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# A Survey on Libraries & Library Usage in Maine

Market Decisions, Inc.

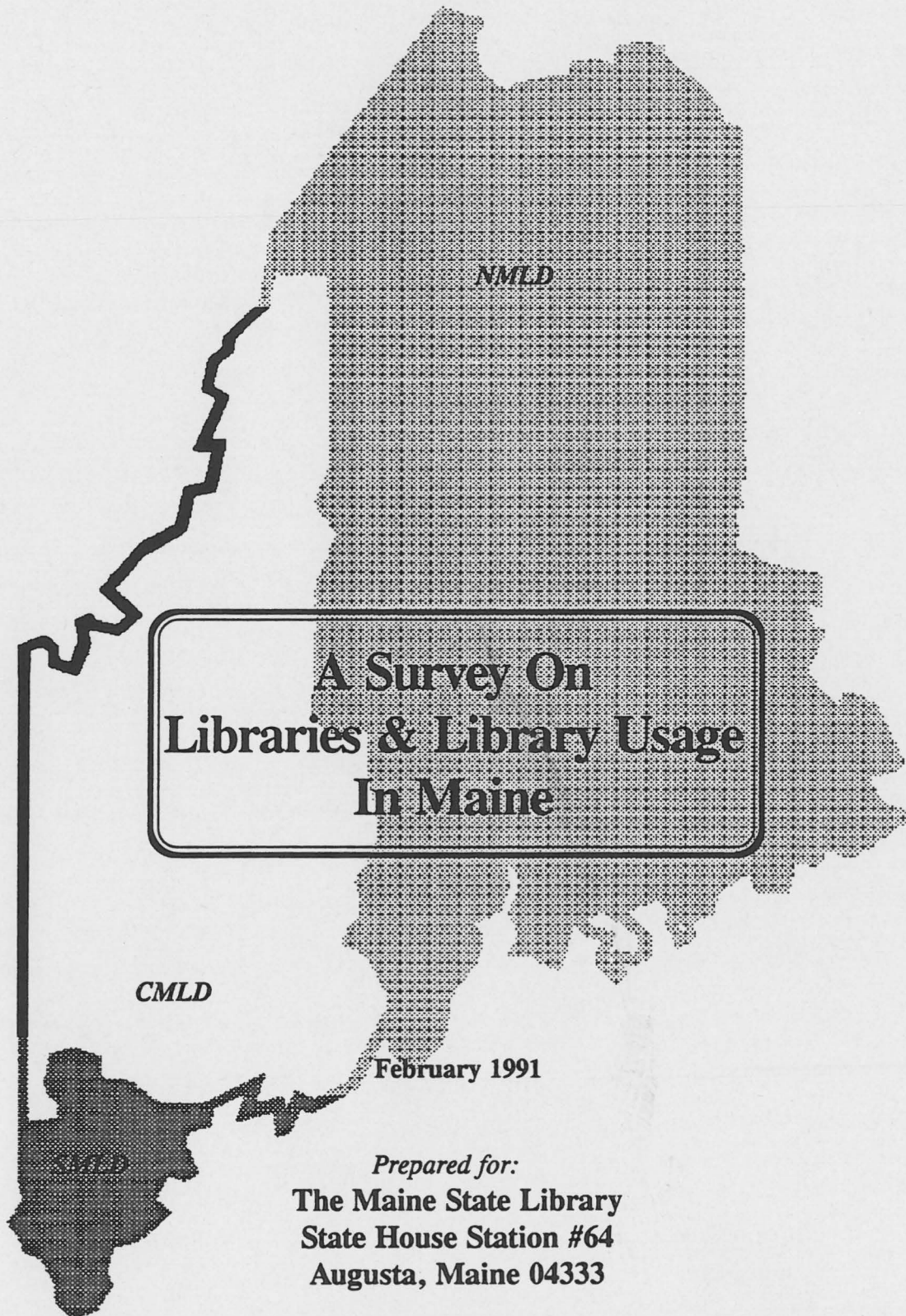
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**A Survey On  
Libraries & Library Usage  
In Maine**

**February 1991**

*Prepared for:*  
**The Maine State Library  
State House Station #64  
Augusta, Maine 04333**

*By:*  
**Market Decisions, Inc.  
22 Cottage Road  
South Portland, Maine 04106**



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# **SURVEY ON LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY USAGE IN MAINE**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Background**

In preparation for the Blaine House Conference on Libraries in March, as well as the National White House Conference in July, a research study was conducted by Market Decisions, Inc., for the Maine State Library to assess the current state of library usage in Maine, and explore options for the future of Maine's libraries. In addition to providing material for the conferences, the goal of the research was to provide guidance, insight, and motivation to library boards and directors statewide.

To best evaluate current usage patterns as well as factors related to usage, it was first necessary to understand the questions and concerns of those who have a stake in the future of Maine libraries. For this reason a two-stage research program was conducted. The first stage involved conducting in-depth interviews with library decision makers (school superintendents, library trustees, town/city managers, and academic deans) and a focus group with librarians representing school, academic, public, and special libraries around the State. The insights gained during this first stage of the research were instrumental in designing the questionnaire for the statewide survey of adults, and for providing dimension and clearer understanding to the results that emerged from the survey. Following this exploratory stage, Market Decisions conducted 400 telephone interviews with Maine adults on their current use of libraries, their perceptions of Maine's libraries, and factors related to library usage.

### **Findings**

#### **Mainers' Use of Libraries**

The majority of Mainers (87%) have a public library in their own City or Town and more than half (60%) of those surveyed had been in their local library within the past two years. Overall, three out of four (75%) Maine adults had visited at least one library in the State in the past two years. More than one-third (39%) had used another town's library in the past two years, with 14% having used their regional library. Less frequently, Mainers had visited the Maine State Library (11%), a college or university library (21%), a public school library (20%), or a special library (10%).

Just over half (53%) of Maine's adult residents have a public library card or are registered with a local library. Reported card ownership among children was higher than that reported for adults, with two in three (65%) households with children indicating that at least one child had a library card. Having children, in itself, was found to be positively associated with card ownership; 62% of the adult respondents with children reported owning a card.

Maine's adults tend to fall fairly equally into three categories of library usage. Frequent users (those who used a library at least once a month) accounted for one in three Maine adults (38%), as did infrequent users -- those who used a library less than once a month (32%), and non-users (31%).

When Mainers visited their local library in the past year, they used it primarily for taking out books (77%), conducting research for personal, business, or academic purposes (67%), or for seeking specific information (66%). More than half (54%) had requested information from the reference librarian -- substantially more than had used a computer on-line search (9%). Less frequent reasons for visiting the local library were: taking out children's books (32%), reading newspapers or magazines (29%), taking out non-book items such as videos or audio cassettes, and inter-library loan (21%). One in five (19%) had attended special programs offered at the library and 18% had attended children's programs. Some (14%) had attended community meetings at their library.

When compared to how they used libraries ten years ago, more Mainers perceived themselves as using the library less frequently (39%) than more frequently (28%). The majority (77%) of those who saw themselves as being more frequent users of the library cited changes in their personal lifestyle as reasons for increased usage, rather than an increased/renewed interest in reading or changes in the library itself. One-third (31%) mentioned they now had more time to read or visit the library because they were retired, were working less, or their children were grown. One in four (24%) used the library more frequently because of school or work requirements. For some (22% of those who now used the library more frequently), the increase in usage was driven by their desire to encourage their children to read.

Among those who now used the library less frequently (38% of the respondents), most (88%) said they had no or little interest in reading. Other reasons, relating to their personal lifestyle, were that their children were grown up, or they were no longer in school (30%), they were too busy to go to the library (28%), or they had no need to use a library (13%). Some mentioned that they bought their own books (9%) or were ill and/or housebound (8%, and 40% among those over 65). Some (12%) mentioned the library and its shortcomings as a reason for their less frequent use.

### **Factors Related to Library Usage**

Distance from the library appeared to have an impact on usage, but only for those residents who lived less than three miles from the library. Among those who lived within one mile of the library, 44% were frequent users, compared to 38% overall. Most (74%) disagreed, however, that they would visit their library more often if it were closer. Even among those who lived three miles or more from their library, only one in three (36%) felt they would visit their library more often if it were closer.

Better hours also would appear to have an impact on increased usage. About half (49%) of the Mainers surveyed said they would use the library more if it were open on weekends and evenings, with frequent users (57%) being more likely to want additional hours than infrequent users (50%).

Although few (8%) residents admitted to feeling uncomfortable in libraries, there are strong reasons to believe that many non-users find bookstores to be less threatening environments than libraries, and for that reason, may prefer buying books to borrowing them. In total, 40% of the residents surveyed indicated they would rather buy books than borrow them, and 29% thought it was easier to find a book in a bookstore than in the library. Differences by usage were strongly apparent -- those who never used their local library preferred buying (60%) to borrowing (33%) and were as likely to feel that it was easier to find a book in the bookstore (45%) than it was in the library (48%).

As might be expected, the amount of time spent reading, or watching television varied by library usage, with frequent users spending more time reading, while infrequent users and non-users spent more time watching television. Overall, respondents had read or referred to a median of six books in the past three months, and spent an average of five hours per week reading books. Fourteen percent (14%) of the Mainers surveyed, including 29% of the non-users, said they had not read or looked at a book in the past three months. At the same time, very few did not watch television (3%), or watched five hours or less (16%) of regular television programming. The majority of adults (52%) watched between 6 - 15 hours per week, while one in four (25%) claimed to watch more than 20 hours per week.

Many Mainers spend a significant amount of time listening to music. While only 7% indicated they did not spend any time listening to music, one in three (37%) spent more than 20 hours a week listening to music, and another third (36%) spent between 6 - 20 hours listening to music. Although Mainers are big listeners of music, few (6%) spent any time at all listening to books on cassette. This is probably due more to a lack of awareness or availability, rather than interest.

### **The Local Library's Role in the Community**

Mainers, whether they used libraries or not, strongly agreed (86%) that the local library was a vital part of their community. Related to this, residents generally felt that libraries should offer public services such as after-school programs and places for youngsters to meet for club meetings (74%). Offering such programs for children did not, however, extend to providing after-school programs for children until their parents picked them up. Most (71%) felt that providing such a service should not be the library's responsibility. Of those who did think that libraries should provide such a service to their patrons, more than half (55%) thought that user fees should pay for the service, rather than general taxes (29%).

The librarians and city/town managers interviewed differed somewhat in how they defined the mission of the public library. While librarians viewed the public library as a place to "promote life-long learning" through print, non-print and programming materials, city/town managers viewed the community library more as a "community activity center" that was integral to the city/town and provided residents access to resource materials. The need to promote an image of the community library as "the place to be" was not necessarily to the library's detriment. Managers admitted the library was always a hard sell when budgets were decided. Against such



services as police and fire protection, the library was considered non-essential and important only for the quality of life. To compete for dollars, the community library was required to offer more than an environment for life-long learning and recreational reading; it needed to provide special social services as well.

### **The Role of School Libraries**

Among the general public there was strong support for school libraries taking on a greater share of responsibility for school aged children. Most residents agreed that students should be able to get most of their materials for reports from their own school libraries (75%), rather than to rely, to a significant extent, on the local public library (20%). There also was strong support (64%) for school libraries staying open during the summer. To assist school libraries in becoming more self-sufficient, many residents (56%) agreed that more funds should be allocated to school libraries, rather than to expand children and young adult services in the public library. There was also reasonable support (54%) for combining the community library with the school library in small communities in order to provide one library offering more depth than two smaller ones.

The results of the survey support what librarians and school superintendents view as being the mission of the school library -- to support and enhance the school curriculum. At the same time the burden on school librarians must be considered. It was the consensus among those interviewed that there were now too many demands placed on the school librarian, and that effort should be exerted to allocate a greater proportion a funding to the school library to support adequate staffing needs. The results of the survey suggest that residents see a need for building up the school libraries, even if that means fewer children's materials/services for the community library.

It was generally felt that school librarians' professional image among teachers had improved over the past ten years. It would appear, however, that school librarians have become the victims of their own success. Librarians agreed that teachers were now more knowledgeable about using the expertise of librarians, and they were pleased with this result. At the same time, librarians were concerned that teachers had become too dependent on them -- librarians now found themselves playing many roles including media expert, technical expert, information specialist, and, unfortunately "the guy who gives the teachers a break from the kids."

### **Non-print Materials and Services**

Librarians saw the emergence of greater use of non-print materials as positive and agreed that it was the responsibility of the library to provide information in multi-media forms. Making users and prospective users aware, and getting them accustomed to using information in a variety of forms, was not always achieved as easily as librarians would like. It was felt that there was still resistance, at least in the local libraries, to ask the librarian for guidance in finding/using materials that might be on microfiche or available through a computer. Librarians saw a shift in the emphasis of their role to providing guidance in accessing information. They did not feel that the general public was currently aware of this shift.

