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The Evolution of the Library Media Center: A Study of the Past, Current, and Projected Future
Library Services Available in Johnson City, Tennessee

A dissertation
presented to
the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

by
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May 2016

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Keywords: Library, Media Center, Librarian, Media Specialist, Collection Development,
Collaboration, Role of Librarian, Makerspace

ABSTRACT

The Evolution of the Library Media Center: A Study of the Past, Current, and Projected Future

Library Services Available in Johnson City, Tennessee

by

Johnnie Sue Saylor Hawley

The purpose of this qualitative study was to indicate changes in library services available to the citizens of Johnson City, Tennessee. The study covered library services available in educational and public settings for patrons from preschool to adult ages. Librarians in this study all worked in either a public library located in Johnson City, TN or worked in the Johnson City School System as a media specialist in either an elementary, middle, or high school.

This qualitative study was conducted using interviews of librarians to gain their perceptions of the library and their roles within the libraries of Johnson City. Librarians were interviewed to determine their views in the past, present, and future of the library as an establishment.

Documents from the various libraries were also analyzed to determine changes in library services.

Various themes emerged from the data analysis. Participants discussed their roles as librarians, the library as an institution, and collection development. Other themes that emerged were discussions of library materials that were now or would become archaic. Participants also made projections as to the future of the library itself and whether or not it would become obsolete.

The results of this study suggest that libraries will continue to evolve as technologies and community needs and expectations change. The appearance of the library will evolve to contain more learning spaces for active and group learning. The role of the librarian will evolve as the technology evolves. It will become more focused upon teaching patrons how to use learning tools and access information rather than simply managing and controlling the library's assets.

The librarians' role has the potential to become one of service leadership in the community and in the school setting. The impact of the library and the librarians' role will directly affect students, teachers, and community members. Recommendations from this study may assist in transitioning the librarian/media specialist's role to a great service leadership model that supports individual growth and community development.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this study to my many family members who were there for me throughout this process. To my husband Craig Hawley, thank you for your patience as this endeavor took much more time for me to complete than it should have. To my children Gabe and Isabel Hawley, thank you for constantly encouraging me and being my special cheerleaders. The dedication you show in your undertakings encouraged me. To my mother-in-law Marcy Hawley, for being a support for me and for pushing me when I needed it. To my brother John and sister Sarah, thanks for picking me up when I was falling apart.

And finally, thank you to my late mother Phyllis Saylor, who instilled in me a hard work ethic and a love for education. I remember studying with her when she worked on advanced degrees and how proud I was of her when I went to watch her graduate. I hope she feels that same pride, and I am excited to repeat that moment with my family watching.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend a special thanks to the participants in this study. The librarians in Johnson City are a special group of professionals who truly have a heart for the community and a desire to offer the best library services available. I have enjoyed working with each of you and look forward to continuing our professional relationship. Thank you for the insightful conversations. Your enthusiasm for our profession inspires me, and I want to express my undying respect and gratitude for the support you have given me.

I would like to express a special thanks to my committee members as well. Thank you for your guidance, wisdom, and encouragement. I'd like to extend a special thanks to Dr. Eric Glover my committee chair. Thank you for not giving up on me as I demonstrated just how good of a procrastinator I could be and also for being willing to work overtime when I finally got started and wanting to finish so quickly. You lead me rather than manage me. Thank you for taking this journey with me.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For too many years, libraries have been underappreciated. Often a new sports arena, shopping complex, office building, or theater draws more interest and attention than the library. In recent years, however, this has begun to change. Communities are beginning to recognize the value of having a strong library. Libraries provide valuable services for residents of all ages, incomes, and ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, they can also infuse a healthy dose of vivacity into downtowns, main streets, and neighborhood centers. In trying times of economic stress libraries provide especially important services to those trying to find a job or residents just looking for a place to read a book, listen to a CD, or go online. Libraries in large and small cities are becoming dynamic places, and library media specialists are energetically seeking to engage the community. Beyond offering a place to read or check out a book, libraries are expanding their mission (Sneville, 2009).

School libraries have long been staples in elementary, middle, and high schools as well as vital components of colleges and universities. The Every Student Succeeds Act or what was previously known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) provides federal funding for K-12 education programs and was last reauthorized in December 2015. Throughout 2010 and 2011 both the House and the Senate have held hearings on what should be included in this reauthorization. It is critical that dedicated funding for effective school library programs be included in this legislation. Why are school libraries important? An effective school library provides students with more than just books; they are now sophisticated learning environments and provide the education and necessary skills to succeed in college and in the workforce. Research repeatedly

confirms that a well-funded library with a state-certified school librarian is an integral component of students' education (Korte, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

There is much evidence of the changes and improvements that libraries have already experienced as they have evolved and adapted to the current technology-rich needs of their patrons, but there is also much speculation as to how the library will further evolve to meet those needs in the future. There is also some talk of libraries becoming obsolete. Most research, however, indicates that while some services offered at libraries will become obsolete, the institution itself will morph into something that better meets the needs of future constituents but will always remain a staple in both schools and communities (Sneville, 2009). The librarian career will also evolve to meet new demands, but librarians will continue to be the information authorities that will be need to help the rest of the population navigate the ever-changing technology bursts our society experiences. The purpose of this study is to examine how community and school library services are evolving.

Research Questions

This study was an examination of the evolution of the services available both the private and public library media centers in the Johnson City, TN area, as well as the evolving role of the media specialist. It provided a comparison the past, present, and projected roles of both the media center and the media specialist as perceived by professional librarians.

Research questions used to guide the study included:

1. How do librarians and media specialists perceive the library media center?

2. How do librarians and media specialists perceive their role in the library media center?
3. How will libraries and librarians change in the near future?

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze how the library services and the librarians' roles have evolved over the years and, more importantly, to indicate what those roles will entail in the future. By examining the impact of media specialists and media centers, this study will provide guidance for librarians and community leaders in adapting media centers to better meet the needs of a changing society.

Scope and Location of the Study

This study was conducted using qualitative methods to address the research questions referenced above. I conducted interviews with Johnson City area librarians and administrators supervising library operations. The purpose of the interviews was to gather perceptions and viewpoints regarding transformations in library operations and variations in librarians' roles in the past, present, and future. I maintained the overall focus of the interview questioning, maintained objectivity throughout the study, and reflected regularly to ensure this position.

Johnson City, Tennessee consists of a 39.6 square mile area and has a population of 63,152 citizens according to the 2010 Census. Forty-eight percent, 30,401 are males, and fifty-two percent, 32,751 are females at the time of this study. The median resident age is 36.9 years old that is similar to the Tennessee median of 35.9 years old. The estimated per capita income in 2010 was \$25,575. That same year the average median household income was estimated at

\$37,047, which was lower than the Tennessee median of \$43,314. The Johnson City area has a rich mix of area history, outdoor life, culture, local dining, and shopping venues. Located in the Appalachian Mountains, it can arguably be considered one of the most beautiful places in East Tennessee.

The Johnson City, Tennessee area is rich with libraries. The local school system maintains 11 school media centers, as they are often called in school settings. All are run by full-time certified media specialists. The Johnson City Public Library is a two-story, 42,000 square foot building housing a collection of over 140,000 print and nonprint items. Located on the East Tennessee State University, the Charles C. Sherrod Library is a four-story, 191,700 square foot building with numerous meeting and study rooms, extensive technology labs, and several types of specific collections. All 13 libraries are easily accessible and are located within a short distance of each other ("About Johnson City," 2015).

School districts are expected to provide high quality education. As a result of the increased accountability required by No Child Left Behind Reauthorization Act of 2008, school districts are under increasing pressure to demonstrate student achievement. One such way is to hire quality media specialists and maintain updated media centers that studies indicate increase students' testing scores. To that endeavor each Johnson City School employs a full-time certified media specialist. There are eight elementary, one intermediate, one middle, and one high school in the Johnson City School System.

Statement of Research Bias and Limitations

I began my teaching career as an English teacher, and after 8 years of teaching I completed my master's degree in Educational Media and School Library Services. My thought

was that it would be beneficial as an English teacher even if I never transferred to the library.

The last 7 years of my career, I have happily been employed as a media specialist. What initially began as a supplemental degree to aid in teaching English became my passion. I found my niche, and I discovered that while the work was intense and demanding, it was extremely rewarding.

Over those 7 years I have served as the librarian in an elementary school, for 5 years and a middle school for two years. I have personally experienced changes in the library services provided in the school system and also experienced changes in what is expected of media specialist. While my years as a librarian have all been in the Johnson City School System, I have taught in eight different schools in five different systems in East Tennessee. As an English teacher I have had many experiences working with the librarian and taking my classes to the media center and have experienced different ways the media center was run and perceived.

I am currently in a media specialist position in the system in which portions of this study will be conducted but have no oversight or influence on other media centers or media specialists. I have worked closely with the Johnson City Public library on various occasions and personally know many of the librarians and administrative personnel. As a graduate student at East Tennessee State University, first for my master's degree and now as doctoral student, I am very familiar with the university's library. This study is not intended to be a comprehensive look at all libraries and librarians; rather, it is a snapshot of the library and librarians services specific to the location of the study as perceived by those working in the profession. I acknowledge my bias as a supporter of library media centers and the individuals who work there. However, I suggest that this bias gives me unique access to the honest opinions and aspirations of library media specialists.

Definition of Terms

Library and/or media center refers to a place where books, magazines, and other materials are available for people to use or borrow. The terms are interchangeable, but the term media specialist is often used in educational settings.

Librarian and/or media specialist refers to a specialist in the care or management of and responsibility for adapting the library or media center to meet changing needs. The terms are interchangeable, but the term media specialist is often used in educational settings.

Learning commons refers to a future oriented view of the library where the focus is on constructive learning and the learner rather than focusing on the sources available. They are educational spaces similar to libraries and classrooms that share space for information technology, remote or online education, tutoring, collaboration, content creation, meetings, and reading or study.

Overview of the Study

This chapter establishes the need for completion of this study. What has the library and the role of the librarian been in the past, present, and future? Chapter 2 is a review of the literature pertaining to library history and projected future as well as the past history of the library profession and projections as to how it will evolve in the future. Chapter 3 consists of the methodologies and procedures used to gather data including descriptions of participants, the procedures used, and method of data analysis. Chapter 4 reports the data collection and findings. Finally, Chapter 5 reflects the conclusions, summary and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This researcher's first memories of visiting the library were from second grade. The elementary school library was in the center of the school and had a three-stair pit where students surrounded the librarian, as she was called at the time. She would sit in the bottom and read stories to all her classes. The anticipation of traveling weekly to the library, as it was called, to hear another installation of *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl (1961) was felt by all. After completing a chapter, students dispersed through the shelves to select books to take home for the week. Names were eagerly signed on lined cards and the hour-long visit for the week was complete. Today a visit to the library provides this and many more opportunities; students now visit a media center and work with the media specialists to use a wide variety of materials including various forms of technology.

History of the Library

Past: Origin to 2000 AD

In the 1730s there were no libraries in the British colonies, and because they were rare and expensive, Americans had little or no access to books. Benjamin Franklin and others realized the need to investigate ideas in books and decided to pool their books together in one place. There were 50 contributors and each invested 40 shillings to start purchasing for the library ("The Library Company," 2014). The Library Company, as it was named, became the first successful library and was founded in the summer of 1731. The collection grew with the country and from the Revolutionary war through 1800 it was recognized as the Library of Congress as Philadelphia was then the site of the national government. Until 1850 it was the largest

American library and still contains all of the books acquired over the centuries. (Overview, 2006). More than 10 years later, in the 1740s, other American cities began to develop their own versions of libraries. The Library Company began to collect more than just books by adding coins, fossils, geological specimens, flora and fauna and scientific instruments to their collection (“The Library Company,” 2014).

The origin of the school library is less certain. In colonial times school libraries were no more than the placement of a Bible, a chapter book, and the Bay Psalm Book on the corner of the teacher’s desk (Encyclopedia on Library, 1979). Franklin recommended school libraries as an important part of academic studies in 1740 and the Penn Charter School in Philadelphia devoted an entire room for this purpose in 1744. Throughout the 19th century the rise of the school libraries mirrored the rise of the public ones. The first instance of legislation allowing schools to use tax funds to purchase books was in New York State in 1835. Nineteen states followed suit and by 1876 school libraries were counted along with their public counterparts reaching the total of 826 libraries in America. By 1913 that number grew to approximately 10,000 according to the U. S. Office of Education (“Public libraries in the United States of America,” 1876).

By 1934 book wagons delivering books to rural schools had evolved to include books, magazines, and newspaper clippings that were lent to a school from a period of 6 weeks to a year. Sometimes these traveling libraries had as many as 500 books covering general topics. If a school desired a specific topic, it requested a package of library books, pamphlets, and newspaper clippings focusing on specific subject matter. Some states were even able to send paintings, stereographs, and other visual aids (Michie, 2005).

In its earliest stages the role of the library was a warehouse of books where patrons could choose and borrow a book, and based on the honor system, were expected to return the item

before selecting a new one. Melvin Dewey, in his commitment to improve librarianship, reformed the system and aimed to save time and eliminate waste. Upon his in Amherst College in 1872 he began working in the college library. After graduation in 1874 Amherst hired him to manage its library and to reclassify the collection. Just 2 years later he published *A Classification and Subject index for Cataloging and Arranging Books and Pamphlets in a Library*. Today, it's widely known as the Dewey decimal classification system. Dewey went on to found the Spelling Reform Association, the Metric Bureau, and the American Library Association and also served as editor for the ALA's *Library Journal* (Wiegand, 2000).

Dewey established the first school for librarians in 1887 and admitted its first class of 20 members—17 were women (Wiegand, 2000). Among them was Mary Kingsbury, the first professionally trained school librarian who graduated in 1900 and was appointed to the Erasmus High School Library in Brooklyn, New York (Woolls, 2003). Also in that class was Mary E. Hall, who was appointed in 1903 to the Girls' High School Library also in Brooklyn. Hall is noted for producing the first standards for school libraries and was the first chairperson for the School Libraries Sections that later became the American Association for School Libraries (Pond, 2003).

In 1947 the aim of the school librarian was to provide services such as helping students choose and obtain books, widen their range of reading interests, help cultivate an appreciation for the arts, develop social awareness, and encourage habits of life-long learning. A librarian was also expected to work cooperatively with teachers (Fargo, 1947).

From 1950-2000 the nation experienced a tremendous growth in school libraries. While in 1953-54 only 36% of the public schools had functioning libraries, that number rose to 92% in the 1999-2000 school year. Additionally only 40% of public schools employed a librarian during

1953-54, while 86 percent of public schools had librarians in 1999-2000. While collections vary from school to school, calculating a ratio of books per student is a common practice.

Comparatively, on the national level, there were three library books per pupil reported in 1953-54 and 17 library books per pupil in 1999-2000 (Michie, 2005).

Current: 2000 to 2015AD

Studies continually validate the idea that quality school library programs significantly impact student achievement, especially vulnerable students (Kachel, 2013). Some states have cut the number of librarians they employ in their schools, and their standardized scores have suffered for it. In those states that have added librarians, average reading scores for all students have increased by 1.5%, an increase of almost three times more than states that lost librarians, 0.5% (Lance, 2011). Moreover, schools that allowed librarians to use flexible scheduling saw writing scores improve. With flexible scheduling students were four times more likely to earn an “advanced” writing score, and Hispanic students were almost seven times more likely to earn that high designation. Students who were poor, minority, or had an IEP, but who also had a full-time certified librarian, were at least twice as likely to earn an “advanced” writing score as their counterparts in schools without full-time librarians (Kachel, 2013).

