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# AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF MEDIA SERVICES IN INDIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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A report of a study that measures the perception  
of media staff, teachers, and students  
concerning services received  
from the elementary  
media center.

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DAVID V. LOERTSCHER and PHYLLIS LAND

Media specialists are often disturbed by the lack of understanding of their service programs by students, teachers, and administrators. "I could do so much for the teachers if I just knew the topic of their teaching units in advance." "If students just could realize how much help they could get from the media center, this place would be packed all day long." "I've told the teachers some of the services which I am willing to offer, but few of them ever come in to the center." This difference of perception between the media staff and user groups is critical.

There have been attempts in the past to measure the dichotomy and the overlap of perception by researchers who have employed the role study technique.<sup>1</sup> While the role study technique produces valuable theoretical information, other techniques are

necessary to provide more practical bases for evaluation.

In the present study, the authors decided to measure the perception of three groups (media staff, teachers, and students) concerning the services received from the elementary school media center. Three aspects of the service program were measured: the variety of services, the frequency of these services, and the dispersal of these services among teachers and students in the school. In order to accomplish this task, three elements were essential: a list of services, a frequency scale, and data from each of the concerned groups (media staff, teachers, and students).

Measuring service frequency and variety is not a measure of *quality*, that is, two media staffs claiming to provide assistance in producing audiovisual materials on a regular basis is no evidence that both faculties have the same expertise upon which to draw. Yet, in another sense, there is some basis for a study of quality built into the present study. The profession has praised efforts to provide a diversity of services, particularly those of

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a nontraditional nature (production, instructional development, and some utilization services). A certain stamp of "quality" or professional approval is given to one school media program over another if the staff is able to retain the important traditional services of accessibility, awareness, and acquisition while branching into other areas. "Good," "better," "quality," "excellence" are used in the vernacular by professionals to identify media programs which develop closer interaction between the media staff and the educational program of the school. This means that great assumptions are made about results, for example, joint planning between the media staff and the teacher will produce a higher quality instructional unit. What we are saying is that we have confidence in our symptoms of quality and hope they are causal (in the absence of techniques to show that relationship or lack of association).

#### **HOW THE RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED**

The project was conducted in two phases. Phase one involved 214 schools randomly selected by a computer from the 1,279 elementary schools in the state of Indiana. All members of the media staff in each of the schools were asked to respond to a questionnaire concerning the services provided to both students and teachers. In schools without media centers or media staffs, the principal was asked to complete the questionnaire.

The 199 schools which responded to the phase one questionnaire were categorized into one of five groups having the following types of media collections and staffing: (1) classroom collections only—27 schools, (2) centralized collections with minimal supervision—49 schools, (3) centralized collections with full-time clericals—32 schools, (4) centralized collections with part-time professional staff—51 schools, and (5) centralized collections with full-time professional staff—40 schools.

In phase two of the study, 15 percent of each group (thirty-two schools) was chosen at random. Researchers visited each of these schools and collected data from half

the children of the school in grades two, four, and five. Questions were read orally as the children followed in their questionnaire booklets. The researcher then distributed questionnaires to the teachers who were asked to respond at their leisure and return their responses by mail.

Returns from teachers in the thirty-two schools were excellent. Six schools returned 100 percent of the questionnaires, sixteen schools returned between 80 percent and 100 percent, six returned between 60 percent and 80 percent, three between 50 percent and 60 percent, and one between 40 percent and 50 percent.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CONTENT**

In order to test media service variety, the authors extracted usable service items from a variety of existing service lists<sup>2</sup> and organized them into nine categories of services: (1) accessibility of facilities, materials, and equipment—twenty-six services; (2) awareness services to teachers and students—ten services; (3) utilization of media staff, materials, and equipment—thirty-six services; (4) acquisition of materials and equipment—twenty-one services; (5) production of audiovisual materials—eight basic services, fifteen types of audiovisual formats; (6) planning (instructional development)—eighteen services; (7) evaluation of collection and program—eight items; (8) professional services—twelve items; and (9) activities in the media center—eighteen items. The project had the advice of an excellent advisory group who helped to devise the service items and more importantly to consult on the basic questions to be asked in the study.