There was strong agreement among users and non-users alike that it was just as important for a library to offer non-print materials (e.g., video and audio cassettes) as it was for them to provide printed material (77%). Along with this, more than half (55%) disagreed that all they really needed in a library was a place where they could take out some good books. Additionally, users of community libraries were more likely to indicate that their library did not have enough non-print materials compared to other resources available.

Although there was strong support for non-print materials in libraries, most Mainers did not feel that libraries should provide a lending service for such things as tools, sewing patterns, toys, etc. (only 16% thought this should be a service of the local library). Nor did most of them think their local library should be the provider of popular videos (31%). For those who did think such services should be provided, most thought the funding for such services should come out of user fees rather than general taxes.

Computerized information services were generally viewed as being consistent with the role of the public library. Most Mainers agreed that libraries should provide access to general information (73%) and/or professional information (62%) through computers. There was less support, however, for providing access to library information sources from home computers (40%). For the most part, residents who felt computer services should be provided thought they should be paid for with user fees, rather than with taxes.

### **Perceived Adequacy of Maine Libraries**

Although librarians may feel their libraries are understaffed, this perception is not translated to the public in the perception of inadequate assistance. The staff at local libraries received very high marks from the responding residents. Among those who had used their library in the past two years, 95% said their local library staff was helpful and approachable. Among frequent users, none disagreed with this statement. Almost as many (89%) agreed that their library's staff was adequately trained. Librarians credit users' positive perceptions of librarians with the State's recognition of the need for professional librarians.

With the exception of non-print material, most users felt their local library provided adequate recreational, reference, children's, and classic literature materials. Mentions of "too much" of any one type of collection were rare or non-existent. Consistent with Mainers' assessment of adequacy of reference materials at their local library, 76% agreed that their library met their informational needs, while 17% disagreed, and 6% did not know.

Most Mainers who used their public library felt that it was easy to use (95%). Somewhat fewer (75%) thought their library was equipped with adequate rest room facilities and reading areas. Despite the strong satisfaction with the staffing of their library, the perceived adequacy of collections, and the positive assessment of the physical facility, less than half (46%) thought their library was adequately funded. One in three (33%) disagreed that their library was adequately funded, while 20% admitted to not knowing the adequacy of funding.



Although librarians agreed that the State had come a long way in the past 20 years, there was general consensus that much of the State was still far behind in providing adequate materials to library users. Additionally, librarians strongly asserted that more attention had to be placed on the design the facility.

### **Encouraging the Use of Maine's Libraries**

Overall, librarians and library decision makers agreed that the quiet institution with "a lot of books" was a thing of the past, and an establishment that could not survive. The library, it was felt, needed to become a vital part of Mainers' day-to-day lives in fulfilling their need for life-long learning -- in whatever shape or form was necessary to achieve that end.

When asked what things about their library discouraged them from using it more, Mainers were most likely to respond with a personal reason, rather than one focused on the shortcomings of their library. Overall, 43% gave a personal reason such as being too busy (21%), having little interest or need for the library (11%), or buying their own books (7%). One in three (34%) said that nothing in particular discouraged their use, while 23% focused on the physical structure of the library, and 19% mentioned library operations. Frequent library users were more likely to focus on library related issues than were infrequent and non-users, who more frequently mentioned personal reasons for not using their library more often.

To achieve stronger recognition for their libraries, librarians have employed a variety of marketing efforts, including writing regular columns in the school/community publications, holding meetings in the library, corresponding regularly with administrators/superintendents on new ideas, holding a "donut day" once a week to introduce new users to materials and services, developing strong ties to the business community, sponsoring community arts programs, conducting surveys on readership, providing a young adult room where kids don't have to be quiet, and becoming involved with city/town government.

Librarians, as well as library decision makers talked at length on the need for more professional librarians with strong people skills. It was agreed that librarians should be the ones to initiate marketing of their libraries to prospective users, and that librarians should also be the ones to initiate relationships with other libraries.

One possibility explored with the public for encouraging stronger use was offering the option of a longer borrowing time. One in three (36%) Mainers indicated they would be more likely to borrow books if they could take them out for a longer time. Interest in such an option was stronger among infrequent users (42%) than among either the frequent user (33%) or non-users (33%). Going toward a bookstore setup was also mentioned by the librarians as a way of increasing usage, especially among non-users. Other means of encouraging usage included better display and presentation of materials, and developing a better network between public and school libraries.

## The Future of Maine Libraries

There was strong support among librarians and decision makers alike for larger regional libraries. Regionalization, it was believed, could solve a number of problems. First of all, in many smaller communities it was next to impossible to find qualified librarians. Secondly, a sizable reduction in operating costs could be achieved by combining the resources and services of two or three communities, and therefore eliminating duplication of effort and materials. Several communities could, together, afford one larger library that provided far greater depth in resources and professional services. It was the impression of the librarians interviewed that at present there were a lot of small libraries that couldn't survive and continue to function as "real" libraries. Although they may provide a suitable environment for a reading room in their community, they were not adequate for providing access to sufficient resources.

More than half (54%) the Mainers surveyed preferred a small library close to home, while 38% preferred a larger library, and 8% did not care (these were predominantly those who never used a library). Of the 38% who preferred the larger library, most (34%) said they would be willing to travel more than five miles, and more than half of these (21%) said they would travel more than ten miles for a larger library.

Preference for a larger or smaller library did not differ by amount of usage, but rather by *how* Mainers used their library. A smaller, close-to-home library was most strongly preferred by those who took out children's books (60%) and visited their library for children's programs (59%). It was also more strongly preferred by those who used the library more frequently than they did ten years ago because they were retired or working less (74%), or by those who wanted to educate their children, and encourage them to read (71%). A larger library was preferred by those who used the library for on-line information (72%) and those who now needed to use the library more for school and work (74%).

Certain demographic characteristics were also related to what type of library Mainers preferred. Whereas long-time residents were strongly in favor of small libraries, newcomers preferred large libraries, and were willing to travel farther to get to them. The level of formal education attained was also related to preference -- Mainers with at most a high school education strongly preferred the smaller libraries, while those with a college education preferred the larger libraries. Possibly related to school related needs, younger residents (18-24) strongly preferred a larger library, while all other age groups of adults preferred smaller libraries.

Most (71%) adult Mainers surveyed were aware that Maine had a statewide system that allowed users to determine if materials were available at other libraries elsewhere across the State. Most (60%) said they would use a statewide library card that would be honored at all participating libraries in the State, should one become available. In general, interest in such a card increased with library usage. Half (50%) of those who were interested in the statewide card, felt that the card should be supported by user fees, while 27% preferred a pay-by-use fee, and 18% advocated more State taxes to the library to cover such use.



## Implications and Recommendations

The following recommendations flow from the results of the study, and are offered for your consideration. Of course, these suggestions must be weighed against other factors that are beyond the scope of this study.

1. The results of the survey indicate three equally-sized groups of Maine adults; those who use the library once a month or more, those who use it less frequently, and those who never use it. Understanding the composition of each of these groups allows us to develop strategies for encouraging stronger use.

Groups noted for their more frequent, or increased, use of libraries were newcomers to Maine, retirees, and parents of school age children. Following are some ideas for drawing more individuals from these groups to the library:

- a. Librarians could send out letters to newcomers to their town with a registration form for a library card. The letter could be followed up with a phone call to make arrangements for a "get-acquainted" tour of the library and its services. Names of newcomers could be developed from lists provided by area realtors and rental management groups.
- b. Public and school libraries could offer an annual introduction program to parents of children just starting school. Possibly the school could provide a list of incoming kindergartners to the library each fall. A program for "new" students in the public library (which the parents would attend) would also familiarize parents with all the material and resources available for their own use at their local library.
- c. A third group very likely to respond to marketing would be new retirees. Librarians could watch for the names of persons who have recently retired in local newspapers (often these are announced) and, possibly once a year, hold a program just for new retirees that would focus on materials that may be of particular interest to them.



2. There are also numerous opportunities to more effectively draw in the infrequent users - those that come less frequently than once a month. Though it may be very difficult to attract those who never use libraries, marketing to the needs of infrequent users may also increase interest among non-users. Some possible opportunities for libraries to consider are:
  - a. Offer the option of checking out books for 4 - 6 weeks. Infrequent users, especially, indicated they would use the library more if such an option were offered. Related to this is the finding that many infrequent users said they now used the library less than they used to because they were "too busy" and didn't have much time for reading. It's understandable that time is a significant obstacle to reading more among adults who often have demanding jobs and family responsibilities. For many, it may be physically impossible to take more than one hour per night out for personal reading. Libraries may be deterring greater usage with their two-week lending times since many busy adults cannot be expected to finish a book within this time-frame. Checking out books for the second time may present an inconvenience that busy adults would prefer to avoid. For that reason, they may see it as "easier" to buy rather than borrow.
  - b. Many Mainers are not avid readers of books. On average, Mainers reported spending a median of five hours a week reading books, and it is likely that this is an overestimate. This does not mean that those who don't read much aren't capable readers and/or do not want to continue a process of life-long learning. It's quite possible that print media may not be as attractive to them as other media forms (video/audio). Libraries have made great strides in providing more and more non-print media to their users over the past 20 years. It is possible, however, that many prospective users are unaware of just how much the library can offer them in the way of classic movies on video, great music, and books on cassette. Possibly, libraries should place less emphasis on "Read, Read, Read" and start promoting something like "Question, Explore, and Experience." In fact, among those who did not use their libraries often, the biggest reason given was that *they didn't read that much*. **Libraries must reassert themselves as the places to get to know things, not just the places to read things.**
  - c. Others ways libraries can better appeal to infrequent users is to reconsider their hours. Many users and non-users alike said they would use their library more if it offered better hours. Again, the library must be flexible to suit the lifestyles of its public.
3. Mainers spend a lot of their personal time listening to music; in fact, they averaged 12 hours a week. But very few spent any time at all listening to books on tape. It is very likely that a sizable proportion of Mainers are unaware that they can "listen" to books at their leisure. Libraries must do a better job at getting the word out that such tapes are available, and should market them as the solution for people who want to keep up with

good books, but don't have the time to read. In Maine, business people often drive for hours to get to meetings, and this is a wonderful opportunity to relax and "take in a book" while driving.

4. Maine libraries must let their public know what they have. Many people are unaware of just how much the library can provide its users, especially in the non-print and computer search areas. Distributing newsletters via local newspapers is a good way of reaching the public at a reasonable cost.
5. To serve their own publics better, libraries (of all types) should consider conducting their own surveys of users (both frequent and infrequent) to get a better handle on what their own users want in the way of services.
6. Although many Mainers over 65 indicated they visited their library more frequently because they had more time, those who visited the library less frequently than they did ten years earlier said they were prevented from using it more because of being housebound and/or ill or handicapped. Stronger efforts may need to be made for getting the library to those who cannot physically get to the library themselves.
7. From the results of the survey and the focus groups, it was apparent that the relationship between schools and the community library has reached a critical stage that must be addressed. It would be in the best interest of both the schools and the community libraries to take a hard look at what should be expected by each in the way of providing services for school age children. Perhaps a group composed of school librarians, school administrators, public librarians, and public library trustees could study the problem and construct guidelines for the responsibilities of each and how they might work together to meet the curriculum needs of the schools. This may or may not include such possibilities as combining the resources of the community and school libraries.
8. In addition to better working relationships between schools and community libraries, it appears the position of the professional school librarian must be better defined so that this person is not used as a "jack of all trades." A better definition for the school librarian's role should be developed and practiced.
9. There was strong support for libraries offering on-line services among the public. It was felt that user fees would be appropriate for covering the cost of such services.
10. Maine's libraries face a tough future. The emergence of new, expensive services as well as tighter budget constraints force libraries to confront some difficult problems which require creative solutions. Most adults in Maine would prefer a smaller library closer to home to a larger library farther away. This may not be incompatible with how librarians and decision makers view future libraries. Realistically, many adults view the library as a place to take out books for themselves and/or their children, and many are not concerned about being able to access special services. For these users, small community

reading rooms that do not require the skills of a professional librarian may be the answer. At the same time, several communities could pool their resources to provide one larger library which provides full library services and professional staff.

## DETAILED FINDINGS



# **SURVEY ON LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY USAGE IN MAINE**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

In preparation for the Blaine House Conference on Libraries in March, as well as the National White House Conference in July, a research study was conducted by Market Decisions, Inc., for the Maine State Library to assess the current state of library usage in Maine, and explore options for the future of Maine's libraries. In addition to providing material for the conferences, the goal of the research was to provide guidance, insight, and motivation to library boards and directors statewide.

