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Investigation of the Ashenden Proposal for redesigning teachers' work: The case of secondary teacher librarians

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**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ASHENDEN PROPOSAL
FOR REDESIGNING TEACHERS' WORK: THE CASE OF
SECONDARY TEACHER LIBRARIANS.**

by

G.A. Hornsby B.A.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

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at the Faculty of Education, Edith Cowan University

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Abstract

This thesis documents the implications of the Ashenden proposal for the work of teacher librarians in particular, and teachers in general. The participants are eight practising teacher librarians 'in charge', from Perth metropolitan secondary schools. Data for this qualitative study was collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed using the constant comparative method.

The study identifies the main strength of Ashenden's proposal as his orientation towards the professional ideology of teachers which implies trust in the professional intentions, knowledge and discretionary judgements of teachers. The study also finds that the Ashenden proposal is incompatible with the work of teaching as a profession. Points of departure arise from: Ashenden's view of the industrial relations process; the productivity requirement to work within existing levels of resourcing; his industrial management approach which tends to characterise teaching as a labour form of work; and his limited view of the problems associated with teachers' work.

The thesis proposes two alternative courses of action, based on an integration of the field data, the literature, and the identified strengths of the Ashenden proposal. One proposal is intended for all teachers. The other is intended for teacher librarians, who form the specific focus of the study.

Declaration

"I certify that this thesis does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text".

Signed



Date

18/12/95

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis documents the findings of a qualitative investigation into a radical proposal, formulated by Dean Ashenden, for restructuring the work of teachers. The context for the study is the current debate about teaching as a profession, the debate about the quality of education, and issues surrounding the definition and control of teachers' work. The participants are eight teacher librarians from a broad range of secondary schools. Their input enables the study to go beyond simple questions such as whether the Ashenden proposal is feasible and acceptable, to pose more fundamental questions about the nature of the proposal itself and the nature of teaching as a profession.

Teacher librarians fulfil a unique role in secondary schools. They often have teaching contact with more students than other types of teachers. They promote the development of skills which aid student learning in all curriculum areas. They possess a broad knowledge of resources which support all areas of the curriculum. They have a flexible timetable, about which classroom teachers can only dream. They control, in the library, the most flexible and resource rich teaching area in the school. Yet because, in the traditional sense, they have no timetabled classes, no curriculum of their own, no reports to write, and no classroom, they often struggle to gain recognition as real teachers with a valid role to play in secondary education.

In this study, the perspectives of eight teacher librarians on the Ashenden proposal are combined with recurrent and underlying themes in the literature about teaching as a profession, to produce two new proposals which are probably even more radical than

the Ashenden proposal. They are radical because they take the concept of teaching as a profession seriously, rather than as a ideological tool for controlling one of the largest and most vital occupational groups in Australia. They are radical because they challenge teachers to act like they want to be treated, as a profession.

Background

This section provides an overview of current issues and trends that make up the context which prompted the study. Global forces of change are described along with their impact on teaching as a profession. The demands on teacher librarians in their dual roles as teachers and information resource specialists are outlined. Within this context the Ashenden proposal for redesigning teachers' work is introduced.

It was Daniel Bell, in 1962, who first used the term 'post-industrial society' to describe and forecast a transition in the structure of Western society (1974, p.xi). He cited the exponential growth of science, knowledge and technology (1974, p.44) as the source of many changes in politics, culture, economy and the nature of work. Today many labels are used to describe different aspects of the times of rapid change in which we live.

As Australia rushes towards the twenty-first century it is being transformed by global forces very similar to the ones forecast by Bell in 1974. The forces are technological (for example, computing, communications, the information age, and industry), economic (for example, deregulated global markets, export oriented national economies, debt management, economic rationalism, and privatisation), organisational (for example, managerialism, post-Fordism, and neo-corporatism), societal (for example, the changing family unit, equity, human rights, sovereignty and the nature of

work), and environmental (for example, depletion of the ozone layer, pollution, unsustainable industry and resource depletion). The impact of these forces is further complicated by the agendas of governments, politicians, business, industry, and other organisations and individuals.

Education in all developed nations is also subject to these forces and is experiencing massive changes, especially with regard to its role in national economies. Beare and Slaughter (1993, p.16) offer one view of the situation:

As the overlapping waves of social, technical, political, economic, cultural and environmental change have washed over us, so the structures, the continuities, expectations, values and meanings which once sustained the cultural landscape have weakened or dissolved entirely. Far from there being a coherent and integrated rationale to guide education, there is instead something of a human and cultural vacuum. One consequence is that we flee to simplicities, like the regression from education to economics.

Along the same lines, Marginson states that “governments and industry now see formal education as an arm of economic policy and a part of the social process of commodity production” (1993, p.20). Marginson goes on to argue that micro-economic reforms are aimed at freeing up the education market. Human capital theorists view this as the optimum way of maximising production while simultaneously reducing public spending. Consistent with these sentiments is the Australian Council of Trade Unions’ (ACTU) drive to “emphasise the link between education and economic reform” (Angus, 1991, p.7).

Arguably, there is a world-wide education reform agenda directly linked to the belief that increasing the productivity of education will increase the economic performance of the nation. Bates mounts an impassioned argument against this agenda and refers to the economic forces currently engaged in the “destruction of society” (1993, p.1). On

the other side, Argy, a prominent economist, states, "education and training policy will have an important bearing on Australia's long term economic growth" (1993, p.21). One of the areas that needs attention, according to Argy, is the 'quality of teaching', a phrase which some would see as hiding a range of economic agendas for controlling the work of teachers.

The teacher quality debate is conducted in many publications of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) such as "Social and economic aspects of teaching" (1987), "The condition of teaching" (1989a), "Education and the economy in a changing society" (1989b), "The teacher today" (1990a), "Teacher demand and supply" (1990b), and "The training of teachers" (1990c). This small selection of titles highlights at least three issues which are currently significant in Australia: the linking of education to the economy; the current condition of teaching; and the structure of teacher education. In Australia apparent concern over the quality of teaching has led to many federal and state reports and policy initiatives such as the establishment of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL), and more recently the National Schools Network (NSN) and its predecessor the National Schools Project (NSP). Robertson (forthcoming, p.25) argues that the NSP is intended to "reconstitute [the] professional status" of teachers to make them servants of the economy.

The teacher quality debate in Australia has centred around teachers' responsibility to the national economy. Kenway (1994, p.v) observes that "education is to be tightly ... coupled to the economy, reshaping itself in order to reflect and promote new economic directions and imperatives". The reasoning behind this coupling claims that a healthy national economy depends on a highly skilled and innovative workforce. Upskilling

the workforce, in turn, relies on education. Further, the success or failure of education is dependent on the quality of teachers.

An assumption underlying many federal and state reports and initiatives of the last decade is that teachers' performance is deficient and in need of improvement. See, for example, the Schools Council (1989, 1990, 1992), Dawkins (1988), Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) (1990, 1993), Ministry of Education W.A. (1987,1990), Australian Education Council (AEC) (1990), Quality in Education Review Committee (QERC) (1985).

Many educators regard recent reforms with a level of cynicism and disgust that has resulted in some of the most bitter industrial conflicts teachers have engaged. Nevertheless, most teachers would agree with the professional imperative of wanting "to do a better job" and becoming "more competent" (Ingvarson & Chadbourne, 1994, p.15). For example, an important objective behind the establishment of the Australian Teaching Council, a teacher controlled body, was to "support improvements in the quality of teachers' work" (McCrae, 1992, p.9).

Aspin, Chapman and Wilkinson (1994) point out the immense difficulties of defining 'quality' in education. The term quality is employed to signify varying conceptualisations of 'standards' and to represent different agendas for educational reform. Despite the fact that definitions of quality, assessments of current standards, and agendas differ, all parties are apparently concerned with improving the productivity and/or quality of teaching. The study is oriented towards the definitions and viewpoints of teachers rather than those who would use educational reform as a tool to "subordinate society to the demands of the global economy" (Bates, 1993, p.4).

Beare and Slaughter (1993, p.18) integrate the economising of education and the teacher quality debate:

Educators not only understand the need to change but have usually been willing participants in the process. They know that education is absolutely pivotal to each country in the twenty-first century, and that a major rethinking is necessary. They will not willingly subscribe to an ideology for education which is inadequate, unidimensional, and limiting for students. Furthermore, educators are well prepared to deliver major changes and have experience to call upon. They know that changes which emerge from economic rationalism and from the now defunct industrial world-view are literally a recipe for disaster.

Teacher librarians are a unique species of teacher. Everything written so far in this section applies to them as much as to any other teacher. In addition some of the forces of change discussed place special and immediate demands on the everyday lives of teacher librarians. Bell used the term post-industrial society to signify a form of society that followed industrial society because he considered it premature to assign a defining label to the future state of society (1974, p.37). However since the "axial principle" of post-industrial society is the "centrality of theoretical knowledge" (1974, p.14), one of the many terms now used to describe the age in which we live, 'the information society', seems appropriate. As the key information and resource specialists in schools, in an age when information is the axial or central principle of society, teacher librarians should be central to the provision of education. The pressure of this role, or at least the pressure of struggling to assert this role, is becoming the defining principle of the professional lives of teacher librarians.

There are two significant aspects to this demanding task. The first is the ongoing integration of new information technology into the resource collection and services of the school library. This is far from the simple act of purchasing a computer, or a flashy new encyclopaedia on CD-ROM. As Marchionini (1991, p.185) points out, it

involves a wholesale reconsideration of the organisation and structure of information services within the whole school.

The second significant aspect of this demanding task concerns the imperatives for learning which are inherent in the concept of an information society. The overwhelming quantity of information available to citizens, the technological format of the information, the urgency and critical nature of decisions which must be based on that information, and issues of access and equity, have stimulated the evolution of a new dimension of literacy known as information literacy. Doyle (1994, p.3) provides a current profile of an information literate person as one who:

Recognises that accurate and complete information is the basis for intelligent decision making; recognises the need for information; formulates questions based on information needs; identifies potential sources of information; develops successful search strategies; accesses sources of information including computer-based and other technologies; evaluates information; organises information for practical application; integrates new information into an existing body of knowledge; [and] uses information in critical thinking and problem solving.

These are the processes which teacher librarians usually refer to as information skills.

The integration of technology and the promotion of information skills is an emerging role being taken on by a young profession. Wright (1993, p.11-12) provides some of the flavour of the complex context in which teacher librarians function in this aspect of their role:

The effectiveness of information skills instruction in schools will, in part, depend on the ability of the [teacher librarian] to select appropriate computer-related information resources, to develop instructional strategies that build not only on the software's capability but also on the current capabilities of students, and to design with teachers instructional strategies that make the best use of these electronic resources in light of the curriculum and the goals of the school.

However the central role of teacher librarians in the information strategies of schools is only one of the demands placed upon them. For example, the Education Department of Western Australia also expects teacher librarians to manage students, manage the development of library collections, manage library resource centre operations, be involved in school planning and administration, and participate in professional activities (Ministry of Education, W.A. and the State School Teachers' Union of W.A., 1993). Another aspect of the role of teacher librarians is the promotion of the lifelong practice of recreational reading and the appreciation of literature. This is most commonly achieved in secondary schools through programmes developed cooperatively with English departments. The combination of all these expectations has the potential to place significant demands on the time and expertise of teacher librarians.

While the demands placed upon teacher librarians, and all teachers, are constantly expanding, the resources available to achieve the expected outcomes are not growing accordingly. In some cases they are shrinking. The economic rationalism which links education to the economy also denies education the extra resources required to achieve the economy's own goals. The pressure to do more with less, adds impetus to the imperative to examine work practices and organisation in order to extract every last gram of efficiency and effectiveness from the physical and human resources which remain. Robertson reports that the NSP's brief to participating schools has been to "investigate how changes in work practices can lead to improved student outcomes whilst working within current levels of resourcing" (forthcoming, p.26). This is one aspect of the pre-occupation with productivity, rather than quality in education.

In 1990, Dean Ashenden, a teacher, academic, writer, broadcaster, and private educational consultant published his analysis of the problem of teaching and proposed a solution, claiming that his proposal for the restructuring of teachers' work would improve the productivity of teaching and learning, through the award restructuring process. Teachers' unions reacted quickly (Moloney, 1990; Flinn, 1990), to reject the Ashenden proposal, mainly on industrial grounds. A study by Chadbourne and Robertson (1992) which sought the views of teachers in a junior primary school documents the staff's reservations about many aspects of the proposal on educational grounds. It is the only known published empirical investigation of the Ashenden proposal to date.

Late in 1990, Ashenden was asked by the Western Australian School Libraries Association (WASLA) to conduct a workshop for its members and challenge the accepted views of the traditional activities of teacher librarians. Fifty-one teacher librarians attended and developed ideas about improving teacher librarians' work and options for the future roles of school library staff. The solutions the workshop groups arrived at, as reported by Ashenden (1990b, p.11), seem to support the general thrust of his proposal.

Ashenden begins with the premise that teaching is a "deeply unhappy profession" (Ashenden, 1990a, p.11). The reason for teachers' unhappiness is threefold. First, teachers are dissatisfied with wages and conditions. Second, teachers' workload is too heavy. Third, teachers' relationships with students are largely unsatisfying.

The cause of this unhappiness and the core problem of teachers' work, according to Ashenden, lies in a conflict between practice, defined as the labour process of

teaching, and the “professional ideology of teachers” (Ashenden, 1992b, p.61). The main factor restraining teachers’ work is the poor organisation and management of teachers’ work. Teaching, says Ashenden, is the last of the true mass cottage industries with almost no division of labour. Teachers want students to be “creative, critical, reflective autonomous learners” (1990a, p.15). Teachers know what they want to teach but are restrained by the work structure of the classroom and by the plethora of non-teaching duties they have to perform.

Ashenden’s proposed restructure of teachers’ work claims to address the problems of wages and conditions, poorly designed work and negative teacher-student relationships, as well as delivering the boost in productivity and quality which would satisfy the needs of the economy and teachers themselves. The core of the Ashenden proposal is to change the division of labour in education. This involves using non-teaching staff to perform duties which are not “really teaching” (Ashenden, 1990a, p.12) but which teachers currently perform, such as photocopying, supervision of students, and low level teaching. Ashenden claims that implementation of his proposal would result in: better salaries and career paths for teachers through a greater allocation of AST positions; more clerical and administrative support for teachers; redesign of teachers’ work towards more ‘real teaching’; fewer jobs for teachers (a 33.8% reduction, based on Ashenden, 1990a, p.14); higher student teacher ratios; and more productive teaching and learning. In line with the framework of productivity, all of this is achieved on a cost neutral basis. The Ashenden proposal is explained in greater detail in chapter two of the thesis.

This outline of the background to the study has placed some of the current stresses on teachers and the education system within the context of global forces of change. The

linking of education to the economy and subsequent concern about the quality of teachers has been described. Within this context the demanding, emerging role of teacher librarians in an information society which still clings to the economic rationalism of the industrial age has been briefly explored. Finally the Ashenden proposal, which has been introduced as an intervention in the teacher quality debate, has been outlined. It is a proposal that seeks to redesign teachers' work according to teachers' own professional aspirations. It claims to have the potential of delivering increases in the productivity of teachers' work and the quality of education.

Significance of the study

The Ashenden proposal provides opportunities to examine the work of teacher librarians from the viewpoint of professional satisfaction, their view of what constitutes "real teaching" (Ashenden, 1990a, p.15) in the school library, the division of labour within the school library, and the factors which contribute to an effective school library service in the information age. Although they are small in number and represent diverse educational settings, the teacher librarians in the study display remarkable unity in matters of critical importance to their profession. For anyone interested in the provision of information services in secondary schools, their views are exciting, encouraging and challenging.

The study is also significant in terms of the Ashenden proposal. It identifies aspects of the proposal which are unacceptable to teachers and presents two alternative proposals which take into account the literature and the views of the participants, who are practising teachers. The alternative proposals are considerably broader in scope than the Ashenden proposal and represent a radical shift in emphasis.

Although the study focuses on teacher librarians, its significance for classroom teachers should not be underestimated. An intention of the Ashenden proposal is to draw attention to and bring about changes in the archaic work organisation of the traditional classroom which, it is claimed, restricts learning in post-industrial society. The study examines the Ashenden proposal from the perspectives of a group of teachers who are not bound by the four walls of a classroom, or by an inflexible timetable, or by the content of a single subject area of the curriculum. Those who operate within the cottage classroom have much to gain by considering the possibilities for student learning that these teacher librarians want to open up for them. On the other hand, they can also be reassured by an alternative view of the cottage classroom as an artist's studio rather than as an inefficient industrial practice.

An early critic of the Ashenden proposal noted that although it was impractical given the time constraints of award restructuring, "teachers and teacher unions would do well to keep both the good and the bad ideas in mind for the future" (Moloney, 1990, p.14). Robertson also suggests that "proposals such as those offered by Ashenden, must be investigated and debated by the educational community" (forthcoming, p.4). The researcher has taken up that suggestion by investigating the Ashenden proposal in the context of the school library organisation.

Central research question

The central research question investigated in the study can be stated as follows.

What is the assessment of experienced teacher librarians of the Ashenden proposal for redesigning teachers' work, including his analysis of the problem and his proposed solution, as it applies to the school library?

Subsidiary research questions

The study investigates Ashenden's version of the problem as well as his proposed solution. Subsidiary research questions one to three, listed below, are all aimed at examining a specific aspect of the problem as perceived by Ashenden. Questions four and five are aimed at assessing the Ashenden proposal and comparing it with teacher librarians' own solutions. The subsidiary research questions are answered in the appropriate sections of chapter four and five.

1. Is there a discrepancy between the practice and what teacher librarians view as the ideal standard of teaching and learning in the school library?
2. What level of professional satisfaction do teacher librarians report under current work arrangements?
3. To what factors do teacher librarians attribute the discrepancy between practice and their ideal standard of teaching and learning, and their level of professional satisfaction?
4. Could the Ashenden proposal contribute to greater productivity of teaching and learning in the library and to greater professional satisfaction, according to teacher librarians?
5. To what extent are the solutions that teacher librarians propose to improve the productivity and professional satisfaction of their work consistent with the Ashenden proposal?

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the work of previous writers in the fields of teachers' work, teacher librarianship, and the Ashenden proposal. It also reviews the literature on interpretive research, which is the methodological approach adopted for the study. The intention here is to align the study with established concepts and theoretical approaches. This will provide a firm foundation on which to build the new concepts which will be discussed in later chapters.

Teachers' work

A continuing thread which is picked up at various points of the thesis is the concept of the post-industrial society. In selecting a name for the concept, Bell (1974, p.37) apparently considered at least three options which were: the knowledge society; the information society; and the professional society. Each of these names describes a salient aspect of what Bell saw emerging but none encapsulates the whole. One of Bell's five dimensions of post-industrial society involves a shift in occupational distribution towards an eventual pre-eminence of professional and technical classes. The shift has since been noted by many writers although not all agree with Bell's view of the origin and purpose of the professions. For example, Carlson (1986) presents a critical view which has the professional "middle class" (p.30) functioning as a tool of the dominant capitalist hegemony. Watkins (1992) describes the labour process approach to the study of teachers' work in which teaching, as a profession, occupies a contrary class location. Teaching is semi-autonomous, neither part of the working

class or the dominant capital class. According to this approach, a struggle between the dominant class and the profession, over the definition and control of professional work ensues. This is a useful framework for the consideration of teachers' work as a profession.

