

## Teachers' Perceptions of School Libraries: Comparisons from Tokyo and Honolulu

Yuriko Nakamura

*Library and Information Science Program,  
Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo*

### 学校図書館に関する教員の認識：東京とホノルルの比較

1998年に、日本の東京都大田区と米国ハワイ州のホノルル学校区において、教員の学校図書館に関する認識を問う調査を行った。本稿では、調査結果の類似点と相違点を明らかにし、各地域での学校図書館の発展への影響の可能性を検討した。回答から、両地域の教員は、学校図書館と学校図書館員の教育的役割の重要性を認識していることが明らかになった。しかしホノルルの教員は大田区の教員よりも、学校図書館を頻繁に利用し、学校図書館員に対してもより高い期待をしていた。これはおそらく、学校図書館政策の違いと、訓練を受けた学校図書館職員の有無によるものであろう。恐らく各地域での学校図書館の発展の本質的な違いによって、その他にも大田区とホノルルからの回答には、興味深い相違点が見られた。

*A survey of teachers' perceptions of school libraries was conducted in 1998 in Ohta-ku in Tokyo, Japan and in the Honolulu District in Hawaii, USA. The results were compared to find similarities and differences and to examine possible influences on the development of school libraries in these locations. Most survey respondents in Ohta-ku and Honolulu acknowledged the importance of the pedagogical role of school libraries and school librarians. Teachers in Honolulu had higher expectations of service from school librarians than did teachers in Ohta-ku. This result was probably due to differences in policy and in the availability of trained school library personnel. There were some other interesting differences between the survey responses of teachers from Ohta-ku and Honolulu, probably because of major differences in the nature of school library development in the two areas.*

### Introduction

During the 20th century, school libraries emerged as an important part of modern education. As teachers moved away from text-based instruction and looked for new or additional resources and structures (Van Deusen, 1996),

school libraries and school librarians emerged. In the last two decades, school library programs have become more important than ever because of technology development and because of the information explosion. Some countries, such as the United States, Canada, and Australia, have developed especially good school library programs based on the understanding that information literacy is an essential survival skill for children in this information age and that resource-based learning must be integrated into content area instruction. A key factor in developing school libraries seems to be use of the library by classroom teachers.

Much research has looked at teachers' perceptions of the school library in countries such as the US. Even in an early study in the 1960s, teachers' perceptions of the school library were identified as an important factor affecting the development of the school library (Teilke, 1968). However, it also has been pointed out again and again that some teachers are still unaware of the functions of school libraries and that teacher training should place more emphasis on school libraries as an integral part of education, even in the US.

Lack of knowledge about school libraries on the part of teachers has been established as an inhibiting factor in countries with successful school library development. However, little research has been done on whether it is an inhibiting factor in countries where development of school libraries has been slower, as in Japan, for example. What are Japanese teachers' perceptions of the importance of school libraries? Do Japanese teachers have opportunities to learn about functions of school libraries in instruction? Little research on these questions has been done in Japan.

In a study in the United Kingdom, Valentine and Nelson (1988) found that teachers' perceptions and use of school libraries were influenced by teaching style and by the presence of a qualified librarian. Traditionally, Japanese schools have relied more on text-based lectures, and reading guidance is important among school library programs (Nagakura, 1991). In addition, only a few school libraries have full-time professional school librarians. Recently, however, the Japanese government has committed to placing librarians in the schools under the new School Library Law. The study reported in this article attempted to test whether lack of understanding of the appropriate use of school libraries among teachers is a factor limiting the development of school libraries in Japan.

## Methodology

### *Comparative Method*

Comparative librarianship broadens understanding of library problems by offering an opportunity to look at theories and practices of librarianship in different countries (Jackson, 1982). The comparative method was used in this study in order to get a better understanding of development of school libraries in Japan and to find keys to more effective development. Problems

in school library development are caused by a combination of factors, and these factors have to be examined both in the context of librarianship and of social and cultural background in a comparative problem study (Simsova, 1982). The development of school libraries in Japan should be examined in several contexts. Teachers' perceptions have been identified as one of the major factors in school library development; this study seeks to provide a piece of fundamental information by focusing on teachers' perceptions of school libraries in two different educational communities, one in Japan and one in the US.

### *The Sample*

The survey was conducted with elementary school teachers in two urban areas, Ohta-ku in Tokyo and Honolulu District in Hawaii. The school libraries in these areas are in many ways representative of the school library situation in Japan and the US. In Ohta-ku, there is no certificated full-time school librarian in any public elementary school. Instead, in each school one or a few teachers are responsible for taking care of the school library in addition to their classroom responsibilities. Public elementary schools in Honolulu District, on the other hand, have school librarians, most of whom are certificated and have degrees in both education and library science. Most public elementary school libraries in Ohta-ku are run with fixed scheduling, and every class is supposed to have one hour of library use each week under the guidance of the classroom teachers. Some school libraries in the Honolulu District are also run with fixed scheduling, but some have flexible scheduling. Materials other than in printed format, such as videos and computer software, are not usually integrated into library collections in Ohta-ku; they are more likely to belong to an individual teacher or another section of the school. However, these materials have been integrated into the school libraries Honolulu District. Also, most of the public elementary school libraries in Honolulu have been automated, but this is not the case in Ohta-ku.

### *The Questionnaire*

A questionnaire was designed with the aim of examining teachers' perceptions of school libraries (see Appendixes A and B). Teachers were asked what they thought about the functions and personnel of school libraries and about education for the use of the school library. The survey consisted of four parts. The first part asked about the general background of the teachers, such as gender, age, and grade level. The second part asked about teachers' perceptions and actual use of the school library. The third part asked about teachers' perceptions of the role of school library personnel. The last part asked about the teachers' experience and expectations of learning about school library use in their teaching work.