Indiana is an excellent state in which to conduct research of school media centers. The elementary media programs in the state are in every stage of development—from those with no center at all to some fine and exemplary centers. Because of this diversity, the authors were able to add another dimension to the research, that is, staffing patterns. That old question of "Does a full-time professional librarian make a difference?" inspired the questions: What staffing

patterns are associated with: (1) more services to teachers and students? (2) more agreement by the teacher/students concerning the media center program of services? (3) more utilization of the media center?

These questions plus those already stated (service frequency, diversity, and diffusion) formed the basis of the study which was conducted in Indiana elementary schools during the 1973-74 school year.

### MEASURING SERVICE FREQUENCY

The authors considered a number of ways to measure service frequency. One might stand behind the potted palm in the media center and count the number of times certain services are performed. The media center staff may be asked to keep tabulations. Users might be asked to keep diaries during their media center visits or at times when they interact with the media staff. Users may be asked to indicate whether they receive a certain service hourly, daily, weekly, monthly. All of these techniques have been used at one time or another with varying success. For the present study, data had to be collected through a survey because of economics and so that a large number of schools could participate. Therefore, two scales were chosen for their simplicity and, as it turned out, their effectiveness in discerning frequency differences.

The media staff was to indicate for each service whether they provided it: (1) regularly (to a majority of users), (2) occasionally (to a majority of users or regularly to a few users), (3) rarely or never, (4) don't know, (5) doesn't apply.

For some items, frequency was not appropriate, so a simple yes, no, don't know scale was used. On the receiving end, the teachers were asked to indicate how often a service was provided to them: (1) regularly, (2) occasionally, (3) rarely or never, (4) don't know, (5) doesn't apply.

It was felt that elementary school students, particularly those in the primary grades, would have trouble with the concept of regular and occasional. Therefore, the scale used for most of the questions was: (1) no, (2) sometimes, (3) yes, (4) don't know.<sup>3</sup>

### QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS AND THE PILOT STUDY

There is nothing more discouraging to the person confronted with a questionnaire than having a number of the items not applicable to his situation. If the response rate is to be high, the questionnaire must be easy to fill out, brief, relevant, and understandable. Because there are a variety of staffing patterns and types of elementary school media centers in Indiana, several forms of each of the questionnaires had to be constructed. Specifically, there were three forms for media specialists/principals, three forms for teachers, two forms for second graders, and two forms for fourth and fifth graders. Questions were arranged in random order, necessitating the rearrangement by computer of all responses into a master order within each of the nine different categories of services. All these different forms and the computer rearrangement may seem like a lot more work for the persons conducting the research—and it is; however, the extra work paid off in a higher return rate of the questionnaires.

In any study of this magnitude, a pilot study must be conducted in order to test out the questionnaires and the techniques of conducting the research. In this case, an extensive pilot study was conducted in nine schools. On the basis of this experience, questionnaires were revised and techniques refined.

### INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

The data (a sizeable mountain, but not quite Mt. Everest) were analyzed by computer using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) in addition to some programs written especially for this study. The results were interpreted on the basis of statistical significance and practical significance.<sup>4</sup>

It would have been helpful to collect data from teachers and students in all 199 schools. Since that was neither practical nor economically feasible, teacher and student responses from 32 schools had to suffice. In order to interpret the results, the researchers had four sets of data in the form of computer printouts to compare for most of the

items: the media specialists/principals in all 199 schools (all phase one data), the media specialists/principals in 32 schools (a subset of the phase one data), the teachers in 32 schools (phase two data), and the students in 32 schools (phase two data). Many times the media staff responses in the 32 schools were very nearly the same as those in the 199 schools so that the teacher responses could be generalized to all schools.

## FINDINGS

Comments on some of the most interesting results of the data analyses are presented here in each of the nine different categories of services that were included in the questionnaires. These findings are then summarized into some generalized conclusions about various staffing types, groups of respondents, and finally the research as a whole.

### *Accessibility*

**SCHEDULING:** Eighty-two percent of the centers utilize regularly scheduled class visits, with one-half to three-fourths of the centers allowing small group and individual use.

**AUDIOVISUAL LOAN POLICIES:** Less than 20 percent of the centers allow audiovisual materials to be taken home and those that do favor older children's requests. The full-time media specialist is the most trusting in this respect. Audiovisual equipment for home loan is almost non-existent in any of the centers.

