentation) for use with the LRC Committee. This has yet to be actioned.”

She found development planning extremely useful to her work because it:

“Provides a much needed overview. However if the LRC is not featured within this document [ie whole school plan] it can be most inhibiting.”

When asked if she contributed to whole school planning she said that she was:

“Not invited!”

She identified in the vignette response that there could be help for school librarians in making decisions:

“This could come from many levels, especially on a national level and authority level. We are sadly lacking in having a collective voice OR having a decent profile on a professional basis... Many issues are dealt with on a day-to-day basis by School Librarians... since immediate and direct contact with an appropriate person on a regular basis is often not available. In many instances, it is only when problem [sic] arise or major issues occur that one needs to refer this to the line-manager.”

In terms of school librarians making decisions, she said in the vignette that:

*“**Much depends on individual personalities and strengths.** However being the sole IS [information studies] professional amongst teaching staff can be inhibiting especially to those newly entering the field. A lot depends on the ethos of the school and other factors as to whether librarians are allowed to/have the opportunity to voice opinions and make decisions.....*

This has a lot to do with the training we give prospective applicants bearing in mind we do not specialize in this field as trainee teachers do. There is rarely support available to librarians that is similar in nature to that given to probationary teachers ie a formal structure of mentoring and active support.

But there are also many people in schools who do not understand the purpose of having a resourcing specialist within schools. Some headteachers do not want someone who has ideas and is a decision-maker within their own field.....

Communication is often lacking even when relevant decisions are made....”

Even with so many negative points, such as lack of money, assistance and support, she still appeared to be motivated to deliver highly relevant services in collaboration with teaching staff. Perhaps because she did not spend time on choosing and cataloguing books, she had more time to spend on collaborative work, however the resources in the library would soon be insufficient to support the delivery of the curriculum. Nevertheless, this example shows that even with a below average situation, if the librarian is motivated enough to work with teaching staff, an important contribution can be made to support teaching and learning in school.

5.1.7 Conclusion

There was a very wide range of provision demonstrated in Scottish school libraries in this sample. Librarians showed a varied approach to the job, some working in difficult circumstances and without adequate basic levels of facilities and funding. However even

in some of these cases, librarians were still motivated and able to contribute to teaching and learning.

It was not necessarily the case that those sampled with better levels of funding and facilities provided more of what users needed. Factors that seemed to make the difference included drive of the librarian, collaborative skills and planning. More formal planning and evaluation of initiatives would also be helpful because it shows that services have been tailored to identified user needs and that the librarian maintains an awareness of the success and progress of initiatives.

This survey was carried out in 2002, when the new inspection profile in Scotland was just about to start. This involves the librarian contributing written documentation to inspectors in advance of their visits, presenting formal information on the role and activities of the library and the qualification and experience of its staff. In addition, the qualitative documents now available encourage the collection of evidence and complement the inspectorate profile, so it is expected that schools now collect more data than they did at the time of the survey. If such an exercise were to be repeated now, it is expected that more formal measures of identifying needs and evaluation would be in place in Scottish school libraries.

5.2 US

As can be seen in Chapter 4, where the results of the survey are presented, generally US school libraries had more staffing assistance than Scottish school libraries, as well as more money. US school librarians are dually qualified as teachers and school librarians. At the two extremes are Jack, who had no help at all, and Letitia, who worked with another school librarian for 37.5 hours each week, with 140 hours of clerical assistance each week plus 25 hours of student help.

Formal planning and evaluation approaches to delivering new services were sometimes mentioned by participants, although informal methods were also in use. A robust planning and evaluative approach to setting up new projects would be recommended in order to ensure all steps in the process are covered.

5.2.1 Jack

Jack was in a small school; had a high budget; he worked towards guidelines; and had low levels of assistance.

Jack worked in a school of 500 students, and only worked for 33 hours each week in the library, as he spent 7 hours teaching a subject. He had no help, and stated in the vignette response about the fictional situation presented:

“At least a part-time aide should be hired.”

With a budget of £7500 he had a per capita rate of £15, which was well above average. With 50 seats he was on target to seat 10% of the roll. He was able to offer a wide range of services and resources, including Internet, curriculum support and multimedia resources. Although he used most of the methods listed to identify user needs, he did not survey users, meet with heads of departments, have a suggestion box or attend curriculum meetings.

He described in the questionnaire the process he used to deliver a new service:

“Idea comes to me (or I think of it), I research it, present it to the principal. She takes it to the superintendent, and he takes it to the Board.”

In the vignette he reported that for career progression one could:

“Consider going into school administration, or teaching library science at the college.”

Jack said in the vignette:

“I’m currently working on certification as an elementary or middle school principal.”

He thought that all involved could improve their decision-making skills, perhaps by:

“In-service for those of us already teaching, include in a class for new librarians..... We all can use some improvement.”

He thought that those that could help with decisions about the library should include:

“Other librarians.... Other teachers in the school.”

In his opinion as reflected in the questionnaire, core services were decided by school administration. He did not mention examining options or evaluating the process. As part of working towards guidelines, he produced an annual report and there was a district

wide formal evaluation every 5 years, so there were measures in place to evaluate the services provided. He found development planning of some use, but felt:

“Goals change too often.”

He thought that the time he spent communicating with his supervisor was about right (5%); that the time he spent on planning programmes with teachers was at 5% but should be double that figure; and that he spent 5% on planning and management issues, but should be double that figure. Jack was carrying out a range of higher level of tasks, but there was capacity to build on these, and if he had some assistance he would have more chance of developing these tasks.

5.2.2 Letitia

Letitia worked in a large school; had a low budget; high levels of assistance and low levels of resourcing.

Letitia had another full-time librarian to help her, along with 4 clerical staff for 140 hours each week, and 25 hours of student help. She worked in a large school of 3000 students. Her budget was £9000, giving expenditure for each student of £3 each year, which was well below the average figure. The library had 12000 items. She could seat 300 users in the library, which gave her 10% seating provision, with 74 of these computer seats, which she felt could be increased in number. Mainstays of the school library for Letitia were circulation of resources, reading program, multimedia equipment, Internet research, computer training and teacher collaboration.

With such a large library Letitia was able to provide a wide range of services, including videocameras, interactive whiteboard, laptop loan and digital projector. She wanted to add ebook circulation, distance learning capabilities and another 48 computer seats to library services. The reasons she suggested these is because she thought students would be intrigued by ebooks, she felt that not having distance learning was a hindrance and that she had observed a demand for more computer time. Reasons to prevent these were identified by her as lack of school vision for ebooks and lack of funding for the other two initiatives. In the vignette she said that school librarians offered services based on: *“Tradition”*, and that they would not offer new services because:

“Fear of doing something poorly, and, lack of time.... Partly self, partly a lack of administrative support.”

This lack of confidence and support may be a reflection on past experience, or a perception of what might happen. Training in assertiveness skills and decision-making assistance may help to allay these fears. To reinforce this, she considered that librarians would not appreciate any help in making decisions, but that they would value:

“Inservice in assertiveness training.”

Letitia had marked most of the items from the methods listed to identify user needs, except for specific observational study, attending curriculum meetings and a suggestion box. User demand was her primary motivator. She was not aware of any national, State or local guidelines and did not answer questions about development planning. From these results it could be that there is still some capacity to carry out some higher level tasks, although Letitia has thought creatively about e-books and distance learning approaches. Having so much help is enviable, but she is in a very large school with a small budget, which will restrict what she can do.

In the vignette response, she said about managers of school librarians:

“I wish they were not so ‘afraid’ of being leaders.”

This comment may rise from her own personal experience, and it would be interesting to explore, perhaps to identify if managers had been trained in leadership skills, and how this might make a perceived difference to staff they lead.

5.2.3 Deirdre

Deirdre worked in a rural/suburban school of 1320 students; a library teacher assistant for 20 hours each week, 4 hours of parent help and 40 hours of student help; a medium budget of £4500 (£3.40 per student), which had been an increase based on:

“Increase in student use - collaboration with administration [management].”

Deirdre had 16,000 resources, having added 300 plus in the last year. She had 60 seats, which she said were not sufficient for student needs. Three new services she wanted to provide were Internet instruction for staff; coffeehouse night and PowerPoint instruction for students. She wanted to add these because she:

“Saw the want & need over the past 2 years.”

She offered the range of services she did:

“Because that is why I am here for the students & staff – to offer these services.”

Her methods to set up new services included:

“Brainstorm ideas; talk to students or staff; talk to administration [management]; offer service; survey at end.”

By surveying she was evaluating the service. She used all methods of identifying needs, except a suggestion box and user comments. She spent 10% time planning programmes with teaching staff, but estimated the optimum time at 50%. She estimated planning and management issues at 20%, and communication with her supervisor at 5%, both of which she thought were at the right level. She was aware of guidelines at all levels and thought they were of some use to both herself and her manager. She was unable to suggest ways she worked towards the guidelines. She found development planning of some use, and contributed to whole-school development work.

In the vignette response Deirdre said that school librarians decided on what services to offer:

“By looking at their school, students, staff & curriculum.”

She then mentioned some examples of collaboration, such as being generally proactive, compiling an online newsletter and having regular meetings with line managers. She also suggested that school librarians could:

“Use other lib[raries] - & prof[essiona] journals. Also support from admin[istration.]”

This shows a wider perspective. She also thought that it would be important to improve decision-making skills of school librarians by encouraging:

“More librarian-librarian collaboration.”

In sessions like these they could share their experiences, identify problems, examine possible solutions and establish good practice. She felt that school librarians should be more confident in:

“Trusting themselves.”

Through her responses Deirdre showed her emphasis on consulting staff and students, while keeping awareness of wider issues in the literature and in practice in other school libraries.

5.2.4 Betty

Betty worked in an urban school of 1845 students; had the assistance of another library media specialist and a library clerk, each for 40 hours a week, plus student help for 8 hours each week; a very high budget of £17058, £9.24 for each student.

Betty had 107 seats in the library, which she considered was sufficient for activities taking place. Her new services were to collaborate with teachers and students on PowerPoint projects and familiarise students with a State reading award aimed at high school students, as these were new facilities on offer.

She identified users' needs by ongoing observation; user requests; user comments and ideas from professional literature. She decided on offering new services by speaking to her co-worker (who she identifies as Post 1); decide on feasibility; presenting to the Principal:

“Look at the needs of the school and then consider time available.... Consider the options/alternatives and budget... The next school year will be my third in this school so offerings have been carried forward from previous years and I have been offering changes and suggestions as we go along. When the Post 1 person retires (maybe at the end of this next year) other things will change... I suggest to the Post 1 person or if the Post 1 person has an idea, he comes and says, what do you think? We discuss and then try it if we decide that it is feasible. If we decide that it needs to be past [sic] by the Principal, then the Post 1 person does that.”

Her estimates for working with teachers was low at 3%, with an optimum level of 5%; working on planning issues at 1%, with an optimum of 2%; and communicating with her manager at 3%, with an optimum of 5%. She was aware of guidelines at all levels, and felt that for her national and State guidelines were highly influential, while these were of some influence to her manager. However she reported that local guidelines were of no influence to her or her manager. She had attended presentations and workshops on the guidelines and made presentations to the School Board concerning guidelines. She found development planning of some use but did not contribute to whole-school planning:

“If this development planning is in my field, it is generally very useful. If the development is general and is to apply to all curriculum areas, it may or may not be useful to me..... Since I am new to this district, I am not yet involved in that aspect.”

Betty said in the vignette response that the scenario presented showed a lack of collaboration:

“Being a LMS [library media specialist] is a public relations (PR) job so he needs to work on marketing the library, i.e. put the library name on everything that goes out of the library, do a newsletter, host a ‘cookie/punch look-at-the-new-books time’, talk to all the new faculty [teachers] at the beginning of the year.... Needs to involve students in the facilitation [of the Book Review Club.]”

She did not consider that further training or assistance in decision-making was needed by school librarians, as long as they were considering wider opinions of users and throughout the school. She did not think that there was much career progression:

“There are not many supervisor jobs available. If a person wants to continue to work in a LMC and work with students, they can only move up the salary scale.....Become a member of the school district salary committee and work for change.”

While recognising the problem of career progression, she suggested a positive way of changing the position for school librarians.

5.2.5 Rosa

Rosa worked alone in a small high school with 329 students; she had a high budget and medium level of resources.

In the questionnaire, Rosa reported that her budget had increased by £1250 in the last year as there had been an increase of federal funding. The complete budget was £4540, a sum of £13.79 per student, which was high. A new service she wanted to add was library web pages, because she thought it would help students by providing a gateway to Internet resources. She used all methods of identifying user needs except a suggestion box. She offered the range of services:

“To support our curriculum and help students and faculty of [initial of school name] H[igh] S[chool].”

When describing the process of delivering a new service, she outlined:

“Idea; research it; get student, faculty, community input; design plan; discuss with Principal; refine plan; present to school board; implement and promote.”

She therefore had good input from users and spent time planning. In the vignette response she thought that decision-making could be improved:

“By getting more input from others and evaluating and having others evaluate past decisions.... An advisory committee of students, faculty [teachers] and parents/community members.”

With collaboration and evaluation being so important to her, it is not surprising that her estimates on time spent on management issues were high; collaborating with teachers was 20%; on planning at 20% and on communicating with her manager at 15%. She was unable to name an optimum amount of time for any of these topics. She was aware of all guidelines and felt that State and local ones were highly relevant to herself and her manager, whereas national ones were of some influence to them both. She wrote curriculum plans based on local, State and national guidelines. She found development planning extremely useful because: *“It’s the plan/direction for our library services.”* She contributed to whole-school planning. She thought that there was opportunity for career progression:

“If you’re willing to relocate..... Look for a job in another school district with opportunities for advancement or look at a college or university position.”

Like Betty, Rosa also identified a lack of collaboration in the vignette scenario, and she identified a problem in dealing with:

“Negative people unwilling to try new things.”

The way she would solve such unwillingness was to involve teachers in planning for the future and to target them with services that would be attractive to their needs.

5.2.6 Brad

Brad worked in a large high school with 1200 students; a high budget; assistance in the form of a library media clerk for 40 hours each week.

Brad’s large budget of £17,500 (£29.16 per student) included grant money. He had 150 seats in the library, which was above the minimum standard. New services he wanted to offer were support for school improvement plan; linking textbooks into his library management system; and digitising yearbooks for web access. He identified these because he considered them to be:

“Useful and needed.”

He said that he used all of the methods to determine user needs:

“We are here to support our students and teachers – whatever it takes.”

Brad did not follow formal procedures when setting up a new service:

“This is not formal; we try to meet needs as they come up – last year it was a daily TV news show.”

He tried to meet needs as they arose, so planning and evaluation of such projects were not carried out in a formal way. He was unable to determine working percentages because they were largely informal. He was aware of guidelines at all levels and found them all of high influence to himself and his manager. He worked towards guidelines by attending conferences; delivering standards based workshops and chairing the local committee for guidelines. He found development planning of some use and considered:

“It is important to have goals to focus the work.”

Brad was also involved in whole-school development planning. Like Betty, Brad considered that PR was an important element of the work of the high school librarian:

“Put the spotlight on the library and its services – even listing annual accomplishments for his building in a ‘review’ type newsletter.”

He emphasised the introduction of technology as an important tool to keep the library ahead and relevant to youngsters. He thought that training in problem-solving and decision-making would be useful for school librarians and their line managers, and he said that the Principal had already been trained:

“Well, everyone can improve with training.”

He also considered that there was career progression:

“What is career progression? It parallels the classroom teacher – I think we have lots of opportunity if we want to take responsibility and ‘go for it’..... Schools are based on salary schedule – unless he picks up addition[al] grad credits, he is stuck. He should network with others and get additional experiences to prepare himself for other opportunities.”

So in his situation there is clearly a way school librarians can progress if they choose to follow the opportunities available.

5.2.7 Conclusions

A range of provision in American high school libraries was found in the study. However it was typical for them to have much more funding than in Scottish libraries. Extra staffing support was often in evidence, and this gave individuals an opportunity to collaborate more, to plan more strategic work and to play a wider role in the school environment. With either good funding or extra staffing there was also the added benefit of being able

to offer more services. Where school librarians had both of these elements in place, there was the potential to do even more. However the position in the US was not perfect and there were some negative experiences reported, such as poor collaborative experiences and lack of managerial leadership.

5.3 Overall conclusions

This chapter has contributed to the understanding of the range of situations and experiences of school librarians and libraries examined in this study. There was a wide range of practice demonstrated by participants. Some were very organised and covered many stages of planning and evaluation, while some took a more informal approach, networking with staff and students, finding out their interests and needs, and targeting services and facilities to those. School ethos and historical aspects of what had been done in the past would be factors to be considered, and could cause difficulty when suggesting a change of approach. Perhaps starting at an informal level is a starting point to collaborating and testing out the process, but it would be recommended to try to move to a more formal footing concerning planning and evaluating projects, as this way of working demands more commitment and action should be easier to undertake once it is agreed and recorded in writing. Connecting changes to practice with formal guidelines and standards should help to strengthen the case, but it is acknowledged that this will not always be easy. The skills and qualities needed to be an effective high school librarian are discussed in more detail in Chapter 8, and these will help a great deal in making progress in collaboration and positive changes. The model presented in Chapter 9 will also highlight recommendations for becoming an effective high school librarian.

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**THE EFFECTIVE EVIDENCE-
BASED HIGH SCHOOL
LIBRARIAN:
A JOURNEY TO DECISION**

ALISON TURRIFF

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of
The Robert Gordon University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

December 2008

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VOLUME 2

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GLOSSARY

A list of terminology and definitions used in this study is displayed in Table 1.1:

Table 1.1 Glossary

Administration	US term for management team in a school
Chartered Librarian	Scottish term for a qualified librarian who has achieved a recognised professional qualification at university level in library and information studies, and has been awarded the post-graduate Chartered qualification by CILIP
Clerical assistant	An assistant working in the library who is not required to be qualified as a librarian and undertakes clerical duties
CILIP	Chartered Institute of Library & Information Professionals
CSF	Critical success factors
Ebook	Electronic book
Edatabase	Electronic database
EBL	Evidence-based librarianship
EBP	Evidence-based practice
Faculty	US term for teaching staff
Field Officer	Support post to school librarians undertaken by a working school librarian part-time found in some Scottish authorities
Grad credits	US term for additional postgraduate qualifications
HMIe	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (Scotland)
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IS	Information Studies
LIS	Library and Information Studies
LMC/LRC	Library Media Centre/ Library Resource Centre =school library
LMS	Library Media Specialist = School librarian (US)
Library assistant	An assistant working in the library who is not required to be qualified as a librarian
Library media program	Formal information literacy work organised by the librarian
List serv	Group of librarians who are linked in a common email network and who share opinions and seek advice and support
PI	Performance Indicators
PT/Principal Teacher	Term used in Scotland for Head of subject department
Principal	US term for Head Teacher
Pupil	Scottish term for school student
QIs/Qualitative indicators	Measures that demonstrate value elements
Quantitative indicators	Measures that demonstrate statistical elements
Rector	Scottish term for Head Teacher
School librarian	A qualified librarian who works in a school
SLS	School Library Service giving an overview of support to school librarians and other school staff
SMT	Scottish term for senior management team in a school
Student	US term for school pupil
Teacher-librarian	A teacher who spends part of her/his time managing the library
Technicians	Members of school staff who support the installation, networking and use of ICT with their technical expertise

Chapter 6 Planning and decision-making processes

The aims of this chapter are to investigate how school librarians plan, make decisions and the extent they follow models from decision-making theory. A variety of methods was used, including literature review, interview, questionnaire survey, vignette, critical incident diary and focus group, providing a triangulated approach. More details of methods are in Chapter 3. Full questionnaire details are given in Chapter 4. When reporting findings from data collection, fictional forenames are used throughout.

6.1 Planning services

Services offered by surveyed school libraries displayed in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Services offered by sample libraries

Service	% respondents offering service – Scotland (n=27)	% respondents offering service – US (n=22)
Resources to support the curriculum	100.0 (n=27)	100.0 (n=22)
Advice on resources	100.0 (n=27)	100.0 (n=22)
Requests from own resources	100.0 (n=27)	95.4 (n=21)
User recommendations of resources for purchase	100.0 (n=27)	95.4 (n=21)
Teaching library skills	96.0 (n=26)	100.0 (n=22)
Resources about careers and jobs	96.0 (n=26)	81.8 (n=18)
Requests from other libraries	92.5 (n=25)	0.0 (n=0)
Computer instruction	92.5 (n=25)	95.4 (n=21)
Resources for staff development	92.5 (n=25)	95.4 (n=21)
Internet instruction	88.8 (n=24)	90.9 (n=20)
Author visits	70.0 (n=20)	22.7 (n=5)
Book review schemes	40.7 (n=11)	59.0 (n=13)
Reading Club	11.0 (n=3)	0.0 (n=0)
Video filming facility	7.4 (n=2)	50.0 (n=11)
Interactive whiteboard	7.4 (n=2)	27.2 (n=6)
Digital projector	7.4 (n=2)	63.6 (n=14)
Study skills	7.4 (n=2)	0.0 (n=0)
TV/video/audio	7.4 (n=2)	13.6 (n=3)
Information services for teachers	3.7 (n=1)	13.6 (n=3)
Preparation of curricular worksheets	3.7 (n=1)	13.7 (n=3)
Hire of video cameras to teaching staff	3.7 (n=1)	50.0 (n=11)
Homework club	3.7 (n=1)	0.0 (n=0)

American school librarians were more likely to offer extra services to users than Scottish librarians. Typically these services reflected the bigger space of the average American library, there were more staff available, there was more money for additional resources and also adjoining suites were more common in libraries, for example ICT suites, video and audio production and editing suites, with digital cameras and projectors, image and optical character reader scanners. Extra services that were common in US schools included loan of laptops, textbook circulation and video camera loans.

The vignette was chosen as a method because during the questionnaire stage it was clear that many participants were uneasy about identifying problems with their own practice and experience, for example a typical response in the questionnaire from American school librarian Molly was:

"I reckon [school library] policy should be updated every year or so, but it's hard to do that in practice and I do it maybe every two or three years."

In the vignette she recommended that policies should be updated every year, which did not reflect her practice of updating every two to three years. It was considered that it would be interesting to allow participants to comment on an objective situation in the vignette in order to gauge their opinions about what they thought should happen in an ideal situation. The vignette provided a way to identify this, to consolidate real issues raised in the questionnaire and also to give scope to reveal if there were any other issues.

In the vignette method, which is discussed as a method in more detail in Chapter 3, an imaginary situation was presented where the fictional school librarian delivered a basic coverage of services, and the aims were to identify if respondents recognised the deliberate omissions in services and could make suggestions for better practice. This was largely successful, in that most respondents identified areas for improvement and identified omissions.

The main purpose of the services offered by the school librarian was summed up by American librarian Sue Ellen in the vignette, who said:

"My job is to work with students. I spend my time with them. They are the most important part in my day. They are the reason I'm there."

This indicated that she considered that the work she did was totally focused on student need. She also thought that:

“I work in a great school district. I am a valued member of the team whose input is frequently asked for. I feel very empowered and am happy with my administrators [managers], teachers, and community.”

Here she outlined some of the major issues that she considered make for a positive professional experience for the librarian. With these positive factors, she felt appreciated, part of a wider team with common goals and the planning of services in the library was focused on the identified needs of library users, in collaboration with her colleagues.

The vignette described a project which had failed at the first hurdle, and it was anticipated that participants would have opinions about this. US school librarian Betty thought that the project was a good idea, but it:

“Sounds like he [school librarian in vignette] took all the responsibility for pulling it together..... Needs to involve students in the facilitation.... Find adult/parent volunteers to help.”

This demonstrated her suggested principle of collaborative working for success and echoed the experience of Sue Ellen. This extra collaborative support for the librarian was a common solution suggested by participants throughout the study, either formally through a library committee and being involved in collaboration in school matters or more informally by regularly speaking to students, teachers and parents. Issues of collaboration are discussed more fully in Chapter 7.

As previously mentioned, a questionnaire survey was introduced early in the research (see Chapter 4 for full findings) in order to highlight common themes and areas of concern of school library practitioners, their line managers, Directors of School Library Services and national professional bodies. As these had been identified as important issues by practitioners and managers, these were then followed up in more detail in later collection gathering, such as vignette, interview and focus group. In this way various methods would act as checking devices, approaching and confirming information by the use of different methodologies.

Respondents established in the questionnaire what they considered were their core services and ways of working. Two areas of these essential elements (literacy promotion

and collaboration) were deliberately omitted in the vignette because it was considered interesting to see if vignette respondents identified them as being missing. Responses to the vignette indicated the clear recognition amongst respondents of the importance of literacy promotion and collaboration as two overriding strategies, as already suggested within the questionnaire in Chapter 4. Considering the vignette, most US respondents did identify that these core elements were missing, as outlined by US librarian Freda:

"[The librarian] does not seem to be stressing reading for enjoyment for students or faculty [teachers]. It is also unclear if he is meeting the students' expressed needs or if they have had an opportunity to express their needs and wanted services."

This was consolidated by US librarian Rhona who suggested that what could be missing was:

"Maybe a reading program of some kind similar to the Reading Review Club [project mentioned in vignette]. Anything that will encourage teens to read."

Rhona described here linking in a formal method of setting up a reading programme to promote and link with the Reading Review Club.

US respondents were more likely to identify omissions to services than Scottish librarians. Although some Scottish librarians did identify omissions, which were mainly related to literacy promotion, such as encouraging reading, one quarter of Scottish librarians answering the vignette did not identify any omissions. For example, Scottish librarian Rose said:

"I think he offers a wide range of services that would suit the schools [sic] needs."

This could be because the US librarians were more likely to have planning, reflection and collaboration time than Scottish colleagues, who tended to be more involved in operational issues, and might not have the same strategic overview.

US librarian Betty suggested that the librarian in the vignette:

".. needs to be involved in classroom teacher/library media specialist (LMS) collaboration."

Betty reinforced what was said by Freda, reflecting the importance of involving teachers with library work. Only 7.4% of Scottish librarians identified the omission of collaborative work, which could indicate that this is not a priority for them. This compared with 59.1% of US librarians who identified that collaboration had not been included as a core

service. However, different levels of collaborative work were identified by some Scots, from the basic stage described by Scottish librarian Audrey, who thought it important that the librarian should:

“Talk to Departments, find out what they are doing and how he can fit in with their needs. E.G. when are investigations being done, what resources are needed and how the library can help.”

Scottish librarian Ruby considered more formal ways of working when she identified in the vignette the importance of the librarian to be aware of:

“Curricular relevance of services and interface with school/departmental plans and priorities.”

Scottish librarian Cordelia also had a perspective of a more central role for a sustained school librarian contribution to teaching and learning when she talked about the need in the vignette for the librarian to:

“Point out the value of what he does – subtly but relentlessly! The library should be central to learning in the school, so he may need to make what he does more relevant to pupils’ experiences, and to work with teachers to deliver what they need.”

Half of respondents to the vignette considered that there was insufficient promotion of reading in the scenario presented. One third thought that there was not enough collaboration with teachers in the vignette. Half of the respondents considered that the librarian should be more proactive and should communicate more.

Main reasons why needs were not met were identified by respondents as lack of time, funds, staffing and librarian confidence. All but two Scottish respondents identified at least two of these reasons as problems. These reasons were regularly cited by most respondents in all methods and can be seen as important barriers to progress.

Scottish Director of School Library Services Daisy said in the questionnaire survey that strategies to improve the situation of school librarians were to promote:

“Wider consultation; braver LRC staff; better staff development for LRC staff; higher expectations on the part of schools as to best practice in school LRCs.”

She also thought that there needed to be a:

“Mix of strategic officer led and in-school negotiated [process] – LRC staff will be best judge of how to ‘tailor’ core services to particular needs of their own staff + students. Evaluation of the services should also be a mix of top-down and bottom-up.”

Daisy showed awareness of collaboration school-wide, but also the need to develop library staff to cope with the work they do as a sole professional. Her use of the phrase “*braver LRC staff*” was interesting; again this could be tied into an issue of confidence and taking risks. Will this be a skill identified by participants? However if librarians were to collaborate and relate library work to user needs and whole-school priorities such as the curriculum, this could be said to spread the risk and strengthen their argument for progression and development of the service in line with what users needed.

The lack of confidence is a particularly interesting issue, and this could be seen to be connected to a lack of development and training which has been raised by many respondents and the fact that librarians work alone and tend to try out strategies experientially without guidance or reference to management strategies, as highlighted by school librarian James in the Scottish focus group:

“I was trying to think there where I have gained what understanding and prioritisation I have of the decision-making process, I have to say in my own case it’s been I think through experience and observation, I’ve never come across a means by which that is actually taught and imparted to me.”

This was supported by his fellow focus group member Fiona:

“I don’t think that there are training courses available for how to make decisions you do have to observe.....practice. It’s working out what good practice is that’s difficult to begin with.”

A typical vignette response was that of Barbara, a Scottish librarian, when she identified barriers to prevent librarians offering new services as:

“Time/Funding/Lack of clerical help.”

US librarian Rhoda said in the vignette that her problems arose from:

“Tetchy kids.. Tetchy faculty... Not enough \$.”

Scottish librarian Audrey considered in the vignette that problems were: “*Budget and Time.*” as well as: “*Lack of commitment from management.*”

Scottish librarian Frances said in the vignette that in the case of librarians a:

“Lack of self-confidence can inhibit decisions.”

Once again this issue of confidence appeared to be a barrier. Was this because they felt isolated if they worked alone, or that they did not feel that they play or are seen to play a full part in teaching and learning? In contrast, all Directors of School Library Services

who participated in this study seemed to be more aware of the need to link in library developments with wider school issues. This is possibly not unexpected, given their wider overview. Chantal, a US Director of School Library Services, said in the vignette that:

“Services should be offered in coordination with the classroom teaching staff based on their needs and the curriculum... Most administrators [senior management in schools] would welcome new ideas and services from the librarian... No one should stand in the way if the service is coordinated with the curriculum.”

This co-ordination with the curriculum and demonstration of relevance to teaching and learning appeared to be a critical factor in the success of the school library. Chantal also considered that:

“Support for the single librarian in the building should take the form of removing pedantic chores from their plate so they can spend more time before the students.”

By this statement she showed support for providing clerical help to allow the librarian to work on higher level tasks. In America, it was usually the case that the librarian was supported by other staff, whereas the model in Scotland was generally that of a sole librarian. However, Laura, a US librarian, was a new sole professional working for 60 hours each week, without clerical help. She identified in the vignette how difficult it was to offer all that was required, mainly due to time constraints. She also thought that what could prevent librarians offering services is:

“The knowledge that (perhaps) once you start a ‘new service’ there is no un-offering it. It will then be a regular, expected service into infinity.”

Laura identified an important point about developing services, particularly when there is only one member of library staff, and where the capacity to update, maintain and develop services could be said to be more hampered. In the questionnaire, Scottish Director of School Library Services Noreen pointed out that although national guidelines were important for school librarians to establish a minimum standard:

“Standards and Performance Indicators are not statutory.”

The lack of statutory status was an important point as it could relate to the way the library was perceived by teaching and management staff. In the vignette she also considered that problems in provision could be caused by *“Conflicting demands”* and *“Possibly the librarian if unwilling to change.”* She called for more involvement between the librarian and suggested that librarians could involve: *“Staff, pupils, Advisers,*

Inspectors.” In this way there would be a wider range of contributors giving their own varying views on what the library could offer, depending on their perspectives and needs.

US Director of School Library Services Louisa said in the questionnaire that important influences for the librarian to consider when developing services were relating them to: *“Policies and the needs of the school population.”* In the vignette she reported that in her opinion school librarians were: *“Overworked in the job.”* She considered that librarian skills in decision-making could be improved by:

“Working with peers on this and having workshops with motivational speakers.”

US Director of School Library Services Ian said in the questionnaire that in terms of making decisions, librarians should have:

“Inservice dealing with the subject. Many times this is not covered in-depth in the college classes.”

This need for training in making decisions for school librarians was identified in many responses, and appears to be a key factor. Scottish Director of School Library Services Daisy said in the vignette that she considered problem areas were: *“Lack of strategic openness, lack of time, lack of information”*, however she considered that no one would stop librarians developing new services if: *“They put forward a powerful enough case.”* She also thought that librarians were not always aware of: *“The role of the school library in the wider community”* or the *“Future role of school libraries in light of increased ICT in schools.”*

This emphasised the perceived need to relate library developments to the curriculum and collaboration with teachers. By linking in this way, more strength will likely be given to the position of the school librarian because there will be overt support for the whole curriculum and the use of ICT in improving student attainment. Simple solutions to improve the situation of the librarian in the vignette raised by respondents included the librarian producing an annual report; asking teachers for help; asking users to complete a questionnaire to identify their needs; being more persistent; attending departmental meetings and meeting the line manager more often. US librarian Sue Ellen raised the idea that the librarian should:

“Be a squeaky wheel (The squeaky wheel gets the oil).”

One US librarian Sheena (who worked in a prison high school) thought that the librarian needed to be proactive and collaborative in approach to the work:

"I get the feeling that Bill [librarian in vignette] isn't having fun any more. He is spread to [sic] thin through his work and seems to be busy with the business of being busy. He has forgot [sic] that he is there for the students... he needs a shake up he is offering only one fun thing for the students....quit worrying about it and get out there and hustle. Don't wait for the teachers to come to him, get out there, Make himself indispensable... meet with the departments... offer himself."

Sheena also identified a commonly held view that one thing to make the librarian's job more difficult was a:

"Close minded principal that does not see the librarian as anything more than a babysitter."

In other words, the library can provide a useful area for management to place students without a teacher, even if the reason for being there is not related to curriculum goals, but may be more for convenience. Sheena considered that the librarian had two main options if his post was not valued in school: *"Quit and look else where [sic]."* or:

"Re-create his job, make himself valued and needed. This takes time. Sometimes jobs expand to greater challenges and money by the amount of energy one puts into their job."

These comments were largely reflected by other respondents and the emphasis on relating the library more towards whole-school activity was clearly vocalised. American respondents were more likely than Scottish librarians to recommend that the unsatisfied librarian should move out or up. This is probably because there were more opportunities for US school librarians to do so. More details of these opportunities are discussed in section 6.5.

An interesting part of the vignette results was that some respondents did not identify the deliberate omissions and negative messages about the work of the librarian, and of particular note were the ones who said that the range of services were acceptable. This did not reflect the results of the questionnaire, where two commonly identified core elements were literacy promotion and collaboration. Perhaps these librarians were in posts where managers did not make more high-level demands on them. The majority of respondents who did not identify the omissions were Scottish respondents. American librarians had more formal and curricular demands placed on them because library assignments tended to be graded and counted toward the final grade in various subjects, whereas the Scottish model was not so related to the formal aspect of the

curriculum. However even without this formal curriculum contribution, it was expected that the increasing use of national, State or District guidelines, setting minimum service level provision and benchmarking techniques such as external inspection and the use of self-evaluation models would help to identify a minimum standard level of service in Scotland, and that by collaboration and discussion librarians and managers could establish where each library was in comparison to this benchmark standard level, and for action measures to be planned and carried out to improve the library against the minimum standard.

6.2 Use of formal guidelines and measures

In America, rather than national guidelines being produced, States and/or Districts tend to produce their own guidelines and standards. In one American State, written State-wide guidelines (Potter, Lohr and Klein 2002) have been produced which helped form the basis of discussion between the Principal and librarian for common areas to be considered for school library planning and to establish how their library could be compared to the minimum standard. The focus is on themes of ICT, curriculum development and information literacy across the curriculum. As Marysia, an American school librarian, said during a focus group:

“I think it’s imperative that we as librarians sit on curriculum development committees within our school districts so that we’re infused into the entire curriculum.”

The librarian was generally seen as an ICT expert in US schools in this study. Although there was a technical team in each school, they fulfilled mainly hardware and ICT networking tasks, whereas the librarian usually led in terms of application of the software to curriculum tasks, and teaching and developing information literacy by using this software. This is generally quite a different role to that of the Scottish librarian. This “ICT expert” role in Scottish schools was taken by a wide variety of staff, from technicians to teachers of computing or business management, to authority-led development officers with an overview of schools, sometimes librarians, sometimes no-one at all within school. In the US model, teachers who might not normally use the library were encouraged to work with the librarian in order to fulfil ICT elements of the curriculum in the subject they taught. Also because assignments were based in the library using its resources and graded for subject achievement, there was more formal encouragement and requirement of teachers to work with the librarian in many subjects, because this

work had to be done to achieve curriculum delivery and the librarian was the expert in the use of resources and information. This was unlike the scenario in Scotland, where the librarian had no formal input into the curriculum planning of the majority of schools surveyed.

However the US model outlined was not applied whole scale throughout each State. Torres (2002), an American school librarian who contributed to the school librarian support site LM_NET, states that:

“Several members [of LM_NET] identified poorly defined, weak, or non-existent library standards in their state or region as a major contributor to the problem. When their state education agency can’t seem to define or put down on paper what exactly is expected of school librarians and libraries, how can we expect campus principals to do it? I know the incredible shrinking library standards in the state of Texas have had a tragically adverse impact on the school library system here for the past few years. In Texas, not only have the library standards been considerably relaxed, but they are also no longer factored into the state rankings of the performance of individual campuses and school districts, and therefore, in the minds of many administrators, they may as well not even exist.”

In Scotland there were guidelines and indicators providing similar focus, such as the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities *Standards for school library resource services in Scotland* [COSLA standards] (1999), Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum *Taking a closer look at school library resource centres* (1999) and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education *How good is our school: libraries supporting learners* (2005). The COSLA document outlines general minimum principles of library provision in schools and the other two documents were designed as qualitative indicator (QI) self-evaluation instruments that articulate with recognised school educational QI documents, using the same structure, priorities and language (Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum *Taking a Closer Look at School Library Resource Centres* (1999) with Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (1998) *How Good is our School*; and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (2005) *How Good is our School: libraries supporting learners* with Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (2003) *How Good is our School 2*.) This articulation with national education documents is important, because it makes the model of the library documents easier for senior management teams in schools to understand, as they are already familiar with the general principles from the educational documents. These kinds of documents are usually planned on a national scale by national bodies and they were created by practitioners, managers and education planners. In this way a level of standardisation of service is possible and there

is an opportunity to benchmark against wider nationally agreed principles, without having to start from the beginning in each school or in each authority and giving a wide variety of perspectives.

For example, school librarian Dorothy described in the questionnaire how she worked towards national Scottish guidelines:

“Investigate guidelines and matched these with the present provision in the school library. Also let senior managers know these guidelines and our present level [of performance through self-evaluation].”

Scottish librarian Fiona described in the questionnaire how in her school library there was a:

“Constant push towards improvement of standards through work with Head Teacher within school and Educational Development Service [School Library Service].”

Thus Head Teacher and School Library Service support was seen as important to progress the development of standards and guidelines on an individual school basis. Without this, the librarian could carry out some tasks and make developments, but management and central support was needed to make the work of the library whole-school and authority-wide priority.

On a more negative note, Scottish librarian Ruby said in the questionnaire survey when she tried to implement discussion of a new QI document:

“I translated the Closer Look [Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum Taking a Closer Look at School Library Resource Centres (1999)] document into a Starter Discussion (Powerpoint presentation) for use with the LRC committee. This has yet to be actioned.”

Although Ruby had tried to bring this to the attention of managers in school, it was not taken forward, thus missing an opportunity to put the library role in the centre of whole-school learning and teaching. Scottish school librarian Fiona piloted the use of qualitative indicators for her area and reported in the questionnaire that she found the use of development planning: *“Makes me reflect, identify evidence, focus, justify”* on what is going on in her library. However, not everyone used guidelines, as demonstrated by Scottish librarian Lesley who said in the questionnaire survey that implementing documents was: *“Just a paper exercise, would rather be doing.”*

This opinion was reflected much more by Scottish respondents, and this could be a reflection of the fact that Scottish librarians were more likely to work alone and had to do all library tasks, including operational duties, while US librarians had more time to reflect as they had other staff to do more routine tasks. There were exceptions, for example another Scottish librarian Fiona valued the intellectual exercise more, appreciated the reflective opportunity offered by using guidelines as: *"Focusing the mind."*

However Fiona was a librarian who had a long standing national involvement with a professional body and had part-time assistance to allow her to carry out wider tasks for her authority, so in this way she had a wider and more reflective outlook. These two opinions represented the extreme views from respondents, and although views generally featured between the extremes, there was a general trend that Scottish librarians were more likely to consider that they would prefer to be carrying out operational tasks which were more familiar to them and needed to be done on a daily basis, rather than spending time on more strategic and challenging planning and reviewing. These opinions were represented in all datasets. Was this because many were familiar with elements of librarianship, arising from training and experience, and found the unfamiliar elements of management and education more challenging? Without other library staff to share their thoughts and concerns were they less comfortable in this area?

Scottish school librarian Stephanie said in the questionnaire survey that there was a:

"Tendency to get bogged down in day-to-day, trivial (often disciplinary) issues."

As an example of how this was illustrated in practice, one Director of School Library Service Daisy had managed to successfully bid for library assistant help in all secondary schools throughout her authority, and was disappointed to report that after several years:

"They [the school librarians] haven't taken the chance to do the higher level stuff – they still prat around with things the assistants should be doing, like issuing and cutting up [news]papers. They seem to find comfort in that and maybe feel safe with that rather than what they're paid to do. I just wish they would get it together and do a manager's job. The thing is the schools don't really see that's what they could be, should be doing either. It gets me down, really. Maybe it's a training issue, but the general council management courses aren't really specialised enough for their field. I don't know."

Eisenberg (2002) considers that:

"Librarians seem to treat 'strategic management' as a dirty phrase.... [However] strategic management turns vision into reality." p2

However Rita, a librarian in a Scottish school library in a different authority had a different viewpoint:

“If I had a library assistant, then the percentage of my time that I could spend on management tasks would realistically increase. In a previous position this was the case and a higher percentage of my time could be spent on management issues. I spend a reasonably high percentage of my time on non-professional tasks.”

Her previous experience in another school library when she had an assistant was a contributing factor because she had already carried out more management tasks than she did in her present job and was aware of the difference. For those unlike Rita who might find it difficult to work on more strategic issues, it could be that there is a need for specialised management courses aimed at practitioner school librarians. These kinds of courses may be run throughout the authority for school librarians, or they may not be offered. As Daisy has already identified, general management courses may not be specialised enough for the work of a school librarian, for example issues such as supervising students, learning styles or pedagogy were not factors concerning more generic managers in an authority. Customised management and education courses could help by allowing sole librarians to share their experience with peers in a safe environment, use practical, real and relevant examples and outline ways of dealing with real-life strategic issues in a reflective way. Trainers would have to be aware of the particular situation of school librarians and central services could communicate the details to them.

6.3 Library policies and development plans

Creating library policy was an important first step in planning because it outlined what the library offered and set an expectation to users. To make updating of library policy easier, it was suggested by respondents to the vignette that policy should be updated regularly and that others should be involved. US librarian Betty said that the librarian in the vignette: *“Needs a library advisory committee to assist with this”* and that he should: *“Set more realistic goals.”*

US librarian Freda said that the librarian in the vignette:

“.. should get input from the faculty and patrons. He can also get on the internet and find many such policies to pattern after.”

US librarian Rhona thought that:

“He could visit with other librarians and compare their policies with his and make needed changes. There is not need [sic] to ‘re-invent the wheel’.”

These suggestions showed that some librarians believed that the process of developing policy could involve looking at wider existing policies in practice and adapting them, rather than starting with nothing. However there was another school of thought, where many librarians did not identify working with others in practice. For example US librarian Sheena said in the vignette response when talking about updating policy:

“Maybe it is too complex and needs to be stream lined [sic]. Work on one page at a time. Only [update] when there is a major change in policy. Policy is too big, to [sic] complicated, needs to re-think what he is expecting.”

Scottish librarian Frances identified an interesting slant to keeping control of policy updating in her response to the vignette:

“Perhaps some of [the priorities] depended on the action of others who let him down? Keep at least some of them entirely in his own hands – then he has no one to blame but himself.”

By identifying priorities of teachers and other users, negotiating developmental tasks and sharing the work between librarian and teachers, hopefully people will not “let down” the librarian, because what is in the development plan will be a priority to those who have taken ownership of it by being involved in its construction.

US librarian Sue Ellen had some useful practical suggestions for time management of the policy revision process when responding to the vignette:

“Do it over the summer break when there aren’t so many interruptions. Keep it on computer disks so he doesn’t have to rewrite the whole thing and can easily make changes.”

This is a useful strategy, although it has to be noted that some school librarians do not work in the vacations. Generally in this survey US librarians only worked during term-time, while Scottish librarians worked all year round. Some librarians in the US did additional work over the summer term, perhaps dealing with information literacy teaching in summer school, rather than their own substantive duties. Sue Ellen’s suggestion would mean that for US school librarians, on a practical level, such updating work would be done in their own time if it were to be carried out in the summer break.

Another approach to time-managing the task came from Scottish librarian Barbara in the vignette:

“Sometimes it is easier to put difficult things to one side and perhaps he just has to have the will to make time, even if its [sic] at home, to do it.”

Again, this raised the issue of librarians undertaking such work in their own time, as it could be difficult to do without interruption at work, particularly if the librarian had no assistance. In this survey, Scottish librarians were more likely to suggest working with senior management than teaching staff, whereas Americans were more likely to mention working directly with teachers. For example, Ruby said in the vignette:

“Discuss with line manager... Select short-term goals and identify others that can remain as long-term priorities.”

Half of all respondents thought that the updating should be done every year, although very few carried this out themselves. Most respondents thought that there should be better forward planning; only realistic targets should be made; not to do too much alone and to involve others, although again it proved that these ideals were not met by many participants. In fact one Scottish librarian Ross voiced the opinions of many when he said:

“Let’s face it, a school library policy is something that is created because it is vaguely useful in case of HMI inspection or to backup some point in a distant development plan. It is usually of no earthly use to man or beast!”

This was reflected by other Scottish librarians such as Mary who felt that her development plans or policies were largely:

“Rubberstamped every year – I am not sure they have ever been looked at by the Rector [Headteacher].”

She felt that it was a pointless exercise because there was never any feedback or amendment. With some collaboration on library policy she could have a more positive experience and feel that it was a relevant, useful contribution to a wider school vision.

However Rita, a Scottish school librarian, said in the vignette that she found development plans useful as a management tool, as:

“They help me to focus on the bigger picture rather than getting bogged down in the problems of day to day running of the library.”

Scottish librarian Jean pointed out in the vignette that there were financial advantages to keeping a wider perspective:

“With a good, well designed plan, [the library is] more likely to be allocated funds for planned developments.”

Jacqueline, another Scottish colleague in the vignette response, found that development planning helped her to prioritise because it:

“Reminds me of the areas in need of development that are not always considered on a day to day basis.”

In order to make the policies and development plans truly meaningful, it would seem sensible that they have to be worked on in collaboration with teachers and with guidance from senior management to make them really relevant to whole-school issues and to support the delivery of the curriculum in schools. One Scottish school librarian Ruby stated in the vignette that she was: *“Not invited!”* to contribute to whole-school development planning, going on to say:

“However if the LRC is not featured within this document [whole-school development plan] it can be most inhibiting.”

Scottish school librarian Rita indicated in the vignette that further progress could arise from development planning:

“I do try to mirror the school development plan whenever appropriate, in the library. I may contribute in the future as the headmaster and myself are working towards a whole school information policy.”

Working on whole-school issues like this is one way to endeavour to place the library at the centre of school curriculum planning. Although Scottish school librarian Tim stated in the questionnaire survey that:

“We don’t do development planning in a structured way, things develop in an “ad hoc” way. I’m sure I would find a more structured development plan very useful in my regular work..... It would give us a framework to fall back on and a basis for decision-making..... The library does not feature in the whole-school development plan.”

He clearly understood the value of such planning, but did not feel able to create a library plan as part of his autonomous role in the library and work towards contributing to a whole-school plan.

He also stated that:

“I feel that the Library Resource Centre Co-ordinator should really have PT [Principal Teacher] status which we don’t have at the moment. If we had, we would automatically spend more time on library development planning and on developing programmes.”

He considered that having such status conferred upon his post would automatically make a difference to how he works, rather than taking the initiative at this stage and

creating expectations from senior management. Perhaps such a move would not be appropriate in some school situations.

In some schools, library policy was created after teaching departments had created their policies, so that the library policy included elements of priority for departments, immediately giving it more relevance to whole-school and departmental issues. One Scottish school librarian Linda described how she did this:

“Every year I get to put my plan in a fortnight after everyone else [other departments in the school]. This lets me see what they are doing, my line manager gives me them, how I can fit in with that and provide what they need, if I can. Otherwise I’m working blind, ‘cos they never used to tell me what they did in advance, and it would be like a bit of a shock when they expected I’d know they wanted something, like I’m clairvoyant [laughs]. I know some of the departments are not keen that I oversee theirs, if you like, like I’m checking their work and seeing what I shouldn’t see, and they get chased to get them in in time for me to see, but I need to get an overview of what they want and make, like, my priorities.”