Over the years the institution of the library has developed into several different types of libraries. While sources disagree on the main types, there are four that were prevalent in all of the literature. According to the American Library Association (ALA) there are four recognized types of libraries: academic, public, school, and special. Each offers some similar resources, programs, and services, but each has unique offerings and specified patrons. Briefly, academic libraries serve colleges and universities, public libraries serve communities, school libraries serve a specific school, and special libraries are created for specific entities such as corporations,

hospitals, or even private businesses (“Types of libraries”, n.d.).

Types of Libraries

There are many types of libraries throughout the world. Librarians are classified according to the type of library in which they work -- a college or university (academic), a public library, a school library media center, or special library.

Academic Libraries. These libraries are located on research institutions of all sizes from major universities to community colleges. They are, by design, physically on the campus and focused on the needs of their students, staff, and faculty. Their main role is to provide access sources of information that will support the teaching and learning of the specific institution (“The three main types of library”, 2008). Larger institutes had several academic libraries on campus to support different majors such as law and science. Academic librarians often have faculty status and can obtain tenure. A master’s degree in library science is required to obtain a position in an academic library, and some institutes require an advanced degree in the subject specialty. An academic librarian consults with patrons to analyze, identify, and locate information requests; creates campus-wide information literacy programs and can offer classes to improve students’ literacy skills; organizes and facilitates access to information in a variety of methods; remains current on the advancement of technology and how to provide strategies for students to use new technological media; maintain electronic databases, computer-based programs, and manage websites; collaborate with classroom faculty, computer technicians, and curriculum developers; and participate in and promote ways to raise funds for academic libraries (“Types of Libraries,” n.d.).

Public Libraries. This is what most people think of when they hear the word “library.” A public library is a publicly funded institution that provides mainly books for loan. Today, a

librarian does much more than check out and shelve books. Librarians are now also required to be technology experts, information detectives, reading advisors, community programming coordinators, children's storyteller, and numerous other duties to maintain the programs available. The responsibilities are diverse, challenging, and ever-changing. As the name indicates, public libraries serve the general public "from the cradle to the grave," and often have departments designed to focus on the youth, teen, or adult populations' needs ("Types of Libraries," n.d.). The lending stock is mainly divided into fiction and nonfiction books but now also may contain VHS, DVDs, CDs, and audio books. Patrons of public libraries are predominately in the very old and very young age groups ("The three main types of library," 2008).

School Libraries. These are usually part of a school system and serve students, teachers, and staff attending or working in grades kindergarten to graduation. Often these libraries are referred to as media centers and the librarian is a media specialist who is required to have a second degree in education or a certificate of school media. The responsibilities of the media specialist are varied but include working with both students and teachers to access information in a variety of formats. Class instruction may be required in a flexible scheduling format or on a regular weekly basis instruction each class in the school. The instruction focus is literacy promotion, accessing sources in the media center, research steps and procedures, and evaluating sources. A school media specialist is a collaborator, a change agent, a curriculum leader, a technology expert, and an instructional coach. Media Specialists promote literacy, research skills, and inquiry learning. They provide a foundation of how to access information and "develop effective users of ideas and information, a lifelong skill" ("Types of libraries," n.d.).

Special Libraries. Special libraries are distinctive and specific in fulfilling their need. These are created within corporations, hospitals, the military, museums, law firms, advertising agencies, professional associations, private businesses, government agencies, and even in churches. These are not typical when compared to other types of libraries and are designed to meet the need unique to the institution. They can be created with a particular population in mind such as the blind and physically handicapped, and others can be dedicated to specific collections such as the Library of Congress. Special librarians may not be typical either and have a nonlibrary job title (“Types of libraries,” n.d.).

Special libraries tend to be one-subject libraries and also vary in size depending on the institution they serve. They are often run by “solos,” an individual who works alone. Rather than librarian, the term “information scientists” is used (“Three main types of libraries,” 2008).

Sources Available in Libraries

Libraries, regardless of the type, offer similar types of sources. Historically these sources have been tangible items that can be accessed at the library or taken home through the lending program. Books are the most common and most numerous of the sources available at any library. Books cover virtually all topics, both fact and fiction. Patrons use books to access lots of information on a topic in one location, they may use a book to put their topic in context with important issues and historical timelines, or they may use a book to help support and argument.

Another common resource format is a magazine which contains a collection of articles and images on diverse topics. For information on current events and popular interests, this has historically been the best source. Patrons can find information or opinions about popular culture and up-to-date information about current events and people of interest. Academic libraries provide access to academic journals. Common to this type of library, journals provide scholarly

research that is reviewed by an editorial board before publishing. “Articles in journals can cover very specific topics and narrow fields of research,” (“Types of information sources,” n.d.). Once exclusive to academic libraries, journals are now available to most libraries as they can now be accessed through the internet.

Newspapers are a third common resource offered at most libraries. A newspaper is a collection of current events and local news that is published daily, weekly, or on another schedule. Patrons use them for local, national, and international information. There are a variety of types of information ranging from editorials, to commentaries, to expert opinions. Most libraries now offer hard copies of newspapers although previous issues can be accessed electronically.

Reference sections are included in most library collections and in them there is a wide range of encyclopedias. This is a collection of short, factual entries on general and specific topics written by different contributors who are knowledgeable about the topic. General encyclopedias provide concise information on a multitude of topics and are arranged in alphabetical order. Specific encyclopedias focus on one topic and patrons find in-depth detail on one field of study.

The final source that is common to most all libraries is access to information through the internet. The World Wide Web provides patrons the ability to access information and quickly link to related information. This is the source for the most current information as it can be updated instantly. Also, this source is not limited to written content as it also includes sounds, images, and video. Patrons need to be trained on evaluating information obtained via the internet as not all information is reviewed before posted on the web.

With the invention and use of the internet, other library information formats have become obsolete. Before the 80s and the introduction of the internet, libraries offered a vertical file that contained hard copies of images collected for patrons to be able view places, people, and items of which they had no previous knowledge. These are no longer maintained as any image can be accessed via the internet. Libraries also once had huge collections of microfiche, past newspapers, articles and such photographed on small film that could be viewed on a microfiche reader. Again, all this information is now uploaded and available on the internet.

As libraries continue to evolve, one of the newest formats provided to patrons is the use of electronic databases. These contain citations, articles, newspapers, podcasts, blogs, videos, and other media types. Some databases contain summaries of articles while others provide full-text articles. The convenience of a database is that information is arranged and collected in topical format making research less tedious.

While the types of sources have evolved in the last 50 years, probably the most obvious evolution in library services is the way patrons locate sources. A library catalogue is a list of materials held by a library and an indication of where each item is located. Card Catalogues were once a staple in all types of libraries. Until the early 1990s this was the most the main type of catalogue. This system consisted of a wooden or metal cabinet with several small drawers arranged alphabetically. Within each drawer were hundreds of index cards indicated where sources were in the library. For each source there were three cards created. A patron might remember a book's title, author, or subject and could use any three of those to find a card in the card catalogue that would list all the information about the book and where to find it in the collection. The process was effective but monotonous and often plagued by human error.

As computer technology advanced and became more economical, libraries have converted their catalogues to On-line Public Access Catalogues (OPACs). Patrons now simply type in a subject, title, series, keyword, or author they would like to locate and the OPAC system will immediately indicate the item's location. The use of this electronic database has made searching for items easier for the majority of patrons. Not all patrons are technologically confident, but most do well with the new system. This system holds more information, takes less time to update, and is more user-friendly ("Introduction to libraries," 2008).

Obsolete Sources

The introductions of DVDs and CDs have surpassed the older formats, making those sources obsolete (Erickson, 2011). Through the years there have been various types of sources that are no longer useful to maintain in the library collection. A few of the fading formats are audiocassettes, VHS tapes, Beta tapes, laserdiscs, floppy discs, CD-ROMs and LPs (Emanuel, 2014). Most libraries no longer maintain collections of microfiche, 8mm or 16mm films, oral histories on audio cassettes, filmstrips, or local recordings on vinyl (Lazard, 2015).

Libraries should be cautious when deciding whether or not to abandon a format and begin offering a new media format. To avoid being caught with unusable material, libraries have been cautious to begin purchasing new formats until they become established components of society. This procedure was adapted when early proponents of BETA technology were thwarted when it was superseded with the VHS format. Deferring audio and visual technology purchases until they are established formats has become the unspoken normal procedure. Once video rental stores showed evidence of renting more DVDs than VHS tapes, librarians accepted the obvious and began to phase out their VHS collections and focus on their DVD collections. Evans (2005) notes that it is important to realize that no format will last forever, but it's equally important to

remember that once a format becomes obsolete, it's obsolete—the responsibility of maintaining the format falls on museums (Evans, 2005).

Vertical files are one aspect of library services that some librarians claim as obsolete and others still strive to maintain. Often housed in file cabinets, a vertical file consists of photocopies rather than original documents broken down by subject. Files hold basic information samples appropriate for telling anecdotes and establishing background information on researchable subjects or serve as starting points for finding more detailed information elsewhere. Vertical files contain such items as newspaper clippings, magazine articles, brochures, fliers, pamphlets, letters, speeches, sermons, and any other type of documents related to the subjects available (Whetzel, 2011). Other entries are in forms of maps, travel materials, government documents, technical reports, pictures, photographs, annual reports, and other miscellaneous materials (Payson, 1995). Subjects depend on the library's preferences, but some examples are family histories, biographical information, or topical subjects related to community needs or curriculum units (Whetzel, 2011).

Even though vertical files contain valued information that patrons can access independently, they may not be heavily used. Teachers and faculty members often require more rigorous sources such as books or journal entries. Many librarians have concluded that maintaining a vertical file is professionally counterproductive. Some argue that it does not get used because it doesn't have the quick access and appeal of a computer search where many of the same sources can be found in a digital form (Payson, 1995).

Others see the vertical file as an indispensable reference tool because it allows students to research current issues, can be organized to specifically fit a school's curricula, and it can provide local information not easily accessible via the internet (McAbee, 2011). Overall, those

against keeping a vertical file have won this debate, as more and more libraries have chosen to discontinue providing one. Most report that the biggest reason is maintaining it is simply too time-consuming. Other deterrents are that it is not used enough, the information is available elsewhere, and it is an outdated idea (Payson, 1995).

Perhaps one of them most obvious relics of past library procedures is the card catalogue. Once established, libraries have to have a way to keep track of the loans they allow. One of the first systems was the manual circulatory system consisted of signature cards used for check out. Each book had a pocket in the back that held a card specific to that source. If a patron wanted the book a signature would be required on that card with a date. The librarian would keep the card until the book was returned, and upon its return the card would be replaced and the book returned to the shelf. The card catalog was a large piece of furniture consisting of many index card-sized drawers. Each drawer represented an alphabetized section of cards that contained the title of a book, the author's name, a brief summary of its contents, and its location on the library shelves. When browsing for books one would flip through the cards searching for books based on the three types of cards: subject cards, author cards, or title cards. This was often a long laborious process and often resulted in reaching the shelf to realize the book was not there.

Presently most libraries operate with an automated circulation system. Checking out with this system is easier because it involves scanning the patron's library barcode number on the patron's library card and then scanning the book's barcode. The computerized system will then match the book to the patron and record that the book was checked out on the date it was scanned. The system calculates the due date and keeps track of the patron's loans. When the book is returned, the barcode is scanned again and the computerized system uses the check-in mode to update the patron's record to reflect that the book was returned and also updates the

collection to reflect that the book is back in the library. Circulation reports on late books, fines, amount of circulations, inventory, and numerous other reports can be generated instantly using this system.

Most helpful to patrons, this system allows for easier searching. All books are entered into the system with the same information as card catalogue cards of the past: title, author's name, a brief summary of the book, and its location in the library. That is just the basic information, but with the computerized system more details can now be tracked such as publishing information, cost of the book, location of purchase, and numerous subject headings that a patron may use when browsing the catalogue for reading material. Books that match the search heading appear immediately and there is also an indication if the book is available or is on loan to another patron. There are always concerns with technical issues, but the computer system has far surpassed the manual system. While the card catalogue is no longer a staple piece of furniture, it is still valuable to those with nostalgic memories of library visits, but as a functioning check out system it is now almost unilaterally obsolete (Stephens, 2007).

Projected Future: Beyond 2015 AD

According to Thomas Frey (2006), "libraries are in unique positions." Because most patrons still have favorable memories of visiting the library when younger, there are not real detractors protesting against the institution. Libraries have the luxury of time to reinvent themselves. Its role in the community is changing and Frey (2006) offers the four following recommendations to help the transition. First, evaluate the library experience. Information needs to be relevant, useful, and somehow meaningful. In short, we need to experience it (Frey, 2007). For that, something has to be personally encountered. Other industries have already made this transition. Frey postulates that it is the Starbucks experience that the company is

selling rather than their coffee. Coffee can be purchased anywhere. That same concept needs to be transferred to the information world. The question then becomes, “How do we go about creating the ultimate information experience?” (Frey, 2007). Future libraries have the opportunity to create new information experiences.

Some ways that might be accomplished are rethinking the space available, his second recommendation. Possible ideas include adding exercise equipment such as treadmills or exercise bikes for patrons to read or listen to audio books while working out, mini-theaters to offer a full sensory experience as information is obtained, podcasting studios, band practice rooms, art studios, recording studios, imagination rooms, blogger stations, and drama studios where literature can come to life are just a few of the possibilities for the next-generation library (Frey, 2007).

New Uses of Space

One way libraries of the future can to reinvent themselves is to think of new ways to use their space. As more books become available in electronic formats and more references are available online, libraries will gain new space and they need to plan new, innovative ways to use that space.

Learning commons. As content became more accessible online, libraries have had to reinvent themselves and rethinking the use of their space has come to the forefront. Librarians have realized that their role is more about connecting learners and helping them construct knowledge rather than simply housing sources (Holland, 2015). A paradigm shift has changed the focus from acquiring sources to becoming more user-centered, more trusting, and more flexible. Becoming more user-centered meant rethinking how patrons use the library, while becoming more trusting and flexible meant letting go of some outdated library policies. For

instance, it meant trusting patrons to check out reference rather than forbidding them from circulating (Hartland, 2015). As education has evolved the demand for a place to encourage participation in the learning process and construction of knowledge has become paramount. Instead of being an archive, libraries have become a learning commons (Holland, 2015).

Sometimes called an information commons, a learning commons is a place for full-service learning and project construction. Several colleges and universities have repurposed their libraries to this learning commons approach (“7 things you should know,” 2011). The goal was to create learning hubs in the school community where students and teachers could collaborate, communicate, and share. It meant that the library would be a louder place full of people working, talking, and learning where there are no preconceptions or physical barriers and where curiosity is encouraged. The library was not seen as a place to house resources but rather a place to create meaning from them (Holland, 2015).