**CIRCULATION:** About half of the centers restrict book borrowing to two titles per visit; however, full-time media specialists seem to have the most liberal loan policies, a third of whom allow students to check out more than three books per visit.

**AUDIOVISUAL CENTRALIZATION:** Eighty percent of the schools without media centers do have central audiovisual materials repositories.

### *Awareness*

**NEW MATERIALS:** Almost all those in charge of media collections make an ef-

fort to notify teachers and students of new materials and equipment purchased for the school. However, only 50-65 percent of the teachers indicate that they receive this information from their media staff. In schools without media centers or media staffs, only 38-45 percent of the teachers feel they are informed.

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES:** Just over one-third of the centers regularly supply information concerning community resources (human, field trips, etc.) but one-half of the principals in schools without centers supply their teachers with this service. Teachers do not agree with the media staff for this service but do agree with principals. Since utilization of community resources often entails administrative approval and involvement, the higher agreement between teachers and administrators is not surprising.

**INTERLIBRARY COOPERATION:** Part-time professionals give more emphasis to interlibrary cooperation than any other group but their efforts are directed at a relatively few members of the faculty in the schools they serve.

Only 15 percent of the students are provided with information about media services from other libraries in the area.

### *Utilization*

**LOCATION:** While virtually all media staffs help teachers locate materials in the media collection, the full-time professional provides ideas on how materials can be used, locates materials of various difficulty and interest levels, and provides more consultation on the use of audiovisual equipment than does the full-time clerical. Teachers in schools with no central collection or minimal media staff collect useful materials with little or no assistance from others.

**READING GUIDANCE:** Almost 80 percent of the professional media staff give reading guidance by discussing books with class groups and utilizing book talks at least occasionally. Less than 50 percent of the clerical media staff attempt this type of guidance. In all cases, however, approximately 60 percent of the teachers

are unaware that these services are being provided.

The full-time professional media staff indicate that they provide individual reading guidance to students regularly—a full 25 percent more than other types of media staff give. This service includes the location and the selection of reading materials. Students were asked if the media staff helped them find the materials they needed. Those having the full-time professional receive more assistance at a more constant rate than those with other types of staff.

The full-time media specialist does much more to promote reading through displays and exhibits than other media center personnel and these efforts are noticed by teachers.

The provision of reading guidance through individualized reading lists, parent-teacher-media staff conferences, reader interest files, and reading records is almost non-existent.

**LISTENING AND VIEWING GUIDANCE:** Between 70 and 80 percent of the full-time professionals attempt some sort of listening guidance while less than half of the other types of staff try this service. A similar pattern emerged with viewing guidance, but only 60 percent of the full-time specialists give this service.

The part-time professional claims to give less reading, listening, and viewing guidance to individual students than does the full-time clerical. Teachers support this claim.

**INSTRUCTION:** Professional media staff provide much more instruction to students in how to use the media center and teach these skills as a unit of instruction rather than integrating the teaching into classroom instructional units. Media skills are usually taught by the media staff to class-size groups, although professionals do work with individuals and small groups regularly. Part-time professionals do more media instruction than do full-time clericals but not nearly as much as the full-time professionals.

**REFERENCE:** Concerning reference service, media staffs do provide direct an-

swers to simple reference questions, but they also encourage students to seek out their own answers whenever possible.

**AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT:** Eighty-four percent of the centers assist teachers by scheduling audiovisual equipment.

Almost all staffs assist when audiovisual equipment emergencies occur, but in schools with part-time professionals, this responsibility is more often handled by others. In schools without media centers, teachers indicated that they must be more independent in coping with equipment problems.

#### *Acquisition*

**MATERIALS SELECTION:** The professionally trained media person follows recognized procedures when selecting materials. Recommended lists and critical reviews are used in preference to publishers' catalogs. Where full-time clerks have district level assistance, recommended lists and reviews are also used. Principals in schools without media personnel indicate that recommended lists and publishers' catalogs are used but rarely do they consult reviews before purchase decisions are made.

Only a third of the respondents indicate that previewing materials before purchase is a regular policy; however, 78 percent do previewing on at least an occasional basis.