Her line manager Norman said at interview that this was done:

“To let her see what is going on in the school, and what subject priorities are. Then she can’t say she doesn’t know what they want from her. They have high expectations of Linda, and we need to equip her all we can……. Not just for resources, but information skills, at the right time, working with departments and not duplicating, or doing things out of synch, but building on the foundation and building up skills of pupils in an organised, considered and systematic way. ”

By being given a formal overview of the policies of other departments, and the fact that this process was endorsed by the management team, Linda had a real opportunity to provide whole-school support and make whole-school priorities for library work for the forthcoming year, although that was not to say that everyone would be completely satisfied. Apart from this method, another idea would be to establish a regular and meaningful programme of formal departmental collaboration as this would give her similar insight into what departments were expecting from the library. This could be more time-consuming and lengthy. Without an overview of some kind the librarian was inevitably less likely to provide what subject teachers and students needed. Such support from the management team was invaluable and showed that they recognised the contribution of the library and librarian to teaching and learning, from a whole-school viewpoint.

6.4 Support for the school librarian

Data from the vignette discussion identified elements of a good support system for school librarians as including a central support service; regular meetings with other school librarians; good line management; collaborating with teachers in school and having a library assistant. However there were marked differences between responses from US and Scottish respondents. A typical comment from Scottish librarians was from Marjory, who identified in the vignette useful support for her as being:

“Colleagues in other school libraries... a good line manager... a good, helpful, effective support service from public library [or School Library Service if appropriate].”

Other interesting comments arose from the vignette, such as that of Shirley, a Scottish school librarian who identified it would help her as:

“Being considered a Head of Department (even if not paid).”

Many Scottish librarians also identified that having a library assistant would be a great support to the work they were doing in school. The focus for Scottish respondents was on other school librarians; clerical help; status and a supportive manager.

US librarians raised a different suite of issues as being a support to their work, based largely on collaboration; professional development; curriculum relevance and evaluation. For example, Freda in the vignette response identified useful support networks:

“District and regional school librarian associations... Local teachers and faculty with shared interests... e-mail, list-servs with other school librarians.”

Rhona, another US librarian, identified in the vignette other typically popular responses to the same issue:

“Planning time provided for Bill [librarian in vignette] and teachers to work on units of study together... Supervisor takes more interest in Bill’s library program by offering suggestions... Students have an opportunity to evaluate Bill and library program.”

Most US school librarians surveyed did not have a central School Library Service although most of the Scottish schools surveyed did have such a central service. US librarians were more likely to have other library support staff in school, a whole-school technology lead role and regular peer support from librarians within the State and/or District. They were also more likely than Scottish librarians to join mailservers such as LM_NET, which is an email list self-help support group for librarians internationally. None of the Scottish respondents mentioned that they used mailservers such as this,

although three quarters of the US librarians surveyed used this list regularly. A typical comment from newly qualified US librarian Laura in the vignette was that:

“Librarians could help each other by communicating more with each other. I found the LM-NET listserv extremely supportive and instructive when I belonged, for example. It just takes more energy and time than you want to give at the end of the day, sometimes.”

Laura was a relatively new young professional and identified that she worked for 60 hours each week. Also by talking of “the end of the day” there was a hint that she may have been doing this after her official working time.

From the vignette data it emerged that the school librarian's job can be made more difficult by budgetary constrictions; low profile in schools; lack of support; not being seen as a professional and feeling professionally isolated. American librarian Bertie identified major problems for the librarian as being:

“Principal with lack of vision, students who don't appreciate what LMC [library media centre] can do and faculty [teachers] who don't see the relevance of library media program.”

Scottish librarian Ruby pinpointed a problem in the vignette that:

“There is rarely support available to librarians that is similar in nature to that given to probationary teachers ie a formal structure of mentoring and active support.”

Most Scottish authorities did have some central support to new librarians, such as a Field Officer network or a central person in an advisory capacity from the Education Department or School Library Service to guide and support librarians in schools. This would help the sole school librarian to have some feeling of peer support.

In the vignette, the period of optimum staff development activity was identified by respondents as every 2-3 months, although this ranged widely from every month to at least once a year. The topics which respondents most frequently identified as important for identification for staff development were ICT; literacy promotion; learning skills and creating web pages. The respondents who were comfortable with the once-a-year activity tended to be those who were more experienced, confident and who had their own networking contacts, compared to newer members of staff who preferred the more frequent activities for support.

In the vignette discussions, a majority of respondents identified regular peer school librarian meetings as being important every 2-3 months, with topics to include digital development; reading initiatives; interchange of ideas and information skills. The sharing of practice with other school librarians was a major factor raised by librarians in influencing their decision-making. When asked about influences that they considered important, a typical comment was that from American school librarian Bertie who was interested in: *“What goes on in other LMCs [school libraries].”*

This expressed need for outside support and stimulation is not surprising, given the relatively professionally isolated nature of the post. Meeting up with peers and sharing of good practice were mainstay issues which featured throughout the research and were relevant regardless of librarian experience and age. However, Scottish librarians were more likely to attend centrally organised staff development sessions two or three times a year, while American respondents were more likely to have monthly focused working meetings with peers, largely on topical District technology and information literacy topics. Any staff development sessions attended by US librarians were with teachers, usually on topics of ICT or curriculum development.

US librarian Sue Ellen said in the vignette that immediate supervisors of school librarians could have their decision-making skills improved if librarians were kept in the loop:

“Keep them [school librarians] informed and they will make good decisions.”

She also thought that:

“You won’t get help if you don’t ask for it or show a need.”

The communication aspects of collaborative working were therefore identified as important, by Sue Ellen and many others. Without this channel of communication, US librarian Bertie said that:

“It just all breaks down if you don’t talk to each other.”

Scottish librarians identified the new national inspection profile (Her Majesty’s Inspectorate 2006) as a priority for staff development, probably because the new process of profiling at inspection started about the same time as the questionnaire and vignette discussion were carried out, in 2002. All were keen to find out more about the process and to examine any paperwork which could be considered and used as a model. The national professional body CILIPS produced guidance documents used in

the inspection process and case studies on its website (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland 2007) for librarians to use freely, and these have been updated with more case studies and examples as more librarians share their own work as they progress through inspections.

For example Marjory, a Scottish school librarian, said in the vignette response that she identified as useful topics for development work to be:

“NoF training [New Opportunities Fund, that is standardised contextual ICT training aimed at school librarians in 2002 and funded by Scottish central government]... Self-evaluation techniques... Assertiveness training.”

Scottish librarian Frances reported in the vignette response that she wanted training on:

“Preparation for Inspection... Literacy Promotion... Creating/Maintaining Web Pages.”

This reflected common views that the vast majority of Scottish librarians wanted to have ICT and literacy promotion training. Only a quarter of Scottish librarians said in response to the vignette that they wanted to find out more about curriculum or learning issues. Collaboration was not identified as a priority learning topic from Scottish respondents. Was this due to a lack of self-awareness, or that they did not feel they needed guidance in this area because they were working at an appropriate level already, or that they did not relate their work to a collaborative approach?

In contrast, three quarters of the US librarians identified through the vignette that curriculum, ICT, reading promotion and collaboration issues were priorities for their development. This reflected the different focus of the staff in two countries – the US library staff training issues were based on the curriculum and collaboration, which they were comfortable with as teachers, while Scottish participants looked at ICT and literacy, which tied in more with their skills and experience as librarians. It would seem that if regular guidance and support were given to Scottish librarians on curricular and collaboration topics this could help them recognise the need to include these areas into their normal work. If this is deemed to be important, it would also be necessary to communicate this message to managers within schools for optimum success, ideally with national and local commitment.

There was general discontent about the level of support offered by line managers, with most participants citing lack of time to meet, reflect together and discuss issues meaningfully in any depth. Scottish librarians were more likely to complain about this than US librarians. Typical responses were those of Scottish librarian Barbara:

"It's all so minimal! I have no time where my immediate supervisor comes and meets with me to discuss anything. Teaching staff are always busy and just ask quickly in passing."

Similar thoughts came from Scottish librarian Ruby:

"Contact with my line manager is too infrequent and at present is at an unsatisfactory level. I tend to go to him if a problem arises."

It could be that if formal regular timeslots were allocated for librarian and line manager to focus on issues, there would be more feeling of the importance of the library contribution to whole-school development: the focus would not necessarily be on negativity and reacting to problems, but on more positive and proactive planning and development in a more organised manner, taking consideration of curriculum, whole-school and departmental needs. It would also give a positive opportunity to work together using self-evaluation tools and checking progress against guidelines and standards documents.

6.5 Perception of the role of the school librarian and career progression

In this study, pay and conditions varied greatly between US and Scottish school librarians. School librarians in Scotland generally worked all year round, including school holidays and, as non-teaching support staff, they had less favourable pay and conditions compared to teachers. US librarians in schools were dually qualified as teachers and librarians, and had the same holidays, conditions and payscales as teachers. US librarians tended to work longer hours than Scottish librarians, with the questionnaire results indicating a US average of at least 40 hours and in one case 60 hours (Laura), compared to the Scottish average of 36 hours. Two of the US respondents apologised about the lack of answers as the questionnaire progressed because they were very tired. These were Sheena and Sue Ellen. Sheena said at the end of the questionnaire:

"I realize this is not what you are looking for?? guess I am just so tired?? Good luck."

Sheena worked in a prison high school library for 300 teenage boys and worked on her own, with only one voluntary student helper for up to 37.5 hours each week. Sue Ellen also worked on her own in a high school, although she had librarian colleagues

responsible for elementary and middle school students and voluntary student helpers for up to 15-20 hours each week. She related in the questionnaire response to how she set up new services:

"I ask others if they think it's a good idea, I try it out, if it works, I continue it. (I'm sorry that my answers are getting short. It's been a long day and I'm tired.)"

Sue Ellen worked with two other librarians in a school for 1000 students, one for each level of elementary, middle and high school, although by working 40 hours, she worked more than the other two who worked 35 hours each.

Interestingly enough, Laura (who worked 60 hours) was in the equally unusual position as the other two US librarians in that she did not have clerical help, although she had up to 20 hours of student voluntary help during the week. Although useful when it works well, voluntary help can be difficult to manage if volunteers do not report regularly for work or if they are not committed to the task. Laura also felt swamped by paperwork. She worked in a small rural school with less than 750 students. In the questionnaire survey she identified time constraints causing her problems in delivering new services. In the vignette she repeated this view:

"Do not update anything that does not need 'updating'! (This seems to be not an option here in [State name]).... I hate the constant 'updating' required each year, which seems to me to be essentially just a paraphrasing of last year's 'policy'!"

During the fieldwork phase visits, it was noted that US school librarians tended to work typically from 7.30am-5.00pm, while Scottish librarians worked typically from 8.15am-4.00pm. In two US schools visited during the fieldwork phase, the librarians started work at 6.45am because they supervised either TV or radio broadcast activities for the school, and did not leave until after 5.00pm. US librarians did not normally work school holidays, although they could choose to carry out extra paid summer school activities, either in school with students doing extra classes or at universities taking or teaching LIS (Library and Information Studies) classes in universities. It was also observed that in American schools visited, librarians tended not to take breaks away from the library, but continued to be available while they had lunch or coffee.

Perhaps as a result of the differences in pay and conditions, one of the negative impacts in planning was that many Scottish librarians felt that they were not equal with teachers, and felt that they were not perceived to be equal by teachers or students. Many

considered that this caused difficulties with collaborative planning and working, as teachers did not recognise the role of the librarian to carry out this high level work. These responses featured in all data sets. A typical comment was that from Scot Elma at interview:

“They don’t have a clue what I do, what I could do, what I can do. They just know I am not a teacher, and that blinkers them and limits me in their mind.”

There were two main problems in this area. Throughout data collection, many librarians reported that teachers did not always appreciate the higher level tasks they were expected to undertake, and that they were not equal to teachers. Teachers observed sole librarians doing all levels of work in the library, including typing and issuing books, and this may have led them to think that what they did was administrative in nature. There were different views on this issue, as Scottish librarian Elma related at interview that she felt that there was inequality between teachers and librarians:

“I don’t see why I should be expected to do all the policy stuff when that’s done by PTs [Principal Teachers], who earn a hell of a lot more than me. When it suits them [management] I’m a PT, but then again I’m non-teaching when they don’t want me to use up teaching staff development funds. So I never get to outside courses because there is no fund to pay for non-teaching staff in schools.”

US librarians did not seem so conscious of this because they were both teachers and librarians, with the same conditions and pay as teachers, so they did not demonstrate this negative feeling to the same extent, although some still acknowledged that some teachers did not fully understand what they could offer. However Laura, a US librarian who worked alone and for 60 hours each week, stated in the vignette that she was aware of:

“Archaic attitudes about librarians which limit what the patrons/teachers expect from the librarian/LMS [library media specialist.]”

There was a clear perception in all data sets that some teachers did not know what librarians did, as described in a focus group by US school librarian Donna:

“Classroom teachers are unsure what an LMC director’s [high school librarian’s] job is.”

She believed that when teachers stayed with classes in the library and took part in projects:

“The teacher then sees for themselves what an LMS Director [high school librarian] does and knows.”

The importance of having a teaching qualification was highlighted in an American focus group, when Kitty said that:

“When I had classes at the university I could pick out every teacher that had his degree in his/her field but no classes in how to teach. That is a requirement for public education and is priceless in the skills it teaches.”

Her focus group colleague Karen said that:

“Just as a famous author can not [sic] always teach reading, there are skills that are learned in the process of becoming a teacher.”

However their colleague Donna stated in the focus group that:

“Do I think that someone without a teaching license can be a teacher – YOU BET – no doubt in my mind – but do I think its right that a person be expected to do what a teacher does and not get paid for it or the respect NO.”

So it seemed that there was some agreement that there were skills to be learned when teaching and dealing with a class, and however these were imparted to librarians, they were recognised as important to do the job, and there should be appropriate recompense in terms of pay and conditions. One element of this equality was related to career progression, which the Scots participants identified as minimal, compared to US respondents, who had equal opportunity to teachers, and who could apply for promoted posts. Scottish librarians in schools were trained generically as librarians, with no school specialism. Within most authorities there was no opportunity for career progression for school librarians, as each post was paid at one grade only.

If there was a School Library Service, there may have been an opportunity to apply for a promoted post there, although this would take the school librarian away from working directly with students. Some Scottish authorities had Field Officer posts, where a small number of librarians in schools (perhaps one or two in each authority) would also work one day each week or fortnight to support school librarian colleagues professionally, while a library assistant took their place in school.

Possible options identified in the vignette responses to enhance career progression included applying outwith the sector; developing one's own strengths and taking further qualifications. Three quarters of vignette respondents did not consider that there was good career progression opportunity for school librarians, including all Scottish librarians surveyed. American librarian Brad stated in the vignette that:

"Schools are based on salary schedule – unless he [librarian] picks up addition[al] grad credits [postgraduate qualifications], he is stuck. He should network with others and get additional experiences to prepare himself for other opportunities..... It parallels the classroom teacher – I think we have lots of opportunity if we want to take responsibility and 'go for it'."

This was consolidated by US school librarian Freda who said in response to the vignette:

"Many of us come to the end of the salary schedule and must decide to sit it out until retirement or go back to obtain another degree and move on to higher education."

This reflected the different position of the American school librarian, who was also a teacher, compared to the Scottish librarian who was not paid as a teacher and who did not have the same opportunity to progress as teachers. US librarian Betty positively suggested in the vignette that librarians wanting career progression could also:

"Become a member of the school district salary committee and work for change."

US Director of School Library Services Ian said that:

"One can always become better at one's current position by improving skills using college classes, in person or online. Too, when one becomes a leader, the possibilities of new challenges become endless."

However while acknowledging that career progression for librarians was not good, even in the US situation, he considered that:

"Librarians are too complacent."

Noreen, a Scottish Director of School Library Services thought that:

"Salary scales vary from authority to authority but very few promoted posts [are] available in this field... Consider move to [an]other sector of librarianship."

Sue Ellen, an American librarian, philosophically commented in the vignette scenario that:

"Maybe he [school librarian] just needs to accept that he'll never get rich teaching and there are more important things in life than money."

Although she considered that career progression was not good within her profession, she thought that she was working in a vocation:

"I'm satisfied. I knew from the start what teachers make and I don't need a lot of money to live on. I'm in it because I think it is the best way for me to help others and also because I love to read and I like working with technology."

In contrast to the money issue, two US school librarians surveyed had qualified as Principals [Headteachers], and were continuing to work as librarians while waiting for vacancies as Principals so that they could move upwards and outwards. Such a situation

would not be possible for Scottish staff. Many Scottish vignette respondents agreed with their colleague Marjory that the:

“School librarian really has to move out of school libraries to progress. If you don’t move out you only really have the central service to move into, into management. And who wants to do that! You can’t do this job [school librarian] and get paid more for your experience as you learn and progress. It’s a very short [pay] scale.”

Scottish librarian Frances said in the vignette that the librarian could:

“Either change his career or agitate – whichever is quicker (Probably the career change.) [Agitate] re – where should the profession be going? How best should we span both worlds? Should we consider dual qualification? How could it be done? Would we then have access to a different career path? Could this affect our salaries? How can we improve our existing career path? Where are our Professional Associations in all this?”

Scot Barbara said of the librarian in the vignette:

“There is no career progression because that is the nature of the school librarian post. He’d have to apply for another job.”

Scottish librarian Audrey said in the vignette that the librarian could:

“Get together with other School Librarians in the Authority and try for re-grading.”

Other than moving outwith the sector, Scottish librarians could not realistically identify another way of progressing inside schools, other than the Field Officer or central School Library Service models used in some authorities, as already described. This was also a solution cited by a US librarian Jack:

“Consider going into school administration [management] or teaching library science at college.”

Jack himself revealed in the vignette that:

“I’m currently working on certification as an elementary or middle school principal [primary school Headteacher].”

However Scottish school librarian Fiona said in a focus group that:

“I was interested in [another Head Teacher] Euan’s point there about status, there was a time when I would have said that a teaching qualification, a dual qualification, would have improved the status of the librarian in schools significantly, but I think that in the changing climate there are more professionals involved and my feeling is that teacher colleagues are now more inclined simply to regard me as a colleague from another profession rather than an unqualified somebody or other.”

It was interesting to note that Fiona was not altogether typical of Scottish librarians surveyed. She had a library assistant working in her library, she had had supportive

Headteachers who appreciated her wider (local and national) contribution to teaching and learning, and she had been in post in one school for a considerable amount of time. Thus she had the opportunity to demonstrate for many years to teachers that she had a valuable input to make at a strategic level. So it seemed that experience, in-school support, personality, skills and abilities could also play a part in the librarian being perceived differently as a professional who plays a role in strategic planning.

6.6 The planning process of making decisions

Garvin and Roberto (2001) make an important point when they say:

“The fact is, decision making is not an event. It’s a process, one that unfolds over weeks, months, or even years; one that’s fraught with power plays and politics and is replete with personal nuances and institutional history; one that’s rife with discussion and debate; and one that requires support at all levels of the organization when it comes time for execution. Our research shows that the difference between leaders who make good decisions and those who make bad ones is striking. The former recognize that all decisions are processes, and they explicitly design and manage them as such. The latter persevere in the fantasy that decisions are events they alone control.” p110

They recommend an inquiry approach, which is an open process designed to generate multiple alternatives and testing of assumptions within a framework of clear goals. They favour this to what they call the advocacy approach, where participants compete for their preferred solution to be chosen. They say:

“A process characterized by inquiry rather than advocacy ends to produce decisions of higher quality.” p111

Inquiry based decisions are said to advance the objectives in a more timely manner and could be implemented effectively. They name three factors of effective decision-making - conflict, consideration and closure. They recommend cognitive conflict rather than affective conflict. Cognitive conflict consists of disagreement over ideas and assumptions, while affective conflict is emotional, involving personal friction and personality clashes. Consideration involves group members feeling that their views are fairly represented and considered, and that they have a genuine opportunity to influence the decision. Without this, there could be resentment and frustration. Once a decision is made, leaders should explain the logic to the group. Closure involves when a decision is made. Making a decision too early and too late was equally damaging. One suggestion was for the leaders to summarise the decision and allow thinking time for more discussion to take place at the next meeting. Another element that could be added to

this model could be called checking or evaluation, where decisions are monitored for success, and to identify where amendments have to be made.

The planning stage of decision-making is an important element in the quality of the decision, to include proper planning and reflection. Most decisions mentioned in data collection for this study were made about strictly library issues such as resourcing, services offered and opening hours. Decisions on library issues outlined by librarians in the questionnaire were advertised to users by a variety of methods, such as weekly bulletins, memos and displays but generally were not formally represented in policies.

According to Edwards, Ward and Bytheway (1995) in their writings on system analysis, critical success factors (CSFs) are elements that have to be achieved in order to meet objectives. Therefore at the planning stage, these elements should be identified and it should be established how they would be met in terms of action, for without them the objectives would not be achieved. In a way these factors are interim targets towards longer terms goals and part of a business strategy approach. It is important that the CSFs are identified and shared with all levels in order that there is clarity. These factors also need to be reviewed regularly in order that progress can be monitored.

In a critical incident diary, Scottish school librarian Nell planned a boys' reading initiative with the English department, and after reflection from the critical incident exercise concluded in future that she should:

“Allow more time – it always takes longer.”

She came to this conclusion after reflecting on the success of the project. She also had not considered timing of the project at the planning stage and after piloting it decided to launch it at the beginning of the school year for maximum impact. She found it:

“Useful to have a round table session to brainstorm.”

She did this with English teachers at the beginning of the project, valuing the importance of collaboration. Initially a review period was not built in at the planning stage, but on reflection after the event, when writing the critical incident diary she considered that:

“I think I will do that [create a review period] with the English department and maybe speak to my line manager, so we can see how well it has gone, have the boys taken out these new items, has the project worked.”

After the pilot, she concluded that:

"I maybe need to think about this being more of a long term project, needing more funding over the school year."

This indicated a tendency which featured throughout the research, that for many reasons some librarians did not plan in great detail before undertaking an action, but that they tended to implement an action and then adapt it if needed, in what could be called an incremental process. Mintzberg (1973) talks of Lindblom's definition of such a process as "*disjointed incrementalism*," p16 more simply called "*the science of muddling through*." Lindblom (1980) himself says:

"Policy makers will come to see policy making as a never-ending process in which continual nibbling substitutes for the good bite that may never be offered."
p38

This nibbling approach, or what Lindblom (1980) calls "*seriality*" p38 is one way of gradually working towards a solution, or rather, working away from the negative present situation. Lindblom makes the distinction between strategic problem solvers who consider that such an incremental process is viable and focuses on what is feasible, and those scientific problem solvers who consider anyone using such an approach to be an indecisive, makeshift procrastinator.

Collecting information, looking at results, reflecting on what could be done, undertaking a pilot, thinking of the outcomes and compiling and analysing the critical incident diary highlighted Nell's incremental route to change her future practice. Gradually as she gained information she moved towards action that would help her deliver services.

Another critical incident diary return from Nell detailed that a research article on the need to give boys fiction to develop the creative side of their brains stimulated much discussion between Nell and her English teachers:

"We decided to press ahead, get more funding and continue the project this time on fiction. It was also suggested that we fund some author visits as that would stimulate even more interest. We need to set up a more long term plan, including funding, for the whole area."

This demonstrated that after the experience of implementing the project and reflecting in the diary, she appreciated the need for consideration of timing, funding considerations and review at the planning stages, which would hopefully be carried forward to future projects.

An experience related in the critical incident diary by Scottish school librarian Iona involved her following the recognised structure of bidding for school funds for new computers to senior management, but she felt that this was:

“Not a priority for them.”

Once the bidding process failed and she made the pragmatic decision to use her own library resource budget (although that meant she would have less money for resources for that year), a compromise was reached with the senior management in response to her action. They unexpectedly offered her about a third of the money she needed for the project after she had committed to using her own budget. In retrospect, she reflected that:

“I have known I should update machines for 18 months or so, maybe I should have tackled SMT earlier and made [the] bid earlier and included in dev[elopment] plan.”

She learned from this experience:

“Don’t put things off. Make a sacrifice now for a one off purchase for the greater benefit of the library.”

She thought that the exercise in keeping the diary showed her that it was:

“Horrible to see how things can take so long – [there were long] gaps between action.”

She had learned valuable lessons from this, and committed to change her practice, plan at an earlier stage in future, reflect more and monitor the progress of a decision more closely.

Typical decision-making models in schools were as described by Scottish librarian Elma in the questionnaire:

“Preliminary discussion with line manager, who would pass it to SMT [Senior Management Team] for discussion and hopeful approval. – Does it need extra funding or not influences whether it could be instantly implemented or not.”

Similarly Scottish school librarian Tanya described in the questionnaire her process in deciding to set up a new service:

“Initial idea – consultation with line manager – insertion in development plan – consultation with Library committee – purchase of any necessary resources – publicise new service – begin service.”

The basic principles described here were typical of other respondents, of seeking approval and consulting others with a view to funding, without much exploration of the complexity of the problem, considering options and making a choice. These kinds of models were the most common ones described by participants in this study and emerged from both Scottish and US participants. US school librarian Freda considered in the vignette that:

“I think school librarians make their decisions based on the needs they see. Call it direct observation. There is just so much time and so much money so services are fairly easily prioritized. In the United States, there is a move for standards-based services and curriculum. We have reports and forms to complete and turn into the local school district and then onto the state. Many of us do use collection statistics, collection mapping, circulation statistics, etc. to decide on budget, purchases, and services.”

However Scottish librarian Ruby stated in the vignette that:

“There are also many people in schools with rather preconceived ideas about the nature of our job and also those who do not understand the purpose of having a resourcing specialist within schools. Some headteachers do not want someone who has ideas and is a decision-maker within their own field..... However being the sole IS [information Studies] professional amongst teaching staff can be inhibiting especially to those newly entering this field. A lot depends on the ethos of the school and other factors as to whether librarians are allowed to/ have the opportunity to voice opinions and make decisions.”

This represented a view of the how the nature of the job of school librarian can be negatively perceived by teaching colleagues in schools. US librarian Jack considered in the vignette response that researching an idea was his way of working when setting up a new service:

“Idea comes to me (or I think of it), I research it, present it to the principal. She takes it to the superintendent, and he takes it to the Board.”

Although he did not identify looking at options, he did recognise the importance of backing up his way forward with evidence. This thinking was refined by Rosa, a US librarian who outlined her process in the vignette response, bringing in collaborative working when planning new services:

“Idea; research it; get student, faculty, community input; design plan; discuss with Principal; refine plan; present to school board; implement and promote.”

Although both of these comments showed a methodical way of working, two important areas from the literature of examining options and evaluating the decision were missing. Many of these measures involved qualitative methods of evaluating improvement, as it

was often acknowledged that quantitative measures did not fully represent the work or value of the library. As Scottish librarian Nell said in interview:

“Figures don’t mean much – I might not issue a single book all day and that wouldn’t mean that I hadn’t been kept busy all day, helping kids and answering queries, doing information skills and everything else I do. I suppose it’s hard to prove what I do if you only use statistics. Teachers coming in see what I do and know the worth of it. Well, some of them do.”

Lavoie, Dempsey and Connaway (2006) present a technique called “*data mining*” which they believe could help with decision-making and identifying trends. By looking at quantitative data such as statistics and requests they could gather intelligence that would support librarians with decision-making. This technique was presented to librarians in general, and school librarians were not mentioned specifically. In view of comments like those from Nell, perhaps this is something that could be progressed in a research project in certain areas, in tandem with more qualitative work.

After examining the findings of this study, a new model of incremental experiential practice has been identified, now named the pragmatic solution-driven model. It shows experienced practitioners gradually working towards a better solution to their present situation, where a whole scale, dramatic and major change might not be possible due to other constraints within school. Without a formal or rational framework the model provides a series of small steps towards a better situation in a similar way to the “*decision accretion*” described by Weiss (1980) and the “*trial and error*” p29 discussed by Lindblom (1993). In the Scottish focus group, librarian Fiona describes a quality she thinks is needed to be an effective school librarian:

“...adaptability, the ability to take a situation, and, if you like, twist it to achieve the ends that you need to achieve, to be able to say well, this isn’t the ideal, this isn’t what I would like, but if I do this and I do that, we’ll still get there in the end..... you also need to be a bit of an opportunist, seize every opportunity that offers, then worry about how you are going to do something with it.”

This describes her experience of progressing a course of action. However the practice based on this model differs from that described by Weiss and Lindblom in that it is almost wholly idea- or solution-driven, different options are not considered and there is normally not a conscious awareness how the change will affect the larger goal. Typically the practitioner will not know at the start of the process what or where the goal is, which causes problems in trying to identify how and when it is achieved.

From findings discovered in this study, examining other options were not usually considered when solving a problem, but the focus often started with the identification and application of a solution to a problem, usually the only one that was identified at that time. This could have been a solution identified from the literature, or by observation in a workplace, or reflecting on a problem. Once an initial solution was applied, if it was considered that it was not completely solved, or another problem had arisen as the result of implementing the initial solution, then an incremental process was applied, where another solution was identified and put into place, or the original solution was adapted. This process could continue in stages many times until it was recognised that an appropriate solution was in place and worked at the time, or was better than the starting point. Any future changes might have started the process to repeat again. These changes could include a change in circumstances, staffing, user demand or management. This model could easily be applied more generally to other workplace situations where there are similar constraints.

6.7 Reflection

On reflection, Scottish school librarian Iona identified that in her critical incident diary when discussing the outcome of her situation (described above) that in fact:

“I do have some power – [there are] always alternatives. Discussion was helpful to make me see options.”

This realisation came to her after she had described and reflected on the situation in her critical incident diary. Such reflection had clearly helped her to stand back from the facts and gave her a realisation that she could change things. In a follow-up questionnaire after a focus group session (more details are in Methodologies Chapter 3 section 3.7.3), American librarian Ellen seemed to enjoy the experience of sharing experiences with peers, and she said that:

“We don’t spend enough time thinking about what we do in advance of doing it or learning from what we have tried in the past.”

She committed to:

“Endeavour to spend some time each semester reflecting on what I aim to do and evaluating what I have done, the success of it.”

Although acknowledging that such an action would take up some time, she saw the value of planning and reflecting, as she now thought that these would help with future

work after the focus group discussion. In her follow-up questionnaire after the same focus group, another US librarian Susan said that she:

“Will allocate time to reflect more, and take time out the library to do it.”

Susan also concluded that reflection was useful on a practical level. The focus group method produced positive results and it was encouraging to hear participants come to such conclusions as a result of taking time out to reflect on practice, and also to be stimulated in a professional way merely by getting together, sharing and testing out strategic and professional thoughts and opinions in a way that was difficult for them in school where the focus was often on operational issues.

Scottish school librarian Nell stated in a feedback form that after using the critical incident diary:

“I would like to continue writing things down and somehow formalising it all.”

This showed that she intended to collect evidence of practical work, note stages in the decision-making process and reflect on what she recorded, because she thought it would be helpful to her in the future. One important point raised by Scottish school librarian Audrey in the questionnaire concerned a lack of non-contact (or what could be called reflection) time where she would not be available to students and staff:

“I spend very little [time] planning, my days are busy dealing with staff and pupils, and finding the time to sit and think and plan instead of always reacting to situations is very difficult. I have no non-contact time unlike teachers, and often have to squeeze any planning into in-service days etc or do parts of it at home.”

Allowing the librarian some element of non-contact time would be invaluable and allow for collaboration and time to consider planning and to think about practice. Gibbs (1988) develops a reflective cycle that explored the elements of describing and analysing a situation. An adaptation of this model is presented in Figure 6.1.

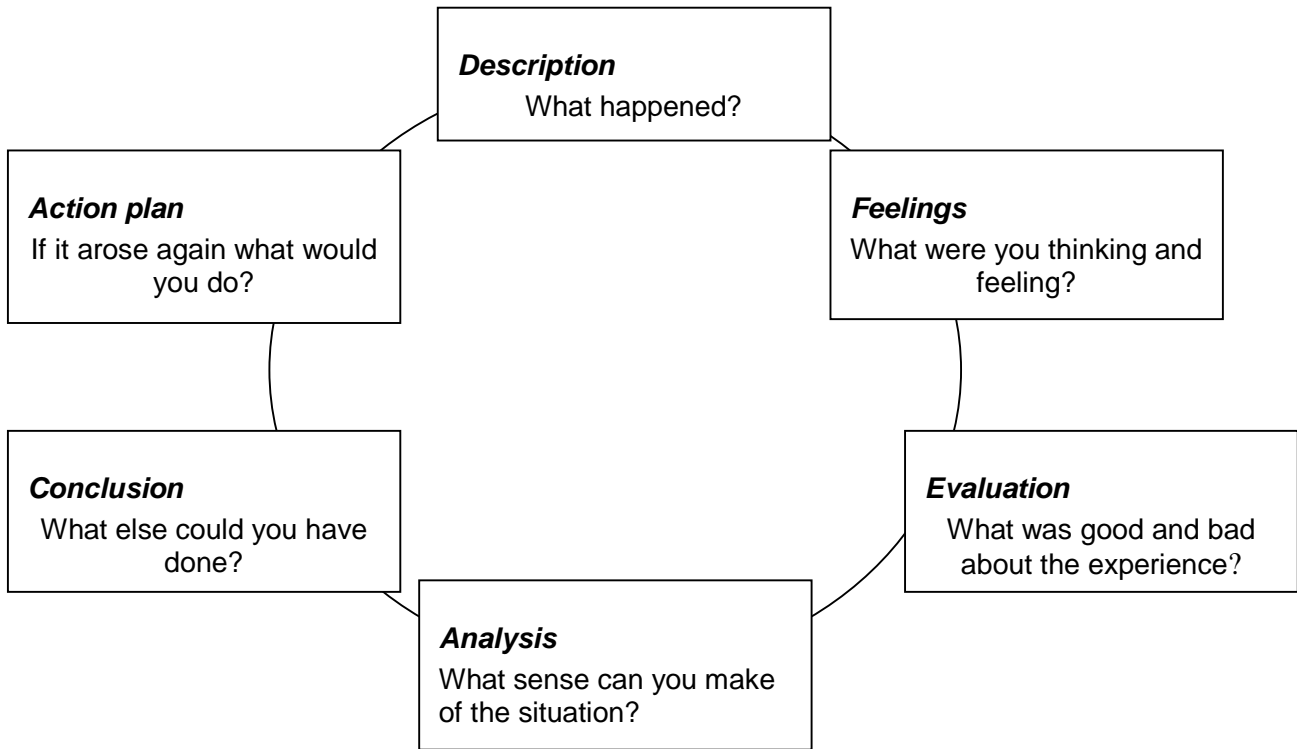


Figure 6.1 Gibbs' reflective cycle. Adapted from Johns (2004) p17

This figure illustrates the affective feelings of the practitioner, with the questions guiding the practitioner towards considering his own normal way of thinking and responding within the situation towards gaining insight into self and practice, and in particular considering future practice and other options. Some of this way of thinking was demonstrated when participants responded to focus groups and critical incident reflective diary. Although writing in the nursing field, Johns (2004) cautions that such a model is heuristic and merely a device to help the practitioner “access reflection” p19 and is not a prescription into what reflection was. It includes more affective and qualitative issues, such as what the person was feeling. It also usefully includes a step where other options are considered, which is an important element of decision-making.

6.8 The right decision

This section examines how librarians make decisions and gives examples of the scenarios cited by respondents. The basic principles of the literature discussion of decision-making theory have been outlined in Chapter 2, section 2.5. As Vroom and Yetton (1973) say:

“Problem-solving and decision-making are not separable activities.”

It is recognised that problem-solving and decision-making are part of the same process. There was generally a lack of rational decision-making practice demonstrated by participants in this study, in that not many examined alternative strategies or formally evaluated decisions once they were made. From questionnaire results in both countries, the most common model for both countries on decision-making about an issue was to consider a strategy first then apply it, adapting and amending as circumstances dictated in an incremental process. If the strategy didn't work completely, it was adapted until it met the needs or the majority of the needs of the issue. At the start of making a decision, librarians in this study did not always fully explore the problem, identify possible solutions, make the decision based on the consequences of choosing each option, and then evaluate the outcome, which would be basic elements of rational decision-making theory. However, elements of rational decision-making could be used in schools. Although it would be impossible to identify all alternatives, it would be possible to identify some or many alternatives. In addition, by collaborating with other people in school, the librarian could gain a variety of perspectives which would provide a wider range of alternatives from different viewpoints.

The concept introduced by March and Simon (1958) of "satisficing" could be said to be applied by many school librarians in the study. For example, Scottish librarian Nell had tried out a reading scheme project for boys that was planned quickly and without much notice due to budget and time pressures. Once she had analysed the shortcomings of the project and taken account of the comments of English teachers who were involved, she produced more long term strategies to develop what they wanted. However in the short term, she had delivered what was required at the time before developing it to something that would become more relevant in the long term. There were other implications, mainly of time and money, that would result from the longer term project, but the initial project started the ball rolling because it provided what she called: "*The foot in the door.*"

Allison's (1971) Politics Model, where many people have their own different goals and conflicting preferences - what he calls: '*the pulling and hauling that is politics*' p144 has a relevance in schools, where politics are in use all the time, and the strength in this model is to recognise the elements involved, what their goals were, and to relate the desired outcome for the library to the aims of an ally within school. This was illustrated by Iona's

comments in the critical incident diary in 6.6, where she made a pragmatic decision to buy new ICT for the library management system rather than waiting for senior management to give her the money and unexpectedly received a contribution from them after the event. They had refused to give her money when she initially approached them, but by spending some of her own money, this became a catalyst for them to contribute.

Lindblom (1980) raises the concept of *“trial and error”* p29, where decisions are made on the basis of small disconnected processes over time, leading to a gradual change, problem by problem. In a letter to a journal about how she made personal life choices, Krasner (2007) relates how she makes decisions:

“For me, to even contemplate the success of a huge venture brings with it the possibility of failure. Somewhere in the back of my mind is always the feeling that maybe I can’t do it; maybe I’ll fail. I find the very idea of gearing myself up for something massive to be very scary, so much so that I can’t start it. On the other hand, breaking things down into small chunks, just taking the next step, and then deciding what to do next, is quite manageable and far less stressful. And if you keep on and on doing that, you eventually reach your goal.” p17

If this reflects the style and skills of a library practitioner, the fact that it is recognised is useful. This preference can then be acknowledged and either accepted as part of the process of making decisions or guidance and training could help the practitioner to change.

At interview, one Scottish school librarian Deena said that when making decisions:

“You just have to get on with it, you know best, you’re the librarian. Others [teachers and management] aren’t really interested in library things, as long as they can get what they want when they want. I decide what to do, then just do it. I’ll tell them [teachers and management] about it if needs be. If it doesn’t quite work, I can tweak it, tweak it a bit more if needed and deliver what is best – I am the library professional, after all.”

She was stating clearly that she believed that the librarian was the best person to make decisions, and that other stakeholders were not interested in the way things were done. It was also interesting to see how she carried out the decision-making – in a process that was the most common model for both countries, she considered a strategy first then applied it, adapting and amending as circumstances dictated in an incremental process. At the start of making a decision, she did not fully explore the problem, identify possible solutions or make the decision based on the consequences of choosing each option, basic elements of decision-making theory.

When asked for an example of a recent decision she had made, she outlined the following example:

“Well I had to sort out a resourcing problem with Art. They wanted stuff I didn’t have for a new topic. I said I needed more money from them to get in what they needed. So I got money, I bought in stuff and did a booklist and display for them when it was ready. And do you know it turns out once they saw what I had together they had a lot of the stuff in the department! They never really knew they had it, it was scattered about with various staff. So that was a bit of a waste in a way, the Principal Teacher was not happy, money wise. But they should talk together more and this kind of thing wouldn’t happen, would it? And I spent all that time and effort too.”

Here she acknowledged that collaboration (more details in Chapter 7) would have helped in terms of preventing duplication of purchase. When asked if there could have been any other solutions to the situation in hindsight, she considered that:

“I suppose the PT [Principal Teacher] could have asked them to check their own stocks first, that would have saved money. You think they would speak to each other, wouldn’t you? And do you know I thought afterwards I could have asked the Schools Library Service if they had any I could borrow, or through the university on interlibrary loan. That would have let them see them quicker. Then if they had liked them once they used them, I could have bought what was the most essential, saving Art cash and I suppose me time.”

Although Deena realised after the event that she could have liaised with the central School Library Service, she didn’t report that she could also have prompted the Art staff to search their own sources. Once she spent time on reflecting on the situation, she acknowledged that there were other options that she had not even considered before, some giving other benefits. When asked if this experience would make any difference to her future decision-making, she said that:

“I think now I would stop and think more. Like get back from the situation in a way and think a bit wider. I know there is not always time and you get things thrown at you, but I can see it helps if you stop and think, even for a short time. Then you can look at other things you could do, and weigh them all up before making a decision – that’s what I find hard, and the time thing. I suppose I just want to do the best for people and help them out, but quickest isn’t always best.”

After reflection, Deena showed that she was considering the quality of the decision more, and although she acknowledged that it was not always easy to reflect and look at options, she showed an awareness that she considered that this was better practice.

Lindblom (1980) also discusses the concept of mutual adjustment, which has been demonstrated by some participants. US librarian Donna, who had been a Mathematics

teacher, said at interview how she negotiated with the Mathematics department to give her something she wanted:

“They wanted me to teach Math if they had an emergency. As a certified Math teacher, I gave them that flexibility. They agreed to provide Math cover in the library media center if students needed that. Now this has been established on a daily basis and a Math teacher is timetabled here [in an adjoining room] at least once a day for student support. It gives me an extra attraction to students.”

It was agreed in the Scottish focus group that communication and information were essential to good decision-making and that there was a need to share in the whole-school vision. Scottish Director of School Library Services Sharon revealed that:

“I have seen the effect on motivation and the potential for a school librarian who was missed out on all of that loop of information and a librarian affected in that way can start to become less effective as a school librarian, not quite a downward spiral but something that really has to be addressed. It’s not always very easy to make that change if you’re not yet in the position of power and I suppose that’s where the Field Officer [a professional support post for school librarians filled by a school librarian who has library assistant cover in school to carry out such tasks one day a fortnight] and somebody like myself can come in to support but it’s not always easy to make, to effect that change, I don’t think, if it’s, you know, it’s not good in the first place.”

In the second US focus group librarian Donna identified a:

“Need to tell my Principal that what we do in library is outstanding.”

This arose after speaking to others in the focus group and being invigorated by the shared discussion and the recognition of excellent work done in their various libraries. She raised an important point that communication with senior management involved giving feedback – or evidence - on how the library was achieving and how it met its targets.

In this way senior management will become more aware of the contribution the librarian made to teaching and learning. Equally, where there were problems, these needed to be identified with senior management when appropriate, in order to help to solve them. Therefore being involved in whole-school communication processes was seen as vital to effective decision-making.

Throughout the period of the study in many responses there was an element of librarians feeling a lack of confidence and were unsure whether decisions they made might be what they termed as “*right*”, particularly from the Scottish participants who tended not to

have librarian colleagues to share the task of decision-making. Scottish school librarian Fiona said in a focus group that school librarians needed to be closely involved with school priorities in order to ensure making better decisions:

“Of course in order to make informed decisions you do have to be included in the school decision-making processes and included in the information that’s given out because any decisions about how you run the whole library reflects what the school requires of you, if you don’t understand what they’re trying to achieve then you’re left to go off in the wrong direction. And that of course is very much dependent on a supportive management team who do realise the importance of the library and make sure that it is included in decisions.”

This view was consolidated by Scottish school librarian James, who stated in the same focus group that:

“If you are in the position that if you want to take decisions but you can’t get information relevant to these decisions or you’re not part of the process whereby you can find out it comes under a communication issue relevant criteria for making the decisions. That can be disadvantageous. Whereas if you’re in the position where you’re kept well in touch with things so I certainly again agree with everyone else when they say I feel that with the decision making process can’t be taken in isolation from things like, you know, communication or just from the librarian or library resource centre manager or whatever but also to that individual not just for the school but more also sources outwith the school and I think that very much determines whether you’re making the correct decisions if you have the correct information.”

This concern about not having the relevant information when making decisions could be made worse by not having librarian colleagues to share ideas and discuss strategies, because then librarian could feel decisions were made in a vacuum, without fitting into a wider picture. As had been seen from the focus group findings, this sharing of ideas and experience proved to be valuable to participants. Many librarians were seeking assurances that their experiential decision-making was both right and as valid and efficient as taught theory. Perhaps because they did not have this professional discussion before decisions were made they felt more insecure about decisions being valid, and if anything were to go wrong, they may have felt that they were the only individuals to take responsibility. As James and Fiona reported during the Scottish focus group in section 6.1 of this Chapter, it was difficult to identify good practice. Now that there are national guidelines and indicators, hopefully good practice can be identified more easily as librarians question the relevance of what they are doing and how they meet what users want.

From the questionnaire survey, the majority of respondents considered that librarians could improve their decision-making skills. Participants identified that what could improve these are more consultation with users and managers, evaluating the service, innovating and marketing ideas. Scottish librarian Ruby said in the vignette that:

“Being the sole IS [information studies] professional amongst teaching staff can be inhibiting especially to those newly entering the field. A lot depends on the ethos of the school and other factors as to whether the librarians are allowed to/have the opportunity to voice opinions and make decisions.”

She also believed that:

“There is rarely support available to librarians that is similar in nature to that given to probationary teachers ie a formal structure of mentoring and active support.”

She considered that:

“Some headteachers do not want someone who has ideas and is a decision-maker within their own field.”

She felt that there were some Headteachers would rather have someone who was not going to make major changes. Two thirds of respondents of the questionnaire survey thought that school librarians would appreciate more help when making decisions, with the line manager, School Library Service Director, students and other school librarians being most popular supports identified. From the study, respondents identified that school librarians make decisions based on their experience, what is offered and perceived to be needed by users: a core principle. Most popular information used in Scotland was identifying user needs, knowledge of students, teachers and curriculum in the individual school. American respondents were more likely to mention the use of wider national or State research and surveys. This could be due to the higher prominence of widespread Statewide surveys of library contributions to teaching and learning (Scholastic 2004). There are more details of these studies in Chapter 4, section 4.2.4.2. Within both countries, it could be that a core skill for school librarians is to gather evidence of needs and feedback from users by research within the school, possibly relating it to national and local studies and research. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

There were few formal examples of identifying user needs in both countries through the responses from questionnaire or vignette, although with the introduction of new national inspectorate profiling in Scotland, questionnaires to users about their needs and library

use were being used more frequently as the study progressed. Finance was probably the most important influence on decision-making, because that placed limitations on expenditure. In Scottish schools surveyed, expenditure had been largely static over the past few years, whereas in the US schools surveyed, there was a general increase in formal budget allocation, such as *Information Power* and *Library Power* funding from central government. There was also opportunity for other funding, such as using State money raised by court fines from criminal activity for educational initiatives and various proactive fundraising projects to fund library resources and activities. These measures were discovered on later study visits to American high school libraries. Karen, an American librarian reported that:

“It’s excellent that we get this money because our State takes money from road traffic offences and drugs and gives it to education. This might not continue as drugs and speeding groups now want to put that money back into driver education and drug rehabilitation.”

One Scottish school surveyed received extra national funding because the school housed a national specialist school, and the extra money was targeted at library staffing and resources to support students in that specialism and came directly from central government the Scottish Executive, now called the Scottish Government. In the 2002 questionnaire, US schools surveyed in this study showed that average library funds of participants was £8.56 per head of student population. However within this result there was a wide range, from £3 to £20. Scottish figures from the questionnaire averaged at £3.14 per head, with a range between £0.58 and £6.50 per student. 2005 figures from visits and interviews showed that the US school library average of those surveyed was £10.86, while the Scottish average was £3.42. The most up to date recommended figures from the Library Association (now CILIP) (Tilke 1998) set a minimum standard of £13 per student, with an optimum level of £17. These figures were recommended in 1996.

A negative response came from Scottish school librarian Mary in her critical incident diary return. Although talking about a whole-school decision-making process and not just librarian decision-making, it is useful to relate this incident to give a flavour of the librarian’s frustration and feeling of powerlessness in the decision-making process. Because the library funding only covered basic library resources and averaged in Scottish participants at £3.42 per student, most ICT equipment had to be funded through whole-school sources, and librarians must take part in this process if they want to

replace dated ICT equipment. Mary had made a bid to a whole-school equipment fund for new computers several years, yet on the latest occasion had no outcome of the decision almost three months later. A decision was made five months after the original bid that priority was not being given at that time for the library computers. She did not know who eventually had made the decision and she complained that the Head Teacher had never responded to various written requests. When reviewing the decision she stated that she:

"Felt fobbed off and basically disregarded. A second class citizen!"