The questionnaire was created to consider teachers' perspectives, especially teachers' knowledge of library-related terms. A questionnaire was

drafted, based on previous surveys by other scholars, and then informally reviewed by several principals and teachers. Their comments suggested changes in vocabulary and changes in response options. Changes were made to make the questionnaire simpler and easier for teachers to understand and answer.

The likelihood of the presence of a school librarian required changes on certain questions. For 3-1, the question, "Do you think a school library person needs to be posted in the school library?" was asked of teachers in Japan instead of the question for teachers in Hawaii, "Do you usually ask school librarians for help?" For 3-2, the phrase "if a school library person is posted" was added for teachers in Tokyo. In D-2 and D-4, the phrase "through conversations with school librarians in my school" was not included for teachers in Tokyo.

### *Conducting the Survey*

Ohta-ku, located in the southernmost area in Tokyo, has the second largest population among 23 wards in Tokyo. The northern part of Ohta-ku is well known as a good residential area, whereas another part is recognized as the most important industrial area in Tokyo because there are many small factories. There are 63 public elementary schools in Ohta-ku. Principals of 13 public elementary schools approved the distribution of the survey to teachers. One special education school was included. There were fewer than 20 teachers in each school. The survey was conducted in Ohta-ku in March 1998. Two hundred, eight questionnaires were distributed. Two weeks later, 143 questionnaires were returned, for a 69% response rate.

The island of Oahu is divided into four school districts: Central Oahu, Hawaii, Leeward Oahu, and Honolulu. Honolulu District is the smallest in area, but because it covers downtown Honolulu and other areas that have high population densities, it has the largest number of schools. There are 39 public elementary schools in Honolulu District. Principals of eight public elementary schools in the district approved the distribution of the survey to teachers in their schools. The survey was conducted in Honolulu District in April 1998. Two hundred, sixty-six questionnaires were distributed. Two weeks later, 130 were returned, for a 48.5% response rate. Some responses from kindergarten teachers and school librarians were excluded to maintain comparability with the Ohta-ku sample.

## Results

### *Section A*

The percentage of female teachers was larger in the respondent group from Honolulu; the percentage of male teachers was larger in the Ohta-ku group. Among the Honolulu respondents, there were 119 (92%) female teachers and 11 (8%) male teachers; among the Ohta-ku respondents, there were 43 (30%) female teachers and 100 (70%) male teachers. The Ohta-ku teachers' ages and

amount of teaching experience had a clear relationship, probably because many people in Japan continue to work where they started to work after their graduation and rarely change jobs. Generally, teachers in Honolulu seemed to have less teaching experience than teachers in Ohta-ku. Although 80 (56%) of the respondents from Ohta-ku had over 20 years of teaching experience, only 49 (38%) from Honolulu had that much teaching experience.

In Honolulu, the category *other* was chosen for grade level ( $n=36$ , 28%) more frequently than in Ohta-ku ( $n=26$ , 18%) as there were many special education teachers and Title I teachers. Grade 6 teachers were under-represented in responses from Honolulu (only  $n=6$ , 5%). In Ohta-ku, grade levels of teaching were distributed almost equally; there were about 20 teachers in each grade level.

Question A-5 was composed specifically for Japanese teachers. The question asked, "Have you worked for the school library as *Komu-bunshyo*?" Respondents could answer: *no*, *yes* (past), or *yes* (present). In Japan, one or a few teachers in an elementary school are responsible for the school library work besides their classroom work as their *Komu-bunshyo*—the work for which each teacher takes responsibility in addition to his or her classroom work. Management of school libraries is regarded as part of such work in most Japanese elementary schools. Of the Ohta-ku respondents, 18% (26) were responsible for library work at the point of the survey and 29% (41) had experienced the work before. On the other hand, 52% (75) had had no experience of the work. Only two male teachers were responsible for library work in their school, and one other male teacher had been responsible previously. Others who were or had been responsible for the work were all female teachers, a situation that was quite similar to the fact that most of school librarians are female in the US.

### Section B

Question B-1 was, "How have you regarded the importance of the school library in your teaching?" Teachers were asked to check one from five options: very important; important; somewhat important; not important; and do not know. Almost twice as many teachers in Honolulu ( $n=93$ , 71%) checked *very important* as did the teachers in Ohta-ku ( $n=53$ , 37%) (see Figures 1 and 2.) However, almost three fifths ( $n=85$ , 59%) of teachers in Ohta-ku checked *important*, and the combined total of 138 (96%) of respondents from Ohta-ku chose either *very important* or *important*, whereas 115 (88%) of respondents from Honolulu chose one of the same two categories. More teachers in Honolulu gave negative answers of *somewhat important* or *not important* than teachers in Ohta-ku. Teachers in Honolulu might have a clearer opinion of school libraries, because they gave comparatively definitive responses to the question B-1.