The professional status of teaching is of great concern to teachers at the present time. The literature reviewed in this chapter focuses on teachers' work as a profession, or at least as an emerging profession. As such it contextualises aspects of the Ashenden proposal which on one hand seem to support the professional nature of teaching and the professional aspirations of teachers, but on the other hand have been characterised as a conservative intervention (Seddon, 1995, p.250) designed to narrow the scope of teachers' work.

Three themes in the literature of teachers' work as a profession can be identified. There are writers who assume that teaching is a profession, writers who argue that teaching is not yet a profession, and writers who point out the dangers of interventions which claim to professionalise teachers. These three themes can be compared, in action, to the three sides of a coin. Although a coin has three sides, it only ever lands on two of them. It may spin on the edge for a time before forces of inertia or gravity determine whether it will land on the obverse or reverse side. According to this analogy those who argue that teaching is not yet a profession represent the edge of the coin. In time teaching will either be a fully fledged profession or it will be professionalised according to the economic agendas of government and other interventions. The teaching coin is currently on its edge, so the focus of this discussion is the 'not yet a profession' literature. However, like the edge of a coin, this theme encompasses the other two.

One basis for viewing teachers' work as a profession comes from the work of Mitchell and Kerchner (1983) who identify four categories of work: labour, craft, art and profession. These four categories of work are determined by different approaches to two dimensions common to all work: task definition; and oversight mechanisms. Mitchell and Kerchner's typology of work is reproduced in Figure 1.

		OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING MECHANISMS	
		Direct/ inspection	Indirect/ licensure
		Activity monitoring	Technique monitoring
TASK DEFINITION APPROACHES	Rationalised. Preplanned programs. Routinised.	LABOUR (loyalty/insubordination as basis of evaluation)	CRAFT (precision/ incompetence as basis of evaluation)
	Adaptive. Situation responsive. Flexible.	ART (sensitivity/ frivolousness as basis of evaluation)	PROFESSION (responsibility/ malpractice as basis of evaluation)

Figure 1. Task definition and oversight structures (from Mitchell & Kerchner, 1983, p.216)

Mitchell and Kerchner argue that, in terms of task definition, teaching should be predominantly adaptive, situation responsive and flexible. They also claim that oversight and monitoring mechanisms in teaching should be largely indirect. According to Figure 1 this line of argument places teachers' work in the professional category. However Mitchell and Kerchner remind us that they are talking about "ideal type[s]" (1983, p.215) and that teaching actually contains varying proportions of all

four categories of work. Relevant to the coin analogy is Mitchell and Kerchner's further argument that teacher unionisation and the industrial relations process leads to an increase in the labour component of teachers' work, thus reducing teaching's status as a profession. Angus' (1991, p.6-7) account of the construction of education as an industry and union reluctance to address issues any broader than salary and conditions tends to confirm this analysis of the problem. Although in the 1995 industrial dispute in Western Australia, it is the SSTUWA which is trying to broaden the scope of negotiations to include the quality of education, it is still a case of the labour relations process resulting in a reduction of the professional status of teaching through task definition and oversight mechanisms. Any intervention which rationalises, routinises or puts in place mechanisms for direct oversight of the work of teachers can be said to reduce teaching from a profession to a labour category of work. Some examples supplied by Mitchell and Kerchner (1983, p.223) of mechanisms which support the construction of teaching as labour include: the specification of hours and duties; separating regular and extra duties; homogenisation of work roles; creating grievance procedures; and defining evaluation procedures. The work of Mitchell and Kerchner has implications for the Ashenden proposal which are explored later in this chapter.

Other writers also argue that teaching is not yet a profession. Hatton (1988, 1991) identifies two reasons for this. Firstly, teacher education programmes have a technical rather than a critical emphasis. Secondly, the constraining nature of teachers' work situations reduces the capacity of teachers to exercise discretion.

Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995) document moves in the United States to introduce licensing for teachers. They advocate a model of teachers' work based on professional knowledge, which informs judgements and decisions, that in turn

influence teacher behaviour (1995, p.100-103). In terms of task definition and control mechanisms they confirm Mitchell and Kerchner's view of teaching as a profession.

Robertson and Trotman (1992) are critical of many policy interventions in Australia which claim to professionalise teachers. They assert that the policy push for the professionalisation of teachers is driven by economic goals and that these "policy directions point clearly to a deskilling of teachers" (1992, p.28). If this trend is not arrested, teachers will be "technician[s] operating within a managerialist and economic rationalist schooling framework" (1992, p.29).

Crowe (1993) provides a detailed analysis of the document "Australia's teachers: An agenda for the next decade" (Schools Council, 1990). He concludes that this vision of the profession calls for teachers who are more compliant, less autonomous and deskilled. Their work will be more prescribed. According to Figure 1 these are characteristics of labour, not a profession.

Shacklock (1994) also views policy efforts at professionalising teachers with scepticism but points out the difficulty of defining what a true profession is, and then applying that definition to teachers in the current climate of community expectations and corporate and government agendas for controlling teachers.

One definition of a teaching profession involves the affirmation of three principles:

1. Knowledge is the basis for permission to practice and for decisions that are made with respect to the unique needs of clients.
2. The practitioner pledges his first concern to the welfare of the clients.
3. The profession assumes collective responsibility for the definition, transmission and enforcement of professional standards of practice and ethics. (Darling-Hammond, 1990, p.25)

Darling-Hammond also points out the effect of bureaucratic systems of education on the work of teachers. She argues that professionalism in these systems means that teachers comply with directives, conform with policies, implement pre-planned curricula and assessment procedures, and keep records. Teachers have little or no room for autonomous decision making or the independent use of professional knowledge. They are bound to serve the system rather than serve the clients, and often enact “policies and procedures they know to be educationally counterproductive” (Darling-Hammond, 1990, p.31).

Seddon (1991, 1995) discusses some of the interventions currently shaping teachers’ work which tend to characterise teachers as technicians rather than professionals. She includes the Ashenden proposal as one of these.

In an exploratory analysis of post-Fordist modes of production and consequent national agendas to harness education to the economy, Robertson (1994, p.122) describes one of the uses of the term ‘quality’:

Quality acts as an ideological slogan which at the same time is used to set into place the institutional structures (for example, the proposed Teaching Council to regulate quality) and processes (for example, teacher development activities and the curriculum) ... delivering quality in this new context for teachers’ labour means the introduction of strategies which significantly reduce teacher autonomy by regulating their work. In the case of these reforms the effect is to deskill them.

Robertson’s view represents another interpretation of current policy interventions. However, it is a view which also tends to confirm Mitchell and Kerchner’s claim that rationalised task definition and direct monitoring mechanisms reduce teachers’ work from profession to labour. It also links the teacher quality debate, outlined in the background to the study, to regulatory and deskilling interventions.

An assumption underlying the work of Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1994) is that teaching is not yet a true profession. Their "career development model" (pp.11-45) can be viewed as a tool for forging teachers into a true and recognisable profession. One of the difficulties they point to is the lack of an explicit professional knowledge base for teaching. Robertson and Trotman (1992, pp.24-25) also identify problems in this regard, as do Lieberman and Miller (1992, p.3) and Holly and Walley (1989, pp.288-289). Interestingly, Angus (1992, pp.39-40) cautions researchers engaged in defining a knowledge base for teaching as a result of his own research into the transformation of knowledge about teaching. He raises questions about the feasibility and the utility of such a knowledge base. The discussion of uncertainties in teaching conducted by Floden and Buchmann (1993, pp.211-221) also raises questions about the inherent restrictions that a rigidly defined knowledge base places on any professional.

Knight, Lingard and Porter (1991, p.135) argue for a "reconstruction of the notion of professionalism within teaching". Clearly they do not believe teaching is yet a profession or even that a suitable definition of what a teaching profession should be like has been agreed upon. The argument comes in response to aspects of an industrial intervention, award restructuring, which they view as too "narrow and technicist" (1991, p.134).

At least one group of writers appear to believe that teaching already is a profession and base their ideas for improving the profession around the concept of collegiality; hence the concept of "interactive professionalism" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991). Fullan and Hargreaves have published much on the subject together and individually (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992; Fullan, 1991; and Hargreaves, 1994). Other writers who would

improve the profession by promoting collegiality include Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994) and Adie (1988).

Educators are not united in their perceptions of teaching as a profession. This is perhaps the most significant indicator that teaching is not yet a true and recognisable profession. However Shacklock (1994, p.3) is able to say after his review of the literature on teachers as professionals that:

There is a dominant trend which runs through most of this work which is unmistakable - there is an assumption that teachers either are, or at least are realistic in their aspirations to be, professionals.

With Mitchell and Kerchner's conception of teachers' work in mind the study proceeds on that basis.

The work of teacher librarians

The general view of teaching as a profession provides a framework for a more specific consideration of the work of teacher librarians. Teacher librarians tread a fine line between two professions, teaching and librarianship. The knowledge base of both professions are problematic. Teaching's knowledge base is questionable because it has never been explicitly defined. Librarianship's knowledge base is rigidly defined but being made increasingly redundant by information technology. The struggles that teachers endure as a profession are compounded for teacher librarians by a dual loyalty and by the ambiguous position which being a member of two professions creates. Teachers often do not recognise teacher librarians as real teachers and librarians often do not recognise them as real librarians. Despite this, the teacher librarianship literature abounds with strong voices advocating the teacher librarian's role in education. It is a role which is only beginning to be recognised by education systems.

This section of the review of literature identifies some of those voices and outlines what they say teacher librarians should be doing.

Different conceptualisations of teacher librarians' work can be identified in various nations and education systems. An American view is presented by Shontz (1991), who describes the three primary roles of teacher librarians as information specialist, instructional consultant and teacher. Shontz provides nine standards of performance which include ninety-nine indicators to evaluate teacher librarians in each of these roles. The view she presents is based on a comprehensive review of the American literature and incorporates several nationally significant evaluation frameworks. The document also presents guidelines for other aspects of school library services such as personnel, facilities, resources, organisation, planning and management, and access. While Shontz doesn't say how the ninety-nine indicators could be measured, the standards and indicators themselves provide a comprehensive and convincing account of the teacher librarian's ideal role.

Haycock (1991) discusses a view adopted by the Canadian School Library Association. He divides the role of teacher librarians into "nine areas of competence" (1991, p.17). These are: administration of the learning resource centre program; selection of learning resources; acquisition; organisation and circulation of learning resources; reading, listening and viewing guidance; design and production of learning resources; information and reference services; promotion of the effective use of learning resources and services; cooperative program planning and teaching; and professionalism and leadership. The nine areas are further subdivided into sixty-seven specific competencies. As with the work of Shontz this represents a highly refined and idealistic delineation of the teacher librarian's role.

“Learning for the future” is a document produced by a collaborative effort between the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) and the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), and published by the Curriculum Corporation (1993). It contains a highly significant Australian conceptualisation of teacher librarians’ work. It describes a circular model (p.6) of five interrelated domains of the school library resource service which has learners and learning as the hub surrounded by: teachers and teaching; resourcing the curriculum; developing the physical environment; and providing access to information. These five domains are further encompassed by four cyclic processes which are: analysis of need; developing policy; implementing policy; and evaluating outcomes. The eighteen listed facets of the role of the teacher librarian (pp.43-44) occur within the framework of this circular model.

Finally, the Ministry of Education, W.A. and the State School Teachers’ Union of Western Australia (1993) have formulated a Western Australian statement of what should constitute teacher librarians’ work. This draft document details six broad areas of responsibility which are: planning and implementation of learning activities; student management; library resource centre collection development; library resource centre operations; school planning and administration; and professional activities. Within these six broad areas are listed twenty-five specific responsibilities for teacher librarians.

A thorough comparison of these four views of teacher librarians’ work would make an interesting study. It is not the purpose of the study to do that. However, it is possible that even though each view is structured and categorised differently, the actual content of the teacher librarians’ role contained in each would be found to be highly similar if such a study were to be done. Each of the above four documents may exert an

important influence on the professional ideology of individual teacher librarians. All of them contribute to expectations that teacher librarians hold for their own professional lives and so may become the yardsticks by which individuals gauge the quality and legitimacy of their own practice. However these documents do little to prepare teacher librarians for the reality of an education system which pays, at best, lip service to the ideals they espouse. Therefore Ashenden's campaign to bring practice closer to the professional ideology of teachers may seem attractive to teacher librarians.

The Ashenden proposal

Compared with the other literature on teachers' work, Ashenden's proposal is interesting because it claims to describe teachers' work as it is now and to provide a model to redesign teachers' work through the industrial relations process so that governments, industry, teacher employers, teachers and students all stand to gain, no matter what their definition of quality. It suggests a collaborative restructuring process at odds with the adversarial nature of most industrial relations but in agreement with the collaborative ideals of education. It further suggests that the conflict between practice and professional ideology affects not only teachers but education systems and unions alike. This section will identify the literature containing and surrounding the Ashenden proposal, the responses to the Ashenden proposal, and finally, the Ashenden proposal itself will be explained.

The Ashenden proposal has been published in three forms (Ashenden, 1989b, 1990a, 1990c) and has received a wide audience. For related publications see Ashenden (1989a, 1989c, 1990b, 1992a, 1992b, 1994) and Ashenden and Milligan (1993). The

most vehement opposition to the Ashenden proposal came from unionists (Moloney, 1990; Flinn, 1990).

Moloney (1990, p.13) claims that it is “nonsense”, going on to point out what he sees as Ashenden’s “limited conceptions of productivity”, his ignorance of the “time frames of the award restructure”, his ignorance of the details and priorities of the wages system, and his ignorance of the “practical difficulties encountered by teacher unions”. Three of the four criticisms relate to the mechanisms of the industrial relations system, so are not directly relevant to the study. Moloney’s criticism of Ashenden’s limited conception of productivity is relevant as the aim of the Ashenden proposal is to increase the productivity of teachers’ work. Interestingly, Ashenden has accused the teachers’ unions of exactly the same narrow view (1990a, p.11-12,15-16).

Flinn characterises the Ashenden proposal as a “pretence” (1990, p.23) and his alignment with the AEC as “nothing short of a joke” (1990, p.24). According to Flinn, Ashenden’s criticisms of union approaches to award restructuring are unfounded and ignorant, the focus of Ashenden’s argument is narrow, the proposal is divisive, and Ashenden is mistaken in his assumption that non-teachers would be cheaper than teachers.

Assessments have also been offered by Seddon (1991, 1995) and Robertson (1994, forthcoming). Seddon points out much that is useful about Ashenden’s work and notes:

What is most valuable about Ashenden’s starting point is that it focuses attention unequivocally on teachers’ actual labour process - the work teachers do and the workplace they do it in - rather than on the agencies that regulate teachers’ work or the imputed problems facing teachers and teaching. From this he offers a redefinition of the problem of teachers and teaching and a new solution. (1995, p.248)

Seddon then goes on to criticise Ashenden's analysis of the problem as too narrow, because it focuses only on what teachers do in the classroom (1995, p.250). She also disagrees with what she claims is his privileging of the "ideology of education over the actual practice of teachers' work" (1995, p.250). As if to confirm Flinn's criticism, Seddon identifies the Ashenden proposal as an intervention in the restructuring of teaching and the teacher quality debate which is closely aligned with "conservative specifications" (1991, p.18; 1995, p.250).

Robertson (1994) cites the work of Ashenden as an example of conservative strategies designed to create the more flexible labour force required for post-Fordist modes of production. She equates Ashenden's proposed division of labour within schools with post-Fordist moves towards more flexible workforces (forthcoming, p.7; 1994, p.140) and also with similar proposals emanating from the NSP (forthcoming, p.27). Robertson also welcomes "Ashenden's attention to the labour process of teaching" (1994, p.132). She identifies the strength of Ashenden's proposal as his identification of the conflict between the labour process of teaching and teachers' professional ideology. Robertson defines 'professional ideology' as "a commitment to educating children - that is [teachers'] pedagogical concerns" (1994, p.132). She notes with scepticism Ashenden's claim that his proposal could give teachers the chance to "become real professionals" (forthcoming, p.3). Robertson (1994) goes on to point out some aspects of the proposal that teachers would be unwilling to accept and highlights some of the ethical and industrial issues not addressed by Ashenden. Finally she argues that the Ashenden proposal is "essentially undemocratic" (forthcoming, p.29).

The only known empirical investigation of the proposal in a school setting is an interview-based field study by Chadbourne and Robertson (1992) focusing on a junior

primary school. According to Chadbourne and Robertson, the teachers in the school they studied are not willing to swap salary increases for the trade-offs required by the Ashenden proposal. The teachers seem content in their cottage classrooms and do not believe that the Ashenden proposal constitutes a better way, in terms of student learning, of organising their work.

The Ashenden proposal includes his analysis of the problem and his proposed solution. Each will now be explained.

According to Ashenden teachers are “deeply unhappy” (1990a, p.11); their level of professional satisfaction is very low. The three factors causing this unhappiness are: workload; relationships with students; and wages and conditions. In relation to workload, Ashenden notes that teachers are asked to do “too many things which aren't really *teaching*” (1990a, p.12). This phenomenon relates to the concept of the intensification of teachers' work as identified by Connell (1985, p.69-85) and described by Hargreaves (1994, pp.14-15). Robertson (1994, pp.141-144) identifies current Australian trends in the intensification of teachers' work. Relationships with students are largely unsatisfying for teachers, according to Ashenden. If, as Lortie claims, the “psychic rewards” of teaching are to be found in “caring for and working with young people” (in Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991, p.22), then a deficiency in their relationships with students could result in the type of teacher dissatisfaction which Ashenden describes. The final aspect of the problem, wages and conditions, has to do with the recognition and remuneration teachers feel they deserve as professionals.

These three symptoms are aggravated by the discrepancy between the practice of teaching and the professional ideology or aspirations of teachers. The discrepancy is,

in turn, caused by the poor organisation and management of teachers' work. The classroom is the last of the "mass cottage industries" (Ashenden, 1989a, p.12; 1992b, p.60) which means that, as a rule, teachers perform every duty required to keep the classroom functioning, including many routine, non-professional duties.

Ashenden's solution, inspired by the comments of Shanker (1987), is to redesign teachers' work. What the classroom needs is more division of labour. This entails bringing in more non-teaching staff such as parents, clerical staff and intern teachers to take care of all the jobs that presently distract teachers from the real business of teaching and learning. The subsequent rise in the productivity of learning would justify a rise in teachers' salaries. To pay for the salary increases and the extra staff, Ashenden proposes reducing the total number of teachers by approximately one third. The reduction would be achieved through natural attrition. The resultant rise in student to teacher ratios would be compensated by the reorganisation of learning groups, and the use of various technologies and new pedagogies to shift the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the student.

The Ashenden proposal is a clever integration of many current themes in the industrial arena, the teacher quality debate, the professionalisation of teachers movement, and learning theory. For this reason it is important to examine the nature of the proposal, especially in terms of its implications for the definition and control of teachers' work.

