Of Special Interest

Attitudes of Preservice and Inservice Teachers Toward Working With School Librarians

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This research focused on how preservice teachers and inservice teachers relate to working cooperatively with school librarians in the instructional process. The study involved 98 preservice teachers who were enrolled in the School of Education, University of Pittsburgh, and 96 inservice teachers who had graduated from the same school and similar programs three to five years earlier. The data were collected using questionnaires. No significant differences were found between the attitudes of preservice and inservice teachers. The size of the school was found to be a significant factor in teachers' attitudes toward cooperative work. Significant but weak relationships were found between teachers' attitudes and some variables related to teachers' knowledge about school librarians and to library education that the teachers were engaged in.

Changes in society and education influence the school library media specialist's roles and responsibilities. Three major changes in society's development affect educational trends and methods: the information explosion, new areas of knowledge, and technological advancement (Liesener, 1985). It is the task of education to prepare prospective citizens for a society that offers an unknown future. The amount of information that exists, and the rapid changes, make it impossible to teach pupils comprehensively. Hence there is a need to provide students with tools for coping with both known and unknown types of knowledge, enabling a lifelong process of independent learning.

The main place for providing these tools is the school library media center. It contains information related to students' main fields of study and to other fields that are of interest to them. The school library media specialist (hereafter referred to as librarian) is the expert on information who knows the principles and tools for accessing it, that is, for defining the information needed and locating resources that might address that need. It is the librarian's responsibility to transmit these principles to the students. For the learning process to be effective, it is necessary to teach library and information skills related to subject matter as part of a teaching unit; that is, the teaching of information skills should be integrated with the subject matter.
This can be done only if the teacher and the librarian collaborate in developing the instructional unit (American Library Association, 1988).

**The Librarian as a Partner in the Instructional Process**

Effective cooperation between librarians and teachers can occur when the library is accepted as integral to the curriculum and the librarian is accepted as part of the educational staff as a teacher who specializes in resources of all forms and types. Haycock (1981; 1985) presents a model that consists of three levels of involvement in the curriculum:

1. **Curriculum support**: the basic level, on which librarians deal with library materials in a technical-professional mode (circulation, cataloging, etc.).
2. **Curriculum enrichment**: the level on which librarians provide activities to promote reading, listening, and viewing and offer reference services for individual and class activities.
3. **Curriculum implementation**: the highest level, on which teachers and librarians perform work that is fully integrated. Teachers and librarians work cooperatively in all of the stages of developing an instructional unit: planning, teaching, and evaluating. This article focuses on this level of curriculum implementation (hereafter referred to as cooperative work).

Four partners in the educational process play a role in the library: the teacher, who looks for appropriate materials for his or her class; the student, who receives information and information skills; the librarian, who links information with users (teachers and students); and the principal, who establishes directions for the school library media center’s operation (Loertscher, 1988). This article focuses on one of the partners, namely, the teacher.

Although library literature and guidelines for the American school library media programs emphasize the librarian’s part in the educational process, research has found that this role is implemented more at the low level of curriculum support and less at the high level of curriculum implementation. That is, teachers see librarians mainly as suppliers of information (Craver, 1990; Turner & Zsiray, 1990).

Library research has identified three major groups of factors that are associated with the implementation level of cooperative work between teachers and librarians: teachers’ characteristics, such as the number of classes on library skills they have attended (Griffin, 1980) and their attitudes toward cooperative work with librarians (Corr, 1979); librarians’ characteristics, such as years of experience in the school setting; and schools’ characteristics, such as size of school (Turner & Martin, 1978).

**The Nature of Attitudes**

One factor that was found to be statistically associated with level of cooperative work with librarians was teachers’ attitudes toward that issue. In this study, attitude is a predisposition that a person takes toward an object or a concept, a definition based on Triandis (1971). Psychological and educational
research have found that attitudes can be learned and changed (Rajecki, 1990; Stern & Keislar, 1977), indicating the possibility that if teachers’ attitudes toward cooperation can be changed positively, then, indirectly, the level of cooperative work will increase.