Question B-2 concerned willingness to use the school library in terms of four major school library programs: instruction about the use of the library

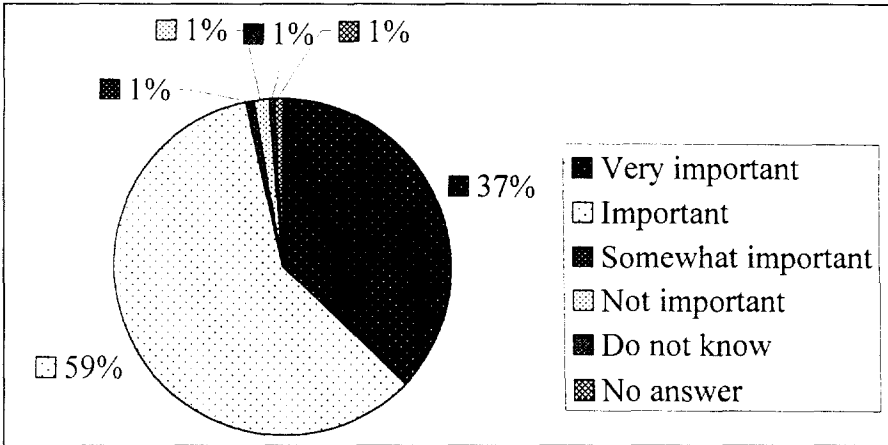


Figure 1. B-1, Importance of the school library (Tokyo).

and resources (changed from *library skills instruction* as suggested in informal conversations with teachers); reading promotion and education; project or research assignment (which is changed from *resource-based learning*); teachers' own use for developing curriculum units; and other. In general, teachers in Honolulu chose the highest rate, *very willing*, for items more than teachers in Ohta-ku (Figures 3 and 4).

Answers for *reading promotion and education* in the two countries were different. In Honolulu, the largest number of teachers chose *very willing* for *reading promotion and education*, whereas in Ohta-ku, the smallest number of teachers chose *very willing*. Teachers in Ohta-ku were most interested in *project or research assignments*. Over 100 out of 143 teachers (70%) chose *very willing* for *project or research assignment*; this result was unexpected. Another

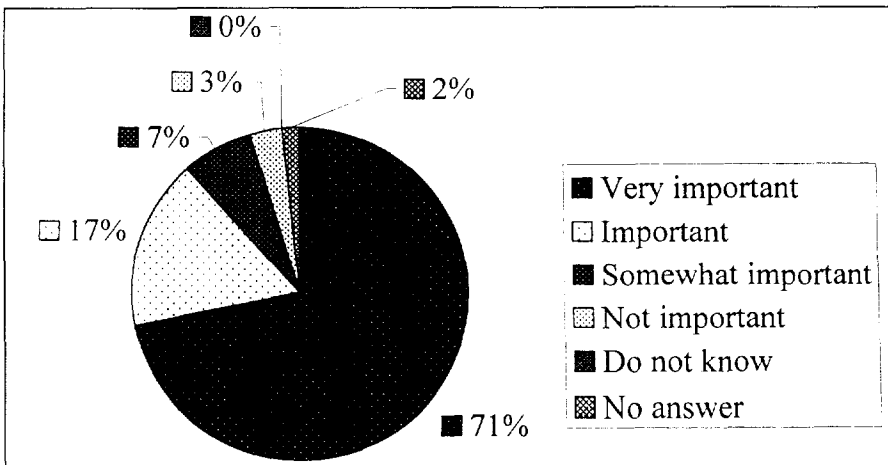


Figure 2. B1, Importance of the school library (Honolulu).

interesting result was that Japanese teachers seemed not to be as strongly positive toward *instruction about the use of the library and resources*, because the number of the teachers who chose *somewhat willing* was larger than that of the teachers who chose either *very willing* or *willing*.

In sum, teachers in Ohta-ku were very willing to use the school library for research or project assignment, willing for reading promotion and education and developing curriculum units, and somewhat willing for instruction about the use of the library and resources. On the other hand, teachers in Honolulu did not have a clear preference in school library programs, and many of them were very willing to use the school library in any way.

Question B-3 asked about the frequency of the use of the school library (Figures 5 and 6). In both countries, the largest number of teachers indicated they used the school library once a week: 50% (71) in Ohta-ku and 36% (46) in Honolulu. However, a mere 4% (5) of teachers in Ohta-ku indicated they used the school library more than once a week, whereas as many as 28% (37) of teachers in Honolulu indicated thus. If the answers *more than once a week*, *once a week*, and *once or twice a month* are added together, the sum is less than 80% (109) in Ohta-ku, but it is over 90% (120) in Honolulu. Meanwhile, in Ohta-ku, 10% (14) of teachers answered *once or twice a semester*, whereas in Honolulu 4% (5) of teachers answered so.

Question B-4 was only for the teachers who answered that they used the school library once or twice a semester or hardly ever. They were asked to give the reasons for their infrequent use of the school library. In Ohta-ku, 13

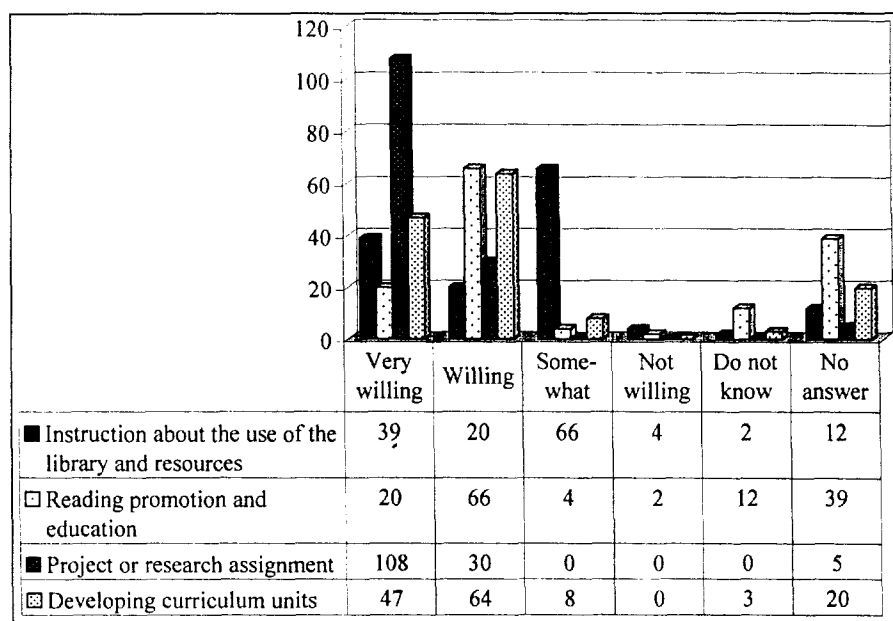


Figure 3. B,2 Willingness to use the school library (Tokyo), n-142.