Summary

The review of literature has explored the concept of teachers' work as an emerging profession. Within this framework additional demands upon the work of teacher librarians in an information society have been described. The Ashenden proposal and

the published responses to it have been introduced. The Ashenden proposal has been described as an intervention in the teacher quality debate that could facilitate a collaborative resolution of industrial, professional and quality issues, to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. An apparent contradiction between Ashenden's sympathy towards teachers' professional aspirations and what some writers have identified as an alignment with conservative specifications that tend to characterise teachers' work as labour, is explored in chapters four and five. The review of literature supports the significance of this study of teachers' work within the broader field of educational administration.

CHAPTER THREE

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter explains the theoretical and conceptual frameworks which guide the study and describes and justifies the method used.

Theoretical framework

Methodology

Constructivism, as described by Guba and Lincoln (1994, pp.110-111), provides the theoretical assumptions underpinning the study. This theoretical paradigm makes ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions which have been applied to this research. The ontological implication of the constructivist approach is that the reality of the library organisation, within and around which teacher librarians spend much of their time, is viewed as a social construct. Greenfield refers to organisations as “a set of people caught within a definition of how they shall relate to each other” (1993, p.104). What can be known about an organisation, according to the epistemological assumptions of constructivism, is to be found in the minds of those who make up the organisation, since that is where the organisation exists. The methodology of the study must therefore be one which seeks to understand the unique meaning which the Ashenden proposal has for each participant teacher librarian within and for the context of their school library organisation. The Ashenden proposal and its possible impact upon the work of teacher librarians and other teachers can be investigated by seeking to understand the perspectives of individual teacher librarians and looking for patterns and common themes in their responses.

The study of teachers' work

In addition to methodological assumptions, the study adopts a particular approach with regard to the conceptualisation of teachers' work. Within the framework of the labour process approach (Watkins, 1992), it is assumed that teaching is, or should be, a profession; that teachers are ultimately responsible for both defining and controlling the performance of their professional duties. However, teaching as a profession occurs in a cultural, political, social and economic milieu which often threatens the definition and control of teachers' work. It is as part of the struggle between vested interests and the teaching profession that the study finds its significance. It is further assumed that teachers have a professional obligation to continuously seek improvement. The study is also an expression of that obligation. As a member of the teaching profession, the researcher has investigated the Ashenden proposal, firstly as one possibility for improving the work of teachers through an examination of the organisation and management of teachers' work, and secondly as an intervention designed to define and control the nature of teachers' work.

The Ashenden proposal apparently seeks to grant teachers the freedom to teach according to their professional ideology and aspirations, by redesigning teachers' work. However as Robertson points out, "powerful and vested interests" (forthcoming, p.5) can redefine the nature of teachers' work through the manipulation of "words and concepts" (p.5) such as professionalism. The Ashenden proposal may be, as one critic has suggested, "a wolf in sheep's clothing" (Flinn, 1990, p.23).

Conceptual framework

Figure 2 shows a simple model of the education system. In line with the constructivist approach to educational research, this framework is the individual construction of the researcher. It represents the researcher's overall conception of the education system at the time of the study. It is provided to enable readers to better understand as many of the influences on the study as possible so that they are better placed to construct their own interpretations of the findings and draw their own conclusions. The researcher is seeking to disclose not only the method of the study but also the mind of the researcher.

Basic components of any system, such as inputs, processes, outputs and feedback are included. The inputs included are not meant to be a comprehensive list of all the inputs to the education system, but only those inputs which have specific relevance to the study. The concept of teachers' work is shown as it relates to other elements of the education system. Teachers' work is significant because it stands between all the inputs to education and the process of learning. Teachers' work is the transforming filter through which all inputs to the system must pass before they reach students. Teachers and their work are central to education not only because they perform this function but also because there is nothing else which could. Teachers are necessary. If eight hundred students were placed in a school complete with facilities, policies, organisational structures, curricula and other inputs, they would learn very little without teachers.

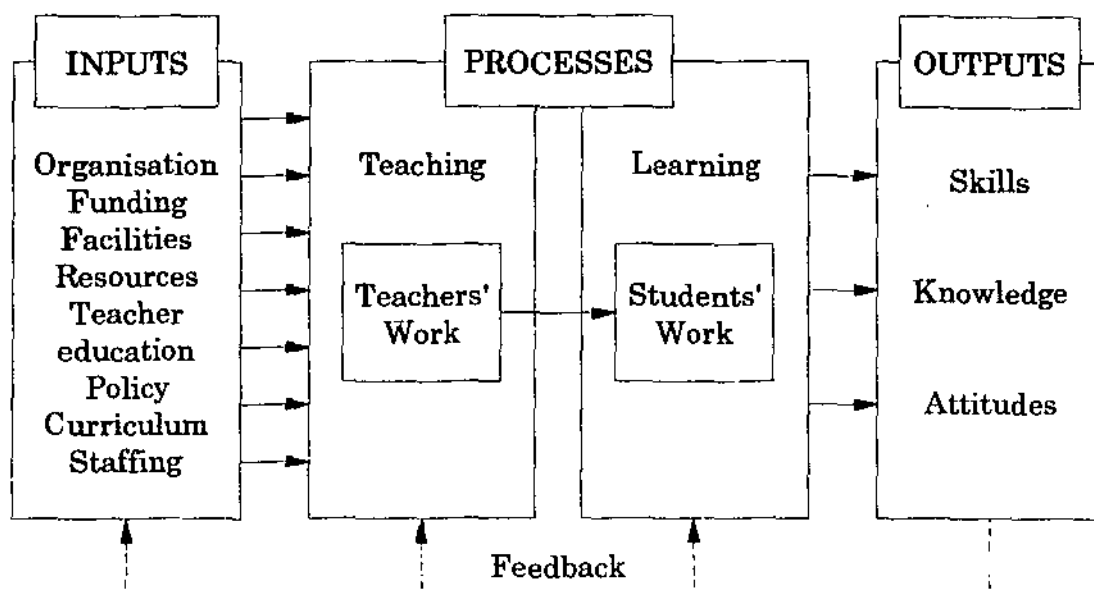


Figure 2. A representation of the education system showing the significance of teachers' work in the production of skills, knowledge and attitudes.

The conceptual framework also has implications for the quality and productivity of teachers' work since the work of teachers directly affects the learning process. The centrality of teachers' work is described by an anonymous teacher who inadvertently supplied the title for "good teachers make good schools" (Ministry of Education, W.A., 1990) and who also said, "good teachers using good pedagogy ensure good learning". Dawkins (1988, p.5) states that "the quality of teaching is central to the quality of our schools". Knight, Lingard and Porter (1991, p.135) also acknowledge "the centrality of teachers and their work to an improved educational provision". Whether the concept of centrality makes teachers the scapegoats or whether it opens opportunities for teachers to define and control the quality of their work seems to depend on how the concept is used and by whom.

Quality is closely related to productivity. Seddon (1991, p.15 & 1995, p.248) argues that "increasing productivity aims to increase real outputs, both in quantity and quality,

using a constant amount of labour over a constant time". Seddon also concurs with the argument of Marginson that "increased productivity ... involves changes in the organisation of work" (Seddon, 1991, p.15 & 1995, p.248). Thus redesigning teachers' work to achieve greater productivity becomes a basis of negotiations for better pay and conditions for teachers.

Many interventions concerned with improving the quality of education tend to focus on one or other of the inputs shown in Figure 2. For example, devolution in Western Australia focuses on changing organisational structure and policy while student outcome statements are essentially a curriculum oriented regulatory intervention. However all these interventions are at risk of failure because they have to pass through the transforming filter of teachers' work. These interventions tend to ignore the fact that teachers are people who make decisions about what they will or won't do. Teachers have their own purposes, and as much power, for affecting the quality of learning, as they decide to use.

The Ashenden proposal, on the other hand, is an intervention which focuses solely on teachers' work in seeking to improve education. The study shows that this is just as problematic as concentrating only on inputs. Nevertheless, the Ashenden proposal is valuable because it makes the assumption that if teachers have the freedom to teach the way they want to (according to their aspirations), then the quality and possibly the productivity of teaching will increase. Implicit in this assumption then, is trust in the professional intentions, knowledge and discretionary judgements of teachers.

The conceptual framework displayed in Figure 2 supports the significance of research which investigates proposals for improving education through redesigning teachers'

work according to the professional aspirations of teachers. It does this without negating the importance of inputs or the possibility that inputs may need adjusting in order to facilitate improvements in the work of teachers.

Method

Guba and Lincoln (1994) identify four competing paradigms in qualitative research: positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, and constructivism. On page 30 of this document, in the section discussing the theoretical framework for the study, it was stated that the methodology of the study must be one which seeks to understand the unique meaning which the Ashenden proposal has for each participant teacher librarian within and for the context of their school library organisation. With this requirement in mind the study adopts a constructivist approach using semi-structured interviews based on open questions linked to the subsidiary research questions, to elicit the individually constructed views of teacher librarians. Fontana and Frey (1994, pp.361-376) discuss the interview in qualitative research. Huberman and Miles (1994, pp.428-444) discuss issues, definitions and methods of qualitative data management and analysis. One of these methods, described in more detail by Maykut and Morehouse (1994, pp.126-149), is the constant comparative method, which is used in the study.

There are other published studies which use a similar interview-based methodology. The most relevant example is that by Chadbourne and Robertson (1992) which is also an investigation of the Ashenden proposal, though in a different setting. Neumann (1990) adopted an interview-based approach to investigating academic work, a topic related to teachers' work. Holbeck (1990) used a semi-structured interview approach to investigate the early withdrawal of rural students in their first year of tertiary study.

Aspin, Chapman and Wilkinson (1994) use interview-based data to identify concepts of quality schooling held by individuals across a broad range of educational organisations.

In this section the method used in the study is described in considerable detail. The reasons identified by Huberman and Miles for this “transparency of method” (1994, p.439) are: to inspire confidence in the reported conclusions; to facilitate secondary analysis of the data; to allow replication of the study; and to demonstrate integrity. To achieve these ends this section carefully reports on: the selection and characteristics of participants; the nature and development of the collection instrument; the step-by-step procedures followed; the method of data analysis; the pilot study; and the perceived limitations of the study including how the researcher has attempted to overcome the limitations.

Participants

Four factors guided the selection of participants for the study. First, the number of participants was determined partly by the scope of the study and partly by a judgement about how many would be needed to reach the point of data saturation. Second, participants had to be currently practising in the Perth metropolitan area. This was to ensure that they could consider the Ashenden proposal in relation to an actual school library setting. Thirdly, all the participants needed to be in charge of the school library in which they worked. This would enable them to comment on the reorganisation of work practices from the point of view of the overall administration of the library as well as considering how the library functioned within the context of the school. Finally, the participants were selected from a list of attendees at a seminar organised by WASLA and conducted by Ashenden in 1990. This meant that the participants had

at least five years experience in school libraries. It also ensured they had some previous exposure to the ideas of Ashenden. Additionally, the fact that they had attended the seminar was an indicator of their commitment to the profession of teacher librarianship. Tables 1, 2 and 3 summarise the biographical and contextual data collected about the eight teacher librarians in the study.

Table 1. Mean age and experience of participant teacher librarians

Teacher librarians	Mean (years)
Age	47.6
Experience in school libraries	14.6

Table 2. Characteristics of schools where participants were employed

Schools (n=8)			
People		Education system	
Students (mean)	Teachers (mean)	Government	Independent
986.6	81.4	5	3

Table 3. Mean staffing profile of school libraries in the study

Staff	Mean FTE
Teacher librarians	2.175
Library technicians	0.375
Library officers	1.6125
Parent help	0.0625
Student teachers	0.125
Other assistance	0.0875
Total staff	4.4375

Collection instrument

The main data collection instrument was a semi-structured interview supplemented by a brief biographical questionnaire, which was presented to participants in a package together with a two page summary of the Ashenden proposal. Appendix A contains the entire package. The linking of questionnaire and interview questions to the research questions is shown in diagram form in Appendix B.

The number and nature of the interview questions were refined through a pilot study and also according to suggestions made by reviewers of the research proposal. The pilot study is explained more fully on page 42.

Procedure

Potential participants were selected according to the criteria outlined in the section entitled Participants, on page 36, and approached to participate in the study. After the initial approach they received a letter explaining what the study was about and what it would mean for them in terms of time and work. Nine people were approached and eight agreed to participate in the study. A package containing the questionnaire, interview schedule, summary of the Ashenden proposal and the disclosure and consent form was mailed or delivered to participants once they agreed to participate (see Appendix A).

The interview occurred on average about sixteen days after the package was sent. The delay allowed sufficient time for participants to think through their responses to the interview questions. Some participants made notes on the interview schedule and these were collected, where possible, at the interview along with the questionnaire.

The disclosure and consent form was also signed by the participant and the researcher at the interview. All participants consented to the taping of the interviews.

Interview tapes were subsequently transcribed, the data analysed (see page 39, Analysis of Data), and a preliminary summary of the findings prepared (see Appendix C). The process described by Maykut and Morehouse as a “member check” (1994, p.147) was then carried out. Participants received a copy of the preliminary summary and were asked to comment on any aspects with which they disagreed or any important point which they felt was missing. Their comments were then incorporated into the findings of the study. The member check proved to be a valuable test of the initial interpretation of participants’ comments. None of the participants disagreed with any of the interpretations or conclusions drawn by the researcher, however they did add a few points which they had omitted at the time of the interview.

Analysis of data

The collection and analysis of qualitative data, as Miles and Huberman (1984, p.26) note, should begin concurrently. From the beginning of the first interview of the study, regularities were noted, patterns observed, and possible explanations explored, changing and growing in firmness as the data accumulated.

Maykut and Morehouse base their description of the constant comparative method of data analysis on the work of Glaser and Strauss, Lincoln and Guba, Taylor and Bogdan, and Sibbet (1967, 1985, 1984 & 1981 respectively, in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.126). For their description of the method see Maykut and Morehouse (1994, pp.126-149). Figure 3 summarises the process. The method was adapted for use in this study and found to be a thorough and efficient method of data analysis.

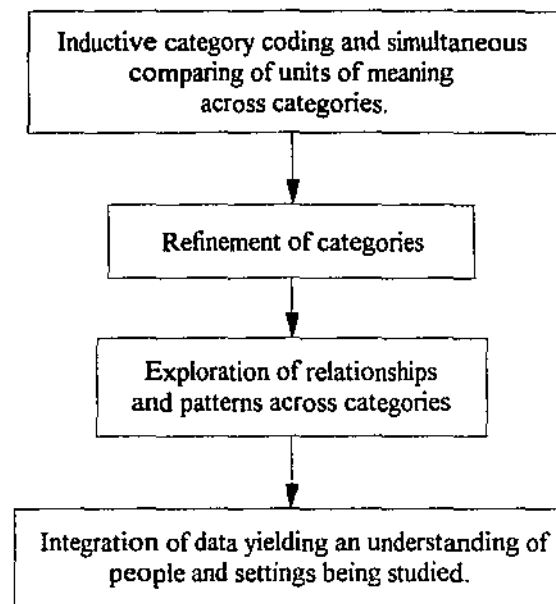


Figure 3. Constant comparative method of data analysis (from Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p.135)

The first stage of the constant comparative method is the preparation of the data. Data collected for the study included the interview tapes, questionnaires, participants' notes on interview schedules and other documents supplied by participants. The other documents included existing role statements and lists of tasks. The preparation of data began with the transcribing of interview tapes onto computer based text files to produce a hard copy. The hard copies of the transcripts, along with the questionnaires and other data, were then coded to indicate the source, type and location of data as shown in Table 4.

Next the data was divided into units of meaning, a process Maykut and Morehouse refer to as "unitizing the data" (1994, p.128). This was done by reading through the transcripts and other data, and by highlighting each section of text which formed a unit

of meaning and stood by itself in relation to the text around it. At this point each unit of meaning was allocated a unique code so that it could be referred to and identified easily from the body of data.

Table 4 shows the scheme of coding used in the study. For example, a code of T3-9e would describe unit of meaning, 'e' from page 9 of the interview transcript of participant number three.

Table 4. The coding scheme for units of meaning in the study

Aspect of data to be identified:	Category	Code
Type of data	Interview transcript	T
	Questionnaire	Q
	Member check	M
	Other	O
Source of data	Participant (8)	1-8
Location of data	Page number	any numeral
	Unit of meaning	a-z

The coding of units of meaning began with the completion of the first transcript. Also, at this time the process referred to by Maykut and Morehouse as “inductive category coding” (1994, p.134) began. As units of meaning were coded they were also allocated a label which consisted of a single word or short phrase which seemed to the researcher to effectively summarise the content of that unit. These labels were recorded separately with the code as a reference. As the collection and analysis of data proceeded, other units which seemed to have similar meanings were referenced under the same label. Sometimes it was necessary to go back and read the original unit of meaning to ensure that the label actually applied to the new unit. If a unit of

meaning did not fit any existing label, a new label was created. The end result was a collection of provisional categories divided into sections according to the research questions of the study. Some provisional categories had up to twenty references; others had only one or two.

The refinement of categories followed (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p.139). At this stage, units of meaning were assembled together in text files according to their provisional categories. This allowed direct comparison of units within categories and refinement of categories through either removing unsuitable units from categories, moving units between categories, developing new categories, or relabelling categories to more accurately reflect the meaning of the units they contained.

In the exploration of relationships across categories (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p.143), the quite specific categories were grouped under more general concepts. This helped to identify broader trends and issues and also lead to the integration of data, which culminated in the understanding of the views of the participant teacher librarians regarding the Ashenden proposal.

Pilot study

In April 1995, a pilot study was conducted by the researcher to ascertain the relevance of the questionnaire and interview schedule to the research questions, the amount of work involved in transcribing interview tapes and analysis of data, and the utility and suitability of the constant comparative method of data analysis for this particular study. Two practising teacher librarians agreed to participate.

As a result of the pilot study and advice from reviewers, the original interview schedule was modified significantly. In the pilot study it was found that a number of

questions were duplicating the data collected or were not directly relevant to the research questions. These questions were revised or eliminated. The number of interview questions was reduced from fifty-six to seventeen. The use of a pilot study to test the collection instrument and data analysis method greatly increased the quality and validity of the main study.

Limitations

The scope of the study was limited by the time constraints of the honours degree course. The main effect of this limitation was the number of participants in the study.

The study does not accept or reject the utility of the Ashenden proposal. That would require a full scale trial in at least one whole secondary school. Even then generalisations to other schools would be dangerous. What the study does is to investigate the possible implications of the Ashenden proposal for the work of eight teacher librarians. The issues, trends and consistencies identified as a result of this investigation should not be taken as generalisations directly applicable to all other teachers or teacher librarians. They are guides or indicators of the nature of the Ashenden proposal. However, conclusions drawn in the study were based on agreement between at least two and sometimes three sources of data, for example, the literature, the field data, the Ashenden proposal itself.