### **Methodology**

To best evaluate current usage patterns as well as factors related to usage, it was first necessary to understand the questions and concerns of those who have a stake in the future of Maine libraries. For this reason a two-stage research program was conducted. The first stage involved conducting in-depth interviews with library decision makers including school superintendents, public library trustees, town/city managers, and academic deans and a focus group with librarians representing school, academic, public, and special libraries around the State. The insights gained during this first stage of the research were instrumental in designing the questionnaire for the statewide survey of adults, and for providing dimension and clearer understanding to the results that emerged from the survey.

#### **1. Interviews with Library Decision Makers/Librarians**

Candidates for personal in-depth interviews were selected by the research committee. Prospective interviewees were selected based on their role (i.e., town manager, school superintendent, etc.), geography, and the demographic characteristics of their community. A list of the persons interviewed, either in personal interviews or in the focus group, is included in the Appendix.

Participants were asked questions about library usage, methods used to encourage usage, and their vision for the future of Maine's libraries.

## 2. Statewide Survey of Mainers

Market Decisions conducted 400 telephone interviews with Maine adults on their current use of libraries, their perceptions of Maine's libraries, and factors related to library usage. Respondents were selected at random in such a way that the sample allows us to estimate statewide usage/attitude patterns with a maximum error of 5%. Subgroups of smaller base sizes yield less precise measures, but can provide meaningful trends.

The Maine adults were asked questions about their current use of libraries, how it compares with their use of libraries ten years ago, what discourages them from using libraries more, and their thoughts on possible options for libraries in the future.

### Contact Results

To achieve 400 completed interviews with a random sample of Maine adults, 1,419 phone numbers were dialed. Of these, 578 were ineligible because the phone number was not in service or had been disconnected (354), the number belonged to a business (150), the number was for a seasonal residence (28), or the household was otherwise ineligible due to communication problems / illness, etc. (46). Of the remaining 441 numbers not resulting in a completion, 204 numbers were dismissed after more than three calls were made to the number on different days, and at different times of day, resulting in no answer or a busy signal, and 42 callbacks for appointments set with the prospective respondent that did not result in a completion. The remaining 195 calls not completed were refusals (187) and terminations (8), resulting in a response rate of 67% with eligible adults.

### Sample Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the sample are provided in Table 1 on the following page.

### About This Report

As an aid to understanding the analysis, tables and graphs are provided throughout the report to support the findings. The computer tabulations, under separate cover, may be referred to for more detailed results by groups which are of particular interest to the reader.

Findings from the in-depth interviews and the focus group are interwoven with the results of the statewide survey of adults to provide additional insights. It is felt that this presentation provides a more integrated analysis.



Table 1.

### Characteristics of Respondents Surveyed

	Maine Library Survey Sample (400)
<b>County of Residence</b>	
Cumberland	20%
York	14
Aroostook	11
Midcoast (Knox/Lincoln/Waldo/Sagadahoc)	11
Penobscot	10
Kennebec	9
Downeast (Hancock/Washington)	9
Androscoggin	6
Somerset/Piscataquis	6
Franklin/Oxford	6
<b>Gender of Respondent</b>	
Female	59%
Male	41
<b>Age of Respondent</b>	
18 - 24	7%
25 - 34	23
35 - 44	25
45 - 54	13
55 - 64	14
65 or older	17
<b>Income</b>	
Under \$15,000	18%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	17
\$25,000 - \$34,999	16
\$35,000 - \$49,999	21
\$50,000 or more	14
Refused	14

## II. USE OF LIBRARIES AMONG MAINERS

### A. Libraries Used

#### 1. The Local Library

The majority of Mainers (87%) have a public library in their own City or Town and more than half (60%) of those surveyed had been in their local library within the past two years.

The presence of an in-town public library was only marginally related to stronger library usage. While incidence of usage (of any libraries) among residents with an in-town library was 69%, incidence of overall library usage among those without an in-town library was 60%. Over one-third (39%) of Maine residents who lived in a town without a library said they never used a library, compared to somewhat fewer (30%) who had a library in their town.

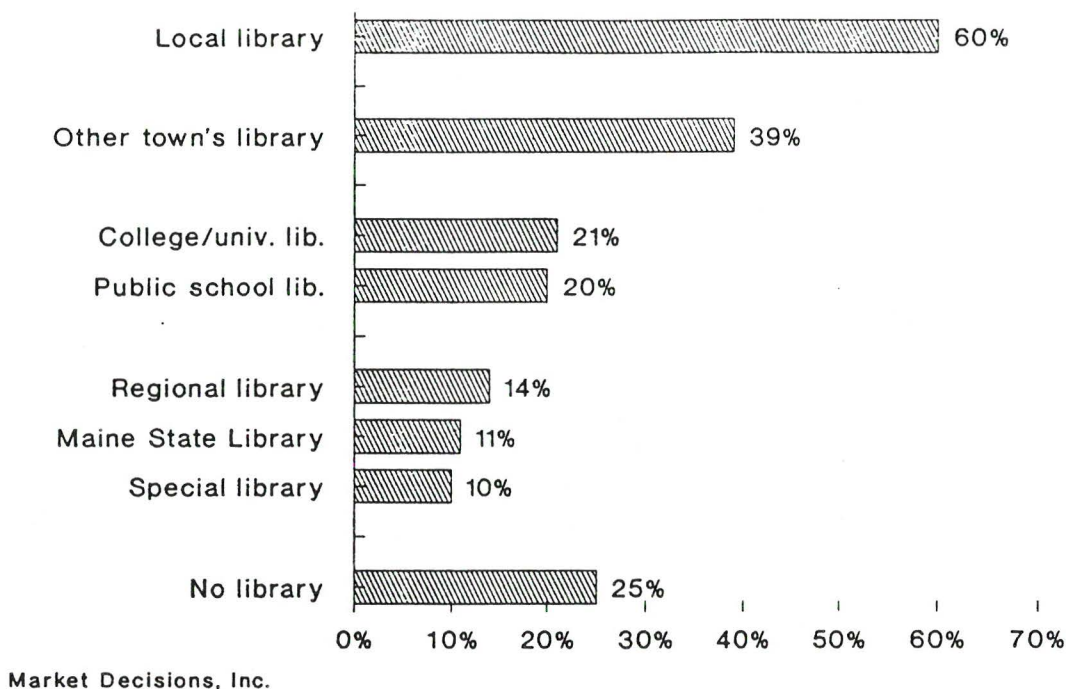
#### 2. Other Libraries Used

Overall, three out of four (75%) Maine adults had visited at least one library in the State in the past two years. In addition to the 60% who had been to their local library, more than one-third (39%) had used another town's library in the past two years, with 14% having used their regional library. One in ten (11%) Maine adults said they had visited the Maine State Library within the past two years. Use of the regional libraries was largest in the host counties; half (51%) of Kennebec County adults indicated they had visited the Maine State Library, while 35% of those who lived in Penobscot County claimed to have visited their regional library in Bangor. Cumberland's regional library, Portland, had been used in the past two years by 24% of that county's adults.

One in five Mainers had been in a college or university library (21%) and/or a public school library (20%) within the past two years. More than half of the residents (58%) were aware that university and college libraries in Maine were usually open to everyone who wants to use them, while 14% thought they weren't open to anyone and more than one in four (28%) did not know. One in ten (10%) had used or visited a special library within that same time period. (See Figure 1 on following page)

Mainers who had used their local library were more likely to have used other libraries as well. Almost half (47%) of those who had used their local library in that time period had also used a library in another town.

Figure 1.  
Libraries Used in Past 2 Years



## B. Card Ownership

Just over half (53%) of Maine's adult residents have a public library card or are registered with a local library, and 60% of Maine's households have at least one member with a library card.

Reported card ownership among children was higher than that reported for adults, with two in three (65%) households with children indicating that at least one child had a library card. Having children, in itself, was positively associated with card ownership; 62% of the adult respondents with children reported owning a card compared to 46% of those who did not have children. This result is consistent with what we heard in the focus group. Librarians described the biggest users of public libraries as being children 9-13 and women (mothers) in their 30's and 40's.

Although many of those who had cards were frequent users, having a card did not necessarily translate to usage -- 15% of card holders had not visited their library in the past two years, including 5% who said they never used their library. At the same time, 32% of those who did not have cards had used the library in the past two years, 13% of whom used their library at least once a month.

Table 2.

Characteristics Related to  
Card Ownership

Incidence of  
Card Ownership  
%

The incidence of card ownership was strongest  
among Maine adults who...

Live in Kennebec County	69%
Have a college education	68%
Have a household income \$35,000-\$49,999	67%
Ages 35 - 44	63%
Have children under 18	62%
Live in York County	61%
Women	58%

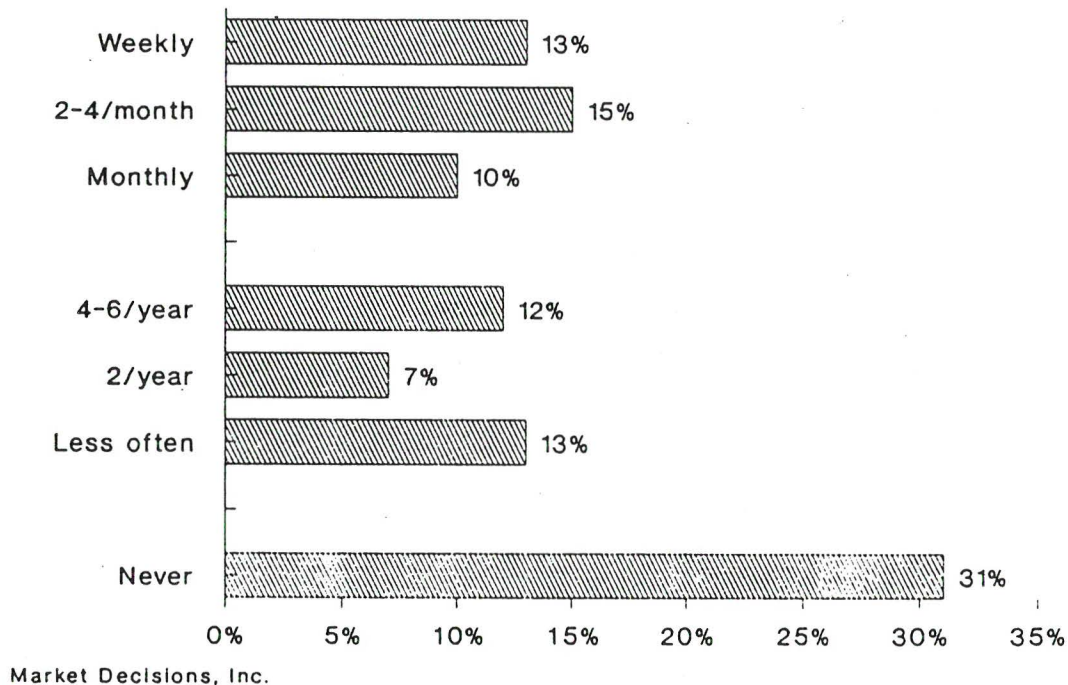
...and was weakest among Mainers who...

Did not finish high school	27%
Have a household income less than \$15,000	39%
Live in Franklin/Oxford Counties	39%
Live in the Midcoast area	39%
Live in Penobscot County	43%
Live in Aroostook County	44%
Men	45%
Do not have children	46%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53%</b>

### C. Frequency of Usage

Maine's adults tend to fall fairly equally into three categories of library usage. Frequent users (those who used a library at least once a month) accounted for one in three Maine adults (38%), as did infrequent users -- those who used a library less than once a month (32%), and non-users (31%). Those who had cards were, understandably, more frequent users, with 59% being frequent (at least once a month) users. Proximity also was a factor -- 44% of frequent users lived within one mile of their library, compared to 37% of the infrequent users and 26% of the non-users. (Figure 2)

Figure 2.  
Frequency of Usage



As mentioned previously, frequent usage of libraries was strongly related to card ownership. For that reason, the characteristics of persons who were frequent users of libraries was similar to that of card users in general.

Table 3.  
Characteristics Related to Frequency of Usage

Frequent users (those who used a library at least once a month) had the following characteristics...

	<u>Incidence of Frequent Usage</u> %
Newcomers to Maine (10 yrs. or less)	56%
Live in Kennebec County	54%
Have a college education	48%
Live in York County	44%
Have a household income of \$35,000-\$49,999	44%
Have children under 18	42%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38%</b>

...while non-usage was highest among those who...