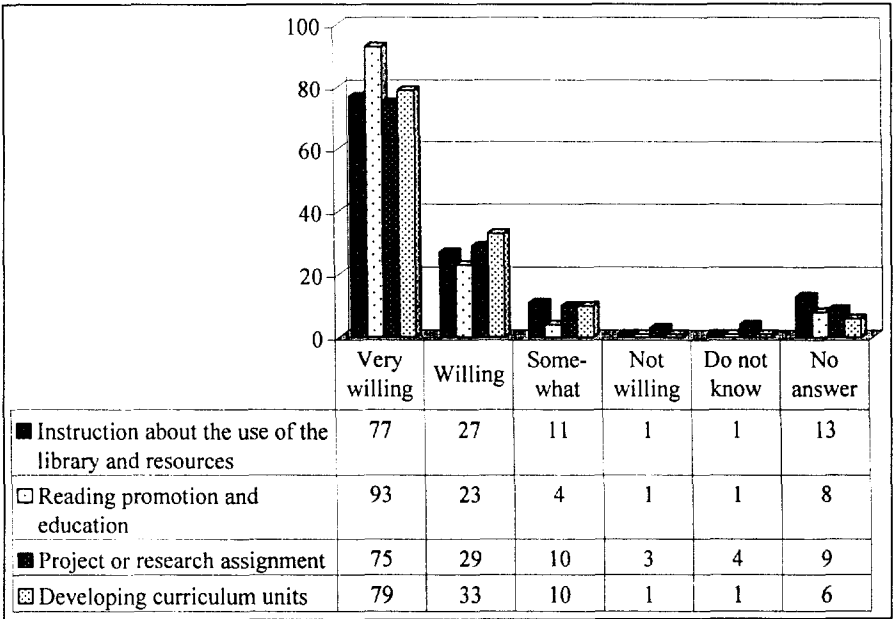


Figure 4. B-2, Willingness to use the school library (Honolulu).

teachers claimed, "We do not have an adequate school library and facility." Seven other teachers in Ohta-ku claimed, "I cannot find enough time to use the school library in the school curriculum." In Honolulu, four teachers claimed inadequate libraries, and four claimed they had no time. The answers were similar in both countries.

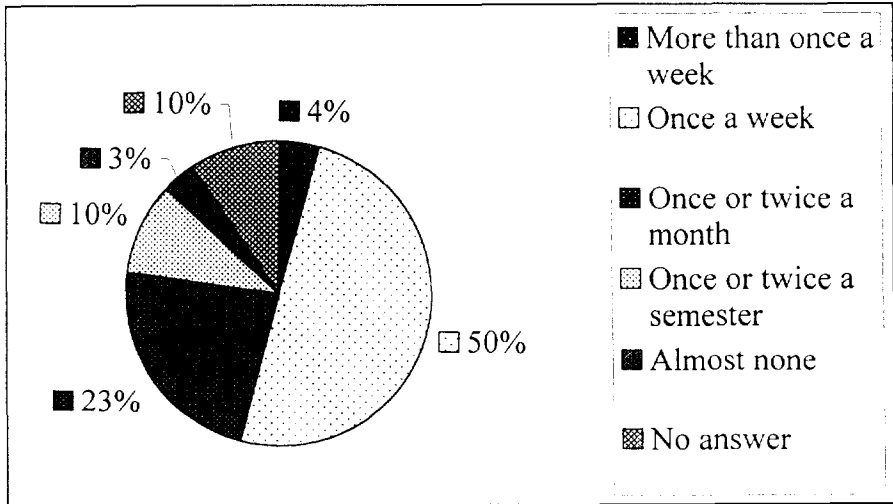


Figure 5. B-3, Frequency of use of the school library (Tokyo).



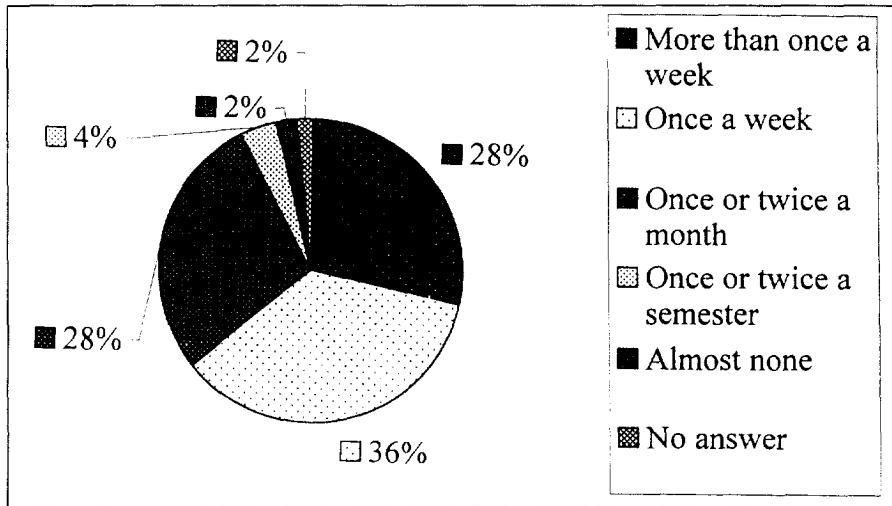


Figure 6. B-3, Frequency of use of the school library (Honolulu).