The Ashenden proposal is intended for implementation on a whole school basis. The study investigates the proposal in the context of a much smaller and quite different organisation, the secondary school library. It is possible that the shortcomings identified in the Ashenden proposal and the suggested modifications may have arisen as a result of investigating the proposal in a different context to that for which it was

originally intended. However, as already stated, all conclusions were confirmed from at least one other source of data in an effort to broaden the context of the study and to overcome this limitation.

CHAPTER FOUR

TEACHER LIBRARIANS' VIEWS ON THE ASHENDEN PROPOSAL

Introduction

This chapter reports the findings of the study, providing answers to the first four subsidiary research questions listed on page 13. Firstly, Ashenden's analysis of the problem of teachers' work is investigated and then his proposed solution is assessed in terms of its application to the work of the participant teacher librarians and their school library organisations. In chapter five the Ashenden proposal is further compared to the teacher librarians' own views of improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school library and in chapter six alternative proposals are presented, based on the participants' comments, the literature, and the Ashenden proposal. Whenever participants are directly quoted an anonymous code is supplied to indicate the source of the quote. The codes range from TL1 to TL8. TL stands for teacher librarian.

The problem

The study set out partly to discover whether the problems reported by Ashenden are experienced by these teacher librarians.

The discrepancy between practice and the ideal

It makes so much sense to believe that there must be a discrepancy between practice and the ideal that it almost seems beyond the need for investigation. Surely this principle applies in many situations in the world of work and life generally. Yet since the Ashenden proposal is designed to bring practice closer to the professional ideals of

teachers, it is important to ask: what are teachers' ideals?; what tasks do they currently perform?; and what is the nature of the discrepancy between the two? Three sources of evidence will be examined which support Ashenden's claim that the discrepancy does exist and provide clues as to the nature of the discrepancy. The first is the diversity of teacher librarians' practice compared with the unity of their vision. The second is a direct comparison between practice and ideals. The third centres on the factors that teacher librarians report which prevent achievement of the ideal standard of teaching and learning in their libraries.

The teacher librarians were asked to list all the tasks they perform in their current positions. Overall they listed 77 distinct duties. Appendix D contains a complete listing. Table 5 shows those tasks which were reported by more than half the participants.

Table 5. Tasks reported by more than half the participants in their current position

Task	Frequency (n=8)
Budget	8
Information skills programme	8
Managing Library staff	7
Selection of resources	7
Collaborate with teachers	6
Managing library systems	5
Literature promotion programme	5
Correspondence	5

It is remarkable that only 10.5% (8 out of 77) of the reported tasks were performed by more than half of the participants. A related fact is that 54.5% (42 out of 77) of tasks were reported by only one participant. In other words, more than half of what these

teacher librarians do is unique to their particular school library context. This is indicative of a great diversity within the practice of teacher librarianship.

The teacher librarians were also asked to describe their ideal view of teaching and learning in the school library. Three areas: resources, information skills, and collaboration, were consistently included in their ideal view. In relation to resources the teacher librarians said:

We should provide all the necessary resources to match all the clientele we have in the school, the staff and students. I think it's essential that we set up, like a little information hub within the school that can contact the international databases and things like that. (TL1)

Our main priorities here are I think supporting teachers, curriculum support of teachers, and then supporting students in recreational interests and all the other stuff associated with their subjects. (TL2)

And with adequate resources in the library. (TL4)

Kids are going to have access to computers, to the library catalogue, to CD-ROMs, to internet from their classroom. Our cooperative teaching role with teachers will have a dimension of providing access to resources to kids. (TL5)

When you've got 1200 kids in a school you do need a big range of resources and we don't have it. And ideally, I'd see not only the library two-thirds full [in terms of bookings] but also the library two thirds full with current up to date resources. (TL6)

Supplying an adequate resource collection for the school. (TL8)

These teacher librarians have a clear and consistent vision of their responsibility as resource specialists within the secondary school. Their view of resources is suitably expanded to include up to date technology. This is emphasised by the fact that they rarely used the term 'book' during these interviews. Their vision of libraries seems to be keeping pace with the latest developments in information technology. They are concerned with ensuring that resources are relevant to the curriculum.

They are also concerned with teaching students how to use the resources to become informed. The second area on which most of them focused was information skills.

And so what I would like to see much more of than I do is all assignments very clearly distinguished between content and skills. And we use each assignment and every assignment not necessarily to teach but to reinforce a particular skill. For example, notemaking, finding information. (TL3)

And an information skills program which we're using the Ministry type continuum, the information process type philosophy and trying to get that going throughout the school across curriculum. (TL5)

We would be teaching skills across the board and we would be reinforcing them. And it's interesting that in Stepping Out, they're saying that in their research that they maintain a skill has to be repeated seventeen times before a child absorbs and inculcates it into their practice. (TL6)

I think it's very important that students learn the skills of finding information, finding it effectively and evaluating the information they've got and using them. (TL7)

Teaching research skills where necessary. Doing the location skills, doing the notemaking skills. Assisting students to achieve success in the library. That's where I see my main role. (TL8)

What is evident from the above comments is that, where the curriculum is concerned, teacher librarians are more concerned with skills and processes than with content. Their emphasis is on teaching students how to locate and use information in all subject areas, rather than teaching them specific facts. What they are concerned with is enabling students to gain intellectual access to the resources within and without the school library collection. Their views are consistent with Doyle's (1994) idea of information literacy as discussed in chapter two.

The third area of consistency among the views of the teacher librarians is in the area of collaboration. They comment:

Co-operation between staff and students. (TL8)

But my ideal view of teaching and learning in the library would be for TLs and teachers to work together and for students to work together as well. And I think it's really essential that TLs and teachers get together and work out, right, now what's this assignment, or what's this essay, or what's this product going to give the kids in the long run. (TL1)

To me the library should work very closely indeed with the teaching staff (TL3)

So that's sort of trying to get the independent learning, cooperative teaching, you know all those sorts of philosophies accepted across the school ... our cooperative teaching role with teachers will have a dimension of providing access to resources to kids. (TL5)

My ideal is the cooperative planning model of Haycock. So I would perceive the best way would be the idea that you get together with the teacher. You have an idea of what sort of skills you want each year level to learn. You have an idea of where the students are. You work with the teachers in the different subjects to develop the skills and you're involved in evaluating the skills by seeing how they've gone. (TL7)

The three areas of resources, skills and collaboration begin to blend into one another at this stage to form what is arguably a highly consistent and common vision, held by the teacher librarians. The vision is also consistent with the models of teacher librarians' work discussed in chapter two, especially that of Shontz (1991). Shontz's three primary roles of the teacher librarian are information specialist, teacher and instructional consultant. Each of the three aspects of the teacher librarians' vision can be seen as an application of an aspect of the Shontz model as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Comparison of Shontz (1991) model with participants' ideal view of teaching and learning in the school library

Aspect of Shontz model	Teacher Librarian Vision
Information Specialist	Provision of resources
Teacher	Information skills across the curriculum
Instructional Consultant	Collaboration with classroom teachers

Anyone familiar with Shontz (1991) will recognise this as a superficial comparison. They will also recognise that the provision of resources is not the total role of an information specialist. Neither are information skills the total role of the teacher librarian as teacher. The same could be noted about collaboration and the role of instructional consultant. Nevertheless, the unity of this ideal view and its consistency with the literature is significant.

It is significant because on one hand there is a unity of vision amongst these teacher librarians which seems to be consistent with ideals advocated in the literature, and on the other there is a diversity of practice. This observation indicates a significant gap between practice and the ideal. At least two possibilities can be suggested to explain the nature of the discrepancy. The first relates to the nature of the ideal. Is it an ideal which teacher librarians actively strive for and expect to be able to achieve, or is it one which guides their practice but is too utopian in nature to be seen as achievable? The second relates to the nature of practice. The small group of practitioners in the study were drawn from a broad cross-section of schools both in terms of size and education system. Could it be that the ideal finds different expressions in the different personal styles of each practitioner and the different cultural, political, social and economic contexts of each school library? If that is the case then an apparent discrepancy between practice and the ideal may not indicate a conflict but merely the natural consequences of implementing the ideal in different contexts. If the ideal is a firm expectation then a discrepancy may also indicate the presence of restraining factors at work within the contexts of each school library.

The second source of evidence which seems to support the Ashenden view of a discrepancy between practice and professional ideology is a direct comparison

between the tasks reported by the teacher librarians and aspects of their ideal. How much of what they actually do relates to what they want to be doing?

The comparison was carried out on a group basis which possibly biases the comparison against the Ashenden view since it creates the opportunity for practice to appear closer to the ideal than it really is. This is because an aspect of the ideal reported by one teacher librarian could relate to an aspect of practice reported by a different teacher librarian. However it also allows for the possibility that in an interview situation, individuals may have omitted aspects of their own ideal view which, given their unity of vision, other individuals may have mentioned. The table in Appendix D shows the full list of tasks reported by the teacher librarians. There are 77 distinct tasks which are reported a total of 175 times. The fourth column of the table shows those tasks which directly relate to any aspect of the ideal view of teaching and learning as reported by any of the teacher librarians. The table shows that of the 175 tasks currently performed by these practitioners, 91 are directly relevant to their stated ideal. In other words, 52% of the tasks they perform directly contribute to the achievement of their professional ideology. The other 48% do not. This should not be interpreted as indicating any time value. What it does indicate is that these teacher librarians do a lot of things that may not contribute directly to the achievement of their professional ideology. Further compounding this evidence of a discrepancy between practice and the ideal is the high probability that, of the 52% of tasks that relate to the ideal, few if any of these tasks are accomplished at an ideal standard.

The third source of evidence supporting a discrepancy between practice and professional ideology centres on the factors which the teacher librarians themselves report which prevent the achievement of that ideal standard. According to Ashenden

the main factor in the discrepancy is the organisation and management of teachers' work (1990a, p.12), which is the focus of his solution. The factors reported by the teacher librarians confirm the discrepancy between practice and the ideal but also point to a broader view of the problem than Ashenden. Appendix E contains a full list of the twenty one factors reported by the teacher librarians along with sample comments and the frequency with which each factor was reported. Four factors stand out because of the number of participants who mentioned them and the amount of time they spent talking about them. Table 7 summarises these four important factors.

Table 7. Main factors preventing achievement of the ideal standard of teaching and learning in secondary school libraries

Reported factors	Sample comments	Frequency mentioned (n=8)
Content orientation of curriculum and/or teachers	This school of course is at the moment very content orientated and very exam driven. And a lot of the emphasis is recall rather than the skills we're trying to put across. (TL5)	6
Lack of Time	I don't seem to have the time to do as much literature promotion as I'd like to. You never seem to have enough time to do whatever you want to do. (TL7)	5
Teachers' lack of co-operation	The main problem is probably the perceptions of the teachers. (TL7)	5
Understaffing	I think our staffing is fairly minimal for what we're trying to do. (TL5)	4

The first factor is the content rather than process emphasis of the curriculum and consequently of teachers and students. As one teacher librarian explained:

We have such terrible restraints on us as far as what we are to teach the students. And there's still an emphasis on what is to be learned and not how to learn. And all the theory is coming out that how to learn is more

important, for the kids to think about what they're going to learn and how they're going to learn about it, and evaluate the final outcome. But still in schools that change is really, really slow. Still the emphasis is on content. Most of the kids' marks is on the content of what they learn, rather than the process of how they learn. And I think that that's what's really important, how to learn. (TL1)

This teacher librarian sees the curriculum as a restraining influence, as out of date in terms of learning theory and the requirements of the information society. Another teacher librarian comments that this actually results in students who are not properly prepared to face the post-secondary world:

We have a very bright clientele and we're doing them a disservice by honing in on content and not developing their skills. Because I don't know and no one's ever done a study of these kids as to how they cope in the independent atmosphere of university or college. Compared to some high schools which might get 10 or 15% of their kids into university, we get 50%. Now that shows the level of attitude of these kids, their work ethic. But they're very content oriented. And they feel that if you simply give them the right information on a piece of paper that's all they need to know because they can rote learn it. And they're not independent learners. They're not good at research. The plagiarism is so high here that we've even stopped printouts of the CD-ROMs. We've stopped photocopying during class time. Because teachers constantly bring us down extracts which they've just copied straight out. And they feel they're doing right because they feel that they are providing the content which is what teachers have asked for. There's no analysis, there's no extraction, there's no presentation. That's what we're trying to push with the year 8s in our skills program. (TL6)

As transmitters of the curriculum, classroom teachers are implicated in this dilemma. However they too seem driven by the deadlines and the assessment frameworks of the current curriculum. For example:

I think the real difficulties lie in content pressure on teachers. (TL3)

Time pressure to cover the curriculum, that's mostly a teacher's problem. They have so much to get through and they have to have this outcome. Now if that means they set a task and the kids don't achieve it and they don't have any more teaching hours to achieve it in well, that's all that can be done. (TL4)

The nature of the curriculum is something which is currently outside the scope of the organisation and management of teachers' work. According to the conceptual framework of the study, it is one of the inputs to the education system. It is a factor which Ashenden does not appear to consider in his analysis of the problem.

Another significant factor preventing the achievement of the ideal standard of teaching and learning according to these teacher librarians is the lack of time.

But it's time to talk to other teachers, it's time to. If you're going to do something that's more student centred in the library then that takes more time, more organisation. (TL1)

I don't seem to have the time to do as much literature promotion as I'd like to. You never seem to have enough time to do whatever you want to do. (TL7)

Then you have the problem of having time to develop any cooperative planning. The teachers don't seem to have the time. You're holding them back at the pass all the time. (TL7)

Time would probably be one of the major problems. (TL8)

These comments highlight the lack of time for teacher librarians and also for classroom teachers. The lack of time is a symptom of the intensification of teachers' work. Ashenden would explain this by pointing to the poor organisation and management of teachers' work, claiming that a new division of labour is required in order to give teachers the time they need to focus on more 'real teaching'.

However the third significant factor impeding the achievement of the ideal standard of teaching and learning reported by these teacher librarians, may also have a bearing on the time problem:

Pressure of management work for myself. Because we have so few staff, I must get through the acquisitions, I must get things working. Usually if there's students in the library and they need help we put everything else aside. (TL4)

I think our staffing is fairly minimal for what we're trying to do. And we are all working from 8.00 in the morning to 5.30 at night, and tonight till 9.00pm. The library's open long hours and the staff are pretty stretched. I think we've got a problem there. (TL5)

We have a ceiling rate on teacher librarian staffing in this state. So no matter how big we get we can't get more than three TLs. I think it hits the ceiling at 1300. And the library officer staffing stays at two. Every other teaching and non-teaching role in the school goes up with student population. (TL2)

The teacher librarians believe that they are seriously understaffed. This is a possible explanation for their concurrent lack of time. Once again this is a problem with the inputs to the education system. According to the teacher librarians it is a problem which Ashenden, coming from a productivity standpoint with the requirement to keep inputs constant, does not address.

The fourth important factor preventing achievement of the ideal standard of teaching and learning is the attitudes of classroom teachers towards the school library. The teacher librarians have plenty of examples to illustrate the problem. Three are included here:

I mentioned the ongoing conception from some people of what the library is and what it should be. I'm still getting criticisms from some members of staff for having signs up in the library in colour. The previous head of library thinks I make it look like a kindergarten. Displays are a no no, it's a serious place of learning. I'm up against that old concept by some people that it should be a place of quiet individual study, that people shouldn't teach in the library. (TL5)

The example just this morning of someone who's used the same video every year for the last 25 years, and he knows, he will tell you what he's teaching on October the fourth 1997 because he knows that's the fourth Tuesday of term 4. He will always believe that there is nothing that we can do for them, that they teach well enough because their performance in TEE is very high. I would argue that their performance in the TEE might have occurred even in a cave without the 25 repetitions of the video. (TL6)

I have had one teacher a couple of years ago who took marks off the students who were researching if they asked me a question. I was wondering why these poor kids had this hunted look when I asked, can I

help you? And they were tearing around behind the stacks. And I found out later the teacher was taking off marks if they asked me any questions. He's not here now. That's the sort of extreme you can get to. (TL7)

Where do teachers get these attitudes from? That question cannot be answered by the study except to suggest that the answer has little to do with the organisation and management of teacher librarians' work. These three comments describe phenomena such as: tradition-based attitudes to education; inflexibility; intransigence; over-reliance on TEE scores as indicators of student achievement; mistaken conceptions about the nature of independent learning; and lack of communication.

Two points need to be made about the factors preventing achievement of the ideal. First, in support of Ashenden, they indicate a discrepancy between practice and professional ideology. Secondly, they draw attention to the narrowness of Ashenden's approach. They broaden the focus from the organisation and management of teachers' work to the contexts within which that work occurs and the inputs of the education system as a whole. This does not deny the importance of examining work practices. It does highlight the possible danger of focusing exclusively on the work of teachers when trying to improve the quality of their work and the quality of education.

In answer to subsidiary research question one¹, it is possible to answer yes, there is a discrepancy between practice and what teacher librarians view as the ideal standard of teaching and learning in the school library. However, in answer to the first part of subsidiary research question three², according to the comments of the participants, the nature of the discrepancy is subject to a broader range of factors than Ashenden

¹ This research question reads: Is there a discrepancy between the practice and what teacher librarians view as the ideal standard of teaching and learning in the library?

² The first part of this research question reads: To what factors do teacher librarians attribute the discrepancy between practice and their ideal standard of teaching and learning?

identifies. If this is the case then a solution that concentrates solely on the organisation and management of teachers' work may not be as productive as Ashenden believes.

Professional satisfaction

Ashenden states that teaching is a "deeply unhappy profession" (1990a, p.11). He attributes this problem to poor relationships with students, the scope and control of their work, and wages and conditions. In order to find out whether this aspect of the problem of teachers' work is true in 1995 for teacher librarians, participants were asked to describe: their level of professional satisfaction; their relationships with students; their wages and conditions; and any other factors they perceive as influencing their professional satisfaction.

Level of professional satisfaction

When asked to describe their level of professional satisfaction, some evidence of frustration appears:

Well you're always frustrated because you always feel that you should be doing more than you actually are. (TL3)

The last year has been a funny year. It's been a very frustrating year because of the campaign, the industrial action. (TL8)

Some teacher librarians describe their professional satisfaction in negative terms:

I've been dissatisfied with my own performance, which really relates to what Ashenden says, which I was quite pleased to read that. It sort of reinforced how I was feeling. My own performance, I'm dissatisfied because I'm not doing what I would like to do in the library. (TL1)

I suppose it's not that high because I keep on thinking I could do better. (TL7)

A few seem to be blaming their own performance for their lack of professional satisfaction. They think they should be doing more than they are. However, six (75%) of the participants gave positive answers to this question despite the frustrations.

I've put very high down here because I love this place. I think it's the best job out. It is so wonderful. (TL2)

I get a lot of professional satisfaction. (TL3)

I'm really lucky in the college I work in. Up until last year it was exceptionally high. (TL4)

I think it's very high. (TL5)

Reasonably high. (TL6)

But getting away from the industrial campaign, I feel that being a teacher librarian is a very exciting time. As far as that's concerned, as far as technology, as far as what's available, what's coming on the market, the support from the administration, it's a terrific feeling of professional satisfaction. (TL8)

Overall these teacher librarians have a far more positive view of their profession and report a much higher level of professional satisfaction than the teachers Ashenden used as the basis for his conclusions.