In her final reflection, she showed frustration because although she had followed the recognised process for several years, she felt that she had no hope of ever getting the computers and that the library was not treated with the same priority as other departments. She also stated that:

"The LRC [library] is not taken seriously in the planning and funding process. We are on our own and will probably have to fund a new PC [computer] from the LRC budget effectively reducing the purchase of new book stock even further."

She wryly reflected that the critical incident diary was interesting because it was:

"Useful to chart how long it takes for nothing to happen."

Finally she stated that:

"It's actually been a very demoralising exercise as I knew it was happening but to have to record it in detail makes it even more depressing!"

[The good news for Mary is that she recently gained a new Headteacher, and after initial discussions about the role of the library in whole-school learning and teaching, she is now positive and hopeful that change will happen, and that the library will have a more prominent role in how it supports the curriculum and contributes to collaborative work in raising student achievement. This will be led by the Headteacher as a priority and staff will be involved in various projects.] Both Iona and Mary had similar problems of trying to fund ICT in the library, and both felt that this was not a priority for the management team. From critical incident diaries, they recorded that they felt demoralised and that the library was seen differently from the rest of the school and they felt that other departments were seen as more important to school management. They recorded that they felt that there was a perception that the librarian was not seen as the same as teachers. One strategy to deal with this would be to emphasise the cross-curricular role of the library and that any investment in library ICT would benefit the whole school rather than just one department. Perhaps by including new ICT as part of the development plan, and relating

this objective to supporting the curriculum there would be more chance of such a request being met if identified as a priority. The problem of being unable to update software without upgrading hardware is an important issue because of the consequences of unreliability and inability to carry out basic functions of cataloguing, issuing, information skills work and searching if the system were to fail.

This was not generally the same in the US, when school librarians tended to have much more money than Scottish colleagues, and an element of that normally covered regular ICT equipment renewal as well as resources and electronic databases. US schools surveyed reported that they spent between one third and two thirds of the library budget on electronic databases. However there was usually still some way of bidding for extra money from wider school or State funds. The recent *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002) gave extra national federal money to US school libraries to better equip them with more resources, hardware and training for staff in order to help students to achieve more. The benefits of this initiative are reported in more detail when discussing collaboration in Chapter 7.

This US initiative offered a remedy to the situation reported at that time in the literature, where research showed that there was a direct correlation between high quality school library media programmes and student achievement (AASL 2002). This document stated that spending for school library media programmes was the single most important variable related to better student achievement; academic achievement was higher where school library media specialists engage in collaborative programme planning and teaching with classroom teachers, to integrate information literacy, in flexible scheduled programmes; and students in schools with library media specialists performed better on assessments of reading ability. At about the same time, a response on LM_NET from a Canadian elementary school librarian states that cuts in her country were causing concern (Hermans 2002):

“Due to government cuts, many districts have eliminated the elementary teacher-librarians. Those of us who are left are very worried about what is coming next year..... We need to get classroom teachers on our side, but I also believe that it’s the voice of the parents that might save our profession from extinction. Let’s share the research with them and educate them about what their children are loosing [sic] if the school doesn’t have a teacher-librarian. research is more than cut and paste from the internet.”

The *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002) offers a real solution to some of these problems, as discussed when outlining collaboration in Chapter 7. An interesting comment came from US librarian Sheena who quoted the words of Admiral Grace Hopper as her yardstick in a vignette response:

"My motto, when it comes to decisions, never explain, never complain it is easier to ask forgiveness than [sic] to get permission."

Sheena made it clear that she believed that to make decisions clearly and definitively, it was important to take full responsibility. However in this way of thinking there was no clear sharing of responsibility or collaboration in decision-making, which other participants identified as being important to them. Her fellow US librarian Derek said in the vignette that:

"Librarians should conduct more research and construct solid rationales for making decisions except for those requiring a quick decision turn around."

By this comment Derek made a distinction between quick routine decisions and decisions requiring more reflection and evidence collection. The data suggested that librarians in schools cannot always have full control over decisions affecting the library, because so many other people are involved in terms of consultation, collaboration, management and funding.

An interesting article by Minkel (2002) describes how one US school District began an innovative programme to challenge Seattle's librarians to expand their role and increase the amount of influence they had within schools. Mike Eisenberg (Dean of the University of Washington's Information School at that time) had been brought in to lead training for a District-wide initiative, on the basis of promoting new high-speed Internet within the District. One school librarian describes how in the past she:

"Did the usual library lessons, but nothing much ever came from them."

Eisenberg told school librarians to change how they did jobs, communicate and collaborate more and take a part in technology-based learning:

"To reinvent themselves - to demonstrate that they directly affected student learning and were instrumental in preparing students for life in an electronic world... In the age of the Internet, the librarian should serve as every school's 'chief information officer'."

Eisenberg advised school librarians to promote themselves more heavily; to be known as an information literacy teacher for students and staff; to become a reading advocate;

to be an information manager selecting appropriate resources. A simple method used in this project was for the librarian to send a memo to her Headteacher every ten weeks outlining what training she did with students that affected their learning. Extra support from the management team helped the librarian in the article to progress. In addition, monthly meetings with other school librarians focused on using technology to present information literacy lessons to teachers and students, using curriculum mapping to establish and chart learning goals. As a result, most librarians agreed that they have taken on a more active leadership role in schools:

“They must provide what teachers, principals, and the public want, which is academic achievement....Curriculum units that make use of librarian’s skills are more likely to boost student achievement – and their test scores.”

Where such initiatives show that using evidence works, it could be because authority-wide commitment and energy are paramount, where training, time, support and money are available. Without such commitment, initiatives are more likely to fail.

6.9 Evidence-based practice

Todd (2007) summarises two main strands he identifies in school library EBP:

“It is the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best research evidence in making decisions about the instructional role of the school librarian. It is about using research evidence, coupled with professional expertise and reasoning to implement learning interventions that are effective. Why instructional? All the research evidence points clearly to this dimension of the school librarian’s role as a primary enabler of learning outcomes. Second, evidence-based practice is about ensuring that professional efforts focus on gathering meaningful and systematic evidence on dimensions of teaching and learning that matter to the school and its support community, evidences that clearly convey that learning outcomes are continuing to improve.” (Todd 2001[b]).” p62

From this study, the problem of accessing research literature was identified, unless one was a registered university member of staff or student. As Linda said in interview:

“How are you supposed to see these things? You used to go the [university] library and have a look at any journal, now they are all electronic and we can’t look at those, we don’t have passwords or access as we are not students there.”

Many research journals were only available electronically through passwords normally only given to registered staff or students, where in the past any member of the public could access university libraries in person and examine hard copies of resources. Some abstracts of articles were available through general Internet sources, but it was often

difficult to access full text sources. In general terms, professionals now mainly access research articles or digests through hard copy journals relevant to their specialisms.

Recent surveys have shown that teachers rely more on local personal contacts for information rather than research journals (Williams and Wavell 2006). Kimmel (1992) identifies that many librarians think that research is dull and dated and not practical but also that:

“Research is most successfully applied, it seems to me, when it is applied with passion.” p95

Participants of the second US focus group discussed how they used research and Karen outlined her practice:

“We use the results of the research done in the States – Colorado, Alaska, Pennsylvania etc [Scholastic 2004] to show the evidence of good libraries and increase in student test scores. We are in the process of doing [our home State] research right now. We had an online survey from the State.”

This 2004 document from Scholastic outlines American research since 1990 showing that the school library is critical to the learning experience and student academic achievement and states categorically:

“A well-stocked library staffed by a certified library media specialist has a positive impact on student achievement, regardless of the socio-economic or educational levels of the community.” p1

This paper shows the measurable impact of school libraries and school librarians on learning outcomes in America. The three main features that it says influenced learning are:

- Collaboration between librarians and teachers to teach and integrate literature and information skills into the curriculum
- Partnership working between librarians and teachers on projects helping students to use a variety of resources, conduct research and present findings
- Librarians were supported fiscally and programmatically by the educational community to achieve the mission of the school, which would include adequate management, financial and staffing support

These measures involve the librarian selecting and promoting appropriate resources (including electronic sources); teaching students how to use resources, find information, manipulate and present findings; promoting the love of reading; collaborating with teachers; and integrating the use of resources to support teaching and learning and the delivery of the curriculum.

The librarian is described here as:

“At once a teacher, an instructional partner, an information specialist, and a program administrator. Library media specialists play an essential role in the learning community by ensuring that students and staff are efficient and effective users of ideas and information. They collaborate with teachers, administrators, and others to prepare students for future successes.” p2

Oatman (2006) describes the workings of one school in New Jersey, where the librarians use evidence-based practice where searching for information can be as important as the topic, where he describes the process as a kind of three-legged stool:

“One of the legs rests on the evidence information scientists have produced on the research process. Another leg stands on the librarian’s understanding of how her individual patrons learn best – visually, aurally, by reading, or all three. The third leg consists of data, measurable proof that the librarian’s guidance had a real impact on learning.”

This “guided inquiry” he describes is a labour-intensive exercise, involving librarian intervention on at least three occasions, at the beginning, middle and end of a project, where they asked the students “What do you know?” the high school students were building on work already undertaken at middle school level, where another librarian had sowed the seeds on guided inquiry. Each high school student produced an essay at the end of each project outlining what they have learned about themselves in terms of learning. The time involved for the librarians could be as much as five to seven hours for each project for each student, and close teacher-librarian collaboration and Principal commitment would be essential for this process to work. In 2006 the New Jersey Association of School Librarians awarded an 11th grade science project at the school the library media program of the year. Such success is in no small way due to high librarian/student ratio, which is possible in this school as it is a private establishment. However the main principles can still be applied where that ratio is less favourable, even if on a smaller scale.

Todd, Kuhlthau, and OELMA (2004) report in a wide ranging study in Ohio of 13,000 students that 99.4% of students in grades 3 to 12 believe that school libraries and their

services help them to become better learners. They also state that an effective school library plays a critical role in helping student learning for building knowledge when led by a credentialed library media specialist who has a clearly defined role in information-oriented pedagogy. Todd et al also call for primary or elementary schools to be staffed with school library media specialists in order to maximise achievement. They summarise three essential, interactive and iterative elements of a school library's intellectual and physical infrastructure:

- **Informational** To include appropriate information resources, suitable technology and reading material
- **Transformational** To include information literacy engagement, technological literacies such as critical thinking, ethical use and communication, and reading engagement
- **Formational** To include student knowledge creation, knowledge use, knowledge production, knowledge dissemination, knowledge values and reading literacy

Kenney (2006) quotes Ross Todd when referring to this Ohio research:

"We want this research to bring a cycle of renewal, bring a cycle of continuous improvement.... I would very strongly argue that simply providing a technology infrastructure, simply providing high-quality information resources and reading materials, providing a certified school librarian, providing administrative support, do not necessarily generate improved practice....It's about [the school librarian] taking action and looking at my instructional intervention.... Guide students more meaningfully in their inquiry...I sense that a lot of what kids do in school libraries is purely busywork.....We see so many kids coming into the school library with a project to do. At the end, did they learn anything? And what does that learning look like?.... Few [school librarians] can actually articulate outcomes, not in terms of the library but in terms of knowledge and skills and attitudes and values-based outcomes as defined by the curriculum standards." p2-3

Consolidating the findings of Todd et al, McGill-Franzon et al (1999) state that:

"Simply providing teachers with a generous supply of children's books had little effect on the educational outcomes of students."

Supplying resources is therefore seen as not enough, it is how they are used with students that makes the difference, an ideal task for the school librarian. Research in Alaska by Lance (1999) reveals that students in high schools with full-time teacher-librarians are almost twice as likely to score average or above average on California Achievement Tests than those libraries without teacher-librarians. Test scores increase the more times library media specialists gave library instruction sessions.

Another research study in Colorado by Lance (2000) reports that elementary [primary] school students whose librarians are identified as being the most collaborative score 21% higher in reading on the Colorado Student Assessment Program than students with librarians identified as the least collaborative.

A Florida study by Baumbach (2002) shows that in high schools where library media programs are staffed for at least 60 hours a week, there is a 22.2% improvement in test scores compared to those staffed for less than 60 hours. Such studies demonstrate the value of having a qualified teacher-librarian who actively promotes and develops services offered by the school library. Librarians can use this growing body of research in order to demonstrate to management in schools and educational authorities the value of having a librarian who can collaborate with teachers to improve attainment and achievement.

James, one of the Scottish focus group participants, called for more collation and promotion of this specific research, so that busy school librarians can identify relevant studies from the literature which they can use to make a case for development:

".. in school libraries we could do ... with an overarching body so that all the different places that are doing research ... can work collaboratively to pool information, to pool ideas ... whereas at the moment they tend to be... available through particular authorities, portals ... and they're probably all equally valuable and could really help somebody else. If they were ... in one place."

This is reinforced by Bradley (2007) who states that:

"Librarians hoping to practice EBL face the formidable task of searching many sources both within and outside of LIS in order to retrieve the scattered but essential evidence to answer the profession's most pressing questions." p22

She suggests starting with Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA) then moving onto Library Literature and Information Science Index (Library Lit), then Information Science and Technology Index (ISTI). Bradley then recommends that once these basic LIS databases have been searched, it would be advisable to examine databases in allied professions because of the multifaceted nature of LIS work, for example ERIC for educational topics. Bradley describes how keywords may vary depending on the author and context. Ultimately these measures only deal with published material, and a wealth of information may be available from unpublished sources. She suggests looking at Internet directories such as BUBL [2008]

(<http://bubl.ac.uk>) which is a catalogue of internet resources or E-LIS (<http://eprints.rclis.org/>) which is an archive for library and information science. However she recommends the sustainability of the process when she states that:

“Librarians should take the time to evaluate the success of the search process. Figuring out what worked and what didn’t work can make your next search more efficient. It can also ensure that rather than being a once-in-a-lifetime experiment, EBL becomes a part of your regular practice.” p24

Martina and Jones (2006) note that in the past EBL had an academic focus, but suggest that competency-based measures are increasingly more relevant in vocational libraries. They suggest that practitioners need to use evidence to establish and maintain their credibility, and that they need to be more systematic in design and analysis of that information. Fisher and Robertson (2007) cite a New Zealand study dealing with special libraries in government agencies when they say:

“The smaller the library staff size, the less likely the librarians were to use research.” p12

They encourage librarians to use EBP to:

“Question the conventional wisdom and to base your decisions on the best available evidence.... Convince higher management of our value and continue to contribute to our respective organizations” p15

By using EBP they envisage this having a positive effect on managers, particularly when working in a small library with few staff, because the evidence will prove the library value and impact on users.

Barriers to research are discussed by Pretty (2007) she considers that there is a narrow evidence base. In a similar way to Bradley, she suggests using a wider selection of databases to include those in social science and medicine, as they can be relevant to LIS practice. She also considers that real EBLIP (evidence based library and information practice) is the:

“Daily application of research to practice....the nature of our practice, not another task we try to add on at the end of the week.” p31

Pretty suggests using a new website (University of Newcastle, Australia [2008]) (www.eblip.net.au) which provides a directory of current EBP activities and support.

In a similar way to the teacher research of Williams and Wavell (2006), Genoni, Haddow and Ritchie (2004) state that librarians do not generally use research findings when making decisions related to their professional practice, using instead experience, instinct or opinions of colleagues. They identify what they call a research-practice communication gap, which has also been found in other professions such as nursing and psychology. Barriers to using research include time constraints, language barriers, accessing literature from other disciplines and physical availability. One solution to filling this culture gap between university-based researchers and service-based practitioners is to develop more collaboration and communication methods when establishing research funding, bringing more practical considerations to researchers, and more theoretical aspects to practitioners. Booth (2003) considers that with practitioner research there can be a lack of rigour; with academic research there can be a lack of relevance, and that practitioner evidence-based practice provides a pragmatic approach to bridging that gap.

With regard to the language barrier, as well as the obvious problems of foreign language access, it is important that librarians use language more likely to create a relevant connection and positive response from educationalists, for example in a development plan to relate items to school priorities and make a bid. For example, to bid for £500 of resources to support the individual reading study element of Higher English, rather than simply to increase the fiction stock. In this way the use of educational terms would mean more to teachers than librarian terms and would be more relevant to budget holders as they relate more directly to curriculum goals.

US school librarian Freda acknowledged in the vignette that in order to improve decision-making skills:

"We could gather more feedback and utilize it to improve decisions."

Van House (1992) states the importance of collecting baseline data before and after implementing an intervention to judge if situations have improved. She also stresses the need to relate decisions to clear mission, goals and objectives but then states that:

"An organisation rarely follows this idealised process, however." p55.

She sees decision-making and decision-makers as being a:

"Jumble of poor practice, ongoing programs, individual preferences and beliefs, and interest groups." p55

She recommends that:

“Evaluation is a process by which an organisation examines, not only its actions, but its presuppositions, values, and mission.” p53

Therefore evaluation can demonstrate progress in a concrete way, by relating library development with organisational goals.

6.10 Conclusions

This chapter has contributed to the understanding of how high school librarians involve themselves in planning and decision-making processes. The findings of the study were examined, along with guidance from the literature, to discover how school librarians planned and made decisions. Generally decisions were made on an adhoc basis, perhaps due to restrictions of time and planning. There was some evidence of long term pre-planning and collaboration with teaching colleagues, mainly from American librarians. There was little demonstration of large-scale evaluation of strategies implemented. This could be due to the nature of the post, when often school librarians reacted to user demands, had no assistance and carried out a range of operational and strategic tasks. It would be anticipated that allocating more regular non-contact time to planning; collaboration; and reflective tasks would help by providing a positive climate to encourage more strategic thinking and collaboration.

From this study, although there seemed to be little formal recognition and application of rational decision-making strategies in practice, models of decision-making that fitted well into the mode of working described by participants involved incremental and experiential practice. Practitioners evidenced many long hours in post, and more focused whole-school planning and collaboration would mean time on activities could be more targeted to whole-school goals. More formal training in strategic thinking and decision-making, and encouragement in collaborative working would help the school librarian to explore new models for consideration in future work practice.

Ways of incorporating evidence-based practice into normal working life were discussed. Although it is recognised that there can be difficulties in finding research evidence, a concerted effort to bring together research evidence, published material and grey literature into mainstream literature would help practitioners to see what work is being done. Practitioners can then be encouraged to apply the research they have accessed

to their work and collate their own data. Results can be reported in the literature, encouraging a culture of improving practice by the use of evidence.

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Chapter 7 Networking and collaboration

The aim of this chapter is to examine the extent to which school librarians in the study use networking and collaboration to help them with decision-making. When reporting findings from data collection, fictional forenames are used throughout in order to preserve anonymity.

7.1 Collaboration in library-related decisions

Generally it was reported in the questionnaire survey that those involved in decision-making concerning school library matters were mainly school librarians, but also to a lesser extent line managers and Principal Teachers [Heads of subject departments]. On fewer occasions students' views were sought, for example Scottish librarian Fiona invited library prefects to a bookshop to help her choose books, and many librarians invited student and staff suggestions for new stock. As part of the Scottish profiling preparation for inspection, formal student and staff surveys asking for views on the library were introduced. All of the Directors of School Library Services surveyed agreed that an element of consultation was expected, and that State, District and national guidelines should be followed for consistency. One Scottish school librarian Barbara said in the questionnaire that she would not welcome help from teachers:

“But it would be helpful to have more assistance or support from a library person eg education librarian [Director of School Library Service].”

Apparently she felt more comfortable taking guidance from someone in the same field rather than a member of staff in her school. However another Scottish librarian Lily voiced the views of most Scottish librarians when she reported in the questionnaire that:

“I don't think librarians would appreciate this [help from others in making decisions].”

Although there was criticism of not having enough support generally, there was more feeling from Scottish participants in the questionnaire that they did not want help from other school colleagues when it came to making decisions, as they felt that the librarian should make decisions concerning the library as they were the information specialists. Quoted above were two examples of librarians not welcoming help from others, which indicated that there was a development issue concerned with collaboration and role, and how collaborative work could benefit decision-makers in the process, without removing power from the librarian. US librarians tended to report more willingness to collaborate and there was more evidence of joint working groups, particularly related to pedagogy,

technology and curriculum matters. This reflected the different role played by the US librarian, who was dually qualified as a teacher and more involved in wider school issues.

American school librarian Donna summed up many views in a focus group when she stated:

“The greatest successes come when teachers and directors [school librarians] work together and communicate needs.”

The most popular methods of deciding which services to offer depended on the librarian’s perception of the needs of the curriculum and informal observation of library use. There were a few comments reflecting more formal methods or even tying into development plans or speaking to staff, such as American librarian Betty’s comments in the questionnaire on the: *“need to be part of the curriculum process”* and decisions should be: *“based on student need.”*

Lack of money, support staff and time were commonly mentioned as preventing the school librarians providing new services. People who prevented librarians offering new services were identified as line manager, librarians themselves, teachers and the authority. American librarian Caroline stated in the vignette that decision-making skills could be improved by making: *“Time for collecting and analyzing data to support decisions.”*

However Scottish librarian Ross thought in the questionnaire that:

“Many people get tired of fighting apathy in others and became apathetic themselves.”

This was confirmed by Scottish librarian Lily who said in the questionnaire that:

“I’ve chased staff [teachers] for years, always promoted the library and what I can do for them, and sometimes I get fed up being proactive all the time.”

This showed that some librarians, particularly in Scotland, did feel demoralised at times. Perhaps if there were more obvious two-way collaboration where library development and function was clearly linked to whole-school teaching and learning, this feeling may lessen. The evidence in this study from American schools was not so apparent, perhaps because the library contribution was more clearly and obviously linked to the delivery of the curriculum, with assignments in the library being graded towards subject

achievement. In addition more reporting of collaboration was noted from US respondents throughout the survey, although it was not completely embedded in practice.

Positive aspects of working alone included having more control over the working environment, freedom to work at one's own pace, not wasting time in meetings or with paperwork and easier decision-making. As American librarian David stated in the vignette, the librarian:

"Has the freedom to run the library in his way.... he can work on what he feels is important without interference."

However, it was also recognised by respondents that there was a danger of becoming isolated, a lack of feedback, no sharing of ideas and problems may not be easily identified. As American school librarian Deirdre noted in the vignette:

"No collaboration or communication leads to misunderstanding."

Another US librarian Patricia said in the vignette the danger was that the librarian:

"Might be out of touch with staff expectations..... administration [senior management] may not see the impact of [librarian's] work."

In the second US focus group, librarian Karri reflected that she:

"Will speak to my Principal about planning decisions – although I need to start thinking myself, he needs to join in at a later stage so we make sure bigger school impacts are considered."

American school librarian Donna identified in a focus group a:

"Need to tell my Principal that what we do in the library is outstanding."

This was the result of sharing with others their thoughts on the impact of their school libraries towards student achievement.

Generally the school librarians surveyed enjoyed the autonomy that they had within the library, and there was an appreciation from librarians and managers that some form of collaboration and effective communication links were required to give a more rounded approach to making decisions. As Grover (1996) says:

"Collaboration is hard work with many rewards – it's a journey, not a destination, with students as the beneficiaries of creative team efforts of library media specialists, teachers and administrators. Establishing collaboration for teaching takes a long time and requires nurturing." p6

It would therefore seem to be good practice to encourage positive use of long-term collaborative working, and this would involve giving time and guidance for staff to

establish ways of working together. State or national guidance and possible funding would help by raising the profile of the idea and inviting wider discussion of strategies and implementation.

One aspect that could cause confusion was the use of jargon, or different definitions of language. Nell, a Scottish librarian, said in interview:

“The [geography] teacher was talking about using reference books [for the project on countries] and I said that we couldn’t really do the project with those as there weren’t enough on the different countries. She just looked confused, and so was I. She then took me to see the books she meant and they were non fiction, not reference at all. I now realise some teachers mix those up, but I didn’t know that at the time.”

The same sort of confusion was noted by other Scottish participants, and perhaps this was because they were librarians and not teachers, who used a different educational vocabulary. In America, the librarians were teachers first, so used the same educational vocabulary as teachers. Where there were problems, they tended to be about library or information terms, where there were different definitions of terminology. From the Scottish focus group there was some discussion of this. Fiona said:

“From a rather frivolous point of view it actually impresses the hell out of some of the staff if you use the educational jargon and they view you quite differently.”

Her colleague Briony said more cautiously:

“I sometimes find that you have to be very careful initially when you’re talking, coming across jargon for the first time that sometimes the same jargon word means something different to a librarian or to a teacher and you sometimes find you’re talking at cross purposes but, like Fiona says, sometimes you can help to build links if you’re using jargon people recognise in the profession. Not for a while but years back we used to have problems with, it’s actually notetaking and notemaking, two terms that meant very different things to me. To me notetaking and making meant the same thing, but – notetaking meant sort of, how they wrote it down onto the bit of paper, I think, and notemaking, sorry I got that the wrong way round.”

This showed some of the confusion that can arise when terminology was not commonly defined. Pignatelli (1987) warns of the professional isolation of school librarians if educational jargon is used by teachers:

“You can suffer a sense of curricular isolation because people are talking about things you can’t get access to.” p18

The divisiveness of language is identified as a problem by Hornby and Atkins (2000), who suggest that some basic collaborative vocabulary be established, without supplanting professional terminologies. As an example of eliminating language

difficulties, documents focusing on library self-evaluation such as one produced by the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (1999) mirror an existing whole school document that teachers and senior management are already familiar with in terms of structure and vocabulary. As they had this prior working knowledge, they would be more familiar with the principles of the companion document and it should be easier to implement. Librarians in the focus groups discussed using accepted education vocabulary and felt that it was more productive to do so, because it is the common language in a school.

Although much of Becher's (1994) research is in the field of higher education, he describes the concepts of universities operating as a community culture while being composed of various tribes. Each tribe has a distinct territory, a distinct language and ways to symbolise its apartness from others. However these tribes possess a common culture and could communicate and understand with other tribes. Does this concept of tribes reflect what is happening in high schools between teachers and librarians? Hopefully as information professionals working in an educational environment, school librarians would make it part of their remit to find out about educational jargon and terminology and the implications for the school library.

Salmon and Rapport (2005) state that from a social work field:

"It could be that professionals feel inhibited to ask for clarification about meanings because of perceived hierarchies within the room or because they do not wish to be considered awkward or pedantic. It is also possible that professionals are not actually aware that there may be others in the room who might have a different understanding than they do as to what has been said."

It would seem to be useful practice to have some mechanism to pre-empt some of these problems, perhaps by having a formal approach with time built in for planning and discussion before working together.

One study by McCartney, Ellis and Boyle (2006) in the area of speech and language therapists working with teachers states:

"Good relationships often exist, but by definition not egalitarian relationships..... Mutual trust and respect can not be assumed when professionals work together for the first time, although professional responsibility can..... Joint work in mainstream depends upon to [sic] managing the best level of collaboration they can achieve, and agreeing that, although it may not be perfect, it may be 'good enough'."

Their model looks at the speech and language specialist in a consultant role, an outside expert recommending courses of action to be undertaken by teachers. Weaknesses would be that there would be no guarantee that the activities are carried out systematically in the classroom and it could be that activities are less effective when carried out by people other than specialist speech and language therapists.

This model does not directly relate to school librarians, because unlike speech and language therapists, the librarian is a permanent member of school staff with a specific location, and also the librarian serves the whole school at all times rather than being brought in for special problems. However it is still useful to compare the collaboration of staff from a different profession with teachers as there are similar problems.

McCartney, Ellis and Boyd (2006) define the “*good enough*” level as being at a level of co-operation, where there is regular and open communication rather than full collaboration which they say would include trust, mutual respect and personal support, free and open discussion and shared responsibility for planning, positive interactions and relationship building. This is obviously a more time-consuming and involved process, but in order to get the benefits of working together at such a level, it involves real effort, commitment and leadership from school and/or authority.

McCartney (1999) identifies other problems in collaboration between speech and language specialists and teachers, for example teachers not being aware of non-teaching conditions of service, such as fewer holidays and different hours of working, and specialists not realising how difficult it can be for teachers to leave the classroom. Such misunderstandings can take a toll on working relationships.

7.2 Collaboration with line managers

Line managers were either direct supervisors of librarians, or Headteachers. As such, their background was in education and teaching a subject. They may not have had management or leadership training. One American librarian Letitia said when speaking of her school management in the vignette, that: “*I wish they were not so ‘afraid’ of being leaders.*”

US librarian Freda reported in the questionnaire survey that:

"Many supervisors are also overwhelmed with the sheer amount of work, but I think it their job to educate themselves on libraries and their services."

Almost all librarians in the questionnaire survey considered that their line managers could improve their own decision-making skills, and it was considered that most do not know enough about school libraries. Frances, a Scottish librarian in the questionnaire survey, stated that:

"They are generally very busy people who do not have an intimate knowledge of libraries..... Communication is often lacking even when relevant decisions are made."

An American correspondent on the school librarian support site LM_NET (Torres 2002) states when collating information she had been sent by other librarians:

"On the matter of principals and other school administrators being uninformed or poorly informed about the correct role of the school librarian, several LM_NET members suggested that librarians need to take an active role in changing those perceptions. Obviously many principals need to be educated about our true role, especially since they generally receive almost no training at all at the undergraduate or graduate level regarding the role and function of the school librarian. While educating the principals was identified as a great need, I did not receive any specific suggestions on how best to accomplish this other than on a one-to-one basis at each campus."

Another way to achieve this collaboration and discussion about roles would be to include coverage of the role of the school librarian in basic teacher or postgraduate courses, or by local authority or District at in-service training aimed at senior management.

In one Scottish school visited for this study, it was revealed at interview that the line manager of a school librarian had sorted a long term problem with senior student disruption during private study in the library by setting up private study supervised by teachers in another location. Unfortunately she failed to tell the librarian about it, and after a full school year it was revealed during an interview with the researcher that there were still behaviour problems with senior students in the library and that the librarian did not know about the supervised study elsewhere. Scottish line manager Treena then realised that she had not told the librarian Bernadette at the start of the school year:

"... do you know now I think about it I am not sure that I told her [the librarian] that I set up private study [elsewhere]. That could be why there is still a problem [with study pupil behaviour in the library]. Let me email the Principal teachers now and tell them they should stick to what was agreed, and tell the librarian that there is now private study [scheduled elsewhere]."

The librarian Bernadette said during interview where she heard about this intervention and that she had not been informed of it:

“Nothing would surprise me. Maybe she did set it up, but she didn’t tell me and it has made no difference to me here. I never bothered telling her that there was still a problem because nothing would have been done anyway. If she set up private study, well, it didn’t work, ‘cos it is still going on [poor behaviour in the library].”

However if Bernadette had known that this solution to disruptive behaviour during study in the library had been set up, she could have monitored it and informed Treena that it was failing, as what happened was that some teachers did not enforce the rule and gradually let students back into the library over the year. Once clarification had been made about the issue, everyone knew what was supposed to happen, and teachers knew that if they let students go to the library then they would be sent back to private study, it had a major impact on sorting disruption problems in the library. As the librarian said at a later interview four months later:

“It has made a huge difference, it is much better. Kids come along and if they get a book and go back, OK, if they muck about they’re straight back to the teacher [supervising study] with a note. I just don’t get Fifth Years here anymore, just Sixth Years and they’re OK, smaller numbers as well. It was the numbers of drifting Fifth Years not wanting to work that made it so bad – constant, low-level noise – I had to get involved and that stressed me out.”

So lack of basic communication in this case resulted in a strategy not being implemented, monitored or evaluated, with major impact on the work of the librarian and the relationship and communication between Treena and Bernadette. This raises a development issue where roles, communication lines and the decision-making process need to be clarified. One idea in an authority was to offer an induction pack to the line managers of librarians in school which would help them to identify how the library and librarian fit into the role of whole school curriculum support and strategic planning. In this way if it was a totally new area of responsibility for line managers, they would have a better grounding in what was expected from the authority.

An American Headteacher Scott stated in interview the importance of librarians having a vision of where they want to go, in addition to skills in collaboration and technology. Another American Headteacher Peter interviewed (in post for four years) felt that his school librarian Gill, who had been in post for twelve years, did not deal with discipline in a positive way and he wanted to see more progress on technology and collaboration.

When interviewed, Gill said that she loved the ordering resources part of the job, but admitted that the worst part of the job for her was the discipline, and she said that she knew she often over-reacted and gave out long exclusions for fairly minor matters as she couldn't cope, and to get rid of students for a fortnight for a misdemeanour dealt with her stress. During interview a student interrupted her with an obviously forged note giving him permission to use the library and she told him: *"Mister, you've just won yourself a vacation from the library for two weeks."* Gill said afterwards that she was relieved to be able to ban him as he was always a *"trouble-causer"*, which on investigation she defined that he came into the library regularly to meet up with friends. She seemed unwilling to share the disciplinary problems she had with the management in case they:

"Think I can't do my job. That would truly be the worst. I'm so close to retirement and it can't come soon enough, believe me."

US Headteacher Norman stated at interview that he saw his librarian Denny as disillusioned and negative with a lack of vision, making the library chaotic in his eyes. Norman did not consider that she collaborated or delivered what a school library should. Denny had been in post for twenty years and Norman had been in school as Principal for three years. When interviewing the librarian, it seemed that there was a communication problem as Denny was completely unaware of these opinions and thought she was doing a good job, although she didn't have much to do with the Principal:

"Thank the Lord..... he [the Principal] rarely comes into the LMC [library], he isn't very interested and lets me do what I need to do....if I wasn't doing it right he would soon say (laugh). "

However neither of these Headteachers identified how they could deal with the situations. They were unwilling to tackle problem areas either head-on or through a more collaborative guided way. As the librarians had been in post for a considerable time and the Principals were relatively new, it was acknowledged that they felt it was difficult for them to tackle such problems, although it would seem to be reasonable practice for a manager to deal with performance issues as early as he could, in order not to let what he saw as unacceptable practice to continue and undoubtedly the longer the situation remains the more resentment will build up and the more difficult it will be to resolve.

An appraisal or staff review system in school would help to address some of these concerns as it would offer the opportunity to help staff progress with problem areas, give them incremental goals and provide them with support and guidance.

How then were changes to be made and who would lead them? Without a more proactive approach to identifying and acknowledging problems, examining possible strategies and working together to create a new way forward, it seems that progress is unlikely to be made. This approach can be difficult and painful for those involved, but without it the solution that remained with both of these Headteachers was to wait until their librarians left and someone new started in post, or somehow things were to change. This is hardly a happy or productive solution nor does it demonstrate effective leadership or the best way toward improvement.

As we have already seen, two US Headteachers interviewed had problems and had difficulty in sorting them out. As already described, Scottish Headteacher Harry who worked with librarian Norma acknowledged at interview that the librarian had: *“a very complex role.”*

Harry considered that different groups should be consulted when making decisions, including students, teachers, technicians and SMT, to reflect: *“how the library fits into the overall learning in school.”*

Harry identified problems with the strategic output and reflection he required from his own librarian and like the two US Headteachers with librarian problems found it difficult to resolve. He considered that his school librarian Norma should involve many different groups in decision-making. Although he realised the importance of being involved in committees such as Learning and Teaching Committee, he acknowledged that Norma was not a member of any as she did not have the time. He committed at interview to: *“draw her out”* and to encourage her to carry out such work, with incentives of time, new ICT resources and money.

Demonstrating positive action to solve this problem, he employed an additional temporary member of staff to give her extra support to carry out higher level tasks, acknowledging her unique and complex role within school. This made a great difference to the work of that school librarian, and she acknowledged that her confidence had grown and that she felt that she was now part of a team that offered informed professional support. Norma had been more collaborative and produced the quality

documents Harry required from her. She also felt more valued and stated in the interview:

“I feel he sees what I can do and lets me do it. It is more satisfying now than it has been in the past – I feel I am able to do my job better.”

As she reported in interview:

“I now feel that he [Headteacher] takes me more seriously, understands what I can do and have to do and is letting me get on with it. By getting this extra time I can now think and do the things I never had time to do before, although I knew I should be doing them – it was a worry.”

In very practical terms Harry changed Norma's practice by overcoming some of the barriers outlined in section 7.1 of this Chapter. These were identified by respondents to the vignette as time, funds and staffing. Once he provided his librarian with these benefits, she was able to work more strategically, collaboratively and reflectively, and let someone else carry out more operational tasks.

In contrast to these problem areas, Barney, the Headteacher of US librarian Ellen, felt at interview that she contributed very well and fully contributed and collaborated in her role, he saw her as: *“diplomatic, yet gets things done and people on her side.”*

He felt that this was an important part of her collaborative approach to the job. This ideal was generally recognised by all Headteachers, although they acknowledged that it was not always done to their satisfaction. However without addressing problems, they cannot be progressed.

7.3 Encouraging collaboration with teachers

Teaching staff were an important group for the librarian to consider when collaborating. They offered a route to whole school working in wider, curriculum-focused and attainment issues. Shucksmith (2006) describes the relationship as:

“A learning community of professional workers would theoretically be characterised by a culture of trust between members which allowed risk-taking, which pooled resources, which gave moral support and developed social values that emphasised awareness of others. Such trust is only likely to be established where the relationships that develop are authentic, however, and some have argued that the hierarchical distribution of power in schools frames interpersonal relationships too strongly for this to happen.”

These are the sort of issues that could usefully be raised in a developmental session between partners in a school. Once these are explored and the school culture and preferred practice established, then it would be easier to progress with minimal misinterpretation over role, resources and risk. Another useful exercise would be to spend some time on identifying role preference, raising awareness of the importance of role in collaborative working.

In field visits made to schools and from data collection, it seemed that much collaboration was largely adhoc and not part of wider long-term planning. Where there was very organised and pre-planned input and evaluation, as demonstrated in some US schools visited, there was coherent and valuable contribution to learning and teaching which was recognised throughout the school and beyond, and a research project in a US university identified the value of the programme in the school (Oatman 2006). This model involved many library staff and an enormous time commitment throughout all levels, from elementary to high school, and it would be difficult for most schools to follow such a model. However elements of this programme could be incorporated by other librarians.

The second US focus group agreed that collaborative planning was common in their experience, with long term goals related to State standards and curricular topics essentially and as a matter of course.

Loertscher (2000) lists ten levels of collaboration between librarian and teacher, as outlined in Table 7.1 below. In an earlier document, Loertscher (1982) emphasises the merits of each level, saying there was no need for guilt if working at a lower level. The higher one rises in the taxonomy, the more collaborative the work is between teacher and librarian. Levels 8 to 10 are described in *Information Power* (AASL and AECT 1998) as proactive roles which librarians should aim to achieve. Perhaps this is one formal way of identifying the level of working at present, and then a plan put into place to progress up the taxonomy.

Table 7.1 Collaboration levels. Adapted from Loertscher (2000)

- 1 No involvement (LMC is bypassed entirely)
- 2 Smoothly operating information infrastructure (facilities and resources available for the self-starter)
- 3 Individual reference assistance (LMS is human interface between information and users)
- 4 Spontaneous interaction and gathering (no advance notice needed for users to access facilities)
- 5 Cursory planning (informal and brief planning with teachers and students for LMC facilities or network usage)
- 6 Planned gathering (gathering of materials/access to important digital resources is done in advance of a class project upon teacher or student request)
- 7 Evangelistic outreach/advocacy (a concerted effort is made to promote the philosophy of the four major programmatic elements – see 8)
- 8 Implementation of the four major programmatic elements of the program [collaboration; reading literacy; enhancing learning through technology; information literacy]. The LMC is on its way to achieving its goal of contributing to academic achievement.
- 9 The mature LMC program (meets the needs of every student and teacher who will accept its offerings in each of the four programmatic elements)
- 10 Curriculum development (LMS contributes to the planning and organisation of what will actually be taught in the school or district)

In order to achieve this, there has to be whole-school commitment to give the librarian the necessary support, whether it was extra space, money, staffing or in-service sessions to teachers to encourage collaborative approaches to planning.

Turner (2005) states that the school librarian is in a unique position, as no other member of staff has so much contact time with students and this creates a conflict in terms of time to collaborate with teachers versus keeping the library open for students. He stresses that professionalism means that the library is usually kept open at the expense of collaboration, which he believes is done largely in the librarian's own time (as was often the case with sole librarians). He thinks that if a regular compromise arrangement

is made, then students soon adapt to it without much difficulty, for example closing to attend weekly staff meetings. This was done by Nell, a Scottish librarian, who said:

"I close the library twice a week at break so I can go to the staffroom and mingle. It's a really useful time to catch up with teachers and make arrangements for library use, chase for requests and so on. Also I think they see [me] more as one of them, and that is important."

Due to change and uncertainty in the profession, Hargreaves (2000) states that teachers must collaborate in order to respond to the change, and more teachers have to teach in ways they were not themselves taught. In addition to this, less money, tighter policy controls and learning standards, testing and curriculum targets lead to conflicting pressures leading teachers to reconsider the kinds of professional learning they need to do the job. He considers that there is a contest between what he called professionalisation (improving status and standing) and professionalism (improving quality and standards of practice). He reports moves towards more collaborative working amongst teachers, which involves a reworking of their roles and identities, but acknowledges that some teachers do not willingly collaborate.

Hargreaves considers that collaboration is vital to cope with topics such as expansion and change in the curriculum; more understanding of teaching styles; increased social work responsibilities; inclusion of all students; multicultural diversity and changing management and leadership structures. He calls for time for teachers to collaborate directly to improve teaching, learning and caring within the school and to make better use of support staff to do more general tasks. In addition, targeted INSET provision could help by guiding staff in working on specific projects. School librarians were in the ideal position to contribute to helping teachers cope with these changes, particularly with their expertise in finding and applying information and using ICT effectively. It was evident that in many American schools visited, these roles were the areas where collaboration and skill exchange was pivotal and of value to teachers.

In the field of school librarianship important elements raised by participants include using initiative, subject knowledge and communication. No-one in this study identified that they had formally or consciously examined the range of team roles as part of the collaboration they carried out with teaching staff. It would be interesting to explore if such an exercise might break down barriers and preconceptions to the role others can play and help towards a more unified approach to collaboration. By using such an exercise,

participants would be more aware of their role preference and ensure that all roles were played by team members for a more cohesive approach to collaboration. In Scotland, school librarians Fiona, Briony and James agreed in a focus group that collaboration was important, but also enjoyed the autonomous role they had, with appropriate support and communication when needed. Examples of these might be having a supportive management, being included in whole school communications and departmental meetings. Briony took part in the formal collaborative planning in her school, as well as through informal means. She also had a wider remit as she had a Field Officer role within the authority to support other school librarians. Her Headteacher Euan considered in a focus group that using standards and indicators provided an effective way of measuring the success of the library. He also said that Briony was responsible for the whole school website, and this helped with her whole school perception, showing his expectation of a wider role. This was an unusual role among Scottish librarians, who were less likely than US colleagues to play a wider role in school and outwith the school.

Scottish Librarian Briony identified in the focus group:

"I miss the intellectual discussion about planning goals because I am engrossed with achieving goals."

She resolved to make an effort to plan goals more as a result.

American school librarians agreed that collaboration was vital, although they would have the final decision on how the budget would be spent. Donna, a school librarian from America, emphasised the importance of collaboration when she said in a focus group:

"The greatest successes come when teachers and directors [school librarians] work together and communicate needs."

Some schools in this district had set up TEAM workgroups, which meant Together Everyone Achieves More. US librarian Karen discussed flexible scheduling, where the library was seen as an extension of the classroom. Teachers brought students to the library as needed, and the librarian went into the classroom to help with project work. This was obviously easier in the larger American libraries which were not solely staffed, but problems were still identified rising from lack of staff and time. In US libraries visited, library work was assessed and contributed to overall subject grades, which demonstrated the importance of work in the library to the curriculum, unlike the situation in Scotland where no evidence was found of formal grading towards subject achievement.

The recent US federal law *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002) (known as NCLB) aims to ensure better inclusion of students by working to high standards, much more formal assessment of student work and evaluation of funding and initiatives. It also gives parents more choice in the school their children attend. This Act was produced after it was acknowledged that too many students were being left behind in terms of achievement. The main goal is that every child be educated to his or her full potential and that the achievement gap be closed. At that time, according to the *No Child Left Behind Overview* (2005), 70% of inner city fourth graders (aged 9-10) were unable to read at a basic level on national reading tests.

Nearly a third of college freshmen needed to take a remedial course before they were able to begin regular college level courses. The Act was developed to increase accountability for student performance, focus on what works by spending on effective, research-based programmes and practices. It was also seen as important to reduce bureaucracy, increase flexibility and empower parents. Schools in particularly needy areas would be given more funding and districts that did not meet performance goals may lose funds.

The Act aims to:

“Improve literacy skills and academic achievement of students by providing students with increased access to up-to-date school library materials, a well-equipped, technologically advanced school library media center, and well-trained, professionally certified school library media specialists.”

Thus the contribution of school librarians and well-equipped libraries to student achievement is clearly recognised. The Act also recognises the importance of professional development, technology and liaison with other bodies and calls for education agencies to:

“Provide ongoing, sustained professional development for teachers, principals, administrators, and school library media personnel serving the local educational agency, to further the effective use of technology in the classroom or library media center, including, if applicable, a list of the entities that will be partners with the local educational agency involved in providing the ongoing, sustained professional development.”

The importance of using technology towards improving student achievement is acknowledged when the Act recommends that schools should be:

“Acquiring connectivity linkages, resources, and services (including the acquisition of hardware and software and other electronically delivered learning materials) for use by teachers, students, academic counsellors, and school library media personnel in the classroom, in academic and college counselling centers, or in school library media centers, in order to improve student academic achievement.”

Since the Act has been in force, there has been a great improvement in student achievement. According to official government information in the long-term Nation’s Report Card (NAEP) July 2005 (*No Child Left Behind Overview 2005*) there were several real achievements:

- More progress was made by nine year olds in reading over the last five years than in the previous 28 years combined
- Reading and maths scores for African American and Hispanic 13 year olds reached an all time high
- Achievement gaps in reading and maths between white and African American nine year olds and between white and Hispanic nine year olds are at an all time low

As described in one American focus group, this Act was already having impacts on their work. As US librarian Karen said:

“NCLB calls for much more formal assessment. Funding and evaluation of schools and programs is now being assessed. In fact many of the technology dollars in the state of [X] this year went to enhance the backbone infrastructure so that all the assessments, student id numbers, etc. can be funnelled to the capital.”

Her colleague school librarian Donna agreed with this:

“This is true---NCLB is changing a lot in the way schools work.”

Even in American schools where librarians were also teachers, there was still a feeling of lack of knowledge from teachers as school librarian Donna described in a focus group that:

“Classroom teachers are unsure what an LMC director’s [school librarian’s] job is.”

She believed that if teachers stayed with classes in the library and took part in projects:

“The teacher then sees for themselves what an LMS Director [school librarian] does and knows.”

However, US librarian Kitty stated in a focus group:

"I can understand students thinking we are volunteer moms but not my colleagues."

This reflected a perception of her role that did not meet her expectations. Also acknowledging this problem with role perception, US librarian Karen in a focus group believed that instead of: *"preaching to the choir"*, librarians needed to focus on the non-believers and: *"get those grumblers involved."*

She also identified that:

"I think librarians must be in constant contact with administration [school management]. We must sit down and establish a solid working relationship, discuss budget, and make them understand the trends in national and state goals. We can provide them with the latest information that research has shown about libraries and increase in test scores, for example."

These positive measures showed that there was a way forward and this involved regular collaboration, communication and collecting evidence. Lance (2002) said in a White House Conference that:

*"Collaboration activities in which school librarians should participate, according to our research, include:
Identifying useful materials and information for teachers, planning instruction co-operatively with teachers, providing in-service training to teachers, and teaching students both with classroom teachers and independently. It is these types of collaboration between librarians and teachers that are linked directly with higher reading scores."*

This view was reinforced by Haycock (2000) when he states that:

"Academic achievement is higher where school library media specialists engage in collaborative program planning and teaching with classroom teachers, to integrate information literacy, in flexible, scheduled programs."

These authors showed the importance of linking appropriate collaborative work of the librarian and teacher to student achievement. This was defined in more detail by Buzzeo (2002):

"Collaborative planning is two or more equal partners - a library media specialist and one or more teachers - who set out to create a unit of study based on content standards in one or more content areas plus information literacy standards, a unit that will not only be team-designed, but also team-taught and team-evaluate[d]." p23

She also considers that:

“The two partners have a much more prolonged and interdependent relationship. They share goals, have carefully defined roles in the process, and plan much more comprehensively.” p25

This US author (Buzzeo 2008) points out the problems of collaborating with both US and Scottish models of school librarians:

“Some of the librarians [I met in another European country] reported to me that they were not teachers and I was so surprised. I hadn’t encountered that model before. In the U.S. we pride ourselves on being part of the teaching staff in the school and yet we struggle to be seen in that equal role by our colleagues, especially in elementary schools, where sometimes we are “drop off time” to cover the teachers’ planning period. While those elementary LMS’s [sic] are expected to teach, they are asked to do so in isolation without integrating the multiple literacies into the classroom learning, which is the more appropriate and sought after collaboration model.”

