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The management of independent secondary school libraries in England and Wales:
The skills and perceptions of library managers

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This paper investigates aspects of the management of independent secondary school libraries in England and Wales. It is based on a survey of 150 independent school library managers, with a response rate of 68.7 percent, which was carried out as part of an ongoing PhD research project. The paper considers a range of issues important to school library managers: for example, policy and procedure document production, project management, sources of guidance, the management skills most important to practitioners and the opinions of school library managers on a range of management issues related to the running of a school library. The qualifications and experience of school library managers are also considered in the research. The survey demonstrated a notable degree of satisfaction with the management and operation of libraries by library managers in individual schools. However, a number of factors were identified as barriers to successful management, which may have implications for policies and procedures within the sector. Additional research is planned to clarify the level of school library provision in independent schools, including further interviews with school library managers, diary keeping and a survey of senior management in independent schools to gauge their opinions on their school library.

KEYWORDS: education; England and Wales; independent schools; libraries; library management; school libraries; secondary schools

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INTRODUCTION

CILIP recommends that the school recognizes the essential management role of the librarian and seeks to appoint a full-time chartered librarian with administrative support. (Barrett and Douglas, 2004: xi)

This paper is derived from a survey that was carried out in June 2006 as part of a currently ongoing PhD about the management of independent school

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libraries in England and Wales. The aim of the survey (and wider PhD research) was to investigate the management of independent secondary school libraries and to understand the issues that impact on, and are significant to, this management. Part of this survey specifically addressed the management skills required to run a school library in this sector. The survey identified the qualifications of the library manager, and sought the manager's opinions about a range of key issues in school librarianship and how their school library operated. The findings presented in this paper demonstrate the management skills and perceptions of current school library managers in this sector.

The school librarian profession in the UK has struggled to be an attractive proposition for library and information professionals because of low pay (which is often pro rata, term time only), a status within the school that has traditionally been seen as a passive support role, little opportunity for career progression because many school librarians are solo workers, and resultant problems of both professional and geographical isolation. As Tilke (2002: xxiv) points out, ' . . . there have been and are many pressures on school libraries and librarians to succeed and even to survive. These could be because of financial constraints, low or high expectations, curriculum/examination pressures, political policy etc.'.

School libraries have recently become much more pro-active and integrated into the whole school culture, however. The value of school libraries for educational attainment and learning is being increasingly acknowledged. Senior management are now seeing the value of a well-supported, multi-media resource centre that meets the needs of the whole curriculum. A recent government report underlines this: 'Libraries can have a significant impact on pupils' personal development' (Office for Standards in Education, 2006: 1).

This paper is presented in the context of a potential paradox of individual schools recognizing the importance of the school library, but a lack of agreement within schools about the best way to manage it.

The term 'library manager' is used because some schools do not necessarily have a specific librarian, instead relying on a teacher or other staff member to run their facility. The term 'school library' is used, although there is an acknowledgement that such facilities are increasingly being called learning resources centres or similar.

The lack of statutory standards for school libraries in England and Wales means that there is variation in how the libraries are managed. The most common types of independent school library managers are:

- **a Chartered Librarian**, who is a professional librarian who has been accepted as a registered Member of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (MCLIP) through their experience and qualifications. The actual requirements can be viewed at http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/;
- **a qualified librarian**, who has a degree or postgraduate qualification in librarianship or information studies;
- **a teacher-librarian**, who is dual qualified, with both teaching and librarianship qualifications;
- **unqualified librarians**, who do not have formal qualifications in librarianship, but may have other relevant qualifications, skills and experience;
- **teachers**, who have teaching commitments as well as responsibility for managing the library, often run school libraries which do not have a specific librarian;
- occasionally a member of the **clerical or administrative support** staff will also have responsibility for maintaining a library.

There may also be other categories such as **volunteers.**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) defines an independent school as 'any school that provides full-time education for five or more pupils of compulsory school age . . . and which is not a school maintained by a local education authority or a non-maintained special school' (Office for Standards in Education, 2005).

The independent secondary school sector educates around 7 percent of the school population (Independent Schools Council, 2007). Most of these schools are members of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) (www.isc.co.uk). The ISC has a number of affiliated bodies, including the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) (www.hmc.org.uk); the Girls' Schools Association (GSA) (www.gsa.uk.com); the Independent Schools Association (ISA) (www.isaschools.org.uk); Society of Headmasters & Headmistresses of Independent Schools (SHMIS) (www.shmis.org.uk); Association of Governing Bodies of Independent Schools (AGBIS); Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) (www.iaps.org.uk); Independent Schools' Bursars Association (ISBA) (www.theisba.org.uk). In addition, some 25 independent day schools are owned by the Girls' Day School Trust (www.gdst.net).