**EQUIPMENT SELECTION:** The most popular source used when purchasing audiovisual equipment is the producer's catalog. Fifty-seven percent of all respondents use this course regularly and 80 percent use this course at least occasionally. The majority refer at least occasionally to published equipment evaluations, verbal recommendations from other schools, convention exhibits, and on-site demonstrations or trials before making purchasing decisions. The full-time professional utilizes the above-named sources more often than other media personnel but not as frequently as the audiovisual and library professions advocate.

**RENTAL/LOAN:** The majority of schools claim access to materials on loan from

district center collections, public and/or academic libraries, and from rental and/or regional libraries.

However, only 31 percent indicate reliance on interlibrary loan from other school media centers in the district. Access to materials from these agencies, save for the public library, is reserved almost exclusively for teachers and is rarely made available to students.

### Production

**MATERIALS:** Phase one participants were asked to check which of fifteen different types of audiovisual materials are produced in their school building and at the district level. The percent marking yes was as follows:

	<i>School Building</i>	<i>District</i>
Mounting of materials	69%	43%
Laminating of materials	65%	44%
Graphics (lettering, making charts, etc.)	43%	37%
Slides	15%	36%
Videotapes	17%	47%
Tape recordings	77%	46%
8mm films	6%	15%
Radio programming	3%	19%
16mm films	5%	12%
Puppets	48%	9%
Models and dioramas	50%	18%
Transparencies	79%	42%
Kits	32%	23%
Games	52%	20%
Filmstrips	21%	17%

**FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND SUPPLIES:** While 60 percent of the schools provide teachers with facilities and equipment to produce audiovisual materials, 55 percent regularly furnish supplies. Teacher agreement for both services is 10 percent below that listed by the media personnel or principal.

**CONSULTATION:** Half of the media staff and principals indicate they give consultative help to teachers who wish to produce their own audiovisual materials on a regular basis. Teachers in schools with a media staff agreed, but teachers in schools without media staff and/or media centers

disagreed with their principals.

**STUDENT USE:** Students in approximately 20 percent of the schools are provided with facilities, equipment, supplies, and consultative help to produce their own audiovisual materials. Students' response to whether they were allowed to make audiovisual materials showed that an occasional class may take advantage of the production capabilities.

### *Planning Services (Instructional Development)*

**PRINCIPAL INVOLVEMENT:** Principals in schools without media centers or media staffs claim little or no involvement in the planning of instructional units.

**MEDIA STAFF INVOLVEMENT:** The order of involvement reported by the media staffs in instructional unit planning (eight different services) was as follows: schools with full-time clerks (lowest), schools with part-time professionals (greater), schools with full-time professionals (greatest).

Teacher response to media staff involvement in instructional unit planning was as follows:

1. Schools with full-time clerks—teachers reported more involvement than clerks claimed.
2. Schools with part-time professionals—teachers reported much less involvement than the professionals claimed.
3. Schools with full-time professionals—teachers reported somewhat less involvement than the professionals claimed.

**SERVICE TYPES:** The most popular services in instructional unit planning reported by all media staffs were:

1. Consulting in advance of unit presentation—39 percent help regularly (48 percent of full-time professionals help regularly).
2. Gathering materials—68 percent help regularly (83 percent of full-time professionals help regularly).
3. Suggesting materials of appropriate difficulty—50 percent help regularly (68 percent of full-time professionals help regularly).

- Suggesting materials at varying interest levels—52 percent help regularly (65 percent of full-time professionals help regularly).

Media staffs do little to assist in the analysis of learning tasks or consult on the formation of behavioral objectives.

**BIBLIOGRAPHIES:** Eighty-five percent of the full-time media specialists report assistance in the selection of the best medium to meet a specific objective at least occasionally. Seventy percent of the teachers agree.

Seventy percent of the professional staffs prepare bibliographies for instructional units at least occasionally.

#### *Evaluation Services*

**COLLECTIONS:** Media staff and principals were asked to rate the quantity and the currency of materials in their collections. Comparing their ratings with those of the teachers revealed that:

- Principals (in schools without media centers or without media staffs) overestimate both the quantity and currency of materials.
- Media staff responses are within 10 percent of the teacher responses.
- Most of the teachers and media staffs are happy with collection sizes but only about half are satisfied with the currency of the materials.