Attitudes consist of three components (Triandis, 1971; Rajecki, 1990):

1. The cognitive component, which consists of beliefs about an attitudinal object. These beliefs are based on correct or incorrect information.

2. The affective component, which consists of feelings toward an attitudinal object. Feelings generally represented on a continuum between positive and negative poles are involved in evaluation.

3. The behavioral component, which consists of intentions to behave in a particular way toward the attitudinal object. Such intentions are not necessarily the same as the actions actually taken.

Breckler (1984) found that among adults there is generally a consistency among the three components; however, an entire attitude and each of its components may be changed (Rajecki, 1990). A change in one component may be reflected in the others. Each component may be changed in a different way: the cognitive component might be changed by providing new information about the attitudinal object; the affective component might be changed by involving the person in an experience that is not consistent with the existing attitudes; and the behavioral component might be changed by forcing someone to behave differently. Both forming and changing attitudes require intervention of an active agent. This agent might be a powerful person such as a parent or teacher, a significant group, or the media (Triandis, 1971; Rajecki, 1990).

**Teachers’ Attitudes Toward Cooperation With School Librarians**

Studies of teachers’ attitudes toward educational issues have found that those attitudes changed during the professional socialization process in which teachers alter their status from student teachers to teachers (Lortie, 1975; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984). As preservice teachers, they initially have liberal attitudes. During the first five years they work as inservice teachers, however, their attitudes become more conservative (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981; Veenman, 1984). One explanation for this phenomenon is that the direct experience teachers have with the attitudinal object, that is, working in the school setting, induces them to adopt the traditional approach that usually already exists in the school (Lortie, 1975; Wells, 1984).

Preservice and inservice teachers’ attitudes may be formed and changed by having information about and direct experience with the attitudinal object (Stern & Keislar, 1977). Schools of education have the tools to provide information, mainly by classes, and to provide experience with the attitudinal object, mainly in the context of practice teaching. Schools of education are supposed to be attitude agents for teachers, and indeed there is agreement that they have some influence on teachers’ attitudes (Lortie, 1975; Wells,
There is debate, however, about the level of their influence after students become teachers (Wells, 1984).

Some evidence indicates that schools of education have some influence on teachers' attitudes toward cooperative work with librarians: the number of classes about libraries that inservice teachers attend is associated with positive attitudes toward librarians and their roles (Griffin, 1980). Scott (1987) found a correlation between teachers' educational level and their attitudes toward the role of school librarians' and cooperative work with librarians. In reality, as reflected in teacher and principal training textbooks, this type of education is rarely provided and, if it is, not in a systematic way (Saddler, 1970; Turner & Zsiyay, 1990).

It is possible that the development of teachers' attitudes toward librarians is different from the development of their attitudes toward educational issues such as discipline. Although teachers have daily experience with discipline, they do not necessarily have daily interaction with the librarians of their schools, and this limits teachers' opportunities to develop or change their attitudes toward librarians. Furthermore, preservice teachers develop their attitudes about librarians from the point of view of students, whereas inservice teachers are likely to look at librarians from the point of view of teachers, and these are two different perspectives. Several studies that examined teachers' attitudes toward cooperative work with librarians reported mixed attitudes; as Turner and Zsiyay (1990) conclude, teachers' attitudes are not strongly positive.

The aims of this study were to determine whether there are differences between preservice and inservice teachers' attitudes toward cooperative work with librarians and to identify factors related to those attitudes.

**Methodology**

The study was done in the United States in the summer of 1991. The preservice teachers were represented by 98 of 142 students (70%) enrolled in teaching certification programs in the School of Education, University of Pittsburgh. The inservice teachers were represented by 96 of 266 teachers (36%) who had graduated from the same school and similar programs between 1986 and 1988 and who had worked as teachers at various educational levels for at least one year.

This research was based on the assumption that the demographic characteristics of the preservice teachers who participated in this study were similar to those of the inservice teachers who had graduated from the same programs over the past five years. In addition, it was assumed that all the participants had had similar teaching education because during the period investigated there were only a few changes such as greater emphasis on technology or on subject matter studies in the curriculum, and the philosophy of the school remained the same. Therefore, for the purposes of this
study, preservice and inservice teachers are treated as the same population at different times.