	<u>Incidence of Non-usage</u> %
Did not have a high school education	52%
Have a household income less than \$20,000	43%
Live in the Midcoast area	42%
Are men	38%
Are 65 and older	38%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31%</b>

Librarians in the focus group, as well as several of the decision makers interviewed, mentioned that the user group had changed over the past ten years. Many felt that the influx of more college-educated out-of-staters with higher household incomes had influenced what they perceived to be stronger use of the libraries. The results of the survey support this hypothesis.



Table 4.  
Frequency of Library Usage  
by Demographic Characteristics

	<u>Base</u> (400)	<u>Frequent</u> (147)	<u>Infrequent</u> (127)	<u>Non-Users</u> (126)
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	37%	32%	31%
<b>Years in Maine</b>				
0 - 10	(64)	56%	8%	23%
11 - 20	(65)	43	35	22
More than 20	(271)	31	37	33
<b>Presence of Children</b>				
Children in HH	(175)	42%	32%	25%
No children in HH	(225)	32	31	37
<b>Education Attained</b>				
Less than high school	(48)	10%	38%	52%
High school graduate	(144)	31	31	38
Some college	(93)	42	33	25
College graduate	(114)	48	32	19
<b>Age</b>				
18 - 24	(28)	50%	32%	18%
25 - 34	(93)	38	32	30
35 - 44	(102)	41	26	32
45 - 54	(52)	31	35	35
55 - 64	(56)	29	43	29
65 and older	(68)	35	26	38

Table 4. (Cont.)  
Frequency of Library Usage  
by Demographic Characteristics

	<u>Base</u> (400)	<u>Frequent</u> (147)	<u>Infrequent</u> (127)	<u>Non-Users</u> (126)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Household Income</b>				
Less than \$15,000	(71)	23%	30%	48%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	(69)	36	33	30
\$25,000 - \$34,999	(66)	38	36	26
\$35,000 - \$49,999	(85)	45	31	25
\$50,000 or more	(52)	40	27	33
Refused	(57)	39	33	28
<b>By County/Region</b>				
Cumberland	(79)	34%	29%	37%
York	(57)	44	33	23
Midcoast	(43)	30	28	42
Aroostook	(43)	40	26	35
Penobscot	(40)	35	28	38
Kennebec	(35)	54	31	14
Downeast	(34)	26	35	38
Androscoggin	(25)	32	40	28
Oxford/Franklin	(23)	30	43	26
Piscataquis/Somerset	(21)	38	38	24

## D. Readership

Overall, respondents had read or referred to a median of six books in the past three months. Frequent library users averaged 12 books, compared to 6 books for infrequent users and 3 books for non-users. Fourteen percent (14%) of the Mainers surveyed, including 29% of the non-users, said they had not read or looked at a book in the past three months.

**Table 5.**  
**Number of Books Read or Referred to**  
**in Past Three Month**

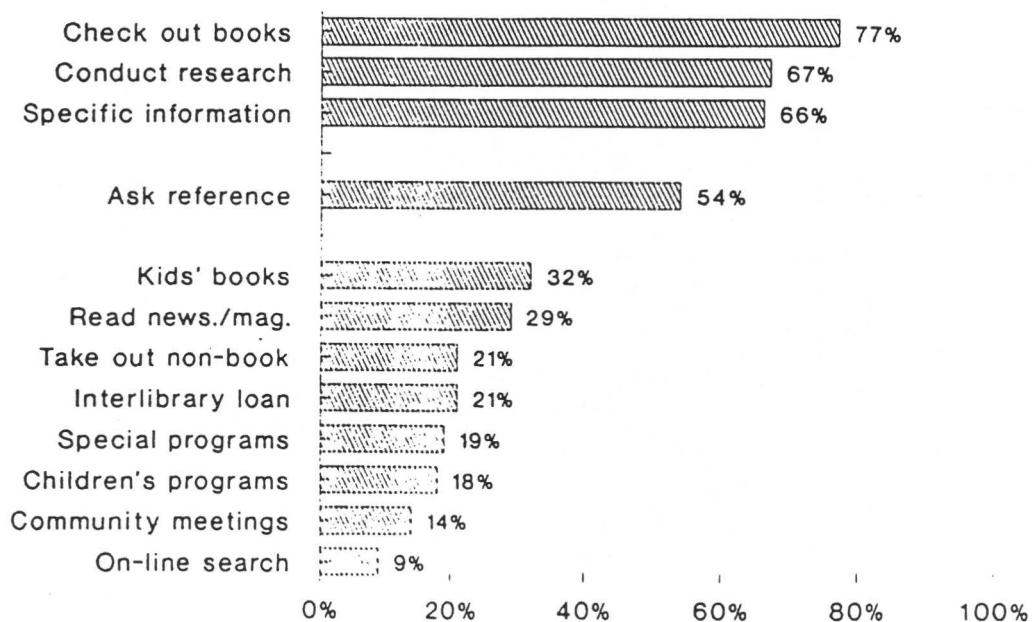
	<u>TOTAL</u> (400)	<u>Frequent</u> <u>Users</u> (147)	<u>Infrequent</u> <u>Users</u> (127)	<u>Non-</u> <u>Users</u> (126)
None	14%	5%	10%	29%
1 - 3 books	19%	11%	21%	24%
4 - 6 books	20%	13%	26%	22%
7 - 10 books	11%	14%	13%	6%
11 - 15 books	14%	22%	12%	6%
16 - 25 books	9%	12%	5%	8%
More than 25 books	11%	19%	9%	3%
No answer	4%	5%	4%	2%
<b>MEDIAN # BOOKS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

### E. Why Mainers Use Libraries

When Mainers visited their local library in the past year, they used it primarily for taking out books (77%), conducting research for personal, business, or academic purposes (67%), or for seeking specific information (66%). More than half (54%) had requested information from the reference librarian -- substantially more than had used a computer on-line search (9%).

Less frequent reasons for visiting the local library were: taking out children's books (32%), reading newspapers or magazines (29%), taking out non-book items such as videos or audio cassettes, and inter-library loan (21%). One in five (19%) had attended special programs offered at the library and 18% had attended children's programs. Some (14%) had attended community meetings at their library. (Figure 3)

Figure 3.  
Reasons for Visiting Libraries  
Among Users

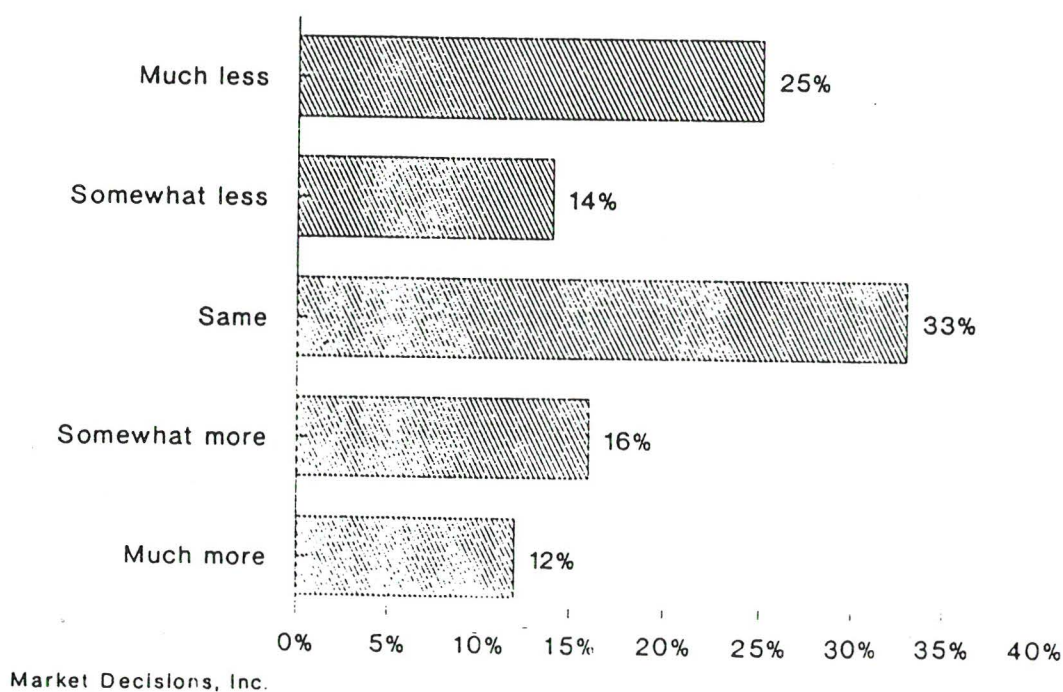


## F. Trends in Usage

To understand how and why usage may have changed, respondents were asked if they now used libraries more frequently, about the same, or less frequently than they did ten years ago. More Mainers perceived themselves as using the library less frequently (39%) than more frequently (28%). One in three (33%) felt that they currently used the library about as frequently as they did ten years ago. (Figure 4)

This declared shift in usage differed from the perception held by most of the librarians interviewed. The consensus among librarians was that libraries were being used more, not less, and that usage had in fact increased in the past ten years. There are several possible explanations for this difference. First of all, the librarians selected for the focus group were highly skilled librarians as well as assertive, proactive individuals, and it is likely that the shifts they had seen in usage were in large part due to their own ability to encourage greater usage of their libraries. Also, many of the librarians focussed on the increased use by children/students who, with the exception of a few college students, were not surveyed.

Figure 4.  
Do you use libraries more often?

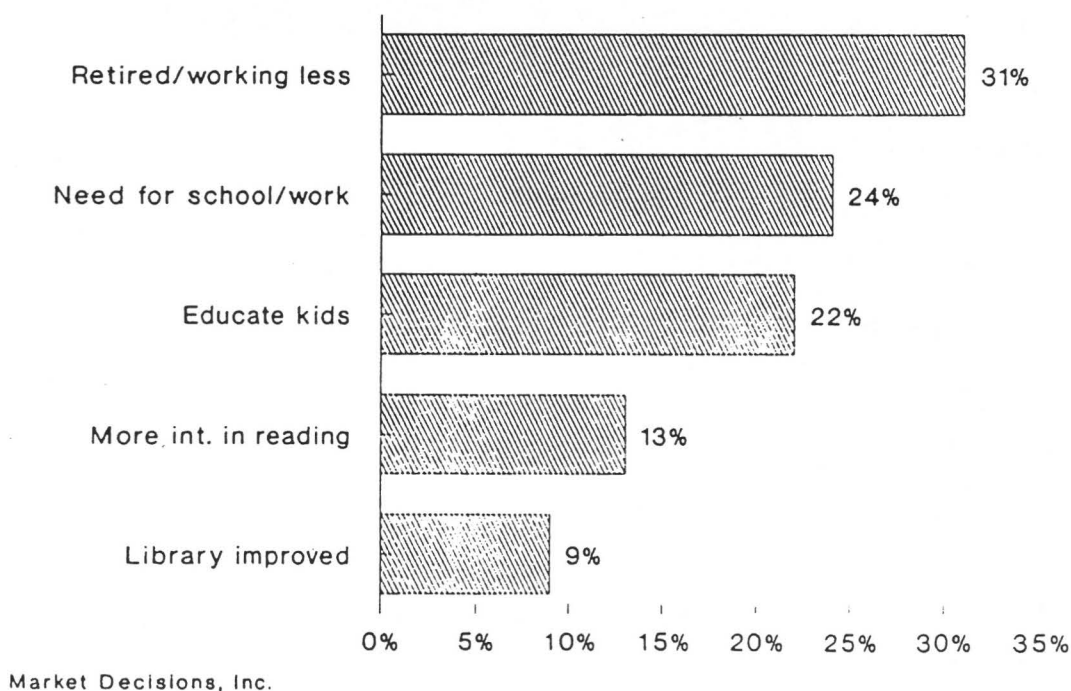




The majority (77%) of those who saw themselves as being more frequent users of the library cited changes in their personal lifestyle as reasons for increased usage, rather than an increased/renewed interest in reading or changes in the library itself. One-third (31%) mentioned they now had more time to read or visit the library because they were retired, were working less, or their children were grown. One in four (24%) used the library more frequently because of school or work requirements. For some (22% of those who now used the library more frequently), the increase in usage was driven by their desire to encourage their children to read.