**SERVICES:** Few media staffs evaluate jointly with teachers the success or failure of media center involvement with instructional units on a regular basis. A majority of the full-time clerks never attempt evaluation and a third of the professionals do not. Evidently, media specialists are relying on observation, complaints, and "golden silence" for feedback rather than attempting any of the more formalized approaches suggested in the questionnaire. The figures may also indicate that the staffs do not know how to engage in joint evaluation with teachers.

#### *Professional Services*

**COLLECTIONS:** The media staff/principals were asked to indicate which of five

different types of professional materials are available at the school and district level. Those answering yes were as follows:

	<i>School</i>	<i>District</i>
Books	75%	51%
Periodicals	35%	47%
Audiovisual materials	50%	52%
Research reports	34%	91%
Curriculum guides	72%	95%

**COMMUNICATION:** Half of the full-time media specialists try to provide bulletins or notes to teachers concerning items of professional interest and less than a third of the part-time professionals and clericals attempt this service. A third and a quarter of the teachers agree respectively.

**IN-SERVICE TRAINING:** The media staff/principals were asked to indicate which of four different types of in-service training had been offered in their schools or districts during the past three years. Those answering yes were as follows:

	<i>School</i>	<i>District</i>
Integrating materials into instruction	59%	35%
Utilizing media services effectively	60%	34%
Producing audiovisual materials	41%	35%
Use of audiovisual equipment	75%	38%

#### *Activities*

**TRADITIONAL:** The traditional library activities of looking at and reading books, selecting books to borrow, and finding materials for school subjects are commonplace in most school media centers.

**AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS:** Almost half of the media centers with full-time staff allow children to view and listen to audiovisual materials as individuals. The appropriate lessons on operating audiovisual equipment are given regularly. Less than one-third of the other schools allow students to interact with audiovisual materials in their centers.

**UTILIZATION:** In schools with centralized collections but minimal staff less than half



of the students use their "library time" to find materials and information for school work. This probably means that the collections are being used for supplementary reading materials in these schools.

**STORYTELLING:** The majority of the media staff read or tell stories to the kindergarten through third grade but the percentage drops to 20-30 percent in the fourth through sixth grades.

**NONTRADITIONAL:** Activities which occur occasionally on a class-by-class basis include making puppets and having puppet shows, playing games, making audiovisual materials, acting out plays, and interacting with community resource people.

**STUDENT-MEDIA STAFF AGREEMENT:** In all of the above services, there was a strong agreement between students and the media staff on the occurrence of these activities.

## **THE STUDENTS**

Collecting data from students was one of the most interesting parts of the study. The students were anxious to be of assistance during the fifteen minutes which were required to fill out the questionnaire booklet and enjoyed the stories which some of the researchers told while booklets were being collected.

The findings not already reported elsewhere were as follows:

### *Reading Enjoyment*

The majority of students indicate that they enjoy reading; however, the percentage drops as students get older.

### *Audiovisual Enjoyment*

There is a higher enjoyment of audiovisual materials than books.

### *Sources of Materials*

Students were asked to indicate where they obtained materials for school work when they could not get them from the classroom collection or the media center. Children without media centers rely much more heavily on home resources and

those at the public library than do children who have access to centralized collections. Unfortunately, the schools without media centers were also those in lower economic areas so that home resources must be severely limited. Half of these children have adequate public library service near their schools.

### *Enjoyment of the Media Center*

The question was asked "Do you like to go to the media center?" The researchers thought that that question would be some sort of measurement of the personality of the media staff. Not so. Almost all children like to go there (Could it be that they like to get out of the classroom?).

### *Reading Guidance*

Students were asked if either their teachers or their media staff know what they like to read. According to the children, neither group knows.

Children confirmed the fact that they do get help in finding needed materials when a media staff is available. A full-time person does make a difference.

## **MEDIA STAFF-TEACHER AGREEMENT**

A rather elaborate computer program was written to count the number of times a certain percentage of teachers agreed with the media staff on each item within the nine categories of services.<sup>5</sup> Ten different percentages were computed (10 percent, 20 percent, . . . 100 percent). For example, the computer counted how many times 60 percent of the teachers agreed with the media staff concerning activity services in the media center. These measurements were taken on fifty-nine service items and across twenty-one schools (only those schools having media centers and staff).