Makerspaces. A new concept in library services is the addition of makerspaces. “A makerspace is an exciting opportunity for school libraries to take that next evolutionary step toward making the library a destination, instead of a fly-by stop” (Preddy, 2013). A makerspace is a place where community members can work alongside parents, staff, and mentors to create, problem solve, and develop skills in a hand-on environment that fosters talents, thinking, and mental rigor. As designated by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Standards for the 21st Century Learner, the four crucial components for inquiry and life-long learning are: think, create, grow, and share. Active learning using all four of the components is the basis for a makerspace area. It’s a safe place where patrons can question current thinking through research, construct, and problem-solving. Patrons can build using cognitive, kinesthetic, and social skills while working through makerspace activities. They may also exercise dexterity

skills as well as following step-by-step directions, group dynamics, patience, and endurance (Preddy, 2013).

Starting a makerspace can be as simple as providing a space for patrons to independently create a story related craft with guidance but room for individuality. Other simple ideas are a Lego station, gingerbread house creations, and a greeting card center. Amy Koester, a children's librarian in Illinois, even recommends simple recycling ideas such as using found items to create a marble track and other STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) activities that require students to use old items in new ways (Peterson, 2013). Justin Hoekne, Coordinator of Teen Services in Southern Tennessee, states, "It's not just about technology. It's about getting your hands dirty. It's not just sitting at a computer" (Peterson, 2013). Remembering the four components, think, create, grow, and share, it is important to remember that teenagers love to show off and parents love to watch them do so. In the area of growth, makers advance through the three phases at their own pace. The first phase is Learning and Building Knowledge, where makers learn to become independent. They may need guidance or direction, but the goal is for them to test skills they may not even know they possessed. The second phase is Independence and Challenge, where makers take knowledge acquired in the first phase and are given a coordinator-created challenge that will have an open-ended solution. The student is tasked with working out the steps, supplies, and application required to experiment and arrive at a solution. The final, third stage is Self-Directed Experimentation in which the patron sets an independent goal and must use trial and error to work through personal inquiry, designing, creating, and completing a project (Preddy, 2013). Some higher-level activities and larger commitments may require getting the community involved. Library budgets are often stretched beyond their means and a community sponsor can help with gathering materials needed to sustain a makerspace at

any level, and as the program evolves, local companies can assist in expensive purchases as a 3-D printer (Peterson, 2013).

Makerspaces are not the only designated spaces in the future of library design. Teen spaces are desired as the need for teen library program has presented itself. There are unique issues that apply to teens as opposed to any other patron group. Libraries have excellent programs for young readers and adults generally support library services, so why shouldn't there be attention on the age group in between these two? "Teens were once children and will soon be adults. If we want everyone to love and support the library—with their checkbooks, their voices, and their votes—then we should consider the fact that library experiences make library supporters (Ludwig, 2011). Teen or YA spaces need careful consideration to create, and actual teens must be involved in the process. A survey taken in summer 2014 evaluated themes in the library and analyzed the librarians' level of importance and the teens' level of importance for themes including study space, programming, gaming, displays, group space, individual space, and various other areas. The results were that in almost every area, teens' interests were not what the librarians had assumed. While access to technology was an obvious interest, teens expressed the need comfortable furniture as their highest percentage. "The study showed that the balance between private individual space use and for social group use is likely to appeal to the greatest number of teens" (Kuhlmann, 2014).

Thirdly, libraries need to embrace new information technologies. Technology becomes available faster than people can learn to use it. No other organization has met this need. Libraries cannot only become a resource for these new technologies but also must be the ones to help the public learn how to best use these devices. Books and writing are a technology, and as all technology has a lifespan, its time may be up. As the public shifts to a new form, so must the

library.

New Technologies

As sources become obsolete new ones become available. New technologies become available and libraries need to find ways to make them a part of the services they provide. The speed with which technology is advancing becomes more rapid and libraries need to keep up with the hurried pace.

Video games. One element that is projected to be a staple in future library services is the use of video games. The American Library Association already endorses this practice and views video games in the same vein as board games. The association's position is that it promotes interaction with diverse peers, allows them to develop problem solving skills as well as encourages strategic planning, and provides them with a format to share their areas of expertise (LeFebvre, 2013). Offering gaming in the library has been a successful outreach tool for tweens, teens, and even seniors. In schools they are being recognized as valuable instruments to reinforce a variety of curricular, social and life skills. When libraries began to include popular media such as DVDs and music CDs, they opened their collection development to include more nontraditional resources (Mayer, 2010). Buchanan and Elzen (2012) note, "Games are part of the larger flood of evolving media and tech. As librarians consider how to respond to change, it may help to revisit the mission of libraries. It may also help to consider the fundamental nature of games"(p. 19).

Learning a the game's rules, learning new symbols, and reading the text that comes with some video games and role playing games is just as much of an educational activity as reading a book (LeFebvre, 2013). Video games give patrons a chance to practice reading, writing, and computing in the safe environment of the library. Games are immediately engaging and entice

players to problem-solve in order to “level up.” Gamers are constantly challenged to create strategies, anticipate and predict new outcomes, coordinate multiple operations and resources, decipher maps, track statistics, and adapt to increasingly difficult levels. In this information-rich world gamers learn a wide range of media literacies that are not dissimilar that requirements of the school environment (“Libraries & Gaming”, n.d.).

The first video game machines became available over 30 years ago to a population that are now parents. The Entertainment Software Association projects that 69% of U.S. heads of households now play some type of video games. The average game player is 33 years old and 25% of those gamers are over the age of 50. Furthermore, 30 percent of those gamers are adult women, who are quite understandably comfortable with their teens playing video games. Teens are the hardest demographic to reach when it comes to library programming, so offering video gaming is an element that can be used to attract them (Neiburger, 2007).

Beginning efforts to include new media are often met with concern, but by doing so, libraries have begun to embrace the desires of the community, thus changing their collection policies to engage and foster relationships with their patrons (LeFebvre, 2013). According to Eli Neiburger (2007), “If you don’t offer them something they value now, you’re going to be irrelevant to them for the rest of their lives. It’s not a risk we can afford to take” (p. 2).

Neiburger (2007) suggests offering a gaming tournament. A monthly gaming tournament will draw in new patrons and introduce your new collection. Tournaments can be set up similar to sporting events with a bracket, play times, and awards. It also provides the opportunity to have patrons become aware of other library offerings. While attending the tournament or waiting their turn, gamers can explore other library options (p. 86-92).

Libraries should be cautious when integrating video games into their collections. With

and endless number of games and growing variety of kinds of games, guidance and age appropriateness is a concern when assisting patrons. Games have ratings similar to movies. The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) provides ratings making it easier to decide whether a game is appropriate for the age of the library's patrons. Educational games are a wise choice as they are attractive to both educators and parents alike, but popular games should also be considered. Some libraries even offer the option to check out video gaming systems, thus allowing patrons another avenue to connect with each other and with the society at large (Buchanan, 2012). Even though cautions should be observed, now is the time for libraries to explore video gaming. The United States Supreme Court has reviewed arguments concerning the nature and possible effects of video games. The First Amendment protection has been applied to the medium, and we compared to the likes of books, plays, movies, and other media that communicate ideas (Brown V. EMA, 2011). The very items libraries provide. In the current society that offers phenomena of immersion and interactivity, libraries should be a part of this discussion.

3-D printers. In the midst of the digital revolution, the library has taken on a leading role in making new technology available to people of all ages and has helped them build skills and competencies needed to survive in this high-tech world. One of the latest technologies made available at libraries is 3-D printing ("Progress in the making," 2014). Presently over 250 U.S. libraries offer 3-D printing to patrons and single-handedly spreading STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) curriculum themes into the community (Millsaps, 2015).

3-D printers provide many stimulating applications. Materials used in these types of printers are ABS (acrylonitrile butadiene styrene) and PLA (polylactic acid) plastic. These printers can be used to create everything from prosthetic limbs, toy figures, and even handguns.

In school libraries curriculum applications are endless not only STEM areas, but also in artistic and various other content area lessons. Students have used 3-D printers to create everything from advanced art and craft projects to automotive parts and even medical devices (Millsaps, 2015).

The first academic library to provide a 3-D printer was the DeLMare Science and Engineering Library in 2012. Located on the University of Nevada campus, this library was able to fulfill the mission of most libraries: to provide access to rare and expensive technology for the common good. The potential benefits of providing access to a 3-D printer are endless. Chemistry professors saw that being able to print in 3-D made objects tangible rather than simply viewing them in computer models and thus would transform their teaching and research. There are similar benefits across many disciplines. Just as a document printer produces a tangible product of students' creative writing that enables further refinement, adjusting, collaborative input and improvement, 3-D printing provides learners to quickly produce real-world versions of previous intangible digital objects (Colegrave, 2014).

While the benefits are numerous, 3-D printers are not yet what most would consider affordable. While they are becoming more affordable, there are still other expenses involved than just purchases the expensive printer. Software, materials, and maintenance are also expensive (Millsaps, 2015). While 3-D printers have been around for more than 30 years, they are just now becoming attainable. In 2004 a key patent for 3-D printers expired and in 2009 and 2010, additional patents also expired resulting the creation of more affordable versions. Originally costing upwards of \$20,000, 3-D printers and the filament costs have dropped as low as \$4,500, but it is still an expensive purchase (Leahy, 2015).

Intellectual property issues and copyright concerns as well as patent, design patent, and

trade secrets need to be considered when creating guidelines for use of this new technology. As this technology grows, so does the potential for producing dangerous products (“Progress in the making,” 2014). Other concerns are: maintenance, training of library staff, economic considerations, content being printed, public policy considerations, and legal ramifications (Millsaps, 2015).

E-Books and E-Readers. Reading is changing and reading formats are also evolving. Avenues are opening to bring reading to even more people. As always, librarians strive to find the right book for every reader, but now librarians must also find the right format to entice readers. Several libraries have encompassed the use of e-books and e-readers in their continual pursuit to promote reading, stay current with client requests, and address needs of all readers. Some institutes loan e-books to be used on patrons’ personal devices, and some have even made e-readers available for patrons to take home. E-Books are defined as a book-length publication in a digital format that consists of text and images and are published through and read on computers or other electronic devices. Readers need access to a computer, cell phone, or an e-reader to access and read e-books, magazines, and newspapers in the electronic format. E-Readers are defined as a device for reading content, such as e-books, newspapers and documents. Standalone e-readers often have wireless connectivity for downloading content and conducting other Web-based tasks (Doiron, 2011).

As rapid access to information evolves, many publishers are now releasing their new titles in both traditional and digital formats. This is in response from demands by patrons and the growing attraction to e-readers. Some titles are exclusively released in digital formats (Doiron, 2011). As of 2012 patrons requested e-books more than music or video sources (Greenfield, 2012). That same year, 12% of Americans 16 years or older reported having borrowed and read

an e-book from a library (Zickuhr, 2012). While this shows great demand, some publishers are still reluctant to invest in e-book production claiming that e-book readers prefer to buy their own e-books rather than visit the library to obtain one (Greenfield, 2012). This is a true threat as Zickuhr (2012) found that of those patrons attempted to obtain e-books, many found obstacles. Many found the library did not carry their desired books, many encountered a long waiting list for their desired e-book, and others found that the e-book available was not compatible with their reading device.

In fact, many patrons are generally not aware that e-books are even an option at their libraries. Fifty-eight percent of patrons in a 2012 study reported that they were unaware that their library provided e-book lending services, and 48% of all owners of e-reading devices did not know their libraries offered e-book access (Zickuhr, 2012). According to Siracusa (2009) there are both pros and cons to offering e-books for lending. Advocates claim they are cheaper to produce, save trees, do not take up shelf space, can be updated easily, revisions take place instantly, and they contain many multi-media features that enrich the reading experience. They contain hyperlinks, audio and visual extensions, still and animated images, notation components, and quick references to help with understanding of the reading material. To say the least, they are lightweight, effortlessly portable, and easy to use (Pastore, 2008). Most notably, e-books are a valuable resource in accommodating students with special needs. Many e-readers offer text-to-speech enhancements and read along highlighting to enhance reading for students with a qualifying print or visual disability. Publishers also offer many titles in the high-interest/low reading level field and using an e-reader that masks the book title students can read at their level without stigma or social persecution (Harris, 2012).

Disadvantages of e-books would include the size and quality of the screen, the contingent

of readers who prefer holding the book rather than the device, the challenges of any electronic device such as battery life, recharging time, etc., and the lack of uniformity between e-readers (Siracusa, 2009).

When implementing an e-book or e-reader component to the library, there are many factors to consider. Cost is of utmost concern. While with their popularity the cost of e-readers is coming down; there are still other monetary components to consider. Not only does the device need to be purchased, but a case must be provided to increase its longevity, a protection plan must be purchased because to the extensive use it will endure with many patrons, and of course, there must be room in the budget for purchasing numerous e-books. In a school setting permission from parents is a concern, and the school must decide if the e-readers will be used in a school-only setting or will they be taken home (Jonker, 2012). For these reasons and others, many libraries and schools have adopted a BYOD (bring your own device) option as an alternative to the 1:1 schools that provided a device to every student. Network access can be filtered, but some devices use personal data that can bypass any filter in place. Schools with 1:1 programs have more control over how devices can be used, but implementing costs make this option invalid for many systems (Harris, 2012).

New Organization: Dewey Decimal vs. New Organizational Systems

The Dewey system is the most widely used system in the world. Over 200,000 libraries in 138 countries have used the system. However, a brewing dilemma in the library world is whether or not to change from the traditional Dewey Decimal organizational system to new, user-friendlier systems. Patrons often find the Dewey system to be intimidating even though it is often taught in elementary, middle, and high school settings. While this classification struggle has been around for years, it is one that has come to the forefront as some libraries have actually

switched to experiment with new systems. A small branch library in Arizona reclassified its nonfiction books in 2007 using the Book Industry Standards and Communications (BISAC) system and became the first to attempt a new system (Fister, 2010). The BISAC system is similar to bookstore displays arranged in simple categories like history, teen, home, and garden rather than arranged in a numerical order (“Visual Merchandising Guidelines,” 2013). Many librarians agree that the BISAC format is helpful in that it uses a simpler and user-friendlier language than the often-confusing Dewey system. The publisher determines BISAC categories and the responsibility often falls on the editor, who best knows the book. Subject heading, which are also used in the Dewey system, are also used. Unlike Dewey, however, the BISAC system codes are not known to the end-user allowing the patron to browse but allowing the staff to help patrons find specifics. Libraries switching to this method found that patrons were more at ease and were more self-sufficient and comfortable in the library. The end result was that the patron was more satisfied with the experience. Neither system is superior to the other, but if the focus is on the user’s experience, libraries that have switched to a BISAC or similar system reported that their patrons were very pleased and confident using the system.

Another system implemented in 2009 in Colorado is called WordThink. WordThink is BISAC-based with a few modifications. Each book is labeled above the spine label with a word for its category—art, antiques, etc. and each also has a narrower term. For instance, a book was labeled Art/drawing and located in the Art section (Fister, 2010). The system was developed to encourage patrons to be more independent and empower them in their searching endeavors.

When looking for books on crafts, in the Dewey system, paper crafts are located in the 735 while sewing books are found in 646. Cooking and Pets are in technology and gardening and sports are in the arts section of Dewey classifications. Even more confusing is that fairy and

folktales are located in the 300 section of nonfiction. Under the newer systems all craft items were located together in the “making it” section. This was one of the biggest reasons a growing number of school and public libraries are making the switch. Teachers reacted well to the change noting they can find things to use in their classes in a quick fashion because the libraries was now arranged as they teach, in units (Kaplan, 2012).