For others (13%) a renewed interest in reading had sparked their more frequent use of the library, while a few (3%) mentioned saving money by borrowing books. For 9%, the stronger use was related to an improved library. (Figure 5)

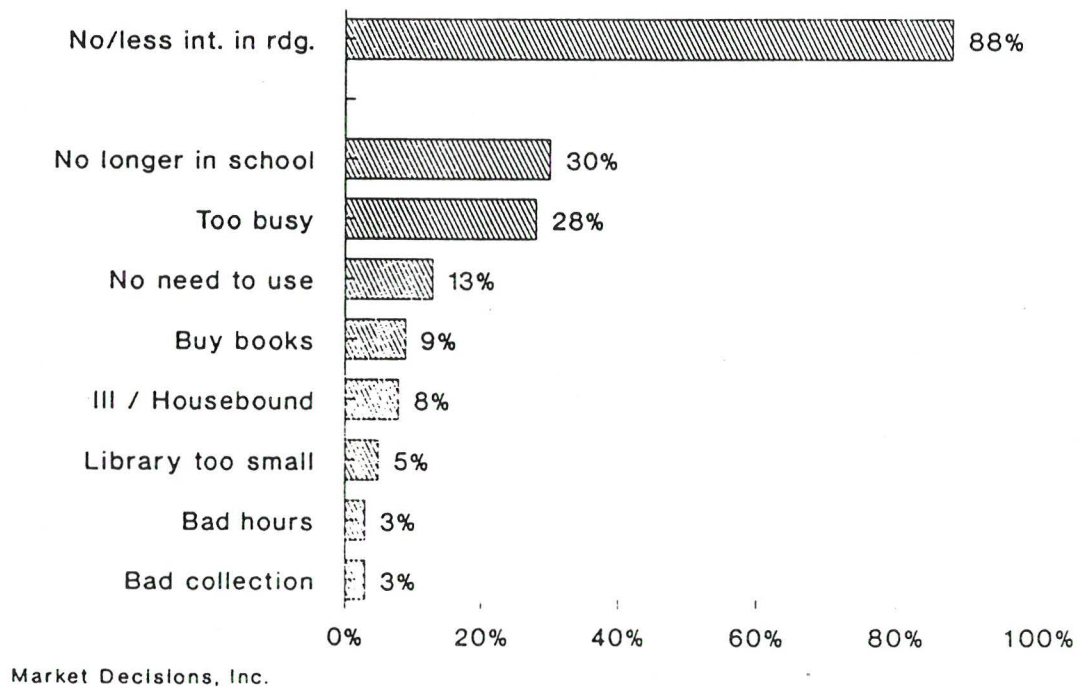
Figure 5.  
Reasons for Using Libraries More Often



Among those who now used the library less frequently (38% of the respondents), most (88%) said they had no or little interest in reading. Other reasons, relating to their personal lifestyle, were that their children were grown up, or they were no longer in school (30%), they were too busy to go to the library (28%), or they had no need to use a library (13%). Some mentioned that they bought their own books (9%) or were ill and/or housebound (8%, and 40% among those over 65).

One in ten (12%) mentioned the library itself as a reason for their less frequent use; it was too small/old/far away (5%), the hours were inconvenient (3%), or the materials were out of date (3%). (Figure 6)

Figure 6.  
Reasons for Using Libraries Less Often



### III. FACTORS RELATED TO LIBRARY USAGE

#### A. Proximity

Distance from the library appeared to have an impact on usage, up to a point. Among those who lived within one mile of the library, 44% were frequent users, compared to 38% overall. Most (74%) disagreed, however, that they would visit their library more often if it were closer. Even among those who lived three miles or more from their library, only one in three (36%) felt they would visit their library more often if it were closer. Furthermore, those who lived more than three miles from their library did not differ in their frequency of use. Beyond a three mile radius, distance did not appear to have a substantial impact on usage.

Table 6.  
Relationship Between Proximity and Library Usage

#### 1. Actual distance from library

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Frequent User</u>	<u>Infrequent User</u>	<u>Non-User</u>
Distance from Library:				
One mile or less	36%	44%	37%	26%
2 - 3 miles	31%	23%	32%	38%
4 - 5 miles	13%	14%	12%	11%
More than 5 miles	21%	19%	19%	24%

#### 2. Perceived influence on usage of being closer to library

	<u>TOTAL</u>	----- Distance from Library -----	
		<u>0 - 2 Miles</u>	<u>3 or more miles</u>
Would you go to the library more often if it were closer to your home?			
YES	22%	11%	36%
NO	74%	86%	61%
Don't Know	4%	4%	3%

## B. Convenience Offered by Library

In total, 62% felt their local library provided adequate parking. Although poor parking is often believed to be a deterrent to more frequent usage, the results of the survey indicate that adequate parking has negligible impact on usage; there was no difference between users and non-users with respect to the adequacy of their library's parking.

Better hours would appear to have an impact on increased usage. About half (49%) of the Mainers surveyed said they would use the library more if it were open on weekends and evenings, with frequent users (57%) being more likely to want additional hours than infrequent users (50%). It would appear that offering more hours on evenings and/or weekends could be the stimulus needed to promote stronger usage among infrequent users. Four in ten (40%) non-users also thought they would use the library more if it were open more hours.

**Table 7.**  
**Impact of Convenience on Usage**

	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Frequent Users</b>	<b>Infrequent Users</b>	<b>Non- Users</b>
<b>Library has adequate parking:</b>				
YES	62%	63%	60%	64%
NO	33%	37%	35%	25%
Don't Know	5%	1%	4%	10%
<b>Would use library more if it were open for more hours:</b>				
YES	49%	57%	50%	40%
NO	46%	41%	46%	52%
Don't Know	5%	2%	4%	8%

### C. Competition with Bookstores

Although few (8%) residents admitted to feeling uncomfortable in libraries, there are strong reasons to believe that many non-users find bookstores to be less threatening environments than libraries, and for that reason, may prefer buying books rather than borrowing them. In total, 40% of the residents surveyed indicated they would rather buy books than borrow them, and 29% thought it was easier to use a bookstore than the library. Differences by usage were strongly apparent -- those who never used their local library preferred buying (60%) to borrowing (33%) and were as likely to feel that it was easier to find a book in the bookstore (45%) than it was in the library (48%). In general, preference for borrowing and ease in finding books in the library increased with the amount of use.

**Table 8.**  
**Libraries vs. Bookstores**

	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Frequent Users</b>	<b>Infrequent Users</b>	<b>Non- Users</b>
<b>More likely to buy a new book, rather than borrow one from the library:</b>				
YES	40%	20%	44%	60%
NO	53%	72%	49%	33%
Don't Know	7%	7%	7%	7%
<b>It's easier to find a book in the bookstore than at the library:</b>				
YES	29%	15%	30%	45%
NO	66%	81%	66%	48%
Don't Know	5%	4%	4%	7%

### D. Competition with Other Media

To understand the relationship between overall media consumption and use of libraries, respondents were asked to estimate how many hours of their personal time were spent reading magazines, newspapers, and books, watching television (both scheduled programs



and videos), and listening to music. Overall, most adult Mainers spent between 1 - 5 hours per week reading magazines (63%) and newspapers (59%). There was greater variation in the number of hours spent reading books, with 18% spending no time at all reading or referring to books, one in three (37%) spending 1 - 5 hours per week, 21% allotting 6 - 10 hours for reading books, and 24% spending more than ten hours per week reading or referring to books.

There was also a great deal more variation with adults' television viewership; very few did not watch television (3%), or watched five hours or less (16%) of regular television programming. The majority of adults (52%) watched between 6 - 15 hours per week, while one in four (25%) claimed to watch more than 20 hours per week. Fewer hours were spent watching videos, with 40% spending no time at all watching videos, and 49% watching five hours or less.

Many Mainers spend a significant amount of time listening to music. While only 7% indicated they did not spend any time listening to music, one in three (37%) spent more than 20 hours a week listening to music, and another third (36%) spent between 6 - 20 hours listening to music. Although Mainers are big listeners of music, few (6%) spent any time at all listening to books on cassette. This is probably due more to a lack of awareness or availability, rather than interest.

As might be expected, the amount of time spent reading, or watching television varied by library usage, with frequent users spending more time reading, while infrequent users and non-users spent more time watching television. (Figure 7)

Figure 7.  
Profile of Residents by Library Usage  
Media Consumption

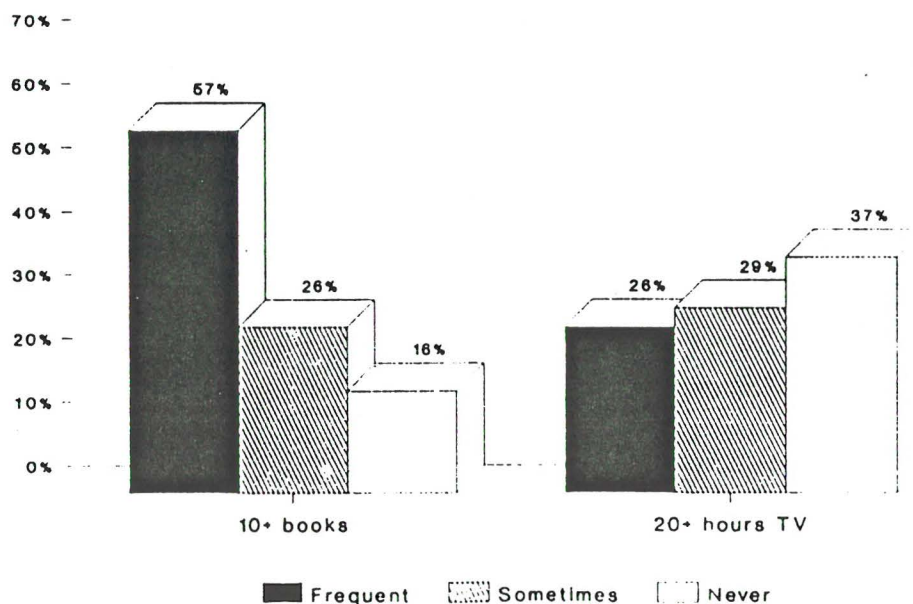


Table 9.  
Total Hours Spent per Week  
in Media Related Activities

Weekly Time Spent in Hours							
Activity	None %	1-5 %	6-10 %	11-15 %	16-20 %	More than 20 %	Median # Hours
Reading:							
Magazines	12%	63%	17%	6%	1%	2%	3
Newspapers	9%	59%	29%	3%	-	1%	4
Books	18%	37%	21%	13%	3%	8%	5
Watching:							
Television	3%	16%	27%	25%	4%	25%	11
Videos	40%	49%	9%	1%	*	1%	1
Listening to:							
Music	7%	20%	22%	10%	4%	37%	11
Books on Cassette	95%	5%	*	-	-	-	0

Table 10.  
Median Number of Hours Spent per Week  
in Various Media-Related Activities

	TOTAL	Frequent Users	Infrequent Users	Non- Users
Reading:				
Magazines	3	3	3	3
Newspapers	4	4	4	3
Books	5	7	5	2
Watching:				
Television	11	10	14	14
Videos	1	2	1	1
Listening to:				
Music	11	10	14	14
Books on Cassette	0	0	0	0

#### IV. THE LOCAL LIBRARY'S ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Mainers, whether they used libraries or not, strongly agreed (86%) that the local library was a vital part of their community. Related to this, residents generally felt that libraries should offer public services such as after-school programs and places for youngsters to meet for club meetings (74%). Offering such programs for children did not, however, extend to providing after-school programs for children until their parents picked them up. Most (71%) felt that providing such a service should not be the library's responsibility. Of those who did think that libraries should provide such a service to their patrons, more than half (55%) thought that user fees should pay for the service, rather than general taxes (29%). Interest in such a service was stronger among younger residents and among those with less income. However, households with children were not more interested in such a service than those without.

**Table 11.**  
**The Perceived Role of the Public Library in the Community**

	Agree %	Disagree %	Don't Know %
The library is a vital part of your community	86%	9%	5%
Libraries should offer public services such as after-school programs and places for youngsters to meet for club meetings	74%	16%	10%
A public library should provide after-school programs for children until their parents pick them up	27%	71%	2%

Librarians and the city/town managers interviewed differed somewhat in how they defined the mission of the public library. While librarians viewed the public library as a place to "promote life-long learning" through print, non-print and programming materials, city/town managers viewed the community library more as a "community activity center" that was integral to the city/town and provided residents access to resource materials. The managers, however, admitted to harboring conflicting feelings about this definition, and indicated that the "true" mission of the library was diluted by practical necessity. The role of being "a safe place for kids" was not altogether dismissed as inconsistent with the managers' views of the community library's role.

The need to promote an image of the community library as "the place to be" was not necessarily to the library's detriment. Managers admitted the library was always a hard sell when budgets were decided. Against such services as police and fire protection, the library was considered non-essential and important only for the quality of life. To compete for dollars, the community



library was required to offer more than an environment for life-long learning and recreational reading; it needed to provide special social services as well.

## V. THE ROLE OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES

There was much discussion about the need for a more structured relationship between school and public libraries among the librarians in the focus group. Current working networks between school and public libraries were believed to be "more a matter of personality" rather than of structured planning. School superintendents also stated that they had no direct association with community libraries, and that although they worked together, better planning could benefit both. Some concerns voiced by the librarians focused on the duplication of effort in small communities, where a combined school and community library may be a better solution than two smaller libraries each providing less depth in material. Also, there was the feeling that if the local library was to support the school library there should be more coordination in planning for curriculum needs.