Although this mentions elementary [primary] school librarians, she emphasises the importance of collaborating on improving multiple literacy achievement in students, and if US librarians (as qualified teachers) do not get recognition from teachers, and librarians are not recognised as teachers, such a problem could also be evident in Scotland.

Miller & Shontz (1998) give encouragement to school librarians trying to improve the service offered:

“If your long-range goal is to increase services, but you work under less-than-ideal conditions, there is hope. Research tells us that communication with colleagues [managers and teachers in school] is a key element in spreading the word about the value of a high-quality library media program. After all, it is your colleagues who help forge the curriculum, develop budgets, and design learning activities. If you don’t make your case, the money will go elsewhere.” p33

In a focus group Karen also considered that:

“Collaboration provides better opportunities for students to receive benefit [sic] of classroom teacher knowledge of curriculum and LMC Directors’ [school librarians’] knowledge of research methods and materials.”

Therefore it can be seen that joint working with teachers can have very real benefits to students, and teachers and librarians can use their complementary skills to achieve better student opportunities. However Kenney (2006) quotes US-based researcher Ross Todd talking about his large scale Ohio and Delaware studies who says that:

“My sense is that collaboration actually takes place at a very low level. In many respects, I think collaboration has been a ‘guiltifying’ word for our profession. It’s low even though we’ve consistently said this is one of the fundamentals of school library practice....

...nobody had ever asked teachers if they want to collaborate. We've always said of school librarians, you must collaborate, but nobody had ever said, is this really part of the teaching agenda? Do teachers want to do it?" pp3-4

Mintzberg (1979) states a clear principle regarding collaborative working:

"Mutual adjustment achieves the coordination of work by the simple process of informal communication" p3

This idea of mutual adjustment showed that there needed to be agreement and co-operation by all parties. Bartholomew, Davis and Weinstein (1996) emphasise the need for more organisational commitment within interprofessional social work training, as they consider that there needs to be a culture of collaboration and an outward-looking approach, with established links between all parties. In addition to management commitment and adequate resourcing, they also recommend that an agreed value base be established at the start.

Gulati (2006) discusses the use of e-learning [electronic learning] in nursing. She considers that the use of e-learning resources and techniques, and creating e-portfolios make for an evidence-based and reflective practitioner. Suitable IT access and skills development training would be essential to this working well. Gomez and Lush (1996) reinforce this call for work-based tasks forming the basis of learning in nursing, with performance-related, problem-based work tasks. They consider that such team-based working should involve co-operation, innovation and enhancement of performance.

It would be useful to research in more detail the collaboration between librarians and teachers in schools, in order to establish current practice and to make recommendations for best practice, and to consider how e-learning could contribute to this learning process.

There were documents from various US states that show apparent close collaborative working between teachers and school library media specialists. One example was an integration matrix for individual subjects and grades.

These were very detailed plans of action clearly stating who was responsible for various activities and how these fitted into model standards for the State and District. For

example, the following extract in Table 7.2 is from one document which shows how certain curriculum areas are to be delivered:

Table 7.2 Integration Matrix: English language and Information & Technology Literacy for Grade 3. Adapted from (Wisconsin 2004) p28

Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for English Language Arts	Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Information & Technology Literacy	Janesville District Grade Level Goals/ Objectives	Choices of Activities/ Strategies/ Assessments	Choices of Resources/ Tools
Recall the content of stories after hearing them, relate the content to prior knowledge, and answer various types of factual and interpretative questions about the stories	Identify new information and integrate it with prior knowledge – B.4.6	Student recalls details from and answers interpretative questions about stories read to him/her	Book 1 Theme 1 Teacher uses different levels of questions, Reading /literature responses Library Media Specialist asks content related questions during story times	Active Questioning (Nancy Johnson) Pair It Books (Steck Vaughn)

From this simple example it can be seen that every aspect of the curriculum is recorded and matched with resources and activities to help children achieve the goals determined by the State (Wisconsin) and the District (Janesville), and to clarify who is responsible for different aspects of each stage. Even if such a task were to be planned in the library less formally, topics in the grid are likely to be the kinds of areas to be clarified. However, putting it all down on paper ensures that there is less misinterpretation or misunderstanding about what that teacher expected from the librarian, and what the librarian expects the teacher to be doing.

It is acknowledged that it takes time to plan and record, but it is a valuable use of time because as a whole each plan records all skills and activities to be done, allowing the

chance to reduce or eliminate duplication and omission. Cross-curriculum information literacy skills can also be planned in these documents so that skills can be included once, then where necessary consolidated with different tasks in other subject areas and at different grade levels, all building towards a coherent and co-ordinated whole for the student learning experience, rather than a more adhoc experience where topics and tasks meant to develop certain skills might be repeated or absent altogether.

There were two main areas of networking and collaboration – within and outwith the school, however one librarian outlined one group of people who could be involved who cross over both of these. After experiencing cuts in government funding to school Districts across her local province involving the loss of teacher-librarians in elementary schools, a Canadian correspondent on the online school librarian network LM_NET (Hermans 2002) suggests another way of collaborating:

“Advocacy for teacher-librarians has to be on-going. Unfortunately, those that need to hear the message, often don’t get it. I think it’s time to change our targets and start sharing the research with parents around the world.....We need to get classroom teachers on our side, but I also believe that it’s the voice of the parents that might save our profession from extinction. Let’s share the research with them and educate them about what their children are loosing [sic] if the school doesn’t have a teacher-librarian.”

Closer involvement from parents could be explored in a concerted effort to put pressure on government or local authority for increased funding for school libraries, based on their contribution to achievement within schools and to lifelong learning goals.

Parents are taxpayers and constituents of government ministers and councillors, therefore have a voice within national and local decision-making. A summary of a conference (Summit Deluxe 2007) described how a speaker promoted real advocacy:

“How to take the information about a library’s impact and communicate it to stakeholders and funders.”

Interestingly, the paper from this speaker was entitled *“Just because they love you doesn’t mean they’ll fund you”*, as reported by Chen (2007), emphasising that librarians and managers have a constant challenge in promoting the idea of why their libraries are invaluable to users, link activities in the library to curricular demands and justify funding at every opportunity.

A recent document by AASL (2007) sets out some challenging standards for information literacy for 21st century learners. This paper introduces the term multiple literacies rather than just information literacy, to encompass more technologies, such as digital, visual, textual, technological along with information literacy. The thinking skills of students are highlighted as being an important part of this process, also the social context of sharing and learning with others, self-assessment strategies and the ethical use of resources. They also focus on the importance of the school library:

“School libraries are essential to the development of learning skills. School libraries provide equitable physical and intellectual access to the resources and tools required for learning in a warm, stimulating, and safe environment. School librarians collaborate with others to provide instruction, learning strategies, and practice in using the essential learning skills needed in the 21st century.” p3

The four main strands for students to meet are:

- Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge
- Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge
- Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society
- Pursue personal and aesthetic growth

For these detailed standards of student learning to be met, it needs to be established within each school and authority how these can be imparted, and who is tasked with activities. If school librarians are to participate in taking these standards forward, either individually or as part of a collaborative team, they should be equipped to collaborate. This would involve adequate staffing levels, budget, reflection and preparation time, and suitable ranges of resources to suit a variety of learning styles. It will be interesting to examine how schools implement these guidelines.

7.4 Outside connections

Outwith the school, networking gave the opportunity to take a wider view, identify the practice of others, generate and share new ideas and identify standards and benchmarks for comparison. Few of the librarians surveyed mentioned being involved with outside bodies other than local school librarians or State/District school library organisations. Those who were involved in this way seemed to be more confident in

collaboration and their contribution to attainment. Their wider remit was also recognised by others, for example in one exceptional case one Scottish school librarian (Fiona) had gained an advanced post-graduate award from a national organisation, mainly for her contribution to the wider profession through sustained and varied service to a national body for school librarians. Local networks of school librarians were found to be useful with participants, also mentioned were reading professional journals, being involved with organisations, conferences, library websites and LM_NET (an international Internet-based listserver for school librarians, where people could log opinions, ask questions and respond to queries raised by others).

Everyone who took part in the focus groups said that they enjoyed the experience and several participants identified the intellectual discussion as something valuable to be repeated, acknowledging as Briony did that so often work was based on operational matters. There was also a general feeling that many participants did not spend enough time on planning and weighing up options.

US librarian Karen said in interview that:

"I know I need to do more in terms of planning, but it isn't always easy to find the time – the library is busy from the minute I arrive, even in the car park students ask me for help about work. But where do I get the time? I am a very organised person, I am a professional, but there are not enough library staff to deal with it all – they think I am Wonderwoman! [Laughs]. And they do expect it all to be done. I do my best. It's just when someone is in front of me, they are my number one task. Has to be."

Scottish librarian Iona said in interview that she would like to do more formal decision-making:

"Talking about this [decision-making], problem-solving and all that, makes me interested in the proper way to do it, like following models and being more objective. I am going to find out more about that. It could save a lot of grief in the long run."

These librarians again mention the main barrier of time when dealing with planning issues. This is obviously a major element to consider when trying to make the practice of school librarians more effective.

7.5 School connections

When considering networking within the school, school library service manager Sharon stated that:

“Community Schools will draw in other professions who won’t tolerate being excluded from the part they can play in supporting the pupils.”

School librarian Briony agreed with Fiona that:

“There are more professionals other than teachers in schools nowadays leading to a change in the perception of the status of the librarian.”

She was also stimulated by the focus group discussion:

“I would like to carry out more research into the attitudes of pupils and staff towards the library and ways to make interaction with people more effective.”

Briony planned to speak to her Headteacher Euan and:

“Investigate using the software he mentioned to get some feedback from pupils (and staff eventually) as a starting point.”

Briony also acted in a wider role as a Field Officer, supporting other school librarians in professional and practical issues. This role involved acting as a professional support for colleagues for one day each fortnight, while an assistant worked in her place at school. She identified some very basic issues to consider when planning collaborative work, such as anticipating what was likely to happen and thinking of consequences when involving the work of a class and their ability levels. In this instance she identified not planning the session in enough detail and therefore only identified when undertaking the lesson that:

“I didn’t organise a digital projector and getting pupils to follow instructions when sitting with their backs to me was problematic.”

This showed that she acknowledged the need to walk through or pilot the session in advance and anticipate likely scenarios. When delivering a session to a class of lower ability, she became aware of the need for differentiation, which would be tackled in the review. These experiences made her more aware of working closely with teachers to establish ability levels and also practical aspects of delivering a session. Linda carried out an exercise to improve overdue notification, and worked in consultation with the Head of English as he was:

“A good source of ideas and a good person to bounce ideas off.”

This was often something missing from the work of a sole professional and taking up such an opportunity gave the librarian an experience of sharing strategies and ideas with colleagues. Scot Linda stated in a critical incident diary that she learned the:

“Importance of devising a solution to a problem that is not overly-complex and does not create more problems than the issue you’re trying to resolve.”

This indicated how she looked ahead to the possible consequences of the strategy to be used. By involving a teacher she also provided another viewpoint to what is essentially a librarian issue.

Fiona stated in the Scottish focus group that:

“I involve mine [students] in decisions about stock selection, for example, what books we might buy, what resources we should have, I’ve also involved the PRC the Pupil Representative Council in discussions – when we had a problem with lunchtime use of the library and complaints about pass system, about we might address that problem. That one was also discussed with the Guidance team.”

By involving a range of school personnel, she was spreading the decision-making and considering various points of view. From the survey, collaboration was seen as vital to the role of the school librarian. A typical comment was that from Bernadette that librarians should:

“Get busy being proactive.”

Lee (2001) raises the need for professionals to discuss problems with others who understand – for example to get things off their chests at breaktimes, gain each other’s support and regain their internal balance. In a school situation where there is only one member of library staff, although other school staff can be used, it is not possible to do this on a daily basis to a library colleague with a detailed knowledge of the job and problems.

7.6 Conclusions

This chapter has contributed to the understanding of how high school librarians network and collaborate, both within the school setting and with outside contacts. When working alone, networking was recognised as an important way for those in multi-disciplinary teams to add to their personal development, minimise stereotyping of others and feelings of isolation and disorientation (National Health Service 1994). Effective networks can help individuals to build good working relationships; exchange information and ideas; understand the employing organisation; make work more productive and develop

skills and career. Together these can increase the power of the individual and influence over the service they provide. In the scenario of a school library, this can mean a better understanding of the work and roles of other professionals in the school and an identification of shared objectives. Managers in schools can play a vital role in encouraging collaborative work between teachers and librarians. There was evidence from most participants in this study that they networked within school, discussing issues with teaching and senior management staff. In one State in America, monthly District meetings between school librarians from different schools in the area were organised, offering mutual support and a platform to discuss issues, share practice and explore solutions.

However when there was only one member of staff, which was most common with Scottish participants, it was not so simple to be able to network in school because if the librarian left the library during the school day or lunchtime opening then the library was unstaffed; if s/he held a meeting in the library s/he was likely to be interrupted; and meetings after school have been stated to be more difficult to arrange due to the McCrone agreement for teachers, as this limits their formal hours of work. It was more difficult for school librarians to make external contacts, although there were exceptions, with people like Fiona and James who played a role with national bodies. Once again, being able to leave the school library for meetings or activities was a major problem.

Collaboration tended to be more formally recognised and used in US schools than in Scottish schools, although the definition of collaboration was variable, ranging from co-operation and information-giving to a fuller mode, where there was real collaborative planning at the earliest stage, and throughout the process. A starting point for school management would be to examine how the term collaboration is defined, and establish the level to be met at the beginning of the process. This could very well be increased as working continues. Without such clarity, there could easily be misinterpretation between teachers and librarians. Once there is common agreement, then plans can be made to work to this level. Monitoring of collaborative projects would be an important element, so that progress can be assessed and higher level working could be negotiated and undertaken.

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Chapter 8 Interprofessional relationships and roles

The aims of this chapter are to examine joint or interprofessional relationships and roles; identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based librarian in a high school and to examine reflective practice. It would be interesting to examine how interprofessional education might help by encouraging collaborative approaches to the school library operating in the wider school structure and to examine roles and skills of librarians and other key players in the school environment. When reporting findings from data collection, fictional forenames are used throughout.

8.1 Interprofessional relationships and roles

Taking account of studies in the literature, it might be considered whether there was a real possibility of training school librarians and teachers together for some core aspects of joint working, establishing a principle for collaboration in the workplace, to understand in more practical and interactive terms the role of the other and to encourage reflection and evaluation. In the nursing field, Reeves (2004) states that research into the impact of interprofessional education was beginning to demonstrate that it can help promote improved collaborative practice.

Glen (2004) suggests that aims of work-based interprofessional education should include developing greater confidence by addressing what she calls: *“professional protectionism.”* p105. She relates that this is done by identifying the usefulness of role overlap and contributing to a learning culture that fosters reflection, analysis and evaluation by focusing on interactive learning. She also says that:

“Learning and exposure to good role models in practice has long been recognised as being more influential than learning and role models within higher education institutions.... Adult learning is more likely to be effective if it is interactive and problem – case – or task-focused.” p105

Therefore for work-based training in interprofessional education, the focus on solving relevant and real problems can be a useful way of learning, bringing in different perspectives and strengths from each profession, creating a rounder picture and working to achieve an outcome together.

In one American State, it was acknowledged by focus group participants that joint training with teachers and librarians was the norm, and often ICT training was offered to

whole school staff. There used to be more of an incentive, as described by US librarian Donna in a focus group:

“It used to be that those attending these classes were moved up on the pay scale after a certain number of hours – this is no longer the case. It depends on how the principal or whomever explains the class – if a new item ... such as a new student management program that we have here is offered – the principal is more likely to get the entire staff involved.”

However staff were still keen to get involved if the subject was useful to their practice.

Sims and Leonard (2004) state that in a joint initiative for teachers in the nursing field, two key outcomes are to break down professional barriers (by learning together participants had examined occupational cultures, values and working practices and come to a greater understanding of and greater respect for other's roles and responsibilities) and the design of a core curriculum module based on common ground from training programmes of the different professionals involved in the project.

In a medical field, Morgan (2000) states that co-operation has a core principle of working together for a common purpose or toward a common goal. She considers that this is a complex concept, and that in addition to displaying professional behaviours, there is a need to consider roles played by each member of a team and to examine in a formal sense how these skills could be learned and developed. The professional behaviours she identifies as being central to co-operation and organisation include dependability, professional (physical) presentation, initiative, empathy, clinical reasoning (subject knowledge to include ideas and solutions) and verbal communication. Morgan suggests that including users in the decision-making process and directing one's own development is vital.

The description and investigation of roles of team members such as those outlined by Belbin (1981) could offer a useful exercise for team members to identify their own preferences and understand how others work and what each can contribute to collaborative working. For example, Belbin defines eight typical team player roles, including the Shaper team player as one who is highly strung, outgoing and dynamic, who is prone to provocation, irritation and impatience, but who has a drive and ability to challenge inertia, ineffectiveness, complacency and self-deception; while the Resource Investigator team player is extroverted, enthusiastic, curious and communicative, who

has a capacity for contacting people and exploring anything new, with an ability to respond to challenge, but being liable to lose interest once the initial fascination has passed (p 74).

A study carried out in 1998 (Wilson and MacNeil 1998) in 250 programmes for Principals in US universities shows that 75% did not mention information about school libraries. Only 18% integrate information about school libraries into coursework. This confirms findings from an earlier study where 90% of surveyed school librarians say that their Principals do not understand what library media centres could offer. Wilson and MacNeil suggest a three step plan to remedy this apparent lack of understanding by those who decide about budget allocation. The first step is to incorporate such information into programmes for aspiring Principals. The second step is to raise the awareness of existing Principals by discussing with their own school librarians and by visiting outstanding libraries in discussing standards, scheduling, technology, skills and services. The third step is for librarians to become more proactive in expanding this knowledge, by offering to speak to aspiring Principals and offering their schools for a visit.

8.2 Need for background in the field of education

Several American respondents felt that being a teacher was core to their job, and found it difficult to imagine how the job could be done without knowledge of educational principles and group management, as was the case in Scotland, where school librarians were not teachers. In America, school librarians in state schools and who attended librarian courses must first be licensed teachers. Very often school librarians who have qualified on school librarian courses then teach on these courses, as was the situation with many participants in this study. In this way current practice was combined with academic learning to provide a best practice scenario.

One participant of the Scottish focus group (Briony) raised the idea of school librarians having extra training:

"I would also like to see options for not full teacher training for school librarians but some options on educational theory and the practical aspects of managing large groups of pupils and lesson planning available both as part of librarianship courses (perhaps the nearest teaching training establishment could contribute) and also as free standing courses as on site or distance learning for people who are already qualified. I have to say that I learned the practical skills by working with and observing experienced and inexperienced staff."

James said in the Scottish focus group that:

"I was trying to think there where I have gained what understanding and prioritisation I have of the decision making process, I have to say in my own case it's been I think through experience and observation, I've never come across a means by which that is actually taught and imparted to me."

His colleague Fiona said in the focus group:

"I don't think that there are training courses available for how to make decisions you do have to observe practice. It's working out what good practice is that's difficult to begin with."

They had gained experience of schools, curricula and education through their working lives, but the feeling was that this was not an efficient way of obtaining this background information as it was not delivered consistently or in a timely way.

Scottish school library service director Sharon agreed in the vignette that librarians were often:

"Ill-equipped in their knowledge of the Scottish curricula."

Her authority had a Field Officer model, where professional and peer support was available. She considered that even briefer external training courses:

"Can be expensive and not always easy for the librarian to secure funding."

She suggested that librarian development in schools offered:

"Little opportunity to learn at Nelly's elbow [learning on the job]."

This was largely because in a sole post situation, unlike other jobs in librarianship, there were no librarian team members. Sharon suggested that it might be interesting to carry out a team exercise with school librarians to establish personality types, for example Myers-Briggs tests. In this way they could recognise their strengths in working and identify areas needed to develop. James and Fiona believed that collaboration was very important and needed to be active and meaningful. As Scottish school librarians did not need to be teachers, there was a development need concerning the principles of assessment and discussion needed about whether work in the library was to be assessed for subject grades.

In the higher education situation, Snively (2001) advocates collaboration between the librarian and teaching staff to establish assessment strategies for information literacy that are contextual, performance based and focused on the process of research. In this

way the recommendation is to move away from the standalone induction programme in favour of relevant, subject-based, research-focused, contextual concepts.

8.3 Skills required to be an effective evidence-based school librarian

Skills identified as being needed to be an effective high school librarian are outlined in more detail in the model in Chapter 9.

As Brice et al (2004) say:

“Inconsistent approaches to teaching research methods in library and information studies departments and an absence of skills in implementing research findings provide a formidable obstacle if students are to be aware of the importance of research from the onset of their librarianship career..... Tools and products are urgently needed to make it easy for practitioners to apply research findings on a day-to-day basis.” p285

This would seem to be a useful early step, to plan how such skills can be delivered to new professionals. It would be valuable for this to be cascaded to the wider profession through articles in general library and information studies journals (for optimum coverage) and by offering short courses on implementing such skills for practitioners.

Many wide ranging ideal skills and qualities for a successful school librarian were identified by participants. A welcoming and open personality was seen as a prime factor. An element of tenaciousness was a popular choice, along with patience, humour and a passion for the work that was to be done. Adaptability was seen as important in order to respond to the varying demands of users, including taking opportunities when they were presented. The abilities to see the bigger picture and to assimilate information from a wide range of resources were also perceived as important skills. The objectivity and detachment that librarians could offer because they were not teachers and concerned with the demands and restrictions of the curriculum and examination cycle were recognised. A willingness to collaborate within school and to network with other school librarians and central bodies like the School Library Service were identified. When asked about skills and qualities they thought important, members of the first US focus group had different views. Delia, a middle school librarian said:

“I think a sense of tenacity because you gotta stay with what you’re doing, because you don’t have a lot of people supporting you and also being pretty self-directed helps and having a sense of curiosity or creativity, and I’d also say organisation, because you gotta be able to record and stay on track with what this evidence is, that you’re looking for.”

Upper school librarian Marysia continued the discussion:

"I think it helps if you're a people person, you have to like people, because we're really a service industry as much as, we might not like to agree with that, but we are in a service industry, so I think by nature we chose this occupation because we want to help other people, so if you don't want to do that, don't do this job, please, 'cause it reflects on how people will come into your environment."

Another upper school librarian Susan said:

"I think you have to have a healthy sense of fear..... Fear, fear, because that's how a kid feels. And I think a lot of us forget that, really and truly when a kid starts a project he's, he's scared and they're scared because they don't have control, they don't think they can learn how to have control, they have no idea how they're going to do this and so if you have a healthy sense of fear it gets you over the hump of when a kid is so abusive to you because you the kid's scared."

Middle school librarian Deena then said:

".. life experience can help almost as much as the teacher certification, especially for the more mature person."

These comments represented some of the varying views held, formed from librarians' own experience and reflections on what was needed to do the job. The second US focus group responded in a similar vein. Karen, a US librarian identified important qualities as:

"Humor, knowledge, confidence in own abilitiesWillingness to explain something multiple times!"

Her colleague Donna said:

"Patience..... and a nose for news..... you cant [sic] be the kind of person that gives up easily or is walked on by others."

Her colleague Karri said:

"Organizational skills, so you actually have time to read some of the new things out there!"

From the Scottish focus group, James considered it important:

"Being able to see the big picture and the kind of skills that go along with that, being able to you know assimilate information from a whole range of different sources, being able to look at different needs."

Scottish Headteacher Euan said in the same focus group that:

"I think librarians are passionate, they actually believe and have faith in what they do and I think you need to have that faith, because teachers are driven by the curriculum, by, certainly in secondary [high] schools, by the whole certification process and I think there's a need to have, it's a kind of objectivity, a kind of detached, which is ironic given that we're talking about collaboration of work, but not necessarily being involved in that maelstrom of preparing for examinations, and seeing learning for what it should be."

Fellow participant Fiona said:

“... another one which is very important is adaptability, the ability to take a situation, and, if you like, twist it to achieve the ends that you need to achieve, to be able to say well, this isn’t the ideal, this isn’t what I would like, but if I do this and I do that, we’ll still get there in the end..... you also need to be a bit of an opportunist, seize every opportunity that offers, then worry about how you are going to do something with it.”

These qualities and skills identified by practitioners were interesting because they reflected what they themselves felt was needed to undertake their tasks. This adaptability quality could be said to lend itself well to the pragmatic solution-driven decision-making model described in Chapter 10. In a statement on school library media supervisors, the American Association of School Librarians (2001) outlines five main roles of the school librarian as administrator, communicator, teacher, facilitator and leader.

Missouri State guidelines (2001) give an outline of positive personal attributes needed to be a school library media specialist. These include empathy, gregariousness, subtlety, daring, organization, diversification, enthusiasm, instinct and persistence.

Swigger (1999) considered that there are three basic elements for the legitimacy of a profession:

“.... its practitioners’ unique mastery of useful skills; its effective delivery of service; and society’s recognition that the profession has both the authority and competence to solve important problems. A profession focuses on its own expertise. It is responsive to its clients’ needs. And it differentiates itself from other professions.”

He states that librarians need to remain librarians, nurture and develop those skills and not take over the role of teachers:

“School librarians now need more expertise to cope with changes in the infrastructure of knowledge and information systems and with the variety of pressures a diverse society generates..... The library isn’t the center of the school – it’s an integral part of a system. Relax. Librarians won’t save the world. Librarianship does offer opportunities to engage in decent work, to be helpful, and to participate in intellectually challenging experiences. That’s a lot.”

Swigger urges practitioners to see school librarianship as a profession on its own, rather than a hybrid of teaching and librarianship, which he considers its historical root. By devoting time and pride in the profession as it stands, and by concentrating on library skills such as developing services and systems, he believes that it will be seen as a

profession in its own right. This is an interesting opinion, with the emphasis on going back to basics and concentrating on traditional skills. However he does not mention the teaching element, and whether this should stay with librarians in schools, or be transferred to teachers. It must also be said that Swigger was a Dean of a School of Library and Information Studies in the US. Perhaps the answer lies in mastering the roots of the profession, and taking on newer challenges as they arise.

Pignatelli (1987) relates that when he was a high school teacher in Scotland:

"I was a member of a [school] library committee. The interesting thing was that though it had many members, the person who wasn't there was the librarian. I didn't even find this strange...."

"I certainly find it arrogant that people who are not teachers are seen as not to be rated. That was the logic for not having the librarian on the committee: she was not a teacher." pp16-17

This explains the situation he experienced as a teacher. Pignatelli also considers that:

"[School] Librarians have very different and specific skills, and I would ask that you do not try to become teachers. Try to recognise that you have a distinct contribution to make which complements the role of teachers." p17

He said this some twenty years ago, and this discussion is still taking place now. When talking of the role of the high school librarian, he also considers that:

"Your status and credibility are often determined by the institution you work in.... it's a peripheral role, in many cases..... Don't underestimate the ignorance of some of the colleagues you have to work with in schools.... In many cases it's not malicious; it's a genuine lack of understanding of the skills you can bring to a situation... Bringing people [school librarians] centrally into the planning and the life of the school could help." p18

These thoughts are also reflected in this study, as can be seen from participants' comments in section 8.5 of this Chapter.

Freelance librarian Ann Irving (Hyams 2001) is quoted as thinking that librarians:

".... spend too much time on the mundane library stuff, and aren't political enough to see how to make an impact." p555

Discussing a proposal that the UK demand dually qualified school librarians, she observes that where some countries had this as standard, these librarians still feel undervalued. She considers that school librarianship should be seen as academic

librarianship rather than children's work, which would more accurately rate its professionally challenging role, demonstrating how it delivered literacy and learning.

8.4 Information literacy role of school librarians

The first US focus group established that student achievement and the delivery of the curriculum depended on library research and that integrated library work develops critical thinking skills. The group also considered that teachers concentrated more on content than skills, and this would be an important element to clarify in collaborative planning.

This focus group also agreed that the library was the centre of the school function, learning and attainment. One member of the group Susan said that:

"Without databases it is like working without half your head."

The expenditure of a third to two thirds of the library budget on electronic databases in the US was seen as essential to the delivery of the curriculum and development of information literacy and critical thinking skills. Johnson (1998) relates a perception amongst some educationalists that technology has somehow superseded expenditure on books. He quotes responses from management leaders in schools:

"Buying books is investing in an out-dated technology. All the information anyone needs will soon be available on the Internet – for free..... Our new school won't need a library media center since all the classrooms will be networked."

He believes that such statements are made due to the need to reduce expenditure and also through a lack of knowledge about how teachers and learners use media centre resources and what the Internet actually contains. He compares adding technology to a media centre to:

"A strip mall adding a new store – all the stores get new traffic and higher sales. Experienced teachers and media specialists know that it takes newer technologies and print together to create meaningful learning experiences.... Computers will not replace books...."

Johnson believes that these technologies are complementary to each other, and he emphasises the difference between the authoritative, carefully selected texts in the library compared with the material on the Internet that he describes as credible-looking.

Reflecting on a crisis in school libraries in Ontario, where funding was to be cut, Hammond (2002) notes that:

“Why would the [Ontario] Tory government, which is so focused on quick fixes, American models, testing and standards, not immediately adopt a strategy that would guarantee increasing student scores on its tests? Apparently, studies done in several states by Colorado researcher Keith Curry Lance and his associates, clearly demonstrate that staff, time and money put into the school library will have a direct effect on increasing test scores. Why wouldn’t the bureaucracy jump at the opportunity to demonstrate the success of its policies with such clear results? Perhaps this is just too simple a solution given the maze of problems created by the policies of underfunding, overcrowding and sliding morale that have faced our schools and, consequently, our children since the Ontario Tories decided that the business model in education would produce better results than the learning model.”

Hammond questions the validity of decisions made on a business footing rather than an educational basis. Abra (2002) makes similar comments on the same situation:

“As a teacher-librarian, I deal daily with the heartbreak of trying to teach students how to do research with inadequate resources and funding. Surely, in the ‘information age’, a time when knowing how to use electronic databases and manipulate information is important, we can find the wherewithal to fund libraries. But this is not the case. It is a ‘frill’ that we will regret losing as we churn thousands of information-illiterate students out of the test mills we now call schools.”

Abra shows the real outcomes of lack of funding for both the librarian and the students and calls for a change in policy to prevent these negative factors continuing.

One Scottish Headteacher Harry thought that his librarian needed to make students self-sufficient in understanding, and interestingly he referred to:

“The information skills side of it. I don’t know what we do here, but we need to improve upon it. She needs to make kids self sufficient in understanding.”

So without knowing exactly how this was delivered in his school, he showed an awareness that it was not meeting present needs. As American school librarian Susan stated in the first US focus group:

“Some people do get it and recognise the revolutionary nature of kids doing real research and thinking for themselves.”

However in a later email discussion with Marysia, her colleague in another school, there was concern shown by Susan about recent cuts in posts and lack of funds. Susan said that:

“In spite of the knowledge people have that the research kids do really improves their learning potentials, there are still challenges to the program [of delivering information literacy] and we are constantly on the defensive trying to preserve and improve Perhaps we are now experiencing a backlash before we all move forward. Or perhaps I am delusional and it is just about money no one seems to want to spend.”

In the same discussion, Marysia showed concern as she said:

"I am almost afraid to open my mail everyday because there is so much email flying around about loss of school librarians all over the state..... I have been at meetings with the DOE [Department of Education] and presented for the School Boards Association and other members at [State] Association of School Librarians are doing their best to get the attention of decision makers.... We hope for some kind of statement and/or strong support from [State] Education Association."

This last action demonstrated her networking links and the importance she placed on the involvement of wider educational bodies in bigger issues.

King (1993) likens the role of the tutor from:

"Sage on the stage" to "guide on the side." p30

This concept could also be used for the school librarian, when the role is now seen more as a facilitator of information literacy, active learning and critical thinking using real world information sources rather than delivering traditional library or information skills. This is in line with the huge information explosion and the need for students to become more independent in locating, using and evaluating information. It is also difficult to implement such skills fully and successfully without collaboration.

Andretta (2005) describes the change of approach to information literacy principles, where emphasis is on the competences of student ability to access and evaluate information in a subject context, a framework for independent and lifelong learning rather than a more passive role. Bottery (1998) identifies the importance of professionals in the field of education moving outwith a fixed body of knowledge, teaching students how to learn, to enquire rather than to accept. Rather than being the expert, the professional must provide clients with what he calls an education in self-help, and in education this means concentrating on the skills of acquisition rather than a body of knowledge.

Lance (2002) focuses on the importance of leadership skills and collaboration in a *White House Conference on School Libraries*:

"When school librarians demonstrate this kind of leadership in their daily activities, they can create an environment conducive to collaboration between themselves and classroom teachers. That, in turn, enables them to work with classroom teachers to instill a love of reading and information literacy skills in their students."

This reading role is also reinforced by Smith (2001) when she states that:

“Students in schools with library media specialists perform better on assessments of reading ability.”

There are therefore certain skills that are linked to the librarian which appear to have a direct effect on the work of students.

8.5 Professional identity

Many sole librarians in this study expressed the feeling of professional isolation within a school and they were not always confident in interprofessional dealings. As sole professionals, they were unable to observe practice of other librarians at work and to reflect on practice with colleagues, as was common in most other library situations. They were aware of teachers and students seeing them doing clerical work (particularly in Scottish schools that were solely staffed) and that teachers did not always understand what they could offer in terms of improving attainment (this was evident even with American librarians who had support staff).

One American correspondent on the school librarian network site LM_NET (Torres 2002) makes the comment:

“If we want to be treated like professional educators, we need to think, act and behave like them. We need to help write and/or help interpret curriculum, emphasizing library skills and the use of library resources.

We need to write lesson plans and use them in our instruction, we need to teach library skills classes throughout the academic year. We need to assess student performance on library instruction wherever possible. We need to participate in campus and district committees on curriculum and instruction issues, if we stop acting like non-instructional support staff, we will not be treated as such. We need to be proactive in all of these matters.”

When discussing the role of the librarian as school technology expert, she acknowledges that some involvement with campus technology initiatives is inevitable, but the library role must come first:

“There are much better ways to increase our visibility than leaving our library to fix a paper jam in a classroom computer printer—such as offer workshops and inservice sessions for teachers, distribute library newsletters, invite authors to speak, have book talks or other special programs, create useful library Web pages, go out to the classroom to give a book talk, participate in as many campus committees and programs as possible that have any sort of library or literacy angle to them, etc.

The key is to think and behave like a professional – not a clerk or technician. I think many librarians who choose to go fix computers are doing so because they prefer to do that over professionally accepted methods of reaching out to their community... .It's tragic when someone spends years teaching, earns a Masters degree in library science, gains appropriate state certification, and then "moves up" to become a librarian—only to find out that many educators regard them as something equivalent to a janitor or cafeteria worker. Incredible!"

Torres raises many issues here, involving perceptions of librarians, Principals and teachers. Clarification of role by discussion and agreement within school and within local and national education authorities would be a starting point, to be followed by a written statement outlining the expectations of the librarian in the high school. Without such clarification inevitably confusion and different perceptions will arise.

As sole professionals having to carry out all tasks, the emphasis reflected in this survey tended to be on operational issues and task rather than strategic issues and reflection. A framework of regular broader experience could help to remedy this problem, for example job shadowing, peer support and networking to observe the practice of others and to offer a professional sounding board. Also a more proactive examination of staffing issues could be of benefit, by providing the librarian with some clerical help and the opportunity to collaborate and reflect on more quality and strategic matters.

Woods and Whitehead (1993) discuss the stresses of being a sole worker. The lack of colleagues of the same background means that there is no one in the school who fully understands the detail of the job to listen and discuss problems with and no one to give recognition, praise progress or give feedback. The bonuses are that a sole worker can be fairly autonomous, organise his/her own way of working within the constraints of dealing with the public and delivering the service.

A certain amount of human contact is available in the school situation but there is still this problem of being a sole professional of a kind in this field. A participant from the Scottish focus group (Briony) said she agreed with another member of the group that:

"There are many more professionals other than teachers in schools nowadays, leading to a change in the perception of the status of the librarian."

Sharon also agreed with this and she identified a certain negative SMT attitude towards non-teaching staff and that:

“Community Schools will draw in other professions who won’t tolerate being excluded from the part they can play in supporting the pupils.”

Tilke (1998) considers that solo librarians could sometimes be too self-critical, and he suggests talking through issues with a critical friend, and also raising problems within school. Scottish Director of School Library Services Sharon considered that:

“The personality of the librarian is crucial in making the LRC a place at the heart of the School. Recent interviews have highlighted that it is a challenge to fill posts. The HT [Headteacher] was despondent at the quality of the candidates. A bright welcoming librarian can overcome many inadequacies of building and initial co-operation of SMT.”

Another Scottish Headteacher (Harry) identified skills needed:

“Interpersonal skills are essential – you need an understanding of the educational context in which you are working. ICT skills are essential. Negotiating, being approachable in your nature to both staff and pupils. Somebody with initiative, try to build bridges, try to approach the active members of the school community, be quite sociable, link with staff as well. Need some kind of flair for display, make the library an attractive place. Need to be able to think at a higher level and evaluate your performance and also manage your manager, often the librarian, because her own manager is not as proactive as subject departments, takes a more active role.”

These skills are reflected in the model represented in Appendix V.

8.6 Professional reflective practice

Greene (2007) is a teacher in a Scottish high school and when talking about critical reflection and self-evaluation amongst teachers says that:

“I expressed concerns that people had a confused idea of what exactly was meant by these skills. I argued that teachers required more than a basic knowledge of the concepts and suggested that, if teaching was to benefit from current interest in the idea, there had to be a sustained rigour in the approach to teaching self-evaluation in teacher training institutions.... Self-evaluation, if understood well and used wisely, was the approach that ultimately defined teachers as professionals and not merely as craftsmen/women.... The view that teachers reflect naturally is not one that stands up to any real scrutiny. Some teachers, perhaps many, will at times think about what they do, but this does not constitute reflection or self-evaluation.”

Greene says that the document known as *HGIOS 3 [How good is our school 3]* (Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education 2006):

“Describes self-evaluation as neither bureaucratic nor mechanistic, but argues that it is a ‘reflective professional process’ and suggests that teachers ‘naturally reflect in relation to their own responsibilities’. These are debatable claims and worthy of comment.”

Greene warns:

“As teachers, we should be careful when reading official documents that we are not too accepting of them, as if the authors know better than us about what is required in terms of our professional development, both in and out of classrooms. This is not always the case, as HGIOS 3 demonstrates.”

This may be seen as a surprising perspective, as it could be expected that such official documents allied to the profession for the practical use of and implementation by the profession would accurately reflect the skillset of teachers and managers using them. If this is not the case for teachers, then librarians cannot assume that teachers know more about reflection and self-evaluation than they do. This is a useful piece of knowledge to investigate and if it is found to be accurate, it may provide an opportunity for learning and development of such documents in school to take place jointly.

One American librarian Ellen described in a focus group how she collaborated with teaching staff to align the State standards for information and technology with teaching units she delivered, including designing appropriate assignments. She worked on this area because she saw what others were doing at a Department of Public Instruction workshop and then attended another workshop on raising the quality of assignments. She worked with another librarian in her school and met teachers to discuss how they would undertake integrating technology elements into their assignments. Time was identified as a problem because teachers already felt fully committed, but as these staff were keen to progress this area, they made the time. Even with this kind of collaboration, this librarian felt that she did not spend enough time thinking about what she did in advance of doing it or learning from what she tried in the past. Summarising in the critical incident diary, she made a commitment to spend some time each semester reflecting on what she aimed to do and evaluating the success of what she has done. Another American librarian Susan felt that she didn't get a lot of time to think about where she wanted to take the library because she was so busy. After the second US focus group, she was keen to allocate time to reflect more, and take time out of the library to do it.

One concept that could be called an introject, identified by Bub (2006) is lack of time, that is, a slogan accepted as fact and not subject to critical examination. Once it is scrutinised, it becomes meaningless. The concept of lack of time was raised by most participants. While acknowledging that many school librarians are sole workers and

subject to the needs of the user, it could be countered at least partially by a better management of time, as committed by Ellen and Susan. For example, there could be some negotiation that the school librarian be released from contact time for some regular part of the week. In one case (Briony) this librarian held a Field Officer post, which meant that for one day a fortnight a library assistant covered the school post while the librarian visited other school librarians and gave them professional developmental support. However, many school librarians in Scotland did not have any support staff, and this could result in them concentrating on operational tasks that needed to be done in order to deliver the service, many of which were at a clerical level, while the strategic considerations, which were at a higher level, were often, in practice, secondary priorities. Adding to this the lone working situation and a lack of professional discussion and sharing could result in a lack of confidence in or implementation of professional strategic practice.

The American librarians normally had some additional help, often at least one other librarian or assistant. Two schools surveyed with rolls of 3000 students each had 8 library staff. Any staffing which moved the librarian from sole working potentially gave her/him time to attend meetings, collaborate, plan and reflect. However recent cuts in posts (including posts responsible for training librarians) were noted by American participants and they identified how this was affecting their work in a negative way.

Another American colleague Karen described in a critical incident diary return how she collaborated to set up a project to purchase resources for a new part of the curriculum, involving a foreign language and overseas countries. Departmental meetings were arranged to discuss how this was to be done, she attended national conferences and worked in various teams within school. Other local schools and local universities were also included as the approach was to be District-wide. Meetings were videotaped to provide a reference for the future when decisions were to be made. Local universities were involved to suggest relevant current texts and support material. Even parents from the school were involved, as they were asked to collect artefacts from foreign countries in the summer holidays, and they were given money from school to buy such items.

The problems encountered involved getting items processed in time. Staff then had a training evening explaining how to use the artefacts, with presenters involved with various countries giving personal accounts about their visits. Displays were set up in the

library. There was a similar event for the Parent Teacher Organisation, who had raised much of the money. Summarising in the critical incident diary she said that in retrospect she would have moved earlier with her suppliers to get advance notification of material availability earlier. This collaborative model involved community, parents, teachers and students and provided a practical product with shared ownership and shared working.

Schön (1991) calls for more flexible practice by professionals, as many are asked to undertake tasks for which they had not been educated. He considers that professionals must be adaptable and put into practice elements of reflective practice, in order that they can undertake current tasks required of them. This was re-stated by Briony, who found the catalyst of the Scottish focus group had given her the impetus to carry out more research into attitudes of staff and students towards the library and ways to make interaction more effective. This was echoed by Johnson (2003) who considers that in the 21st century, professionals need to add to the skills they used as learners and develop skills as reflective practitioners after graduation (p48). Mutch (1997) states that not having such reflective processes will prevent a professional from responding to changed circumstances with new approaches.

Kasar (2000) defines being a professional as having a consumer-focused, problem-based approach, using quality improvement and teacher-facilitated and learner self-directed development. Swisher and Page (2005) cite certain characteristics of professionals found in the literature: theoretical knowledge; autonomy in professional decisions; authority; education; responsibility, accountability and ethics; nature of work and decisions; role and identity.

Nixon et al (2001), in discussing the case of professionalism within the higher academic sector, make two useful points about maintaining professionalism. The first is that the responsibility for professional development needs to be taken by professionals themselves, as self-development, as this demonstrates professional nerve. This phrase mirrors the concepts of risk-taking as raised by Scottish school librarian Michael in a vignette response (more detail in Chapter 5 section 5.1.2), when he said that decision-making of school librarians could be improved by:

“Exposure to other professional areas where people are forced to take risks and make difficult decisions, eg school management level (!), finance sector, business community etc. etc.”

This element of risk-taking and bravery of school librarians was also identified by Daisy, a Scottish Director of School Library Services, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, section 6.1 when she said that she would like to see:

“Wider consultation; braver LRC staff; better staff development for LRC staff; higher expectations on the part of schools as to best practice in school LRCs.”

Wilkinson (2008) talks about her perception of the wider profession of library and information studies:

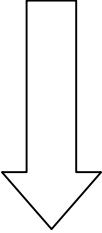
“But we still suffer from a shortage of strong leaders to act as role models. These qualities need to be developed, along with a self-confidence and willingness to take risks that is often scarce. New entrants to the profession need the right support and encouragement. Because libraries represent an overhead to their institutions, they are prone to a ‘master-servant’ relationship. Library staff need to be confident enough to behave as equals with their academic colleagues.... There is a skills gap.... And there is definitely an image problem.... we continue to suffer from the usual stereotypes.” p19

Perhaps this perception of lack of risk-taking in the profession is a more general issue that could be explored in further research. The second point raised by Nixon et al (2001) is that differences in disciplines should be recognised in order to maintain true collaboration. Without this acknowledgement, existing hierarchies and false perceptions were likely to continue.

Humphreys and Hyland (2002) define professionalism in public service occupations as including specialist knowledge and expertise, ethical codes and procedures concerned with training, induction and professional development. They consider that the centralisation of control over certain aspects has diminished professional autonomy, and for school librarians such examples would be inspection and quality indicators. To re-professionalise, they cite the use of research, reflective and experiential practice as one solution. Another solution is to use new rationalism and critical theory, based on collaboration and not being wholly reliant on technicism.

Writing about the situation for nursing staff, Johns (2004) considers that reflective practice is holistic because it focuses on the whole experience and tries to understand it; it is grounded in the meanings the practitioner gives to the experience and acknowledges that the practitioner is self-determining and seeks to facilitate growth. Johns gives an interesting diagram to illustrate layers of reflection and the difference between “doing” reflection and “being” reflective, which is modified below:

Table 8.1 Layers of reflection. Adapted from Johns (2004) p2

<p>Reflection-on-experience: Reflecting on a situation or experience after the event with the intention of drawing insights that may inform my future practice in positive ways</p>	<p>Doing reflection</p>
<p>Reflection-in-action: pausing within a particular situation or experience in order to make sense and reframe the situation proceeding towards desired outcomes</p>	
<p>The internal supervisor: Dialoguing with self whilst in conversation with another in order to make sense</p>	
<p>Reflection-within-the-moment: Being aware of the way I am thinking, feeling and responding within the unfolding moment and dialoguing with self to ensure I am interpreting and responding congruently to whatever is unfolding. It is having some space in your mind to change your ideas rather than being fixed to certain ideas</p>	
<p>Mindful practice: Being aware of self within the unfolding moment with the intention of realising desirable practice (however desirable is defined)</p>	<p>Reflection as a way of being</p>

At first glance definitions of different layers of reflective practice might seem to be similar and confusing to differentiate. Stages can be defined as follows:

- Consider what I learn now for the future - learn the lessons for future circumstances
- Make sense of the present situation – relate it to what is important
- Starting reflective technique – looking inwards to consider the situation
- Reflectively aware – awareness of own experience, assessing of the situation and considering options
- Fully reflective – automatically relating experiential learning to fully meet goals

An explanation such as this might clarify the concept for practitioners, and encourage them to consider which stage they meet at present, and how they might reach later stages. One element Johns did not include was collaborating with colleagues, which would seem to be desirable in a reflective model. A more open model from Bottery (1998, adapted from pp166-169) provides five ethics to underpin professional practice in the future:

- Provisionality – where individuals recognise the limits of their judgements
- Truth searching – the truth is not absolute, and what professionals need to search for is a better description of reality
- Reflective integrity – the professional needs to recognise the limits of personal perception. The problem should be identified, different schemes and approaches considered, then a decision made as to which approach works and fits the problem best. This involves professionals listening to other viewpoints
- Humility – by relying on the contributions of others, the traditional technical rationality of the professional can be seen to be lessened and can be a threat to some. However a model including dialogue can also be supportive and presents an interrelationship between knowledge and values
- Humanistic education – to be a reflective practitioner, professionals need to help users help themselves. Including the views of others gives a clearer picture of the situation, a more comprehensive frame of reference and a wider insight into both problem and successful strategy

Bottery relates each of these ethics with a citizenship agenda, leading to a strong democracy which will empower users to gain valuable lifelong learning skills such as respect for the opinions of others. He predicts that professionals would move away from the traditional perception of professional infallibility towards a process of reflection on practice by someone who is more likely to communicate, educate and learn from users, increasing public perception of trustworthiness, efficiency and openness. Bottery also includes collaborating with other professionals in his model, which seem to be crucial in maximising the benefits.