### Section C

Because no certificated school librarian is assigned to the school library in public elementary schools in Ohta-ku, the questions regarding the school library personnel were asked differently than those for teachers in Honolulu.

Question C-1 for teachers in Ohta-ku was, "Do you think school library personnel need to be posted in the school library in your school?" Seventy-four percent (107) answered Yes, 13% (18) answered No, and 13% (18) gave no answer. The question was changed to "Do you usually ask school librarians for help?" in Honolulu. Seventy-three percent (96) of the respondents answered Yes, 25% (32) of them answered No, and 2% (2) gave no answer. Interestingly, almost the same percentage of the teachers answered Yes for the different versions of C-1. In both countries, over two thirds of the teachers admitted that help from school library personnel is necessary.

Question C-2 asked about expectations of service from school librarians (Figures 7 and 8). Teachers were asked to rate their expectations for 11 items, including *other*. Japanese teachers were asked to imagine there were school library personnel in their schools to answer the questions. However, many Ohta-ku respondents did not answer the questions in this section, almost 20% for each item. Also, Ohta-ku respondents did not have a clear preference for services provided by school library personnel. In particular, they seemed not to expect to circulate materials from school library personnel, maybe because students were working on circulating materials.

Teachers in Honolulu generally had much higher expectations of service than did teachers in Ohta-ku. Responses from teachers in Honolulu also showed some preference of service. Over 80% *highly expect reference service and instruction for children in how to use the library and resources* from school librarians. As in Ohta-ku, circulation was not so highly expected in

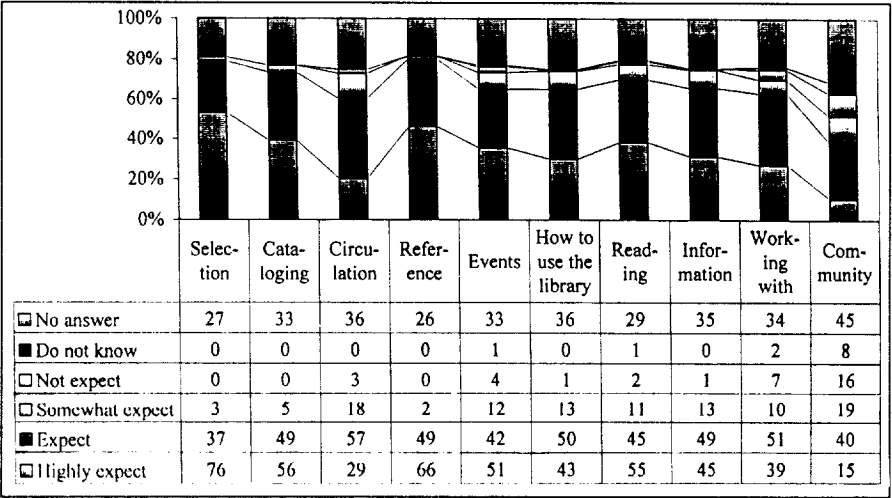


Figure 7. C-2, Expectations of service from school librarians (Tokyo) n=143.

Honolulu, maybe because students work voluntarily to help school librarians in many schools.

The most complex result was that of the item regarding working with teachers in *developing curriculum units*. Twenty-three (18%) teachers indicated they *do not expect* school librarians to work with them in developing curriculum units, whereas, surprisingly, only seven (5%) of the Ohta-ku teachers indicated so. In the last few decades, the American Association of School Librarians has been emphasizing the role of school librarians in working with teachers on developing curriculum units. However, the idea may not have been totally accepted by teachers in Honolulu. The opinions on provid-

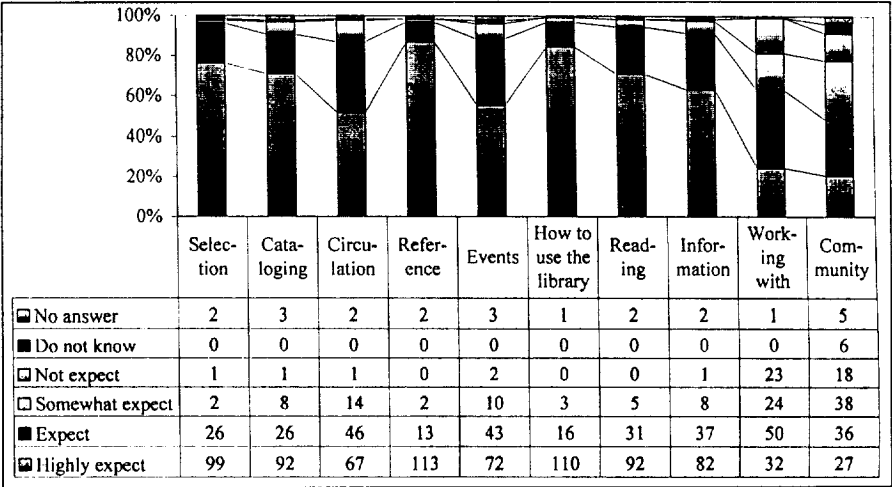


Figure 8. C-2, Expectations of service from school librarians (Honolulu) n=130.

ing library services for community members including parents varied too. Some teachers *highly expect* it, but others *expect*, *somewhat expect*, *do not expect*, or *do not know*.

Various opinions were given on the item regarding library service for community members from teachers in both Ohta-ku and Honolulu. Some Ohta-ku respondents gave special comments on the issue in the section for free comments (see Section E). Some of them mentioned they were eager to have the school library open for community members. However, many of them also said it was actually impossible because of inadequate facilities or bureaucratic issues. According to their comments, Ohta-ku teachers seemed to be very interested in the issue of opening school libraries to the community in comparison with teachers in Honolulu.