Relationships with students

When questioned more specifically about relationships with students, these people were unanimous. A few comments will suffice to sum up the view of the whole group:

The kids are great and yes I enjoy my relationships with them. (TL5)

Now I think we enjoy a fantastic relationship with students in this school and I think they know that they come number one. (TL2)

This does not mean that relationships are always jolly and happy for these people. They acknowledge there are times when relationships become strained for disciplinary

or pedagogical reasons. The comment of one teacher librarian shows that these events do not necessarily mean dissatisfaction in this regard:

You never really know your relationships with the students. I've known teachers who thought they had a marvellous relationship with students but I've heard the students. And I haven't heard the students about me. But I think on the whole they certainly think that I am a lady of forceful disposition. I insist on certain behaviour in the library and I usually get it. But I don't think that most kids mind that. I'm sure there are some kids in the school who think that I'm a real old bitch. But then I can be when I need to be. And the point is that in any teaching situation you're not in a popularity contest. And as long as they're learning something, I don't care whether they hate my guts. (TL3)

This comment indicates that it is possible for teachers to be satisfied with the state of student relationships even though those relationships aren't always pleasant. Nevertheless most of the teacher librarians describe their relationships with students as positive and satisfying. On this point they disagree with Ashenden.

Salary and conditions

When it comes to wages and conditions however the majority support Ashenden's view that wages and conditions are a factor in professional satisfaction and that they are not satisfactory at the present time. However it is a surprisingly slim majority considering the focus on wages and conditions brought about by the industrial dispute which was very current around the time of the interviews. The views of these people are divided into at least four camps over the issue.

One participant is completely happy with salary and conditions. When asked if salary and conditions reflected the amount and level of work performed, the reply was:

Yes, they do. The conditions of work are great for me. (TL4)

Another is happy but with two qualifications. Firstly that it depends on personal circumstances, and secondly that teachers' salaries do not indicate a professional status:

Yes. But then I can sit back and say this because we're in a comfortable position, my husband works. So I think it depends partly on your personal circumstances. (TL3)

and

I think the real problem with teachers, classroom teachers, is the only way they can earn reasonably professional salaries is to get out of the classroom. And this senior teacher business is a waste of everybody's time. (TL3)

A third believes that salaries are fine for teacher librarians but that teacher librarians in charge of a school library should be paid as a head of department.

Just being a normal teacher librarian, I'm happy with the pay and conditions, but being in charge is a bit different and you have a lot of problems associated with the budget, and being given all the responsibilities of head of department. (TL2)

All the teacher librarians in the study are in charge of their libraries and some others also raised the issue of formal recognition of head of department status during the interview. It is discussed in greater detail in chapter five.

The fourth camp consists of the remaining five teacher librarians who express dissatisfaction with either wages or conditions or both. For example:

I know that if you compare your salary to what other people get, then often it's not very equitable for the amount of time and energy that you put into your profession. (TL1)

No, I suppose would be the answer. My conditions of work are good. I can't fault any aspect of the conditions of work. Certainly salary I would think does not reflect the number and range of people you deal with and the overall understanding you need of the school to do the job properly. The hours you put in. (TL5)

I suppose like every teacher they don't. I spent a lot of my out of hours time reading. I spent a lot of my out of hours time developing professional development with my professional associations. No, I don't think it does. And I find it frustrating that it's not attracting people that I'd like to see into the profession. Maybe no one's ever happy with what they get. I think about 1973 we were well paid but that's about the only time we've ever been reasonably well paid. (TL7)

They express dissatisfaction with salaries and conditions on grounds such as: comparability with other professions; the knowledge and personal qualities required; the hours worked; the professional commitment displayed; and the attractiveness of the profession to quality personnel. All of these are reasonable grounds on which to complain. Ashenden's view on this point is well supported by this group of teacher librarians.

Other factors

The study sought to identify any other factors which may contribute to the professional satisfaction of teacher librarians. The responses to this question indicate, once more, that Ashenden's view is narrow, even simplistic, in limiting an assessment of professional satisfaction to only three factors. These people describe thirty-one distinct factors. Even these thirty-one items, having been taken from such a small sample of practitioners, could not be guaranteed to be a complete list of all possible factors. What they do convey is the complex nature of professional satisfaction and the danger of generalising about what is a very individual perception. The complete list of factors with sample comments is contained in Appendix F.

Three factors only are mentioned here because they stand out as being most important to professional satisfaction. They are: recognition; the support of school administration; and specific achievements. Table 8 summarises these three factors.

Recognition was mentioned more than any other factor in professional satisfaction.

For example:

The satisfaction comes when the administration acknowledges that I'm doing my job well. (TL4)

Positive feedback from students. That really gives us a buzz. And positive feedback from teachers. That makes us feel so good. So that

really makes us feel so satisfied. And anyone who says kids saying nice things about you doesn't make you feel good are liars. Someone just has to say one nice thing and we go around telling everybody. If some teacher sends back a little note thanking us for a box of books on Vietnam that we put together at the last minute, and we were really flat strap. But this person bothered to write a note. That makes us feel really good and we just really share that. Makes it really good. (TL2)

Most teachers would agree that students value recognition of their work, at least privately. It seems that schools which recognise the efforts of staff also do much to encourage a positive attitude and enhance professional satisfaction.

Table 8. Three significant factors contributing to professional satisfaction of participant teacher librarians

	Factor	Sample comment	Negative or positive (N or P)	Frequency mentioned (n=8)
1.	Recognition	The satisfaction comes when the administration acknowledges that I'm doing my job well. (TL4)	P	7
2.	Support of Admin.	Support from the administration of the school. It's very high. (TL8)	P	5
3.	Specific achievements	The ability to put forward your ideas and follow them through. (TL5)	P	5

A related factor in professional satisfaction, mentioned separately because of the importance attached to it by participants, is the support of school administration. When asked what factors affected their professional satisfaction these people made comments such as:

The support from the administration of the school. It's very high and we're treated as professionals. I am on the head of departments meetings. When the campaign's over I'm also the chairman of the school development council. I was asked by the administration to take on that role. (TL8)

On the whole I've found very good support from the heads of department and from the administration for what I'm trying to do in the library. (TL3)

Support of admin., so that's the deputies, they do the timetable so they have great power. And they also do reliefs. In this school every time we get a relief teacher and they've got classes for three or four periods, the other two periods they don't get off. They are timetabled to come down here and help us. The deputies thought of that. They said we know you need help. We didn't ask for that. They thought of it all by themselves. Something really simple like that, but it's helped us enormously. (TL2)

The third major factor contributing to professional satisfaction is specific achievements.

The ability to put forward your ideas and follow them through (TL5)

I'm pleased with the progress of the year 8 skills because that's something that was not really done in any detail and that's something that's developed over the last couple of years. (TL6)

Something that I'm very much in favour of is promoting the complexity of the job to other staff members in the school. People just think, you're a librarian, you just read books, sort books. Well that's just a small part of our job.* And I think I've succeeded in a lot of ways. (TL8)

The capacity to have a specific goal, to work towards it and to achieve it seems to be a major factor in the professional satisfaction of these people.

These three factors differ from those mentioned by Ashenden in that they are all positive. They indicate a positive attitude in the participants that did not seem to be evident in the teachers on which Ashenden based his statements about teaching being deeply unhappy. The participants themselves noticed this and one even commented:

He's very negative. Some of his articles he's written about teaching and the quality of teaching and the professionalism of teaching and how happy teachers really are deep down, I think suck. He couldn't have been a very happy teacher when he was teaching. He thinks everyone is just hiding in a cupboard just waiting to find another career and that's just not true. (TL2)

The data in Appendix F shows that in this sample, reports of factors having a positive impact on professional satisfaction outnumbered negative factors by more than three to one. The study finds little evidence to support Ashenden's assertion that teachers are deeply unhappy. In fact, the evidence indicates the possibility that the opposite may be true. In answer to subsidiary research question two¹, the study concludes that, overall these teacher librarians report a high level of professional satisfaction. In answer to the second part of subsidiary research question three², the study has documented thirty-one factors reported by the participants as contributing to their professional satisfaction.

Summary

The investigation of the problem of teachers' work as described by Ashenden has found that a discrepancy between practice and professional ideology does exist. However in the case of teacher librarians, the organisation and management of their work practices is only one of many factors, both internal and external to the school library organisation, which could account for that discrepancy. Therefore any attempt to bridge this gap needs to consider all the relevant factors.

Ashenden's assertion that teachers are deeply unhappy is not supported by the evidence presented here. To gain a true picture of the professional satisfaction of teacher librarians it is necessary to consider a much broader range of factors. Ashenden reports only three factors compared to thirty one reported by the eight

¹ This research question reads: What level of professional satisfaction do teacher librarians report under current work arrangements?

² This part of subsidiary research question three reads: To what factors do teacher librarians attribute their level of professional satisfaction?

participants. This concentration on only a few factors could have distorted Ashenden's view of the professional satisfaction of teachers.

Ashenden's proposed solution is partly based on his perception of the problem. Since Ashenden's view of the problem does not accurately describe the situation in which the teacher librarians work, the likelihood that his solution is totally satisfactory is also reduced.

The solution

The core of the Ashenden proposal is to change the division of labour in schools by reducing the number of professional staff and employing non-professionals, interns and parents to perform the routine duties that presently take up so much of teachers' time. This would allow teachers to concentrate on 'real teaching' and would result in an increase in the productivity of teachers' work. The study questioned participants in four areas: tasks which could be performed by non-professional workers; how teacher librarians would utilise the resultant free time; the utilisation of new technologies, pedagogies and flexible learning groups; and the cost neutrality of the proposal.

The organisation and management of teacher librarians' work

One aspect of the organisation and management of teacher librarians' work is the decision about which tasks they perform themselves and which tasks they delegate to other staff. In the day to day allocation of tasks and responsibilities, teacher librarians experience a high degree of autonomy. They are not bound by scheduled classes or timetables to the extent that classroom teachers are. They do not experience the same pressures to cover the curriculum or to provide assessments of students, as classroom teachers do. They rarely experience direct informed supervision because deputy

principals and principals either don't have the time or don't know what teacher librarians do. Of all the personnel in a school, teacher librarians probably have the greatest capacity to re-organise their own patterns of work, with the possible exception of the gardener. In addition, school libraries already possess a small workforce of clerical and/or non-professional staff who work under the direction of teacher librarians. Therefore teacher librarians, especially those designated as 'in charge' are in an ideal position to consider the implications of the Ashenden proposal.

Non-professional tasks

In order to identify tasks which could be performed by non-professional workers, participants were asked to identify any of the tasks they had previously listed which could be performed by other library staff. A few clerical tasks such as opening the mail, filing and circulation duties were identified by one person. This person was actually in the process of organising the library officers to assume responsibility for these tasks. A few higher order tasks were also identified such as: processing the accounts; erecting displays; supervising students; cataloguing; and performing support functions related to technology. Each of these tasks was nominated by one or two people at the most.

Although it is seen as possible for non-professional staff to perform these duties, qualifications are often added. For example, when discussing cataloguing one person added:

Whoever was doing it would have to have an understanding of the school curriculum. (TL5)

As another example, one participant cited supervision of students:

Mornings, before school and lunch times are not teaching times, they're supervisory times, so that could be done by non-teaching staff. (TL8)

However the same person had, earlier in the interview, affirmed the importance of before school and lunch times:

That is a vital part of the job of teacher librarian. Being able to just talk in a friendly and positive manner with students is a really important part and the fact that at lunch times and before school, I don't see my job as primarily disciplining and negative. I walk around and talk to students, talk to them about books, talk to them about what they're reading, ask them if they need any help, have a bit of a joke every so often. That's a very, very important part of being a good teacher librarian. (TL8)

This example highlights the fact that certain tasks, seen in isolation, may appear to be non-professional tasks. However, the teacher librarians affirm the finding of Chadbourne and Robertson (1992) that even some routine tasks may be critical to the performance of professional duties.

The majority of participants, after careful thought, concluded that there were actually no tasks which they currently perform which could be delegated to a non-professional staff member without sacrificing the effectiveness with which that task was performed.

The following comments illustrate the point:

Really there are actually no tasks that I do that non-teaching staff can do (TL2)

This is what I was thinking about because theoretically, there's an awful lot, such as cataloguing, book selection, but that's in theory. I'm afraid if I'm going to run this library there are things, well the cataloguing, I happen to like cataloguing but also in a less selfish way, by cataloguing books I know my collection so that when students come, and this gives me enormous pleasure, and they say I need some information on ergonomics and I say, Ah I bought a new book the other day and it's got a really good section on it, here you are. (TL3)

Basically, most of my work concerns either working with students which is a teacher role or working with teachers. And collection development, you've got to know the curriculum, you've got to have that background to do that. And the way I've sorted out my division of tasks here, I don't think there's many that I do that could be taken over by a library officer or somebody else. (TL7)

It seems that most of the teacher librarians have already taken steps to organise their work along the lines suggested by Ashenden, although their definition of what constitutes a professional task may differ from his. This would explain why there are so few tasks which they want to delegate to non-professionals. If this is the case then teacher librarians stand to gain little from this aspect of the Ashenden proposal.

An apparent contradiction arises at this point because earlier in the chapter, in the section dealing with the discrepancy between practice and professional ideology, it was noted that teacher librarians do many things which don't directly contribute to their vision or ideal view of teaching and learning in the library. Appendix D contains the full list of tasks reported and their connection to the ideal view of the participants. Shouldn't it be possible for some of these tasks to be delegated to non-professional staff? In fact some of the tasks in the table in Appendix D do appear in the list of tasks that one or two participants said they would be willing to give up, at first. Some of the more common ones that don't appear on the list are budget, managing library staff, managing library systems, correspondence and membership of sundry committees. A possible explanation for the apparent contradiction is that these tasks are perceived by the teacher librarians as not relating directly to their view of the ideal, yet they are still tasks that require a professional level of expertise and judgement to accomplish to an adequate standard. Therefore teacher librarians are unwilling to surrender them. It would follow that, in order for teacher librarians to concentrate more on 'real teaching', more professional staff are needed, not more support staff.

Utilisation of extra time

Given the conclusion reached in the preceding section, there would be an insignificant amount of extra time for teacher librarians resulting from implementation of the

Ashenden proposal. However, the participants have plenty of ideas of what they would do if they could get some extra time. Most of these suggestions fit into the three areas already discussed as representing their ideal view of teaching and learning in the library. They are provision of resources (information specialist), information skills (teacher), and collaboration (instructional consultant). The terms in brackets are the Shontz (1991) equivalents of these aspects of the teacher librarian's role.

The most fervent wish of the teacher librarians is for more time to explore their collaborative or instructional consultant role. This role includes talking to teachers:

Time for talking to other teachers. (TL1)

Working with teachers to develop things. (TL4)

What I'd like is more time to liaise with teaching staff. Being able to discuss with staff what they're doing, how they could use the library better. (TL8)

It also includes liaising at the department level:

Time to liaise with departments. To know that you had time that you could visit everybody's department once a fortnight and take new gear to show them. (TL6)

We'd like to be able to go to the subject department meetings. (TL2)

Reasons for the extra liaison at both levels include: involving staff in selection of resources; raising awareness of what the library has to offer; and planning, co-ordinating and evaluating programmes for units of work.

With regard to the provision of resources (information specialist) role, the teacher librarians suggest that more thorough cataloguing and indexing of resources would enhance students' physical and intellectual access to the information in the school library, and that more effective and thorough procedures for selection of resources could be implemented if time was available.

The participants also express the need for more teaching time:

I'd like to run and organise a literature promotion programme for year 9 and 10's that we're thinking of doing for next semester, but we could have done it from the start of the year if we'd had more time. (TL2)

Ensuring that kids have sufficient skills to adequately use those resources and within each classroom the kids have the skills to use the facilities that computers are going to enable them to get access to is going to be quite a big teaching job. (TL5)

Thinking and planning time covers all of the above three areas. It is also something the teacher librarians feel in need of.

Time for thinking and time for good planning and that isn't occurring. (TL1)

Develop programmes, be able to look at what they [departments] are doing in advance and say right, we could fit in here. (TL6)

I'd like more time planning use of future technology, definitely time to do that. Because we're living in a life of three to five years in technology. So you've got to be able to plan ahead. (TL8)

The only way the teacher librarians could see to make time for these tasks, which they see as an integral part of their profession, not as added extras, is to employ more professional staff. This is quite the opposite from the Ashenden proposal, which involves a reduction in the number of professional staff.

New technologies, pedagogies and flexible learning groups

In order to cope with the increased class sizes which would result from reducing the number of professional teaching staff, Ashenden advocates the use of new technologies, pedagogies and flexible learning groups. The aim is to make students more responsible for their own learning. New technologies include the use of computers with sequenced learning programs, or distance education packages, so that students could work more independently. By pedagogies, Ashenden means goal or

work based assessment, negotiated curriculum, and learning and behaviour contracts. These are all aimed at enabling students to work by themselves to a greater extent. Flexible learning groups include small group work, peer and cross age tutoring, student managed learning groups, and research.

Participants were asked how they thought the use of these strategies would increase the quality of teaching and learning and if they would facilitate a drop in the number of teachers as Ashenden suggests. The consensus is that these ideas are useful as teaching strategies and that they could increase the quality of learning, especially independent learning. Some of the strategies are already in use in the school libraries concerned. However these ideas are not cost neutral, especially technology. In addition the teacher librarians believe that some of these learning strategies actually require more professional staff and certainly never less. The following comments illustrate and expand on these points:

We've gone through the technology thing ourselves. One of the big pushes for automating a school library is that it's going to reduce labour of certain repetitive tasks and it has done that. And it has made users more independent, but I can't say it's actually saved us money. (TL2)

All these new technologies are merely tools and children need to be shown how to use the tools and the more complex the technologies are, the smaller the groups you have to do it in. (TL3)

I So when Ashenden says that by using these new technologies etc., that will actually facilitate having less teachers?

R Codswallop! I think you need more teachers. The theory is that once they learn they explore it for themselves, of course they don't, they go back to playing with paper. I find these people who think, put a child in front of a computer and they will find their own way round it, my experience is not that. They need the people there. (TL3)

Costing goes up. Not only in terms of hardware and software but in terms of teaching time. (TL4)

The allocation of support time would be imperative to doing the Ashenden proposal. The technical support would be imperative to use new technologies as part of your normal teaching, not as an exception. (TL6)

I think that they're all great mechanisms but I don't think you can enact them in mass. I knew an exchange teacher from Canada who worked like that in his school but he had two teachers in every class and a full time assistant because of all the negotiation. (TL2)

In the opinion of the participants, the ideas themselves are terrific. They are just the sort of thing that teacher librarians have been talking about for years. They can certainly be used to increase the quality of education and to encourage learners to be more independent. However, they would require substantial upward adjustments in financial and human resource inputs to the education system. In the opinion of the teacher librarians, they are not strategies which can be used to reduce the number of professional staff, as Ashenden suggests. This limits their utility in terms of productivity, where inputs must be kept constant.