A two-part questionnaire was designed for use in the study. The first part related to teachers' attitudes toward cooperative work between teachers and librarians in instructional development. In this part, the cognitive component was examined in two different ways:

1. The participants had to indicate, on a Likert-type scale, the importance they ascribed to 14 different activities performed by a school librarian. Ten of those activities demand cooperation between school librarians and teachers.

2. Using the Error-Choice technique, the participants were introduced to eight pairs of "non-factual" statements. In each pair, one sentence presented a favorable attitude toward cooperation and one presented a favorable attitude toward other types of work in the library. The participants had to choose only one statement.

In order to assess the affective component, the participants were instructed to consider two situations in which they had to work cooperatively with a school librarian. In one situation, they were asked for their feelings toward the general idea of working with the school librarian. In the other, the Semantic Differential method was used. The subject had to choose, from a list of 24 adjectives, those that represented their feelings about this situation. Half the adjectives reflected favorable feelings, the other half, unfavorable ones. The attitude itself was calculated as the sum of values of the cognitive and affective components; the range of the attitudes score was from -10 to 34.

The second part of the questionnaire addressed the participants' background such as education about librarianship, areas of specialization, and levels of teaching; experience in teaching; and personal experience with school librarians. The inservice teachers were asked to give some details about the school in which they worked: the size of school and the level of cooperation among members of the school staff. The data on the preservice teachers were collected in classes, and the data on the inservice teachers by mail.

**Findings**

Answers to the research questions were obtained using Pearson Correlation and T-test. The first research question was: Do attitudes toward working cooperatively with school library media specialists in designing an instructional unit differ between preservice teachers and inservice teachers?

The T-test indicated no significant difference in the attitudes between preservice teachers and inservice teachers (see Table 1). Attitude was calculated as the sum of the values of the cognitive and affective components.

This finding is not consistent with the socialization process that teachers generally go through in relation to other educational topics. In that process,
Table 1
Differences in Attitudes Between Preservice and Inservice Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Preservice Teachers</th>
<th>Inservice Teachers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Component</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Component</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>12.48</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>22.90</td>
<td>4.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None is significant at .05.

Preservice teachers change their attitudes as they become inservice teachers (Cole, 1990).

Inconsistency was also revealed between the relatively high positive attitudes (23 in the range of −10 to 34) among inservice and preservice teachers on one hand, and low actual performance of cooperative work with librarians on the other. Sixty-one percent of all the teachers and 65% of the inservice teachers said that one of the librarian’s roles is to help in instructional development, but only 28% reported any cooperative work in this regard.

The second research question was: Which factors might explain differences in teachers’ (both inservice and preservice) attitudes toward working cooperatively with librarians? The variables examined were chosen based on the psychological, educational, and library literature reviewed above: teachers’ knowledge of librarianship, teachers’ experience, the general level of cooperation among school staff, and teachers’ demographic characteristics (for more details, see appendix A).

A significant and strong correlation was found between the level of educational cooperation among school staff (defined as the number of different staff members with whom teachers worked cooperatively) and teachers’ attitudes toward similar cooperation with librarians (.32 p<.05). This finding was limited to small schools with fewer than 500 students (see Table 2). It appears that in small schools, where all the staff know each other, there is more likely to be a cooperative atmosphere that may influence attitudes toward and relationships with librarians. This finding should be considered with care, because only small numbers of people belong to this category.

A check of the variable teacher knowledge of librarianship revealed a significant but low correlation between, on one hand, the attitudes and, on the other, teachers’ knowledge about librarians’ roles (.21 p<.01) and their professional education (.17 p<.05). As has been found in other studies (Craver, 1990; Turner and Zsiray, 1990), the participants in the present study knew more about the technical and managing aspects of librarians’ roles.
(noncooperative roles) than about their roles as partners in the instructional process (see Table 3).

Seventy-four percent of the participants knew about all the noncooperative roles of librarians, whereas only 26% knew about all the roles that demand cooperation. Sixty percent of all the teachers did not know that school librarians are required to have teaching certification. It is reasonable to assume that such unawareness reduces teachers' expectations about librarians' performance and teachers' willingness to work with them cooperatively.