### Section D

Questions D-1 and D-2 asked about teachers' experience with studying about the use of the school library in teaching (Figure 9). Fewer teachers in Ohta-ku had learning experience about the use of the school library in teaching. Among the Ohta-ku respondents, 27% (38) answered Yes, whereas among the Honolulu respondents 45% (59) answered Yes. However, many of the teachers who answered Yes in Honolulu indicated in D-2 that they had learned "through conversations with school librarians in my school," an option that could not be chosen by Japanese teachers. Among Ohta-ku teachers who answered Yes in D-1, 39 teachers had taken a class at a university

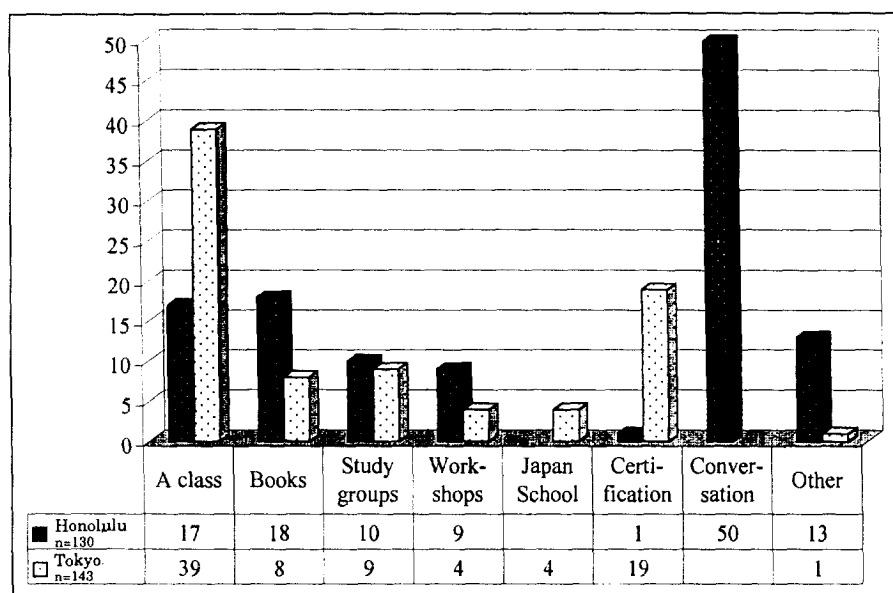


Figure 9. D-2, Ways of learning about the school library and its use—Experience.

and learned about the use of the school library in teaching, and 19 teachers said they had the certification of either librarian-teacher or librarian.

Questions D-3 and D-4 were only for teachers who answered No to D-1. D-3 asked, "Do you think you want or you need to learn about the school library and its use?" The results were very similar in both countries (Figure 10). A few over 50% answered Yes, and most others answered No. Most teachers from Honolulu wanted to learn *through conversations with school librarians or workshops by administrators, universities, research institutions, or others*. Other teachers liked *teachers' study groups or classes at a university*. On the other hand, many Ohta-ku teachers preferred *teachers' study groups and workshops*. In comparison with the answers from teachers in Honolulu, not so many Ohta-ku teachers chose *a class at a university*, but they chose *books or periodicals* more. It may be because inservice education for teachers at university is not common in Japan (see Figure 10).

Eleven teachers were also interested in *getting the certification of teacher-librarian*, and five teachers were interested in *the certification of librarian*, whereas only four teachers in Honolulu indicated that they were interested *getting the Master's degree in Library and Information Science*. This difference also may be mainly because of the difference of the certification system in both countries. Generally, it can be said that it is easier in Japan to get those certifications that have no relationship to a master's degree. The results in Section D seemed to reflect educational systems for teachers or the certification systems for librarians in both countries.

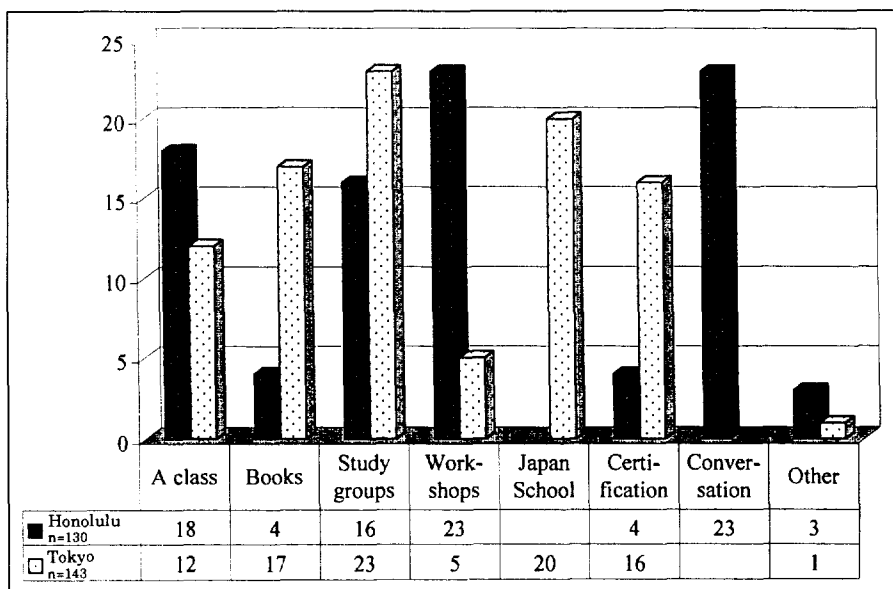


Figure 10. D-4, Ways of learning about the school library and its use—Expectation.