A very interesting pattern emerged. At any teacher agreement level (10 percent-100 percent), the highest media staff-teacher agreement count was in schools with a full-time media specialist. The next highest was in schools with full-time clericals, and the lowest was in schools with part-time professionals. In other words, the full-time

person is in the best position to communicate his service program to the teachers.

Looking more closely at each of the three staffing patterns, the authors discovered that as a group:

1. Schools with full-time professionals are the most homogeneous in their media staff-teacher agreement patterns.
2. Full-time clerks are the most heterogeneous group in the media staff-teacher agreement patterns—even though the “average” clerical ranks above the part-time professional in this respect.
3. Part-time professionals claim a wide variety of services but also have the poorest teacher agreement pattern. This result is probably not due to a desire on the part of the respondents to deceive, but rather indicates the difficulty these persons have in carrying out a full-service program in a few hours per week.

Another interesting pattern which emerged was the drop-off in teacher agreement above the 50 percent level for all media staffing groups and at the 60 percent level when there is a full-time media specialist giving the service. That means that if you are a full-time media specialist and you claim to give a service regularly, usually about 60 percent of the teachers will agree.

## MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

The variety and frequency of services given by the media staff is often disappointing. However, full-time media specialists give a significantly greater number of services than do either part-time professionals or full-time clericals. Most centers still emphasize the traditional acquisition, accessibility, and some utilization services. The media staff need to make a greater effort to communicate their service program to the teachers in their schools. Services in the areas of instructional development, evaluation, production, professional development, and utilization are either not frequently offered or teachers are not made aware of their existence.

## Communication

Full-time media specialists should expect an average of 60 percent of the teachers to agree on service frequency perceptions.

The full-time person is better able to communicate the service program with all teachers than is the part-time individual.

## Planning (Instructional Development)

The professionally trained media personnel participate more frequently in planning instructional units than do the full-time clericals. This activity includes consulting in advance of unit presentation, suggesting appropriate media, and gathering materials of appropriate difficulty and at varying interest levels. The level of involvement, however, is not as great as the profession advocates.

## Utilization

Teachers in schools that have full-time professionals receive more assistance in ways to utilize materials in their instruction than in schools with other types of staff.

Students receive more help from the full-time media specialist in finding what they need than from other types of staff.

Instruction on the use of audiovisual equipment is the most popular topic for in-service training of teachers. Perhaps this may indicate a need for more pre-service training.

Full-time professionals provide more reading guidance for students than do other types of staff.

## Acquisition

Professionally trained media personnel more often follow recognized procedures when selecting materials than other persons in charge of acquiring materials. However, procedures for the selection of audiovisual equipment are less than desirable.

The potential for sharing materials between media centers within a school district has not been realized.

## *Production*

While most schools have facilities for producing materials, students rarely have the opportunity to produce.

## *Activities*

The concept of the media center as an activity center still needs more development. Rigid scheduling of students into the center and large blocks of time devoted to library instruction are receiving undue emphasis.

## *Schools Without Media Centers*

The absence of a centralized media collection in the school places the burden of providing materials on the home and on the public library. This means that many children still have little or no access to the media and services they need.

## **SOME FINAL NOTES ON TECHNIQUE**

The authors set out to compare the perceptions of users and the media staff concerning service frequency and variety. The technique was successful in measuring service programs on a statewide level, but also gave a great deal of encouragement for its use in the individual school.

If a service-by-service comparison of the media staff response with that of the teachers and students is made, the following conclusions and questions for improvement can be constructed:

1. Teachers and students are receiving the service at the frequency intended. Is the *quality* of the service sufficient to satisfy the needs of the users?
2. Teachers and/or students are not aware that a service is available. Shall we then increase our efforts to communicate the service? Do we need in-service training or instruction? Should we concentrate service on a few enthusiastic teachers and/or students and let them spread the word? Is it unrealistic, considering our staffing and budget, to try to provide this service?
3. Only a few teachers are taking advantage of the service. Is this all our staff can handle? Should we increase our

efforts to reach more teachers and/or students?

The questions might be asked: Doesn't the media staff have a clear picture of who and how many users they are serving in a school, particularly when many schools are small enough for the media staff to know almost every user personally? Why go to the trouble of gathering data from users? The authors have been particularly pleased with the improved view of the service program which is generated by getting formal feedback from users. In every case where the researchers have gone over the results with the media staff, we have been convinced that the technique provides better information than the traditional informal methods.