To maintain or discontinue Dewey is a much-debated topic, even with some libraries already successfully piloting new systems. Those for maintaining the Dewey Decimal System argued that the system could sort large collections into more specific group and provide rich layers of access. Dewey was more in depth than BISAC-based systems. Some librarians claimed deserting the Dewey Decimal System added to the “dumbing down of society (Fister, 2010).”

Many librarians, however, have long seen the need for a change. Elementary librarians have successfully argued the point that it was hard to teach a decimal-based system when students don’t even learn the concept of decimals until fourth grade. Furthermore, fiction and picture books are arranged by the author’s last name when younger students are interested in content over authors (Kaplan, 2012). Others argue that patrons had trouble understanding the online catalog, feel intimidated with the complex classification system, and preferred to go straight to the shelf and not have to look anything up. Dewey’s classification system pulled topics together that don’t always make sense to the patrons.

When making the decision to change or keep the Dewey Decimal System, the key factor has always been the patron. While many felt that Dewey didn’t translate well for patrons, many feel it shouldn’t be abandoned. The dilemma over this is far from decided (Fister, 2010).

New Collections: Specialized Collections

A fourth opportunity for transition would be for the library to provide community focus

by unique information such as community memories. Instead of only collecting documents, also preserve the memories of the experiences of the area. Agresta (2014) adds that futuristic library might be something of a community sanctuary where patrons are encouraged to lose awareness of their phones and constant messages, and instead of completing the multiples immediate tasks of today's lifestyle, patrons stop and concentrate on one thing. In the past that was a book, but today it could be any number of sources available at the library. Spinks (2015) envisions libraries becoming "vibrant and attractive community hubs" which will focus on the need to create digital literacy and digital fluency. The librarian will become a community impresario with digital expertise and the focus will be less on lending books and more on accessing e-books and other, newer media.

It is not disputed that technology has hurt the libraries, but it has also helped them keep pace on current trends. In 2013 a new library opened in San Antonio, Texas. Called the BiblioTech, it offers an all-digital, cloud-based collection of over 10,000 e-books. Patrons can even check out one of their 150 e-readers, 25 tablets, or 25 laptops. E-books are loaned for a period of 2 weeks, and when that time has expired, it simply disappears from the reader thus no need for late fees. If patrons own their own devices, there is no need to ever enter the library, but if one borrowed an e-reader or other device, it will deactivate if not returned on time, prompting them to renew or return it (Rock, 2013).

The Hunt Library located on the North Carolina State University campus is another example of an innovative library. The entrance looks more like at computer store than it does a traditional library, and is a place where patrons can get help on any technological problem they have. Color-coded walls lead to various offerings in the facility. Yes, there is a book section, but it is not the main focus as there are also media rooms, video game collections, and a 3-D

printing lab to create plastic models. Patrons are gathered around gadgets instead of the card catalogue, and food and coffee are readily available throughout the library. Rather than the silence rule of the past, there is a “just enough” noise-level allowed (Rock, 2013).

With the rise of these new conceptual libraries—some with no books—one might think that books are no longer desired. Coffman (2013) asked Amazon executive Jeff Bezos and discovered that when people buy a device they read 4 times as much as they did before, but they still are buying paper books. The need for hard copies of books will never die. There is just something about hold and experiencing a book that will never fade.

In many regards libraries are doing what they have traditionally done, adapting to new technologies. Whether it be storing documents, collecting books, managing records and videotapes, or offering e-books and computer terminals, libraries are always mindful of the information future. Books won't disappear, but with the addition of other media, they may no longer be the main focus of the library. Libraries need to find ways to access the overabundance of information in this digital age and become facilitators to help patrons access and sort through all that information (Rock, 2013).

In 2013, Miguel A. Figueroa was appointed as head of the Center for the Future of Libraries, an organization created by the ALA to provide help in this futuristic direction. The center strives to identify emerging trends in library services, to promote innovative techniques to help librarians transition to the new concept, and to build connections with experts and “innovative thinkers” to help libraries confront new issues (“Centers for the Future of Libraries,” 2015).

More than just vast rows of books, contemporary libraries are evolving into public spaces. The meaning of the library continues to evolve, with the addition of coffee spots, teen

spaces, and new types of media collections, the parts of the conceptual idea of the public library remains to expand. Lukanic (2015) sums it up best and ensures confidence in its future when he state, “Libraries are an essential place where, people, knowledge and research intersect to tackle our world’s greatest challenges.” Change is of course inevitable. Libraries have already made great advances from its days when books were chained to lecterns (Frey, 2006), but the surface has only been scratched and there are many more changes to come.

Role of the Librarian

If asked, most people would probably say that a librarian’s job involved stamping books. This is a common response as most people’s experiences with librarians have been on their frontline, checking out books. In fact handling books is only one small part of what librarians are required to do. Librarianship is a people profession where the librarian is called upon to connect people with information in various formats. They help people access and use information for education, school or pleasure. To become professionally qualified as a librarian, one must obtain a masters degree in librarianship or information science (Cragg, 2011). While anyone can obtain a library science degree, the field is obviously suited to those with a certain set of personality traits and natural skillsets. There are several core competencies that are needed to become a successful media specialist. Some are taught in efforts to obtain a library science degree, some are mastered on the job, and some are innate personality attributes.

According to Schliff (2013) one must possess the following basic personality traits and skills: a love of knowledge and learning, a desire to work around people, an obvious love of books, overall knowledge of the world, solid organizational skills, good with numbers, friendly, ethical, personable, tech savvy, and a basic affinity for working with large volumes of

information. While these are personality traits, other competencies are needed or can be learned and developed on the job. Librarians need to be team players and problem solvers as well as be able to juggle several tasks at one time. They must be able to promote reading, communicate well with staff and patrons of all types, speak effectively in front of groups, and present information clearly and in an interesting manner. The ability to use technology is now an essential component of the job. Librarians must have a vast knowledge of books, ability to archive and file information, maintain databases, evaluate sources, and have a strong ability to adapt to new tools, systems, and situations as they arise. This has always been a constantly evolving field.

Some of the unique competencies that library information science professionals need to possess are grouped into 10 basic skill areas. First, technical skills are essential in the 21st century. The ever-growing access to information is largely based on emerging technologies. Online media manipulation and the ability to troubleshoot new technologies are commonplace now. With the evolving technologies, it is also important to be able to easily learn new technologies and embrace them as they arise. Second, time-management skills are also important. Being able to address everyone's problem effectively and efficiently while still completing library maintenance is vital to staying approachable to patrons. Presentation skills also are needed to make the library welcoming, obtaining material for the library, and assisting patrons in their use of the library. Communication skills are vital as the librarian is the advocate for information hub, the library. Fifth, a librarian must now possess customer service skills. The librarian must strive to be aware of customer needs and continually design and improve programming to meet the needs of the community the library serves.

Sixth, a librarian must possess evaluation and assessment skills to avoid focusing on the needs of one group of patrons, to update services to new needs to bring programming up-to-date to meet current needs and to be abreast of new technologies. Managerial skills to not only manage the vast amounts of various information sources but to also manage the workers and volunteers in an efficient manner. Eighth and ninth, a librarian must have skills in the areas of policies, procedures issues and standards related to the institution where the library is located and also knowledge of the informational sources and services to be provided. The librarian must be the protector of the library information science guidelines and the institution guidelines and be an advocate for the library as well as defend information policies (copyright law). Finally, a librarian must have a commitment to life-long learning—a skill that encompasses all the others (Ahmad, 2009).

When studying the attributes for a librarian, one must also consider that there are various types of librarians. Types of librarians can be categorized by demographics: children's, youth, and adult librarians. They may also be categorized by their type of work: school, public, college, or special libraries. Even within the work category there are more divisions of types of specialized functions: acquisition librarians, reference librarians, special collections librarians, bibliography librarians, administrative librarians, and cataloging librarians ("What Are the Job Duties of a Librarian?").

Each has its own demands. For example, becoming a cataloging librarian requires a more specific set of attributes. Cataloging librarians work more with the books and the numbers than they do with patrons. Competence is of utmost importance as the tools needed to catalog are vast and detailed. One must be competent in 10 cataloging tools including MARC 21 formatting, Library of congress Subject Headings, Dewey Decimal Classification, Bibliographic formats,

and CONSER cataloging manuals to name a few. Accuracy is vital in the library world. Efficiency is in demand as well. It's important to have the current sources but more important to quickly get them cataloged and available to the patrons. Consistency is also extremely important. There are options within the cataloging process that must be consistent as not to confuse the patrons or make materials hard to locate. Being adaptable is needed as well. New sources present themselves, and new guidelines are created as the collection evolves.

In assigning subject headings and classification numbers, many issues arise causing ambiguity and require good judgment. As gray areas present themselves, a cataloging librarian should be able to exercise good judgment. Seventh, problem-solving skills based on logical reasoning are necessary. The remaining three attributes are commitment, research ability, and self-discipline (Sung, 2013).

Melvin Dewey, who founded the Columbia School of Library Economy in 1884, created one of the first job descriptions for librarians. In his description the librarian should be scholarly, cultured, and possess executive abilities. The librarian should always be in advance of the community and constantly be involved in improving education. The librarian should be a leader, a teacher, passionate, serious and intelligent. Librarians should be able to gain the confidence of the children, and guide them from good books to the best. The library should be a school for the young, a college for the adults, and a hub for intellectual activity. Librarians should be interested in reading and possess a fondness for books but not be such recluses as to not understand the ideas of those who know little of books (Murray, 2009).

Evolving Job Description

While much of that still holds true today, the present job description for a librarian is multifaceted and more detailed. Today, librarians find themselves providing a great deal of tech

support, both in providing hardware needs and mastering software and web intricacies in order to help patrons navigate through electronic information. They are often called upon to de-bug any glitch on any digital device (Zickuhr, 2012). Librarians have had to make a perspective shift from being library-centered to being information-centered. They have become manipulators of information in all forms rather than sources confined to the library building. They have become masters of the information overload available in present-day. It is important to select appropriate information, not just any information. As information access providers, librarians have become the organizers of electronic information providing patrons with preassessed, semiordered, and annotated sites upon inquiry. They have also taken on the role of research assistant by assisting in locating and obtaining publications owned and not owned by the library. It is the librarian's duty to know which additional sources are needed to make a search complete as possible. As a research assistant the librarian must also be able to assist patrons navigating through networked services such as distance support, printed or online manuals, and on-screen instructions. Librarians use both face-to-face and end-user training as a part of their daily duties.

Another new aspect of the librarian's job is becoming a collaborative system designer. In this aspect librarians are the liaison between the IT departments and the general public. The information overload results in the need for a liaison who specializes in retrieving information and guiding users to obtain that information in a simple, understandable format. Being a specialist in the Information Age makes librarians in more demand than ever ("The Role of Librarians in the Electronic Environment").

Specifically, a school librarian is no longer simply perceived as a person who checks-out and maintains the book collection. The role now has many new demands. As a leader the school librarian is challenged to create an environment of collaboration and creative problem-solving

flourish. The school librarian should be an enthusiastic communicator who fosters an environment of creativity, innovation, and openness to new ideas. The library should be a welcoming place where all ideas are encouraged and used to create a consensus. School librarians serve on decision-making teams in the school, take an active role in school improvement and accreditation activities, help implement school, state, and national program standards, and share expertise by presenting at faculty meetings, parent meetings, and school board meetings.

School librarians are now seen as instructional partners who work with teachers to strengthen connections between students' informational and research needs, curricular content, learning outcomes, and information resources. They participate in curriculum development at various levels and employ a wide range of literacy skills—including information, media, digital, visual, and technical literacy—to meet content standards and develop life-long learners. They collaborate with teachers to help design inquiry-based learning experiences and participate in implementation of said strategies. They join with teachers to plan and implement exciting and meaningful experiences designed to promote a love a reading, and they plan and provide professional development opportunities within the school and system at large.

As information specialist, the school librarian provides leadership and expertise in selection, acquisition, evaluation, and organization of information in various formats. As a teacher, the school librarian empowers pupils to become critical thinkers, fervent readers, adept researchers, and ethical users of information. And finally, as a program administrator, the school librarian works with members of the learning community define policies related to the library program as well as manages and supervises personnel, resources, and facilities. Above all, the

librarian strives for continuous improvement of all aspects or programing ("Sample job Description: School Librarian," 2010).

Change forces libraries to move forward. Libraries have always been in transition but not at the speed that the future now demands. Consider the amount of time it has taken libraries to move from librarian-lead online searching, to supervised end user searching, to CD-ROM searching, to present-day web-based searching. The new technologies of the future are now emerging at an even quicker pace and are constantly transforming both the library and the role of the librarian (Shank, 2011).

The printed page is becoming obsolete as Americans increasingly turn to digital screens for information and communication. With this in mind the role of the librarian is being re-branded as trusted navigators in an everexpanding sea of information in evergrowing forms of devices (Mullaney, 2013). Librarians in the future must be able to teach others the specialized skills they use daily. Collecting, organizing, preserving, and disseminating information are activities now required of patrons. In the coming age of information learners, librarians are more important than ever. In the 20th century knowing content was the key component of learning. In the 21st century, however, curation of that information has become the focus and both students and teachers need to be trained in these skills. Librarians often research and introduce patrons to new ways to use information. Examples of useful curation tools are Pinterest, PearlTrees, LiveBinders, Paper.Li, Posterous, ScoopIt, Storify, and Symbaloo.

A new priority for librarians is to help patrons stay informed on how to be a responsible digital citizen and have compassion for other in the digital world. Patrons need to be trained on how to publish their work in the real world with their real identity to build their digital footprint responsibly. Often younger patrons post anonymously but must be taught the value of these

concepts. For students this translates to authentic learning and the importance of intellectual property. Accountability is paramount when the public forum is used. Students learn the cost of having published work repurposed without permission rather than simply study the concept. Being taught how to license work under Creative Commons or another intellectual property licensing system is an essential skill for future adults in our society. Of course, students will make mistakes online, but with guidance librarians can help to rectify them and learn from them culminating in a gradual release of responsibility. In this manner librarians become key in helping patrons become accountable members of the digital society ("Five key roles for 21-century school librarians," 2010). Librarians must become well versed in both print and online tools in order to also help faculty members meet their goals regardless of the medium or the technology (Shank, 2011).

The future requires students and patrons to be creators and publishers of content in various forms including multimedia content. No longer are they required to produce predominately written essays. Publishing in a public forum rather than following a rubric fuels creativity and requires accountability. It also forces them to take ownership of their learning making it more relevant to them. Because librarians have always matched patrons to books, research questions to resources, and problems with tools to solve them, it is only natural that librarians would be the ones to support learners as they construct their own knowledge. With the massive variety to now produce information, from power points to multifaceted movies, on the ever-increasing types of technology, librarians have been transformed into masters of mobile technology.

Librarians of the future will be helpful in creating a culture of connectedness. The vast explosion of technology has made information easily obtainable and has connected the world.

Small communities of learners were once isolated to just their small towns, but in the future there will be a connected society of learners. Patrons will be able to form instructional partnerships with educators around the world. One example of how librarians use this concept is the observance of World Read Aloud Day where librarians and teachers regardless of their location geographically can work together to become a connected classroom. Other possibilities are joint blogs with different schools in different parts of the world, and virtual book clubs including patrons from various locations.