### Section E

In both countries, most written comments were related to school library personnel. Many comments from the Ohta-ku teachers revealed the teachers' wish to have school library personnel, although their expectations of the status of school library personnel differed. Four teachers wrote it as *librarian* (*sisyo* in Japanese), nine teachers wrote *librarian-teacher* (*sisyo-kyoyu*), and four teachers wrote other ways such as *part-time worker*. (It should be noted that *sisyo-kyoyu* can also be translated as teacher-librarian, as does the Japan Library Association, although the order of the words in Japanese are librarian-teacher.)

Other comments from the Ohta-ku respondents were about lack of budget or about integration of new technologies such as computers and about their wish to change school libraries into multimedia centers. Interestingly, teachers in Ohta-ku seemed to be more concerned about the budget and contents of the school library, whereas teachers in Honolulu were concerned about the school librarian. This is probably because Japanese teachers do not have special personnel in their school libraries, and they have to maintain and use school libraries themselves without help. Comments about the contribution of public libraries were given only by the Ohta-ku respondents. Three mentioned they had been using the helpful service of public libraries delivering books to schools. Another teacher commented that as public libraries developed, school libraries might become unimportant. Help from public libraries has been shown in research to be another inhibiting factor in the development of school libraries (Knuth, 1995a).

Among the Honolulu responses, over two thirds of the comments were related to school library personnel. Many praised the school librarians in their schools. Some teachers from Honolulu indicated that the school librarian *is* the school library, that school librarians have highly influenced their use of school libraries, or something similar. The answers to some questions, such as B-3, C-1, and C-2, differed largely from one school to another in Honolulu. The differences possibly stem from differences among the school librarians. Others made comments on the school library, such as importance of the school library for children and the need to improve the accessibility of the school libraries by opening them for longer hours.

### Others

The relationships between factors were examined in order to find factors influencing frequency of use of the school library or willingness to use the school library. In terms of the frequency of use of the school library, in the Ohta-ku sample, correlations with age, teaching experience, grade level, and learning experience may be pointed out. In Ohta-ku, the six teachers using school libraries more than once a week were all over 40 years old, but 19 teachers using school libraries less than once or twice a semester were also all over 40 years old. This may be because many teachers over 40 years old with

many years of teaching experience have already established their own teaching style, and by habit some frequently use school libraries and some rarely use them. In general, younger or less experienced teachers seemed to be using school libraries less frequently in Ohta-ku. On the other hand, in the Honolulu sample, there seemed to be no clear relationship between frequency of use of the school library and age or teaching experience. Frequency of use of the school library was also related to grade levels in the case of Ohta-ku, whereas a clear relationship could not be found in the case of Honolulu. In Ohta-ku, teachers of younger grades tended to use school libraries more than those of other grades. Six teachers from Ohta-ku indicated that they were using school libraries more than once a week: four taught grade 1, one taught grade 2, and one taught grade 3. Grades 3 and 6 teachers were less frequent users of school libraries, although the reason is unclear.

Findings from this survey did not point to a definite relationship between the frequency of use of the school library and the teachers' previous experience in learning about school libraries and their use (Figures 11 and 12). There were no clear relationships between teachers' attitudes toward the school library and their learning experience about school library use or, in the case of the Ohta-ku teachers, their experience of library work in school. It was clear that most of the teachers in both groups who answered *almost none* for their frequency of use of the school library had not learned about how to use the school library in their teaching. However, of the teachers using the school library more than once a week, over 60% of those from Ohta-ku and over 50% of those from Honolulu had no education in school library use.

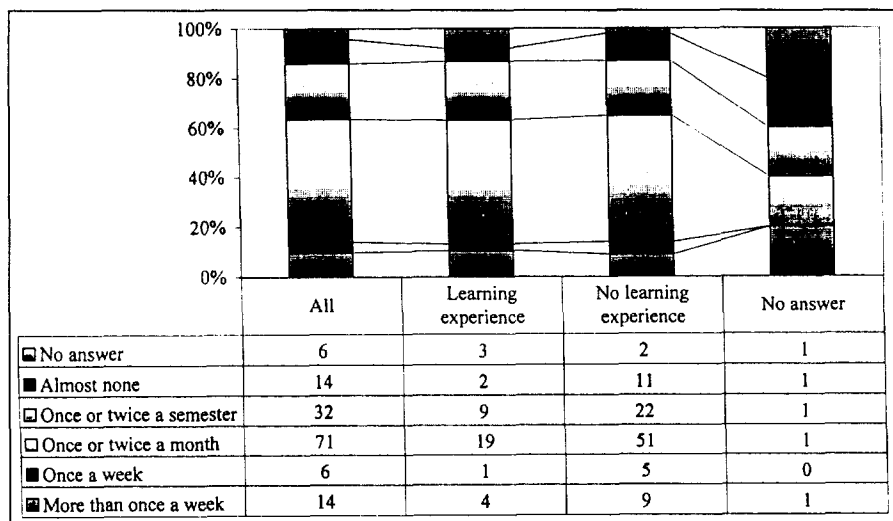


Figure 11. Learning experience and frequency of use of the school library (Tokyo)  $n=143$ .