Some librarians felt the schools were making too many demands on the public libraries. Because librarians (and school superintendents) believed the mission of the school library was to support and enhance the curriculum, the school was viewed as being primarily responsible for providing required resources. Because of this, it was felt that if teachers assigned reports requiring the use of a library, the schools should make efforts to keep their libraries open on evenings, and possibly during the weekends, to allow students to conduct their research. Additionally, it was felt that not using the school library during the summer was a waste of resources, and that local libraries should not have to take on the entire burden of providing library services to children while school was not in session.

It was generally felt that school librarians' professional image among teachers had improved over the past ten years. It would appear, however, that school librarians have become the victims of their own success. Librarians agreed that teachers were now more knowledgeable about using the expertise of librarians, and they were pleased with this result. At the same time, librarians were concerned that teachers had become too dependent on them -- librarians now found themselves playing many roles including media expert, technical expert, information specialist, and, unfortunately "the guy who gives the teachers a break from the kids." As one school librarian put it, "We have to be an expert in too many fields." Additionally, the emergence of whole language reading programs in many elementary schools required the need for greater depth in materials and knowledge in children's literature.

Overall, librarians saw the movement toward greater reliance and cooperation with the librarian as very positive in delivering the mission of the school library. They felt that "just getting the kids in there" was important so they could become comfortable with the library environment, and get to know what opportunities the library held. At the same time, school librarians as well as school superintendents, lamented the need for deeper staffing with professionals as well as



support staff. Although they could adequately operate the libraries with current staffing, many felt the teaching of sequential library skills was an impossibility in smaller communities where one professional librarian was often expected to manage all the school libraries. As in the case of the community library, money was something that school libraries had to fight for, and funds had frequently been shifted in the recent years to buy computers out of the monies previously budgeted for the library.

Despite inadequate staffing in many areas, the librarians and school superintendents agreed that Maine students had received much better training in the use of libraries over the past ten years. This was seen as a direct result of requirements implemented to hire professional librarians with MLS degrees. Additionally, the use of more multi-media materials had increased children's interest in the library, and had extended its perception beyond the boundaries of "the place to take out books." It was felt that the younger children (K - 4) now viewed the school library as a fun place "to do stuff" that was more hands-on. Librarians believed that a strong increase in independent use of libraries was emerging, and was especially apparent among children in grades 4-8. Along with the improvements in library staffing, librarians credited teachers with helping to achieve this result.

Among the general public there was strong support for school libraries taking on a greater share of responsibility for school aged children. Most residents agreed that students should be able to get most of their materials for reports from their own school libraries (75%), rather than to rely, to a significant extent, on the local public library (20%). There also was strong support (64%) for school libraries staying open during the summer. To assist school libraries in becoming more self-sufficient, many residents (56%) agreed that more funds should be allocated to school libraries, rather than to expand children and young adult services in the public library. There was also reasonable support (54%) for combining the community library with the school library in small communities in order to provide one library offering more depth than two smaller ones.

Interest in support for expansion of school libraries and/or combining it with community libraries in small communities did not vary by usage or by the characteristics of the respondents. (See Table 12 on following page)

Table 12.  
The Perceived Role of School Libraries

	Agree %	Disagree %	Don't Know %
Students should be able to get most of their materials for reports from their own school libraries	75%	20%	6%
Public school libraries should be open during the summer	64%	8%	28%
Rather than expand children and young adult services in public libraries, more funds should be allocated to school libraries	56%	26%	18%
In small communities, it would make sense to combine the community library with the school library	54%	35%	11%

The results of the survey support what librarians and school superintendents view as being the mission of the school library -- to support and enhance the school curriculum. At the same time the burden on school librarians must be considered. It was the consensus among those interviewed that there were now too many demands placed on the school librarian, and that effort should be exerted to allocate a greater proportion of funding to the school library to support adequate staffing needs. The results of the survey suggest that residents see a need for building up the school libraries, even if that means fewer children's materials/services for the community library.

## VI. NON-PRINT SERVICES

Non-print materials have emerged over the past twenty years as a major part of the materials and services provided by libraries. Librarians saw this as positive and agreed that it was the responsibility of the library to provide information in multi-media forms. Making users and prospective users aware, and getting them accustomed to using information in a variety of forms, was not always achieved as easily as librarians would like. It was felt that there was still resistance, at least in the local libraries, to ask the librarian for guidance in finding/using materials that might be on microfiche or available through a computer. Librarians saw a shift in the emphasis of their role to providing guidance in accessing information. They did not feel that the general public was currently aware of this shift.

There was strong agreement among users and non-users alike that it was just as important for a library to offer non-print materials (e.g., video and audio cassettes) as it was for them to provide printed material (77%). Along with this, more than half (55%) disagreed that all they really needed in a library was a place where they could take out some good books. Additionally, users of community libraries were more likely to indicate that their library did not have enough non-print materials compared to other resources available.

Although there was strong support for non-print materials in libraries, most Mainers did not feel that libraries should provide a lending service for such things as tools, sewing patterns, toys, etc. (only 16% thought this should be a service of the local library). Nor did most of them think their local library should be the provider of popular videos (31%). For those who did think such services should be provided, most thought the funding for such services should come out of user fees rather than general taxes.

Computerized information services were generally viewed as being consistent with the role of the public library. Most Mainers agreed that libraries should provide access to general information (73%) and/or professional information (62%) through computers. There was less support, however, for providing access to library information sources from home computers (40%). For the most part, residents who felt computer services should be provided thought they should be paid for with user fees, rather than with taxes.

Table 13.  
Public Perceptions About Non-Print Services

	Agree %	Disagree %	Don't Know %
It's just as important for a library to offer non-print materials as it is for them to provide printed materials	77%	16%	7%
All I really need in a library is a place where I can take out some good books.	41%	55%	4%
<b>A public library should provide....</b>			
...access to general information through computers in the library	73%	23%	4%
...access to professional information through computers in the library	62%	31%	7%
...access to library information sources to home computers	40%	50%	10%
... a lending service for popular videos	31%	67%	2%
... a lending service for such things as tools, sewing patterns, and toys	16%	81%	3%

Table 14.  
**How Should Services Be Funded?**  
 (Among those who agreed that service should be provided by Library)

	Base	User Fee %	Taxes %
<b>A public library should provide....</b>			
...access to general information through computers in the library	(291)	66%	25%
...access to professional informa- tion through computers in the library	(248)	75%	19%
...access to library information sources to home computers	(159)	79%	15%
... a lending service for popular videos	(124)	76%	16%
... a lending service for such things as tools, sewing patterns, and toys	(66)	58%	27%





## VII. PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF MAINE LIBRARIES

### A. Satisfaction with Staff

Although librarians may feel their libraries are understaffed, this perception is not translated to the public in the perception of inadequate assistance. The staff at local libraries received very high marks from the responding residents. Among those who had used their library in the past two years, 95% said their local library staff was helpful and approachable. Among frequent users, none disagreed with this statement. Almost as many (89%) agreed that their library's staff was adequately trained. Librarians credit users' positive perceptions of librarians with the State's recognition of the need for professional librarians.

As evidence of the librarians' approachability, most adults (83%) indicated they would seek the librarian's help in obtaining a book through interlibrary loan if it were not available in their own library. This would differ with many librarians' perceptions that patrons "don't want to bother us with requests." It would appear that one of librarians' major goals, of being more than "just a person who checks out the books" was being accomplished.

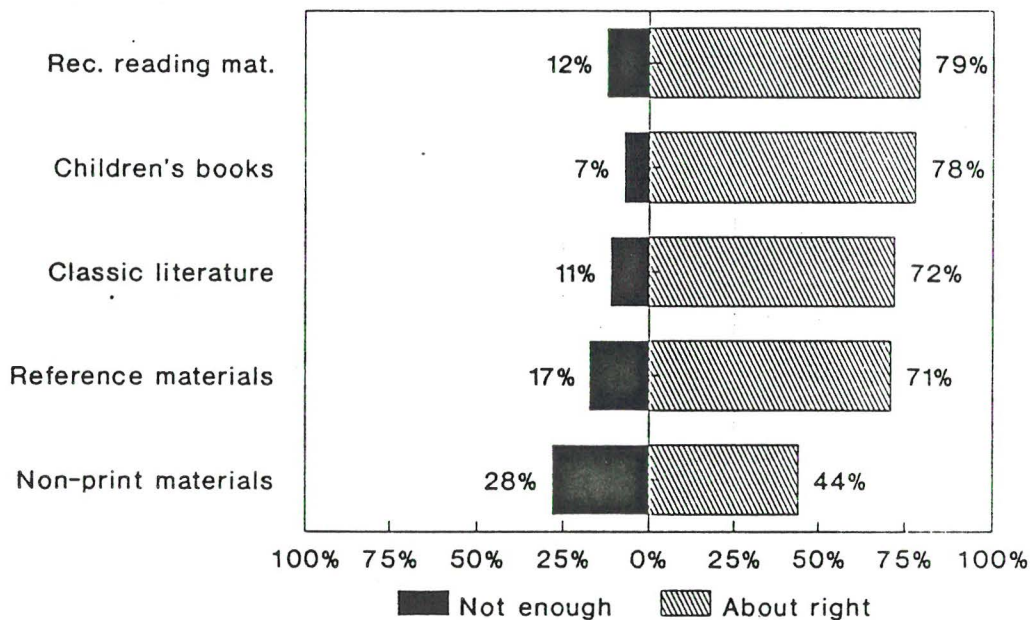
**Table 15.**  
**Perceived Adequacy of Librarians**

	<b>Agree %</b>	<b>Disagree %</b>	<b>Don't Know %</b>
The library staff at your library is helpful and approachable	95%	1%	3%
The library staff at your library is adequately trained	89%	4%	5%
You would seek the librarian's help in obtaining a book through interlibrary loan, if it weren't available in your own library	83%	12%	4%

## B. Collection Adequacy

With the exception of non-print material, most users felt their local library provided adequate recreational, reference, children's, and classic literature materials. Mentions of "too much" of any one type of collection were rare or non-existent. (Figure 8)

Figure 8.  
Adequacy of Collections



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Consistent with Mainers' assessment of adequacy of reference materials at their local library, 76% agreed that their library met their informational needs, while 17% disagreed, and 6% did not know.

Although librarians agreed that the State had come a long way in the past 20 years, there was general consensus that much of the State was still far behind in providing adequate materials to library users. They were particularly concerned that in rural parts of the State residents often had low expectations for the adequacy of collections, and that satisfaction with the services provided did not say much about the level of service actually provided. Librarians felt that only Bangor had a major fiction collection and that no library available to the public in Maine supported a significant business collection.

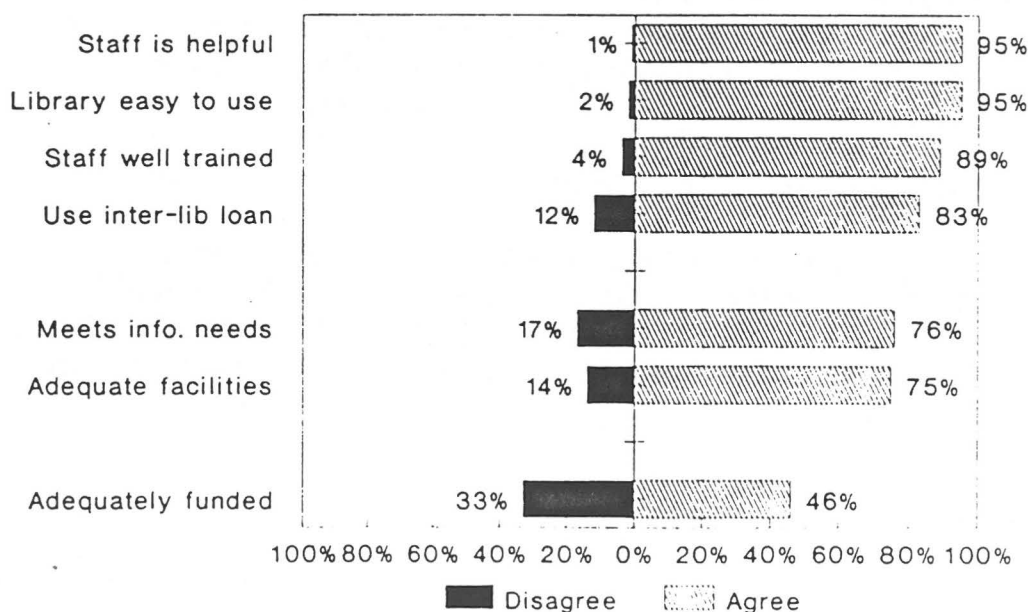
### C. Adequacy of Facility

Librarians strongly asserted that the design of the facility is critical to the success of a library. It was believed that the overall perception of the library had a lot to do with display and presentation. The consensus was "the more spread out, the better." As evidence of this, an example was given of the new Scarborough library where patrons asked, "where did all these books come from?" after materials were moved out of the old library and into the new building. In fact, there were no additional materials -- what they had was just better displayed.

It isn't just community libraries that benefit from more/better designed space. The head librarian at Colby saw a strong increase in use when books that had originally been "buried in the stacks" were brought out into the open, and school librarians mentioned how making a school library a well-lighted, open space resulted in students having a fun perception of the library.

Most Mainers who used their public library felt that it was easy to use (95%). Somewhat fewer (75%) thought their library was equipped with adequate rest room facilities and reading areas. Despite the strong satisfaction with the staffing of their library, the perceived adequacy of collections, and the positive assessment of the physical facility, less than half (46%) thought their library was adequately funded. One in three (33%) disagreed that their library was adequately funded, while 20% admitted to not knowing the adequacy of funding. (Figure 9)

Figure 9.  
Adequacy of Own Library



## VIII. ENCOURAGING THE USE OF MAINE'S LIBRARIES

In searching for solutions to motivate stronger use of libraries, it was important to understand what factors discouraged users from using libraries more, and non-users from using libraries at all. Overall, librarians and library decision makers agreed that the quiet institution with "a lot of books" was a thing of the past, and an establishment that could not survive. The library, it was felt, needed to become a vital part of Mainers' day-to-day lives in fulfilling their need for life-long learning -- in whatever shape or form was necessary to achieve that end.

### A. What Discourages Mainers from Using Libraries?

When asked what things about their library discouraged them from using it more, Mainers were most likely to respond with a personal reason, rather than one focused on the shortcomings of their library. Overall, 43% gave a personal reason such as being too busy (21%), having little interest or need for the library (11%), or buying their own books (7%). One in three (34%) said that nothing in particular discouraged their use, while 23% focused on the physical structure of the library, and 19% mentioned library operations.

Frequent library users were more likely to focus on library related issues than were infrequent and non-users, who more frequently mentioned personal reasons for not using their library more often.

#### 1. Personal Reasons that Discourage Use

Overall, more (43%) Mainers mentioned a personal reason for not using their library, rather than one that dealt with the library itself. Frequent users, however, were much less likely to mention a personal reason as a discouragement for using their library, while infrequent users were most likely to mention their lack of time (31%) as an excuse for not going to the library more.

#### 2. Physical Aspects of the Library

One in four (23%) respondents mentioned physical aspects of their library as a deterrent to stronger use. One in ten (9%) said their library was in need of new and/or more materials (9%), while 7% indicated their library was too far away. Some (6%) mentioned poor access and parking, while 5% cited the size, age, and quality of library structure.



### 3. Library Operation

A significant percentage of respondents (19%) focused on how the library was run when discussing what discouraged them from using their library more. Most of these (14%) mentioned that the current library hours were inconvenient, a concern particularly voiced among users (17%). A few mentioned a noisy/distracting atmosphere (2%), short lending length (1%), and inadequate funding (1%).

**Table 16.**  
**Factors Discouraging More Frequent Use of Public Library**

	<u>TOTAL</u> (400)	<u>Frequent</u> <u>Users</u> (147)	<u>Infrequent</u> <u>Users</u> (127)	<u>Non-</u> <u>Users</u> (126)
<b>PERSONAL REASON</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>58%</b>
Too busy, no time	21%	12%	31%	22%
Little interest/need	11%	1%	13%	19%
Buy books	7%	3%	10%	8%
Ill/ housebound	5%	2%	8%	5%
No interest in reading	4%	1%	3%	9%
<b>PHYSICAL LIBRARY</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Need new / more materials	9%	11%	8%	7%
Too far away	7%	5%	8%	8%
Poor access/parking	6%	8%	6%	4%
Size, quality of structure	5%	7%	3%	6%
<b>LIBRARY OPERATION</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>14%</b>
Inconvenient hours	14%	17%	17%	8%
Atmosphere: noisy, distracting	2%	1%	1%	5%
Lending length too short	1%	1%	2%	1%
Inadequate staff	1%	2%	2%	-
Inadequate funding	1%	-	1%	2%
<b>NOTHING DISCOURAGES</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>28%</b>

## B. What can be done to Encourage Usage?

Librarians were adamant that their peers must become more active motivators for library usage. This required a stronger marketing orientation and being even more visible to their entire community as well as to their users. They suggested that librarians begin with the attitude that "the public really needs me." Additionally, they stated that it was the responsibility of the librarian to train people that the library is "a place to get to know things, not a place to borrow things."

To achieve stronger recognition for their libraries, librarians have employed a number of different marketing efforts, including ....

School Libraries:      Writing a regular column in the school newsletter  
                                  Holding meetings in the library  
                                  Regular notes to the principal/superintendent on what's new

Special/academic  
 libraries:                Holding a "donut day" once a week (possibly when new publications  
                                  come in)  
                                  Developing strong ties to the business community, and affiliations  
                                  with the local libraries

Community libraries: Sponsoring community arts programs  
                                  Conducting surveys on readership  
                                  Newsletters on "who reads what"  
                                  Providing space for regular town meetings  
                                  Providing a young adult room, where kids don't have to be quiet  
                                  Programming to suit needs of the public  
                                  Children's programs  
                                  Developing formal and informal associations with the business  
                                  community  
                                  Becoming involved with the school board/ town council

Librarians, as well as library decision makers talked at length on the need for more professional librarians with strong people skills. The "Marian Librarian" image of the past was gone -- the new librarian needed to be out front and visible to all users, responsive to inquiries, and not look like a "book-worm." It was agreed that librarians, rather than administrators, should be the ones to initiate marketing of their libraries to prospective users, and that librarians should also be the ones to initiate relationships with other libraries.

One possibility explored with the public for encouraging stronger use was offering the option of a longer borrowing time. One in three (36%) Mainers indicated they would be more likely to borrow books if they could take them out for a longer time. Interest in such an option was stronger among infrequent users (42%) than among either the frequent user (33%) or non-users (33%). Going toward a bookstore setup was also mentioned by the librarians as a way of increasing usage, especially among non-users. Other possible options explored included better display and presentation of materials (discussed in Section VII), and developing a better network between public and school libraries (as discussed in Section V).

## IX. THE FUTURE OF MAINE LIBRARIES

### A. Small/Local Libraries or Large/Regional Libraries?

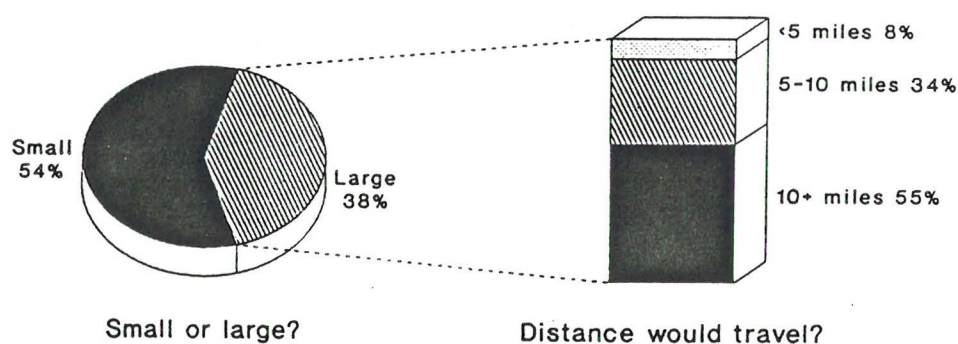
A major area of discussion in the focus group and among library decision makers focused on the form of Maine's libraries in the future. With town and State funding becoming increasingly more difficult to obtain, stakeholders were interested in knowing what solutions there might be for providing Mainers with the convenience of having libraries close to home, while at the same time being able to provide adequate library services. Because libraries were not viewed as providing essential services, they were frequently last on the list when the money from taxes was allocated. City/town managers referred to libraries as "a hard sell." Because of this, libraries often depended on the help of Friends of the Library groups, the Rotary Club, the Lions, volunteers, and endowments. It was felt, however, that libraries could go further in helping to raise funds. Many librarians felt that the smaller libraries could not survive and still function as adequately operated libraries.

There was strong support among librarians and decision makers alike for larger regional libraries. Regionalization, it was believed, could solve a number of problems. First of all, in many smaller communities it was next to impossible to find qualified librarians. Secondly, a sizable reduction in operating costs could be achieved by combining the resources and services of two or three communities, and therefore eliminating duplication of effort and materials. Several communities could, together, afford one larger library that provided far greater depth in resources and professional services. It was the impression of the librarians interviewed that at present there were a lot of small libraries that couldn't survive and continue to function as "real" libraries. Although they may provide a suitable environment for a reading room in their community, they were not adequate for providing access to sufficient resources.

In the statewide survey, respondents were asked if they would prefer a small library near their home, with limited hours and services, or a larger library, farther from their home, but with many resources and professional services. Overall, more than half (54%)

preferred a small library close to home, while 38% preferred a larger library, and 8% did not care (these were predominantly those who never used a library). Those who indicated preference for the larger library were also asked how far they would be willing to travel from their home to get to the larger library. Of the 38% who preferred the larger library, most (34%) said they would be willing to travel more than five miles, and more than half of these (21%) said they would travel more than ten miles for a larger library. (Figure 10)

Figure 10.  
Preference for Future Libraries  
Smaller/Closer or Larger/Farther



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Preference for a larger or smaller library did not differ by amount of usage, but rather by *how* Mainers used their library. A smaller, close-to-home library was most strongly preferred by those who took out children's books (60%) and visited their library for children's programs (59%). It was also more strongly preferred by those who used the library more frequently than they did ten years ago because they were retired or working less (74%), or by those who wanted to educate their children, and encourage them to read (71%). A larger library was preferred by those who used the library for on-line information (72%) and those who now needed to use the library more for school and work (74%).

Certain demographic characteristics were also related to what type of library Mainers preferred. Whereas long-time residents were strongly in favor of small libraries, newcomers preferred large libraries, and were willing to travel farther to get to them. The level of formal education attained was also related to preference -- Mainers with at most a high school education strongly preferred the smaller libraries, while those with a college education preferred the larger libraries. Possibly related to school related needs, younger residents (18-24) strongly preferred a larger library, while all other age groups of adults preferred smaller libraries.

**Table 17.**  
**Preference for Smaller/Larger Libraries**

		<u>Prefer Larger Library</u>	<u>Prefer Smaller Library</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(400)</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Use Library for:</b>			
Borrowing books	(226)	42%	55%
Research	(212)	47%	51%
Specific Information	(208)	44%	53%
Reference Desk	(160)	45%	53%
Children's Books	(98)	39%	60%
Non-Print	(59)	41%	56%
News/Magazines	(78)	53%	46%
Interlibrary loan	(59)	47%	51%
Children's Programs	(46)	39%	59%
Special Programs	(57)	47%	51%
Meetings	(42)	38%	57%
On-line Information	(29)	72%	28%
<b>Use Library more now because...</b>			
Retired/working less	(34)	24%	74%
Use for school/work	(27)	74%	26%
Educate kids/ encourage reading	(24)	29%	71%



**Table 18.**  
**Characteristics Related to Preference**  
**for Smaller or Larger Libraries**

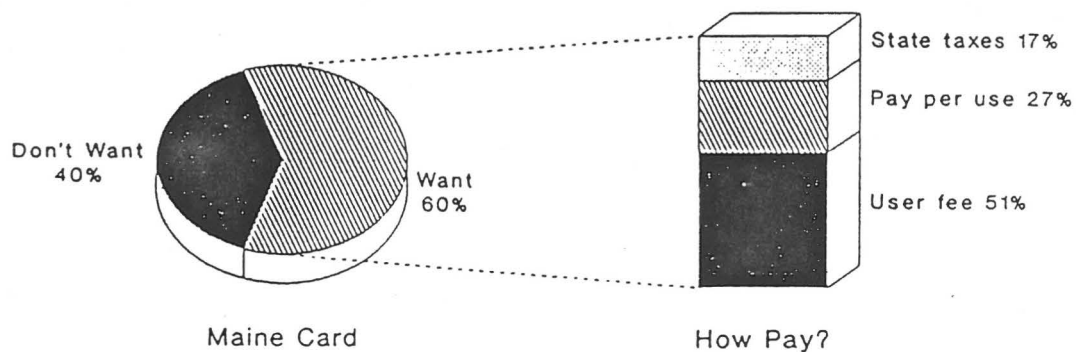
		<b>Prefer Larger Library</b>	<b>Prefer Smaller Library</b>	<b>Don't Care</b>
<b>Length of Residence</b>				
Newcomer to Maine (less than 20 yrs.)	(129)	54%	41%	5%
Long-time Mainer	(271)	30%	61%	9%
<b>Formal Education</b>				
High school or less	(192)	28%	60%	11%
Some college	(93)	42%	51%	8%
College	(114)	52%	46%	2%
<b>Age</b>				
18 - 24	(28)	71%	25%	4%
25 - 44	(195)	44%	53%	4%
45 - 64	(108)	28%	61%	11%
65 or older	(68)	24%	60%	16%

## B. Interest in a State-wide Library Card

Most (71%) adult Mainers surveyed were aware that Maine had a state-wide system that allowed users to determine if materials were available at other libraries elsewhere across the state. Most (60%) said they would use a state-wide library card that would be honored at all participating libraries in the State, should one become available. In general, interest in such a card increased with library usage.

Half (50%) of those who were interested in the state-wide card, felt that the card should be supported by user fees, while 27% preferred a pay-by-use fee, and 18% advocated more state taxes to the library to cover such use. (Figure 11)

Figure 11.  
Interest in Statewide Borrower's Card



### C. Paying for Library Usage

A big question raised in the focus group, as well as in individual interviews, was if users would be willing to pay to use libraries. This question was motivated by the increased demand for more expensive services such as computer accessed information, and the decrease in State and local funding provided to many local libraries.

The results indicate that a large percentage of Maine adults, and especially those who are frequent users of libraries, are willing to pay upwards of \$20 per year if the public library available to them were unable to continue to provide essential services without annual fees.

**Table 19.**  
**Amount of Annual Fee Willing to Pay**  
**for Library to Continue Basic Services**

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Frequent User</u>	<u>Infrequent User</u>	<u>No n - User</u>
Nothing	19%	7%	20%	32%
Less than \$5	11%	11%	11%	12%
\$5 - \$10	17%	15%	17%	19%
\$10 - \$20	29%	33%	33%	21%
More than \$20	21%	33%	16%	13%
Don't Know	3%	2%	3%	4%

## Appendix





### Librarians Participating in Focus Group

Gary Berger	Bath Public Library
Ernest Bradbury	Augusta Elementary
Laurie Brooks	Orono Public Library
Pat Fowler	Wetherle Memorial Library
Jeanne Gamage	York School Department
Carol Guerette	Bath School Department
Deborah Locke	Westbrook High School
Doug McBeth	Jackson Laboratory
Suanne Meuhler	Colby College Library
Sue Winch	Scarborough Public Library

### Individual Interviews

Rufus Ansley	Fryeburg School Superintendent
Paul Beattie	Van Buren Town Manager
Ozias Bridgham	Lubec School Superintendent
Jerry Bryant	South Portland City Manager
John Cleveland	Auburn Public Library Trustee
Thomas Fielder	Gardiner Public Library Trustee
Wayne Ross	President, Southern Maine Technical College



SURVEY OF MAINE RESIDENTS ON  
LIBRARY ATTITUDES AND USAGE

INTRODUCTION: Hello, this is (INTERVIEWER) from Market Decisions in Rockland, Maine. We've been asked by the Maine State Library to conduct a survey of Maine residents on their use of libraries and would like to talk to you, even though you may not consider yourself to be an active library user.

1. First of all, in what Town do you live? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does your Town have its own public library?
  - (1) YES
  - (2) NO
  - (3) DON'T KNOW
3. About how many miles do you live from your public library OR (IF THEY DON'T HAVE ONE) the public library closest to you?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have a library card or are you registered with your public library?
  - (1) YES
  - (2) NO
5. Do any other adults in your household have a library card, or are they registered with the public library available to you? (IF THEY MENTION A FAMILY CARD, WRITE IN # OF ADULTS)
  - (1) YES -----> ASK 5a
  - (2) NO

5a. How many other adults? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you have any children under 18 in your household?
  - (1) YES -----> ASK 6a
  - (2) NO

6a. How many of them have library cards, or are registered to use the public library available to you? (IF FAMILY, GIVE # CHILDREN) \_\_\_\_\_
7. About how often, would you say, do you use the public library?
  - (1) At least once a week
  - (2) 2 - 4 times per month
  - (3) About once a month
  - (4) About once every two or three months
  - (5) About twice a year
  - (6) About once a year
  - (7) Less often
  - (8) Never

INTERVIEWER, IF THEY HAVE NOT USED THEIR PUBLIC LIBRARY, SKIP TO Q 9

8. Thinking of the public library available to you:

Do you think the amount of (READ COLLECTION TYPE) provided by your public library is not enough, about right, too much?

	NOT ENOUGH	ABOUT RIGHT	TOO MUCH
a. Recreational reading materials	1	2	3
b. Non-print materials such as video and audio cassettes	1	2	3
c. Reference materials-	1	2	3
d. Children's books	1	2	3
e. Classic literature	1	2	3

9. Which of the following types of libraries have you been in, in the past two years:

IF THEY SAY YES TO b-g, ASK IF THEY HAVE A LIBRARY CARD TO THAT LIBRARY

	YES	NO	CARD?
a. Your own town's library (ASK ONLY IF UNCLEAR)	1	2	1
b. Another town's library	1	2	1
c. A public school library	1	2	1
d. A college or university library	1	2	1
e. A special library, such as a corporate, medical or law library	1	2	1
f. The Maine State Library in Augusta	1	2	1
g. Your area's regional public library in Portland, or Bangor	1	2	1

IF NO TO ALL IN Q 9, SKIP Q. 11

10. Over the past year have you visited any libraries for :

	YES	NO
a. Children's programming, such as story hour	1	2
b. Community meetings	1	2
c. Special programs put on by the library	1	2
d. Seeking specific information	1	2
e. Conducting research for personal, business, or academic purposes	1	2
f. Checking out books for your own reading	1	2
g. Checking out children's books	1	2
h. Reading magazines / newspapers in the library	1	2
i. Checking out non-book items such as videos or audio cassettes	1	2
j. Using computers for on-line searches	1	2
k. Interlibrary loan	1	2
l. Requesting information from the reference librarian	1	2

11. Compared to how often you used libraries ten years ago, would you say you now use libraries:

- (1) Much less frequently  
 (2) Somewhat less frequently  
 (3) About the same ----- > CONTINUE WITH Q.12  
 (4) Somewhat more frequently  
 (5) Much more frequently

- 11a. Why do you use them (ANSWER TO ABOVE)?

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---



---

I'm going to read a list of statements. Please tell me if you agree, or disagree with each statement. (ALLOW DON'T KNOWS)

- |  | YES | NO | DK |
|--|-----|----|----|
| 12. It seems that people use libraries more than they used to  |     |    |    |
| 13. You don't feel comfortable in libraries  |     |    |    |
| 14. <del>You watch for special programs at your local library</del>  |     |    |    |
| 15. It's easier for you to find a book you're looking for in a bookstore, than it is to find it in the library |     |    |    |

YES NO DK

16. When you decide to get a new book to read, you're more likely to buy it, rather than borrow it from a library
17. You would visit the library more if it were closer to your home
18. Your public library has adequate parking
- ~~19. Your public library building is physically attractive~~
20. The library is a vital part of your community
21. Libraries should offer public services such as after school programs and places for youngsters to meet for club meetings
22. You would be more likely to borrow books if you could take them out for a longer time
- ~~23. The schools in your area teach library skills and encourage students to use the libraries~~
24. Public school libraries should be open during the summer
25. Students should be able to get most of their materials for reports from their own school libraries
26. Rather than expand children and young adult services in public libraries, more funds should be allocated to school libraries
27. University and college libraries in Maine are usually open to anyone who wants to use them
28. You would use your public library more often if it were open more hours on evenings and weekends
29. It's just as important for a library to offer non-print materials (CASSETTES, CD's, ETC) as it is for them to provide printed material
30. All you really need in a library is a place where you can take out some good books.
31. In small communities, it would make sense to combine the community library with the school library
- ~~32. With all the new information service possibilities, you're excited about the library of the future~~
- ~~33. You really don't have any need for the new types of services, such as on-line searches, and information services offered by libraries~~

## ASK Q. 34 - 40 ONLY OF THOSE WHO HAVE USED THEIR PUBLIC LIBRARY

34. You feel your public library is adequately funded
35. You feel that your library meets your information needs
36. You would seek the librarian's help in obtaining a book through interlibrary loan, if it weren't available in your own library
37. Your public library is easy to use
38. The library staff at your library are helpful and approachable
39. The library staff at your library are adequately trained
40. Your public library is equipped with adequate rest room facilities and space for reading areas



41. Which of the following services do you think a public library should provide to its patrons, and which do you feel should not be the library's responsibility:

IF THEY SAY YES, ASK: Should funding for this service come out of general taxes, or from user fees?

		YES		NO		HOW PAY? FEE TAXES	
a.	Providing after school programs for children until their parents pick them up	1	2	1	2	1	2
b.	Providing a lending service for such things as tools, sewing patterns, and toys	1	2	1	2	1	2
c.	Providing a lending service for popular videos	1	2	1	2	1	2
d.	Providing access to general information through computers in the library	1	2	1	2	1	2
e.	Providing access to professional information (MEDICAL, BUSINESS, ETC.) through computers in the library	1	2	1	2	1	2
f.	Accessing library information sources from your home computer	1	2	1	2	1	2

42. What things about your library discourage you from using it more? (PROBE 3)

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43. Did you know that Maine has a state-wide system, so that if a book were not available at your library, your librarian would be able to find out if it is available from other libraries in the state?

1. YES
2. NO

44. If it became available, would you actively use a Maine state-wide library card which would be honored at all participating public libraries in the State?

1. YES
2. NO -----> SKIP TO 46

45. Assuming that such a program would need additional funds to operate, which of the following would you support for paying for such a service:

1. More state aid from your taxes going to the State library system
2. Pay as you use the service (on a use by use basis)
3. Annual fee for members

46. If the public library available to you were unable to continue to provide essential services without annual fees, how much would you be willing to pay on an annual basis to continue library services?

1. Nothing
2. Less than \$5
3. \$5 - 10
4. \$10 - \$20
5. More

47. If you had your choice, which of the following would you prefer:

1. A small library near your home, with limited hours and services, OR
  2. A larger library, further from your home, but with many resources and professional services.  
(ALSO ASK 48a.)
- a. How far would you be willing to travel to get to such a library?

\_\_\_\_\_

~~48. Does your local library currently offer programs that are of interest to you?~~

- ~~1. YES > ASK 48a.~~
- ~~2. NO > ASK 48b.~~

~~48a. What types of programs in particular have you liked?~~

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

~~48b. What types of programs would you like to see?~~

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

49. How many books have you either read completely, or referred to, in the past three months?

\_\_\_\_\_

50. On average, how many hours per week, of your personal, non-work time, do you spend doing each of the following activities:

- a. Reading magazines \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Reading newspapers \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Reading books \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Watching regularly scheduled television \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Watching videos \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Listening to music (including time spent in the car) \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Listening to books on cassette \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Hobbies, including personal computers, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Lastly, some questions about yourself, so that we can combine your responses with others.

51. Do you rent or own the place where you currently live?

- (1) OWN
- (2) RENT
- (3) OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

52. Would you describe the area in which you live to be:
- (1) Urban
  - (2) Suburban
  - (3) Rural
53. Would you say the public schools in your area provide an excellent, good, fair, or poor education for children in your area?
1. Excellent
  2. Good
  3. Fair
  4. Poor
54. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
55. For how many years have you lived in Maine? \_\_\_\_\_
56. Including yourself, how many people 18 and older live in your household?
57. How many children younger than 18 live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_
58. How many years of school did you complete? \_\_\_\_\_
59. In what year you were born? \_\_\_\_\_
60. And finally, was your total household income before taxes in 1989 greater than \$20,000?
- IF NO --- Was it greater than \$15,000?
- IF NO -- Was it greater than \$10,000?
- IF YES -- Was it greater than \$35,000?
- IF NO -- Was it greater than \$25,000?
- IF YES - Was it greater than \$75,000?
- IF NO - Was it greater than \$50,000?
- \$10,000 or less ..... 1
- \$10,001 - \$15,000 ..... 2
- \$15,001 - \$20,000 ..... 3
- \$20,001 - \$25,000 ..... 4
- \$25,001 - \$35,000 ..... 5
- \$35,001 - \$50,000 ..... 6
- \$50,001 - \$75,000 ..... 7
- \$75,001 or more ..... 8
- REFUSED ..... 0

Thank you very much for your participation. Your answers will be very helpful to the Maine State Library.