With the implementation of Common Core, the librarians' role in state testing, instructional mandates, and curricular requirements has become vital. The basis of Common Core has transformed learning to focusing on process, publishing for the real world, and engaging in discourse. Teaching students to also become curators of information, responsible digital citizens, creating unique forms of presentation, and connecting to a larger educational community—the focus of librarians of the future—make the Common Core method get for learners. It helps them see their learning as authentic and relevant ("Five key roles for 21-century school librarians," 2012). In the future, librarians should be integral, educational partners and catalysts for students' knowledge enrichment as well as intellectual inquiry guides (Shank, 2011).

Learning in general has made a tremendous shift. Gone are the days where knowledge is the focus. The focus of the future is on becoming knowledge-able which means being able to search, locate, sort, analyze, criticize and eventually create new information and knowledge ("Five key roles for 21-century school librarians," 2012).

Librarians of the future not only need to rethink their job duties, they also need to rethink their library space. In the future libraries will look very different. Instead of rows upon rows of

bookshelves, there will be more creative uses of the space. New libraries and renovations will show areas devoid of divider walls and massive amounts of open space. There will be more areas comprised of couches and cushy chairs and vast room to lounge and read or work with devices. Many are adopting living room spaces complete with plush chairs and fireplaces.

In areas where books are located, they too will look very different. Libraries have begun to experiment with a “grocery store” model where books are divided by categories and shelved with covers showing rather than spines. Early prototypes of this model have been favorably received. Patrons claim that finding books when they are arranged in categories—cookbooks, health, jobs, trending—they are much easier to find. Using the Dewey Decimal System will become cumbersome and out-of-date. Building designs will also begin to look different. New models are making use of energy efficient ideas such as green roof.

In parts of the country where new buildings are not possible, renovations will involve making new uses of eliminated spaces. Reference books and magazines are moving toward digital formats exclusively, and those spaces are being used in new ways. Some have opted for digital studios initially to entice young patrons who are digitally savvy by nature, but have become popular with adults as well. Adults and companies use them to convert old photographs or records to digital formats, create podcasts, or even create marketing videos. Similarly, many libraries of the future will focus on tech-rich teen spaces. These will come in the form of large rooms designated for teenage use where teens can study in groups, play video games or design products with a 3-D printer. Libraries that have piloted such programs report that the spaces are packed every afternoon following school (Mullaney, 2013).

Are Libraries Necessary?

Finally, there is an on-going debate about the whether or not libraries are necessary. In the digital age, when information is easily accessible and increasingly available online, one might think that libraries and librarians are no longer needed. Most findings report that this is not the case. Information online is often laborious and many times of a dubious origin. There is still more information available but it is located behind a paywall that most individuals cannot afford to maintain. Many patrons visit the library because they simply cannot find valuable information using the search engines available through free avenues. In truth, the internet has added to the wide range of services libraries provide. Librarians provide training on using the internet, evaluating sources, staying safe online, and using social media sites and online collaboration tools (Cragg, 2011). Libraries of the future a place where patrons come to relax, read, get advice, access powerful devices, edit videos, music, and print in 3-D. It should be a learning space where patrons have an equal chance to use devices and access information.

Some feel libraries will become extinct in the near future. If libraries continue to only contain books and tables, they will become obsolete (Hrannar, 2014). Barseghian (2011) predicts that books will be obsolete in 10 years time. All books will digital and even those who like the feel of an actual book, they will no longer remember what it's like to touch a book or visit a library. Many, however, dispute this notion by referring to similar cries of panic from society. The invention of the TV was supposed to be the demise of the radio. Movie theaters thrive and film is quite popular even after the debut of videos. After the introduction of email and smart phone technologies such as texting and various other communication apps, people still can be found talking on their phones. Using these arguments, the demise of paper books seems unlikely ("Are Librarians Totally Obsolete," 2015).

Adding further proof that libraries are necessary is that they continue to evolve and are emerging as a digital library concept. These are libraries that provide information and services in digital formats. This library concept has unique characteristics that differ from traditional libraries. The main purpose remains the same as traditional libraries: to organize, distribute, and preserve information. Digital librarians, however, are called upon to add to their traditional library skills and knowledge. They are also expected to seek additional knowledge and skills within the digital world. They must augment what they have learned in their standard training, and all this is needed in a time when there is a shortage of library staff and funding. Digital librarians reported that their additional job responsibilities included creating digital initiatives and assisting in digital projects, knowing technical standards and practices, understanding and manipulating digital design, development and implementation of digital programs, maintaining digital preservation, and understanding electronic framework (Choi, 2006). Future media specialist students be taught to embrace change, work well with vagueness and obscurity, be willing to learn new skills at any given time, focus on the needs of progressively varied communities, meet people where they are and get them to where they need to be, be able to communicate and push toward a vision, and lead (Bertol, 2015).

Perhaps the best argument that libraries are indeed necessary is that they encourage new reading, foster book groups, and promote communities of readers. Without libraries, publishers will discover that there are fewer readers for their titles. The same principle transcends to other sources now available. Encouraging reading, offering access to information, and anchoring the community as vibrant and multipurpose community centers are the three core missions that the library has and will always continue to maintain through many evolutions (Vinjamuri, 2013).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research design employed in this study and to detail the specific methods and procedures used to investigate perceptions of library media specialists as to the past, present, and projected future of library services available in the Johnson City private and public sectors. Qualitative research was founded on a constructivist philosophy that is focused on accepting social phenomena from the participants' perspective (McMilian & Schumacher, 2006). The researcher then analyzes the participants' perspectives to determine what they consider real and thus what guides their actions, reflections, and feelings.

Design of the Study

Qualitative analysis was used to determine participants' perceptions of the library's past, present, and future and the role of the media specialists in those three eras. This type of analysis uses three common techniques: interview, observation, and document analysis (Merriam, 1998). For this research study media specialists in the Johnson City area were interviewed in a one-to-one situation and documentation of the media centers procedures and services were analyzed. All interviews were digitally recorded to ensure accuracy. A third party transcribed these recordings. All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study included the examination of the changing roles of both the libraries available in the Johnson City area and the librarians who work within them. This study included an examination of the various programs offered and the perceived roll of the media

specialists working in the Johnson City area as well as projections for the future of both. Data regarding the perceptions of media specialists were collected through interviews that were designed to answer the research questions.

Research Questions

This study included an examination of the evolution of the services available in both the school and public library media centers in the Johnson City, TN area, as well as the evolving role of the media specialist. The study compared the past, present, and projected roles of both the media center and the media specialist.

Research questions used to guide the study included:

1. How do librarians and media specialists perceive the library media center?
2. How do librarians and media specialists perceive their role in the library media center?
3. How will libraries and librarians change in the near future?

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze how library services and librarians' roles have evolved over the years and, more importantly, to understand what those roles will entail in the future. The vast amount of information that is readily available and the rate of technology changes accelerating at alarming rates make the way people use information ever evolving. Historically, the library has been the place to go to understand and sift through information. The findings of this study may have value by extension for preK-12th grade education, school

personnel, university personnel, as well as community, state, and federal implications in both the school and public sector.

Ethical Protocol

The initial consideration for ethical review is to assure that the researcher was following appropriate research procedures that maintain the safety of human subjects while obtaining truthful data for analysis. Permission for interviews were granted by the Director of Schools and the administrative supervisor in charge of the elementary, middle, and high schools as well as individual permissions were obtained from each building principal. Permission forms from public community librarians were obtained on an individual basis only. The identity of the participants was protected by the use of pseudonyms. It was impossible to protect the names of the people to be interviewed because they are public figures within the Johnson City community and the Johnson City school system; however, rather than trying to maintain confidentiality, information shared was publically important. Because the participants are public figures, statements could become known. However, because the participants are public figures, they work in that realm and understand that they have a public voice. Additional considerations involved timing of the interviews, place of interviews, and signing of informed consent.

Before the data collection began, the study was defined and submitted for authorization from the East Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board to ensure all participants were protected. The ethical considerations for the document review followed standard writing ethical guidelines including the use of accurate citation, and direct quotations.

Data Sources

This section of Chapter 3 provides a description of the design and methods to conduct the investigation into the perceptions of how professional librarians perceive their roles in the past, present, and future. Qualitative research uses rich and descriptive language to help gain meaning and understanding. There are five characteristics of a qualitative study. First, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed. Second, in qualitative research the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Third, qualitative research usually involves fieldwork. Fourth, qualitative research primarily employs an inductive research strategy. Finally, the final product of qualitative research is richly descriptive (Merriam, 1998).

Also according to Merriam (1998) purposeful sampling is based on the postulation that the researcher wishes to discover, understand, and gain insight. To this end the researcher must select a sample from which this can be learned (pg.61). Because this case study was specific to those working in a media specialist position in a specific area, Johnson City, TN, a purposeful sample was used when gathering data (Patton, 1990).

The first criterion in choosing participants for this qualitative study was that all of the participants had to be employed as librarians or media specialists. All participants were also employed in a Johnson City, TN library or media center.

The researcher submitted the request and received approval from the East Tennessee State University Internal Review Board (IRB). The IRB is established to guarantee that none of the participants are harmed, that their privacy is protected, and that each member is provided with informed consent.

After obtaining permission from the Johnson City Schools Central Office, each school library media specialist was contacted via school email. An initial e-mail included a description of the study and a request for permission to set up more involved interviews. Next, a list was made of willing participants who met the criteria of this study. The researcher made phone calls, and direct the participants gave permission for follow-up interviews. This researcher attempted to use the semistructured approach that included a mix of more and less structured questions for the interview as outlined by Merriman (1998). An interview protocol (Appendix A) was used to conduct all interviews.

The interviews were conducted at the library of the participant or at a place of the participants' choosing. Choice of interview setting was important to make sure the participants felt as if they could be candid and that their privacy was protected. Efforts were made to schedule interviews at a convenient time for each participant. These meetings were tape recorded and transcribed.

After a reply to the initial email asking for volunteers, an informed consent form was presented to each interviewee before the interview occurred. Care was taken to make sure each participant signed and understood the Informed Consent Form.

Document Review

Documents were used to determine past and present library policies of those involved in the study. The researcher examined the participating libraries' policy manuals and other documents related to the operation of the libraries.

Data Collection Procedures

A reflection guide was developed for the documentation of observations during the interview process. This document provided an avenue for the interviewer to record reflections of the interviewee responses immediately upon conclusion of the interview. It was an important step to ensure that observations were recorded quickly and accurately. Every attempt was made to accurately reflect what the interviewee was communicating. The use of follow-up questions enabled the researcher to ascertain more information and further examine what the interviewee was attempting to communicate. Finally, consideration was given to interview bias. Because the researcher is both a media specialist and employed in Johnson City and the Johnson City School System, an auditor was used to minimize personal bias. Researcher bias is a vital component to guard against. Preconceived ideas can affect research outcomes and Guba and Lincoln (1981) recognized this concern and examining ways the researcher could avoid it.

After obtaining authorization from the East Tennessee State University-Internal Review Board, Johnson City Schools, local building principals, and school and public librarians, each interviewee was contacted via email with a letter explaining the study. Personal interviews were conducted at a place of the interviewees choosing. To protect anonymity interview sites were chosen off school grounds when requested. An interview guide was used. In addition to the interview questions probes were used. Probes, which are skillfully asked additional questions designed to gain further insight, were used for clarification (Merriam, 1998).

Two Johnson City employees, library assistants, were used to pretest the questions. This was conducted to screen for awkwardly worded questions and to establish a protocol for the interview procedure. These assistants agreed to participate in a mock interview to aide the researcher in the process of refining questioning and interviewing techniques. The results of the

mock interviews were not included in this study. An auditor was used for the verification of the material transcribed. All collected materials are secured in a locked, fireproof box in the researcher's home.

Data Analysis

The constant comparative method was used to analyze the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1997). Each set of questions was analyzed individually after the completion of every interview in order to identify developing themes and relationships that had emerged among the pieces of data. The data were coded into themes and categories to identify common characteristics. Coding was used to assign words to particular themes to identify various pieces of information. These themes were dominant throughout the research project (Merriam, 1998). As common themes were identified each interview was compared to all existing data to develop the conclusions presented in this research.

Validity and Reliability

A study conducted in an ethical manner increases the validity and the reliability of findings. Consumers of research want to know if the study is trustworthy. With careful design, a researcher can increase the validity and reliability of the study. According to Kemmis (1983), "What makes the case study work 'scientific' is the observer's critical presence in the context of occurrence of phenomena, observation, hypothesis-testing (by confrontation and disconfrontation), triangulation of participants' perceptions, interpretations and so on" (as cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 200).

There are several methods researchers use to ensure the results of a study are dependable. Triangulation, using multiple sources of data, multiple investigators, or multiple methods to

confirm findings, is one such method. As a result I included multiple sources of data (multiple interviews and documents review). In addition the use of an auditor can also ensure dependability. I hired an auditor to authenticate the transcriptions from the interviews, document reviews, and the findings of my study. Peer debriefing was also employed by having a dissertation committee review procedures and analyze findings. Member checking can also ensure validity and reliability. Member checking will be accomplished by sending each participant a copy of the transcript for verifying the accuracy of their statements, and making any changes or additions they deem appropriate.

Finally, Firestone (1987) noted that the trustworthiness of a qualitative study as affording the reader with "a depiction in enough detail to show that the author's conclusions 'make sense'" (as cited in Merriam, 1998, p. 199). I retained a colleague as an auditor to examine the findings as they emerged from the data. Conducting an open dialogue about the data aided me in constructing the theoretical framework for this study.

Summary

“The analysis of qualitative data can range from organizing a narrative description of the phenomenon, to constructing categories or themes that cut across the data, to building theory” (Merriam, 1998, p. 196). In pursuit of understanding of how professional librarians perceive their roles in the future, I triangulated data collected from librarians' interviews and analysis of library documents in search of data linked to the phenomenon. I employed ethical protocols using the guidelines and standards of the ETSU- IRB.

I used an educational case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of professional librarians' perceptions of their future roles and the future of the library as an institution.

Interviews and documents were hand coded to identify emerging themes from the data. I addressed validity and reliability using an auditor, triangulation, multisite design, and purposeful sampling.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study included an examination of the evolution of library media center services in the Johnson City, TN area, as well as the evolving role of the media specialist. It included a comparison of the past, present, and projected roles of both the media center and the media specialist as perceived by professional librarians. Data were collected through interviews of seven Johnson City employees serving in the role of either librarian, director of a library, or supervisor of librarians. Purposeful sampling was used by selecting both school and public librarians in the Johnson City area used. Interviews of librarians serving in school settings included professionals from elementary, middle, high, and collegiate levels. Although a script was used, follow-up questions were used to probe further meaning. The research examined the perceptions of Johnson City area librarians about the past, present, and future projections of the role of the library and the librarian related to the following questions:

1. How do librarians and media specialists perceive the library media center?
2. How do librarians and media specialists perceive their role in the library media center?
3. How will libraries and librarians change in the near future?

The focus of the data analysis was to see if themes emerged as to the evolving role of the librarian and the library as an institution and to ascertain suggestions as their role and the library itself progresses.

Each of the seven participants fit one of the following criteria: (a) a library media specialist working in a Johnson City library or (b) a supervisor of librarians or a director of a library in the Johnson City area.

All participants were cordial and cooperative as the interviewer set up face-to-face interviews. Each interview lasted from 45 to 60 minutes. Participation was voluntary and before the interviews began, the Informed Consent process was explained in detail and signed by each participant. All interviews were taped and participants were assigned codes to protect identities. After each interview tapes were transcribed verbatim and reviewed by the interview subjects to verify authenticity. Librarians were chosen from the school and public sectors. The school libraries in Johnson City proportionately outnumber the public library sector and participants were chosen with that proportionate in mind. Furthermore, the school sector librarians represent all levels of libraries available in the Johnson City area—elementary, middle, high school, and collegiate libraries. The seven interviewees were identified for the purpose of these findings as follows:

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Field</u>
Jan	Public sector
Mark	Public sector
Peg	School sector
Tim	School sector
Ann	School sector
Sue	School sector
Pat	School sector

Themes

Six themes were identified as being aspects of concern as the library evolves into the future. These themes were: (a) role of the librarian, (b) the library as an institution, (c) collection development, (d) obstacles, (e) future projections, and (f) will the library become obsolete.

Role of the Librarian

One of the most prevalent themes that emerged from the interview was the role of the librarian and how it has changed over the years and could change in the future. Many stated that their role is multi-faceted, but as time has progressed and technology has become so prevalent, their roles have expanded and become more demanding.

Past

Mark, a representative of the public sector, noted that the libraries of today offer many different kinds of sources and that varies greatly from the libraries of the past. He stated:

“ . . . attitudes of the librarians in the early 20th century were that they only wanted the classics, the best literature, and not junk fiction.”

Tim, a seasoned member of the school sector, recalled the role of the librarian at the beginning of his career as:

When I was an English teacher coming down and spending 3 days in the library doing research, our media specialist helped us locate information. Now we use our media specialist as a facilitator of that information and filtering the information for us as to what is high quality and what's not high quality.

Pat, another school sector librarian with several years of experience, recalled that though technology has made access to knowledge quicker, it also poses more issues:

“Back in the days of the card catalogs and no electronic resources we were limited. Now it's gotten easier in a way, but so much more difficult in another way.”

The shift in the profession as moved toward one of instruction and training. Mark, a public sector librarian, stated:

Librarians are more needed as instructors and less a gatekeepers. Librarians are often who people in the community turn to try to negotiate technology they don't understand, or in some cases, just to access technology they don't have. It's no longer just answering a question for someone, it's teaching them concepts of how to use some of this technology. Now we have to train people how to use resources.

Present

A common theme from the interviews was the present day perception of the role of the librarian. There is a divide in that some adult patrons still hold to the idea of the librarians of the past. They perceive the librarian in the role they experienced when they were in school or at the public library in their childhood. This misconception is that librarians simply check out books all day, their job is easy, and they are not really teachers anymore. Tim, a veteran member of the school sector, clears up this misperception by saying:

I've grown in my appreciation for what library media specialist do, because librarians wear so many hats, and are not often viewed sometimes a teacher per say. But without a doubt because they do deal with so many different areas, so many different ages of students, probably, I think one of the lead teachers of the building because PE, music, art, and other related arts areas do a phenomenal job, but they do not have to manage anywhere near the budget or the resources the library media centers manage.

Mark went on to clarify what he saw as three roles of the present librarian:

At first it was more about materials and it has now transitioned into three major pieces. One is still the materials acquisition. The second one is being a leader in supporting teachers in implementing of the curriculum. The third one is that technology role. I really see a 21st century media specialist as being one of our technology leaders.

As the librarian's role has grown to include knowledge of technology trends, many of the interviewees noted the importance of that technological role. Pat, a librarians with 12 years experience, stated:

The use of technology and especial responsible use of technology, cautious use of technology needs to be one of our primary purposes because that's also something kids need to learn. Discriminating use of technology so they know what to believe and what not to believe and how to keep themselves out of trouble.

Another way technology has changed the librarians' role is that large quantities of print resources are now available in digital formats. Databases can be purchased much cheaper than numerous volumes of the print format. The shift has been to now see the media specialist as the one who holds the key to insuring that teachers, students, and community members know how to access high quality information and in a very timely way. Pat, a school sector librarian, explained how that transition has occurred by noting:

When I started out, we used print indexes. They could be very specialized but they were still print. It was a very labor-intensive process to find what you need or to help people find what they need. That has certainly changed and I think, like I said, it's a little bit more self-service for people today. They think they can do it. Back then, I think it took so long, just to be able to find what you needed, in many cases, that I'm not sure we were so concerned about the resources because most of the resources were valid resources.

In the school sector the focus has always been with the curriculum in mind. As the curriculum changes so does the need for resources in the library. Sue, a school sector librarian, noted:

“My role changes as the education in Tennessee changes, if the standards change. I just roll with the punches as the standards change and the state changes and the school expectations change, the library changes.”

With that in mind, many school librarians have been asked to carry a full class load in addition to their librarian roles. Several interviewees noted that having several classes makes it hard to not only complete the administrative (running the library) tasks that they have always have but leaves little time to provide the emerging new instructional and collaborative opportunities. This was a concern of many of the librarians. Ann said that she was overwhelmed because of her class load, and Sue explained that her focus as directed by her principal was teaching. Ann also expressed the overwhelming feeling of the growing responsibilities by saying:

. . .then at the end of the day I would frantically try to order some books or straighten up the library or process some things. I’ve always got a million different things going on. I teach a related arts class. That’s one role. Another is the administrator of the library from ordering books and weeding books and keeping the library neat as possible and organize and supervising volunteers and supervising my assistant. I am working constantly with the teachers. I’m here for the students; I’m here for the teachers. I’m the actual librarian with the books and those duties and then I’m also teaching classes. I don’t know what my role is. It’s all those things.

Future

The future role of the librarian or media specialist is uncertain, and the interviewees have varied opinions on what that would be. Some looked forward to the future with excitement and others with trepidation. Tim expressed enthusiasm and speculated that librarians have evolved

from being managers of the material into managers of information. He compared them to the heartbeat of the school but also noted that some things have to change as this evolution takes place. He warned:

Librarians get hung up on the punitive pieces of running a media center such as a student not having 15 cents to print a copy or limited copies or having access to materials. So I really have tried to emphasize that that we're a service. I feel like a media center's role is to serve the teachers and the students in the building and not having it be a punitive place where they come and there is a lot of do and do not rules, but there are just general expectations of being a learner when you come to this space.

The perception of what a librarian does has definitely changed and will continue to do so.

Peg, a school sector librarian of over 20 years, explained her role in the future and noted:

There are many positions that are brand new, so I'm not sure there's a traditional librarian anymore. And I think it's actually changing. I think generations are changing in the way that they look at finding things or how they expect to be taught to find things. Our job is to connect patrons to resources. Those resources could be library sources. Sometimes they're not. Sometimes they're sources outside of the realm of the library. They could be Internet resources. They could be books. They could be electronic resources, but our job is to do whatever we can to facilitate the patrons, their teaching and their research. We assist in showing their students how to find resources they need. That's gotten sort of harder since everything is now electronic and so many times students just feel like, 'Let's just go find it on the Internet,' and it's there. They can just Google it. There's no question about it. The question is, do they know enough to evaluate it once they look at it and say, 'I want to use this in my paper, is this really okay to use?' They really need to

become knowledgeable consumers of information. They need to understand what they're looking for and what they get and to be able to evaluate it. Our job has become not so much connecting them with information, we still do that, but also teaching them how to use it in a proper way.

Library as an Institution

Another reoccurring theme was that of the library itself. Participants expressed several views about the evolution of the library from the past to the present and even made predictions for the future of the institution within the community it serves. Most were more eager to discuss the present and future state of the library. The past history of how libraries have operated is common knowledge, but as Peg, a librarian in an educational setting, noted that there is a need to educate the community about the new present-day library. Peg stated:

I think that people often are unaware of what the library has to offer and so I think our biggest issue moving forward is promotion. I think maybe some people still have a concept of the library as simply the place where all the stuff is and don't think so much about the services that go along with that. That could be really helpful to students and faculty if they were aware of them or if they took advantage of them. I think that's a problem for us. I think faculty may not know what the library can offer for them, so they don't tell their students. I think that is a real problem that we have to address.

Peg also explained that because the faculty no longer has to come to the library to get all their resources to teach a lesson—journals, maps, books, etc.—they are not invested in the library like they have been in previous years. They are not often aware of the new media libraries have acquired because they are relying on the memories of what the library always had

and the role it played. The entire concept of a library has changed. Tim, a library proponent, explained part of the new concept of libraries as “a central place where people should gather.” It should be open and welcoming and transitioning from the old days of the place where one goes to be quiet. It’s no longer the place where one goes to read silently and use the drawers of the card catalogue to search for a book. Tim further explained, “Students need to feel like this is a place to come if they want to be a learner.”

Future

The future role of the library encompasses many things. Interviews indicated that it would continue to be a curriculum support, especially in the areas of language arts and social studies. In the school setting these standards have been revised and updated along with science standards starting in Tennessee in the 2017-2018 school year. There was a movement to include a strong literacy component in all other disciplines. Libraries are well poised to support teachers in finding primary resources, in selecting fiction and nonfiction selections that they can read with their students and work through some in-depth writing projects. Tim, a veteran school sector library leader, stated:

I think that the perception of the library is being forced to change because our curriculum has changed. We are really emphasizing literacy and reading at a much higher level than we ever have in the past. So we cannot continue down that road in individual classroom without also complimenting with a very strong library media center.

Space

As interviews were completed and interviewees speculated on the future of their libraries, a common thread emerged. The need to repurpose the space within the library setting was often expressed. As databases and digit resources for print materials become more commonplace,

there is a diminished need for shelf space. As technology natives become patrons, it has been recognized that they learn in different ways. Peg noted that study carrels were no longer a piece of standard library furniture, and that students wanted to be able to study in groups. Study sessions were not always quiet either. Peg further noted:

That's a real challenge. How do you still keep the collection but somehow reorganize the space to make sure there's room for everybody who needs to work in here in different ways. Some people like to work in groups; some people like to work by themselves. How do you accommodate all the needs? We've been doing a lot of transformation of space.

Mark added:

"I feel kind of limited by our building because we'd like to have even more of a dedicated teen space, a space just for teenagers. We have that but it's connected to the children's area. Best practices suggests that it's better off not."

Tim expressed that one of the great things libraries have to offer is space. "Space for collaborative work time with student groups, researching and working and creating."

Pat stated:

One thing I'd like to strengthen is the environment. I would like the library to have a warmer environment with casual furniture that students could sit and relax and read in a comfy chair and things like that. We have space for testing, but we need space for students to relax.

Peg added:

"We have silent study, but we also have a room that's our active learning area.

It's filled with movable tables, moveable chairs, white boards, and whatever, and people are there all the time. We have group studies on every floor.”

Tim stated:

I'm very much about the kiosk type of library, if we could start moving toward that way. Where students are standing a lot, using an iPad at a digital station to access information, loading it up to their digital account. I'm also very passionate about making sure the media centers view themselves as a place where kids are welcomed before school and after school.

Community

A final aspect that materialized when interviewing participants about their projections of the future of the library as an institution was the fact that it was an essential part of the community. Jan, a public librarian, made that point apparent when she noted:

We have a lot of people that come here trying to decide whether to move to Johnson City or not. You'd be amazed at how many people will stop in and say, 'We just wanted to see the library to see what was here before we decided to move.'

Peg added:

“We try to make the library part of our community's everyday life.”

Mark, a public librarian, explained:

I think it's important that the community have a space like the library to have common community conversations. Libraries can have collections that are relevant to the community. Our Tennessee room, there's a lot of local history there, so it's important to have resources like that available so the community and stay in touch with its roots. I've

been involved in city leadership where we've discussed the library being a crisis center if needed. The library may be a resource hub like that.

Jan summed up the community need when she noted:

“When you come here, it's nice to just curl up and read. You don't have all the distractions of home. If you bring your child here, it's the experience in itself.”

Collection Development

The third theme that emerged when analyzing how libraries and librarians have changed from the past to the present and how they will change moving forward was collection development. As times have changed, the items the librarian purchases for use in the library have also changed. Graphic novels, DVDs, and newer types of sources have become staples in library collections. Mark stated:

“DVDs have really gained momentum and been widely accepted in libraries, and we've seen DVDs and video collections come into prominence at the same time that video stores have failed.”

Obsolete Materials

Before new sources can be added to a collection, outdated sources must be discarded. Many items that were useful in the past are now obsolete as technology has advanced beyond their use. Items such as record players, cassette tapes, and other archaic devices are not seen as valuable items to keep. When asked about what items of the collection might now be obsolete or a part of the past, participants gave the following items.

Tim stated:

“Encyclopedias. Any type of funding that we are using to purchase very expensive static information should be changed. We need to transition away from the purchase of block of knowledge that we can access for free and very cheaply in a digital environment.”

Jan added:

“Magazines I think are one. We cut back every year with those because there’s so many that are online now. People don’t use them as much as they used to. We are exploring digital magazines subscriptions.”

Ann noted:

“We use iPods and occasionally CD players, but we obviously don’t have VCRs anymore. We are not buying VCRs.”

Mark stated:

We’ve seen a lot of print reference dictionaries disappear from the collection. They used to be a huge thing that have just gone away because it just doesn’t make sense to have big, gigantic ‘kill a forest to print a directory’ and it’s obsolete as soon as it’s printed. You can go online and probably get better information that is more current.

Sue added:

“The reference section. Most of those items never get touched. I could see the reference, the encyclopedias, the dictionaries, thesauruses, special collection items, and things like that. They’re practically obsolete now. Most are covered in dust.”

Makerspaces

The concept of a makerspace began in the last few years and is just starting to become a part of Johnson City libraries. The Makerspace is a place where students can use a variety of

materials to work in a hands-on to create things. Tim described it as a corner of the library set aside for active creation, and it's an idea that interviewees want to explore.

Ann, a school librarian, has started such a makerspace and noted:

When I'm not meeting individually with a student, they can be in the makerspace doing a math game, a geography game on the computer, an art activity or creating something with the materials there and that's using their time wisely so they are not just standing in a line waiting to check out books.

Pat added:

I'm reading a lot of stuff about libraries, particularly public libraries, but also some school libraries getting into some of what they call the makerspace, where they're doing things with 3D printing and other creative things too. I think some of that whether it's going to continue or whether it's a trend, it's too early to tell. There is more of a hands-on approach to learning that may translate into more library hands-on materials.

Graphic Novels

Once regarded as not worthy of being available in a library collection in their comic book form, graphic novels have become one of the most popular items to obtain through the library.

Jan, from the public library noted, "Graphic novels circulate more than anything else as far as the whole collection goes."

Pat, a school librarian, added:

"Our most popular item, bar none, is graphic novels. Graphic novels get a lot of kids who would probably never come to the library to come in. that's what brings them in."

Mark, a public librarian, noted:

We've got graphic novels in the library originally, squarely aiming that at the teen audience, knowing that teenagers, if they stop coming to the library, then there's a high likelihood that they might not come back. So trying to keep a collection that was relevant to them, that was so wildly successful that we couldn't keep the adults out of it. We couldn't keep the kids out of it. Here, today after I think we launched that collection in 2004, we have a juvenile graphic novel collection, a teen graphic novel collection, and an adult graphic novel collection.

Music

While most people may search for their own music, it can also be obtained at the library. Most libraries offer CDs as a part of the collection, but that is evolving into a new medium as well. Mark expressed that the CD is a dying format, but also noted:

The music circulates very well here. Of course, we have been providing Freegal music service for two or three years and that is a real unique thing, sometimes controversial in library world because library card holders are able to go onto the Freegal database, log in with their Johnson City Public Library card, and now it's up to 9 million songs. It's all of the Sony Music library and a bunch of other record labels, all kinds of genres of music, and they can download three songs a week. Your counter resets every Monday and you can download another three and just, you know, every week. You can grab three songs. You can grab albums that way.

Gaming

Slower to evolve is the use of video games in the library or in the educational setting. While becoming perceived as beneficial, it is hard to convince others of its value and how it

relates to the library collection. Mark from the public library where he just hired a gaming consultant explained it well when he said:

It's big with teens. That is another way of experiencing a story. You get in a video game and you can be a player in the story, and you'll go through a story that way. There's a lot to that and I have someone on staff now that's a gamer and he can help us with that.

E-Books and E-Readers

While print books are most prevalent in libraries, there has been a surge of e-reader usage that makes it plausible that libraries should offer e-books and e-readers for check out. The Johnson City public library has a dozen e-readers available for check out, but interviewing revealed that they do not get circulated often. It was also revealed that many people have their own electronic reading devices and want to download their own book. As with other new materials, there is a bit of trial and error in knowing how to best promote and best circulate the materials.

Mark stated:

Of course, I mean, I think books are still a brand of the library, and I'm not forecasting that books are going to go away. I think that we're starting to see e-books settle into the landscape of another format that some people prefer and some people don't. From what I see, the majority still does not prefer, but the ones that like it- and that's a sizable chunk of people- they really like it. We're amping up our e-book collection, and we're going to be putting more resources and devoting more collection development to that, but I think that the library being a physical place that actually has books and other collections will continue. I think there's a human element of being in a place and browsing these

collections and interacting with other people with these collections that we can't let go, and I don't think there's any desire on anybody's part to let that go away.

Books

Finally, the biggest part of any of the current Johnson City libraries was the printed book collections. While spaces, layouts, and collections will change as the library evolves, there will always be books.

Sue summed up what most interviewees stated:

“Maybe I’m in denial, but I don’t see these books going away any time soon.”

Mark added:

To me I mean, a book is still a book. That's why when we say book, we're about books, and it means all of that, including the traditional book, which still by far, checks out way more than the digital. The digital gets a lot of splash because it does require more attention and instruction from us but most of our business is still coming from the traditional. At the end of the day, does it really matter that much if someone read a book on large print format or if they read it on their Kindle or if they listened to an audio book while they drove to a work conference? They read a book.

Obstacles

As librarians push toward the future and transforming libraries to these modern places of activity with new technologies, they recognized that there would be obstacles to obtaining that goal. Obstacles noted in the interview process are numerous, and not easily resolved. Obstacles ascertained in this study are detailed below.

Commitment from Librarians

Moving to a new paradigm requires commitment from all present and future librarians. In order to make this movement sustainable, all those involved in the running and supporting of libraries need to be on board with the future vision of what libraries can become and must stay abreast of future trends.

Tim noted:

Ensuring that we have media specialist to buy into the vision of where the 21st century media specialist is going. The other piece is I think the culture that we build that the library is the hub of our learning, and that sort of goes back to number one about transitioning away from the keeper of the books and ‘Shh, you’ve got to be quiet or you are going to have to leave.’

Perception

The perception of the librarian and what his or her job encompasses needs to change as well. Librarians need to be valued for all the things they do and not just seen as another related arts person to simply cover academic teachers’ planning times.

Ann noted the obstacles she perceived as:

“The biggest obstacles would be managing the misconception that books are obsolete and the librarian’s job is easy and it is obsolete as well.”

Jan added:

“The perception needs to change. People thinking the library is not as necessary because they can get what they want at home or elsewhere. Where others may not have the financial means [to transition to the future model]. I think those are probably the biggest obstacles.”

Time and Personnel

With more librarians carrying full class loads while also expected to complete all the librarian duties of running a business, many saw time constraints and lack of adequate help as obstacles to moving toward the future vision of the 21st century library.

Pat stated:

With the high number of students, I know my class load will get larger. There doesn't seem to be the push to hire more related arts teachers so I have to cover it. We could do so much more ideally like work one-on-one with teachers, but it's very hard when you're only one person.

Ann also hoped for more opportunities for collaboration, but noted:

If I had more time in my schedule, the collaboration would be huge. I need to collaborate more with teachers as far as I need to sit down with them and have a meeting and say, 'Let's look at your next six weeks and let's make sure my instruction matches your instruction and we can work together.' When you don't have any flexible scheduling you can't do it.

Funding

Lack of or inadequate funding was an obstacle that 100% of the participants mentioned. Participants in this study received funding in many different ways—even between libraries in the same school system—the Johnson City schools. Some received money from the site-based budget and some did not. They had to rely on fundraisers and fine money. Many face small, diminishing budgets and ever-increasing technology purchases.

Peg stated:

The downside is that electronic sources cost more than print so electronic resources take up a good 80% of our collections budget, and that's a lot. We don't have enough money for the collections. We've had a flat budget for much longer than I've been here. You can imagine as resource prices go up 5%-10% a year and your budget stays flat, something's got to give.

Ann, who received one of the largest budgets in the school system, added:

"It's a little troubling because my budget hasn't increased in . . . in fact it's decreased since I started ten years ago, but the cost of books goes up every year, let alone technology, so I think that's the challenge that we face."

School libraries in Johnson City are funded differently. The individual school's principals make those decisions, and while some libraries receive a portion of the site-based budget, most do not. They are left to raise their own budget with fine money (upper grades only) and other fundraisers that are time-consuming but necessary to be able to make purchases for the year.

Sue explained:

The money I get is the book fair, fines, and fee money. What I can get for the library is very limited. The budget is an issue in the future as it is now. I just have to get what everybody needs with the money that we have. A school of 1,300 kids and it's expected to grow next year, trying to support that many kids with them I make at the book fair is difficult.

Finally, Ann expressed the funding concerns best when she noted:

I don't think that the library funding should be a site-based decision. I don't mean the amount, I mean the fact that a principal can decide whether to fund the library, or not

fund the library. I don't think that should be optional. I think that the libraries in Johnson City—if we are going to make it a priority—must be funded and funded adequately.

Otherwise how can you run a program with no money? It just doesn't make sense. You can't buy anything if you don't have any money. We can have our own fundraisers, we can do book fairs, but all that is very fluid. It changes from year to year. I think, maybe especially in Johnson City we need to know that what we do is a priority, and the way that you show that is our people spending money on it. If they're not, I think that's something that needs to change.

Future Projections

Participants agreed in their responses that the library will evolve digitally and it will be their job to help facilitate those changes. They must learn how assist that movement from print to digital recourses because if they do not, libraries could become obsolete. One noted that a he's seen libraries that converted a room into an audio-visual sound system room where patrons could check out the room and create a video or complete sound editing.

Mark speculated:

I think the library is needed now more than ever because it's more of a technology dependent world and so there's not as many ways to escape the necessity of knowing how to do some of those things. Libraries have to be open to some technology out there that doesn't exist yet that might be a game changer for everything. We'll just see where it takes us.

Peg added:

We have to be able to guide people toward what they need. I think our role now has changed much more in to an explainer of information and a facilitator of people getting what they want than just being the curator of that information and holding it in the library. We have to be able to find it for them no matter where it is or where they are for that matter.

Jan saw another facet of the future of the library as she noted:

It will still be promoting literacy and reading but I think with the programs that we do, we'll have more technology in those programs. I think it's going to be trying to find ways to get kids to come into the library just like we've done before, but we'll be using the technology more to get them here.

Finally, Ann expressed:

“The library is continually going to change, it cannot be stagnate or people will not continue to see this as a place that they need. “

Will the Library Become Obsolete?

The final theme assessed in this study was the participants' feelings on an idea trending in library circles today. Some feel that the library will eventually become obsolete and there will be no need to maintain the building, the collection, or the librarians who work there. That has been true in some areas of our country; libraries have become extinct or librarians have been replaced. Participants were definitely nervous about that possibility, but most were hopeful that the Johnson City community would not allow that to happen.

Jan noted:

No, I don't think that. There will always be a place that it's needed in the community. Even if it's all just Internet access, which I don't see that happening, but I do see some libraries are doing that. I think that they'll still be a place in the system for that in the community.

Sue agreed:

The kids still read paper books, regular books, and I don't know if that's going to change during my career span or not. I feel like the need for the school library is going to be there. The question is, will they keep funding it?

Tim stated:

I don't think the library will ever become obsolete. I think that it will have to continue to change to be relevant and useful. What we are asking teachers to do in the classroom is to become more of facilitators of students, accessing and processing and synthesizing information, rather than always delivering the information. That is what librarians are evolving to do as well.

Pat commented:

"No, it will not. It will change. It will adapt. They will continually adapt I feel to the change in time, but I think they're needed in schools and communities."

Peg added:

"It is still a vital part. People are really interesting in the library and they really do like to work here. So the library is not dead by any means, but it's just that it's changing."

And Ann summarized:

"It will never become obsolete, but I think a lot of that depends on me. I've got to evolve with the times."

Summary

Analysis of the data reveals that several strong themes emerged from these interviews. The role of the librarian has changed from the past and will evolve in the future, but the present emphasis is on instruction and collaboration. The library as an institution is a vital part of the community, but it will also undergo some changes in the future as it becomes more about using the space within the walls in different ways. The collection development process has evolved to embrace new media and technology types to better serve the way patrons learn and use information now and in the future. There are several obstacles that can stand in the way of this transition to a futuristic library concept. They include obstacles such as librarian commitment, understaffing, technology demands, and funding. Finally, librarians strongly agree that the library will not become obsolete in the future.

The Johnson City librarians strongly advocate for the library programs and see them as beneficial to the schools and the community. Findings are analyzed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECCOMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the evolution of the services available at both school and public library media centers in the Johnson City, TN area, as well as, the evolving role of the media specialist. This qualitative case study was conducted by interviewing seven Johnson City area librarians or supervisors of librarians who were chosen through purposeful sampling. An email was sent to the participants and respondents signed an Informed Consent Form (Appendix B) and an interview guide was used (Appendix A). Probes, an interviewing skill that allows the interviewer to inquire further following an interviewee's response, were used to gain a deeper understanding of respondents' views (Merriam, 1998). Library documents addressing the future growth of the library centers were also examined using a document review guide (Appendix D).

Libraries are changing. EBooks, apps, and the web have become a part of patrons' daily lives. Librarians must determine the best way to turn library space into a learning center that's right for this rapidly changing digital world. While libraries have embraced these new technologies, librarians or media specialists as they are sometimes called must also evolve in their role in this digital age (Sullivan, 2011).

The purpose of this study was to examine the perception of librarians and library leaders who work in the Johnson City area and to determine what those respondents perceived as the past, present, and future of their profession and the library itself.

Discussion

Several themes emerged from the analysis of interview responses to the research questions. A discussion of these themes follows.

Research Question 1 Themes

The first research question was, “How do librarians and media specialists perceive the library media center?” While all respondents agreed that the library itself has undergone many changes over the years, they were concerned that the public perception of the library hasn’t changed as much as they would like. Many respondents have implemented new technologies and programming, as well as design and layout changes, but also worry that many in the community still hold to the idea that it’s just a warehouse for books. As we have moved into a digital lifestyle and so much information accessible in homes, people might feel there is no need to go to the library. Because those people are not visiting the libraries, interviewees were concerned that they are not aware of the new and innovative programs and uses of space available in present-day libraries.

Future

The future role of the library is that it will evolve as education and communities evolve. The school library will continue to change to address new curriculum standards. The public library, while able to grow in various educational directions, will mimic those changes as it serves the same community of students. Tennessee standards have changed to include more literacy and writing skills rather than memorizing dates and details related to a subject area. With this advancement, libraries are poised to meet those needs and should be repurposed to accommodate learning communities rather than just places to obtain information. Libraries of the

future must find ways to include their patrons in the learning experience. Frey (2007) emphasized that while the information we provide patrons needs to be relevant, useful, and meaningful, there needs to be a way for patrons to experience the information.

Space

Participants agree that the use of the library will change in the future but were not all certain how that change would occur. The use of space was a common theme that emerged as it was noted that patrons need spaces to collaborate as they discover and use information. Spaces for group work and louder discussions leading to realizations of new information are needed. Quiet spaces are still needed but are no longer the norm. With more information obtainable in a digital format there is no longer a need for large volumes of research and nonfiction books. They should not disappear completely but can be reduced and those areas transformed into learning community spaces. Resource information in a digital format is more current and often more relevant to patrons' needs.

According to Holland (2015) the goal is to create learning hubs where patrons, students, and teachers can collaborate as well as places for communication and sharing so that the library would no longer be known as the place where information and resources are but rather a place to create meaning from information.

Community

The final theme that emerged from the analysis was that the library should continue to be a staple within the community. It will be a place for common community conversations and a location for local information relevant to its own area. In the community and in the school settings it should be the hub of information and a common place for meeting and learning.

Collection Development

The physical look of the library will change in the future as libraries make better use of their spaces, but it will also appear different in the items they offer—in the collections available. Some items have already disappeared from the collections as they are now obsolete. Such items as encyclopedias in print format and information on cassette tapes and VHS formats are not as common. Magazines have even begun to be obsolete, as most have moved to a digital format. Music formats have changed as well. CDs are starting to disappear as music becomes more accessible in a downloadable format. Reference sections have dwindled as this information is more easily accessed and more current in content online.

Makerspaces

A theme identified by four respondents was implementation of a makerspace. The concept behind a makerspace area is that patrons can work and learn in a hands-on format and that work is at a higher level of learning. It's a safe place where patrons can question current thinking through research, construct, and problem-solving. Patrons can build using cognitive, kinesthetic, and social skills while working through makerspace activities. They may also exercise dexterity skills as well as following step-by-step directions, group dynamics, patience, and endurance (Preddy, 2013).

Learners would have the opportunity to take the information they own and synthesize it in a new way as they create within the makerspace. This can range from a young patron using art supplies and pipe cleaners to create a new prototype for a toothbrush to an older learner working with coding to program a robot built to perform a certain task. While it may look like play, it mirrors real-world problem solving and futuristic work place tasks.

Graphic Novels

Librarians who have graphic novel collections noted that it is their most popular section. It is a new type of collection that is becoming commonplace. Participants commented that it is their most circulated section of the library and most popular. It appeals to readers of various levels and all ages. Often reluctant readers are drawn to the collection and then cross over to traditional books. It offers a unique visual experience that draws the reader in, and because they can be read quickly, helps foster a life-long habit of reading.

Gaming

This is one of the newest areas being examined by as a possible future staple in the library. In a video game patrons become a part of the story of the game and they are literally drawn into the story of the game. Various studies show that the memory and strategic elements of gaming also build the mind. Brain games are becoming extremely popular and recognized as healthy ways to increase intelligence (LeFebvre, 2013).

While two participants from the public library sector assumed this collection would appeal to the teen community, it is one that would appeal to many age groups. As more and more patrons are digital natives, this type of collection not only seems interesting, it seems likely that it would become a vital part of the library of the future. How it will be implemented and best maintained is yet to be seen, but even in school settings, educational gaming has become a common element to ensuring students succeed.

E-Books and E-Readers

E-Books and E-Readers have been around for a while, but libraries have struggled to find ways to best use the devices. In school settings e-readers can be used in center-type activities and e-books have become popular. The public library owns a dozen e-readers but rarely has

them circulate. The problem could be addressed with more promotion, but participants expressed that their patrons seemed to still prefer the print version of books over the electronic ones. One interviewee explained that purchasing the e-book was just as expensive as ordering a print copy and if the print copy would circulate, she would prefer to purchase that version. This theory was supported by Greenfield (2012) who noted that some publishers are still reluctant to invest in e-book production claiming that e-book readers prefer to buy their own e-books.

Another idea that emerged was that people who own e-readers tended to want to purchase and own their stories rather than borrow them from the library. E-books and e-readers were popular within the school library collections as long as they were used at school, and patrons were encouraged to do so during required library sessions.

Books

Books remain the most popular items libraries have to offer. The new technologies and the new aspects of the library intrigue patrons, but books are still perceived as special even in the presence of an overabundance of digital literature. Participants agreed that the experience of visiting the library and the temporary possession of a print book was still very appealing to many patrons. Print books will always be a part of libraries, maybe not in the vast quantities as in the past, but they will remain to be a staple collection.

Research Question 2 Themes

The second research question was, “How do librarians and media specialists perceive their role in the library media center?” One of the most prevalent themes that emerged was the role of the librarian and how it has changed over the years and could change in the future.

Role of the Librarian

Participants stated that their role has become more intensive and multi-faceted with the advancement of technology and the need to obtain information more rapidly. Some saw that their role in the school and in the community has gained respect with time, but some also felt that their role is perceived as easy and no longer needed. Many respondents were apprehensive about their role becoming obsolete because this is a course some schools have taken.

Respondents were divided as to whether or not that would be a future action in the Johnson City area. This researcher has never believed that would be the case in this area, as the community and the leaders in our school system see the value of an educated professions training in library science teaching in the school library setting.

It was noted that librarians were no longer seen as managers of materials but rather as managers of information. In the past the main role was one of organizing all the information in a way that made it easily accessible to all patrons. While that is still the norm, librarians today are not seen as professionals who help find answers to questions, but rather professionals who help patrons manipulate information, analyze it, and synthesize it in a new format. Their role could better be described using the term leader rather than manager. More specifically, librarians would evolve into servant leadership roles. In this style the librarian becomes a servant leader valuing the role of the library and the needs of the patrons over intrinsic needs (Glover, 2013, p. 92).

Instruction and training are key components of current library positions. School librarians are charged with being leaders in curriculum development and implementation. Their role now encompasses not only helping patrons obtain information through new technological mediums, but also training patrons how to use that technology. While some have assumed

technology would make their roles obsolete, the reality is that technology has only expanded their responsibilities and increased their job security. Librarians have had to make a perspective shift from being place centered to being information-centered. They have become manipulators of information in all forms rather than sources confined to the library building (Zickuhr, 2012).

The obstacles to advancing the school librarian or media specialist role are that often media specialists are assigned large class loads in the school settings that do not allow for them to work collaboratively with teachers. Librarians need to be able to operate in a flexible scheduling environment in order to move toward the future goal of the profession. Large class loads do not allow the librarian to be accessible to help individual patrons or teachers visiting with their classes. Libraries could be developing and leading quality, higher-order programming, but when over-loaded and understaffed that opportunity has been lost. Most school librarians are challenged with the administrative tasks of running the business of the library, ordering books, processing them, creating programming, organizing the collections, managing the technology, and various other tasks along with their teaching load. Basically, school librarians are sometimes seen as related arts teachers who must also run a business with mass duties that other related arts are not tasked to do.

Research Question 3 Themes

The third and final research question was, “How will libraries and librarians change in the near future?” All participants agreed that the library will evolve digitally and their job will be to help facilitate those changes. They will also be charged with promoting those changes and making sure their patrons know how important it is to stay involved in their local library even if they have books at home, access to the internet, and various technology devices. The world will

become more technology dependent and there is a need to be able to function in our digital world. There is a need to know these technological concepts because people no longer have the luxury of avoiding the digital world.

In the future librarians will need to serve more as guides who lead patrons toward what they need and in the future, that means they would need to be tech savvy and abreast of current technological trends. They will no longer just be the keeper of books but be facilitators who enable people to get what they want and need. Their core role would always be reading promotion, but in the future that would include reading in different formats.

The look of the library itself will be quite different in the future. Libraries may become places of activity rather than quiet buildings with punitive rules. The participants in the study seem to suggest that libraries will become active places with various resources for patrons to explore and learn using various learning styles. Learning commons areas will evolve as patrons are encouraged to work together rather than be alone in their tasks. There will still be quiet areas and private study spots, but the majority of the space will be devoted to collaborate studies.

There would be fewer bookcases filled with books and more spaces devoted to group settings. Furniture will lend itself to collaborative settings. Coffee and food shops may be common place in libraries where food or drink of any kind was once forbidden. Inviting and colorful areas will replace the plain, neutral atmosphere of the past. Technology will be prevalent in several formats, and the library will remain as one of the most vital, thriving parts of the community. All participants agreed that the library will never become obsolete; it will just change and evolve, and they will evolve in their role to meet those future needs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Analysis of the interview responses provided by the librarians and media specialists who participated in this study surfaced specific conclusions. Technology driven changes have created an obvious need for libraries to evolve and change to meet those needs. Libraries can no longer be quiet places of inactivity but rather need to be the hub of the community where patrons are excited to be involved in the learning communities of local learners. Librarians' roles are changing into active ones where they help facilitate learning rather than passively remain behind the circulation counter. The majority of Johnson City library professions are excited about moving toward the future, and it is encouraging to hear the positive things that are happening and the plans for the future of the libraries in the Johnson City area.

The data collected and analyzed in this study support the following conclusions:

1. The role of the librarian or media specialist has changed over time and will likely evolve in the future to be one of a leader and facilitator of information rather than a manager of materials.
2. The library as an institution will continue to change and likely become less about book shelves and more about active uses of space where patrons can learn in group settings and hands-on projects.
3. Collection development will grow to not only mean purchasing books, but also technology, makerspace components, and various materials for meeting the learning needs of the community.
4. The commitment from librarians to these new roles is vital for a transformation to a future model to be successful.

5. Adequate funding will be required to transform libraries into models suited to support communities as they change.
6. School librarians should be allowed time within their day to promote their new instructional leadership role rather than be regarded as a related arts teacher with a full load of classes.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Develop a long-term study that tracks the transformation of a library (or libraries) moving toward a 21st century model.
2. Examine more flexible scheduling models in school library settings to better meet students' variable learning needs.
3. Study school administrators' perceptions of librarian role within the school. No principals were interviewed formally for this study.
4. Examine the value of adding makerspaces to the library setting and ways to implement them.

Conclusion

The future formats of the public and school libraries are evolving into places where patrons are free to learn in active ways. The facility itself and the librarian's role may look different in the future, but the institution can remain a vital part of the community. The facility will be changed in the way it looks by making more learning spaces and providing more unique, hands-on technological learning spaces. Library collections will likely continue to contain books

but will expand to include, gaming, technology, e-readers, e-books, databases, downloads, 3D printers, and various other digital sources. Makerspaces will become a new staple in libraries.

The findings of the study suggest that the library will likely not become obsolete. The role of the librarians in communities and media specialists in schools will continue to evolve. Community librarians will likely become more active as leaders who facilitate access to multiple forms of information for patrons in addition to providing sources and checking them out. Media Center Specialists in schools may become more active partners in learning by collaborating with teachers and to help guide curriculum changes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

I. Introduction

A. Welcome.

B. I would like to thank you for your participation in this study about your opinions the library media center and your roll working in the library. I plan on presenting this material for publication and for review to Board of Education as they examine the effectiveness of the library programs; therefore all of your information, feelings and thoughts are important. This session should take approximately one-hour. Do you have any questions before I begin taping this conversation?

C. I will have each interviewee sign a consent form.

D. Session will begin.

II. Main Interview Questions for librarians/media specialist

1. How do you see as your role as library media specialist currently?
2. How has this role changed during the time you have been a library media specialist?
3. What do you perceive your role as a library media specialist will be in the future?
4. What do you perceive is the library media center's (LMC) role in today's community (or school)?
5. What are some things that are beneficial in LMC today?
6. What are some things you see as strengths in the role of the LMC?
7. What are some of the areas to strengthen?
8. How has the LMC's role in the community (or school) changed from past years to present day?
9. What do you see as the future for the LMC?
10. What are some obstacles that could stand in the way of that future view?
11. Do you feel the LMC is valued as an essential part of the community (or school)?
12. Do you perceive that view will change in the future, and how will it change?
13. What are some services you provide or items you have that are becoming or might obsolete?
14. What do you see as the future of the library media center?
15. How will the LMC change and will it become obsolete?

IV. Conclusion

- A. Here is what I understand that you believe to be the most important aspects of our time today.....Do you agree?
- B. Any additional comments?
- C. Thank you for your participation.

V. Document Collection

- A. Do you have any documents, pamphlets, or notes that address your plans for the future of your library? If so, may I have a copy of those documents to add to my research?
- B. Thank you for your time today.

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Document Informed Consent for Interviews

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Johnnie Sue Hawley

TITLE OF PROJECT: The Evolution of the Library Media Center: A Study of the Past, Current and Projected Future Library Services Available in the Johnson City, Tennessee Area

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY INFORMED CONSENT

INTRODUCTION:

This Informed Consent will explain about being a participant in a research study. It is important that you read this material carefully and then decide if you wish to be a volunteer.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of librarians on the future of their career roles and the future of the institute in which they work. More specifically, it is to identify the ways in which their role will evolve to meet the needs of future patrons in this ever-changing, technological information age. This study is qualitative in design, therefore, interviews and document analyses will be conducted.

DURATION:

There should be about 45 minutes allotted for time that the researcher spends with you. Informed Consent will be reviewed and signed before the interview begins. Each interview will take approximately 20-30 minutes and will be audio-taped. At your discretion, you will have a chance to add additional comments after the questioning has ended. Participants will then be asked to provide any documentation from their library that pertains to future growth of the library. The primary investigator will collect any such documents at that time rather than making two visits to collect data. Since librarians are the people who prepare such documents, they will be the ones approached to help gather this data. The document collection will be conducted in the last 5-10 minutes of the 45 minute visit.

PROCEDURES:

You will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview with the researcher of this study. The purpose of the interview is to assess the perceptions of librarians/media specialists on the future of library services and the future of their librarian role. The researcher will come to your library to conduct the interview. At the completion of the interview, the researcher will ask you if you have any documents or plans pertaining to future growth of the library facility. The researcher will collect copies of those documents to review at a later time and this will conclude the data collection visit. When transcriptions of audio tapes are complete, a copy will be emailed to you for your corrections or additions. This will complete your involvement in the study. You will be given a record of the results in order to share future plans of various libraries for collaboration opportunities.

POSSIBLE RISKS/DISCOMFORTS:

There are no known risks or discomforts to participating in this study.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS:

There are no known benefits to PARTICIPATING in this study. There are, however, possible benefits to the participants from the RESULTS of the study. Participants may benefit from RESULTS of the study as it is an analysis of their future career role and the future of the institute in which they work. Participants will be able to review the research to implement new programs in their libraries if they chose to do so. Answering interview questions will by nature ask them to reflect on their career role and future implications. Sharing the results of the study will encourage professional growth and allow them to know what other libraries are doing to meet current and future needs.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:

Participation in this research experiment is voluntary. You may refuse to participate.

You can quit at any time. If you quit or refuse to participate, the benefits or treatment to which you are otherwise entitled (if applicable) will not be affected. You may quit by calling Johnnie Sue Hawley, whose phone number is 423-737-7438. You will be told immediately if any of the results of the study should reasonably be expected to make you change your mind about staying in the study.

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS: If you have any questions, problems or research-related problems at any time, you may

Call Johnnie Sue Hawley at 423-737-7438. You may call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at 423-439-6054 for any questions you may have about your rights as a research subject. If you have any questions or concerns about the research and want to talk to someone independent of the research team or you can't reach the study staff, you may call an IRB Coordinator at 423-439-6055 or 423-439-6002.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored in a locked box in the researcher's home at 608 East Main Street, Jonesborough, TN for a period of five years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming you as a subject. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services or ETSU IRB and personnel particular to this research have access to the study records.

All attempt to protect participants' privacy will be taken, but as all participants hold public positions as librarians, and are vocal in the community, they are accustomed to their voices being heard. Interviews will be conducted at the interviewees' preference, my library or theirs, or a neutral location such as ETSU.

Most interview data will be paraphrased in the final research document, but in cases where direct quotes from interviewees are used, names will be changed or no name will be mentioned. Quotes will be minimal and will not be used if the level or location of the librarian is mentioned in the section. All efforts will be made to keep the identity of the interviewee confidential.

I have read this information, and I will receive a copy of this form after it is signed.

By signing below, you confirm that you have read or had this document read to you.

You will be given a signed copy of this informed consent document. You have been given the chance to ask questions and to discuss your participation with the investigator. You freely and voluntarily choose to be in this research project.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

PRINTED NAME OF PARTICIPANT DATE

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR DATE

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS (if applicable) DATE

APPENDIX D

Initial Email

To: Librarians in the Johnson City Area
From: Johnnie Sue Hawley
Date: September 1, 2015
Re: Research

I am conducting a research study of the perceptions of current librarians. I will be focusing on their view of the future of the institution of the library. The name of my research project is The Evolution of the Library Media Center: A Study of the Past, Current and Projected Future Library Services Available in the Johnson City, Tennessee Area. I would like to ask you to privately share your perceptions of the past, current and future projections of your role as a librarian. Your perceptions will be compiled in my dissertation and shared with Central Office as a way to help produce a stronger library media services program. Your participation in this program is completely voluntary. All information shared with me will be coded and protected. Any use of quotes will be assigned pseudonyms and you will have an opportunity to review all information for accuracy before completion. If you are interested please respond to me at hawleyj@jcschools.org or call me at 423-737-7438. If you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Johnnie Sue Hawley

VITA

JOHNNIE SUE SAYLOR HAWLEY

Personal

Data: Date of Birth: December 13, 1968
 Place of Birth: Johnson City, TN
 Marital Status: Married

Education:

Public Schools: Washington County Schools, Jonesborough, TN

Carson-Newman University, Jefferson City, TN
English, B.A. Secondary Education Concentration
1990

East Tennessee State University, Johnson City Tennessee
Educational Media & Educational Technology, School Library Media
2003

East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee
Educational Leadership, Ed. D.
2016

Professional

Experience: 1993-1998- English Teacher, Unicoi County High School
 Erwin, Tennessee

2001-2003 English Teacher, Happy Valley High School
Elizabethton, Tennessee

2003-2005- English Teacher, Science Hill High School
Johnson City, Tennessee

2005-2010- Media Specialist, Northside Elementary School
Johnson City, Tennessee

2010-Present-Media Specialist, Liberty Bell Middle School
Johnson City, Tennessee