Cost neutrality and productivity

When asked to assess the overall cost neutrality of the Ashenden proposal the response was unanimous:

I haven't got a clue about how these changes could be kept cost neutral. I've been trying to think of how we could keep it cost neutral and we can't. (TL2)

I can't see it being cost neutral. In fact I've never experienced anything in schools that's cost neutral. (TL5)

I have a problem seeing it as cost neutral. I really do. (TL7)

That doesn't mean the participants didn't try to make it cost neutral. Some of them spent a lot of time thinking, to devise ways of making the Ashenden proposal cost neutral. However, they always rejected their ideas in the end because making the

proposal cost neutral could not be achieved without making some sort of compromise which they were not willing to make. The end result is always either, a reduction in the quality of teaching and learning, or impractical. For example, one suggestion is to use a large amount of volunteers, but practical difficulties of training and reliability make this option unacceptable. Another suggestion is to train library officers to do para-professional or professional work, but still pay them as library officers. This is seen as immoral and also impractical, because library officers already do more than is required of them and they just don't have the time to do any more.

Summary and closing comments

The answer to subsidiary research question four¹ is that the Ashenden proposal would not make any significant contribution to the productivity of teaching and learning in the secondary school library, or to the professional satisfaction of teacher librarians. Their work is already organised to eliminate most non-professional tasks and they already report a generally high level of professional satisfaction. Those things which could raise their professional satisfaction, for example, professional development, are outside the detail of the Ashenden proposal. The teacher librarians support the ideal of independent learning towards which technology, new pedagogies and flexible learning groups are useful strategies, but do not agree that Ashenden's use of them will achieve the reduction in staff which Ashenden requires to keep his proposal cost neutral. They do not believe that the proposal can be cost neutral.

It may appear that the Ashenden proposal has little to offer teacher librarians because the school library is already partially organised according to the pattern suggested by

¹ This research question reads: Could the Ashenden proposal contribute to greater productivity of teaching and learning in the library and to greater professional satisfaction, according to teacher librarians?

Ashenden. There are professional staff supported by library officers and/or library technicians, which seems to reflect the division of labour pattern suggested by Ashenden. It is true that teacher librarians highly value the support they receive from non-professional library staff. However this division of labour was not achieved by reducing the level of professional staffing. It was brought about through growth over a period of years. As recently as twenty years ago it was common for one secondary teacher librarian to be responsible for all the tasks in a secondary school library. Currently, government secondary school libraries may employ up to five staff, depending on size. Some have more.

The concept of growth leads to an important conclusion about the Ashenden proposal. The data collected for the study seems to support the view that the main problem with the Ashenden proposal is the framework of productivity within which it is set. In terms of work organisation, the productivity of these teacher librarians appears to be close to its optimum. The only way to improve quality from that position is through growth. In other words, quality can only be increased by adjusting the inputs to the education system. In this case the areas of staffing, professional development, funding for technology, and the process emphasis of the curriculum all need attention. None of these areas are addressed by the Ashenden proposal. The restrictions placed on growth by a focus on productivity is the main problem with the Ashenden proposal according to the teacher librarians in the study.

The next chapter further explores the views of the teacher librarians to move beyond the Ashenden proposal.

CHAPTER FIVE

BEYOND THE ASHENDEN PROPOSAL

So far in the thesis, the views of the teacher librarians have been examined within the framework of the Ashenden proposal. In this chapter they speak without the constraints of the Ashenden proposal about what they would do to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Their answers stand alone but also shed further light on the nature of the Ashenden proposal. In chapter six, selected parts of the Ashenden proposal will be integrated with the ideas of the teacher librarians and key concepts from the literature to construct alternative proposals for improving teaching and learning. The new proposals will be defined by the principles of growth, quality and professionalism, rather than productivity and industrial management.

Teacher librarians' ideas for improving teaching and learning in the school library

The data reported in this section provides the answer to subsidiary research question number five¹. The teacher librarians in the study made a total of twenty suggestions for improving teaching and learning in the secondary school library. A table showing the complete list of suggestions can be found in Appendix G. Table 9 shows those suggestions which were made by more than one of the participants.

One way of understanding how the Ashenden proposal may be modified is to compare the participants' suggestions with the Ashenden proposal by asking what differences exist between them.

¹ This research question reads: To what extent are the solutions that teacher librarians propose to improve the productivity and professional satisfaction of their work consistent with the Ashenden proposal?

Table 9. Teacher librarian suggestions for improving teaching and learning in the school library

	Suggestion	Sample comment	Frequency (n=8)
1.	More staff	I would increase the support staff. I would at least remove the ceiling rates on TLs and other library staff. (TL2)	4
2.	More collaboration	More collaboration with the teachers. More time to work with the teaching staff. (TL1)	2
3.	Better selection of resources	Everything I buy here is seen by all the teaching staff before I purchase it. (TL4)	2
4.	Centralised PD	Centralised PD organised and performed by exemplar practitioners. I think centralised professional development really pushes forward thinking along. (TL2)	2
5.	New curriculum	I think overall directions with information technologies and working out where we're going and why we're doing it and the building of all that into the curriculum, into the new developing curriculum. (TL5)	2
6.	More PD	I think looking perhaps at more professional development. We're very limited in our professional development. (TL6)	2

The first item in Table 9, more staff, indicates a completely different direction from the Ashenden proposal. The teacher librarians report the need for more teacher librarians, library technicians, and library officers.

I would like to push for a member of staff who was 0.5 a teacher librarian. (TL3)

I think we could well do with another teacher librarian. (TL5)

Allocate more time to non-teaching staff to support. We actually put a request into the principal that the district office provides technical support. (TL6)

The basic level of staffing that exists at the moment is not sufficient for the teacher librarians to make significant progress towards their ideals as documented earlier in the thesis. Ashenden seeks to trade off one kind of staff for another, but that will not allow teachers to draw any closer to their professional ideology. Whereas Ashenden advocates getting more value out of the same resources, these people claim they have already done that, and therefore need more resources before further progress can be achieved.

The second item in Table 9, more collaboration, is a complex issue which involves changing teacher attitudes to the library and allowing more time for effective collaboration to take place. Since teacher attitudes seem to be strongly linked to the curriculum, maybe this item should be linked to the fifth item in Table 9, new curriculum. One teacher librarian expressed the link as follows:

I'm very positive about the student outcomes and the national curriculum, because it seems to me if teachers just altered their emphasis a little bit onto something that's a continuous development of skills, it seems to me their hang up with content will be loosened and they'll be more flexible and open to development of the skills which I think are so important. (TL7)

Allowing more time for collaboration cannot be achieved without more staff. Existing school staff do not have more time, so the only way to get more time is to add more staff. Once again the Ashenden proposal's insistence on keeping costs neutral and inputs constant, because of productivity, is the difference.

The third item in Table 9, better selection of resources, centres around teacher librarians requiring more time: for reviewing the quality and appropriateness of resources to support the curriculum and meet student needs; and also for involving teachers, in a collaborative way, in the selection of resources. Again, more time is the

crux of this suggestion and more time is equivalent to more staff. A familiar pattern is emerging with regard to the Ashenden proposal.

Items four and six from Table 9 can be combined as professional development. The sample comments associated with these items also confirm the pattern of differences between the participants' suggestions and the Ashenden proposal. The teacher librarians believe that significant improvements in teaching and learning will only be achieved as certain inputs to the education system are increased. These increases cannot be accommodated by the Ashenden proposal as it stands.

Some significant issues for teacher librarians emerging from discussions of the Ashenden proposal

As well as their direct responses to the interview questions, as documented so far, the teacher librarians voiced other important concerns which should be considered at this point. These concerns will inform the process of constructing alternative proposals to the Ashenden proposal; a process which will occur in chapter six.

School libraries - heads of department

All participants were 'in charge' of the school library in which they worked. Some commented that the extra responsibilities and duties associated with being in charge were not rewarded in terms of salary or status. For example:

For being in charge of the library and doing the list of things that I gave you, I probably get \$20 a week more than the person who doesn't. So there is no career path for a teacher librarian in charge of a library unless you want to go into deputies which takes you out of the area. You're not recognised as a head of department in the sense of promotion. You're not recognised as a level 3. So that does not give you a lot of incentive for an extra twenty bucks a week, to take responsibility for the biggest budget in the school and to administer 5 staff. Art's only got three staff and no clericals, whereas we have professional staff and clericals. I have to do performance management

on my clerical staff and complete all the documentation. If I was a level 3 I'd get paid differently. (TL6)

It seems that teacher librarians 'in charge' are doing the job of a head of department very cheaply. There is even less of a career path for teacher librarians than there is for classroom teachers. The evidence seems to point to a need for secondary school libraries to be managed by a properly recognised head of department. However, as Harvey (1995) pointed out in the keynote address to the Heads of Department conference recently held in Perth, the position of head of department is problematic, originating as it did from a bureaucratic model which no longer suits the needs of educational organisations. In postmodern organisations, structures are flatter and responsibilities tend to be shared. Whatever the ultimate fate of the head of department position in secondary schools, teacher librarians should receive at least the same salary, status and opportunities as other teachers, according to their professional knowledge and expertise.

The question of library technicians

The teacher librarians assert they are constantly seeking to incorporate new technology into their libraries. However this process places a burden of technical expertise on them which some felt was more suited to the skills of a library technician. Three of the eight libraries already have library technicians. Three others expressed a need for one in their school library:

The system administration of the library computer. There's a lot of database type maintenance, much of which could well be done by a good technician and certainly is done by library technicians in other schools. (TL5)

Technical support would be invaluable. That's an area where a technician, but we don't want a technician who can make slides and videos, that's rubbish and I get very cross about this training of library technicians. I think we need to be right away from that. We should be

looking at their ability to connect equipment up, to get online systems running, to load software packages. So I think these are areas which we could easily pass over. And I'm not possessive of them. (TL6)

There is lots and lots of other stuff that is not a library officer job but is definitely a technician job. And I wish we could get technicians in government schools. There are actually twelve in the state. I'd like to swap one of our library officers for a technician position. I'd like to have a technician and then I'd have a lot of tasks that these three TLs could transfer over, most of them are in the technical management tasks, mostly associated with cataloguing, but some individual user and small group reference work as well. (TL2)

These teacher librarians are saying that there are more tasks they could pass over to a library technician than to library officers. This would provide scope for teacher librarians to concentrate more on the 'real teaching' aspect of their role. Contrary to the Ashenden proposal, however, this would involve bringing in additional staff rather than replacing existing staff.

Content versus process learning

The issue of content versus process has already been explored in some detail in chapter four as one factor which prevents the achievement of the ideal standard of teaching and learning in the secondary school library. The main cause of the problem seems to be the curriculum and its emphasis on content knowledge instead of the processes of learning itself. The information skills which are so important for students to develop are not part of any curriculum content area. Nevertheless the skills of "collecting, analysing and organising information" (Mayer, 1993, p.16), and "using technology" (Mayer, 1993, p.28) are seen as key competencies in the world of work and post-compulsory education. They are also skills which aid learning across the whole curriculum. They can be seen as a form of literacy (Doyle, 1994) which is a basic requirement for an informed and independent citizenry in an information society.

The teacher librarians believe the way to overcome this problem is through the curriculum. If the curriculum is modified then teachers will modify their work because no matter what the curriculum consists of, teachers will always be motivated to work towards the outcomes it stipulates. That is one way in which they measure their own as well as their students' success.

According to the conceptual framework of this study, curriculum is another input to the education system, therefore outside the scope of the Ashenden proposal. However it needs to be modified if teacher librarians are to effectively fulfil their role as teachers of information skills, and if students are to acquire "key competencies" (Mayer, 1993). Some of the teacher librarians place their hopes in the student outcome statements.

The Western Australian versions of the student outcome statements do seem to offer some hope. They claim to address cross-curriculum issues such as, "competency in collecting analysing and organising information" (Education Department of W.A., 1994, p.9) and to incorporate them into all of the eight learning areas. This may provide an opening for teacher librarians if the student outcome statements are ever fully implemented.

Professional development

The quantity, quality and control of professional development is a major concern to all the teacher librarians. The study has shown that it is a significant factor in the professional satisfaction of teacher librarians, and that one way they would go about improving the standard of teaching and learning is to concentrate on professional development. Most of the teacher librarians believe that their professional

development needs are not being adequately met at the present time. They are concerned that Government initiatives to place the onus for professional development on teachers will result in an eventual decline in the quality of education. Some called for more professional development and for a return to the days when professional development was centrally co-ordinated by the Education Department. The one participant who was happy in this regard praised the centralised professional development function of the Catholic Education Office and also the professional development programmes offered by the Library and Information Studies Department of Edith Cowan University:

I do use the Catholic Education Office, but I also use Edith Cowan which has a very good programme of professional development. But it's very interesting that there's hardly ever any government school people ever go to any of them. (TL3)

There must be some reason why government school teacher librarians aren't taking advantage of these professional development opportunities. Two possible explanations are the cost of the programmes and whether the school is willing to pay, and the availability of relief for staff who attend. However there may be many other reasons and this would be an area for further investigation.

The demise of literature promotion?

There is a feeling amongst the teacher librarians that, in the midst of all the current concern with technology and skills, literature promotion is being pushed into the background. Tremendous amounts of energy and money are being poured into technology and skills programmes. For example, one teacher librarian commented:

The thing that interests me in that is the whole role of literature enrichment. I think when teacher librarians start talking information technology, particularly in the other states I think they're beginning to see that as their role and the literature promotion goes all the way back

to the English department. And I doubt very much that if we let that happen, that literature for its own sake, for the sheer enjoyment of it and the range of it that the library can offer, that the library can provide the kids, will be promoted. (TL5)

Only five participants reported a current involvement in a literature programme. Only three included literature in their ideal view of teaching and learning in the library. All complained of a significant lack of time. Is the future of literature promotion in school libraries in jeopardy? If so, is this a good or a bad thing? Is this finding another indication of the need for more staff? This would be another area where a further study could be conducted.

Throughout this chapter it is evident that the teacher librarians' ideas for improving teaching and learning, and their most immediate concerns, indicate a current deficiency in levels of resourcing. They clearly believe that their work is constrained by the inputs to the education system. This suggests the possibility that the inputs to the education system may be used as instruments of control over the work of teachers. If this is the case then the Ashenden proposal, through its alignment with "conservative specifications" (Seddon, 1991, p.18; 1995, p.250), may also be characterised as one of these instruments of control. It is the very nature of these conservative specifications: economic rationalism; and the view of education as an industry, subject to award restructuring and measures of productivity; which makes the Ashenden proposal so unacceptable to teachers.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS: THE ASHENDEN PROPOSAL RESTRUCTURED

By way of conclusion, the loose threads from the review of literature, the findings, and the Ashenden proposal will be tied together in order to construct two alternative proposals, one for teachers in general and another for teacher librarians in particular. The alternative proposals are appropriate to teaching as a self defined and controlled profession, more acceptable to teachers and teacher librarians, and capable of delivering significant improvements in the quality of secondary education. One of their limitations is that they are embryonic only; little more than frameworks for future discussion. Another limitation is that no practical strategy is presented for their implementation. They are starting points only, bases for discussion amongst those concerned with secondary education. They are pointers towards a direction which may be too idealistic to ever be practical in this "political world" (Dylan, 1989).

Points of departure

Several parts of the thesis have raised points which dispute some aspect of the Ashenden proposal in its original form. These points have been used to construct two alternative proposals for improving teaching and learning. The points of departure have already been discussed in some depth and are mentioned here as a reminder only. Table 10 lists and briefly describes the points of departure from the Ashenden proposal identified by the study. Two important issues underlying the points of departure are the definition and control of teachers' work.

Table 10. Points of departure from the Ashenden proposal

Chapter	Source	Point of departure
2	Mitchell and Kerchner (1983)	Industrial relations reduces teaching to a labour category of work.
	Various writers (e.g. Seddon, 1991, 1995; Robertson, 1994, forthcoming; Crowe, 1993)	Current interventions aimed at professionalising teachers result in narrow definitions of teachers' work and greater control of teachers by vested interests. The Ashenden proposal fits this category.
3	Conceptual framework (see Figure 2)	Improving the quality of education may require adjustments to the inputs to the education system as well as to the organisation and management of teachers' work.
4	Practising teacher librarians	<p>Ashenden's view of the problem of teachers' work is distorted from being too narrow in two main areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The factors that prevent achievement of the professional ideology of teachers. 2. The factors that contribute to the professional satisfaction of teachers. <p>The two main problems with Ashenden's solution are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The framework of productivity which constrains action within current resource levels. 2. The exclusive focus on the organisation and management of teachers' work prohibits attention to other significant concerns of teachers.
5	Practising teacher librarians	Significant improvements to education cannot be brought about within existing resource levels.

According to the data collected for the study, education systems control teachers' work through inputs such as: funding; curriculum; policy and regulatory interventions;

staffing levels; and access to professional development programmes. This finding tends to confirm themes from the literature. In addition, it has been noted that the industrial relations process is also a tool for defining and controlling teachers' work. The teacher librarians, and possibly all teachers, would welcome a greater say in secondary education and greater control over their own work but how can this be achieved? The professional action proposal, as explained in the next section, is one possible direction.

A professional action proposal for all teachers

From the viewpoint of teachers, a particularly valuable aspect of the Ashenden proposal is that it claims to be oriented towards the professional ideology of teachers. It claims to be designed to allow teachers to achieve their professional aspirations. As has already been stated, this demonstrates a trust in the professional intentions, knowledge and discretionary judgements of teachers.

This is so even though various writers have characterised it as a conservative intervention designed to mould teachers according to a different definition of profession. Maybe Ashenden's original intentions were subverted by a glitch in his own reasoning. In affirmation of what is assumed to be Ashenden's original intention, the professional action proposal has the professional ideology of teachers as the driving force of change. Ashenden describes it as:

teaching kids to think ... to be conscious of their own learning styles, to be creative, autonomous learners, to be responsible for their own learning, to be reflective (even reflexive!) learners. (1992, p.61)

Robertson describes it more generally as "a commitment to educating children - that is [teachers'] pedagogical concerns" (1994, p.132). What the exact nature of that

ideology is needs to be decided by the profession itself. This is one aspect of the professional action proposal.

Another aspect of the professional action proposal is a departure from the award restructuring and productivity framework which made the Ashenden proposal so unacceptable to teachers and which, according to Mitchell and Kerchner (1983), reduces teaching to the level of labour through restrictive task definition and direct oversight mechanisms. Accordingly the professional action proposal takes a broader view of the problems facing education than just the organisation and management of teachers' work. In assessing the discrepancy between practice and professional ideology it is free to consider teachers' work alongside all the other inputs to the education system, some of which are identified in Figure 2, and to adopt strategies for improvement based on the principles of growth and quality in education.