Eraut (1993) outlines two areas relating to the individual's ability to carry out the needs of a profession – capability and professional performance. He divides capability into three areas – knowledge and understanding (including key concepts, facts and procedures to do the job); personal qualities such as attention to detail, self-evaluation and ability to make sound professional judgements); and cognitive processes (such as the ability to analyse problems, assess client needs and discuss and evaluate alternative practices.) Professional performance refers to the behaviour of an individual, demonstrated by the necessary key duties and skills to do the job. If such a model were to be used for school librarians, it could be defined as follows in Table 8.2:

Table 8.2 Suggested model for school librarians based on the principles of Eraut's model (Eraut 1993 adapted from pp13-20)

Knowledge and understanding (p15)

- Relevant curricula
- Classification schemes
 - Cataloguing
 - Keywording

Personal qualities (p17)

- Empathy with users
- Self-evaluation
- Creativity
- Professional integrity
- Ability to make sound professional judgements

Cognitive processes (pp17-18)

- Analyse problems and situations
- Assess user needs
- Evaluate alternative practices

Key duties (p19)

- Engage students in the learning process
- Collaborate with teachers on information literacy
- Prepare and deliver information literacy sessions

Key skills (p19)

- Oral presentation
- Organisation of resources
- Report writing
- Managing a group
- Learning styles

Certain documents are often collected as a matter of course to demonstrate evidence of competency, and for inspections. These could include degree certificates, teaching

licence, job description, CV, development plans, policies, Charter, Revalidation of Charter, Fellowship, proof of attendance and evaluation of in-service, appraisal documents and details of identification of training needs. These would be useful to start a collection of evidence.

After the basic qualification was gained, Eraut (1994) considers that professionals continually learn on the job. This could involve some degree of continuing professional development and short courses. He states that learning relies on three main sources – publications, people and practical experiences. Publications involve keeping up to date with articles, monographs and other forms of dissemination. People can include tutors, mentors and colleagues. Practical experiences include reflection, making sense and linking specific experiences with other personal knowledge. He talks of the need to be professional learners in order to become more effective learning professionals.

Eraut (1994) states that the power and status of professionals depends on the unique forms of expertise, not shared with other occupational groups, and the value placed on that expertise. He states that the knowledge base of a professional is important, and depends on the uniqueness of the expertise and the value placed on it by others. Expertise that is not so accessible increases the power differential of that profession. Do people value the level of knowledge needed to be a librarian in a school? Are they aware of the level of higher education needed to become a librarian?

Three main areas of expertise for professionals are identified by Eraut (1994). These are basic theoretical technical knowledge; practical practice-created knowledge; and continuing education, involving reflection on practical issues. He recommends that Higher Education institutions and professional organisations need to work together to assist with knowledge development in the professions. He suggests that useful joint ventures would be collaborative research projects; problem-oriented seminars; and continuing professional development.

Schön (1987) suggests that problems faced by professionals are rarely straightforward and clear, and that skilful professional practice often depends less on factual knowledge or rigid decision-making models than on the capacity to reflect before taking action where established theories do not apply. Schön (1987) describes how there is a gulf

between professionals and educators, with professionals focusing on messy but important problems that cannot be solved by theory, while educators focus on the theory that is so often unimportant to society to the extent that it is not relevant to practice. The perception of professional knowledge is not the same to both. Is this gulf one that is impossible to breach? As Schön says:

“What aspiring practitioners need most to learn, professional schools seem least able to teach.” p8

He introduces the concept of artistry, where the practice of unusually competent performers is studied. So bringing together the theory and the practice bonded by the study of the application of the theory in practice, which is a model used in US library schools where qualified practitioners are brought in to teach elements of the school librarian course. He considers that new professionals cannot be taught on the job, but should be coached or mentored, this learning to be achieved by doing and, vitally, reflecting on that practice.

He distinguishes between knowing in action (how people do things using their knowledge) and reflection in action (where people work out how to do a different task by trying what they know, reflecting on the problem and coming up with a suitable solution). He also considers that continuing professional development is vital so that professionals can keep up to date and share practice, a process he describes as renewal.

The ASSET programme (Accreditation for Social Services Experience and Training) was launched at Anglia University in 1989 (Winter and Maisch 1996), initially to launch a post qualification vocational programme for social workers, later expanding into the area of engineering. The principle behind it is of work-based experiential learning and a competence-based curriculum. Perhaps this is another model to be considered for post-qualification development for school librarians, possibly to also include teachers for some elements that can be explored together.

An interesting study by Freidson (2001) states that, unlike physicians or lawyers, engineers cannot dominate the professions in which they work, because they have a more general identity since they serve as disparate specialists in many different fields and therefore they hold a weak position in the economy. It could be said that librarians were like the engineers, in that the general public have a stereotyped yet unclear idea of

what they do and there was no standard model of what a librarian really does. Freidson also states that the training period in a higher education establishment serves to strengthen student commitment to and identification with the profession, as well as creating solidarity with other students. This later manifested in the sharing of common problems and solutions when professionals in one field get together, which is so important yet often lacking in sole working situations.

However Freidson feels that the contingencies of practice means that professionals are almost certain to temper their use of formal knowledge, ranging from adaptation to replacement in the working environment of what they learned in basic training. He says that professionalism represents occupational rather than consumer or managerial control. This concept, along with a body of professional knowledge and skill; occupational training for entry and mobility; occupationally controlled training programme; and an ideology serving some transcendent value define elements of a model of professionalism. We can see that this model fits librarianship, with the involvement of professional bodies such as CILIP in validating courses, producing tools for ethics and body of knowledge, and designing and assessing professional qualifications. Freidson considers that professions are both inclusive and exclusive – inclusive that when professionals get together they focus on work and “talk shop” and exclusive in that without the appropriate skills and qualifications other workers are not included.

8.7 Conclusions

This chapter has contributed to the understanding of how interprofessional education and reflective practice can make a difference to collaborative work in a high school, and given an insight into skills and qualities needed to be an effective high school librarian using evidence-based practice.

Sole working can be a difficult way of working for a professional. Although it can allow a great deal of autonomy within the delivery of a service, it can be isolating and cause difficulties in collaborating, working at a strategic level and developing professionally and fully in school life. Schools can help by providing personnel support to allow the school librarian time to commit to professional development, research, reflection and collaboration on quality issues and higher level strategic tasks. The librarian can also

benefit by regularly becoming involved with local networks of other school librarians, giving the opportunity to share understanding, practice and ideas, and national professional bodies, offering support, good practice standards and development opportunity.

A diverse and interesting range of skills and qualities were identified from the study and also from the literature. Some can be learned, but some are usually more innate. However that is not to say that once they are recognised that librarians cannot apply them, as it is always possible for professionals to change and learn, once there is an understanding of their importance.

In these changing times, school managers have to consider the role and contribution made in school by professionals who are making a real contribution to school life, but are not teachers, which in Scotland will include school librarians. The roles may be different but are not necessarily less professional than that of teachers. Some standard input is recommended to deliver the educational, curricular and group management aspects missing from the experience and training of professionals who are not teachers. Clearer agreed outlines of roles would help everyone working in teams to understand what everyone in school can contribute towards greater attainment of students. Real activity-based opportunities to collaborate, train, make decisions, reflect and work together are important to maximise a rounder, more inclusive and involved positive experience for students and staff. The mindful practice of Johns (2004), demonstrating reflection as a way of being, along with Schön's (1987) skilful professional practice are important considerations for any professional.

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Chapter 9 New models of professionalism

9.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to bring together findings from the study and the literature to create a model of what makes the effective evidence-based high school librarian. A main purpose of the whole study was to gain an understanding of practice and theory, and create a model to package this understanding, which was drawn up as a draft (Appendix S) and then amended after the process of member-checking and validation. Creating this final model (Appendix V) contributes towards Aim 2:

- 2 Critically analyse and relate the significant theories emerging from the literature with the empirical findings of a study based on the work of high school librarians in two countries, to develop a model which describes an effective way of implementing EBP in high school libraries

Objectives e) and f) also contribute to this aim:

- g) To prepare a draft model of good practice concerning decision-making in high school libraries
- h) Refine the draft model based on feedback from research and data collected and suggest benefits from its use by researchers and practitioners.

The model was created to answer the research problem outlined in Chapter 1, by using three main means. First of all, themes arising from the literature were considered; secondly, the findings of this study were examined and interpreted; and the third method was to member-check and validate the draft model. Themes arising from the findings are presented in more detail in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, and they form the basis of the model. The findings from the study were examined and interpreted; informed judgements were made, and based on those, a draft model or framework of the environment, skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based high school librarian was created from the emerging evidence. Topics were noted as they occurred, and once a list had been created, there was an arrangement into common themes, and headings were created. This draft was then member-checked and validated with stakeholders before a final model was created (Appendix V), based on comments and suggested amendments from respondents (Appendix U).

Headings in the model were elements which emerged from the study and the literature. There is complexity in this model, as even the best school librarian who demonstrates all the factors under the school librarian heading cannot carry out the job to the best of her/his ability without a balance of commitment from other headings of the model, for example, aspects of management support and interaction with users. In a similar way, the best management support will not succeed if the librarian does not demonstrate core collaborative qualities and skills. The headings are explored in more detail below:

School librarian

This is the person who is responsible for the delivery of the services of the school library. Ideally this person will be professionally qualified as a librarian and demonstrate collaborative skills and qualities. Bringing together librarianship/information literacy skills; knowledge of educational principles; evidence collection and analysis methods and management development opportunities are core tasks for this post. Daisy, a Scottish Director of School Library Services, said that librarians would not be stopped in developing new services if they “*put forward a powerful enough case.*” She thought that librarians were not always aware of: “*The role of the school library on the wider community*” or the: “*Future role of school libraries in light of increased ICT in schools.*” This shows the need for the librarian to relate library work to curriculum and user needs. More details relating to findings on the role of the school librarian can be found in Chapter 8.

Collaboration

This area demonstrates the collaborative approach within the school by the librarian on library and educational issues, to include work with teaching staff, managers, students and outside individuals and bodies. US Director of School Library Services Chantal summarised it well in the vignette response when she said that:

“Services should be offered in coordination with the classroom teaching staff based on their needs and the curriculum... No one should stand in the way [of library development] if the service is coordinated with the curriculum”

As discussed in Chapter 7, it is part of the new Scottish inspections that school librarians should survey users for their opinions, and this is certainly a useful starting point in collaborating. More details on findings related to networking and collaboration issues can be found in Chapter 7.

Management support

Support from school and authority management is vital to the success of what the library and librarian can deliver. The effectiveness of the school library and librarian will otherwise be limited. Clear guidance and effective communication channels are key to this area. As US librarian Sue Ellen related in the vignette:

"I am a valued member of the team whose input is frequently asked for. I feel very empowered and am happy with my administrators [managers], teachers, and community."

This demonstrates the importance to her of working in a collaborative way, with common goals, good communication and management support. As can be seen in more detail in Chapter 6, many respondents suggested that more collaborative working would help the fictional librarian presented in the vignette to deliver a better service. In the vignette response Scottish school librarian Audrey confirmed that there could be a problem if there was a *"Lack of commitment from management."* And this needs to be borne in mind when planning development. US Director of School Library Service Chantal said that:

"Support for the single librarian in the building should take the form of removing pedantic chores from their plate so they can spend more time before the students."

Many Scottish librarians considered that having a library assistant would be a positive help. A variety of support has the potential to make a real difference to the work of the librarian, so that s/he can spend time on professional work, as outlined by Chantal. More details of support strategies can be found in Chapter 6, section 6.4. Another way that management support can help was related by Scottish school librarian Shirley, who thought it would be helpful for her as:

"Being considered a Head of Department (even if not paid)."

It is interesting that perception of status seemed to be important to many librarians, even if payment was not involved, and this could be a useful strategy for managers to explore.

Skills and qualities

These are important elements to making the work of the library and librarian relevant to user needs. Without a collaborative and flexible approach, the effectiveness of the school library and librarian will be limited. The findings identify the need for

management, educational and organisational skills; and positive reflective qualities. Scottish Director of School Library Services Daisy talked in the questionnaire of needing “*braver LRC staff*”, and this raises the issue of promoting confidence and discussing risk-taking in the context of identifying appropriate skills and qualities needed by a school librarian. Scottish librarian Frances considered that a “*Lack of self-confidence can inhibit decisions.*” The lack of training in such areas was evident, as reported in Chapter 6 during focus group discussion by librarians James and Fiona, who gained their skills by experience and observation.

Reflecting and evaluating are important elements of working as a school librarian, and the problem reflected in many responses to this study was that there was often a lack of opportunity for librarians to regularly set aside time to carry out these measures. Building in time and support to allow this to happen in a formal way was something many respondents requested.

Evidence

The use of evidence has been growing in recent years with the advent of qualitative documents outlining the need to prove how well the library meets the needs of the users. Regular data collection, awareness of internal and external data and a wider professional perspective are needed in order to gauge the effectiveness of the service and how well it meets user needs. Data collection is not the main focus, but a starting point. The key to this area is using the data to examine user opinion, disseminating relevant information, forming forward plans, evaluating progress and benchmarking. In the questionnaire Scottish Director of School Library Services Daisy called for a:

“Mix of strategic officer-led and in-school negotiated [process] ... Evaluation of the services also needs to be a mix of top-down and bottom-up.”

By involving librarians and stakeholders she emphasised the need for a collaborative approach to how evidence is used. Evidence targeted would ideally be a mix of statistical and qualitative information, as statistical figures alone would not reflect the value of the work that is carried out by a school librarian. Carefully chosen qualitative methods can better represent the impact of the work carried out by the school librarian, for example as described in the New Jersey study discussed by Oatman in Chapter 1, section 1.3.3, there was an identification by students after completing research modules regarding what they learned about their own research and study preferences. Such

valuable evidence could help to make the case for more funding and staffing in the library.

National bodies

The role of national professional bodies with an interest in school librarianship is vital to take forward the case of the effective school library and librarian. Respondents taking part in this study identified the lack of a central collation of studies and articles on topics of interest to them, and made a call for such bodies to draw together digests of research for practitioners in schools to use and to disseminate the findings of grey literature. Key aspects of the role of bodies include training, providing a national focus and overview, working collaboratively with academic institutions and blurring the differences between research and practice by dissemination and the encouragement and stimulation of discussion and collaborative work. Respondents such as James and Fiona from the Scottish focus group were both involved in working with national bodies, and this seems to be a useful way to bring together operational and strategic elements in a constructive way. James said that:

“.. in school libraries we could do ... with an overarching body so that all the different places that are doing research ... can work collaboratively to pool information, to pool ideas ... whereas at the moment they tend to be... available through particular authorities, portals ... and they're probably all equally valuable and could really help somebody else. If they were ... in one place.”

He also talked of the librarian's need to see “*the big picture*” which he thought was important in order to set the individual school library in a context, whether within a school, an authority, a country or a group of collaborating librarians. By being involved with local and national bodies, there is an opportunity for school librarians to apply the detail of their practice to the rigour of research in order to form national guidance. However this raises a practical difficulty for many librarians, particularly if they are in a single staffing situation, and if the librarian is not at work for the day to attend wider professional events and gain more understanding of this “*big picture*”, there will be an effect on users if the library is unstaffed while s/he is away.

9.2 Member-checking and validating

The contents of the draft model arose from study findings, and were collated and organised to form the main themes presented in the draft, using a simple listing arranged by topic. To give an example of how one theme emerged, as the study progressed it was

noted that skills and qualities of high school librarians were major topics consistently raised by respondents, and there seemed to be a clear link between the contribution of certain of these aspects to the overall model of effective practice. These themes appeared to be central to representing the complex model of the effective evidence-based school librarian.

Member-checking was an important part of the process, in order to validate with respondents what had been said, to verify that the draft model represented a consensus of viewpoints and that there was corroboration of the contents of the final draft. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state:

“Member check, whereby data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from which the data were originally collected, is the most crucial technique for establishing credibility.....it is essential that they be given the opportunity to react to them.”
p314

Respondents who had already taken part in this study were approached for their comments on the model, in order to add more breadth and validation. Of the original group who took part in the questionnaire survey and vignette stage, three Scottish librarians, two US librarians, and one Director from each country responded.

Further levels of validation were achieved by involving practitioners and stakeholders outwith the study. The main reason for consulting these people was to validate the interpretation of the researcher of the emerging themes from the data and the literature forming the draft. 22 people in each country were approached to comment on the draft model, but many did not respond, in spite of two reminders one month and two months after the draft was sent out. Perhaps they had nothing to add, or there was a lack of confidence in responding, or this exercise was not a priority for them. However, at least half of people approached in each country replied, which was encouraging and gave a reasonable level of response. Many were anxious to contribute to the discussion and put forward their own particular viewpoints.

In total, the number of responses was as follows, as outlined in Table 9.1:

Table 9.1 Respondents to member-checking exercise

	Scotland	US
School librarians	5	5
Headteachers	2	2
Directors of School Library Services	2	2
National bodies	1	1
Author, researcher, consultant	1	2
TOTAL	11	12

All respondents were issued with the draft in Appendix S, and asked to comment, add, remove or amend any statement so that it reflected their perception of the effective evidence-based high school librarian. The draft with annotations is to be found in Appendix T. At this stage it was outlined in a series of statements arranged by theme. Respondents also had the opportunity to add any other comments.

9.3 Former models and frameworks

Past models outlining what was expected of the high school librarian range greatly, and expectations have changed in recent years. No equivalent model has been found from the literature relevant to the full extent of evidence-based practice discussed in this study and as presented in the final model. Evidence-based practice in today's environment enhances the understanding of the requirements of the school librarian and school management. It is useful at this stage to reprise certain past models of what constituted a school librarian at that time, before examining the new model. This can help with comparison and also to see the steps that have led to the new model.

In the UK, Beswick (1986) described the repository model after the Second World War, where main activities for the school librarian were to provide a room where books could be accessed and read, which was limited compared to what is now expected of the high school librarian. The cataloguing, classification and organisation of the library were key elements of the school librarian's work at this time, in order that users could find resources. This is still an element applicable to the school library model in this study, although resources also now include those off-site and accessed electronically, for example from databases or Internet sources.

In 1970 the Library Association produced a document raising the concept of resource-based learning, and the need for multimedia resources in a school library in addition to books. At this time there was a move towards involving the librarian in more of an educational role, as students needed guidance in using and accessing such material. This educational role is an important element of the new model presented in this study. In America school librarians are generally dually qualified as teachers and school librarians, and several US respondents found it difficult to imagine how the job could be done without a dual qualification. However in Scotland there is no need for school librarians to be teachers. Although featured in the literature as a recommendation, there was not much evidence in this study that this educational element for school librarians has been addressed in Scotland, and respondents such as James and Fiona in the Scottish focus group talked of gaining this knowledge through long experience and observation, rather than in a formal way. This would put new postholders in Scotland at a disadvantage to more experienced colleagues, and may not be an efficient way to deliver this perceived need. Gaining relevant educational experience and understanding was raised as a problem by many Scottish school librarians, and there was a call for this to be undertaken in a more formal way, for example by following a course focusing on pedagogy and classroom management. Briony, a school librarian, said in the Scottish focus group that top-up training could be made available, as part of a librarianship/information course or on a free-standing basis, to cover:

“Some options on educational theory and the practical aspects of managing large groups of pupils and lesson planning.”

This topic is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8, section 8.2. Also in 1970, Dyer, Brown and Goldstein talked of the need for manager skills for the school librarian, otherwise there was no focus and direction to library services, adding yet more skills to the expectations of what a high school librarian should do. However, as with the educational element, there was little evidence in this study that this was formally met in the work environment, although management skills are usually covered in generic librarianship courses. This is reflected in the current model under skills, where management skills feature as core elements.

In 1972, Morris, Russell and Stott spoke of the library's need to provide reference, study and what they call recreative reading functions, which still feature in the responses to the questionnaire survey in this study as required services. A reference service was

identified in the questionnaire survey of this study as a core service by similar numbers of Scottish and US respondents - 33% of Scottish and 31.8% of US respondents. However there was a difference between countries when identifying the provision of a study area as a core service - 13.6% of US school librarians compared to 30% of Scottish respondents. This could be due to a difference in the method of provision of study facilities. In many US schools visited there was a central study hall facility supervised by teachers, where hundreds of students could be accommodated, while in many Scottish schools the library would be used for study, supervised by the librarian, so this could reflect the difference in opinion. Morris, Russell and Stott say that the work of librarian was often a part-time task allocated to a teacher, which would fit well with the supervision of study element they mention as a new role. Another difference in this study was in the area of reading promotion, with 63% of Scottish respondents identifying this as a core service, compared to 86.3% of US respondents. In the new model presented in this study, a qualified professional librarian is recommended as essential, and this person could ensure that basic agreed functions are delivered.

By 1975 the Bullock report (Great Britain. Department of Education and Science) was published, and this stresses the importance of reading and information literacy skills, and the importance of language and thinking to the role of the librarian in the school, thus introducing the twin roles of librarian and pedagogical skills. In 1977 new national guidelines were produced (Library Association 1977) and these discuss self-motivated learning, multicultural issues, group working and team-teaching. This involved the teaching of information skills and was based much more on pedagogical skills needed. These two major publications made recommendations relating to the need for librarians to have pedagogical skills, but there is little evidence in Scotland of these skills being imparted to school librarians in a formal way. However their US colleagues already have these skills due to their teaching qualifications and experience.

The situation in the US followed a different route when comparing school librarian background. Hopkins (2000) reports that the first professionally trained school librarian Mary Kingsbury was appointed in 1900, although it is not clear if she was trained as a teacher, a generically trained librarian, or a librarian trained to work in a school. After World War Two, Miller (2000) quotes the School Libraries for Today and Tomorrow,

American Library Association Committee on Post-War Planning, 1945, where a school library was:

“An integral part of the educational program which it serves.” p42

This phrase illustrates the major difference between the UK and US when it comes to the training and function of the high school librarian. The US definition has been clearly linked to education, learning and teaching principles in an integrated way to the demands of the curriculum, with the need for the school librarian to be trained as a teacher, while the UK model has been for the need for a professionally qualified librarian, or sometimes a part-time teacher who deals with the library, and the Scottish model has been for a professionally qualified generic librarian. In UK literature there has been recognition of the need for this teaching element, but little evidence of it being a part of librarians’ training. US author Miller (2000) talks of the library no longer being a location:

“But a school-wide part of the instructional program.” p43

This difference is telling, because the US link between the school librarian and attainment of students still exists, and the librarian has teacher conditions and pay, while the UK school librarian does not have that same educational focus, and is defined as support staff or non-teaching staff, with the resulting unfavourable pay scale and working year compared to teachers. There is now a need for a new model, to include elements of ICT, contribution to teaching and learning and an up to date vision of the librarian working within an integrated and complex environment, with new expectations from users.

9.4 Amending the draft model.

After distributing the draft and sending out reminders after one month and two months, comments were received from 23 respondents. Their comments are reproduced below. Some made no amendments at all, while some suggested some radical changes. Actual comments are presented in italic and between double quotation marks, following standard practice throughout this study, with a bullet point introducing each comment in order to make the list easier to read. Respondents’ own quotation marks were represented by single quotation marks. Suggested comments for change are presented in bold.

General comments:

- “It looks a good succinct piece of work to me.”
- “Spot on!”
- “I think this is useful.”
- “This reflects what is needed.”
- “I think overall this is a very concise, clear and helpful summary that will be of widespread benefit.”
- “Interesting.”
- “I read your model plan and it looks good to me. It seems to be well thought out and pretty inclusive.”
- “I can’t add to this at all.”
- “I think your ideas are well thought out, and very clearly presented. I liked the combination of categories that bring about the ideal model. I thought maybe the **skills and qualities should go first, followed by the role, management, collaboration, then the evidence and nationally???** I liked your work very much.”
- “Do the circumstances **PRODUCE** the effective librarian or do they help to enable effectiveness? I agree that an effective school librarian is best served by particular circumstances, however, if she’s effective, she is also the **ENGINEER** of these circumstances wherever possible.”

Role

- “I think this **needs an overall context of why – eg to assist pupil learning, staff knowledge of new developments etc or something to start with.**”
- “I think the **overall order of bullet points should be about putting the services being offered first – maintaining a collection to support all curricule [sic] subjects is true, but how exacvly [sic] does it support them? Also the word ‘professional’ could be used to highlight the importance of having a qualified librarian.**”
- “I am unsure about **the ‘commit to gaining maximum funding’ – perhaps commit to make most effective use of funding or something that doesn’t put most of the onus on the librarian.**”
- “Need to **act on the outcomes of the evidence collected.**”
- “**Undertake action research on the role of the school library in learning and teaching.**”
- “**Remove last point under librarian – should be (and is) under management support – it’s not something the librarian does.**”
- “I had one question under Role of Librarian, and that was ‘information skills training to users’. I was confused, do you mean **information literacy skills training**, or is this a different strand? Probably no difference??”

- **“Under Librarian** I notice you use phrases like info skills training – is it IS training only? Or do the findings consider info literacy and also the notion of developing abilities through the curriculum (which is not necessarily encompassed in the idea of regular IS training is it?) I also find it interesting that the words learning and curriculum don’t figure here which seems to go against the HGIOS approach, etc.”
- **“Expand point to: Collect evidence and adjust own practice in the light of this.”**
- **“Demonstrate and promote the link between own school library use, learning and achievement.”**
- **“What about resources for pleasure reading** which further encourage literacy development – fiction, magazines, graphic novels and other graphic formats?”
- **AASL has just released its Standards for 21st century learners and they focus not just on info lit but on the multiple literacies [AASL 2007].”**
- **“Here in the states, we often say that EVERY teacher is a reading teacher, so this would read ‘with all faculty’”** [re literacy promotion with English teachers].

Management

- **“Be responsive to the school librarian’s suggestions for changes in the light of action research.”**
- **“Point 1 Where are senior management going to get info to give the clear guidance – someone needs to advise HTs [Headteachers], etc – perhaps this could be added to the ‘national’ section?”**
- **“Point 2 I don’t see what this is getting at – is [sic] seems very general compared to the precision of all the other points?”**
- **“Penultimate point – appraisal – very ‘dodgy’ area – please consider rephrasing – anything on appraisal can have very serious consequences if not properly considered, unions, involved, etc.”**

National bodies

- **“First point – surely linking into specific educational developments** such as Glow and ACFE would be more relevant to Scotland? (or even as examples?).”
- **“Point 2 – can you consider adding at the end of this point ‘that demonstrates the positive effects that school libraries can have on pupils’ achievements/attainments.’ ”**
- **“Point 6 - I’m not familiar with the term ‘grey literature’?”**
- **“Penultimate point – this is a particularly excellent point that I think actually merits first place on the list.”**

Collaboration

- “What about the actual **collaborative TEACHING** role here?”

Evidence

- “ ‘Act on user opinion’ – **can I suggest adding ‘given appropriate support from ananagemnet [management],...’ at the start?**”
- “What seems to be missing in this section, for me, is a **focus on STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT** as a result of the work of the librarian in collaboration with faculty.”
- “Need to link to student achievement.”

Skills & qualities

- “**Change terms used to adjectives.**”
- “**Excellent organisational skills.**”
- “**Liaison and collaboration** would be top of my list.”
- “**Bullet points should all be adjectives** – the mixture between nouns and adjectives makes this run less smoothly than necessary.”
- “Add ‘**Collaborative?**”

9.5 Reflections on suggested amendments and additional comments

One of the major features of this study was to produce a model that would be of real practical use to those working and responsible for the work of school libraries. It was therefore vital to check that respondents agreed with the values and content of the final model because it had to be relevant to their work. The suggestions from those with an interest in high school libraries were invaluable. The fact that practitioners working in school libraries, their managers and stakeholders were able to relate the model to practice from differing levels and backgrounds gave the model, based on the synopsis of findings, elements of reliability, corroboration and related it to reality. Eleven respondents suggested no changes at all, and were happy to accept the draft model as it stood. However, the remainder of the respondents suggested various changes, as outlined above. The comments from respondents gave the researcher the opportunity to reflect again on the findings, to examine them in the light of comments to see if the findings also supported topics like the collaborative teaching role, for example, before creating the final model.

The inconsistencies in the grammatical points had already been recognised, and the model needed the consistency of adjectives rather than a mixture of terms, as well as

attention to terminology, for example the perceived importance of adding in the word professional to indicate qualification, and using the term information literacy (and in later contributions, multiple literacies) rather than information skills. The introduction of the term multiple literacies as an enhancement of information literacy is an interesting one, as it was noted from responses to the member-checking stage that it emerged from the educational literature. The concept of multiple literacies was usefully outlined in the recent AASL document (2007). Relating the model more explicitly to the contribution of the school librarian to teaching and learning was a relevant point. A rearrangement of order was also suggested, showing that listing items was seen by some as a hierarchy, so it was important to be aware of this. The original draft had deliberately not been arranged in a hierarchical order.

Certain sensitivities were raised, for example saying that the librarian was to “commit to gain maximum funding” was seen as putting too much responsibility on the librarian (by school librarian respondents), and also the suggestion of using appraisal (or staff development review) was seen as a negative concept by one respondent (a school librarian). It was still included in the final model, as it was considered to be an important element to help the librarian gain appropriate support and training, but worded in such a way that was intended to be more negotiated and inclusive. It was positive that the action side of the model was taken forward by members, for example applying research evidence to practice rather than just collecting evidence in-house was seen as essential. It was of note that several respondents mentioned the need for managers to be more communicative, responsive and responsible, to be aware of how they could support the library contribution and also to proactively gain more information themselves.

It was interesting that some respondents talked of the need to be more explicit about linking the work of the school librarian with student achievement. The collaborative element of the work of the school librarian was also emphasised as needing to be more explicit. One respondent said that effectiveness to her meant that the librarian was the engineer of situations, to lead in certain situations. There were some comments on encouraging reading and literacy promotion. A difference was noted during data collection, when Scottish respondents tended to talk about working with English language teachers to promote literacy, while US respondents did not specify the subject of teachers promoting literacy. When constructing the draft model, the phrase English

teacher was used as it was more specific. However, at member-checking it was stated by several US respondents that all teachers should share the task of literacy promotion, and it should not be limited to English language teachers. The recognition of the power of the librarian to take things forward in a proactive way was also encouraged by one respondent. One respondent did not know what grey literature meant, and he was informed of its meaning, that is was unpublished literature, which could include resources such as conference papers or poster contributions at conferences. This term was then more clearly explained in the final model.

To summarise, comments from respondents were all very thought-provoking and of value, and involved amending the draft model carefully to include what they had said, to reflect on gaps and further information on findings triggered by their responses. It was expected that reconciling the model with a host of differing viewpoints from a range of backgrounds and roles might be difficult; however there was a general agreement amongst contributors on several points, and no real contradictory statements were made. It was therefore a reasonably straightforward exercise to incorporate all of the points noted by respondents into the draft, and to rearrange elements as they suggested, to produce a more rounded model. This final model is presented in Appendix V, an annotated version appears in section 9.6 below, and a diagrammatic representation follows the written description in Figure 9.1. In order to clarify the presentation of the elements of the model, these will appear in bold italic and annotations will appear in normal text style.

9.6 Annotated final model of the effective high school librarian

This is a presentation of the elements making up the final model after validating the draft model as described. The purpose of the model is to use it when aiming to develop the high school librarian as an effective evidence-based practitioner. It will also prove useful to management teams when recruiting a new school librarian. The more elements under each heading that are in place, the higher the likelihood of the librarian being more effective. A balance of elements from each heading should be included otherwise there is not likely to be the spread of requirements needed. Schools in particular should ensure that the following headings are addressed: role of the librarian; management support; collaboration; evidence; and skills and qualities. Directors of School Library Services can encourage school managers in their areas to meet these requirements,

through training and by providing guidance. The heading of national bodies can be taken forward by those with a wider responsibility, such as Directors of School Library Services. In the model below, annotations are in normal text, with the final model in bold italic. The unannotated model can be found in Appendix V. Factors of the final model are summarised diagrammatically in Figure 9.1.

There are a range of circumstances that combine to enable effectiveness in a high school librarian, and it is acknowledged that s/he may be the engineer of these circumstances wherever possible. Although not all of these may be present at the same time, the ideal situation would be to incorporate as many as possible.

This paragraph explains the principle that the model is an ideal one, and that it is not expected that all elements are expected to be found in any one person. It also appreciates that the librarian has some power over what s/he can offer, although this can vary. For example, circumstances may prevent librarians offering what they think is needed, due to money restrictions, layout and location of the library or the perception of senior management teams of the role expected from librarians.

The service offered by the library and the librarian is a team effort; however the librarian can take a lead role in making the case for the contribution of the library to the work of the school. This can be progressed fully with appropriate support given by management. Identifying these skills and qualities helps managers to understand librarians and what is required of them, and also helps librarians to understand what skills and qualities are needed to be an effective evidence-based practitioner in a high school library.

Skills and qualities

Effective librarians working in the library will demonstrate a range of personal and professional skills and qualities while working in collaboration with teachers and other staff

This calls for a strong emphasis on a collaborative approach, combined with skills such as decision-making and evidence-based practice. This could involve working with teachers, support assistants, auxiliaries and other relevant staff within school. Skills and qualities reflect the themes represented in the headings of Chapters 6-8, showing the relevance of these recurring topics. Consideration of the following professional skills and qualities could be considered when setting a person specification for the job.

It is appreciated that it may be difficult to test these qualities during the recruitment process, but examples could be cited by candidates of when they were demonstrated in previous experience, or how they might deal with a hypothetical situation involving these skills and qualities.

Interestingly, in this study respondents were more comfortable when identifying qualities, and it was more difficult for them to identify skills to include in the model, thus the draft had tended to include more qualities than skills. This emphasis on qualities could be because they were more familiar and comfortable with these personal and subjective concepts than skills, which were by their nature more objective. Another notable point is that no-one who responded suggested that any skills and qualities in the draft model be removed, but they were keen to add more skills and qualities. It is recognised that in the draft model there were more qualities than skills, and this has been addressed in the final model by including more skills which had not previously been explicitly presented.

The skills and qualities identified below emerged from the evidence from study findings and the literature, and the interpretation of these based on the judgement of the researcher. These skills and qualities cover a broad range of activity and are presented according to their relevance to the main themes of collaboration, decision-making and evidence-based practice.

Qualities

Collaborative

- ***enjoys working with children in a school environment.*** This is vital to the work because it is such a basic requirement. The librarian must feel confident and comfortable working with young people and be able to work appropriately with other staff within the environment and confines of a school. People who do not enjoy the environment and helping users (and if in a sole post working in some degree of professional isolation) will not perform to the best of their ability.
- ***enthusiastic.*** This factor occurred frequently in the findings from this study, and was seen to be essential. This is encouraging, because it shows that the library is seen by many as being a positive place relating to school activity. A lack of enthusiasm will not engender a forum for new ideas and developments or a collaborative environment.

- **creative.** Many of the respondents talked of the importance of being resourceful and inventive, particularly when persuading others and when trying to find other solutions to problem situations. This idea of “thinking outside the box” and indirect problem-solving reflected the incremental decision-making style raised by many respondents, moving slowly and persistently round a problem, getting closer to a solution as time progressed. Without creativity, agreed solutions may prove harder to find.
- **positive.** This was seen as an essential quality, because it shows an attitude that is central to working in a collaborative and constructive problem-solving environment. Negativity does not encourage others to contribute.
- **practices a highly visible role in the whole school community.** The importance of taking on a wider role was acknowledged by many respondents. It could offer the opportunity for traditional non-users of the library to see the librarian in a different light, and to increase the awareness of what could be offered in terms of curricular support, reading promotion, gaining information literacy skills, and supporting user interests. It could also help senior management to appreciate the benefits that a wider role taken on by the librarian using her/his own specialist skills can also support whole school priorities. A librarian who cannot offer this kind of support may find that practical support and opportunities to collaborate arise more infrequently.
- **flexible.** Once again this is crucial as a partner in a collaborative working environment because it demonstrates a willingness to try different approaches, appreciate varying perspectives and ways of working. Without this quality, progress will be restricted as compromise will be more difficult when working with others with differing viewpoints.
- **patient.** This was seen as vital by respondents, particularly when dealing with a wide range of understanding, interest and ability levels. If a librarian demonstrates a lack of patience with users it is likely that opportunities to understand and therefore meet their needs would be limited, which would affect the services they receive.

Collaborative and decision-making

- **tenacious.** This was raised by many respondents as a very important quality, particularly by sole librarians who were one of a kind in a school, and who had to

struggle sometimes to get their voices heard and to demonstrate how their work could relate to the whole school. Without such a quality the librarian is likely to progress at a slower rate.

- **risk-taker.** A certain amount of risk-taking has been identified by many respondents and in the literature as being needed by the school librarian. This is allied with using evidence and making decisions. Without the willingness to take risks, achieving full effectiveness is likely to be restricted.
- **uses initiative.** Being able to use initiative is an important quality because it takes decision-making practice forward and links to creativity and flexibility. By working in a creative way new ways of working and novel solutions can be found.

Collaborative and evidence-based

- **open to new ideas and challenges.** This is tied into flexibility and positivity, and encourages creativity and innovation, linking services with changing priorities, needs and interests of users. In a similar way, not demonstrating this element of openness will limit the effectiveness of what can be achieved.

Collaborative, decision-making and evidence-based

- **reflective practitioner.** Being reflective is not always easy; because so many respondents, particularly those who worked alone, focused on getting the operational part of the job completed, and did not always have time to reflect on the wider picture. However this is a vital element in being an effective practitioner, because it focuses on considering what has been done, how well it worked, and to identify future direction considering whole-school priorities. A lack of reflection could encourage the danger of the librarian working at a mainly operational level, leading to limited progress.
- **committed to deliver the service to a high level with a responsibility for continuous improvement and innovation.** This was highlighted more by school managers and Directors of School Library Services, as might be expected with their responsibility for the bigger picture. However it was encouraging that some librarians did see that this was needed, and this may be due to working with more qualitative approaches to offering a school library service, such as implementing guidelines and benchmarking. Without such commitment, the library is likely to become less relevant to the changing needs of its users.

- **consistent.** In a library situation it is important to be consistent in dealing with staff and students, so that the service and approach is the same to all. Without this there could be ambiguity and different messages going out to users.
- **confident.** This quality featured in many responses, and is important to working collaboratively, networking and making decisions. A lack of confidence can lead to ineffective working relationships and development.

Skills

Collaborative

- **excellent organisational skills.** This is important in order to manage and run the library, especially if working alone. A lack of organisation will mean that the library is not likely to be working most effectively.
- **management skills.** These skills are needed in order to effectively manage budget, staff, plan the service and create policies. Without good management skills the library is likely to operate less effectively.
- **time management.** It is essential to be able to manage the time of the librarian, any staff or student help, and to organise the timetable of the library to offer maximum use to all who need it. Without this skill, it could be easy to have an adhoc and reactive service, working from request to request in an operational way and not seeing the greater picture using a more strategic viewpoint.
- **library skills, such as subject knowledge, classification, cataloguing and keywording.** This is core to the work a librarian has to do, unless there is some central service provided elsewhere, perhaps in a School Library Service or by supplier. Even if this is done by someone else, there would still be a need for the librarian to have an understanding of these skills, in order to teach users how to access knowledge and use such schemes. These skills underpin the organisation of the library, and the use by staff and students; and if they do not feature, the organisation of the library and access to resources will be limited.
- **ICT skills.** These are needed in order to access information sources, support the way the curriculum is presented and to teach students and staff. This would involve teaching users about the value of sites and an awareness of copyright, plagiarism and authoritativeness of sources of information. Without these skills users will not learn fully how to access, assess and exploit resources.

- ***presentation skills.*** The librarian may be called on to make presentations to staff, students, parents or other school librarians. This will help the librarian to explain to users and stakeholders how they contribute to whole school goals and student attainment. Without good presentation skills the persuasive element of the librarian's role will be lessened, and support for initiatives may be missing.
- ***class management and pedagogical skills.*** Such skills will help the librarian to make information literacy sessions more useful, interesting and engaging to students. There should be consideration of individual abilities and the use of a range of methods. If librarians do not have this skill, students may not effectively understand how to fully access and implement information sources available.

Collaborative and evidence-based

- ***communication.*** This is vital in order to maintain an awareness of what users need, and to keep channels of communication open so that two way links can be made. A lack of communication will inevitably result in misunderstandings and limited progression with developments and initiatives.

Collaborative and decision-making

- ***negotiation.*** This was recognised as an important skill because so much of the library providing a service depends on making a case for money or support, finding out what is needed by users and persuading them to use it. Without negotiation, there will be little collaborative progress on developments.

Decision-making

- ***analytical skills.*** These skills involve the ability to regularly analyse the activities and services of the library, and being able to continuously improve services to suit user demands. Without this skill, the librarian will be limited in taking improvements forward due to a lack of evaluation and targeting new developments.
- ***decision-making processing.*** This is the ability to make appropriate decisions based on the needs of users, ideally involving them. If decision-making is not logical, relevant and based on user needs, users are less likely to be engaged with library provision.

- **critical thinking.** This is the ability to reflect on a wider perspective of school library provision, to analyse data and introduce creative solutions to problems. A lack of critical thinking practice is likely to result in a less effective library.

Evidence-based

- **evidence collection skills.** This is defined as involving two main aspects. The first is to regularly consult the literature and examine research in the area of school librarianship, in order to more objectively identify models and good practice that can be adapted and implemented. The second aspect is to collect, organise and present data in school, both qualitative and quantitative, to show how the library contributes towards the life of the school, assists with developing multiple literacies, supports the delivery of the curriculum and the promotion of literacy, and improves the attainment of students. Such internal data use can show progress over time. Without this benchmarking of data, the library could be said to show signs of insularity and a lack of vision and commitment to continuous improvement.

School librarian

A motivated qualified professional librarian who is committed to improving the library service offered to users to assist student learning and to continuing professional development to help staff knowledge of new developments, particularly in the topics of education, learning, multiple literacies, technology and management. This section outlines factors to make the best use of a professionally qualified librarian in the high school environment. Lack of money and support may be problems, but the spirit of these recommendations can still be implemented, for example if there is insufficient money to maintain a current collection of resources to support learning, departments could be approached for money or resources; a lending collection might be borrowed from a supporting library service; Internet documents could be downloaded or catalogued for inclusion on the catalogue; extra funds could be raised using a variety of methods; bids could be made to interested bodies; and more work could be implemented on delivering information skills to make best use of the resources that are available, including Internet sources. If the librarian does not fully meet this brief, there is likely to be a less effective service.

- ***maintain a current collection of resources to support learning in all curriculum subjects and continuing professional development to add to staff knowledge in school, based on regular collaboration with teaching and authority staff.*** This is a core service for any school library. Without this the librarian will struggle to attract users. The continuing professional development element will undoubtedly attract teachers and other staff into the library.
- ***maintain a collection of resources for leisure reading which further encourages literacy development, such as fiction, magazines, graphic novels and other graphic formats.*** The main reason for this point is to encourage non-traditional users, particularly students who may not engage in reading. From the earliest models developed in the literature, this has been a key role for the library and a major omission for literacy development of users if it were not addressed.
- ***collaborate with teaching staff across the whole school to develop learning opportunities.*** This is an opportunity for the librarian to spread the word about what s/he can offer to help support the curriculum and how her/his professional training and experience can contribute to teaching and increase the attainment and achievement of students. If all teachers are not included, there will not be full representation from all users, and the library will be less relevant to some users.
- ***provide resources to support the interests of users.*** This will help to attract users who may not have traditionally used library resources; can help the librarian to enhance social development of students; and provide an opportunity to get to know students on a more personal level, which may help with classroom management issues. If these students are not attracted into the library to follow their interests, there will be less representation from all users and their views on future library provision might not be expressed, affecting future library provision.
- ***provide information literacy and multiple literacies education to users.*** This is an important lifelong skill for students, whether they follow an academic or vocational path in future. Such education would encompass contextual knowledge, understanding and values in addition to skills. It may be addressed jointly by librarians and teachers in schools, and could be delivered through subject teaching. Without education and practice in these skills, users will not be able to fully access and assess information sources available to them, or to judge their value.

- ***promote information literacy and multiple literacies opportunities for users to develop abilities through the curriculum.*** By understanding the context and by constantly practising the skills involved in multiple literacies, students will be able to develop their own learning in all subjects. Ideally this would be recorded and each skill planned to be introduced in a systematic way through a whole-school approach to multiple literacies. The existing professional skills of a school librarian can be utilised when planning this process. If these opportunities are not made available to users, they are less likely to develop their abilities.
- ***identify own training needs and communicate them to school management.*** Whether a formal appraisal or staff review and development opportunity is made available or not, it is still important for the librarian to identify what training or developmental opportunities are needed and to strive to have them met. This will provide an opportunity for her/him to be stimulated, to reflect on what is done elsewhere, and to meet other professionals. Such experiences do not always cost money and may not always be met by courses, but can involve relevant experiential activities, such as job shadowing or job exchange. If these developmental needs are not met, the librarian is less likely to have a wider appreciation of what can be offered in school libraries.
- ***regularly engage in formal continuing professional development opportunities with teachers in school, colleagues in other school libraries and on national courses.*** Formal courses can still be useful, not just for the content learned, but also the chance to reflect and the chance to share learning with colleagues and peers. A lack of formal opportunities will tend to make the librarian less open to wider professional development.
- ***be aware of and contribute to the development of wider professional issues at a national and international level.*** In the UK, demonstration of a wider professional awareness is a factor involved in the postgraduate Charter, Revalidation of Charter and Fellow qualifications of CILIP. This also provides a chance for librarians in schools to have a wider perspective than operational tasks in their own job; learn from what is going on in other sectors of the library and information world; and to apply good practice to their own sector. Where this does not happen, the librarian is less likely to benefit from the intellectual stimulation and new ideas offered between professionals when networking, and the danger is that s/he will become more professionally isolated.

- ***regularly access literature and research concerning how the school librarian supports learning and communicate it to school management.*** Such measures will keep the librarian in touch with what recent research has been carried out, and to learn from that by applying good ideas to practice. A wider range of literature may have to be examined if specific literature is not yet available, for example in this study EBP was examined initially in health and social work. There could be a problem in accessing literature if articles are only available electronically through university networks with protected passwords, however professional organisations can help by offering digests and summaries of research, in order to bring closer together parallel roads of practice and theory. A lack of this more extensive research involves less exposure to wider practice. It is interesting that CILIP is now offering access to certain journals online for members, as advertised in CILIP Gazette (2008), and use of such journal access will be useful to monitor.
- ***identify useful data to collect and build up an evidence portfolio reflecting the contribution of the work of the school librarian to improvements in student achievement.*** This measure will be invaluable, particularly when resources are tight and tough decisions have to be made. The librarian should be able to compile a folio of evidence to prove how s/he contributes to teaching and learning within the school. This is already expected from guidelines, standard documents and formal inspections. Without such evidence, the librarian is in danger of being unable to prove the value of the library to student learning, which could be disastrous in times of budget cuts.
- ***regularly collect evidence on how school libraries contribute to learning, share this with teaching and management colleagues and adjust own practice in the light of findings in order to improve student achievement.*** This iterative process will not only collect evidence, but apply its findings to real practice in school. If this is not done, the librarian may find it more difficult to make changes and gain support and funding for new initiatives.
- ***demonstrate and promote the link between own school library use, learning and achievement.*** This follows on from the previous two points, and demands a proactive and positive approach to advocacy, with similar problems when this is not implemented.

- ***promote literacy across the school in collaboration with all teachers.*** All teachers can help to improve literacy, not just English teachers. With a whole school approach led by management commitment, there is an opportunity to consolidate learning and give a consistent message that reading is for all, not just as a learning skill but as a basic social need. Promoting literacy is a basic function of the library, and if this is not carried out, students will not get the best support in helping them to develop literacy abilities and reading enjoyment. If other teachers are not involved, literacy becomes solely an English and library function rather than a whole school priority for all to support as a lifelong skill.
- ***commit to gaining maximum funding by assisting management with linking bids for initiatives with contribution to support for the curriculum and teaching and learning, and to evidence the effective use of funding.*** Funding can be a problem, but a proactive approach to looking inside and outside school for extra support can help. Documenting how extra funding has made a difference will help make the case for future funding. If such links are not made, there is likely to be less success when bidding for money to support projects.
- ***undertake action research on the role of the school library in learning and teaching.*** This will demonstrate how the library and what the librarian does can make a difference to student attainment. It provides real evidence compared to the perception that somehow the library is worthy. If this research is not carried out, or research in other schools not disseminated, the relevance of the library to student achievement is minimised.

Management support

Without management support, the librarian will find it difficult to move ahead, especially with whole-school initiatives. However a good management team can allow the potential of the librarian to blossom.

A supportive senior management team and a Headteacher who provides excellent leadership and who will

- ***give clear guidance and leadership to school staff (based on national and local recommendations) on how to collaborate with the school librarian and use the library to contribute to achievement in teaching and learning and to support the delivery of the curriculum.*** This presupposes that school

managers will make themselves familiar with appropriate guidelines and standards in order that they can get the best from their school librarian's training, skills and experience. They will also need to carry out a team leadership role in drawing together teaching and library staff to collaborate at appropriate opportunities. Without this focus and encouragement, collaboration will not be given the best chance to work across the school.

- ***provide role training for staff to help them examine roles and identify strengths in teams with regard to collaborative activities.*** This is a useful activity where staff can identify and investigate their own comfort zones in working together, and with this awareness, develop, adapt or improve their practice. If role training is not carried out, progress will tend to be more limited and less effective.
- ***provide appropriate support for the school librarian in line with local and national guidelines.*** With this knowledge and how management want to apply it in the individual school or geographical area, major steps forward can be taken in terms of what the librarian can offer students and staff. If this is not undertaken, the librarian may not focus on best practice.
- ***allocate regular formal and informal opportunities to communicate with the librarian.*** Clear communication channels can only help to develop staff and identify and resolve problems, misunderstandings or worries at an early stage.
- ***provide adequate support, space, time, information technology and resources to develop the library as a whole school learning resource.*** In an ideal world, the librarian can do the best job when s/he has what s/he needs. Where ideal conditions do not feature in every area, a plan to move closer towards them over a time period will help to create a positive mood for future working, and hope for change and development. Where this does not happen, there is more of a chance of negativity and hopelessness.
- ***identify sources of internal and external funding for library development.*** In tandem with the librarian searching for funding, the senior management in a school will have different contacts to approach. Careful targeted spending of extra funding can help to achieve more positive change. Without adequate funding the library will not progress fully.
- ***provide regular authority-approved relevant negotiated appraisal and training opportunities for school library staff.*** Appraisal or staff review and

development opportunities can help by developing the librarian professionally and identifying appropriate training or experiential learning can also help. However there is some distrust of such schemes by certain staff who see them as a threat, and it is important that change and development are achieved through negotiation and agreement.

- ***provide staffing support to allow the librarian time for reflective work.*** The librarian will be unable to carry out reflective work in the normal school day in a library that is used constantly. There needs to be time away from the library so that the librarian has time to read, think and plan for the future development of the library. If s/he is unable to do this then the tendency will be for her/him to focus on operational issues, making it difficult to achieve a more strategic approach to library services.
- ***commit to gaining maximum funding by linking bids for initiatives with contribution to teaching and learning.*** Multi-linked initiatives make the best use of funding where there are outcomes meeting several aims, for example a task providing content plus information literacy outcomes may suit departmental, social development and learning goals. If such a co-ordinated approach is not undertaken, funding may not be most efficiently spent.
- ***be responsive to the school librarian's suggestions for change in the light of action research.*** Positivity breeds positivity, and using or adapting an idea from an individual gives them more ownership of the task and helps it to be achieved, particularly when it results in evidence of learning development. If suggestions from the librarian are routinely ignored, the result could be a librarian who becomes more negative.
- ***show an active awareness of the role of EBP to the work of the school librarian and achievement of students.*** Regular reports from the librarian on what has been achieved should ideally be promoted to other staff members, both as an example of good practice and to encourage more collaborative work on joint learning goals. If such information is not presented and disseminated, the librarian may become discouraged.

Collaboration (more detail in Chapter 7)

Collaboration will help the librarian to provide integrated support to teaching staff, for both parties to work together to improve student achievement.

Regular collaborative work to be encouraged and promoted with practical support. The librarian will

- ***take opportunities to meet other school librarians and authority Director of School Library Services (where one exists) on a regular basis.*** Often, working with peers and those involved directly in the same profession can help by sharing good examples of practice, which can then be explored, discussed and replicated back at school. If the librarian is not involved in such networking, there could be a narrower vision of library provision.
- ***collaborate with school management on service self-evaluation and plans for continuous improvement.*** This is a current area to develop in school libraries as it will help with improving and developing library services to users within the individual culture of a school, with staff working on common goals to improve attainment. If this is not carried out, there will be a more disjointed approach to meeting common goals, and developments may not progress as quickly.
- ***identify user needs and opinions on library provision on a regular basis.*** There will always be changing demands, and only by asking users what they want and they do not like about library services can identify changes in use and demands. By offering what users want the library will be more relevant and central to the work and learning of users. If users are not involved, the library could become less relevant to their needs, resulting in a lack of use.
- ***involve potential users with decision-making and library development.*** This can be difficult for librarians to implement as it can be seen as giving up control, but by involving users and collecting evidence, decisions about the library and its services are truly evidence-based and relevant to users. It also shows managers that the library is developing on a collaborative basis. If users are not involved, decisions can be seen as more subjective and less relevant to user needs.
- ***take on a wider role within the school community.*** If users do not visit the library, they will never see the librarian. However if the librarian is involved in the life of the school, whether through attending trips, or school plays, or helping in a sports event, non-users can see another side to the librarian, might be asked

- what they want from the library and might decide to visit the library to see what it can offer them. It also emphasises that the library and librarian play a role in supporting the whole school. If the librarian does not take on a wider role, identifying and meeting user needs will be a more limited exercise.
- ***promote library services throughout the school to all departments and make links between library resources, services and facilities with each department's work.*** This is challenging, but by making clear links between subjects, learning and library support for the curriculum, it will be easier for teachers to see the relevance of using the library. If all departments are not involved, the whole-school premise of the school library is diminished, and the relevance of meeting user needs is reduced.
 - ***undertake a collaborative teaching/instructional role in the library with classroom teachers.*** This is more likely in the US as librarians have a formal teaching role, whereas in Scotland with no formal teaching training or role, there could be more difficulties for librarians to apply this point. However, if it is possible, it will help to share common goals and collaborative tasks. Sometimes it is easier for teachers and managers to accept if it is deemed to be “training” or “instruction” rather than “teaching”: a fine distinction but a very real one in many Scottish high school libraries where often teachers are seen to be the only ones who teach.

Evidence (more detail in Chapter 6)

The use of evidence proves whether and how the library delivers relevant, appropriate services. Conversely, if data is not collected, there is no proof of relevance of the library to student achievement or staff need, which could affect use and funding.

Internal and external data will be used to improve and promote the work of the school librarian with the focus of improving student achievement. With appropriate support, the librarian will commit to

- ***apply principles of relevant quantitative and qualitative indicator documents to demonstrate student achievement, library use and targeted development.*** By focusing on published standards, more weight is given to individual plans, because it is part of a whole. Advocacy can be related to these standards to help to progress issues.

- ***regularly collect, analyse and disseminate research evidence and plan how it can be incorporated into the service.*** The wider findings of research can help by providing ideas for development and for future provision.
- ***regularly collect and analyse data from potential users in school and plan the development of the school library accordingly.*** Such measures will prove what users demand from the service, and future collaborative planning will determine how needs will be met.
- ***compare own school library data with local and national data and outline negotiated improvements in regular action plans.*** Benchmarking opportunities gives a reassurance that the library is working for a common purpose in school: does the library deliver what is needed for users? Plans can then be made to establish current levels of provision and what is needed for future developments towards negotiated collaborative goals.
- ***regularly consult users about their present and future needs and their opinions about the library and its development.*** The library does not exist in a vacuum: if there is no awareness of user demands the librarian cannot hope to meet them. If library services do not meet user needs, the question will be asked, why is the library there? Collaborative approaches meet the dual need of collecting user opinion and involving them in the purpose of the library.
- ***given appropriate support from management, act on user opinions to improve the service.*** This needs regular management commitment to provide the means to respond to identified user needs and develop the library to meet their demands, otherwise there may be a lack of focus.
- ***discuss progress with senior management on a regular basis.*** Focused discussions can help to identify common goals and share information on progress and development. Problems can be identified and resolved by working together.
- ***regularly develop and revise policy and planning documents.*** As a matter of course, reflection time gives an opportunity to plan ahead in a conscious, evidence-based way, rather than being reactive to situations as they occur.
- ***maintain and regularly update a procedural manual.*** This is good practice because it lays out the optimum way of doing tasks in an individual library, and is useful for training purposes for supply or support staff. Where it does not exist there could be confusion and non-standard working.

- ***produce an annual Standards and Quality report for users outlining successes and identifying targets for the forthcoming year.*** This is a very simple and satisfying way of summarising real progress and development over the past year, and highlighting targets for the future. Such a document should be given to all staff, displayed on the school website and in the library for students to see. In this way the relevance of the library in whole school progress can be demonstrated. A sample report with appropriate headings is in Appendix W.

National bodies

There are various bodies with a national perspective that can add a great deal to improve the situation for school librarians. On a local level, many of these factors can be applied to Directors of School Library Services, who will provide local support and guidance to librarians and school managers.

Co-ordinated professional body and literature led practice

- ***training about the potential contribution of the school librarian will be included in basic teacher training and school manager training.*** This will help to increase awareness of the potential capability of the librarian to improving student achievement and attainment, particularly in Scottish schools where librarians are not teachers. The only experience of some teachers will be of what school librarians did when they were students, and this needs to be updated.
- ***professional bodies will articulate with more generic educational and quality documents to produce guidelines and promote research into school library work by evidence-based practice, linking with current and proposed curriculum initiatives, such as Glow; and A Curriculum for Excellence (Scotland); and No Child Left Behind (United States).*** By tying in documents to standards and documents teachers and managers are familiar with, it will be easier for them to understand how the library can link into educational goals.
- ***professional bodies will work with academic institutions to provide opportunities to commission, collate, promote, discuss and disseminate school library research (and especially practitioner-focused action research) demonstrating positive effects of school libraries on student achievement and attainment, including technologies such as blogs and wikis.*** Highlighting what has been achieved by others encourages a climate of

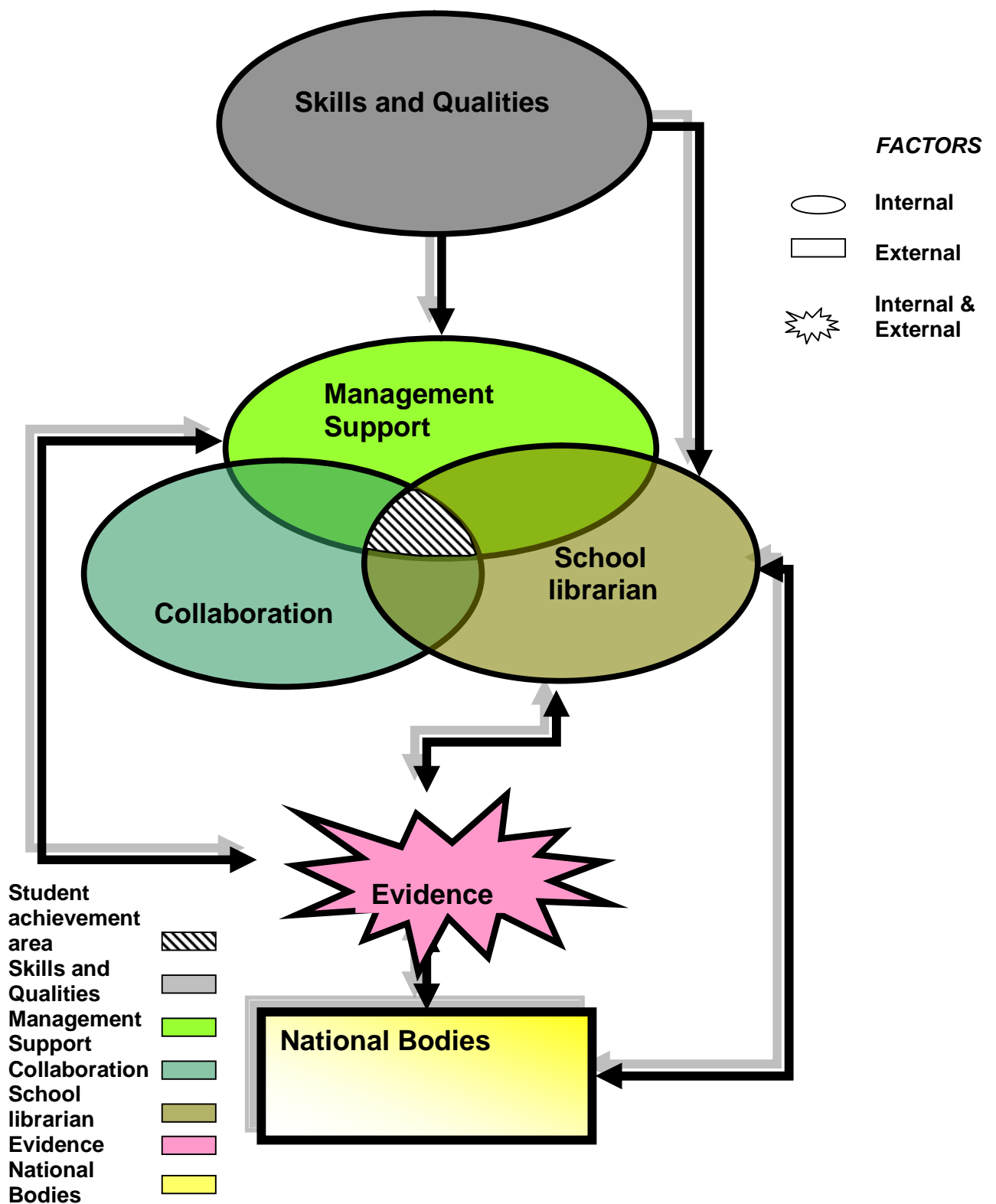
- learning and development. Using modern technologies will ensure that the librarian leads in these areas and provides a more inclusive forum.
- ***professional bodies will maintain and promote a national overview of best practice in relevant school library initiatives.*** It is important to identify and promote best practice in all sorts of areas of the contributions made by school libraries and librarians. This will encourage others to take part and share experiences; provide an element of kudos; acknowledge and celebrate success.
 - ***professional bodies will give clear guidance to Headteachers and school managers on how to make the most effective use of school libraries and the skills of professional school librarians.*** Advocacy is a vital issue to promote best practice, but it must be presented in terms familiar and relevant to Headteachers and managers to gain their full understanding: therefore relating issues always to education and pedagogy rather than librarianship.
 - ***professional journals will commission, promote and provide easier access to articles on best practice.*** There is a problem for those who are not university students, who find it difficult to access electronic items normally only available through university passwords. Better access will give better advocacy.
 - ***mainstream practitioner journals will include digests of relevant research.*** Bringing together research, theory and practice will provide a more rounded picture for all to use, and encourage participation between practitioners and researchers in future work.
 - ***research findings relating to school library work and student achievement will feature more in practitioner conferences.*** Rather than keeping research findings for researchers, and practitioners talking about practice, sharing at conferences will enable everyone to progress: researchers will learn from practitioners who can try out recommendations and give practical feedback, and practitioners will learn from implementing and adapting research rigour from findings in their situations. This could lead to a cycle of progression.
 - ***findings and contacts regarding more informal unpublished “grey” literature on school libraries will be collated and included regularly in practitioner journals.*** Many useful ideas and findings at conferences are lost to those who do not attend the conference: recording, disseminating and promoting these good ideas and initiatives will contribute towards the cycle of progression

- already outlined, building on research with practice, practice with research to form a more rounded and rigorous provision that has been tested.
- ***specialist pre-service and in-service school librarian training will be made available on principles of applying EBP.*** By outlining a very simple approach to what EBP is and how it can be used in school libraries, the benefits of reflection and collaboration can be promoted so that practitioners can gain from the principles and build on what they already know. They can apply the new understanding to practical situations, use relevant feedback and consolidate an evidence-based approach to their practice.

The above listing of main categories and specific components represents the emerging requirements for an effective evidence-based school librarian. The ideal of the effective EBP school librarian would be expected to be achieved if all elements were in place in a school situation. However the achievement of effective evidence-based practice requires more than the achievement of the individual components. It is important also to understand that the interrelationships and interaction between the key factors and thus reveal the complexity of achieving evidence-based practice in a school library.

Figure 9.1 demonstrates the key principles of the model. As already stated, it reveals the interrelationships and interaction between factors and illustrates the resulting complexity. However it is possible to work towards achieving the model by addressing aspects from all headings, recognising required elements and planning how to implement them.

Recognising and adding to appropriate skills and qualities are vital to both librarian and management, through training, continuing professional development, shadowing or experiential methods. Joint training with teaching colleagues is appropriate for some topics, and giving basic information on the role expectations of the school librarian to those on teacher courses would be helpful, whether basic teacher training, in-service and those aimed at managers.



KEY

Figure 9.1 Model of an effective evidence-based high school librarian

The use of evidence is two-way: the librarian creating evidence and sharing it with the wider profession in the literature and at in-service and the librarian using research and in-house evidence to improve her/his practice and show evidence of raising student achievement.

National bodies have a part to play in commissioning, gathering and disseminating evidence, through publications, digests and collating unpublished “grey” literature such as conference papers and posters. This can feed into management and librarian levels through their professional literature, both specialised and joint. At a local level, Directors of School Library Services can also help by providing a focus for best practice, giving guidance and encouraging training and dissemination.

The most important area in this diagram is the hatched area where management support, school librarian and collaboration sections meet: this is the student achievement area and where collaborative decisions are made. Where all three groups are committed to contribute to collaboration in teaching and learning; where the model of using EBP is in place; and where there is a shared ethos of supporting multiple literacies, student achievement is more likely to rise. However, where there is any lack in commitment in these areas, it leaves fewer opportunities for students to raise their achievement levels. There are other areas where some progress can be made: the more elements from the model in the areas of management support and school librarian are in place, there is likely to be more effectiveness. In a similar way, there is likely to be more effective practice when elements from the model in the areas of collaboration and management support are in place; and where elements from the model in the areas of school librarian and collaboration are in place. However the most effective practice is likely to be when elements from all three areas are in place.

9.7 Use of model

The level of collaborative working that affects student achievement can be identified in many ways. The new model in Figure 9.1 offers a way forward in planning and evaluating school library provision. It offers a way of understanding what is required, while also examining guideline documents or local standards. This can then be compared with the level that exists at present, identified through localised reflection on evidence, in negotiation between librarian and manager. The negotiated style is in order

to discuss issues and highlight different perspectives, for example one party may feel some issue has been met, while the other party may disagree.

For example, from the Role of the librarian section of the final model, evidence could be included for some of the headings as outlined by the following measures:

- *collaborate with teaching staff across the whole school to develop learning opportunities*
list meetings with actions; plans of collaborative work; timetables showing collaborative work sessions; session evaluations from staff and students
- *provide resources to support the interests of users*
outcomes of regular surveys to users to identify their needs; communication of those surveys to users showing how their resource needs were met
- *identify own training needs and communicate them to school management*
attach appraisal or staff review and development scheme goals; evaluations of courses or experiences
- *regularly engage in formal continuing professional development opportunities with teachers in school, colleagues in other school libraries and on national courses*
list courses attended; evaluations of courses; notes of meeting actions and continuing professional development undertaken

This expansion of one heading in terms of practical ways to demonstrate how evidence can be produced can be replicated in the other headings to form a practical way forward. This is an area where Directors of School Library Services could assist school managers by identifying evidence collection measures. Once the present situation in a library has been established and evidence collected (which in itself will take some time), the next step is to map out what is needed to be done in order to gather more evidence and work at a higher level. Once an action plan has been drawn up and targets met, standards will tend to improve, and continual improvement can be planned in order to reach negotiated and more advanced targets. Research evidence can be examined from the literature,

and in-house data can be collected, involving users and discovering what they want from their library. However, it is recognised that a great deal of regular and serious commitment is needed to have a plan of continuous improvement that will work, as it involves time, staffing and money. With authority-wide backing, school management commitment and librarian dedication, it can work, and small steps towards a goal are recommended. In this way, such a process is simple to start, progress can be measured and improvement and success can be seen. Indeed this is all part of evidence-based practice, but at a wider professional development level.

Bearing in mind the principles of Lindblom (1980) with what he calls “*seriality*” p38 and “*continual nibbling substitutes for the good bite that may never be offered.*” p38, little by little people can work towards the goal. Mintzberg (1973) talks of Lindblom’s definition of such a process as “*disjointed incrementalism*” p16 where, step by step, progress can be made. The only alternative to this step by step process is not to do anything at all in any organised way, and be left behind as the EBP wave comes towards those working in high school libraries. As in other parts of education, authorities, managers and librarians are looking towards evidence to prove the worth of services, and this can be linked to funding and even continuation of services. It is likely that justification of the costs of the high school library and librarian will be needed sooner rather than later, and where little evidence can be provided, services may find themselves under threat. This is especially true in a situation where having a qualified professional school librarian is not statutory.

To compare with a more recent model, Todd (2007) talks of three interrelated dynamic principles of EBP, evidence *for* practice; evidence *in* practice; and evidence *of* practice, what he calls mnemonically the F-I-O framework. He names six guiding principles for building an evidence-based practice framework in schools:

- “1 *Know the research, and know the research intimately;*
- 2 *Make visible to the research foundation of your practice in your school;*
- 3 *Make student learning outcomes the center of your evidence;*
- 4 *Integrate evidence-generating strategies in your practice that focus on learning outcomes;*
- 5 *Mesh results of local evidence of learning outcomes with other evidence in the school, as well as with existing research to establish evidence-based claims, and to build a continuous improvement plan;*
- 6 *Disseminate, celebrate and build together on the evidence-based outcomes.” p64*

These recommendations are certainly very laudable, and reflect some part of the model presented in Figure 9.1, and have a major impact on the work of the school librarian. The difference between what Todd outlines and the model in this study is that the latter represents a wider focus, also involving school management and national bodies, rather than just from the viewpoint from the high school librarian. Several questions can be asked of Todd's F-I-O framework. Where is s/he going to get time to follow these principles, particularly where the library is solely staffed? How is the librarian to access such literature and research if not a member of an academic library? How and when is evidence to be collected? Who is to determine what is to be collected, and how? How is there going to be time for collaboration and reflection? These are the kinds of questions that will undoubtedly be raised by both librarian and manager, and they need to be seriously addressed as a starting point before much progress can be made. This has been done when outlining the model from this study. If such questions cannot be resolved, then progress will certainly be limited. Some work can be carried out if there is one determined partner in the relationship, but this will obviously affect the overall success of achieving the full potential of using evidence and, crucially, improving the library and what the librarian can offer. Lack of support and collaboration over a number of years is likely to wear down even the most determined practitioner, but some people will keep trying, hoping perhaps for some chink in the armour over time, other pressures for transformation, or possibly a change of staff, as was demonstrated in some study responses.

Todd (2007) summarises what is important when using EBP in school libraries:

"The message is simple. Let your school library be the center of a knowledge-sharing community, and think strategically about how you will work with the evidence... show strength in collaboration.. understand the intended audience [when disseminating results]... the format of presentation is critical." p76

Once again, what he suggests ideally needs all partners to co-operate fully in order to make the maximum progress. There is still a limited potential to make some improvements, and some individuals will take up the challenge. Once again these recommendations have been addressed in the course of developing the model in this study, through developing a model which covers a wider remit than just the school librarian, sharing the load between stakeholders.

From the school librarian's perspective, St Lifer (2002) lists seven habits that sum up a highly effective school librarian:

1. *Great at communicating and proselytizing the vision they have for the library*
2. *A knack for making the people they work for look good*
3. *Skilled at obtaining "buy-in" from crucial members of the organization*
4. *Politically savvy*
5. *Masters of fostering enthusiasm and respect from others*
6. *Innovative, creative, and intellectually flexible thinkers and doers*
7. *Excellent at outreach (read: very proactive)."*

All of these habits are reflected in some form in the model created in this study, and from answers by respondents, and reinforce the crucial elements and skills needed to be an effective practitioner. However, as outlined in the wider model from this study, similar skills will be needed from managers and teaching colleagues. The model from this study includes extra elements including the wider perspective of other stakeholders, management and national bodies not mentioned by St Lifer, and is a model for education. It is evident that no matter how effective the high school librarian, there needs to be equal commitment from management, an encouraging ethos in the school, and a commitment to staff collaboration to improve student achievement. The role of national bodies and Directors of School Library Services is to provide a framework to how this can be done, giving examples of good practice and providing guidance. It is the role of local authorities to provide the support and resources needed to progress the commitment from theory to practice. This is considered to be an effective way that the use of evidence-based practice can make a real difference to student learning and achievement across both countries. The model presented in this chapter shows a national, local and school-wide view of how EBP can be implemented in a high school library. This differs from the literature in that it outlines commitment needed from stakeholders other than the librarian.

Without sustained, deliberate and constant effort and real commitment towards this goal from the many partners involved, the overall outlook is likely to be inconsistent, erratic and variable, although there will be odd occurrences of excellent practice (likely to be more the exception rather than the rule) amongst a backdrop of inconsistency, dissatisfaction and confusion. At this stage in the life of the profession, the case must be made forcefully, the argument won, and once the principles of EBP have been recognised and progressed as outlined in this model, the job of implementing and

benefiting from the practice can be taken forward and the proof of how high school libraries raise student achievement can be shown.

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Chapter 10 Conclusions

The aims of this chapter are to draw together conclusions from this study; to make recommendations for further investigation based on findings arising from this research; and to outline how it has contributed to knowledge. Prior to considering main conclusions, it is useful to recap on what has been achieved.

The purpose of the research was to understand the skills and qualities that make an effective evidence-based high school librarian, and to develop a model demonstrating this understanding. The study started with an investigative phase, with a review of the literature, to identify the historical background of high school libraries in both countries, and to identify how expectations of the contribution of the high school librarian have changed over the years to the present day. The research featured empirical work based on a range of qualitative methods. High school librarians, Headteachers and Directors of School Library Services contributed to the study. A key feature of the research was the creation of a model outlining features of best practice of the evidence-based high school librarian. An early draft model based on an interpretation of the findings was amended to create a final model, after validating with stakeholders during a refinement phase. An important part of this model is acknowledging that the best practice is not to be found in the work of the school librarian alone, but demonstrating that interrelationships between certain elements are needed for the most effective scenario. The original aims and objectives of the research are revisited below and the outcomes examined in relation to these aims and associated hypotheses and questions. Recommendations have been made for potential areas of interest for future research.

As already identified, three key themes emerged from the findings. The first was planning and decision-making processes; the second was networking and collaboration, and the third was interprofessional relationships and roles. Emergent findings were examined, and skills and qualities needed for an effective-based practitioner were identified. At this stage it is useful to reflect on the three themes.

When considering planning and decision-making processes, it was clear that there was little use of rational decision-making theory in school libraries. More often there was an adhoc, experiential and incremental approach to planning and decision-making, which could have been due to lack of time, influence and planning opportunities. This approach

is named for the purposes of this study a pragmatic solution-driven model. It operates by identifying a solution that might work, to provide small steps to move away from an unsatisfactory situation to a slightly better situation. This stage can be repeated again and again: honing, modifying and fine-tuning to move away from negative aspects of applying the initial solution and any further solutions. Key factors are that there might not be evidence of long term planning, different options are not explored and solutions may not always be related to wider goals.

There was some evidence of long-term pre-planning with teachers, mainly from American librarians. Sometimes essential elements of the planning cycle were not included, and these involved mainly planning and evaluation parts of the cycle. Once again lack of time to complete tasks was an issue, and also a lack of time to reflect on more strategic elements featured. Building in regular non-contact time with students would give librarians an opportunity for reflection to take place. Training in strategic thinking and decision-making could help future working practices become more focused. Accessing and applying external research in addition to collating internal evidence could make decision-making more objective and relevant to user needs. Positive results could then be disseminated in the professional literature to encourage a culture of improving practice.

When reflecting on the second theme of networking and collaboration, there was evidence of a range of levels of collaborative work in practice, with more formal recognition demonstrated in US schools. Identifying present and preferred levels of collaboration could be a useful starting discussion between managers, teachers and librarians. Plans could then be made about how to meet appropriate levels of collaborative working and regular planning and monitoring could assess progress. Allocating regular time to work on collaborative projects would need to be negotiated, particularly where the librarian worked alone. An important role for managers would be to encourage collaborative work between teachers and librarians whenever possible and to avoid the librarian working in isolation.

When considering the third theme of interprofessional relationships and roles, there was a call for extra training for professionals, so that teachers, managers and school

librarians could learn more about each other's work, understand what they could expect from each other when working together and explore potential collaborative projects.

Certain skills and qualities were identified as being useful to be a high school librarian, and these could be incorporated when recruiting and developing staff. Some examination of role theory was considered useful in order to make full use of the strengths of partners, and to raise awareness of role preferences when working as part of a team. This involves examination of the way people work together in a team and how there needs to be a balance of roles in a team in order to get the best results from team working, this has been expressed most clearly by Belbin (1992). QUOTE By examining the potential roles that can be played in team working, natural preferences and existing strengths can be determined, and training can be given to help people extend their ways of working. This is reflected by Elston and Holloway (2001) who talk of the importance of training in teamworking practice to helping professionals become more effective in interprofessional working. Freeth (2001). By implementing such training, it is likely to reduce the negative elements of teamworking, such as groupthink as described by Janis (1971), where group members feel invulnerable and may be out of touch with the environment in which they work. A similar negative outcome is described by Curtis (1994) who talks about group members wanting to reach the consensus to match the leader, overriding their own evaluation of a situation.

As with networking and collaboration, allowing time to reflect on practice and plan future strategy would be a useful way of making the best use of the professionally qualified school librarian.

10.1 Aim 1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to be an effective evidence-based practice (EBP) practitioner in the high school library environment

These elements were identified by examining relevant literature and designing appropriate methodology tools to gather information related to themes of interest raised by high school librarians and other stakeholders in this field. When analysing feedback, a broad range of skills and qualities was identified by respondents, and while all would not be expected in one person or school library situation, by itemising core elements in the person specification for the post of high school librarian it would help towards ensuring that a person with an appropriate range of skills and qualities was employed.

There was also an understanding in this model that appropriate environments, training and support would be required to equip high school librarians and colleagues to perform to a higher level, and to complement the range of required skills and qualities; and that there were interrelationships between various elements. As already discussed, three emergent themes appeared to be central to the role of effective evidence-based practitioner and required skills and qualities: planning and decision-making processes; networking and collaboration; and interprofessional relationships and roles.

Collaboration skills underpinned other skills and qualities in the model. However when considering current priorities, in the vignette stage of this study it was interesting that only 7.4% Scottish librarians (compared with 59.1% of US librarians) identified the (deliberate) omission of collaborative work presented in the scenario, which showed that for these Scottish librarians this was not a priority at that time, and that they did not relate to the collaborative element as much as American colleagues. However, Scottish respondents identified different stages of collaboration that could happen, from Audrey who gathered basic information about topics being studied, to Ruby who showed more awareness of formal ways of working when she talked of the need to be aware of the:

“Curricular relevance of services and interface with school/departmental plans and priorities.”

One third of total vignette respondents thought that there was not enough collaboration with teachers, and half said that the librarian in the scenario should communicate more and be more proactive. The information from this aim led into the second aim. The objectives relating to Aim 1 will now be examined, and a discussion about related findings from this study.

Objectives:

- a) To establish how decisions concerning high school libraries were made and to identify the skills and qualities needed to be an evidence-based high school librarian**
- b) To discover who was involved in the decision-making process in high school libraries**
- c) To compare differences between countries about decision-making**
- d) To establish if formal decision-making processes were used**

From the findings of this study, it was evident that decisions in school libraries were often made on an adhoc basis due to restrictions on time, with resulting lack of opportunities to reflect and collaborate. However, there was some evidence of longer term planning and collaboration with teaching colleagues, mainly from American school librarians. Some librarians said that they involved students with decisions about resourcing, and involved staff with wider issues where joint planning might be needed, such as project and information skills planning. However, generally, school librarians made decisions about the library on their own, and many of them said that they enjoyed this autonomous way of working. The danger of too much autonomy could be that collaborative decision-making would not be in force, and that users would not be involved in the process of determining what school libraries delivered. Many managers reported that they wanted librarians to involve more people when making decisions, such as students and staff, however it was unclear in many cases if this had been expressed to the librarian. Potential benefits of collaborative working processes were not always clearly led or encouraged by managers.

The formal processes of rational decision-making theories were not commonly found in this study. Some American and a few Scottish librarians showed an understanding of the rounded process of rational decision-making: planning; collaborating with others; identifying options; choosing from these and evaluating the chosen strategy for success. However, many more chose some of these steps, often omitting planning, option selection and evaluation phases. Without planning, choosing from options and evaluation, decisions will tend not be of the best quality, and often more time, effort and money is spent moving incrementally from one partial solution to another partial solution as time goes on, rather than investigating all options at the start and choosing the best. However in some situations, the incremental approach was often a practical way to get something achieved, even if it did involve more time and not necessarily include all the options, as at least some element of improvement was made. Decisions were largely made from experiential standpoints, often not involving research or evidence. Combining both experience and evidence is usually a good complementary combination when making robust decisions, as it brings together strengths from both and highlights possible problems before they occur, and allows time to consider solutions.

There was little demonstration of large-scale evaluation of strategies implemented. This

could be due to the nature of the post, as often school librarians tended to react to user demands, may have had no assistance and may have carried out both operational and strategic tasks. US librarians tended to have more time to reflect on more strategic elements of their work. Scottish colleagues often had insufficient time to work on more strategic elements as they often had little or no non-contact time, or no assistance. It would be expected that by allocating regular non-contact time for planning; reflecting on ethos and tasks; and collaborating with teachers there would be encouragement for a positive climate for more strategic planning, thinking and collaborative work.

Generally US librarians had more support and better staffing levels than in Scotland. This gave them more opportunity to carry out outreach work away from the library (for example working in the classroom), planning and collaborating with teachers on a variety of subjects. US librarians were also more likely to take a lead in delivering multiple literacies sessions, and this could be because they had a teaching qualification in addition to a school library qualification.

10.1.1 Questions answered

In Chapter 1, some initial questions were asked at the start of the study in section 1.3.3. These will now be answered in general terms based on the findings from the study, and how they relate to Aim 1. More detailed elements feature in this chapter under relevant headings.

10.1.1.1 What were the key factors of services offered in school libraries in each country?

The study sought to identify and discuss these in terms of the needs of the users. They were different in each country, although there was a common core. These factors were identified in Chapter 4 through the questionnaire survey. Table 4.8 in section 4.3.1 outlines full details of recommended core services in each country, but a few highlights show interesting and differing results. Reading promotion rated at 86.3% for US and 63% for Scots respondents. The UK Bullock report (Great Britain. Department of Education and Science 1975) stresses the importance of school librarians promoting reading skills, which represented typical priorities at that time. A more recent report (Scholastic 2004) makes the link of relating student reading scores to library programmes of study (which could include schemes such as Accelerated Reader where

books are allocated point values) where students read books and by completing an online multiple choice quiz, gain points that accumulate to demonstrate reading improvement in a quantitative way.

72.7% of US librarians thought it important that they were rated as ICT experts which no Scottish respondent mentioned, which reflected their perceived role, and the fact that in Scottish schools senior technicians had this ICT responsibility, certainly for hardware. Collaboration rated much more highly with US librarians (77.2%) compared with Scottish colleagues (14.8%), as reinforced by Smith (2001) who reports:

“Central to all media programmes and perhaps the ethos behind media centres in many American schools is the collaborative teaching approach. This approach, supported by extensive research, concludes that information and technology skills are learned most effectively in a resource-based environment with the media specialist working in partnership with educators in all areas, administrators and community resources.” p5

This shows the emphasis in the US on the application of ICT and the collaborative working role of the school librarian.

Scottish librarian Jacqueline demonstrated in the case example presented in section 5.1.3 in Chapter 5 that she had an organised approach to set up a new service, and although she involved features such as taking notes from the literature and listening to fellow professionals, discussing and planning, examining budgeting issues, reporting to her manager then promoting the service, she did not mention looking at various options or evaluating a new service once it was set up. These two omitted stages were also factors missing from the process outlined by her fellow Scot Stephanie, as outlined in section 5.1.4 in Chapter 5, and as reported by US librarian Jack (section 5.2.1 in Chapter 5).

Generally in this study Scottish librarians were less likely to identify the deliberate omission in the vignette of collaboration than their US counterparts, with 7.4% Scots compared to 59.1% Americans identifying this omission. The higher proportion of Americans highlighting that collaboration was not mentioned indicates that there seemed to be more awareness of collaborative working in the US as a central role of the school librarian, who had a more formal role in collaborating with curricular goals and formal assessment. The literacy promotion omission as a key task gave a more even response,

with 37% of Scots and 36.4% of Americans raising that as an omission, indicating that literacy promotion was seen as a commonly shared service of the school librarian in both countries.

10.1.1.2 How did these services develop?

Differences between US and UK models of the high school librarian were examined. Curriculum variations, geographical distances, funding, qualifications and experience played a part in some of these differences. One major difference is that the US school librarian needs to be dually qualified as a teacher who then trains as a school librarian, compared to Scottish school librarians who are generically trained as librarians. The US model is more allied to the fields of pedagogy, assessment and curriculum, while the Scottish model tends not to have this same educational focus, but a more library and resource-based focus. Attempts to follow the educational role of the US model can be difficult in Scotland, as librarians are not teachers and have different pay and conditions from teachers, unlike their US counterparts.

Curriculum requirements also play a part in the different expectations between countries. Generally US librarians are required to take on a fuller role in multiple literacies teaching and assessment. In the US there tends to be more funding, which allows for more access to electronic databases, which requires more teaching of assessing and using sources of information. Each of these factors make a difference in terms of what services are offered, as the Scottish librarians with their library and resource focus are required to provide more resource-based material, while US librarians typically provide more pedagogical and ICT-based instruction.

10.1.1.3 Were features of decision-making different?

Where this was the case, it was investigated why and how they were different. Requirements of users or the working context could be different, and although there could be national, State, District or local guidelines or standards, there could be a great deal of autonomy at the school level depending on the environment or personalities involved. Generally decision-making followed more rational models in the US, although there was evidence of incremental and experiential decision-making in both countries.

10.1.1.4 Did these features differ in relation to cultural context?

There were different cultural elements of a country which affected the needs of the service required for a high school library. In America there was generally more expectation that the librarian contributed and collaborated at an educational and technological level than in the Scottish situation, although there were exceptions to that and some good practice was seen in both countries. The difference could be due to the requirement to be a teacher in the US, and therefore contributions related to teaching were expected, while in Scotland there was more of an expectation of contributions in areas more related to library and resource elements.

10.1.1.5 Did models differ between countries?

There were certainly differences between school librarian provision in the two countries, and at the early stage of planning this study, it was considered that two models might need to be produced, if results between countries were very different. However taking all aspects into consideration, there were enough similarities that it was still possible to create one model to suit both countries without compromising the situation in either country. As it is an ideal model and not meant to reflect the situation with every librarian and every library and every school, the principle was to list ideal elements to encourage stakeholders to aim to meet as many as possible.

10.1.2 Hypotheses

Certain hypotheses were identified at the start of the study, as outlined in Chapter 3, and at this concluding stage it is useful to examine how they have been answered after reviewing the literature and collating responses from stakeholders.

10.1.2.1 High school librarians are now working on more complex developmental work in collaboration with teaching staff

As already outlined in Chapter 1, the expectations on the school librarian have changed greatly in recent years. When working together with teaching staff on wider issues, such as developing multiple literacies skills of students, there will tend to be more complex developmental work because there will be more issues to be agreed and negotiated. There will also be more viewpoints and priorities to take into account. As librarian Donna summarised very well in a US focus group:

“The greatest successes come when teachers and directors [school librarians] work together and communicate needs.”

In the field of school librarianship, important elements raised by participants include using initiative, subject knowledge and communication, and these featured in the final model. No-one in this study identified that they had formally or consciously examined the range of team roles as part of the collaboration they carried out with teaching staff. It would be interesting to explore if such an exercise might break down barriers and preconceptions to the specific team role others can play and help towards a more unified approach to collaboration. By using such an exercise, participants would be more aware of their team role preference and ensure that all roles were played by team members for a more cohesive approach to collaboration.

As stated in Chapter 6, section 6.2 it was not necessarily the case that those librarians with assistants were spending their time on higher level tasks. Scottish Director of School Library Services Daisy reported that once she had put library assistants in schools, she noticed that school librarians tended to feel more comfortable undertaking more operational tasks and discussing these with assistants. Freelance librarian Ann Irving (Hyams 2001) is quoted as thinking that librarians:

“... spend too much time on the mundane library stuff, and aren't political enough to see how to make a impact.” p555

As outlined in the case example section 5.1.1 of Chapter 5, Lesley was a Scottish school librarian in the enviable position of having high levels of assistance, yet she demonstrated low levels of formal collaboration. She stated that development planning was of limited use and:

“Just a paper exercise, would rather be doing.”

As seen in Chapter 5, findings emerged that suggested that there was no link between having higher levels of assistance and the automatic shift to higher level work by the librarian. It would be useful to acknowledge this when planning, negotiating and clarifying responsibilities and tasks of library staff in the high school.

Negative concerns raised by respondents would need to be considered when collaborating with others, and for managers to bear in mind when motivating school librarians who often work in professional isolation. The positive counter-elements of these negative factors are included in the final model, such as building confidence,

tenacity and risk-taking. A conscious effort to explore and include the acquisition and consolidation of such positive qualities in any training or development work would be a useful way to empower school librarians. The methods to gain these qualities could perhaps be discussed in the professional literature and taken forward by professional bodies, employers and library schools. One way to make collaboration positive is for the manager to lead by example, to share a vision for the library, to communicate well and motivate the librarian by working together in a productive way to set goals, and by encouraging the librarian to network with other school librarians at an authority level and examine research in the field. As US librarian Freda said in the questionnaire survey:

"I think it is their job to educate themselves on libraries and their services."

Posting a response to the school librarian support site LM_NET, Torres (2002) said:

"On the matter of principals and other school administrators being uninformed or poorly informed about the correct role of the school librarian.... librarians need to take an active role in changing those perceptions."

The manager can also encourage the librarian to take part in interprofessional training with teachers, to work with those who are enthusiastic and involve them in something they value. This can be through a topic, a goal they have to achieve or develop the use of a technology. By working in this interprofessional way, progress can be made and perhaps more reluctant teachers might be drawn into investigating how their projects could be taken forward once they have heard of the resulting benefits from someone else.

US librarian Sheena suggested another positive way for the vignette librarian to take on a more central role:

"Re-create his job, make himself valued and needed. This takes time. Sometimes jobs expand to greater challenges and money by the amount of energy one puts into their job."

Scottish librarian Linda was allowed to have an overview of all departmental policies before she drew up her development plan. This gave her a great opportunity to coordinate and align the work of the library with departmental priorities. This could be a useful idea for others to try.

10.1.2.2 High school librarians use formal decision-making methods

This hypothesis emerged when studying the literature of decision-making theory, when it was posed if these professionals were aware of such theory and put them into practice. This has not been proved to any general extent, although some individuals did demonstrate such practice. It was also evident from the Scottish focus group when librarians James and Fiona reported in Chapter 6, section 6.1 that they had never had any training in decision-making. In the same section, US Director of School Library Services Ian said in the questionnaire that there should be: *“Inservice dealing with the subject. Many times this is not covered in-depth in the college classes.”* James suggested (as outlined in Chapter 9, section 9.1) that there was need for an *“overarching body... to pool information, to pool ideas.”* This could include appropriate training in elements of formal decision-making for practitioners.

To counter the apparent lack of knowledge and application of decision-making theory, and reflecting on suggestions from respondents, various relevant key points of theory could be outlined in professional journals and at conferences; piloted in practice by professional bodies or covered in professional courses. Basic practical factors could be established and consolidated, with results reported in professional journals or websites. This would help to bring together the use of formal decision-making methods with EBP.

An accepted definition of EBP in librarianship by McKibbin was quoted by Booth (2002):

“Evidence-based librarianship (EBL) is an approach to information science that promotes the collection, interpretation and integration of valid, important and applicable user-reported, librarian-observed, and research-derived evidence. The best available evidence, moderated by user needs and preferences, is applied to improve the quality of professional judgements.”

Such a statement clearly summarises the value of evidence-based work. It brought together the formal research with the experience of practitioners, so it was not merely an academic exercise, but representing reality and relevance at the library desk.

Hospers (1997), when discussing the difference between knowledge and experience, says that:

“We are acquainted only with our own ideas. Whatever exists out there, we can know only through our experiences; and isn’t the content of these experiences all we can really know?” p89

Knowledge can emerge from experience, or by being taught. In this study much decision-making is experiential, based on knowledge and experience of participants.

When looking at the cycle of decision-making and planning, Scottish school librarian Stephanie showed commitment to obtaining opinion from her users and working with colleagues, and bringing these together to make bids for funding and collaborative working time based on user need is a useful strategy, as it helps to justify the project. Interestingly, Deirdre, a US librarian (section 5.2.3 in Chapter 5) did include an evaluation phase in the process she used. Deirdre also referred to reading literature and collaborating with colleagues in school, and other librarians in schools.

Scottish librarian Elma (section 5.1.5 in Chapter 5) talked of the way she felt librarians made decisions: *"Gut feelings!"*

US librarian Letitia (section 5.2.2. in Chapter 5) said that services were offered based on *"Tradition."* and that new services would not be offered because of:

"Fear of doing something poorly, and lack of time."

Such thoughts confirm that often experiential, incremental and conventional routes are often taken by librarians in high schools, but if these were combined with measures based on evidence, needs and research findings, it could prove to be a winning combination to gain funding for collaborative work undertaken to meet whole school goals. Risk-taking could also be a factor that makes a difference.

US Director Louisa suggested that it would be beneficial for librarians to work with peers on collaborative decision-making and:

"Having workshops with motivational speakers."

Such motivational speakers could be from within the school, and many senior management members would be expected to show examples of leading and motivating staff, although it could also involve experts from outwith the school, perhaps from education, business, librarianship or sport.

In America there seemed to be more of a tendency for States and Districts to produce their own guidelines and standards, while in Scotland there had been national documents offering recommendations of services and levels of service. These kinds of

standards can be useful for consistency of provision, to set a minimum level of provision and to establish a basis for individual schools to progress in a negotiated way between librarian and manager. However some US States did not have rigorous current standards and this would be an initial focus for improvement, possibly based on benchmarking with States or Districts who did provide current relevant standards, or providing a federal overview of minimum provision.

An important part of using these documents is to measure establishments against an agreed level of minimum provision, and from the results draw up an action plan to make improvements, and to maintain developments with regular negotiated steps to constantly improve the service. This needs commitment from the librarian and school management, otherwise real change and measured improvement may never be made. However even when improvements are made, resources may still not be used appropriately, and this needs careful attention and monitoring to make the best use of resources. For example, Daisy the Scottish Director talked about how she provided library assistants in all secondary schools, yet after several years the school librarians:

“Haven’t taken the chance to do the higher level stuff – they still prat around with things the assistants should be doing..... they seem to find comfort in that... I just wish they would get it together and do a manager’s job... the schools don’t really see that’s what they could be, should be doing either. It gets me down.”

According to the results of this study, the challenge of evidence-based practice is far from being met in high school libraries. Some school librarians have demonstrated that they are further ahead than others. However it is difficult to generalise that applying certain elements will assure that evidence-based practice will be undertaken, as the combination of factors varies so much, and the skills, qualities and personality of the librarian, and the ethos created by senior management are essential to the EBP culture being implemented and developed. The model in Chapter 9 demonstrates the elements needing to be considered for maximum success, and discussion between school management and the librarian is the starting point, to agree and establish the culture and working practices needed.

10.1.2.3 There is a difference in library provision due to the educational background, conditions and qualifications of Scottish and US high school librarians

There was a difference in librarian qualification and required experience in high schools between the two countries. US school librarians were qualified first as teachers (and depending on the State would need to have worked for one or two years as a teacher before becoming a school librarian), so had the educational and pedagogical understanding and classroom management skills, while their Scottish counterparts had no requirement for formal training in these areas. National bodies and library schools in Scotland could consider providing basic initial or inservice training on these topics in order that school librarians could learn and apply this additional knowledge, and benefit from it. Such a course has been recently developed, as described by Tomney (2008). However not everyone agrees that such training is needed. In contrast, Pignatelli (1987) says that:

"[School] librarians have very different and specific skills, and I would ask that you do not try to become teachers. Try to recognise that you have a distinct contribution to make which complements the role of teachers." p17

Some of these skills could relate to information technology and multiple literacies training. These are areas that should be familiar to the school librarian, and by identifying that s/he is an expert in those fields it could be an inroad into encouraging teachers to collaborate and to use these skills to help teachers deliver the curriculum, to encourage student research skills and improve teaching and learning. US librarian Ellen described in a focus group how she had worked on State standards for information and technology with teaching staff in her school, designing technology goals into assignments. This is one way to take forward collaborative projects for whole school purposes, using the skills of the librarian as the recognised expert.

US librarians tended to have more staffing and funding provision than Scottish colleagues. In the questionnaire survey phase there were two US school libraries that each had eight library staff, compared to many Scottish libraries which were sole staffed. A study to examine this in more detail would be useful to establish appropriate minimum levels of staffing and funding, if basic levels could be established and to examine differences between those with levels of staffing and funding below and above basic levels. The question of whether having a qualified school librarian is to be statutory raises another issue of note. This would involve more expense, so once again, funding streams would have to be identified at a local or national level. It was also noted during fieldwork visits for this study that US librarians tended to work longer hours (typically

7.30am-5.00pm) compared to Scottish counterparts (typically 8.15am-4.00pm). Longer hours meant that they had potentially more time to carry out tasks.

US school librarians had the same teaching pay and conditions as their teacher colleagues, whereas Scottish colleagues usually worked all year round on less favourable pay and holiday entitlements than Scottish teachers. It could be worth investigating if Scottish school librarians were willing to undertake extra training and possibly responsibility, and gain more pay and holiday entitlement in return, and how this could make a difference to being an evidence-based practitioner. The resulting costs of such a scheme would have to be factored into funding streams of this initiative.

Discussing a proposal that the UK demand dually qualified school librarians, Ann Irving (in Hyams 2001) observes that where some countries had dual qualification as standard, these librarians still feel undervalued, so this is perhaps not the solution. The findings of this study confirm that some US respondents felt that teachers do not understand what librarians can offer, for example as described in a focus group by US school librarian Donna:

“Classroom teachers are unsure what an LMC director’s [high school librarian’s] job is.”

Irving (in Hyams 2001) considers that school librarianship should be seen as academic librarianship rather than children’s work, which would more accurately rate its professionally challenging role, demonstrating how it delivered literacy and learning. Although some Scottish librarians said that teachers did not always realise that they were equally qualified or what they could offer towards improving teaching and learning, this was also reported by some US librarians. Perhaps joint training sessions and the encouragement of collaborative projects would help each group appreciate the value of what can be done by working together.

Letitia, a US school librarian talked in case example (section 5.2.2 in Chapter 5) about a lack of confidence she perceived, where some librarians fear doing something new or innovative in case it does not work. She suggested that assertiveness training could be useful. Her colleague Deirdre (section 5.2.3 in Chapter 5) thought it important that school librarians should show more confidence by: *“Trusting themselves.”*

One participant of the Scottish focus group (Briony) raised the idea of school librarians having extra training:

"I would also like to see options for not full teacher training for school librarians but some options on educational theory and the practical aspects of managing large groups of pupils and lesson planning available both as part of librarianship courses."

This could be solved by courses such as that described by Tomney (2008), where school librarians can gain additional educational background, and it would be useful to produce research showing the impact of such courses. Briony's colleague James confirmed that what he had gained in terms of decision-making and teaching skills had been through:

"Experience and observation, I've never come across a means by which that is actually taught and imparted to me."

The question of career progression is also relevant. Even for US school librarians, once they reach the top of their scale they cannot progress further other than moving outside the library. US librarian Jack reported in case example (section 5.2.1 in Chapter 5) that he was qualifying as an elementary or middle school Principal. He identified other routes for career progression as going into school administration or teaching library science. His colleague Betty (section 5.2.5 in Chapter 5) suggested that librarians could be involved in District salary negotiations, which offers another way to improve their financial position without losing the contact with students. Rosa, another US librarian, suggested the option that school librarians could also consider relocating, or investigate a position in library science teaching. US librarian Brad (section 5.2.6 in Chapter 5) was more optimistic with regards to career progression for the school librarian. He saw it on a par with that of teachers, and he encouraged people to take more qualifications, gain more experience and to network fully.

In Chapter 4, section 4.2.2.3 it was reported that Scottish librarians were more likely to be sole workers in the library, and were more likely to undertake non-professional tasks than their American counterparts, because there was no-one else to do this work.

10.2 Aim 2 Critically analyse and relate the significant theories emerging from the literature with the empirical findings of a study based on the work of high school librarians in two countries, to develop a model which describes an effective way of implementing EBP in high school libraries

The skills and qualities were identified by researching the literature and examining themes arising from the findings of the study. The researcher then interpreted these and used judgement to create a draft model (Appendix S), which was presented to members for checking, when additional comments and views were invited (Appendix U). Objectives a), b), c) and d) helped to meet this aim, by finding the original data as stated under aim 1, then creating a model based on these responses and the literature to meet aim 2. This model can be used as a basis for managers to plan recruitment, support and training for staff, and also to consider the wider school environment related to the library contribution to teaching and learning and to the implementation of EBP. With regards to EBP of information professionals generally, Booth and Brice (2004) say that:

“Despite their skills in information retrieval, information professionals do not often systematically search their own knowledge base for evidence with which to support their decisions.” p9

They suggest that information professionals should gain more understanding about the types of information resources pertinent to evidence-based practice, and to become familiar with techniques needed to search them. This would increase the skills base and be relevant to the work of a high school librarian. Although not a common finding in this research that practitioners would systematically compile evidence from research, there was some evidence of such practice being undertaken. For example, Scottish school librarian Fiona piloted the use of qualitative indicators for her area and reported in the questionnaire survey that she found the use of development planning: *“Makes me reflect, identify evidence, focus, justify”* on what is going on in her library. This practice appeared to have become part of her normal way of working, and perhaps the wider role she played in a national body had some influence on her practice. US librarian Jack said that he researched an idea for a new service before presenting the concept to his Principal. Scottish librarian Briony found the catalyst of the Scottish focus group had given her the impetus to carry out more research into attitudes of staff and students towards the library and ways to make interaction more effective.

Booth and Brice (2004) designed two critical appraisal checklists (known as CRiSTAL) to determine the validity and relevance of a piece of research. These useful checklists form part of information workshops focused on EBP and research methods, and although these development opportunities are limited, wider coverage and more sessions would be needed to spread the word about benefits. Brice and Booth (2004) found that there

were barriers to EBP success in various disciplines they studied, including librarianship. These are:

- Lack of time and skills
- Information overload
- Access to resources
- Poor-quality indexing
- Poor quality of the evidence-base itself
- Difficulties in finding information in a format suitable for decision-making

Some of these featured in responses from this study. Lack of time was a very common barrier identified by many respondents. Brice and Booth (2004) counter the argument of lack of time with their findings that valuable time can be wasted by following interventions that evidence has shown is ineffective, and it is therefore more efficient to spend the time on examining research. This could be a useful argument to introduce where lack of time is identified as a problem, as it often was in this research. Another study by McNicoll (2004) confirms that once again lack of time is a factor identified by school librarians as a barrier to using research. It is not seen as a core activity by many librarians she surveyed. In an article, McNicoll (2004) quotes one school librarian who saw research as an additional activity and claimed the:

“Need to get the basics sorted out before branching out [into looking at research].”

It is interesting that for this person the basics were not seen to include researching elements of the profession, and the danger can be that the focus is then on operational issues, at the expense of forward planning and collaborative work. Certainly in this study there were many respondents who suggested that collating and reflecting on research or other information was extra to the basic duties, which came first in their priorities. For example Scottish librarian Audrey said that her lack of non-contact time meant that she could not collate such information during the school day, and this would have to be done at home or during a closure day. Many respondents agreed that they should spend more time collating information, and hoped to do this in the future, for example in responses given by US focus group participants Susan and Ellen in Chapter 6. However, McNicoll reports that librarians in schools identified several areas where research could help them in a practical way with their work, such as linking library use to attainment and linking reading to the curriculum, and this would be a valuable point to make when encouraging

more evidence-based work. McNicoll (2004) calls for more research and more resources to collaborate in this area. Any measure that would help to give librarians direct access to useful studies would appear to be welcomed. Trying to find appropriate information in an accessible format was difficult for some respondents, for example in the Scottish focus group James called for a central body to collate useful information for librarians.

Other objections found by Brice and Booth (2004) on the quality of resources may be more valid, but the authors consider that sometimes people search too narrowly, and more relevant evidence may be found in wider sources. For example, in this study, an examination of collaboration and EBP in the more established fields of health and social work produced very interesting practice, and it could be useful for wider literature to be examined until there is more literature in a specific area, as reflected in the final model.

Booth and Brice (2004) also raise an important issue of involving the user when considering the use of evidence, as they consider it more effective that the evidence found in the research should be moderated by other views and values. Access to resources could be difficult for practitioners who are not students or otherwise involved in the research field, but the authors recommend that more use could be made of the Internet for publication and that more reviews, conference proceedings and digests be made available for practitioners. Wide-ranging promotion and ensuring the authority of sources would be important, to make results valued and useful. They encourage practitioners to get involved in EBP with colleagues and move the concept on from medical libraries and the academic world.

Bodies such as CISSL (Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries based at Rutgers University in New Jersey) (2005) help by working with practitioners, surveying students and making that important link between research and practitioners, demonstrating the impact of school libraries on student attainment and achievement, promoting those results through publication in its research and resources portal, the professional press and the Internet in an accessible way, and delivering training to school librarians which has been: *"Recognized as a premier program in the country."* p4. CISSL also offers relevant staff development opportunities for school librarians and their Principals through its professional institute. The research coverage from CISSL at this

time is largely from America, but this may develop to include other countries. This could be the kind of model the profession and library schools could develop in the UK.

Hartzell (2001) is a former Principal in America who has a pessimistic view of not exploiting the use of evidence, and possible resulting budget cuts:

“If you wonder why funds for libraries and librarians are so easily cut, the answer is this: because they can be. No impassioned defenders rise to protect library media programs the way they rise to save treasured curriculum programs, teaching positions, or athletics. Without significant opposition, school boards and legislators are free to vote for library reductions, and administrators working on budget spreadsheets can strike their delete buttons – all unhindered by public or professional outcry....

Many, perhaps most of them [teachers and administrators] do not understand the value and educational potential of libraries and librarians. It isn't that they don't like them, and they certainly aren't out to “get ‘em”. Mostly, it's just a matter of indifference – and people regard as expendable those things about which they are indifferent..... Libraries and librarians are largely invisible to them.”

Hartzell outlines three problems causing this situation:

- Lack of input about the work of school librarians in teacher training
- Librarians' work is seen as one step removed from students
- Librarians haven't made themselves as visible as they could

He talks here of the situation he is familiar with in the US, where librarians in schools are teachers, yet he can still identify that the role they undertake is not high profile, as reflected in this study by comments by US librarian Donna some four years later who outlined how some teachers did not know what she did.

Scottish librarian Mary talks in the critical incident diary of feelings of frustration and powerlessness in decision-making and her role is not a priority. In contrast, Scottish librarian Nell said in the vignette response that some teachers knew the value of what she did. US librarian Sue Ellen considered herself a “*valued member of the team*”. Thus the situation as reported by respondents varies, but it is anticipated that by applying elements of the model the situation can improve.

Hartzell (2001) proposes ways to increase the visibility of the school librarian:

- Make the role of the school librarian visible to those with power to make a difference
- Change the perceptions of the work of the school librarian by teachers and administrators
- Build a power base to influence the training of teachers and administrators and future school librarians
- Take on wider activities that are not part of the job description

These elements were reflected in the model provided in this study, and tied in well with its emphasis on wider collaborative working, interprofessional training opportunities and the use of EBP.

The objectives relating to Aim 2 will now be examined, and a discussion about related findings from this study.

Objectives:

e) To prepare a draft model of good practice concerning effective evidence-based decision-making in high school libraries

f) Refine the draft model based on feedback from EBP research and data collected and suggest benefits from its use by researchers and practitioners.

Objectives e) and f) contribute towards meeting aim 2. Based on the responses from all data collection and reviewing the literature, a draft model was created (Appendix S). After member-checking with stakeholders, and amending the draft to take account of their views, the final model is presented in Appendix V. Member-checking involved identifying traits and qualities of high school librarians, in addition to creating an appropriate environment to promote evidence-based practice. The model tells us that there is a need for interrelationships between several elements. The school librarian, school management and collaboration within and outwith school is needed to help students achieve more. There needs to be an exchange base of evidence communicated between librarian, school management and national bodies. There should also be a link between librarian and national bodies, particularly in promoting research findings and good practice and in providing professional development opportunities. Addressing each element on its own is not enough: there needs to be

evidence of interrelationships between these elements, which is acknowledged will involve planning, time, resources, commitment and evaluation.

To summarise, the aims and objectives outline the purpose and remit of the study, and show a clear intention to gather information from practitioners, analyse it, and through judgement and interpretation create a member-checked model of the effective evidence-based high school librarian, which would then be made available to practitioners to discuss, amend and use. This practical outcome of producing a model was always an important part of the study, and a way to link the work of the practitioner with research, bringing together the theory found in the literature with the practice and opinion found from the data gathering tools.

Ideally this model will be promoted in the general school library literature, at professional events and by professional bodies, and will provide a framework or structure to encourage discussion and debate amongst high school librarians and interested stakeholders. The model informs the reader of various elements recommended for best practice in creating the effective evidence-based high school librarian, including certain skills and qualities. It also outlines details of interrelationships between the key elements that should ideally be in place for effective EBP to be optimised. These elements include active support recommended from management and national bodies.

In addition to being implemented in the school library field, the findings related to decision-making could be applied to the wider library and information studies workplace, where there is an element of experiential and incremental practice in place. The recommendations to make practitioners more effective in using evidence, such as understanding the interrelationships between collaborating partners; the need for national collation of research; interprofessional training opportunities and giving staff support and time for reflection would be equally valid in many workplace situations.

10.3 Reflecting on what has been learned during the research process

Many lessons have been learned while undertaking this research. The need to be systematic and organised was paramount to the success of such a study. With so much information and data, control needed to be maintained of the data, timetable and the development of the work. Recording what happened at each stage of data collection was

important to maintain that feeling of order and control over the process. Maintaining control over data analysis could have been done by using a computerised method, but a choice was made to record data manually, and to handle the data closely. This meant that there was an indepth knowledge of who had said what and when, making contributions more personal and relevant.

When seeking information from respondents, the concept of building up a relationship, taking an interest in the individual, personalising responses and making people feel that what they said was valued and respected was vital in such a qualitative study, in order to encourage respondents to be honest and also to commit to undertake more than one qualitative method response over a period of time. However this personal touch was undertaken with the recognition that distance should be maintained and there had to be an objective stance from the researcher, otherwise bias or subjectivity could occur.

When awaiting feedback from respondents, a quicker response time and follow-up staging is recommended, as each stage took longer than expected, and in retrospect it would have been useful to follow up responses over a shorter period in order to finish one stage and move onto another more quickly.

10.4 Recommendations for further research

There are several areas where more investigation and research could prove to be useful and have implications for the profession of school librarianship, the field of research and the work of practitioners and stakeholders. In order to fulfil expectations of the role of the school librarian, stakeholders should have a clear awareness of the range of tasks that professional high school librarians can do. Better communication and training for teaching staff and managers could help to make this more apparent. Identifying appropriate qualities and increasing skills of librarians in addition to changing wider school, authority and national environment are important areas of focus. Recommendations from this study include:

- Further evaluation of the application and impact of the model could be implemented on a school or authority scale as part of using formal guidelines or standards. Changes in practice and perception of users could be measured before and after to establish benefits and drawbacks. These could be national or local documents (like those devised in the US by Directors of School Library

Services described in section 4.7, Chapter 4.) Findings of such studies can be fed back into literature, provide guidance for stakeholders, test out theories of the model to practice, and eliminate duplication between those in different authorities with similar interests in finding answers that work for others

- An investigation could be undertaken, perhaps by professional bodies and stakeholders, to establish the best way that findings from research can be communicated to school librarians, managers and Directors of School Library Services. This has the advantage of making research findings more easily accessible and encouraging practitioners and stakeholders to implement or amend what has been found in research, to apply it to practice, evaluate its success and report back on progress. This creates a cycle of what can be called evidenced rigour, with strengths from best practice based on research, and research developing from practice. It would bring research closer to those working in school libraries, encourage involvement in research activities and make practice a basis of research, creating a rounded picture, with relevance to all involved. Gordon (2007) talks of how anecdotal evidence is used and how it:

“Evolves from the human urge to convert experience into story.... Often drives our decisions about what works. In the workplace, it’s known as professional opinion.”

She also calls for a larger body of research knowledge in the use of EBP and action research to be created and promoted, so that it can determine best practice and demonstrate how student achievement can be improved. This reinforces the findings of this study

- Library schools, managers and professional bodies could investigate the challenges raised by the model and determine how evidence-based practice can improve accountability and collaborative effort in all areas of library work
- Library schools, professional bodies and employers could investigate how recommended qualities and skills of school librarians found in the model could best be imparted and developed, and who should be involved in this process. It would be particularly interesting to investigate the risk-taking practice of high school librarians

- It would be useful to research in more detail the collaboration between librarians and teachers in schools, in order to establish current practice and to make recommendations for best practice. In Chapter 4, section 4.2.2.3 it was reported that in many US schools, library staffing was allocated on a pro-rata basis, therefore US schools with larger rolls tended to have higher staffing levels. In Scottish schools, the situation was that each school had a standard post allocation of one librarian, regardless of roll. Some Scottish authorities had library assistants in addition to librarians, but this was also regardless of roll or identified special need and based on a standard post allocation for each school. As reported in Chapter 4, section 4.4.1.3, US librarians tended to spend more time on planning curriculum and instructional materials with teachers than Scottish colleagues. A formal allocation of non-contact time would allow librarians to collaborate more fully with teaching colleagues. Another feature that many librarians identified was to have regular time with their line managers to discuss, plan and agree the library contribution to whole school priorities
- Research into developing more awareness of roles in groupwork when teachers and librarians collaborate could identify if studying role strengths and preferences would help with collaborative working
- Further research could be carried out on the effect of equipping Scottish school librarians with the educational elements related to their work. For example, a part-time two year course was described recently (Tomney 2008) where Scottish school librarians were learning about educational theory and practice, learning styles, the effect of diversity on learning, collaborative working and reflective skills. It would be invaluable to research how this course has made a difference to the work of school librarians and how it has changed their support for teaching and learning
- A study could be undertaken on the effect and benefits of interprofessional training between teachers and librarians
- A more general application of the model could be implemented in a non-school library setting, in another library and information studies workplace. The purpose

behind this would be to identify common elements of the model that could be applied to a more generic setting where experiential and incremental decision-making takes place

10.5 The way forward

As previously stated, the model outlines what is needed for optimum application of an evidence-based culture in high school libraries. However, in summary, there are certain crucial factors to be provided for the successful implementation of such an environment, based on the new and meaningful knowledge arising from this study.

The model provides a deeper understanding of the complex relationships involved in making the best use of the high school librarian in relation to improving student achievement, and this can now be discussed and promoted widely between stakeholders. The study provides this new model of the role of the high school librarian, a new analysis and a broader perspective of the EBP role of the school librarian and other stakeholders, and this can be used to plan future services and provision in schools and in wider research. Findings clearly illuminate that working towards EBP is difficult if it is not carried out with a wider perspective that needs school, authority and national vision and commitment.

Reflection during non-contact time is an important element in allowing the school librarian to take forward initiatives, and consider success of various measures. Time and training for school librarians to collect evidence and apply research is also an important feature. Time for collaboration is vital to equip the librarian with feedback from teaching staff and provide a whole school approach to library work. As part of this time commitment, some assistance is needed to keep the library open for routine matters, while the librarian concentrates on more strategic issues. Without this basic cover, the librarian will inevitably become over-involved in more operational matters and her/his expertise will not be fully utilised.

Employing a school librarian with appropriate skills and qualities is vital to ensure that the EBP culture will progress. This would involve school managers including skills and qualities from the model in Appendix V into the person specification when advertising for an appropriate school librarian. Managers are also advised to reconsider job descriptions

and tailor them to provide lists of required duties and levels of responsibility to carry forward and develop the EBP culture with a whole school remit. Support would also need to be given to librarians to develop and consolidate these skills and qualities.

For existing employees, the situation is more challenging. Negotiation to agree amended person specifications and job descriptions is a start, followed by appropriate, positive and creative staff development, support and coaching to allow postholders to build up and develop required skills and qualities. If a school has access to national or local guidelines, these will provide a useful structure towards good practice. If these do not exist, professional bodies or local authorities can be approached regarding creating them with representatives of practitioners and managers.

Wherever possible, if a school is in a network of other schools, local guidelines towards good practice would provide an opportunity for school librarians, managers and Directors of School Library Services to form an agreed set of standards and ways of working. This in itself would provide an excellent staff development opportunity. If appraisal or staff development and review schemes are in place, this provides another opportunity for staff to be coached towards negotiated improved practice. Courses where educational content applicable to school librarians is included could be useful (such as the course described by Tomney 2008), and further research would be useful in demonstrating how school librarians have applied what was learned on such courses.

If librarians are unwilling to change, there are three main alternatives for managers to consider. The first is to let them continue in place without challenge or discussion, as we have seen in Chapter 7 (section 7.2) with US Headteacher Norman and his librarian Denny; and with US Headteacher Peter and his librarian Gill. The Headteachers' decisions not to communicate their concerns to the librarians about their work and try to change practice meant that they were prepared to wait until one of them retired until changes were made. In the meantime they had negative feelings and what could be described as simmering resentment towards the librarians and what they did, but did not give them the chance to make changes, as the librarians were completely unaware that something was wrong. As managers, they should have been able to manage staff and direct them towards preferred negotiated practice that fitted with whole school culture.

Another alternative is to do what Scottish Headteacher Harry did, also reported in Chapter 7 (section 7.2), when he equipped his librarian Norma with the time and support needed to allow her to change and develop. This involved investment of both time and money, but ultimately provided a chance to bring the librarian into the wider school ethos and gave a structured approach to help her deal with evidence-based practice. The final method of dealing with such a situation is to terminate the contract of the librarian, but this is a drastic measure to be implemented if all attempts at coaching, managing and amending work practices have failed.

If school librarians themselves recognise that changes need to be made, there are some alternative measures for them to consider. They can discuss with their managers how they can best introduce elements of EBP into their work. If the managers are not receptive to this, school librarians can still work with published standards and guidelines; collect, use and disseminate qualitative data to improve the service; examine and implement research findings; share work with peers and collaborate with teaching staff. However, although this will not tend to be as effective as a whole school movement collaboratively planned, supported and developed, it will undoubtedly make a difference to the librarians' contribution to teaching and learning. Without support from management, librarians will either not make the effort to undertake EBP; they will work within the limits of their own work as far as they can; or they may refuse to compromise and look elsewhere for more appropriate work.

Todd (2007) summarises what is important:

“Evidence-based practice is fundamentally about school librarians taking action – action that is informed by systematic research and guided by experience and wisdom.... [these are] principles and processes of best practice: working to achieve the highest levels of sustainable performance in order to achieve the highest level of outcomes... continuously improve on existing processes as times change, as things evolve, and as research informs... Taking action means you are living the solution. Not taking action means that you will be living someone else’s dreams and someone else’s solutions.” p76

He clearly has a vision where school librarians must move forwards by embracing EBP, otherwise they are likely to be left behind, possibly making future funding and services very vulnerable. By acknowledging and proving what they contribute to the achievement and attainment of students they will follow best practice in principles of EBP. As Todd (2008) says later:

“Evidence-based practice is not about the survival of school librarians, it is about the survival of our students. This is the social justice and ethical imperative for evidence-based practice.”

He urges school librarians to take action, collect data, examine research and shift from advocacy to relating what they do to student learning outcomes. Certainly, by focusing on factors relating to how school librarians can improve student achievement there is an opportunity that school librarians will be looked at in a different way by others in schools, local authorities and on the national scene. There are implications for the profession to work more closely with research; educators to promote the contribution that the librarian can make; and stakeholders to provide appropriate training and guidance for these factors to be maximised.

Stakeholders, such as managers in schools, Directors of School Library Services and professional bodies have a role to play in taking this model forward, because it has wider-reaching implications for education and schools, not just for school librarians. In addition to the guidance and training already highlighted, they have a role in fostering a culture of collaborative working and applying what has been learned from evidence and research to meet the needs of users. This will involve encouraging a positive climate and providing practical solutions such as allowing time and opportunity for joint planning, accessing research and reflection. Reflecting on a mnemonic used by a member of a US focus group, there is a great strength in the concept of TEAM - Together Everyone Achieves More.

10.6 Contribution to knowledge

This study makes an original contribution to knowledge in several ways, some relevant to the wider theory and literature of decision-making, evidence-based practice, collaboration, interprofessional working; and some to the more specific and practical field of high school librarianship.

The contribution to decision-making literature reveals a new theory of decision-making in the workplace, not just in high school libraries. A new model of incremental experiential practice has been identified, named the pragmatic solution-driven model. It shows practitioners using their own experience to gradually work towards a better solution to the present situation within the confines they have, where a whole scale, dramatic and

major change might not be possible. Without a formal or rational framework the model provides a series of small steps towards a better situation in a similar way to the “*decision accretion*” described by Weiss (1980) and the “*trial and error*” p29 discussed by Lindblom (1993). In the Scottish focus group, librarian Fiona describes a quality she thinks is needed to be an effective school librarian:

“...adaptability, the ability to take a situation, and, if you like, twist it to achieve the ends that you need to achieve, to be able to say well, this isn’t the ideal, this isn’t what I would like, but if I do this and I do that, we’ll still get there in the end..... you also need to be a bit of an opportunist, seize every opportunity that offers, then worry about how you are going to do something with it.”

This describes very well her experience of progressing a course of action. However the practice based on this model differs from that described by Weiss and Lindblom in that it is almost wholly idea- or solution-driven, different options are not considered and there is normally not a conscious awareness how the change will affect the larger goal. Typically practitioners did not know at the start of the process what or where the goal was, which caused problems in trying to identify how and when it was achieved.

From findings discovered in this study, a variety of options was not usually considered by school librarians at the start of the process of solving a problem, but the focus often started with the identification and application of a solution to a problem, usually the only one that was identified at that time. This could have been a solution identified from the literature, or by observation in another workplace, or by thinking of the idea. Once the initial solution was applied, if it was considered that the problem was not completely solved, or that another problem had arisen as the result of implementing the initial solution, then an incremental process was applied, where another solution was identified and put into place, or the original solution was adapted. This process could continue in stages many times until it was recognised that an appropriate solution was in place and worked for the present time, or was better than the initial position. Any future changes might have started the process to repeat again. These changes could include a change in circumstances, staffing, user demand or management. This model could easily be applied more generally to other workplace situations.

The findings in terms of evidence-based practice provide a useful analysis of recent experience of a profession applying the use of qualitative evidence to demonstrate how contributions are made to a wider goal, and in the case of high school libraries this is

student achievement. However this concept of using evidence can be applied to a wider audience, and shows the importance of implementing the framework of local or national standards of provision and qualitative indicators that have been created by both practitioners and those stakeholders with a more general overview. Such a process can also be applied to other professions, and other branches of library and information work.

The study has also provided a contribution to knowledge in the sector of school librarianship, by several means. By identifying factors that help high school librarians in the US and Scotland to become effective evidence-based decision-makers, the study has contributed to the understanding of the effective evidence-based high school librarian in Scotland and the US, and has provided an important insight into the experience and opinion from those who participated, set against findings from the literature. In conclusion the study clearly identifies three main themes related to effective evidence-based practice. These are planning and decision-making processes; networking and collaboration; and interprofessional relationships and roles.

In developing a model identifying skills and qualities of the effective high school librarian, the research has significantly extended our understanding of the role of the high school librarian as evidence-based practitioner, presenting a wider perspective on that role in a way that other models do not. By revealing new understanding of the current challenges, the complexity of the school library situation and interrelationships between key elements of what has been presented in this study as a new professional practice model, the model has a wider relevance to education, including how it relates to researchers, practitioners and managers.

This present work extends the work of researchers such as Todd (2007; 2008), by providing a whole school consideration of roles and relationships, which complements Todd's indepth research on librarians and students. In this study, the relationships between school librarians and stakeholders have been explored to provide an indication of a fuller picture, situating the role of the school librarian within a wider professional context, which is dependent on effective relationships with Headteachers, teachers and Directors of School Library Services. Because they are involved in decision-making, encouraging collaboration and, crucially, providing money, it is important to involve such stakeholders in progressing the work of the school librarian to become more effective

when using evidence. Without this wider support, the librarian is likely to have less influence in applying evidence and decision-making in support of change. This emergent model of new professional practice therefore differs from previous models, which tended to concentrate more on the librarian perspective. The research therefore provides a way of taking previous knowledge forward, and provides a base for future research to develop.

In terms of collaboration and professional working, the findings of this study, as in the writings of Bruce (1980), identify how collaborative relationships can develop more positively. For example, in Table 2.2 in Chapter 2, Bruce outlines levels of teamworking, and recommends that partners can start at a low level, and work towards creating higher levels of teamworking, moving from what he terms the nominal state, through the convenient mode, to committed working practice. In this thesis, the findings of authors such as Bruce are developed by introducing a variety of practical methods to implement the progression through the levels outlined, such as providing opportunities for joint professional training; creating an appropriate culture of collaborative working; and encouraging school staff to have time to work together. In a practical way to develop working relationships, this study identifies that the support and encouragement from stakeholders can make a real difference in these relationships becoming more collaborative. The thesis determines that guidance and support from management is vital to progress collaborative working in a positive way, and to show that partnership working is expected as standard in school. The study considers that support and commitment of the Headteacher is even more important if all staff are to be encouraged and equipped to collaborate in the spirit of what Zweizig and Hopkins (1999) call a professional learning community. In turn, the study determines that convincing stakeholders in the wider educational environment of the benefits of such an environment would encourage them to lead Headteachers into collaborative working practice.

Nolan (1995) provides an insight into interprofessional working, when he discusses the blurring between professional boundaries. This involves sharing responsibility, being tolerant and trusting partners. However the element of blurring should not become so blurred that the identity of each profession is lost. This study showed divided opinion from participants in making the librarian role distinct and different from that of the teacher, while some participants felt that there should be more joint responsibility and

sharing of tasks. The conclusion in this study was that this area should be discussed and responsibilities negotiated, rather than not addressed at all, as this can involve misunderstanding and assumption. Elston and Holloway (2001) reflect the need to train professionals in teamworking principles, so that they have an understanding of the individual roles needed to make effective teams, for example by looking at Belbin's work on team roles and identifying what role they could undertake. This has also been reflected in the findings of this study, and is taken further in that the exploration of this method is recommended to be undertaken jointly between managers, teachers and librarians, because the importance of shared discovery has been identified as a valuable experience when working together.

Recommendations have been made to help managers and librarians focus on how practice can be improved, including the concepts of collaboration, reflection and using evidence to make decisions, and such principles could be applied in other workplaces. It is intended that this study will help to inform school librarians and stakeholders about important elements of EBP, and provided a way forward to develop this concept in high school libraries, bringing together evidence from schools and providing robust and objective proof of how the high school librarian contributes to teaching and learning goals throughout the school, and to student attainment and achievement.

The key factor that will make a significant impact on the effective implementation of the model is for major stakeholders to work together and recognise the importance of interrelationships between certain key elements. Student achievement can be improved with an effective evidence-based approach to the work of the high school librarian in a framework of good communication within a supportive partnership environment. This is clearly demonstrated within Figure 9.1 in Chapter 9. The final message from this study lies in the areas where elements of management support, school librarian and collaboration meet, because this is where a real contribution can be made to raising student achievement.

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APPENDIX A

Letter to Education Directors

CRIS
Summerhill Education Centre
Stronsay Drive
Aberdeen
AB15 6JA
Scotland
United Kingdom
aturriff@education.aberdeen.net.uk
+44 (0) 1224 346110

December 2001

Dear

I got your name from X X in X, and I am hoping that you can help me. I am studying at Aberdeen University, Scotland for the degree of M.Litt (Master of Letters), and am examining the use of evidence-based decision-making in high schools in Scotland and the USA. I would like to ask for permission to approach members of staff from your authority to take part in my research.

The research is aimed at two cohorts of staff – the first being the person with an overview and support role of high school librarians, and the second being the high school librarians themselves. I wonder if you can help by recommending staff who might be willing to take part? Initially it would consist of a questionnaire survey and a vignette for each cohort, taking approximately 30 minutes to complete.

The aims of the project are to:

- Gather background data about schools, libraries and their services
- Identify how evidence is used to decide about services
- Collate experience and opinions to provide a model of good practice

I am trying to identify good practice and create a model to be of practical use to high school librarians. All respondents would receive a summary of results, and if anyone is interested in what we do in Scotland, I would be glad to tell them. Any help that you can give me would be much appreciated. All information is confidential and individual responders will not be identified, nor the details of their responses. Please contact me if you would like more details at any time. The information given by respondents is essential to the project and your co-operation is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Turriff

APPENDIX B

Letter to Directors of School Library Services

CRIS
Summerhill Education Centre
Stronsay Drive
Aberdeen
AB15 6JA
Scotland
United Kingdom
aturriff@education.aberdeen.net.uk
+44 (0) 1224 346110

February 2002

Dear

I got your name from X X in X, and I am hoping that you can help me. I am studying at Aberdeen University, Scotland for the degree of M.Litt (Master of Letters), and am examining the use of evidence-based decision-making in high schools in Scotland and the USA. I have asked for permission from X to approach members of staff from your authority, and that has been granted.

I understand that you provide a support role to a group of school librarians in high schools. I wonder if you can help by recommending librarians who might be willing to take part? Initially it would consist of a questionnaire survey and a vignette. I would also be grateful if you could answer a brief questionnaire survey and vignette, based on the overview you have in your area, or if that is not suitable, that you nominate someone with an overview of the work of high school librarians in your area.

The aims of the project are to:

- Gather background data about schools, libraries and their services
- Identify how evidence is used to decide about services
- Collate experience and opinions to provide a model of good practice

I am trying to identify good practice and create a model to be of practical use to high school librarians. All respondents would receive a summary of results, and if anyone is interested in what we do in Scotland, I would be glad to tell them. Any help that you can give me would be much appreciated. All information is confidential and individual responders will not be identified, nor the details of their responses. The survey and vignette should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please contact me if you would like more details at any time. The information given by respondents is essential to the project and your co-operation is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Turriff

APPENDIX C

Letter to high school librarians

CRIS
Summerhill Education Centre
Stronsay Drive
Aberdeen
AB15 6JA
Scotland
United Kingdom
aturriff@education.aberdeen.net.uk
+44 (0) 1224 346110

April 2002

Dear

I got your name from X X in X, and I am hoping that you can help me. I am studying at Aberdeen University, Scotland for the degree of M.Litt (Master of Letters), and am examining the use of evidence-based decision-making in high schools in Scotland and the USA. I have asked for permission from X to approach members of staff from your authority, and that has been granted.

I understand that you are a school librarian in a high school. I wonder if you can help by taking part, and by recommending other high school librarians who might be willing to take part? Initially it would consist of a questionnaire survey and a vignette.

The aims of the project are to:

- Gather background data about schools, libraries and their services
- Identify how evidence is used to decide about services
- Collate experience and opinions to provide a model of good practice

I am trying to identify good practice and create a model to be of practical use to high school librarians. All respondents would receive a summary of results. Any help that you can give me would be much appreciated. All information is confidential and you would not be identified, and the details of your responses cannot be tracked back to you. The survey and vignette should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please contact me if you would like more details at any time. The information given by you is essential to the project and your co-operation is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Turriff

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire to Directors of School Library Services

Please answer the following questions with regard to secondary school libraries (for pupils aged 11-18 years) under your jurisdiction.

Policy

- 1 Are there national, state or regional policies regarding services offered by high school libraries?

National		State	
Regional		Don't know	

Other (please detail)

- 2 Describe your impression of how national/state policy is currently made with regard to school library provision in high schools.

Who do you think is involved in developing national/state policy?

Do you consider this to be ideal?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

Please outline what you consider to be the ideal situation when national/state policy is being developed for high school libraries.

- 3 Describe your impression of how local policy is currently made with regard to school library provision in high schools
who do you think is involved in developing local policy?

Do you consider this to be ideal?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

Please outline what you consider to be the ideal situation when local policy is being developed for high school libraries.

- 4 Assuming there was a national, state or local policy documents, how much do you think these should influence services offered in high school libraries?

National/state	Completely		In certain topics		Not at all	
Local	Completely		In certain topics		Not at all	

Decision making

5 How much autonomy do you feel high school librarians have **at present** when making decisions about what services to offer in their own libraries?

Complete autonomy		Some consultation with others is expected		Have no autonomy	
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Comment:

6 How much autonomy do you feel school librarians **should** have in this area?

Complete autonomy		Some consultation with others is expected		Have no autonomy	
-------------------	--	---	--	------------------	--

Comment:

7 What do you think influences the decision making of high school librarians with regard to services offered in the school library?

what could help them with their ability to make decisions?

Comment:

Service delivery

8 What do you consider to be a core range of services in a secondary school library?

Comment:

9 To the best of your knowledge, approximately what percentage of high school libraries in your area offer this core range of services?

Comment:

10 Do you think these core services should be offered in all schools nationally?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

Comment:

11 From your experience, who decides about the range of services to be offered in individual schools?

12 Who do you think should be involved in deciding about these services?

13 Do you believe that there is adequate consultation in schools generally about the range of library services on offer?

14 How would you outline the ideal decision making process for deciding which services should be offered in high school libraries **in your area?**

APPENDIX E

Questions to high school librarians

What do you consider to be the major contribution of the librarian to the work of the school ?

What skills and qualities are needed to be a school librarian?

Who should the librarian involve when making decisions?

How can librarians use evidence to make decisions?

APPENDIX F

Questions to Headteachers

Can you give examples of a recent decision about the library?

Who was involved?

What stages were there in the process?

Can you give an interpretation of what evidence-based decision-making means to you?

Do you know if evidence and research have been considered as part of making a library decision?

Do you think that school librarians use evidence when making decisions?

Can you give examples?

Do you envisage any problems with using evidence in this way?

How could school librarians use evidence-based decision-making?

What kind of training would help?

What guidelines or standards are used in the library?

What guidelines or standards have not been used?

What barriers could exist in using these?

What is your vision of the school library in the next ten years?

APPENDIX G

Follow up questionnaire after interview

Thank you for taking part in the interview. I hope that you found it useful. Please add any further comments or thoughts below.

How useful was the interview for you?

Did you find that anything surprising emerged from it?

Is there anything you would like to add after reflecting on your response during the interview?

Are you considering doing anything different as a result of the discussion during the interview?

Any other comments

APPENDIX H

Questions for focus group interviews

Aims of focus group sessions

- To gather information to meet main objectives
- To consolidate findings from survey stage
- To collate information into preliminary model of good practice (to be further refined by case study)

Strategy

There will be three focus groups of 6-8 participants each, consisting of school librarians, their supervisors and directors of school library services from the following backgrounds:

- Scotland group
- USA group x 2

The groups have been chosen to establish decision making practice within a group of professionals practising in a country/state, with indepth knowledge of that country/state's practice.

Interaction is an important element, as not only will it provide basic information in terms of actual responses, but it will give a sense of reaction to the responses of other participants. The ensuing discussion will help participants explore their opinions of what works, what doesn't work and what they feel is effective practice. The group provides an opportunity for participants to explain to one another their priorities, processes, values and language terms in use. Interesting practice and ideas for follow up case study will be identified from group sessions.

Where possible, the groups will be carried out face to face, but videoconference may be used if it is not practicable to visit.

It is important that discussions are recorded and analysed accurately in order that the findings represent exactly what participants said. It is considered that for this study written notes will be too intrusive and may hinder the flow of discussion, so video/audio recording equipment will be used. This information will then be analysed and coded to feed into a preliminary model of good practice. General themes of likely discussion will be indicated to participants in advance (see briefing details below). However, specific questions will not be given in advance because the initial thoughts and ideas of participants are more important to this study than a considered approach to responses.

It will be important to test run the technical side of videoconference equipment at all sites in advance, ensure that reception is suitable and that each site is staffed by at least one person with videoconference experience. Times of sessions will also be planned to fit in with the convenience of participants. The collaborating institution Rutgers University will

assist with initial contact of likely participants. A pilot session will be held to test equipment and content.

The sessions will start with mutual introductions of each participant as an ice breaking exercise.

Briefing information to be given to participants in advance – face to face focus group

You are invited to participate in a focus group session to explore the decision making role of the high school librarian in Scotland and USA and to enhance our understanding of the interprofessional decision making process within schools. This topic is part of a broader ongoing MPhil/PhD research study which will culminate in a thesis. The information from this group will examine how research evidence is used and decisions are made in the high school library. As a result of the information, one practical outcome will be the creation of a model of good practice. The intention is that this will be useful for high school librarians in their work.

Five main themes will be covered in this session (Purpose of high school library; decision making process; interprofessional collaboration between teachers and librarian; use of research evidence; dual role of librarian). The session is due to last one hour and time will be allocated to each theme. The researcher will introduce each theme and act as a facilitator for the participants to share their experiences.

Don't worry if you have not participated in a focus group session before, because all you have to do is be there, listen and speak, just like an ordinary meeting. Participants will have an interest in high school libraries and will consist of librarians, librarians' supervisors and directors of school library services. There will 6-8 people at the meeting. The meeting will be videorecorded and will only be used by the researcher to analyse and code results. Any contribution you make will be anonymous in the final thesis and the recordings of the discussions will not be passed to any other body.

Briefing information to be given to participants in advance – focus group videoconference

You are invited to participate in a focus group session to explore the decision making role of the high school librarian in Scotland and USA and to enhance our understanding of the interprofessional decision making process within schools. This topic is part of a broader ongoing MPhil/PhD research study which will culminate in a thesis. This information from the group will examine how research evidence is used and decisions are made in the high school library. As a result of the information, one practical outcome will be the creation of a model of good practice. The intention is that this will be useful for high school librarians in their work.

Five main themes will be covered in this session (Purpose of high school library; decision making process; interprofessional collaboration between teachers and librraian; use of research evidence; dual role of librarian). The session is due to last one hour and time will

be allocated to each theme. The researcher will introduce each theme and act as a facilitator for the participants to share their experiences.

Don't worry if you have not participated in a videoconference session before, because the technical side is organised and all you have to do is be there, listen and speak, just like an ordinary meeting. Remaining group members will be based in other locations. They will also have an interest in high school libraries and will consist of librarians, librarians' supervisors and directors of school library services. There will 6-8 people at the meeting. The meeting will be videorecorded and will only be used by the researcher to analyse and code results. Any contribution you make will be anonymous in the final thesis and the recordings of the discussions will not be passed to any other body. NB *dm team* is decision making team

For groups

Range of questions and prompts – yet to be finalised. Each main theme has one or two broad questions and most have prompts. Prompts will be introduced by the facilitator if these topics have not been raised by participants during the more general discussion.

Theme	Objective
<p>Purpose What would be the effect on your school if there was no library?</p>	3 5 mins
<p>Decision making In your school, tell me of decisions made about the high school library (curricular/policy/budget/selection/technology)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is involved in making these decisions? • How are goals set for the library? • What kinds of decisions are best made collaboratively? • What is the most important element to consider when making decisions relating to your high school library? • <i>If there is a dm team</i> Does any one member of the team have executive power over decisions? • What difficulties would you expect to occur when making decisions? • How similar is the decision making process in the library and the rest of school? 	2 10 mins
<p>Collaboration In your school, tell me about how teachers and librarians learn about each other's profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If there is a dm team</i> How does the decision making team collaborate? • <i>If there is a dm team</i> How could collaboration be improved? • In which areas do you collaborate in curriculum planning, technology and teaching? • What are the benefits of collaboration generally in your school? 	5 10 mins

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If there is a dm team</i> Have a discussion of roles between team members • <i>If there is a dm team</i> How easy is it to talk to each other about professional issues? • <i>If there is a dm team</i> How could teamwork be improved? 	
<p>Evidence In your school, tell me about the kinds of research or evidence (sources of information) used by the librarian (internal/external)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the librarian use this evidence? • How does the librarian keep up to date with the new evidence? • What do you consider to be the purpose of the librarian using evidence? • What are the difficulties of the librarian using evidence? • Does your school management use evidence? 	4 10 mins
<p>Tell me about the skills and qualities you consider that the librarian needs to use evidence effectively</p>	5
<p>Dual role What do you consider are the benefits and disadvantages of being a teacher and librarian?</p>	3 5 mins

APPENDIX I

Follow up focus group interviews

Thank you for your contribution to this study - your participation and willingness to share your expertise and knowledge has been very much appreciated. This information will only be used by me to analyse and code results. Any contribution you make will be anonymous in the final thesis and the recordings of the discussions will not be passed to any other person or body.

Thank you also for your interest in this project. Your contribution is valued and will help towards the construction of a model of good practice which can be used and adapted by school librarians. You will receive a copy of the model when it is complete. I hope that you have found the experience interesting. If I can help you with any work you are doing, please contact me.

During the pilot sessions of the focus group exercise, participants wanted an opportunity to give some more information after the event and after some time for reflection. If you want to take advantage of this, please add any information below:

- supplementary information to the answers you gave at the focus group
- note any surprises arising from the discussion
- has the experience of the discussion at focus group had any impact on thinking and work practice - are you thinking of doing anything differently as a result?

If you do want to respond, please complete and email this file to me on aturriff@aberdeencity.gov.uk before the end of October 2005.

APPENDIX J

Critical incident reflective diary

I would like to ask you to keep a reflective diary about decisions you make in the high school library. This diary is an aid to help you follow through the process of making decisions, and I hope that you will find it useful - please feel free to use it for your own in-house or staff development purposes. I have used it in other school libraries to record and track thoughts and actions. I plan for the diary to be used until the end of January 2006, although for more long term decisions, you can use it for a longer period.

First of all, think of a decision you need to make this term, no matter how big or how small. It can be anything from setting up a reading initiative, to designing a new information skills programme, to introducing a new service - anything at all to do with activities in the library. You can submit more than one decision if you want. Please send in diaries by February 7th 2006.

This information you give will feed into the construction of a model of good practice on decision making in high school libraries as part of a thesis for Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Scotland. Any contribution you make will only be used for research purposes, will be anonymous and your personal responses not be shared with anyone else.

Now use the reflective diary to record your progress and thoughts. For any assistance with this diary, contact me on aturriff@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Please make any relevant additional notes at any stage, or at the end.

Name

Post

School

What is the decision/topic you are tracking?

How was this topic identified to you?

Why did you decide to work on this topic?

When was it identified?

Who identified it?

Describe how it progressed by identifying actions at key dates:

Key date 1

Date

What happened?

Who was involved?

Why were they involved?

What progress has been made?

What were the difficulties?

Key date 2

Date

What happened?

Who was involved?

Why were they involved?

What progress has been made?

What were the difficulties?

Key date 3

Date

What happened?

Who was involved?

Why were they involved?

What progress has been made?

What were the difficulties?

Key date 4

Date

What happened?

Who was involved?

Why were they involved?

What progress has been made?

What were the difficulties?

Key date 5

Date

What happened?

Who was involved?

Why were they involved?

What progress has been made?

What were the difficulties?

Continue key date sections as often as required.....

.....

Review of decision making process

What was the final decision?

Were you happy with the decision?

What were the compromises?

How was the decision implemented?

If you decided to communicate it to people, how did you do this?

Was the decision reviewed?

If yes

When and how was it reviewed?

If no

Why was it not reviewed?

Who was involved in the review?

What was the result of the review?

If you were starting to make this decision again, would you undertake it in any other way?

What did you learn from making this decision?

How has this diary been useful?

Any other comments

Thank you for your co-operation
Please return to aturriff@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Alison Turriff

APPENDIX K

Follow up to critical incident reflective diary

Thank you for taking part in the reflective diary exercise. I hope that you have found it useful. Please feel free to use or amend this tool in any way for any future planning or evaluation you do. The information you have provided will only be used for research and any details given will not be identified with you. All findings will be reported anonymously.

Some people have found it useful to reflect on using the diary.

How useful did you find this diary?

Do you want to add any comments about using the diary?

Did you want to add any thoughts that occurred to you after you submitted it?

Are you likely to use this diary format again?

If so, for what purpose?

Are you thinking of doing anything different as a result of using this diary?

Any other comments

Please email me any responses at aturriff@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Appendix L

Vignette

The vignette is a way of identifying solutions to problems raised in a fictional yet realistic scenario. Read through Bill's story and make your comments on how you think he could tackle situations in a different way, based on your skills, experience and knowledge as a school librarian, teacher/librarian, school library media specialist or director or administrator of school library service

Bill is a school librarian in a school for 11-18 year olds. He has been in post for four years and likes the variety of his job. He enjoys the autonomy of running his own section although sometimes he feels isolated as he works on his own. He considers that the value of what he does is not always appreciated and understood by people in school, but he feels that he is seen as part of the school community. His immediate supervisor in school lets him get on with the work and they meet infrequently. He meets the director (or administrator) of the schools library service at staff development activities and meetings twice a year. She provides useful support to him throughout the year.

Bill offers resources to support the curriculum, teaching library skills, cataloguing and classification of resources, inter library loans from local libraries, CD Rom and Internet instruction and talks about career resources. Bill has regular staff development and meets other school librarians twice a year at regular meetings. He does not think that he has good career opportunity as he is at the top of his salary scale. Bill produced a library policy four years ago but has not updated it. He produced a library development plan last year for the first time and met about half of the fourteen targets. He decides what to offer in terms of services by continuing what has always been offered and keeping aware of new developments.

He finds it hard to make decisions on what services to offer as he rarely has time to plan in advance. Recently, after hearing about the idea from another librarian at a staff development meeting, Bill started up a Reading Review Club at lunchtimes. This gives students an opportunity to read a book, write a review and have it published in a regular publication to be given to each student. However, although a popular lunchtime activity, he found it difficult to get enough finished written material from the students, and the costs and time involved in producing the booklet made it unworkable. Reluctantly, he decided to stop it after one school year.

1 What do you think of the range of services offered by Bill?

Name any important core services you consider to be missing

2 *Bill doesn't consider that the value of what he does is always appreciated. What might he do to improve this?*

3 *Bill's immediate supervisor leaves Bill to work largely on his own. What are three positive and negative aspects of this?*

Positive	Negative
1	1
2	2
3	3

4 *List three aspects that you would consider represent a good support system to a school librarian post such as Bill's*

1	
2	
3	

5 *Name up to three things that can make the school librarian's job difficult*

1	
2	
3	

6 *Bill has regular staff development activity.*

What would you consider to be the optimum frequency of staff development activities?

Once a month		Every two to three months		Every four to six months	
At least once a year		Never		Other (please specify)	

List three topics you consider to be of use to school librarians' staff development now

1	
2	
3	

Comment:

7 *Excluding staff development activity, Bill meets other librarians twice each year. What do you consider to be the optimum frequency of these kinds of meetings?*

Once a month		Every two to three months		Every four to six months	
At least once a year		Never		Other (please specify)	

List three areas of discussion you consider to be useful to school librarians now

1	
2	
3	

8 *Bill doesn't consider that there is much career progression in his post. What might he do to improve this?*

Do you think that there is generally good opportunity for career progression for school librarians?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

Comment:

9 *Bill has found it difficult to update his policy. What can he do to make the process easier?*

How often should he update the policy?

What could have contributed to the fact that Bill only met half of his targets?

What could he do to remedy this in the future?

10 *What do you think about Bill's decision making over the Book Review Club?*

why do you think it was unworkable?

how might it have been successful?

is there anything he could do now to resurrect it?

Please answer the following questions based on your impressions of the general practice of school librarians rather than your own practice.

11 *How do you think that school librarians generally decide what services to offer?*

what do you think prevents them from offering new services?

who do you think prevents them from offering new services?

12 *Generally speaking, do you feel that school librarians could improve their decision making skills?*

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

if YES, how do you think these skills could be improved?

Do you think immediate supervisors of school librarians could improve their decision making skills?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Comment:

13 *Do you think that school librarians are likely to appreciate more help with making decisions about services to be provided in the library?*

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

if YES, who do you think could help?

14 How do you think school librarians make decisions?

what information do you think they use to make decisions?

what other influences do you think could affect their decision making?

15 Who do you think is usually involved in decision making affecting the library?

what types of decisions are usually made about the library?

16 When decisions are made by school librarians...

how are the decisions formalised?	
how are the decisions advertised to the users?	

This is the end of the vignette. Thank you for your assistance.

APPENDIX M

Questionnaire to high school librarians – US

Please complete the sections below as fully as you can. An asterisk * can be inserted into boxes to indicate your choice. Please expand response areas as appropriate for your answers, especially if you decide to print off and write answers. Email me at any time if you have any queries on aturriff@education.aberdeen.net.uk

Background details

This section identifies where you work and the student population

How would you describe the type of school where you work?	
--	--

Number of students in school		Number of students aged 11-18 years	
Age range of students in school (eg 9-19 years)			

Staffing

Staffing can vary for different reasons. This section explores staffing levels in your library

How many individual paid library staff are in your school?	
--	--

Please give details below for each paid post in the library:

Post 1

Job title		Weekly hours worked in library role	
Qualification required for post			
Does this person work in school semester time only or all year?	Semester time		All year

Does this person also teach an academic subject?	YES		NO	
If YES, how many hours does he/she teach this other subject each week?				

Post 2

Job title		Weekly hours worked in library role	
Qualification required for post			
Does this person work in school semester time only or all year?	Semester time		All year

Does this person also teach an academic subject?	YES		NO	
If YES, how many hours does he/she teach this other subject each week?				

Post 3

Job title		Weekly hours worked in library role	
Qualification required for post			
Does this person work in school semester time only or all year?	Semester time		All year

Does this person also teach an academic subject?	YES		NO	
If YES, how many hours does he/she teach this other subject each week?				

For any other paid posts, please continue on a separate sheet

In total, how long has the main member of staff (Post 1) worked in school libraries?

Less than 1 year		1-3 years		4-6 years	
7-9 years		10-12 years		13 years or more	

What is the job title(s) of the person/people who immediately supervise(s) the main member of staff in the library?

Are there any volunteer helpers in the library?

YES		NO		<i>If NO, go to next section - Collection of resources</i>
-----	--	----	--	--

In total, how many hours each week in each category do you have voluntary assistance?

Parent volunteers		Student volunteers		Unemployed/retired volunteers	
-------------------	--	--------------------	--	-------------------------------	--

Other types of voluntary assistance in your library (please detail with number of hours worked each week)

What tasks do these voluntary helpers undertake?

Parents	
Students	
Unemployed/retired	
Other	

Collection of resources

Levels of resources and expenditure can indicate the size and work of the library

Approximately how much money was spent on library books and other resources in the last twelve months?	
What is the expenditure per head of student population?	

How has this expenditure changed since last year?

Increased		Decreased		No change	
-----------	--	-----------	--	-----------	--

If there was a change, why do you think this happened?

Approximately how many books and other resources are in the library?	
Approximately how many books and other resources have been added in the last year?	

Seats

The number of seats gives information on the size and capacity of the library and how many students and staff can work in the library at any one time

How many seats are there in the library for student and teaching staff use?	
---	--

Are these seats sufficient for the activities taking place in your library?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Comment:

Services

The range of services on offer gives a picture of your library and what it provides. This can vary greatly in different countries

What do you consider to be six essential core services that should be offered by all secondary school libraries?

What services do you offer in your library?

Requests from own resources		Requests from other libraries		Teaching library skills	
Resources about careers and jobs		Computer instruction		Book review scheme	
Internet instruction		Users can recommend resources for purchase		Advice on resources	
Video filming facility		Resources for curriculum		Resources for staff development	
Audio conferencing facilities		Interactive whiteboard		Laptop loan	
Author visits		Video conferencing facilities		Digital projector	

Others (please detail)

Suggest up to three new services you might provide in the library in the next 12 months

1	
2	
3	

Why did you identify these as potential new services?

Suggest up to three reasons why these potential new services may **not** be provided

1	
2	
3	

Decision making

You make decisions every day. This section looks at how you decide which services are provided in your library

Why do you offer the range of services that are available in your library?

How do you identify the services users need?

<i>Ongoing observation</i>		<i>User requests</i>	
<i>Specific observational study</i>		<i>Discussion with school management</i>	
<i>Survey of users</i>		<i>User comments</i>	
<i>Meetings with heads of departments</i>		<i>Attending curriculum meetings</i>	
<i>Suggestion box</i>		<i>Ideas from professional literature</i>	

Other reasons (please detail)

Describe the process of delivering a new service in your library, from your initial idea to the service being set up

Policy

Policy is the formal process outlining the management and operation of the school library

<i>What is the approximate % of your time spent each year planning curriculum and instruction programmes with teachers?</i>	
<i>What would be the optimum % of time you could realistically spend on this activity?</i>	

<i>What is the approximate % of your time spent each year working on planning and management issues, such as development planning, performance indicators, developing policy</i>	
<i>What would be the optimum % of time you could realistically spend on this activity?</i>	

<i>What is the approximate % of your time spent each year communicating with your immediate supervisor?</i>	
<i>What would be the optimum % of time you could realistically spend on this activity?</i>	

Comment:

Are you aware of any national, state or local guidelines outlining recommendations for secondary school libraries?

<i>National</i>	<i>Yes</i>		<i>No</i>	
<i>State</i>	<i>Yes</i>		<i>No</i>	
<i>Local</i>	<i>Yes</i>		<i>No</i>	

*Please indicate the degree of influence you feel these guidelines have on **your** practice*

	<i>High level of influence</i>	<i>Some influence</i>	<i>No influence</i>
<i>National</i>			
<i>State</i>			
<i>Local</i>			

Please indicate the degree of influence you feel these guidelines have on the practice of your supervisor

	<i>High level of influence</i>	<i>Some influence</i>	<i>No influence</i>
<i>National</i>			
<i>State</i>			
<i>Local</i>			

Describe any ways you work or have worked towards these guidelines

<i>National</i>	
<i>State</i>	
<i>Local</i>	

How useful do you find development planning to your regular work?

<i>Not at all useful</i>		<i>Of limited use</i>		<i>Of some use</i>		<i>Extremely useful</i>	
--------------------------	--	-----------------------	--	--------------------	--	-------------------------	--

Why?

Do you contribute to whole school development planning?

<i>YES</i>		<i>NO</i>	
------------	--	-----------	--

Comment:

This is the end of the questionnaire - thank you for completing it.

Your response will be appreciated and treated in confidence. Please email back to aturriff@education.aberdeen.net.uk or a.turriff@handbag.com by May 31st 2002 if possible.

APPENDIX N

Questionnaire to high school librarians – Scotland

Please complete the sections below as fully as you can. An asterisk * can be inserted into boxes to indicate your choice. Please expand response areas as appropriate for your answers, especially if you decide to print off and write answers. Email me at any time if you have any queries on aturriff@education.aberdeen.net.uk

Background details

This section identifies where you work and the pupil population

How would you describe the type of school where you work?	
--	--

Number of pupils in school		Number of pupils aged 11-18 years	
Age range of pupils in school (eg 9-19 years)			

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Staffing can vary for different reasons. This section explores staffing levels in your library

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--	--

Please give details below for each paid post in the library:

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Qualification required for post			
Does this person work in school term time only or all year?	Term time		All year

Does this person also teach an academic subject?	YES		NO	
If YES, how many hours does he/she teach this other subject each week?				

Post 2

Job title		Weekly hours worked in library role	
Qualification required for post			
Does this person work in school term time only or all year?	Term time		All year

Does this person also teach an academic subject?	YES		NO	
If YES, how many hours does he/she teach this other subject each week?				

Post 3

Job title		Weekly hours worked in library role	
Qualification required for post			
Does this person work in school term time only or all year?	Term time		All year

Does this person also teach an academic subject?	YES		NO	
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For any other paid posts, please continue on a separate sheet

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7-9 years		10-12 years		13 years or more	

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Are there any volunteer helpers in the library?

YES		NO		<i>If NO, go to next section - Collection of resources</i>
-----	--	----	--	---

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Parent volunteers		Pupil volunteers		Unemployed/retired volunteers	
-------------------	--	------------------	--	-------------------------------	--

Other types of voluntary assistance in your library (please detail with number of hours worked each week)

What tasks do these voluntary helpers undertake?

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Pupils	
Unemployed/retired	
Other	

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Levels of resources and expenditure can indicate the size and work of the library

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What is the expenditure per head of pupil population?	

How has this expenditure changed since last year?

Increased		Decreased		No change	
-----------	--	-----------	--	-----------	--

If there was a change, why do you think this happened?

Approximately how many books and other resources are in the library?	
Approximately how many books and other resources have been added in the last year?	

Seats

The number of seats gives information on the size and capacity of the library and how many pupils and staff can work in the library at any one time

How many seats are there in the library for pupil and teaching staff use?	
---	--

Are these seats sufficient for the activities taking place in your library?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

Comment:

Services

The range of services on offer gives a picture of your library and what it provides. This can vary greatly in different countries

What do you consider to be six essential core services that should be offered by all secondary school libraries?

What services do you offer in your library?

Requests from own resources		Requests from other libraries		Teaching library skills	
Resources about careers and jobs		Computer instruction		Book review scheme	
Internet instruction		Users can recommend resources for purchase		Advice on resources	
Video filming facility		Resources for curriculum		Resources for staff development	
Audio conferencing facilities		Interactive whiteboard		Laptop loan	
Author visits		Video conferencing facilities		Digital projector	

Others (please detail)

Suggest up to three new services you might provide in the library in the next 12 months

1	
2	
3	

Why did you identify these as potential new services?

Suggest up to three reasons why these potential new services may **not** be provided

1	
2	
3	

Decision making

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How do you identify the services users need?

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<i>Specific observational study</i>		<i>Discussion with school management</i>	
<i>Survey of users</i>		<i>User comments</i>	
<i>Meetings with heads of departments</i>		<i>Attending curriculum meetings</i>	
<i>Suggestion box</i>		<i>Ideas from professional literature</i>	

Other reasons (please detail)

Describe the process of delivering a new service in your library, from your initial idea to the service being set up

Policy

Policy is the formal process outlining the management and operation of the school library

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<i>What would be the optimum % of time you could realistically spend on this activity?</i>	

<i>What is the approximate % of your time spent each year working on planning and management issues, such as development planning, performance indicators, developing policy</i>	
<i>What would be the optimum % of time you could realistically spend on this activity?</i>	

<i>What is the approximate % of your time spent each year communicating with your immediate supervisor?</i>	
<i>What would be the optimum % of time you could realistically spend on this activity?</i>	

Comment:

Are you aware of any national or local guidelines outlining recommendations for secondary school libraries?

<i>National</i>	<i>Yes</i>		<i>No</i>	
<i>Local</i>	<i>Yes</i>		<i>No</i>	

*Please indicate the degree of influence you feel these guidelines have on **your** practice*

	<i>High level of influence</i>	<i>Some influence</i>	<i>No influence</i>
<i>National</i>			
<i>Local</i>			

Please indicate the degree of influence you feel these guidelines have on the practice of your supervisor

	<i>High level of influence</i>	<i>Some influence</i>	<i>No influence</i>
<i>National</i>			
<i>Local</i>			

Describe any ways you work or have worked towards these guidelines

<i>National</i>	
<i>Local</i>	

How useful do you find development planning to your regular work?

<i>Not at all useful</i>		<i>Of limited use</i>		<i>Of some use</i>		<i>Extremely useful</i>	
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Why?

Do you contribute to whole school development planning?

<i>YES</i>		<i>NO</i>	
------------	--	-----------	--

Comment:

This is the end of the questionnaire - thank you for completing it.

Your response will be appreciated and treated in confidence. Please email back to aturriff@education.aberdeen.net.uk or a.turriff@handbag.com by May 31st 2002 if possible

APPENDIX O

Member checking questions - National bodies

A model has been developed outlining best practice:

- The use of evidence in decision making in high school libraries in US and Scotland
- Personal traits and qualities of high school librarians

Please comment on this model, bearing in mind the ideal situation and also situations you have experienced. Your comments will help to form the final model which will be shared with practitioners with an interest in high school libraries as examples of best practice. Any contribution you make is totally confidential and anonymous, will only be used for research purposes and your personal responses not be shared with anyone else. Please add any additional comments to explain your answers. With reference to the use of evidence in decision making in high school libraries in US and Scotland, please comment on the individual elements presented.

1. Do you think that these are reasonable and valid factors?
2. Would you remove any of these?
3. Are there any other factors that in your opinion are missing?
4. How closely do these factors represent the situation in your school?

.....

With reference to personal traits and qualities of the school librarian, please comment on the individual elements presented.

1. Do you think that these are reasonable and valid factors?
2. Would you remove any of these?
3. Are there any other factors that in your opinion are missing?

APPENDIX P

Member checking questions - Directors of School Library Services

A model has been developed outlining best practice in two areas:

- The use of evidence in decision making in high school libraries in US and Scotland
- Personal traits and qualities of high school librarians

Please comment on this model, bearing in mind the ideal situation and also situations you have experienced. Your comments will help to form the final model which will be shared with practitioners with an interest in high school libraries as examples of best practice. Any contribution you make is totally confidential and anonymous, will only be used for research purposes and your personal responses not be shared with anyone else. Please add any additional comments to explain your answers. With reference to the use of evidence in decision making in high school libraries in US and Scotland, please comment on the individual elements presented.

1. Do you think that these are reasonable and valid factors?
2. Would you remove any of these?
3. Are there any other factors that in your opinion are missing?
4. How closely do these factors represent the situation in your schools?

.....

With reference to personal traits and qualities, please comment on the individual elements presented.

1. Do you think that these are reasonable and valid factors?
2. Would you remove any of these?
3. Are there any other factors that in your opinion are missing?
4. How closely do these factors represent librarians in your schools?

APPENDIX Q

Member checking questions - School librarians

A model has been developed outlining best practice in two areas:

- The use of evidence in decision making in high school libraries in US and Scotland
- Personal traits and qualities of high school librarians

Please comment on this model, bearing in mind the ideal situation and also situations you have experienced. Your comments will help to form the final model which will be shared with practitioners with an interest in high school libraries as examples of best practice. Any contribution you make is totally confidential and anonymous, will only be used for research purposes and your personal responses not be shared with anyone else. Please add any additional comments to explain your answers. With reference to the use of evidence in decision making in high school libraries in US and Scotland, please comment on the individual elements presented.

1. Do you think that these are reasonable and valid factors?
2. Would you remove any of these?
3. Are there any other factors that in your opinion are missing?
4. How closely do these factors represent the situation in your school?

.....

With reference to personal traits and qualities, please comment on the individual elements presented.

1. Do you think that these are reasonable and valid factors?
2. Would you remove any of these?
3. Are there any other factors that in your opinion are missing?
4. How closely do these factors represent you in your school?

APPENDIX R

Member checking questions - Headteachers

A model has been developed outlining best practice in two areas:

- The use of evidence in decision making in high school libraries in US and Scotland
- Personal traits and qualities of high school librarians

Please comment on this model, bearing in mind the ideal situation and also situations you have experienced. Your comments will help to form the final model which will be shared with practitioners with an interest in high school libraries as examples of best practice. Any contribution you make is totally confidential and anonymous, will only be used for research purposes and your personal responses not be shared with anyone else. Please add any additional comments to explain your answers. With reference to the model of the use of evidence in decision making in high school libraries in US and Scotland, please comment on the individual elements presented.

1. Do you think that these are reasonable and valid factors?
2. Would you remove any of these?
3. Are there any other factors that in your opinion are missing?
4. How closely do these factors represent the situation in your school?

.....
With reference to the model of personal traits and qualities, please comment on the individual elements presented.

1. Do you think that these are reasonable and valid factors?
2. Would you remove any of these?
3. Are there any other factors that in your opinion are missing?
4. How closely do these factors represent the qualities and skills of the librarian in your school?

APPENDIX S

Draft model

There are a range of circumstances that combine to produce an effective school librarian in a high school. Although not all of these may be present at the same time, the ideal situation would be to incorporate as many as possible.

Role of the librarian

A motivated qualified librarian who is committed to improving the library service offered to users and to continuing professional development, particularly in the topics of education, learning, information literacy, technology and management and who will

- maintain a current collection of resources to support all curriculum subjects and continuing professional development in school based on regular discussions with teaching and authority staff
- collaborate with teaching staff across the whole school
- provide resources to support the interests of users
- provide information skills training to users
- promote information literacy development opportunities for users
- identify own training needs and communicate them to school management
- regularly engage in formal continuing professional development opportunities with teachers in school, colleagues in other school libraries and on national courses
- be aware of and contribute to the development of wider professional issues at a national and international level
- regularly access literature and research concerning school librarianship and learning and communicate it to school management
- collect evidence and promote the link between own school library use, learning and achievement
- promote literacy across the school in collaboration with English teachers
- commit to gaining maximum funding by linking bids for initiatives with contribution to teaching and learning

Management support

A supportive senior management team and a headteacher who provides excellent leadership and who will

- give clear guidance and leadership to school staff on how to collaborate with the school librarian and use the library to contribute to achievement in teaching and learning
- examine roles and identify strengths in teams with regard to collaborative activities
- provide appropriate support for the school librarian in line with local and national guidelines
- allocate regular formal and informal opportunities to communicate with the librarian

- provide adequate support, space, information technology and resources to develop the library as a whole school learning resource
- identify sources of internal and external funding for library development
- provide regular appraisal and training opportunities for school library staff
- provide staffing support to allow the librarian time for reflective practice

Nationally

Co-ordinated professional body and literature led practice

- professional bodies will articulate with more generic educational and quality documents to promote school library work in evidence-based practice
- professional bodies will provide opportunities to promote and disseminate school library research
- professional bodies will maintain and promote a national overview of best practice in relevant school library initiatives
- journals will provide easier access to professional articles on best practice, including digests in mainstream practitioner journals
- research findings relating to school library work will feature in practitioner conferences
- findings and contacts regarding grey literature on school libraries will be collated and included regularly in practitioner journals
- training about the potential contribution of the school librarian will be included in basic teacher training and school manager training
- specialist pre-service and in-service school librarian training will be made available

Collaboration

Regular collaborative work to be encouraged and promoted with practical support. The librarian will

- take opportunities to meet other school librarians and authority Director of School Library Services (where one exists) on a regular basis
- collaborate with school management on service self-evaluation and plans for continuous improvement
- identify user needs and opinions on library provision on a regular basis
- involve potential users with decision making and library development
- take on a wider role within the school community
- promote library services throughout the school to all departments and make links between library resources and facilities with each department's work

Evidence

Internal and external data will be used to improve and promote the work of the school library. With appropriate support, the librarian will

- apply the principles of relevant quantitative and qualitative indicator documents to demonstrate library use and development
- regularly collect, analyse and disseminate research evidence and plan how it can be incorporated into the service
- regularly collect and analyse data from potential users in school and plan the development of the school library accordingly
- compare own school library data with local and national data and outline negotiated improvements in regular action plans
- regularly consult users about their present and future needs and their opinions about the library and its development
- act on user opinions to improve the service
- discuss progress with senior management on a regular basis
- regularly develop and revise policy and planning documents
- maintain and regularly update a procedural manual
- produce an annual Standards and Quality report for users outlining successes and identifying targets for the forthcoming year

Skills and qualities

An effective librarian will demonstrate a range of personal and professional skills and qualities

- Enjoys working with children in a school environment
- Enthusiasm
- Creativity
- Positive
- Reflective practitioner
- Flexibility
- Tenacity
- Organisation
- Consistency
- Patience
- Commitment to deliver the service to a high level with a responsibility for continuous improvement and innovation
- Practices a highly visible role in the whole school community
- Open to new ideas and challenges

APPENDIX T

Annotated draft model

The main draft model is presented in Appendix S, with the list of amendments presented by respondents in Appendix U. The draft was created as a stage towards creating a final model, and was based on the findings from the study.

In this section, the draft is annotated with explanations behind the headings. In order to clarify the arrangement, elements shown in the draft model are presented in bold italic, with annotations from the researcher in normal text. The draft was emailed to potential respondents, asking for comments and amendments, in order to create a final model of effective practice. The draft began with an introductory paragraph. This was intended to provide a brief guide to the outline of the model and to set the scene:

There are a range of circumstances that combine to produce an effective school librarian in a high school. Although not all of these may be present at the same time, the ideal situation would be to incorporate as many as possible.

The next sections gave themes and include subheadings within them. There was an introductory statement summarising the themes, followed by a bullet point list of subheadings.

Role of the librarian

This section called for a positive professionally qualified librarian who was interested in developing her/his own skills and the services offered in the library. The range of duties and responsibilities were outlined, along with expectations of what the high school librarian should do.

A motivated qualified librarian who is committed to improving the library service offered to users and to continuing professional development, particularly in the topics of education, learning, information literacy, technology and management and who will

- ***maintain a current collection of resources to support all curriculum subjects and continuing professional development in school based on regular discussions with teaching and authority staff.*** This emphasised the need to provide a relevant curriculum focus for students and staff, including

materials that teachers and other staff could use to develop their wider professional skills.

- ***collaborate with teaching staff across the whole school.*** The area of collaboration was key to the findings and it also featured largely in the literature. Building on the foundations of the old model of librarian as keeper of a repository, collaboration was an important approach to the current expectations of the high school librarian, based on a team of people from different backgrounds working together to meet similar goals, ultimately contributing to teaching and learning across the school.
- ***provide resources to support the interests of users.*** In addition to curriculum support, it was recognised by respondents that attracting non-traditional users would involve identifying and meeting their individual interests and leisure needs.
- ***provide information skills training to users.*** This was now a major element of the role of the librarian, where the skills of the librarian could be used to help users find out information for themselves. The high use of information technology, the use of the Internet and electronic databases place demands on users to be able to discriminate valid sources of information from wider information. In the past, published material had a validity by being published, but today anyone can publish on the Internet and being published is no longer a sign of academic validity. Users must therefore be able to decide the value and accuracy of information. They must also be aware of legal issues such as plagiarism and copyright when quoting information sources and be able to appropriately record where information was found. It was a role of both librarian and teachers to ensure that users learned about these issues.
- ***promote information literacy development opportunities for users.*** Helping users to find and develop their own strengths would give them lifelong learning skills and access to information they need in the future. They could identify their own preferred learning styles and develop these with the help of the librarian and teaching staff.
- ***identify own training needs and communicate them to school management.*** As part of the process of commitment to continuing professional development and serving users well, the librarian needed to have an awareness of the skills that needed to be developed in him/herself. Even if there was no money for courses as such, other experiences could be identified to meet the need, such as

job swapping, job shadowing, wider professional involvement, visits and project work. This related to the reflective aspect of their role.

- ***regularly engage in formal continuing professional development opportunities with teachers in school, colleagues in other school libraries and on national courses.*** Working with teachers and other school librarians would help by learning something new about a subject, but also created an opportunity to network and share experiences together, which all helped towards stimulation of new ideas, enthusiastic joint learning, working and training.
- ***be aware of and contribute to the development of wider professional issues at a national and international level.*** A wider awareness of and reflection on what was going on in other areas of the profession could keep the librarian at the forefront of initiatives and professional development. Input from practitioners was helpful, especially when working in another environment with complementary professionals. An example was the creation of a national school library guideline document, as without guidance from school librarians, there would not be much credibility in its use. However by involving a cross-section of stakeholders and practitioners with different experiences and backgrounds, a variety of viewpoints and priorities would be presented.
- ***regularly access literature and research concerning school librarianship and learning and communicate it to school management.*** By keeping abreast of new findings and initiatives, there could be an efficient sharing of good practice, without having each individual look at an issue time and time again. Networking could more easily take place, and ideas developed and exchanged.
- ***collect evidence and promote the link between own school library use, learning and achievement.*** The work going on in school libraries consisted of more than could be represented by statistics. By building up a bank of data showing the real contribution to and impact on users, in terms of qualitative methods such as questionnaires, comments, suggestions, evaluations of events and lessons, there would be a rich source of information to prove that library services meet user and school requirements. Benchmarking opportunities could then be put in place, both to compare with others and to plot the progressive development of an individual school library over time.
- ***promote literacy across the school in collaboration with English teachers.*** Promoting the love of books and developing wider literacy has always been a

large part of the work of the librarian in schools. Traditionally this link has been with English teachers, and complements their role in introducing literature to students.

- ***commit to gaining maximum funding by linking bids for initiatives with contribution to teaching and learning.*** By creating an obvious link between library services, student achievement and curriculum delivery, there should have been more opportunity to make the case for curricular funding with the library as a whole-school resource.

Management support

Management support was an area identified as crucial to the success of the librarian. Without positive encouragement, the librarian could not fully develop what was offered. A leader who made clear the value of the library to all staff would have a big influence on how they perceived the library and librarian. In return, it was important that the librarian kept school management informed about new research and initiatives from wider sources of information, and also to keep management informed of specific examples of how the library supported teaching and learning in the school.

A supportive senior management team and a headteacher who provides excellent leadership and who will

- ***give clear guidance and leadership to school staff on how to collaborate with the school librarian and use the library to contribute to achievement in teaching and learning.*** The Headteacher was in a position of influence to encourage staff to make best use of the expensive resource of library and librarian. A positive ethos throughout the school would potentially help the librarian to collaborate with all staff on a range of work.
- ***examine roles and identify strengths in teams with regard to collaborative activities.*** Spending time with staff on role theory training, allowing staff to explore their natural preferences and ensuring that there were balanced roles when working in teams should make joint working more enjoyable and profitable. Without this input, staff could become distracted by team members displaying conflicting rather than complementary roles.
- ***provide appropriate support for the school librarian in line with local and national guidelines.*** This implied that school managers should be aware of the wider picture of benefits a good school librarian could offer, and to be familiar

- with documents outlining recommended factors. These could be built into an action plan and progressed. The librarian should ensure that management has access to appropriate information and reports on possible impacts on the school.
- ***allocate regular formal and informal opportunities to communicate with the librarian.*** Findings generally related that managers did not always make time to keep communication channels open. As in most circumstances, this was reported in this study to lead to frustration, misunderstanding and resentment. Regular agreed meetings that take place would undoubtedly help to keep channels open.
 - ***provide adequate support, space, information technology and resources to develop the library as a whole school learning resource.*** Although it may not have been possible at the beginning to ensure that all of these factors were in place, identifying what is required to be done, and working towards those goals in collaboration would help to make best use of the library and librarian.
 - ***identify sources of internal and external funding for library development.*** Budget problems and underfunding were common, and creative thinking was needed to explore traditional and non-traditional ways of funding various projects.
 - ***provide regular appraisal and training opportunities for school library staff.*** In a similar way to committing to regular communication links, identifying and meeting training needs were seen as important to keep the librarian motivated and stimulated. This may not always have been in the form of courses, but could involve more experiential events such as a job swap in another school where the librarian had a strength in information skills, shadowing in an academic library to see how they dealt with user surveys, or visiting a newspaper if a future project was to create a school newspaper.
 - ***provide staffing support to allow the librarian time for reflective practice.*** If the librarian never had any time away from the library, s/he would find it difficult to carry out reflective and planning tasks. By allowing her/him to have non-contact time on a regular basis, s/he would be able to meet staff to discuss joint collaboration on curricular work, keep up to date with research, create information skills programmes and maintain and develop policies and procedures. This would also be a better use of the librarian's time, who could devote more energy to professional issues while leaving basic administration to a non-qualified member of staff.

National bodies

There are many areas where professional bodies could lead in consolidating research and practice, helping to eliminate duplication of effort and sharing good practice.

Co-ordinated professional body and literature led practice

- ***professional bodies will articulate with more generic educational and quality documents to promote school library work in evidence-based practice.*** If there were existing generic education documents that were used in schools by managers, it would be useful to model any library-specific documents on these, because managers would be already familiar and comfortable with them, so it would be likely that they would use library documents. This is a method used in Scotland, where a series of self-evaluation school library quality documents relate to the series of self-evaluation educational mainstream documents *How Good Is Our School?*
- ***professional bodies will provide opportunities to promote and disseminate school library research.*** By using existing websites, publications, posters and conferences, these bodies already had forums to bring research to the attention of the high school librarian. This would help to share good practice, ideas and initiatives and encourage new research.
- ***professional bodies will maintain and promote a national overview of best practice in relevant school library initiatives.*** A collation similar to that published by Scholastic (2006) would be invaluable for school library staff, Directors and managers, because it would very simply bring relevant research on school libraries together.
- ***journals will provide easier access to professional articles on best practice, including digests in mainstream practitioner journals.*** Professional bodies and authors could work more closely with mainstream school library and library journals to promote summaries of main findings from research, and provide an opportunity to obtain more details. Some more specialist journals were only available electronically to registered university students. This could be solved by providing wider access or publishing more widely.
- ***research findings relating to school library work will feature in practitioner conferences.*** Such conferences bring together school librarians and researchers, so encouraging networking on future projects could help everyone,

from providing subjects for the researcher to giving the librarian in a school the chance to be involved in and learn from a research project. This could provide a real relevance agenda for all and encourage new research.

- ***findings and contacts regarding grey literature on school libraries will be collated and included regularly in practitioner journals.*** At many conferences there were poster sessions, where librarians who have undertaken some work summarised what they have done on a poster, and were available to consult for a short time over the conference. Much of the valuable and interesting content could be lost to those who could gain from this work, so bringing it to the literature would help to spread good practice and stimulate debate. Other written work could also be lost if it was not disseminated through a national outlet, for example local collaborative work on an issue such as introducing contracts for student behaviour, which could be useful for many more librarians than the local group.
- ***training about the potential contribution of the school librarian will be included in basic teacher training and school manager training.*** This would help to demonstrate to teachers and managers how to make best use of this resource, giving examples of good practice in action.
- ***specialist pre-service and in-service school librarian training will be made available.*** Professional bodies could also lobby for specialist school librarian training in the UK that was already available in the US. However the topics would be different, as the UK librarians who were not teachers would need an emphasis on pedagogy, educational principles and classroom management, whereas the US teacher-librarians examined library and information literacy topics.

Collaboration

This was the key factor for the model of the effective school librarian. Without collaborative working, the rest of the model cannot be fully implemented.

Regular collaborative work to be encouraged and promoted with practical support.

The librarian will

- ***take opportunities to meet other school librarians and authority Director of School Library Services (where one exists) on a regular basis.*** By keeping in touch with people who understand the work of the school librarian, they could share problems and offer strategies to each other. There could be an authority-

wide focus and direction led by someone who had an overview, and who knew what was happening in each school.

- ***collaborate with school management on service self-evaluation and plans for continuous improvement.*** In this way the responsibility for the success of the library would be shared between those who were involved in making decisions about what it offered. By following standard formulas to evaluate the library, there could be benchmarking opportunities and a plan for future action could be drawn up and monitored for success.
- ***identify user needs and opinions on library provision on a regular basis.*** Only by involving and collaborating with users and asking them regularly what they wanted could the service attempt to provide it. Very often in the findings the librarians reported that they knew what users wanted, but without providing evidence of how they knew this.
- ***involve potential users with decision making and library development.*** If users were involved in making decisions, whether about buying new resources, designing a new library or developing a new service, they would tend to feel more ownership of the library.
- ***take on a wider role within the school community.*** The librarian could offer support in many different areas, from taking photographs of school events, to making costumes for drama productions, to taking part in trips. By having a wider involvement, the librarian would be introduced to the wider school community, including those who did not use the library, which was one way they could be reached.
- ***promote library services throughout the school to all departments and make links between library resources and facilities with each department's work.*** Every department could be supported by the library and librarian, whether through topic work support with resources in art, to lending videocameras to sport staff to record activities, to delivery of information skills to computing students, to explaining the hierarchical Dewey classification system in mathematics.

Evidence

The use of evidence provided an objective way to examine a host of areas, including proving the value of the library, justifying extra staffing and determining future developments.

Internal and external data will be used to improve and promote the work of the school library. With appropriate support, the librarian will

- ***apply the principles of relevant quantitative and qualitative indicator documents to demonstrate library use and development.*** These objective indicators showed how the library was used and how it contributed to various whole school goals.
- ***regularly collect, analyse and disseminate research evidence and plan how it can be incorporated into the service.*** This showed a systematic and professional way of working and sharing information, and directly related what occurs in the library to research findings and provided an element of rigour.
- ***regularly collect and analyse data from potential users in school and plan the development of the school library accordingly.*** Once again this showed a systematic way of working, demonstrated and related user need to what was offered in the library.
- ***compare own school library data with local and national data and outline negotiated improvements in regular action plans.*** Such a benchmarking exercise was vital to develop the library in a culture of continuous improvement. Comparisons could be made with other school libraries, or to plot the progression of one school library against its past data.
- ***regularly consult users about their present and future needs and their opinions about the library and its development.*** This showed consideration of user needs and opinions to be the basis of what the library provided, and demonstrated a willingness to change and progress as new needs develop.
- ***act on user opinions to improve the service.*** The main focus here was on change and development based on user comments and views. Without this the library would be operating in a vacuum and in a subjective way.
- ***discuss progress with senior management on a regular basis.*** Regular two-way communication was needed to negotiate, monitor and clarify progress. It also helped to eliminate misunderstanding and resulting frustration. If the librarian was in a sole post, there would be a danger of professional isolation and a failure to see how the library fitted into wider school goals.
- ***regularly develop and revise policy and planning documents.*** Documents were not helpful unless they were relevant, current and represented the culture in which they operated.

- ***maintain and regularly update a procedural manual.*** This provided a focus of the culture of the library within the school. It could be an invaluable source of good practice, explaining how and why things were carried out, and it could be a useful training manual for relief staff or extra helpers.
- ***produce an annual Standards and Quality report for users outlining successes and identifying targets for the forthcoming year.*** This summarised in a brief and simple way what the library and librarian had achieved over the year, and what they will aim to achieve in the next year. It can be very satisfying to bring all this information together and focus on the work that has been carried out, and to acknowledge how it had contributed to teaching and learning.

Skills and qualities

Certain skills and qualities were summarised to demonstrate a range of factors expected to be useful for a high school librarian. A pattern emerged from respondents in that the focus of their responses from study findings was on qualities rather than skills, and this was replicated in the draft model. It was considered interesting whether later member-checking would produce skill identification.

An effective librarian will demonstrate a range of personal and professional skills and qualities

- ***enjoys working with children in a school environment.*** This may seem obvious, but was an important factor. The school environment was not for everyone.
- ***enthusiasm.*** An enthusiastic librarian could make a real difference to the way the library was perceived and used, both by students and staff. Students responded well to exciting events such as competitions and author visits.
- ***creativity.*** The librarian had to think of ways round problems, as it was not always easy to counter them directly. If there was no money for a project, how else could it be delivered? Where else could the money be found?
- ***positive.*** If the librarian was not positive, it would be difficult to move forward with new ideas, encourage collaboration with teachers and attract users.
- ***reflective practitioner.*** It was an important factor for school librarians to focus on wider strategic issues, and not just operational tasks. Time needed to be available to consider reflective practice.

- **flexibility.** Part of collaborative work was being able to compromise and approach situations from other viewpoints.
- **tenacity.** This factor rated highly amongst respondents, particularly when in a sole post where there could be little support to move forward and make changes, and it was important for the librarian to persevere and try different ways to move forward.
- **organisation.** The library by its nature would be used best when there was clear organisation in place. This would make it easier for the user to see what was available and where it was to be found. This involved obvious guiding of areas, bays and shelves; clear classification; and lack of clutter.
- **consistency.** When working with students it was important to be consistent in all dealings with them, as each would then be treated equally and there would be the same messages going out to all.
- **patience.** Working with children involved being patient. There needed to be a recognition of different learning styles, varying ability and maturity levels.
- **commitment to deliver the service to a high level with a responsibility for continuous improvement and innovation.** With the post of school librarian there was a professional expectation that services would be delivered to the highest standard possible. This was tied in with the collection of evidence and acting on results.
- **practices a highly visible role in the whole school community.** The librarian was called upon to become involved in the wider school community. In this way more usage of the library and the services offered by the librarian would be possible, and traditional non-users may have been attracted in if the librarian showed another side to the traditional role.
- **open to new ideas and challenges.** This reflected the creative and flexible elements already mentioned, and involved an open-minded approach to collaborative working.

APPENDIX U

Comments on draft model

After distributing the draft and sending out reminders, comments were received from 23 respondents. Their comments are reproduced below. Suggested amendments they recommended are presented in bold.

General comments:

It looks a good succinct piece of work to me.

Spot on!

I think this is useful

This reflects what is needed

I think overall this is a very concise, clear and helpful summary that will be of widespread benefit.

Interesting

I read your model plan and it looks good to me. It seems to be well thought out and pretty inclusive

I can't add to this at all

I think your ideas are well thought out, and very clearly presented. I liked the combination of categories that bring about the ideal model. I thought maybe the **skills and qualities should go first, followed by the role, management, collaboration, then the evidence and nationally???** I liked your work very much

Do the circumstances PRODUCE the effective librarian or do they help to enable effectiveness? I agree that an effective school librarian is best served by particular circumstances, however, if she's effective, she is also the **ENGINEER** of these circumstances wherever possible

Role

I think this **needs an overall context of why – eg to assist pupil learning, staff knowledge of new developments etc or something to start with**

I think the **overall order of bullet points should be about putting the services being offered first – maintaining a collection to support all curricule [sic] subjects is true, but how exacvly [sic] does it support them? Also the word “professional” could be used to highlight the importance of having a qualified librarian.**

I am unsure about the **“commit to gaining maximum funding” – perhaps commit to make most effective use of funding or something that doesn't put most of the onus on the librarian.**

Need to act on the outcomes of the evidence collected

Undertake action research on the role of the school library in learning and teaching

Remove last point under librarian – should be (and is) under management support – it's not something the librarian does

Under Librarian I notice you use phrases like info skills training – is it IS training only? Or do the findings consider info literacy and also the notion of developing abilities through the curriculum (which is not necessarily encompassed in the idea of regular IS training is it? I also find it interesting that the words learning and curriculum don't figure here which seems to go against the HGIOS approach, etc.

Expand point to: Collect evidence and **adjust own practice in the light of this Demonstrate and** promote the link between own school library use, learning and achievement

I had one question under Role of Librarian, and that was “information skills training to users”. I was confused, do you mean **information literacy skills training**, or is this a different strand? Probably no difference??

What about **resources for pleasure reading** which further encourage literacy development – fiction, magazines, graphic novels and other graphic formats?

AASL has just released its Standards for 21st century learners and they focus not just on info lit but on the **multiple literacies** [AASL 2007]

Here in the states, we often say that EVERY teacher is a reading teacher, so this would read “with all faculty” [re literacy promotion with English teachers]

Management

Be responsive to the school librarian's suggestions for changes in the light of action research

Point 1 Where are senior management going to get info to give the clear guidance – someone needs to advise HTs [Headteachers], etc – perhaps this could be added to the “national” section?

Point 2 I don't see what this is getting at – is [sic] seems very general compared to the precision of all the other points?

Penultimate point – appraisal – very “dodgy” area – please consider rephrasing – anything on appraisal can have very serious consequences if not properly considered, unions, involved, etc

Nationally

First point – surely **linking into specific educational developments** such as Glow and ACFE would be more relevant to Scotland? (or even as examples?)

Point 2 – can you consider **adding at the end of this point “that demonstrates the positive effects that school libraries can have on pupils' achievements/attainments.”**

Point 6 - I'm not familiar with the term “grey literature”?

Penultimate point – this is **a particularly excellent point** that I think actually merits first place on the list

Collaboration

What about the actual **collaborative TEACHING role** here?

Evidence

“Act on user opinion” – **can I suggest adding “given appropriate support from ananagemnet [management],... “ at the start?**

What seems to be missing in this section, for me, is a **focus on STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT** as a result of the work of the librarian in collaboration with faculty

Need to link to student achievement

Skills & qualities

Change terms used to adjectives

Excellent organisational skills

Liaison and collaboration would be top of my list

Bullet points should all be adjectives – the mixture between nouns and adjectives makes this run less smoothly than necessary

Add **“Collaborative”**?

APPENDIX V

Final model of the effective high school librarian

There are a range of circumstances that combine to enable effectiveness in a high school librarian, and it is acknowledged that s/he may be the engineer of these circumstances wherever possible. Although not all of these may be present at the same time, the ideal situation would be to incorporate as many as possible.

Skills and qualities

Effective librarians working in the library will demonstrate a range of personal and professional skills and qualities while working in collaboration with teachers and other staff.

Qualities

Collaborative

- enjoys working with children in a school environment
- enthusiastic
- creative
- positive
- practices a highly visible role in the whole school community
- flexible
- patient

Collaborative and decision-making

- tenacious
- risk-taker
- uses initiative

Collaborative and evidence-based

- open to new ideas and challenges

Collaborative, decision-making and evidence-based

- reflective practitioner
- committed to deliver the service to a high level with a responsibility for continuous improvement and innovation
- consistent
- confident

Skills

Collaborative

- excellent organisational skills
- management skills
- time management
- library skills, such as subject knowledge, classification, cataloguing and keywording

- ICT skills
- presentation skills
- class management and pedagogical skills

Collaborative and evidence-based

- communication

Collaborative and decision-making

- negotiation

Decision-making

- analytical skills
- decision-making processing
- critical thinking

Evidence-based

- evidence collection skills

School librarian

A motivated qualified professional librarian who is committed to improving the library service offered to users to assist student learning and to continuing professional development to help staff knowledge of new developments, particularly in the topics of education, learning, multiple literacies, technology and management

- maintain a current collection of resources to support learning in all curriculum subjects and continuing professional development to add to staff knowledge in school, based on regular collaboration with teaching and authority staff
- maintain a collection of resources for leisure reading which further encourages literacy development, such as fiction, magazines, graphic novels and other graphic formats
- collaborate with teaching staff across the whole school to develop learning opportunities
- provide resources to support the interests of users
- provide information literacy and multiple literacies education to users
- promote information literacy and multiple literacies opportunities for users to develop abilities through the curriculum
- identify own training needs and communicate them to school management
- regularly engage in formal continuing professional development opportunities with teachers in school, colleagues in other school libraries and on national courses
- be aware of and contribute to the development of wider professional issues at a national and international level
- regularly access literature and research concerning how the school librarian supports learning and communicate it to school management

- identify useful data to collect and build up an evidence portfolio reflecting the contribution of the work of the school librarian to improvements in student achievement
- regularly collect evidence on how school libraries contribute to learning, share this with teaching and management colleagues and adjust own practice in the light of findings in order to improve student achievement
- demonstrate and promote the link between own school library use, learning and achievement
- promote literacy across the school in collaboration with all teachers
- commit to gaining maximum funding by assisting management with linking bids for initiatives with contribution to support for the curriculum and teaching and learning, and to evidence the effective use of funding
- undertake action research on the role of the school library in learning and teaching

Management support

A supportive senior management team and a Headteacher who provides excellent leadership and who will

- give clear guidance and leadership to school staff (based on national and local recommendations) on how to collaborate with the school librarian and use the library to contribute to achievement in teaching and learning and to support the delivery of the curriculum
- provide role training for staff to help them examine roles and identify strengths in teams with regard to collaborative activities
- provide appropriate support for the school librarian in line with local and national guidelines
- allocate regular formal and informal opportunities to communicate with the librarian
- provide adequate support, space, time, information technology and resources to develop the library as a whole school learning resource
- identify sources of internal and external funding for library development
- provide regular authority-approved relevant negotiated appraisal and training opportunities for school library staff
- provide staffing support to allow the librarian time for reflective work
- commit to gaining maximum funding by linking bids for initiatives with contribution to teaching and learning
- be responsive to the school librarian's suggestions for change in the light of action research
- show an active awareness of the role of EBP to the work of the school librarian and achievement of students

Collaboration

Regular collaborative work to be encouraged and promoted with practical support. The librarian will

- take opportunities to meet other school librarians and authority Director of School Library Services (where one exists) on a regular basis
- collaborate with school management on service self-evaluation and plans for continuous improvement
- identify user needs and opinions on library provision on a regular basis
- involve potential users with decision-making and library development
- take on a wider role within the school community
- promote library services throughout the school to all departments and make links between library resources, services and facilities with each department's work
- undertake a collaborative teaching/instructional role in the library with classroom teachers

Evidence

Internal and external data will be used to improve and promote the work of the school librarian with the focus of improving student achievement. With appropriate support, the librarian will commit to

- apply principles of relevant quantitative and qualitative indicator documents to demonstrate student achievement, library use and targeted development
- regularly collect, analyse and disseminate research evidence and plan how it can be incorporated into the service
- regularly collect and analyse data from potential users in school and plan the development of the school library accordingly
- compare own school library data with local and national data and outline negotiated improvements in regular action plans
- regularly consult users about their present and future needs and their opinions about the library and its development
- given appropriate support from management, act on user opinions to improve the service
- discuss progress with senior management on a regular basis
- regularly develop and revise policy and planning documents
- maintain and regularly update a procedural manual
- produce an annual Standards and Quality report for users outlining successes and identifying targets for the forthcoming year

National bodies

Co-ordinated professional body and literature led practice

- training about the potential contribution of the school librarian will be included in basic teacher training and school manager training
- professional bodies will articulate with more generic educational and quality documents to produce guidelines and promote research into school library work by evidence-based practice, linking with current and proposed curriculum initiatives, such as Glow and A Curriculum for Excellence (Scotland) and No Child Left Behind (United States)

- professional bodies will work with academic institutions to provide opportunities to commission, collate, promote, discuss and disseminate school library research (and especially practitioner-focused action research) demonstrating positive effects of school libraries on student achievement and attainment, including technologies such as blogs and wikis
- professional bodies will maintain and promote a national overview of best practice in relevant school library initiatives
- professional bodies will give clear guidance to Headteachers and school managers on how to make the most effective use of school libraries and the skills of professional school librarians
- professional journals will commission, promote and provide easier access to articles on best practice
- mainstream practitioner journals will include digests of relevant research
- research findings relating to school library work and student achievement will feature more in practitioner conferences
- findings and contacts regarding more informal unpublished “grey” literature on school libraries will be collated and included regularly in practitioner journals
- specialist pre-service and in-service school librarian training will be made available on principles of applying EBP

APPENDIX W

Headings for Standards and Quality Report

Xshire High School Library 1st September 2008 – 1st September 2009

MAIN ACTIVITIES

KEY STRENGTHS

MAIN POINTS FOR ACTION

SUCCESS STORIES

COMMENTS