Apart from the schools that are members of the ISC there are also a number of schools that are not affiliated, such as faith schools (mainly Christian, Islamic and Jewish), some foreign national schools (such as the Japanese School, the Norwegian School, Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle among others), and some other smaller independent day and boarding schools. These are known as non-association schools.

METHODOLOGY

A detailed literature review and discussion with networks of school librarians, such as the School Librarians' Network (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sln/), identified key issues that needed to be addressed in the independent school library sector in England and Wales.

A questionnaire survey was used to investigate the management issues. The population for this survey consisted of library managers of secondary schools in England and Wales that were affiliated to the Independent Schools Council (ISC). ISC schools were selected because they represent the schools that educate over 80 percent of those pupils educated independently, including a range of day, boarding, single sex and co-educational schools across England and Wales. The survey targeted 25 percent of library managers in ISC schools. The questionnaire was sent to 150 school library managers, of whom 103 responded (68.7 percent).

The survey was divided into sections which asked for general quantitative information about the school, and then more specific questions about the library, its staffing, the role of the library within the school, ICT provision, inspections, financial management, the use of the library and management skills. This paper focuses on the responses from questions about staffing and management skills.

A selection of additional comments made by respondents in the survey is included to illustrate key issues being discussed.

FINDINGS

Respondents' schools

The sample of 150 ISC schools was drawn from a geographical cross-section of England and Wales, with a range of different sized schools, gender of student cohort, boarding and day schools, and those which additionally provide an education beyond the core secondary ages of 11–16. See Figure 1.

- 8.7 percent of respondents' schools were boys only (12.6 percent of all ISC affiliated secondary schools are boys only); 39.8 percent of respondents' schools were girls only (36.5 percent of all ISC affiliated secondary

Figure 1. Number of pupils in the school

Figure 2. Sources of guidance
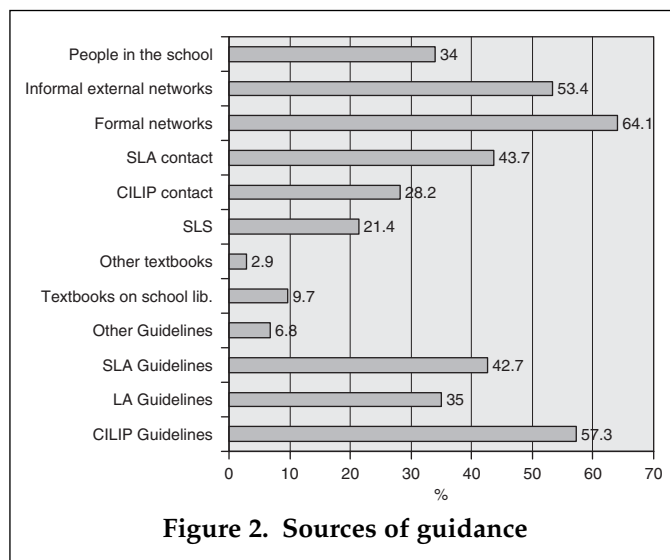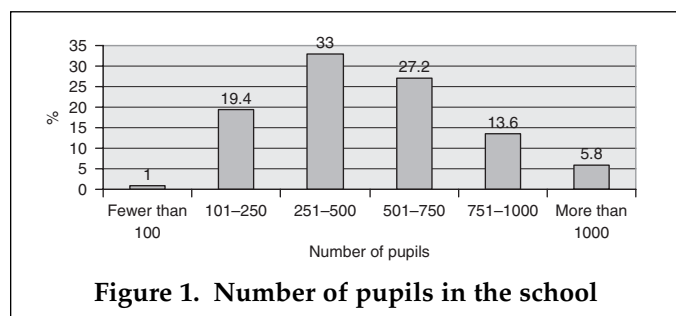
schools are girls only); 51.5 percent of respondents' schools were co-educational (50.8 percent of all ISC affiliated secondary school are co-educational).

- 48.5 percent had boarders.
- 90.3 percent had a 6th form (usually ages 16–18 in further education).

Sources of guidance

Sources of guidance on the management of school libraries and guidelines for best practice are available, and this research aimed to ascertain to what extent practitioners made use of these. See Figure 2.

The most used printed source of guidance was the 2004 CILIP guidelines for school librarians (Barrett and Douglas, 2004) with 57.3 percent of respondents stating that they used this book. The previous edition produced by Tilke for the Library Association (Tilke, 1998) was still used by 35 percent of school librarians. Cross-tabulation revealed that library managers who are Chartered Librarians are most likely to use CILIP guidelines.