The study rejects the conception of education as an industry because it has shown that the principles of industrial management are incompatible with the craft, art and professional aspects of teachers' work. Division of labour is therefore not a term which should be applied to teachers' work. Dahrendorf (in Dordick & Wang, 1993, p.9) forecasts the redundancy of scientific management principles by asserting that, post-industrial society would provide "a new lease of life for men boxed up in the unnecessary cubicles of an inherited division of labour". However it has been shown by this study and by Chadbourne and Robertson (1992) that teachers within and without the cottage classroom often feel overloaded and would appreciate regular assistance and support. For those duties which teachers decide can be performed by non-professional staff, support staff should be added to the staffing equations of schools. This will leave teachers free to do some of the things which they consider

real teaching but for which they don't currently have time. This strategy will, in all probability, leave the cottage classroom virtually untouched. However, according to Dyer (1993):

Smith noted the advantages of division of labor and specialization as a basis for an efficient production system. This concept contrasted sharply with the model of the artisan of the Middle Ages who performed every task required in the making of a product.

The cottage classroom can also be seen as the studio of an artisan, a craftsperson or an artist. Teachers' work has been described at various times by various writers, including Mitchell and Kerchner (1983), as displaying some of the characteristics of craft and art. The cottage classroom seems entirely appropriate if viewed from that perspective. Ashenden's incompatible view is concerned with ensuring efficient production of goods within an industrial management paradigm. His treatment of the cottage classroom is evidence of this.

Growing out of teachers' professional ideology, that is, their concerns for the education of children, is a natural desire to define and control their own work. This, along with the professional status of teaching, has always been the underlying issue of the thesis. Teacher librarians possibly have more control than classroom teachers but even they identify many factors over which they would like more control (See for example, Appendices E, F & G). The professional action proposal seeks to increase teachers' control over their work and hence, the quality of education, through encouraging positive action from a united profession, rather than through restructuring teachers' work. Perhaps the concept of "professional unionism" as described by Kerchner and Mitchell (1986, p.455) has something to offer in this regard.

The core of the professional action proposal is that Australian teachers must unite as a profession. A prerequisite to this unification is the construction of a universally adhered to definition of the nature and function of the teaching profession. As a profession, teachers must then accomplish the following things.

1. They must establish their professional credibility with the Australian public.
2. They must review their involvement in the industrial relations system.
3. They must decide, in consultation with the Australian community what the goals and expectations are for the education of Australian children.
4. They must request and obtain the necessary support from the various education systems to help them achieve that education.
5. They must assume professional responsibility for education.
6. They must establish the fee scales for which they will perform their professional services.

The writer is deeply conscious of the fact that, having accused Ashenden of a simplistic approach, what has been produced is also something which is vague, simplistic and devoid of any practical strategies. However the literature contains at least three substantial models for forging a true teaching profession which could be built on or adapted, namely those advocated by Darling-Hammond (1990), Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1994), and Darling-Hammond, Wise and Klein (1995). In the end the study has arrived at something which is nothing more than a starting point. It is an agenda for change rather than a programme for achieving that change. Consider again the coin analogy described in chapter two. Having thoroughly examined one conservative intervention in teachers' work, the Ashenden proposal, having spoken to practising teachers about their concerns, and having considered the literature, the

writer is convinced that there is little room for compromise. The coin will either fall on the side of teacher controlled professionalism or teacher professionalisation by vested interests. The ultimate responsibility for the fall of the coin rests with teachers.

A school library action proposal for teacher librarians

Everything from the previous section applies to teacher librarians and so the school library action proposal should be viewed within the framework of the professional action proposal. Since the focus of this investigation was on teacher librarians a more immediate and specific reconstruction of the Ashenden proposal can be attempted. However this proposal still reads as an agenda for change, rather than a practical strategy for achieving it.

The problem

Despite having a generally positive attitude towards their profession, teacher librarians identify several factors which inhibit the effectiveness of their work. Some of the more significant of these factors are: the content emphasis of the curriculum; understaffing; lack of recognition for teacher librarians 'in charge'; lack of technical support; a lack of co-operation from classroom teachers for literature promotion and information skills programmes; a lack of adequate professional development; and a lack of time. The cause of these problems lies in the economic rationalism which restricts inputs to the education system while expecting the quality of education to increase. Put simply the teacher librarians have worked as smart and as hard as they can with what they have. Any further gains in quality must be achieved through growth. Burke argues that "extra funds can be provided for education if there is the political will" (1994, p.151). Teacher librarians need to be about the business of engendering that "political will".

The solution

The school library action proposal is even more radical than Ashenden's because it involves the possibility that improving the quality of education may require a greater investment by the Australian public in the various education systems which serves it. This is the undeniable message of the participants in the study. The principle that will guide Australia's allocation of resources to education is probably best summarised in words attributed to Jesus Christ, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21, New International Version). In other words, sufficient funds will always be allocated to those endeavours which are seen as important. This is right and natural, but what it means for education is not a part of the study.

The core of the school library action proposal is the staffing of secondary school libraries. Most of the problems with which teacher librarians struggle, relate either to time or staffing. This is hardly surprising when it is considered that not one of the eight schools in the study have yet attained the "recommended minimum staffing provisions" as contained in "Learning for the Future" (ASLA & ALIA, 1993, p.46), although two came very close. Table 11 shows by how far they fell short.

Table 11. Comparison of participant school library staffing with recommended minimum in "Learning for the Future"

School	Teachers	Teacher Librarians	Recommended Minimum	Shortfall (FTE)
1.	67	2	2.4	0.4
2.	120	3	3.8	0.8
3.	115	2	3.8	1.8
4.	20	1	1.1	0.1
5.	84	1.8	3.0	1.2
6.	85	2.6	3.0	0.4
7.	60	1.8	2.2	0.4
8.	100	3.2	3.3	0.1
Average Shortfall (FTE)				0.65

The school library action proposal involves all secondary school libraries receiving the necessary staffing to bring them up to the minimum levels recommended in "Learning for the Future" (ALIA & ASLA, 1993). This will result in an improvement in the quality of school library services by allowing teacher librarians to more effectively accomplish some of the vital tasks they have identified in the study, such as collaboration with classroom teachers, selection of resources, planning, and teaching.

A second aspect of the school library action proposal also relates to staffing and to enforcing minimum requirements as laid down by "Learning for the Future". This document states, "Where there are 2.5 or more teacher librarians, one should have Head of Department status" (ASLA & ALIA, 1993, p.47). Not only would this allow the teacher librarian 'in charge' to function as the official leader of the school library, it would also: raise awareness, within the school, of the school library as a valid department; provide more of a career path for teacher librarians within the library; and recognise the work already done for little or no reward by teacher librarians 'in charge'.

A third aspect of the school library action proposal involves professional development for teacher librarians in Western Australia. In order to provide effective ongoing professional growth for teacher librarians, professional development needs to be co-ordinated at the state level in order to overcome the fragmentation which currently exists. This means that professional development programmes provided by the Education Department, the Catholic Education Centre, Edith Cowan University and others need to be centrally co-ordinated by recognised experts. A co-operative

approach towards professional development needs to be modelled between education systems and providers for the ongoing growth of the profession. This will help ensure that professional development programmes are complementary, relevant, fully utilised and uniformly directed towards the goals of the profession as a whole.

The content emphasis of the curriculum is the subject of the fourth and last aspect of the school library action proposal. It is more a restatement of an already stated imperative than a concrete proposal. According to the comments of these teacher librarians the nature of the curriculum is a major obstacle to the development of information skills in secondary students. Although the importance of information skills have been recognised in such documents as the "Hobart Declaration" (AEC, 1989), the "Mayer Report" (Mayer, 1993) and "The information process continuum" (Ministry of Education, W.A., 1993), there are still no formal measures to ensure that information skills are learned. More explicit recognition needs to be given to information skills in curriculum documents to allow classroom teachers the freedom to collaborate with teacher librarians, and to integrate information skills into curriculum based programmes. As already discussed, student outcome statements may offer some hope in this regard. Another recent initiative to this end in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT Department of Education and Training, 1994) may also be a useful guide for Western Australia.

The school library action proposal bears little resemblance to Ashenden's original proposal. However it is based on the professional opinions of the teacher librarians who participated in the study. As an agenda for change it is not excessive. To request minimum levels of staffing, adequate professional development and recognition for the development of important skills hardly qualifies as being excessive. Yet in these

tough economic times this modest proposal will probably be seen as idealistic, impractical and even greedy.

Final Comments

Throughout this investigation, the Ashenden proposal to restructure teachers' work has been found to be unworkable within the framework of productivity, unacceptable to teachers, and contrary to teachers' best interests as professionals. In response, the study has affirmed the right of teachers to define and control their own work as professionals, rather than to be 'professionalised' as servants of the economy. To that end it has constructed two embryonic alternatives to the Ashenden proposal. One, the school library action proposal is intended specifically for teacher librarians. It consists of a set of more immediate and specific directions based on the comments of the participants in this study. The professional action proposal is intended for all teachers, and represents a call for action in the face of interests which threaten teaching as a profession.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A - Data collection instrument

The Work of Teacher Librarians

Thankyou for agreeing to participate in this research. You are one of a small group of people selected on the basis of their experience in the field of teacher librarianship to participate in this study.

The purpose of the study is to explore possibilities for increasing the quality and productivity of teaching and learning in the school library and the professional satisfaction of teacher librarians through redesigning the work of teacher librarians.

The collection of data for this study comprises two stages. The first stage is a brief questionnaire for you to complete before the day of the interview. The second stage is the interview. To enable you to give some thought to the issues which will be raised at the interview a copy of the interview schedule forms a part of this document. Also included for you to read is a summary of a proposal to restructure the work of teachers. Please read the proposal and the interview schedule after you have answered the questionnaire.

This is not an assessment or appraisal of you personally or professionally. No identifying information will be associated with the answers you provide. No identifying information will be provided in any of the products of this research. The content of your answers are highly valued and it is anticipated they will become part of a significant contribution to the field of teacher librarianship.

I look forward to talking with you in the near future,

Regards

Greg Hornsby

Part One: Questionnaire

Biographical Information

1. Sex. male or female
2. Age. 20-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44 45-49 50-54 55-59
3. Years of experience as a teacher librarian_____
4. Please list your academic qualifications.

5. School Profile
 - a. Government or Independent?
 - b. Number of students_____
 - c. Number of teachers_____
6. How many library staff?
 - a. Teacher librarians_____
 - b. Library technicians_____
 - c. Library officers_____
 - d. Student teachers_____ Duration of practicum_____
 - e. Parent help_____
 - f. Other staff_____

Current Roles and Responsibilities

7.
 - a. Please list all the tasks you perform in your current position.
 - b. Group the listed tasks according to functional categories and/or areas of responsibility.

1

Part Two: Interview Schedule

The following questions will be asked on the day of the interview. Some of the main questions are supported by stimulus questions. There are no right or wrong answers. I am seeking answers which will help me understand the nature of your work as a teacher librarian, and possibilities for increasing the productivity and professional satisfaction of your work. It would be appreciated if you could read the attached information regarding the Ashenden proposal and give some thought to the questions prior to the day of the interview.

-
8. Describe your ideal view of teaching and learning in the library and the role of the teacher librarian.
 9. What factors prevent the achievement of the ideal standard of teaching and learning in this school library?
 10. Describe your level of professional satisfaction over the last year.
 11. Do your salary and conditions of work reflect the amount and level of work you do? Explain.
 12. Do you enjoy satisfying relationships with students? Explain.
 13. What factors affect your level of professional satisfaction?
 14. Make an assessment of how the Ashenden proposal could be put into practice in the school library in which you work?

- Which tasks which you now perform could be performed by non-teaching staff?
 - How would you utilise the free time that would result from off-loading routine duties, to improve the productivity of teaching and learning?
 - How would changes be kept cost neutral?
 - How would you utilise new technologies, pedagogies and more flexible learning groups to contribute to the quality of teaching and learning as Ashenden suggests?
- 15. Do you see the Ashenden proposal as worthwhile for the school library in which you work?**
- Do you foresee any problems with implementing the proposal?
 - Which aspects of the proposal would be the most useful?
 - Do you intend to further investigate the feasibility of all or part of this proposal for implementation in this library?
- 16. What else could be done to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school library in which you work and the productivity and professional satisfaction of your own work?**
- 17. Do you have any further comments regarding any aspect of this research?**

The Ashenden Proposal

In 1990 Dean Ashenden published his proposal for the future of the teaching profession. The following summary of Ashenden's view of the core problem of teachers' work and the proposed solution has been drawn from the text of that article and from other Ashenden publications of the time (1989 to 1992). It is important that you understand this information to be an effective participant in this study.

The Problem

According to Ashenden teaching is a "deeply unhappy profession" (Ashenden, 1990, p.11). The reason for this unhappiness is threefold. First, teachers are dissatisfied with wages and conditions. Second, teachers' work is poorly designed and managed. Third, teachers relationships with students are largely unsatisfying.

The core problem of teachers' work, according to Ashenden, lays in a conflict between practice, defined as the labour process of teaching, and the "professional ideology of teachers" (1992b, p.61). Ashenden also describes it as a conflict between "situation and aspiration" (1992b, p.61). Teaching is the last of the true mass cottage industries with almost no division of labour. Pedagogy has changed but the basic organisation of teachers' work has not. Teachers know what they want to teach but are restrained by the structure of the classroom and by the plethora of non-teaching duties they have to perform.

The Solution

Ashenden's solution is to restructure teachers' work by changing the division of labour in education. This involves the use of more non-teachers such as clerical staff, intern teachers and parents to relieve teachers of all the routine, non-professional duties they currently perform. This would allow teachers to concentrate on "real teaching" (Ashenden, 1992, p.61) which to Ashenden means teaching students to think, to be conscious of their own learning styles, and to become creative, autonomous learners, responsible for and reflective about their own learning.

Other aspects of Ashenden's proposed solution include:

1. Greater use of technology
 - computers
 - sequenced learning programs
 - distance education packages

2. Reorganisation of learning groups
 - small group work
 - peer and cross age tutoring
 - student managed learning groups
 - research
3. New pedagogies
 - goal or work based assessment
 - negotiated curriculum
 - learning and behaviour contracts

Ashenden's proposal claims to be cost neutral. However the increase in the productivity of teachers' work justifies a salary increase for teachers. Extra non-teaching staff would also add to the cost of the proposal. Ashenden would cover these costs by reducing the overall number of teachers through natural attrition.

According to Ashenden, implementation of his proposal would generate these consequences:

- better salaries and career paths (through a greater proportion of ASTs) for teachers.
- more clerical and administrative support for teachers.
- a redesign of teachers' work towards more 'real teaching'.
- fewer jobs for teachers (33.8% reduction, based on Ashenden, 1990, Table 3.).
- higher student/teacher ratios.
- more productive teaching and learning.

Disclosure and Consent Form

The purpose of the study is to explore possibilities for increasing the quality and productivity of teaching and learning in the school library and the professional satisfaction of teacher librarians through redesigning the work of teacher librarians.

The collection of data for this study comprises two stages. The first stage is a questionnaire for you to complete before the day of the interview. The second stage is the interview. To enable you to give some thought to the issues which will be raised at the interview a copy of the interview schedule and a summary of a proposal to restructure the work of teachers will be provided with the questionnaire at least one week prior to the interview. It is anticipated that participation in this research will take approximately two hours of your time.

This is not an assessment or appraisal of you personally or professionally. No identifying information will be associated with the answers you provide. No identifying information will be provided in any of the products of this research. The content of your answers are highly valued and it is anticipated they will become part of a significant contribution to the field of teacher librarianship.

Any questions concerning this study may be directed to Greg Hornsby, phone, [REDACTED] or Email, [REDACTED]

Agreement to participate in the study "An Investigation of the Ashenden (1990) Model for Redesigning Teachers' Work: The Case of Secondary Teacher Librarians".

I _____ have read the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this study, realising I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

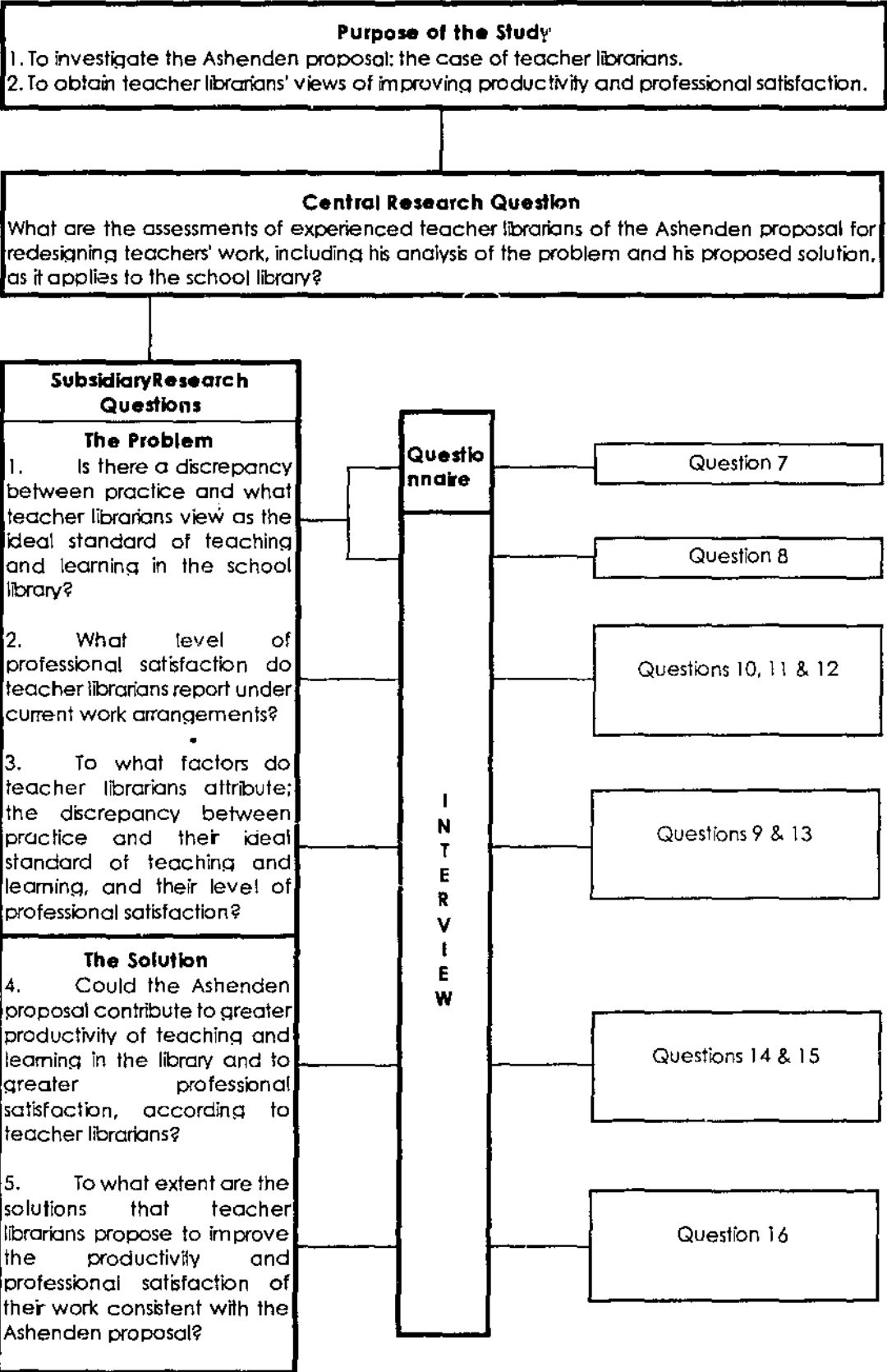
Participant

Date

Investigator

Date

Appendix B - Linking of research questions to questionnaire and interview schedule



Note: Questions one to six of the questionnaire provide biographical and contextual data.

Appendix C - Preliminary summary of findings

An Investigation of the Ashenden Model of Redesigning Teachers' Work: The Case of Secondary Teacher Librarians.

A Brief Preliminary Summary of the Findings

The Problem

The Discrepancy Between Practice and Professional Ideology

Ashenden states that the core problem of teachers' work is the conflict between situation and aspiration or between the practice of teaching and how teachers actually want to teach (their professional ideology). According to Ashenden, the main factor in this discrepancy is the organisation and management of teachers' work.

Summary of Findings

Ashenden's claim that there is a discrepancy between practice and ideal in teaching is supported by the comments of these teacher librarians. However, the participants reported many other factors contributing to this discrepancy than Ashenden. It appears that concentrating on the management and organisation of teacher's work may be too narrow an approach to improving the quality of teaching and learning. If that is the case, then redesigning teachers' work may not be as productive as Ashenden claims. The participants in this study report other significant factors which need addressing.

Professional Satisfaction

Ashenden states that teaching is a deeply unhappy profession. The reasons he cites for this deep unhappiness are unsatisfying relationships with students, dissatisfaction with salary and conditions and poor work organisation and management.

Summary of Findings

The majority of these teacher librarians report a high level of professional satisfaction. They all enjoy satisfying relationships with students. Most of them believe that they are inadequately remunerated for their work. Together they point to many factors, some unique to individual schools, which affect their level of professional satisfaction. Overall they appear to have a very positive view of their chosen career. These findings do not support Ashenden's view except in the area of salary and conditions. It seems that Ashenden's view of the factors that contribute to professional satisfaction is too narrow and too negative to adequately explain these teacher librarians' perceptions of their own professional satisfaction.

The Solution

Ashenden's proposal for increasing the productivity of teachers' work is to change the organisation of teachers' work by allocating routine, non-teaching duties to support staff. The extra staff would be paid for by reducing the number of teachers. The higher student/teacher ratios would be compensated by greater use of technology, new pedagogies and more flexible learning groups. The proposal would have to be implemented on a cost neutral basis to facilitate the rise in productivity which would in turn support the case for a salary increase for teachers.

Summary of Findings

The majority of participants believe there are no tasks they currently perform which could be performed by clerical support staff. These people seem to have already arranged the division of labour in their libraries so that they perform only those tasks which contribute to their professional teaching and library roles. Some of the tasks participants saw as contributing to their professional role were the kind of tasks that would be performed by non-teaching or non-professional staff if the Ashenden model were implemented. Two examples of these tasks are cataloguing and lunchtime supervision. Some teacher librarians did report a few routine tasks they would be prepared to offload, but overall there was little scope for making more time available for teacher librarians through this aspect of Ashenden's solution.

Most participants felt that Ashenden's ideas of technology, pedagogy and flexibility were worthwhile as occasional teaching strategies. Some already use these strategies. However, they did not believe that the use of these strategies reduced the need for teaching staff. In some cases the need for staff is increased. Most participants complained of lack of time to do what they felt they should be doing and believed they were currently understaffed. The solution should include allocating more staff to libraries rather than re-organising the time of existing staff.

None of those interviewed thought the proposal could be cost neutral. Some thought hard and devised options that were cost neutral but which inevitably led to a decrease in productivity or quality of teaching and learning rather than an increase.

Other Ideas to Increase the Quality of Teaching and Learning in the School Library

Table 1 on page 3 summarises the participants' suggestions to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the secondary school library. The most frequent suggestion was for more staff, specifically more teacher librarians or library technicians. The content orientation of the existing curriculum was also seen as a significant problem. The suggestions, if taken as a whole are broader in scope than the Ashenden proposal. The information in Table 1 could be used as a starting point for future discussions about improving the quality of teaching and learning in secondary libraries.

Other Issues

Several other issues surfaced during the collection of data for this research that are clearly of concern to a majority of these teacher librarians.

Teacher Librarians in Charge - Head of Department Status

All participants were in charge of their particular school libraries. Some commented that the extra responsibilities and duties associated with being in charge was not rewarded in terms of salary or status. In some cases they had more staff and larger budgets than some other departments in the school which did have head of department status. There is currently no career structure for teacher librarians within the school library. Thus the potential for valuable experience and expertise to be lost from the school library is considerable.

Table 1. Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning in the School Library.

Areas in which improvements could be effected	Specific suggestions	Frequency (n=8)
Organisation	Delegate responsibility Reduce class sizes More staff	5
Collaboration	More collaboration More mutual recognition between peers Major on strengths of staff More commitment from teachers More liaison with teachers and administration More planning	4
Resources	Better selection procedures Computer networking Raise awareness of range of resources available	4
Strategies	Make learning fun New curriculum (process oriented) Student Outcome Statements Involve TLs in marking of skills lessons	3
Professional development	Centralised PD More PD	3
Library environment	Improve library environment Better displays	2

The Question of Library Technicians

Most of the teacher librarians interviewed are constantly seeking to incorporate new technology into their libraries. However this process places a burden of technical expertise on teacher librarians which some felt was more suited to the skills of a library technician. Three of the eight libraries already have library technicians. Three others expressed a need for one in their school library. These teacher librarians

identified many tasks currently done by teacher librarians which could be performed by a para-professional library technician

Content Versus Process Learning

According to these teacher librarians, one of the major impediments to developing effective information skills programmes is the emphasis which current curricula place on content rather than process learning. This content emphasis conditions teachers to teach content and places pressure on teachers to get through the content of the curriculum to the detriment of the information process. These teacher librarians believe the information process is a major factor in promoting the development of independent learners and preparing students for tertiary study.

Professional Development

Most of these teacher librarians believe that their professional development needs are not being adequately met at the present time. They are concerned that Government initiatives to place the onus for professional development on teachers will result in an eventual decline in the quality of education. Some called for more professional development and for a return to the days when professional development was centrally co-ordinated by the Education Department. The one participant who was happy in this regard praised the centralised professional development function of the Catholic Education Office.

The Demise of Literature Promotion?

There is a feeling amongst these teacher librarians, that in the midst of all the current concern with technology and skills, that literature promotion is being pushed into the background. Tremendous amounts of energy and money are being poured into technology and skills programmes. Only five participants reported a current involvement in a literature programme. Only three included literature in their ideal view of teaching and learning in the library. All complained of a significant lack of time. Is the future of literature promotion in school libraries in jeopardy? If so, is this a good or a bad thing? Is this finding another indication of the need for more staff?

Conclusion

The comments of some participants suggest that Ashenden's work suffers because of a lack of experience, or solid research in schools. This can be seen in areas where his analysis of the problem and his solution are too narrow. These teacher librarians identified a broader range of factors that affect the quality of teaching and learning and their professional satisfaction. Their suggestions for improving teaching and learning also show a deeper appreciation of the complex environment and culture of secondary schools and the education system.

Some of these teacher librarians support Ashenden's ideals of independent, responsible learners. However they cannot support this proposal as it stands.

Perhaps the main area where it should be modified is the framework of productivity which restricts it to a cost neutral implementation and also focuses entirely on teachers' work. If the suggestions in Table 1 are considered it is clear that these teacher librarians believe that improving education involves adjusting the inputs to the system as well as re-organising work practices. If placed within a framework of quality, where additional funding and resources could be supplied to make it work, some aspects of the Ashenden proposal may be more attractive.

Appendix D - Tasks performed by teacher librarians in their current positions related to ideal view of teaching and learning

	Task	Frequency (n=8)	Tasks which relate to Ideal view
1.	Budget	8	
2.	Information skills programme	8	8
3.	Managing Library staff	7	
4.	Selection of resources	7	7
5.	Collaborate with teachers	6	6
6.	Managing library systems	5	
7.	Literature promotion programme	5	5
8.	Correspondence	5	
9.	HODs meetings	4	4
10.	SDI to teachers and others	4	4
11.	Collection policy	4	4
12.	Deal with booksellers	4	4
13.	Co-ordinate teaching programmes	4	4
14.	Library displays	4	4
15.	Membership of various committees	4	
16.	Professional development	4	4
17.	Organise and attend library staff meeting	3	
18.	Budget submissions	3	
19.	Selection policy	3	3
20.	Co-ordinate displays	3	3
21.	Orientation programme	3	3
22.	Accounts	3	
23.	Overdues	3	
24.	Maintenance of physical environment	3	
25.	Keeping up to date with IT developments	3	3
26.	Library promotion	3	3
27.	School development planning	3	
28.	Professional associations	3	
29.	Accessioning	2	
30.	Cataloguing	2	
31.	Manage ordering	2	
32.	Planning	2	2
33.	Liaise with external information agencies	2	2
34.	Classroom teaching	2	
35.	Weeding	2	
36.	Manage relief staff	1	
37.	Security	1	

38.	Pastoral care meetings	1	
39.	Literacy/numeracy meetings	1	1
40.	Budget negotiations	1	
41.	Library bookings	1	
42.	Co-ordinate speakers	1	
43.	Evaluation of CD-ROMs	1	1
44.	Catering to special interests	1	1
45.	Point of need assistance	1	1
46.	Interaction with students and teachers	1	1
47.	Acquisitions	1	
48.	Careers information	1	1
49.	Loans and returns	1	
50.	Writing blurbs	1	1
51.	Resourcing set assignments	1	1
52.	Total resource management	1	
53.	Student booklists	1	
54.	Staff photoboard	1	
55.	Collect money	1	
56.	Quality assurance	1	
57.	Dispense photocopy cards	1	
58.	Fix photocopy machine	1	
59.	Vertical file	1	
60.	Periodical indexing	1	
61.	Shelving	1	
62.	Evaluate programmes	1	1
63.	Advocacy	1	1
64.	User education	1	1
65.	Marking of information skills	1	1
66.	Finding resources for teachers	1	1
67.	User group meetings	1	
68.	Stocktake	1	
69.	Computer literacy skills teaching	1	1
70.	Supervise lunch times, before and after school	1	
71.	Prepare submissions for grants	1	
72.	Peruse reviewing journals	1	1
73.	Planning future resource needs	1	1
74.	Professional development technology	1	1
75.	Withdraw resources and patrons	1	
76.	Assess new technology	1	1
77.	District meetings	1	
	Total tasks	175	91

Appendix E - Factors preventing achievement of the ideal standard of teaching and learning in the school library

Reported factors	Sample comments	Frequency mentioned (n=8)
Content orientation of curriculum and/or teachers	This school of course is at the moment very content orientated and very exam driven. And a lot of the emphasis is recall rather than the skills we're trying to put across. (TL5)	6
Time (lack of)	I don't seem to have the time to do as much literature promotion as I'd like to. You never seem to have enough time to do whatever you want to do. (TL7)	5
Teachers' lack of co-operation	The main problem is probably the perceptions of the teachers. (TL7)	5
Understaffing	I think our staffing is fairly minimal for what we're trying to do. (TL5)	4
Funding	You always have problems with budget. (TL1)	3
Physical structure or design of library	We've got problems with the actual size of the library. (TL3)	3
Student attitudes	They feel that if you simply give them the right information on a piece of paper that's all they need to know because they can rote learn it. (TL6)	2
Different philosophies	There's so many different philosophies in a school and you've got to work with teachers to work out what's best for the kids. (TL1)	2
Intensification in teachers' work	The teachers don't seem to have the time. (TL7)	2
Attitude of other library staff	the non teaching staff often handle the kids in the wrong way, because they haven't had the training. (TL1)	1
Discipline	over-disciplining makes the library an unpleasant place. (TL1)	1
Reading levels	we need to be aware of the reading levels of all our students so that we can provide the necessary resources. (TL1)	1
Overpopulation of school	At recess it's just physically oppressive because of the large number of students. (TL2)	1
No USSR	The kids have never had time, like they do in primary school, when they can sit and read. (TL2)	1
Teacher pre-service training	In the training that teachers get that this library aspect isn't brought out. (TL3)	1
Teacher librarians' views	The problem comes from within me. (TL7)	1

Primary education	Some kids have got it. They've got it from primary school, from their first steps training and good teaching in primary school. (TL6)	1
Coverage of classes	They lose it because it's not reinforced across the board. (TL6)	1
Lack of resources	When you've got 1200 kids in a school you do need a big range of resources and we don't have it. (TL6)	1
Departmental collections	We're in a school where a lot of money has gone into individual department collections rather than into the library. (TL6)	1
TLs having to do classroom teaching	We all teach outside the library, all three TLs teach outside the library and that's cut down our time considerably. We do a lot more stuff off the hoof instead of putting in detailed preparation for a class to come in here. (TL6)	1

Appendix F - Factors reported as contributing to the professional satisfaction of teacher librarians

This table contains all the factors reported by the participants. It also shows whether each factor was described as a positive or negative influence on professional satisfaction and the number of participants who reported each factor. The last two rows of the table show the total positive and negative reports. Positive reports outnumber negative reports by fifty-one to sixteen.

	Factor	Sample comment	Negative or positive (N or P)	Frequency (n=8)
1.	Recognition	The satisfaction comes when the administration acknowledges that I'm doing my job well. (TL4)	P	7
2.	Support of admin.	Support from the administration of the school. It's very high. (TL8)	P	5
3.	Specific achievements	The ability to put forward your ideas and follow them through. (TL5)	P	5
4.	Time	You never seem to have enough time to do whatever you want to do. (TL7)	N	4
5.	Great workmates	I work in a great team. (TL2)	P	4
6.	Good funding	We've done very well out of the school budget. (TL6)	P	3
7.	Great school	I'm fortunate in many ways that the school is supportive. (TL3)	P	3
8.	Involvement in school development	Room to stand up and fight that your vision become part of the school priorities. (TL5)	P	3
9.	Challenge	Looking away from the short term it looks very exciting, very challenging. (TL8)	P	3
10.	Networking	Contacts, professional association contacts and contacts with other teacher librarians I would find absolutely essential. (TL5)	P	2
11.	Professional development	One thing that really has improved enormously over those years, that I think increases one's professional satisfaction is the level of inservicing and professional development. (TL3)	P and N	2

12.	Own performance	I've been dissatisfied with my own performance. (TL1)	N	2
13.	Library environment	The environment here was very tired and poor. And we've worked very hard. (TL6)	P	2
14.	Interesting work	I think it's the most interesting job. (TL6)	P	2
15.	Working with people	Relationships with people. Satisfaction would go right down if they were negative. (TL5)	P	2
16.	Lack of CPPT	I feel I should get more cooperative planning going. (TL7)	N	2
17.	Informed support	There's a difference between being supportive and actually knowing. (TL3)	P	2
18.	Other duties	Because of my role as a ... that is only one day of the week, but I am constantly on call for the students and teachers. It just seems to be the way of it, because they see me as being available, then I don't really feel that I've given the library as much time as I would like to. (TL1)	N	1
19.	Self expectations	I've been dissatisfied with my own performance. (TL1)	N	1
20.	Supportive principal	He is really, really interested. (TL2)	P	1
21.	Relationships with students	On the whole I've got a good relationship with the students. (TL3)	P	1
22.	Teacher attitudes	It comes back again to teacher perceptions. (TL7)	N	1
23.	Efficient library	I think we run an efficient library. (TL3)	P	1
24.	Not achieving ideal	The level of nonsatisfaction goes back to this gap between ideally what I feel I ought to be doing and practically what I've got time to do. (TL3)	N	1
25.	Lack of consultation	My library technician was moved into a different part of the college without my knowledge. (TL4)	N	1
26.	Feeling stuck	They wanted to keep me in the library. (TL4)	N	1
27.	Learning	The technology and the learning curve associated with that. (TL5)	P	1
28.	CPPT	And they were re-writing some of their units. And he came to us and worked with us to do that. (TL6)	P	1
29.	Success	The level of success. (TL6)	P	1

30.	Own attitude	That's changed as to what I regard as satisfaction. Once upon a time I would have got terribly depressed about that. (TL6)	P	1
31.	Cut backs	It's dispiriting to your professional satisfaction if you've got to cut back on services which you know you should be able to offer as a standard thing. (TL6)	N	1
Total positive reports				51
Total negative reports				16

Appendix G - Teacher librarian suggestions for improving teaching and learning in the secondary school library

	Suggestion	Sample comment	Frequency (n=8)
1.	More staff	I would increase the support staff. I would at least remove the ceiling rates on TLs and other library staff. (TL2)	4
2.	More collaboration	More collaboration with the teachers. More time to work with the teaching staff. (TL1)	2
3.	Better selection of resources	Everything I buy here is seen by all the teaching staff before I purchase it. (TL4)	2
4.	Centralised PD	Centralised PD. Organised and performed by exemplar practitioners. I think centralised professional development really pushes forward thinking along. (TL2)	2
5.	New curriculum	I think overall directions with information technologies and working out where we're going and why we're doing it and the building of all that into the curriculum, into the new developing curriculum. (TL5)	2
6.	More PD	I think looking perhaps at more professional development. We're very limited in our professional development. (TL6)	2
7.	Delegate responsibility	Delegate more responsibility to the non-teaching staff in the library. (TL1)	1
8.	Recognition from peers	It's really important that you offer praise to your peers. For me to be praised or thanked is really important to my professional satisfaction. (TL1)	1
9.	Make learning fun	The library can be a place to have fun. (TL1)	1
10.	Major on strengths of staff	If you're working with two or three TLs, it's really important to work out where their strengths lie. (TL1)	1
11.	reduce class sizes	If people want to increase the quality of learning then they drop class sizes. (TL2)	1
12.	Improving library environment	One of the things I'm working on at the moment is improving the actual environment of the library. I want them to be in a more work conducive and productive environment. (TL5)	1
13.	Computer networks around school	My big push at the moment is networking the library to computers around the school for a whole range of educational type reasons. (TL5)	1
14.	More	Greater commitment from this teaching staff	1

	commitment from teachers	in this school. (TL6)	
15.	Raise awareness of resources	I would like to spend more time making them aware of the of the sort of resources that are available. (TL6)	1
16.	Better displays	I would love to have a really nice display up and a video playing and that would give you great pleasure and make it a lot more exciting for these kids. (TL6)	1
17.	Student outcome statements	I'm very positive about the student outcomes and the national curriculum because it seems to me if teachers just altered their emphasis a little bit onto something that's a continuous development of skills, it seems to me their hang up with content will be loosened and they'll be more flexible and open to development of the skills which I think are so important. (TL7)	1
18.	Marking of skills lessons	I think If you can give them a mark for doing it they then know that it's valued and they can't get away without it. (TL7)	1
19.	More liaison between teachers and admin.	In the past we used to go to social studies meetings, English and science meetings. Discuss certain things that we had available, ideas that we had available with the whole staff, the whole English staff, the whole science staff. Now this is a really important part of librarianship. Getting on with the staff, discussing ideas, having staff come to the library. Having time available when they come to the library to discuss things with them. (TL8)	1
20.	Planning	Definitely more time for liaison with teaching and administration staff to plan and prepare for present and future needs. (TL8)	1