There is, however, a warning for those who might misuse the technique. Success comes when both the media staff and users participate in a spirit of cooperation, with an attitude of professionalism and a desire to communicate for program improvement. In some schools, the media staff may be able to administer the technique outlined here. In others, an outside person may be needed to promote a spirit of objectivity and cooperation.

The best reason for doing this research, however, may not be for formal feedback to the media staff. It may lie in efforts by the media staff to educate users to the wide variety of services which the center staff is willing to provide. Sadly, there are still far too many teachers, administrators, and students who are surprised to read some of the services on the list. Some teachers wrote, "Is this the job of the librarian?" Many students laughed out loud when we asked them if they had puppet shows in the media center or if they played games there. We still have some distance to go.

## REFERENCES

1. Of the many role studies which have been done, only two are listed as examples: C. J. Anderson, "Role Expectations of the High School Librarian as Perceived by Librarians, Principals, and Teachers" (Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of Oregon, 1970); Evelyn Hope Daniel, "The Organizational Position of School Media Cen-

ters: An Analysis of the Role of the School Library and the School Librarian" (Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of Maryland, 1974).

2. The most useful lists of services for the present study included: Mary Gaver, *Services of Secondary School Media Centers: Evaluation and Development* (American Library Assn., 1971), p.122-31; James W. Liesener, *Planning Instruments for School Library Media Programs* (College of Library and Information Services, Univ. of Maryland, 1974), p.2-23; David V. Loertscher, "Media Center Services to Teachers in Indiana Senior High Schools: 1972-1973" (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana Univ., 1973), p.118-38.
3. The student scale was constructed with the negative answer first since the researchers wanted the children to consider all answers before responding. During the pilot study, the positive answer was printed first. The researchers suspected that students were responding "yes" because many of the questions were of a positive nature and the children were most anxious to be of help. Luckily, toward the end of the pilot study, student questionnaires had to be reprinted, so the negative-to-positive scale was tested and yielded satisfactory results.
4. Statistical significance was judged on the basis of both nonparametric and parametric statistical tests included in the SPSS package. Since the scales in the questionnaires were normative, chi-squares and percentages were consulted for each item. In two instances, service counts—for example, the number of activity services provided regularly in a school—could be analyzed by the parametric test, analysis of variance. The .05 level was accepted in advance as the ap-

propriate level to judge statistical significance.

A judgment of practical significance was also made for each item. This involved the pooling of the authors' experience to ascertain whether or not a statistically significant result had any meaning in terms of the number of children or teachers in an average school.

5. For each item in the questionnaire, a FORTRAN program computed the percent of teachers who marked each response. For example, on a single question 20 percent might respond to the word "Regularly," 70 percent might respond "Occasionally," and 10 percent "Rarely or Never." The computer then took the response of the media specialist and compared it to the corresponding teacher percentage. This comparison produced a matrix of agreement counts. An analysis of variance was then computed to compare the mean agreements among schools and among staffing categories. The ANOVA was significant at a few teacher agreement levels but not for most. When significance was achieved, a Scheffe post-hoc test showed that the part-time professional was different from the full-time professional group and the full-time clerical group. The pattern of agreements, however, remained constant even when the ANOVA was not significant, that is, full-time professionals achieved the highest agreement pattern with teachers, followed by the full-time clerical group, and finally the part-time professional. The small number of cases in each group required a large F value and a larger sample would probably have produced a different finding. As it turned out, the ANOVA test was not as interesting as the within-group variation.

#### APPLICATIONS FOR SMO EDITOR POSITION REQUESTED

Applications for the position of editor of *School Media Quarterly* are being accepted by the AASL Board of Directors. The editorship begins with the Fall 1976 issue and terminates with the Summer 1979 issue. The editor serves as an ex-officio member of the AASL Board of Directors, the AASL Executive Committee, and the AASL Program Coordinating Committee. The editor is responsible for all aspects of journal development/production and chairs the *School Media Quarterly* Editorial Board, whose members share responsibility for various aspects of the journal development. The *School Media Quarterly* budget includes funds for secretarial proofreading assistance and telephone/postage/supplies expenses. The Central Production Unit of ALA provides technical assistance.