The low level of teachers' knowledge about librarians and their roles is not a surprising finding in light of another finding that only 45% of the teachers were involved in some library instruction during their undergraduate studies, and only 16% had such instruction as part of their educational program. However, a positive relationship was found between number of types of instruction about librarianship in which teachers were involved as undergraduates and the cognitive component of their attitudes.

Another variable that had a significant but low correlation was teachers' direct experience with the attitudinal object, that is, the high school librarians, while the teachers were high school students. The correlation was found between the cognitive component of the attitudes and two segments of this
Table 3
Teachers’ Attitudes According to Number of Personnel with Whom They Work Cooperatively in Schools with Fewer than 500 Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cognitive Component</th>
<th>Affective Component</th>
<th>Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meetings$^1$</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting$^2$</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities$^3$</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^*p<.05$.

$^1$Meetings = number of different personnel who participate in faculty meetings.

$^2$Consulting = number of different personnel consulted in preparing an instructional unit.

$^3$Activities = number of different activities performed cooperatively with other school staff.

variable: the students’ perception of their high school librarians (.14 p<.01) and the students’ past experience with their high school (.14 p<.01). This encounter was a pleasant experience for about half of the students. The percentage of those who had positive memories increased among the inservice teachers when they became teachers in a school setting (from 43% of inservice teachers with positive past experience to 70%, respectively).

Other variables that were examined by T-test, with no significant correlation found, are:

1. Teachers experience: preservice teachers’ stage of internship, inservice teachers’ experience with school librarians as teachers, inservice teachers’ extent of teaching experience.

2. Demographic characteristics: teaching level, size of school, and teaching area. A T-test showed no significant differences between these variables and the inservice teachers’ attitudes.

Discussion
Statistically, there is no evidence of significant differences in the attitudes of preservice and inservice teachers toward working cooperatively with the school librarians. These results are not consistent with the process teachers undergo in relation to other educational issues.

A possible explanation for this inconsistency is that two thirds of the inservice teachers were working in elementary schools, where there may have been no full-time librarian, so that the teachers’ opportunities to interact with the librarian were limited. This finding may also indicate that librarians have little influence over school life.

Another inconsistency was found between the positive attitudes toward cooperation among the teachers and the low actual performance of cooperative work with librarians. This disparity may reflect a sense of social desirability, that is, it is not felt to be respectable to speak against an agent of
culture such as a librarian. This finding may also reflect the way the question was presented to the participants. They were asked to check from a list the roles of the librarian and then rate the level of importance of each role. Most of the roles checked were rated highly, which raises the possibility that the respondents assumed that if they acknowledged a role, it must be important. Examination of the affective component of the attitudes also revealed almost no negative feelings; this may reflect the respondents' real feelings or, again, social desirability.

According to this study, the following variables have a significant correlation with teachers' attitudes or with the attitudes' components, and may explain relationships and differences in teachers' attitudes toward working cooperatively with school librarians:
1. Teachers' knowledge about school librarians' education.
2. Teachers' knowledge about school librarians' roles.
3. Number of types of instruction about librarianship that the teachers received as undergraduate students.
4. Teachers' experience as students with school librarians.
5. Teachers' perception of their high school librarians.

All these correlations, although significant, are weak. These results should, therefore, be viewed only as indicating tendency.

However, one correlation is strong and significant: the cooperation level in schools with fewer than 500 students correlates positively with number of personnel participating in developing an instructional unit. This finding should also be considered with care, however, because of the small number of teachers who reported consulting the school librarian in developing an instructional unit.

These findings support the professional literature concerning the two ways of forming and changing attitudes: having information about and experience with the attitudinal object (Triandis, 1971; Rajcic, 1990).

This study is an exploratory inquiry into the potential variables that differentiate teachers' attitudes. All the variables that showed a significant but low correlation with the teachers' attitudes are worth studying in greater depth. Furthermore, some other variables should be examined, such as frequency of presence of the librarian in the school, rewards that teachers receive for working cooperatively, and length of teaching beyond the five-year period of this study.

Educational Recommendation
The results of this study may have implications for schools of education in regard to their curricula for preservice teachers and for inservice teachers as part of continuing education programs. Schools of education have the tools to influence the cognitive component of attitudes by providing information in classes about the use of libraries, and they can influence the affective
component by actual experience with librarians as part of classes and practice teaching.

It is suggested that both the librarian's role and the teacher's role in the partnership should be learned by modeling. In this way the students will have opportunities to acquire information and to have a direct experience with the attitudinal object, namely, the librarian. I hope this will provide the preservice teachers with tools that they can use when they become inservice teachers. The use of libraries should be integrated into the teaching of subject matter, so that the partnership with, and contribution of, the library will be demonstrated. At the same time, the students should also learn, indirectly, about the roles of the librarians and about what they may expect from them (see Appendix B for an example).

During the final year of study, in those schools of education that have a library school on their campus, it is recommended that there be a joint class for preservice teachers and preservice librarians. In this class, librarians and teachers would learn about each other and would prepare lessons together that would be demonstrated with their classmates.

In practice teaching, the preservice teachers would implement all they had studied about use of libraries and information and about cooperative work. They would have to prepare at least one lesson jointly with the librarian.

It is suggested that a program with similar components be provided for inservice teachers through continuing education for inservice teachers and librarians. A librarian together with a professor who is a subject matter specialist would model a project in which the librarians and the teachers would work cooperatively in planning, teaching, and evaluating an instructional unit.

Cooperation is always between at least two partners, each of whom contributes to the partnership, and both of whom should be prepared for a working relationship of this kind. Although this study focuses on teachers, it should be emphasized that appropriate preparation of librarians for cooperative work is an essential component in increasing the implementation of such work.

To conclude, in a time of growing emphasis on independent study and lifelong learning, the use of the library and its tools is of special importance. Cooperation between librarians and teachers in instructional development is a way of preparing students to be effective users of information. Although the study indicates a low level of cooperation between teachers and librarians, there are some positive implications. Teachers generally expressed positive attitudes toward librarians and indicated that interaction with them was desirable; they also reported a positive change in their experience with librarians after they became inservice teachers. Schools of education have the responsibility, as well as the ability, to promote the concept of
cooperation and to encourage its implementation. It is hoped that the influencing of teachers' attitudes while they are preservice teachers and inservice teachers will be followed by strengthening cooperation between teachers and librarians. Those who will benefit most are the students.

Note
This study was conducted while the author was attending the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

References
American Library Association and Association for Educational Communications and Technology. (1988). Information power: Guidelines for school library media programs. Chicago, IL: ALA.
Appendix A: Explanation of Variables

1. Teachers' knowledge of librarianship
   a. Knowledge of the work of school librarians
   b. Knowledge of preparation required for school librarianship
   c. Type of teacher education about librarianship
      i. as undergraduate students
      ii. as education students
      iii. as teachers

2. Teachers' experience
   a. Teachers' perception of their past experience with school librarians both as students themselves and in the professional setting
   b. Extent of teaching experience

3. The general level of cooperation among school staff
   a. Personnel with whom teachers work cooperatively
   b. Level of working cooperatively with school staff

4. Teachers' demographic characteristics
   a. Teaching area
   b. Teaching level
   c. Size of school

Appendix B: An Example of Modeling Cooperation Work

In history class while preservice history teachers study the discovery of America, they might have to compare different maps that depict Columbus’s route. The professor and the librarian of the school of education might cooperatively develop that instructional unit, and cooperatively teach it. Whereas the professor would focus on the subject matter, the librarian would introduce the preservice teachers to the maps and atlases collection. Then, together or separately, the professor and the librarian would teach the criteria for choosing appropriate maps.

This example demonstrates the possibilities of cooperative work and an integrated instructional unit: in this one lesson of such a unit, the students receive direct information about the subject matter and about using the library and its tools. They also receive indirect information about the librarian’s roles and scope of education; this, hopefully, would increase teachers’ belief in the capability of the librarian to be a partner.