The School Library Association (2007) guidelines are used by 42.7 percent of school library managers, and almost half, 43.7 percent, contacted the SLA for advice. Fewer respondents, 28.2 percent, stated that they contacted CILIP for advice. A number of the respondents who used the SLA guidelines declared how important they were, such as:

> I purchase most of the SLA guidelines that relate to secondary schools and find them to be very helpful.

Again, cross-tabulation revealed that Chartered Librarians generally made the most use of SLA guidelines, although it was not as marked as for the CILIP guidelines.

Even fewer respondents contacted the School Library Service, although it should be noted that all schools now have to decide whether to buy into this service, with 21.4 percent of respondents doing so.
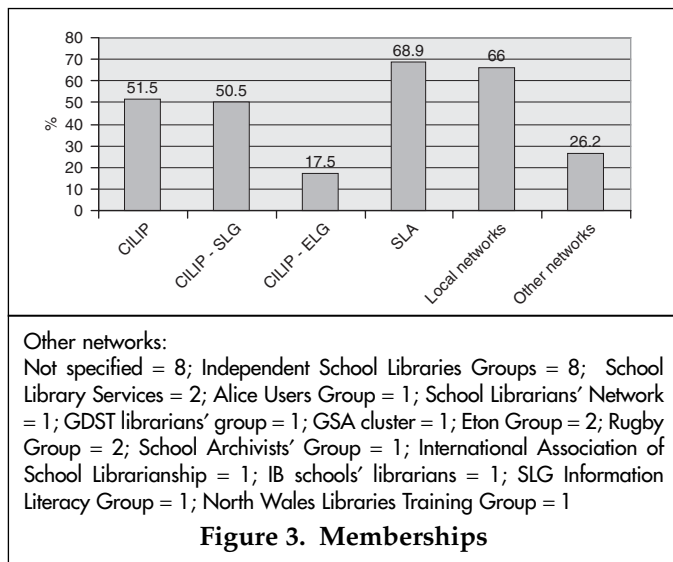
Other networks:
Not specified = 8; Independent School Libraries Groups = 8; School Library Services = 2; Alice Users Group = 1; School Librarians' Network = 1; GDST librarians' group = 1; GSA cluster = 1; Eton Group = 2; Rugby Group = 2; School Archivists' Group = 1; International Association of School Librarianship = 1; IB schools' librarians = 1; SLG Information Literacy Group = 1; North Wales Libraries Training Group = 1

Figure 3. Memberships

Few school library managers (6.8 percent) used other guidelines than the CILIP, Library Association and SLA ones. Textbooks were not widely used as a source of information on library management.

Of more importance is seeking the advice of other practitioners and staff. 64.1 percent of respondents were part of formal networks of school librarians, such as the School Librarians' Network (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sln/) and regional groups. 53.4 percent use informal contacts in other schools, such as colleagues who are also school library managers.

Of the respondents 34 percent use people within their own school for advice, including the Head Teacher, Deputy Head, Director of Studies, Heads of Department, English teachers, other teaching staff and non-teaching staff such as ICT technicians.

Professional membership

Membership of wider professional organizations was deemed to be an indicator of the professionalism of the person running the school library in independent schools. See Figure 3.

Of respondents 53 percent were members of CILIP, with 50.5 percent being members of the CILIP School Libraries Group and 17.5 percent members of the CILIP Education Group (only one respondent who was a member of the Education Group was not also a member of the School Libraries Group).

The organization with the highest membership was the School Library Association with 68.9 percent of respondents being a member.

A similarly high number, 66 percent, of responses stated that they were members of local networks of school librarians.
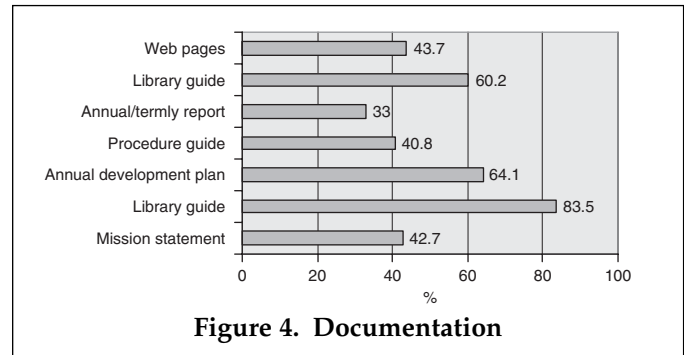

Figure 4. Documentation

Documentation

The management of a school library involves the production of policy documentation to establish the role of the library within the whole school culture. As Anthony Tilke clearly stated in the Library Association Guidelines for Secondary School Libraries: 'The school library policy is a definition of the role of the school library' (Tilke, 1998: 14).

The results of the survey provided an interesting range of responses to whether each school has different policy documentation. See Figure 4.

The 83.5 percent of schools with a school library policy was notably higher than the 59 percent in an earlier survey of school library managers in schools belonging to the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) schools, which represent about 250 of the leading independent schools in the UK and Ireland (Shakeshaft, 1998); 56.1 percent in a survey of general school libraries in the UK by Sheffield Hallam University for the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) (Sheffield Hallam University, 2002); and 49 percent in a survey of independent schools carried out for the author's Masters dissertation (Turner, 2000).

Project management

Just over half (53.4 percent) of respondents had managed a major project in the library within the last five years. From the 55 responses, the projects can be grouped in the following categories (with number of school library managers mentioning that project): automation of the library (24); fit/refurbishment/redecoration (22); new library (16); stock changes (5); ICT developments (4); new security system (1); self-service loans (1); re-cataloguing (1).

While the automation of the library catalogue and circulation systems was the most commonly carried out project, the next most frequently cited projects were major refurbishment and a whole new library – two different solutions to the development of the library. The development of traditional libraries and their services is often difficult because of space and other physical constraints. These projects require planning and management skills. One respondent noted the significance of project management for professional development:

There is also limited scope for promotion and career progression so the main focus for me is to gain experience. Hence the library is improved by projects that test the librarians' skills and ingenuity.

The differing perceptions of the library by pupils and adults must also be taken into account, as illustrated by this comment from a respondent:

On one hand we want it to look good for parents and visitors who like the wood panelling, 'stuffy' books and tradition of it; while the pupils tend to hate this and want reading corners, 'fun' books and computers.

Management skills

The survey investigated which management skills were used by school library managers, and which, for them, were the most important. To do this, one question listed 18 management skills that had been mentioned in guidelines for best practice. Respondents were asked to select five from the list that they considered the most essential in the management of their school library. Some did not make five selections so the total number of responses was not 103 × 5 = 515, but 504.

The percentage figure for each of the 18 management skills is the percentage of respondents who selected that skill as one of their five choices. See Table 1.

The most selected management skills selected were **Communication** skills and **Information literacy** skills. One respondent commented:

Communication skills and a love of information are paramount in managing a school library.

Information literacy is mentioned in all the guidelines for best practice. 'Promoting and developing information handling skills within a library and curriculum context is a key feature of the work of all secondary school library staff' (Dubber, 1999: 3).

Among the skills that were selected least was **Advocacy** which may be explained by this being a relatively new term for school libraries in the UK. **Health and safety** was only mentioned by 4 schools (3.9 percent) and yet this is usually a legal requirement.

Perceptions of independent school library managers

The survey also asked each school library manager to read 15 statements about various aspects of the management of independent school libraries. Respondents were asked to rate the answer from 1 to 5 where 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = slightly disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = slightly agree; 5 = strongly agree.

The first question asked whether a school library should be staffed by a Chartered Librarian. See Figure 5.

This chart shows that more respondents agreed slightly or strongly with the statement that a Chartered Librarian should staff a school library, than slightly or strongly disagreed. However, cross-tabulation with the qualifications of the library manager found that it is mostly Chartered Librarians themselves who agreed with the statement.

Many other countries, such as Australia, Canada and the USA, employ school librarians who are dual qualified as both a teacher and librarian (Tilke, 2002: 21). While this is the norm in other countries, in England and Wales it is unusual to have a dual qualified library manager (in fact, only 8 of the 103 respondents were dual qualified). Opinion on whether a school library should be staffed by a dual qualified manager was indecisively divided. See Figure 6.

More approval came for the statement that the library manager should have a qualification in librarianship: 65.1 percent agreed either strongly or slightly with the statement, 15.5 percent were neutral and 18.4 percent disagreed either slightly or strongly. Only the group of library managers with no library qualifications made any significant negative choice, as reflected in one respondent's comment:

It's probably important that a large library is managed by someone with better qualifications, but in a small school (120 girls), when I know every girl and her reading ability and tastes, this is far more important (according to my customers 'niceness' is the most important qualification. I am nice).

Other feedback reflected more balanced opinion, such as that from one respondent who stated:

Experience is important but so are qualifications because one tends to find that qualified people have better organisational skills when it comes to stock control etc. One sees some weird and wonderful variations on DDC for example and cataloguing in libraries run by unqualified people!
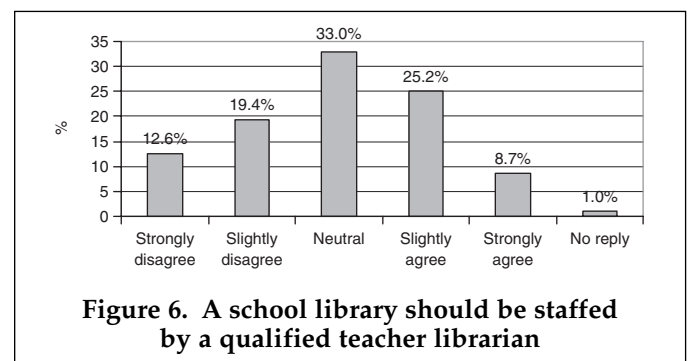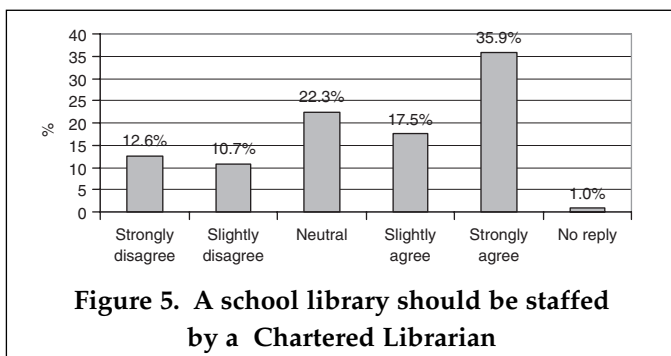
Opinions on whether experience is more important than qualifications for a school librarian were again divided. See Figure 7.

Cross-tabulation with qualifications was more revealing and found that those managers with no library qualifications agreed more with the statement than those with qualifications/Chartered Librarian status.

On many of the message boards of school library practitioners, such as the School Librarians' Network (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sln/), and among networks of school librarians, one of the most frequent complaints is that teaching staff do not have the time or inclination to make full use of the library, despite advocacy and pro-active attempts at encouraging teacher use. The survey revealed that 26.2 percent of respondents strongly disagreed that all teachers understand the role of the library in their school, 26.2 percent slightly disagreed and a further 9.7 percent were neutral. Comments made by respondents supported this, such as:

Table 1. Management skills		
Management skills	**%**	**n = 103**
Communication	63.1	65
Information literacy	62.1	64
Reader development	48.5	50
ICT	47.6	49
Willingness to do routine tasks	46.6	48
Self motivation	38.8	40
Collection management	30.1	31
Behaviour management	25.2	26
PR/marketing	21.4	22
Time management	21.4	22
Financial	14.6	15
CPD (Training)	13.6	14
Evaluation and monitoring	13.6	14
Staff management	13.6	14
Advocacy	9.7	10
Project management	8.7	9
Policies and development plans	6.8	7
Health and safety	3.9	4
(Respondents were asked to choose five management skills from a list of 18. The table shows the percentage of respondents who chose each skill as one of the five they considered to be most important for the management of their own library)		

Figure 5. A school library should be staffed by a Chartered Librarian

Figure 6. A school library should be staffed by a qualified teacher librarian
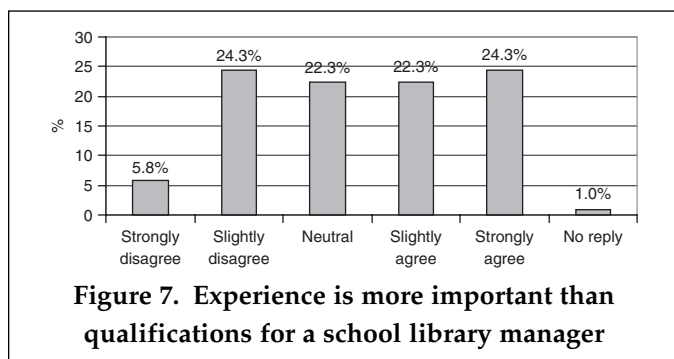
The library is located in an isolated part of the school. Staff do not always seem to be aware that pupils may use the library at lunchtime and deter them from doing so. The librarian is also used as a general dogsbody – photocopying exam papers, organising trips, binding and laminating. It is easy to work out how much senior management appreciate the librarian and library provision. Generally, ordinary teaching staff are appreciative.

Many teachers, who have not worked outside school, have no idea of what goes on behind the scenes, especially because it is a user-driven service.

Other factors that can be obstacles to effective library use include the existence of departmental libraries. The one school from the 103 survey respondents that did not have a library had made a conscious decision to decentralize resources to departments within the school. The problem of departmentalized resources was commented on by one respondent:

> I think the biggest problems here, and no doubt I'm not alone, are the development of departmental libraries, sometimes actually having removed stock from the main

Figure 7. Experience is more important than qualifications for a school library manager

Figure 8. Senior management understand the way my school library is run

official library to start them, on the grounds that the library is 'too far away' from the teaching base! Staff then habitually direct pupils to the department resources instead of the library.

Nevertheless, 37 school library managers (35.9 percent) stated that they slightly or strongly agreed with the statement that all teachers understand the role of the library in their school, showing that this is not a pandemic problem but is rather a big issue for those it affects. Progress is being made, as one respondent commented:

> Ensuring that the library is seen as a cross curricular centre has been paramount in the past 5 years for me and it is beginning to have some impact.

All types of library manager mostly agreed with the statement that their school library was well used by pupils. Among them 80.7 percent were either neutral or agreed that their school library was well used by pupils, with just 18.5 percent of respondents disagreeing either slightly or strongly.

A significant finding from the whole survey was about perceptions of senior management's understanding of the school library. Many of the messages on bulletin board discussion groups and networks of school librarians state that the support of senior management is a problem. The role of senior management is one of the major factors influencing the level of library service provision in schools (along with the library manager and external guidelines for best practice). Of the respondents 28 school library managers (27.2 percent) slightly or strongly disagreed that senior management understand the way the library is run, and even this minority is a cause for concern. However, it was interesting to note the higher percentage (50.5 percent) of respondents who either slightly or strongly agreed that senior management do understand the way the school library is run. See Figure 8. One respondent commented:

> I am fortunate in having the support of the Governors and the SMT in the running and decision-making of the library. The Governors support a generous budget which has increased five fold since I arrived 8 years ago.
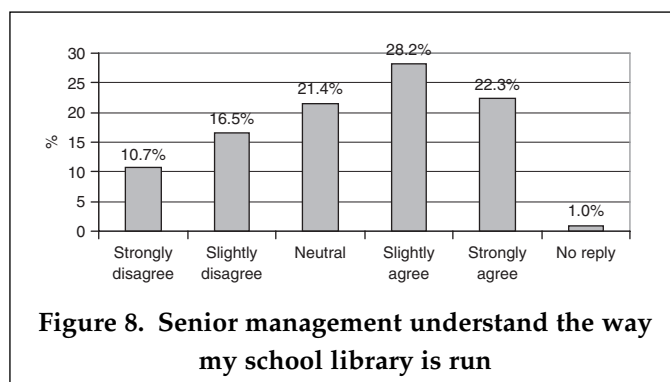
There is a perception among practitioners that as school librarians are often solo workers, and work term time only, there may be a problem for them attending relevant training sessions. This is a topic that is raised informally among the various networks of school librarians. While about one-fifth of the respondents slightly or strongly disagreed that they are able to attend all the relevant training they need, noticeably more agreed. See Figure 9. This, together with some of the other issues above, e.g. support of senior management, starts to suggest that some schools do indeed have obstacles to the efficient management of their library and are sometimes, rightly, vocal about them, but many more are content with their lot and are a silent majority.

Of the respondents 46.6 percent were candid enough to state that a willingness to undertake routine tasks was one of the five main skills for the management of their school library. This admission that there is an important routine administration element to the job of a school librarian was tempered by a significant refuting of the statement that running a school library is largely a clerical job. Just 3.9 percent of respondents strongly agreed with this statement and a further 10.7 percent slightly agreed, whereas 57.3 percent strongly disagreed and a further 16.5 percent slightly disagreed. The outcome of this seems to be that although there are housekeeping duties to do as an integral part of the job, a school librarian is essentially a manager with managerial responsibilities. One respondent commented about how the school library is often perceived:

> Because of the status and salary of the librarian, there seems to be an assumption that the job is mainly clerical.

An obstacle to good management of the library is anything that hinders contact with senior management. Hence, the survey sought to investigate whether this was because there was confusion over who the line manager was. However, only one school library manager declared that they did not know who their line manager was. More than 70 percent of the respondents stated that they slightly or strongly agreed that their line management was clear. While this was an issue for the 5.8 per-
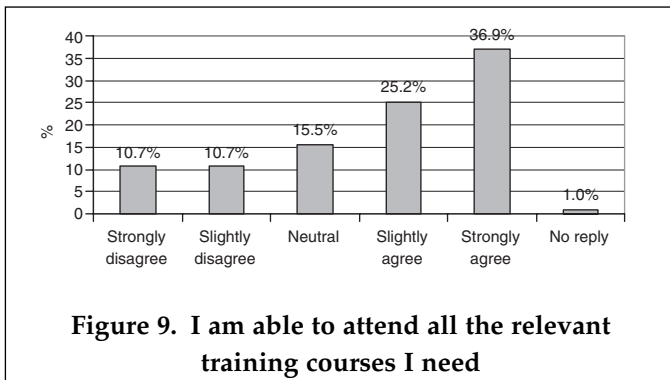
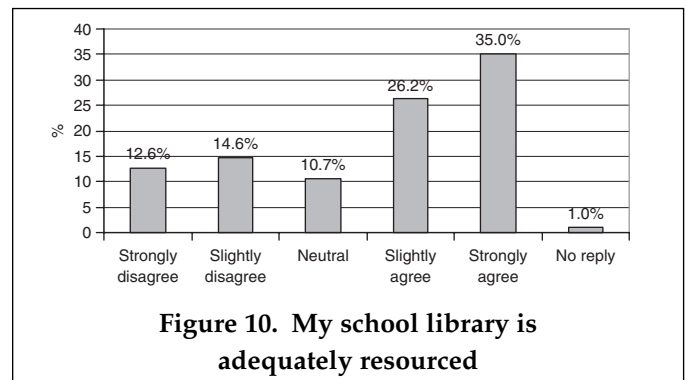**Figure 9. I am able to attend all the relevant training courses I need**

Figure 10. My school library is adequately resourced

cent of respondents who strongly disagreed that their line management was clear, and also the 13.6 percent who slightly disagreed, it was not a general concern across the sector.

Among practitioners in the general school library sector the problem of funding and other resource provision is frequently aired, e.g. on the School Librarians' Network (2007). However, this survey found that most school library managers were either slightly or strongly in agreement with the statement that their school library was adequately resourced, which suggests that independent school librarians are, by and large, content with their budgets. See Figure 10.

While a significant number of the school library managers felt that their library was well resourced, those that did not are, perhaps unsurprisingly, often the most vocal about the situation. In some cases the library manager was new to a post that had previously been undervalued, as illustrated by a comment from one of the respondents.

> I have only been in the position for one year and it is clear that the library is underfunded and underused. The school is keen to rectify the situation when funds become available.

Discipline of pupils in secondary education in England and Wales is often in the news (BBC, 2006). One of the attractions of independent education is that discipline is seen as stricter and behaviour is better, with an environment more conducive to learning. While there may be exceptions to this, the survey results indicate that poor behaviour is not a problem for the vast majority of independent school library managers. The survey found that 81.6 percent of respondents disagreed or were neutral that discipline was a problem in the management of their school library. Behaviour management was one of the five major skills chosen by 25 percent of respondents (see Table 1), which indicates an awareness of the need for maintaining order, even though it is not a significant issue. As one respondent commented:

> Behaviour management is not something I was taught at university, whereas for a school librarian it is essential.

While most school librarians agreed that a major part of their job was promoting their library, it is perhaps surprising that 23 school library managers (22.4 percent) slightly or strongly disagreed, even though the guidelines for best practice strongly urge school librarians to promote the services they provide to encourage greater use, ' . . . such services need to be promoted to users and potential users' (Tilke, 2002: 179). See Figure 11.

A further cause of complaint on networks of school librarians is the shortage of space they have and the lack of potential for expansion or to stock resources in different formats. It was interesting to see that more than half of the responses stated that they were actually satisfied with the space in their library. See Figure 12.

Those disagreeing with the statement are a sizeable minority and for the individual school librarian with a space issue, this is obviously a big problem, as testified to by several respondents who included the following comments:

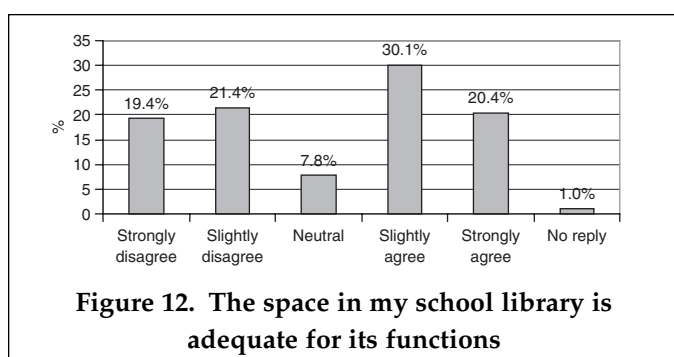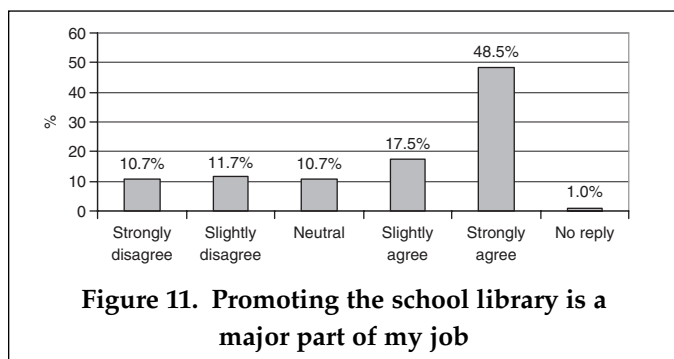> Our library site is too small for the school and initial plans to redevelop it were postponed.

> Our biggest problem is lack of space – virtually for every new book added I have to withdraw an older one.

> xxx's library is enormous and causes great problems in policing.

Because of the long school hours of independent schools and the additional activities they offer outside school hours which may impact on the library, the survey asked if the library manager never worked outside their contracted hours. While 36.9 percent of respondents indicated that they either slightly or strongly agreed, or were neutral, that they never take work home or work outside contracted hours, a substantial 62.2 percent either slightly or strongly disagreed. This indicates that almost two-thirds of independent school library managers work outside their contracted hours.

CONCLUSIONS

There are no guidelines for best practice that are specifically about managing an independent school library, but

Figure 11. Promoting the school library is a major part of my job

Figure 12. The space in my school library is adequate for its functions

professional and government organizations have issued general guidelines for school library management. These guidelines recommend that a chartered or qualified librarian should manage the school library, and they provide advice on many aspects of school librarianship in England and Wales.

Standards of school library provision in independent schools vary because there are no legislative guidelines for best practice in general school librarianship and each school's library is very much a reflection of the individual school community it serves. The findings show that just 57 percent of independent school library managers use the CILIP guidelines (Barrett and Douglas, 2004) and 43 percent use the various School Library Association guidelines (School Library Association, 2007).

The staffing levels, and qualifications and experience of school library managers vary widely throughout independent school libraries. The qualifications, skills and experience of school library managers have significant bearing on how they perceive the management of school libraries in general. In particular, attitudes about the most appropriate qualifications and experience needed to manage an independent school library are polarized according to respondents' current qualifications and experience.

The survey of 25 percent of ISC school library managers demonstrated that a number of management issues relating to general school librarianship, in the literature and in practice, also affect independent school

libraries. Some of the issues that are frequently raised in general school librarianship literature, in discussion groups and in other networks of school librarians, have different levels of impact and significance for those managing independent school libraries. Notable among these are the issues of senior management support, pupil use of the library, resources for the library and discipline, which are raised as problems in the general school library sector but do not seem as problematical to independent school libraries. However, the issue of the understanding by teaching staff about the role of the library and library manager is also highlighted in independent school libraries.

The general satisfaction expressed by many independent school library managers about many of the issues may be because some independent schools have more money available to provide resources for the library than state schools, the library may traditionally be a central part of the school, salaries may be higher, the role of the library is often understood by senior management, behaviour is less problematic because of smaller class sizes, and there is clear line management as demonstrated by this research.

It may be that where there are problems with such issues as the amount of senior management support, these are being vocally raised in networks of school librarians by a minority, while the majority are satisfied and thus passive about the issue. For the individual school library manager, often working as a solo worker, any difficulty with just one management area can affect, or seem to affect, provision of an effective library service. Thus, the survey demonstrated the strong opinions of some respondents about issues that were not of general concern across the whole sample.

The attributes most important for school library managers are identified as communication skills, involvement in information literacy, reader development and a willingness to do routine tasks. Among the least chosen attributes are management of health and safety, project management and production of policies and development plans. However, there was strong disagreement that managing a school library was largely a clerical job, so it seems that there is awareness that the job does involve routine tasks but also management skills. Health and safety, the least selected skill, is a legal obligation and all school library managers should be aware of the implications of this. A significantly high 84 percent of responding independent school libraries now have a library policy and over half of school library managers had managed a major project in the last five years, indicating that although these are not indicated as the most important skills in the management of the library, they have still been used to good effect when needed. It seems that the skills chosen by respondents are those that are most useful in their day-to-day management of the school library, and that other skills are needed in the long term.

This survey of ISC school library managers is one method being used in the research about the management of independent school libraries in England and Wales. Interviews and diary-keeping exercises will be carried out with individual respondents to further investigate some of the issues arising, especially the importance of whole school support for the library, information literacy, and the most appropriate qualifications and experience required for effective independent school library management. A survey of senior management in schools will also be carried out to provide an understanding of their attitudes and perceptions of the school library and its management.

The first part of the research has provided a rich source of data about independent school library managers' perceptions. The completed research will provide an insight into how school libraries in the independent sector are managed and also contribute to the continuing debate about the general provision of school libraries in England and Wales.

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