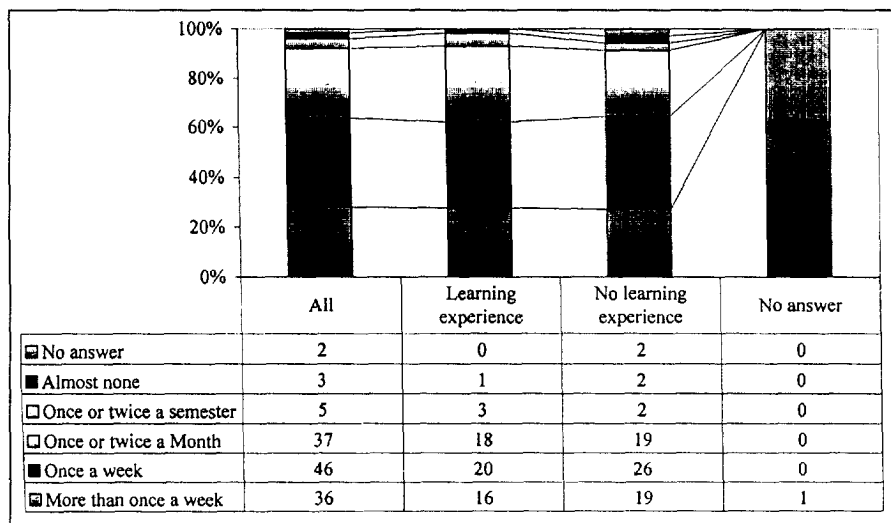


Figure 12. Learning experience and frequency of use of the school library (Honolulu)  $n=130$ .

The survey also probed willingness to use the school library in particular ways by grade level. In Ohta-ku, some characteristics can be pointed out by grade level. Many grades 1 and 2 teachers were *highly willing* to use the school library for instruction about the use of the library and resources; they were more willing than teachers of other grades. For *reading promotion and education*, grades 1, 2, and 3 teachers were *highly willing* to use the school library. For *project or research assignments*, most teachers in all grades except grade 4 were *highly willing* to use the school library. In sum, teachers of children in lower grades were more open to using the school library in Ohta-ku. However, project or research assignments were appealing to teachers in all grade levels in Ohta-ku.

In Honolulu, it is difficult to point out any preferences for ways to use the school library by grade level because most teachers at all grade levels indicated they were *highly willing* or *willing* to use the school library in any way. However, grade 3 teachers in general were the most positive toward using the school library. Grades 1 and 6 teachers were less positive toward using the school library in any way, except for developing the curriculum units.

### Conclusions

From the survey results, no statistically significant data emerged regarding the question of whether lack of understanding among teachers is an inhibiting factor in the development of school libraries in Ohta-ku. However, some interesting results were found. Many elementary schoolteachers in Ohta-ku have already noticed the pedagogical potential of school libraries regardless of the lack of adequate school library facilities and personnel. They are eager

to use the school library for project or research assignments or for developing their curriculum units. This result was unexpected, because it is often critically pointed out that school libraries in Japan are still likely to be regarded as just a room of supplementary reading materials or as a study hall. It was interesting that more teachers in Honolulu than in Ohta-ku are willing to use school libraries for reading promotion and education. However, teachers in Honolulu generally have higher expectations about school libraries and school librarians, and they use school libraries more frequently than do teachers in Ohta-ku. The Ohta-ku respondents also acknowledged the need for and importance of school library personnel. However, their image of school librarians was not as well defined as that of the Honolulu respondents. At the same time, there was still some confusion among the Honolulu respondents about the school librarian's role. Perceptions about school librarians differed from one teacher to another, and many teachers still seemed to have limited awareness of the role of the school librarian. Their perceptions also seemed to be largely influenced by the school librarians in each school. Various educational opportunities, from informal conversations with school librarians to formal education at a university, should be offered for teachers to further their understanding of school library use and personnel in both Japan and the US.

Discussion about the role of the school librarian probably has not yet coalesced in Japan. Further discussion is definitely needed about the roles of school librarians. However, in the case of Japan, it is possible that lack of policy may be a more important factor than limitations in teachers' perceptions of the importance of school libraries. The Ohta-ku teachers showed their desire for school libraries and personnel to support students' learning, but these are not yet in place in most public elementary schools. At this point, it seems that official recognition by legislators of the importance of the school library is much less than teachers need and expect. Policy does have a significant effect on school library development (Knuth, 1995b), and policy improvement is what is needed now in Japan. It is hoped that the School Library Act reforms will have positive effects on the development of school libraries in Japan.

Finally, the study results suggest the need for further quantitative comparative study on school libraries in Japan and the US. The teachers in the Ohta-ku sample tended to give less definitive responses than did teachers in the Honolulu sample; they did not respond frequently with either the highest or lowest rating throughout the questionnaire. Some follow-up will be needed to determine whether these less definitive responses are representative of teachers' perceptions or whether they reflect the well-known tendency of Japanese respondents to avoid selecting the more extreme responses when answering questionnaires (Hayashi, 1997). Detailed interviews and the use of more open-ended questions might be helpful in making this determination.



### Acknowledgments

The author is grateful for the help of Dr. Rebecca Knuth and the support of the Crown Prince Akihito Scholarship Foundation.

### References

- Hayashi, C. (1997). *Japanese culture in comparative perspective*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Jackson, M.M. (1982). Comparative librarianship and non-industrialized countries. *International Library Review*, 14, 101-106.
- Knuth, R. (1995a). Factors in the development of school libraries in Great Britain and the United States: A comparative study. *International Information and Literature Review*, 27, 265-282.
- Knuth, R. (1995b). School librarianship and macro-level policy issues: International perspective. *IFLA Journal*, 21(4), 290-298.
- Nagakura, M. (1991). In J.E. Lowrie & M. Nagakura (Eds.), *School libraries: International developments* (2nd ed., pp 217-235). Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow.
- Simsova, S. (1982). *A primer of comparative librarianship*. London: Clive Bingley.
- Valentine, P., & Nelson, B. (1988). Sneaky teaching: The role of the school librarian: Teachers' and school librarians' perceptions. *Library and Information Research Report No. 63*. London: British Library.
- Van Deusen, J.D. (1996). The school library media specialist as a member of the teaching team: "Insider" and "outsider." *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 11(3), 229-248.

### Author Note

Yuriko Nakamura is currently a doctoral student in the Library and Information Science Program, Department of Lifelong Education Planning, Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo.