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An Exploratory Study of the Characteristic of Rural Public Libraries in North Dakota

Merilyn L. Peterson

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL
PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN NORTH DAKOTA

by

Merilyn L. Peterson

B.A. in English, Northwestern College 1961

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of the

University of North Dakota

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree of


Master of Science

Grand Forks, North Dakota

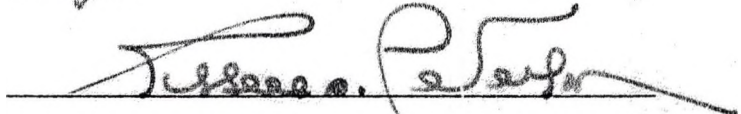
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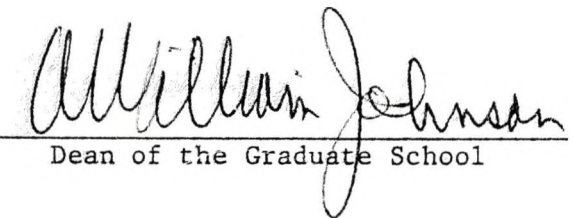
This thesis submitted by Marilyn L. Peterson in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science from the University of North Dakota is hereby approved by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done.



Chairman







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Title AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN NORTH DAKOTA

Department Library Science

Degree Master of Science

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Date *January 24, 1967*

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The author wishes to express her appreciation to the librarians of rural North Dakota for the information they provided. Without their cooperation, this report would not have been possible.

Gratitude is also extended to the Bureau of Educational Research for assistance in processing the data and to Mr. Ralph Perkins for his advice and encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF GRAPHS	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
Chapter	
I. RURAL AMERICA'S NEED FOR LIBRARIES	1
II. PURPOSE AND PROCEDURE	3
III. CHARACTERISTICS OF NORTH DAKOTA'S RURAL LIBRARIES	5
IV. CONCLUSIONS	29
APPENDIX A	30
APPENDIX B	32
APPENDIX C	37
APPENDIX D	39
BIBLIOGRAPHY	41

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Status of North Dakota Public Libraries	5
2. The Status and Book Collection of Each Library	7
3. The Periodical Collection of Each Library	10
4. Hours and Expenditures for Each Library	13
5. Physical Facilities	16
6. Library Furniture and Service	19
7. Method of Cataloging Employed	20
8. Utilization of Libraries	21
9. Educational Qualifications of Librarians	27

LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph	Page
1. Description of the Number of Patrons Libraries Serve Per Week	24
2. Contrast between Male and Female Patrons; Farm and Town Patrons	25
3. Percentage of Patrons within Various Age-divisions	26

ABSTRACT

The importance of libraries and their shortage in most agrarian areas prompted the writer to evaluate the libraries in rural North Dakota. This was done through questionnaires sent to sixty-nine libraries existing in towns with a maximum population of 5,000. All except three responded, giving a 96 per cent return.

As the questionnaires were received, their results were coded and placed on IBM cards. The data were then processed to record frequency and percentage of responses to each question.

This study reveals the extent of the individual library collections, circulation statistics, service to patrons, the physical characteristics of each library, the qualifications of the librarians, and general library usage.

The results indicate that most of the libraries are inadequate. Although approximately 50 per cent meet national minimum standards as prescribed by the American Library Association, they all have several inadequacies which prevent maximum utilization by rural people.

CHAPTER I

RURAL AMERICA'S NEED FOR LIBRARIES

Emerson Greenaway, president of the American Library Association in 1959, said, "It must be admitted that for many years rural booklovers have been receiving short rations from heaven."¹ In substantiation of this statement, John Henderson, in speaking of farm and rural communities, said that in 1961 there were still 25,000,000 people without libraries and more than 250 counties without public libraries.² Due to its rural character, North Dakota has had a wider proportion of people without library service than almost any other state.³ In 1966 the State Library Commission reported that 37 per cent of North Dakota's population had no local public library service of any kind.⁴

Even though "farmers are not a book reading public to whom reading is necessary and gratifying,"⁵ they are undoubtedly becoming

¹Emerson Greenaway, "Rural Libraries and the Library Service Act," Library Journal, LXXXIV (March, 1959), 826.

²John D. Henderson, "County and Regional Libraries," Library Trends, X (October, 1961), 106.

³Glen Brudvig, "The Development of Public Library Service in North Dakota," North Dakota Quarterly, XXXI (Summer, 1963), 64.

⁴Thirtieth Biennial Report of the State Library Commission to the State Board of Administration, Freda W. Hatten, director, (Bismarck: Bismarck Tribune, 1966), p. 6.

⁵Mary Lee Bundy, "What the Farmer Thinks of Public Libraries," Library Journal, XVI (May 15, 1961), 1849.

more and better educated, and many will read materials outside their area of interest if it is presented to them. When several families were surveyed concerning topics of interest they would like made available to them through a public library, all subjects had some appeal. However, topics of greatest concern were the development of crops, soil and livestock; farm management; home and family living; religion; and farm production methods. At the bottom of the list were art, music and literary works.⁶

In stressing the necessity for libraries in rural America, Emerson Greenaway said, "Books in inadequate supply for the rural areas of our country should be equated in importance to the food demanded from these same areas by hungry and insistent city dwellers."⁷

⁶Ibid., p. 1846.

⁷Greenaway, "Rural Libraries," p. 826.

CHAPTER II

PURPOSE AND PROCEDURE

The purpose of this study is to reveal the characteristics of North Dakota's rural public libraries. As used in this thesis, library means a building or portion of a building containing books to serve the public in cities having a maximum population of 5,000. A comparison will also be made with national minimum standards for small public libraries as presented in Library Statistics: A Handbook of Concepts, Definitions and Terminology.⁸

The original research for this paper was conducted through questionnaires sent to sixty-nine public libraries in North Dakota. To encourage maximum response, Mr. Ralph Perkins of the Library Science Department at the University of North Dakota signed a statement indicating the importance of this study.

To determine which communities had libraries, the author contacted the State Library Commission in Bismarck. The commission responded by sending a copy of the Thirtieth Biennial Report of the State Library Commission to the State Board of Administration⁹

⁸Statistics Coordinating Project, Library Statistics: A Handbook of Concepts, Definitions, and Terminology, Joel Williams, director (Chicago: American Library Association, 1966).

⁹Thirtieth Biennial Report of the State Library Commission to the State Board of Administration, Fred W. Hatten, director, (Bismarck: Bismarck Tribune, 1966).

published in 1966. This listed all of the existing libraries and named most of the librarians of that year. Since this study is limited to libraries in towns with a maximum population of 5,000, a North Dakota highway map was consulted for the latest census figures, those of 1960.

After determining which rural communities had libraries, the author sent a three-page questionnaire to each one. Later, follow-up letters were sent to the librarians who had not responded. Telephone calls were eventually placed to fifteen of the remaining seventeen who had failed to reply. Two were not contacted since the identity of the librarian was unknown. Finally, all except three had responded, giving a total of sixty-six replies or a 96 per cent return.

As the questionnaires were received, their results were coded and placed on IBM cards. The data were then processed to record frequency and percentage of responses to each question.

Limitations of this study are possible misinterpretation of the questions, incorrect or opinionated answers, and failure to respond to all of the questions.

CHAPTER III

CHARACTERISTICS OF NORTH DAKOTA'S RURAL LIBRARIES

The results of this survey, as depicted in this chapter, are based on a total of fifty-nine libraries. Of the total that responded, it was discovered that seven had either closed or had integrated with the school library.

North Dakota libraries are placed in four different classes. The four categories and the percentage within each group are presented in the following table.

TABLE 1
STATUS OF NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Status	Number	Percentage
Libraries not meeting minimum standards and open only from one to nine hours a week (Reading rooms)	29	49.1
Public libraries meeting minimum standards	22	37.3
County and regional libraries	5	8.5
Branches or stations	3	5.1

The book collection is one of the factors which determines the status of a library. As stated by the American Library Association, a library must have a minimum number of 2,000 volumes with a yearly

minimum purchase of 200 volumes if it is to be included with public library statistics.¹⁰

Table 2 lists the fifty-nine responding libraries and their status as designated by the American Library Association. The libraries meeting minimum standards are labeled as a "Library"; those not meeting standards are called a "Reading room"; county and regional libraries which serve an entire county or region are labeled as "County"; and branch and station libraries are designated as a "Station." Also included in this table are the number of volumes in each library and the total added each year. Percentages in the children's section and the reference section are also noted.

The book collection statistics in the following chart would seemingly place a few of the reading rooms in the library category. However, other items such as the hours open per week and expenditures, as noted later, also enter into the American Library Association's definition of a public library meeting minimum standards.

The blank spaces in Table 2, as in all the following tables, indicate that there were no responses for those particular items.

¹⁰Statistics Coordinating Project, Library Statistics: A Handbook of Concepts, Definitions, and Terminology, Joel Williams, director (Chicago: American Library Association, 1966), p. 30.

TABLE 2

THE STATUS AND BOOK COLLECTION OF EACH LIBRARY

City	Status	Book Collection			
		Total	Vol. added yearly	Percentage Child.	Ref.
Ashley	Reading Room	8,206	80	25	5
Beach	Reading Room	8,250	200	25	10
Beulah	Station	5,000	250	30	15
Bottineau	Reading Room	3,990	130	27	8
Bowman	Library	5,608	246	32	
Carrington	Library	6,000	400	33	30
Casselton	Library	6,000	200	60	10
Cavalier	Reading Room				
Cooperstown	Library	6,623	300	40	25
Crosby	County	16,921	800	42	33
Drake	Reading Room	3,579	150		
Edgeley	County	26,600	1,250	62	1
Ellendale	Library	68,399	278		
Enderlin	Library	4,418	200	46	2
Finley	Reading Room	2,500		60	10
Forman	Reading Room	4,100	100	25	10
Gackle	Library	2,536	200	18	25
Glen Ulin	Reading Room	2,644	144	50	12
Hankinson	Reading Room	2,346			2
Harvey	Library	8,000	500	25	38

TABLE 2--Continued

City	Status	Total	Book Collection		
			Vol. added yearly	Percentage Child.	Ref.
Hazen	Station	4,600		32	3
Hebron	Reading Room	1,400		75	
Hettinger	County	13,147	750	35	3
Hope	Reading Room	2,025	25		
Killdeer	Reading Room	3,000	50	5	10
LaMoure	Library	5,191		50	15
Langdon	Reading Room	7,104	239	20	15
Larimore	Reading Room	3,588	200	10	20
Leeds	Reading Room	2,500	40	50	25
Leonard	Reading Room	3,000	60	5	10
Lidgerwood	Library	12,573	350	25	50
Linton	Library	7,626	350	40	5
Lisbon	Reading Room	8,391	550	30	10
Mayville	Reading Room	6,780	200	25	2
Mohall	Library	5,000		25	20
Mott	Library	7,850	700	45	33
New England	Library	3,000	200	50	10
New Rockford	Library	7,103	250		
New Salem	Reading Room	2,664	15	30	10
New Town	Reading Room	3,422	300	50	
Northwood	Reading Room	2,000	50	45	5

Table 2--Continued

City	Status	Total	Book Collection		
			Vol. added yearly	Percentage Child.	Ref.
Oakes	Library	8,000	700	40	
Park River	Library	3,500	400	50	10
Parshall	Library	6,000	400	30	25
Pembina	Reading Room	1,625	100	15	10
Reeder	Station	9,000		50	25
Riverdale	County	29,493	2,000	66	3
Rolette	Reading Room	500	20	40	
Rolla	Library	8,251	259	75	10
St. Thomas	Reading Room	2,500	12	30	
Stanley	Library	3,046	200	33	10
Steele	County	7,000	1,500	50	
Towner	Reading Room	2,151	50	51	12
Turtle Lake	Reading Room	800		60	20
Underwood	Reading Room	6,000	500	20	25
Walhalla	Library	5,000	200	4	2
Watford City	Library	6,000	230	15	15
Wishek	Reading Room	7,740	635	33	
Zeeland	Reading Room	1,273	50	50	15

Another important item in a library is the periodical collection. Table 3 lists the libraries with the number of periodicals each

receives and the length of time they are kept on file. The number of children's periodicals each receives is also included.

TABLE 3
THE PERIODICAL COLLECTION OF EACH LIBRARY

City	No. of Adult Periodicals	Yrs. or Mos. Filed	No. of Child. Periodicals
Ashley	0		0
Beach	0		2
Beulah	5	1 year	0
Bottineau	9	3 months	0
Bowman	17	5 years	0
Carrington	30	5 years	3
Casselton	0		0
Cavalier	8	7 years	0
Cooperstown	30	None	2
Crosby	8	5 years	0
Drake	0		0
Edgeley	14	5 years	2
Ellendale	20	1 year	15
Enderlin	4	1 year	0
Finley	2	6 months	0
Forman	0		0
Gackle	12	1 year	0
Glen Ulin	0		1
Hankinson	2	1 year	0
Harvey	30	6 years	3

TABLE 3--Continued

City	No. of Adult Periodicals	Yrs. or Mos. Filed	No. of Child. Periodicals
Hazen	1		0
Hebron	0		0
Hettinger	26	5 years	2
Hope	0		0
Killdeer	2	Indefinitely	1
LaMoure	30	2 years	11
Langdon	4	3 years	2
Larimore	5	1 year	0
Leeds	0		1
Leonard	4	Indefinitely	0
Lidgerwood	24	5 years	3
Linton	0		0
Lisbon	31	None	5
Mayville	30	5 years	5
Mohall	0		0
Mott	20	5 years	2
New England	0		0
New Rockford	16	5 years	0
New Salem	0		0
New Town	0		0
Northwood	15	2 months	0
Oakes	17	5 years	3
Park River	17	4 years	5

TABLE 3--Continued

City	No. of Adult Periodicals	Yrs. or Mos. Filed	No. of Child. Periodicals
Parshall	0		0
Pembina	0		0
Reeder	0		0
Riverdale	22	3 years	0
Rolette	3	2 months	0
Rolla	0		0
St. Thomas	0		0
Stanley	0		2
Steele	0		0
Towner	2	4 months	0
Turtle Lake	8	2 months	0
Underwood	0		0
Walhalla	0		0
Watford City	16	5 years	0
Wishek	8	1 year	0
Zeeland	0		0

The preceding table indicates that 40 per cent of the libraries receive no adult periodicals; 67.8 per cent receive no children's periodicals.

For research purposes, periodicals should be kept on file for at least five years. However, only fifteen of the thirty which

receive periodicals keep them for five years or more.

As stated previously, the American Library Association has set standards for public libraries concerning hours and expenditures.

These standards state that a library must give at least ten hours of public service per week and expend at least \$1,000 per year. Table 4 gives the results for each library concerning these two issues.

TABLE 4
HOURS AND EXPENDITURES FOR EACH LIBRARY

City	Hours Open Per Week	Yearly Budget in Dollars
Ashley	6	1,900
Beach	10	
Beulah	12	
Bottineau	4	100
Bowman	11	4,000
Carrington	20	3,000
Casselton		3,000
Cavalier	5	
Cooperstown	13	3,000
Crosby	27	12,775
Drake	4	
Edgeley	20	
Ellendale	15	5,000
Enderlin	12	2,950
Finley	2	

TABLE 4--Continued

City	Hours Open Per Week	Yearly Budget in Dollars
Forman	2	
Gackle	4	500
Glen Ulin	2	300
Hankinson	5	
Harvey	33	4,500
Hazen	10	
Hebron	1	100
Hettinger	20	6,690
Hope	3	100
Killdeer	2	
LaMoure	6	1,400
Langdon	9	
Larimore	6	500
Leeds	2	250
Leonard	2	500
Lidgerwood	18	1,920
Linton	12	1,350
Lisbon	17	
Mayville	8	800
Mohall	10	2,500
Mott	24	3,000
New England	2	250

TABLE 4--Continued

City	Hours Open Per Week	Yearly Budget in Dollars
New Rockford	10	1,250
New Salem	4	60
New Town	7	1,200
Northwood	2	200
Oakes	43	4,000
Park River	12	2,300
Parshall	11	1,500
Pembina	3	400
Reeder	7	
Riverdale	19	3,500
Rolette	2	75
Rolla	11	3,483
St. Thomas	2	
Stanley	10	
Steele	16	7,000
Towner	2	125
Turtle Lake	4	265
Underwood	7	1,000
Walhalla	7	150
Watford City	17	3,000
Wishek	8	1,275
Zeeland	2	125

Table 4 reveals that a total of twenty-six libraries are open ten hours or more a week and twenty-six spend \$1,000 or more annually. Of these twenty-six, twenty-one do both, thus meeting minimum standards for both hours and expenditures.

Finances for library maintenance come from various sources. However, more libraries are supported by the city than through any other means. Forty-one per cent fall in this category. Other means of support are county taxes, clubs, and voluntary contributions.

Another significant factor concerning libraries is the physical facilities. Table 5 indicates the libraries which are separate buildings. The location of the others is stated in the same column. Also, the size in square feet of the library building or room is noted.

TABLE 5
PHYSICAL FACILITIES

City	Separate Location	Size in Square Feet
Ashley	Yes	1800
Beach	American Legion	
Beulah	City Hall	1500
Bottineau	Memorial Building	1080
Bowman	Yes	1092
Carrington	Armory	1152
Casselton		
Cavalier	Yes	
Cooperstown	Bank	1200
Crosby	Yes	1152

TABLE 5--Continued

City	Separate Location	Size in Square Feet
Drake		212
Edgeley	Yes	1460
Ellendale	City Hall	720
Enderlin	City Hall	504
Finley	City Auditorium	150
Forman	Yes	750
Gackle	Yes	432
Glen Ulin	Legion Theater	240
Hankinson	City Hall	
Harvey	Yes	1200
Hazen	Yes	660
Hebron	City Hall	400
Hettinger	Yes	1248
Hope	City Hall	576
Killdeer	Yes	576
LaMoure	Yes	
Langdon	County Court House	
Larimore	City Hall	322
Leeds	City Hall	280
Leonard	Yes	
Lidgerwood	Yes	1000
Linton	City Hall	1225
Lisbon	Yes	3456

TABLE 5--Continued

City	Separate Location	Size in Square Feet
Mayville	Yes	1854
Mohall	City Hall	400
Mott	City Hall	850
New England	Memorial Hall	300
New Rockford	Yes	1776
New Salem	City Auditorium	748
New Town	Clinic Basement	480
Northwood	City Hall	576
Oakes		
Park River	City Hall	592
Parshall	Yes	
Pembina	City Hall	168
Reeder	Yes	720
Riverdale	One-half Building	4800
Rolette	Memorial Building	210
Rolla	City Hall	
St. Thomas	Yes	300
Stanley	County Memorial Building	
Steele	Community Building	
Towner	Fire Hall	308
Turtle Lake		208
Underwood	Yes	1500
Walhalla	City Hall	165

TABLE 5--Continued

City	Separate Location	Size in Square Feet
Watford City	Civic Center	544
Wishek	City Hall	530
Zeeland	Bank	

The above information reveals that 35.6 per cent of the libraries are housed in separate buildings. Of those remaining, 37.3 per cent are housed in the city hall or civic center.

To be utilized to the fullest extent, libraries should have reading tables, lounge chairs, shelves of reasonable height, and telephone service. The percentage of libraries having these facilities are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6

LIBRARY FURNITURE AND SERVICE

Utility	Percentage
Reading tables	78.0
Lounge chairs	28.8
Shelves of reasonable height	94.9
Telephone service	30.5

Concerning facilities available explicitly for children, 74.6 per cent of the libraries reported having a separate section for children's books. However, only 28.8 per cent have a children's story hour.

Supplementing the regular library facilities are bookmobiles which reach 25.4 per cent of the libraries studied.

Most small libraries employ the Dewey Decimal System for cataloging purposes. North Dakota's small libraries are no exception to this precedent. The various methods and the percentage using each are presented in the following table.

TABLE 7
METHOD OF CATALOGING EMPLOYED

	Number Using	Percentage Using
Dewey Decimal System	45	76.3
Alphabetical by author and title	12	20.3
Subject arrangement	1	1.7
Listing	1	1.7

Since libraries are of no value without patrons, the extent to which libraries are used is significant. Table 8 reveals the population served, the per cent of the population having library cards, and the annual circulation.

TABLE 8
UTILIZATION OF LIBRARIES

City	Population Served	Percentage with Cards	Annual Circulation
Ashley	2,000		4,369
Beach	2,000	30	900
Beulah	2,000	27	
Bottineau	2,700	3	
Bowman	2,000		4,880
Carrington	2,500	40	30,000
Casselton			6,000
Cavalier	2,000		
Cooperstown			8,323
Crosby	5,566		43,688
Drake	1,000	30	5,500
Edgeley	14,300	50	102,074
Ellendale	2,000	40	16,789
Enderlin	1,596	44	5,370
Finley	1,000		400
Forman	2,000	3	2,000
Gackle	523		1,294
Glen Ulin	1,400	6	1,200
Hankinson	1,285	13	2,410
Harvey	5,000	25	30,000
Hazen		10	11,321

TABLE 8--Continued

City	Population Served	Percentage with Cards	Annual Circulation
Hebron	1,400	4	
Hettinger	4,416	46	17,729
Hope	500		400
Killdeer	1,000	4	1,202
LaMoure			8,516
Langdon	2,150	17	
Larimore	2,000	30	2,500
Leeds	900	3	
Leonard	400		
Lidgerwood	2,000	15	10,000
Linton	1,836	16	6,600
Lisbon			
Mayville	3,000	25	5,500
Mohall	1,300	29	
Mott	2,500	40	7,813
New England	1,350	6	1,500
New Rockford	4,000		4,000
New Salem	1,000	10	400
New Town		30	5,200
Northwood	1,500		1,040
Oakes	1,800	39	27,000
Park River	2,000	35	6,500

TABLE 8--Continued

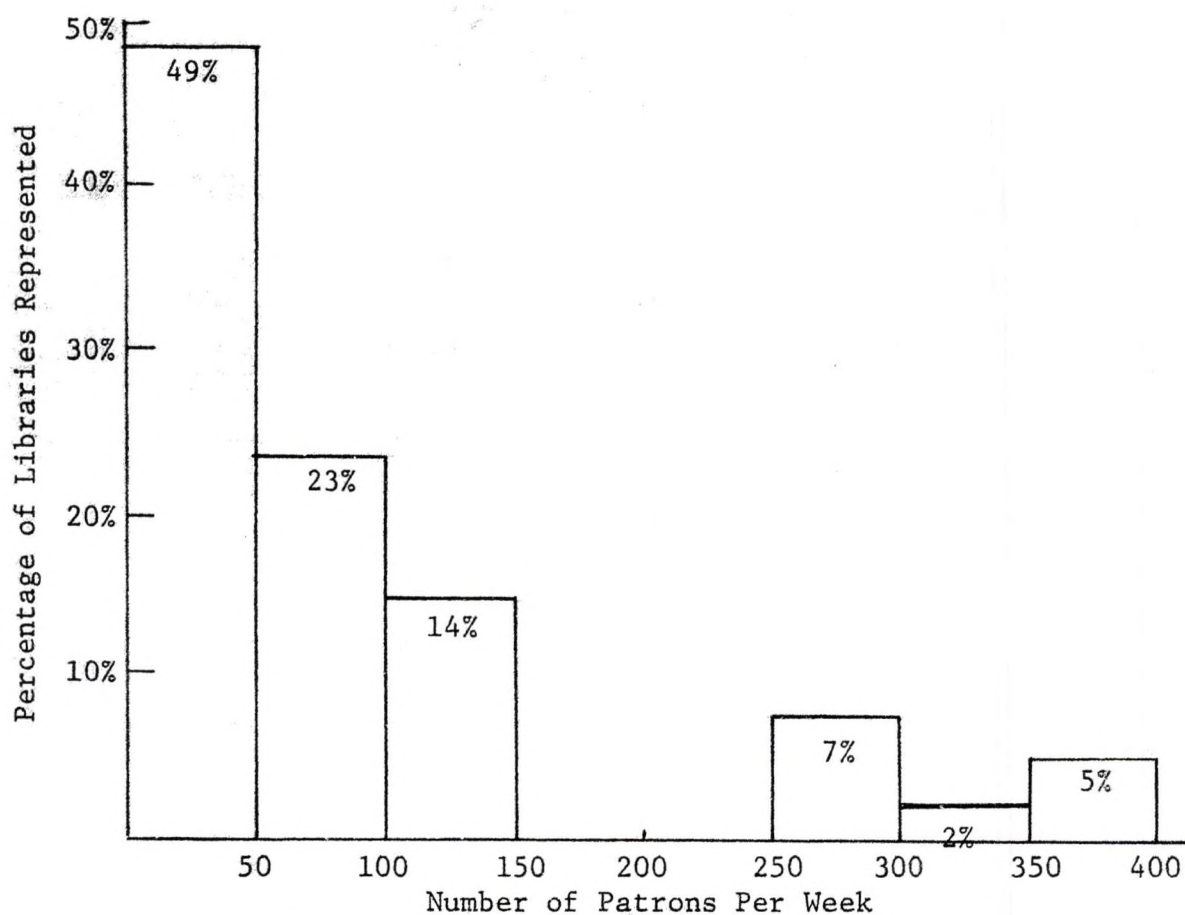
City	Population Served	Percentage with Cards	Annual Circulation
Parshall	1,200		4,300
Pembina	700		
Reeder	350		
Riverdale	20,835	25	103,178
Rolette	600		
Rolla	1,500		6,926
St. Thomas	600	20	300
Stanley	2,000	8	
Steele			20,000
Towner	970		1,200
Turtle Lake	900		300
Underwood	850	47	
Walhalla	1,200	8	400
Watford City	2,000		6,800
Wishek	1,300	25	4,112
Zeeland	600	12	

The wide variance in statistics in Table 8 is due to the different status of each library. For example, statistics for county and city libraries would vary considerably since counties serve a larger population and a larger area.

Although the percentage of a population having library cards is of some significance, it is not completely reliable in judging the

utilization of a library. Perhaps an entire family may use one card, or a card-holder may never use the library. Nevertheless, this information gives some insight into library-awareness of local populations.

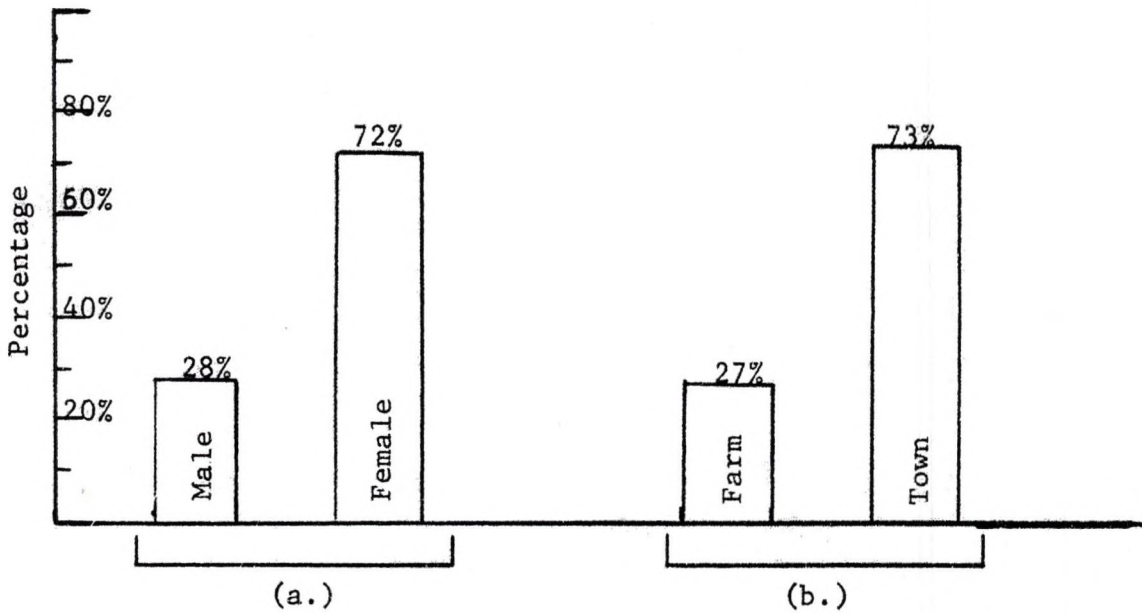
A more descriptive view of library utilization may be obtained by studying the number of patrons a library averages per week. This is shown in the graphic presentation below.



Graph 1. Description of the Number of Patrons Libraries Serve Per Week

As revealed in the preceding graph, approximately 50 per cent of the libraries have less than fifty patrons per week. Nearly 75 per cent average less than 100 patrons a week.

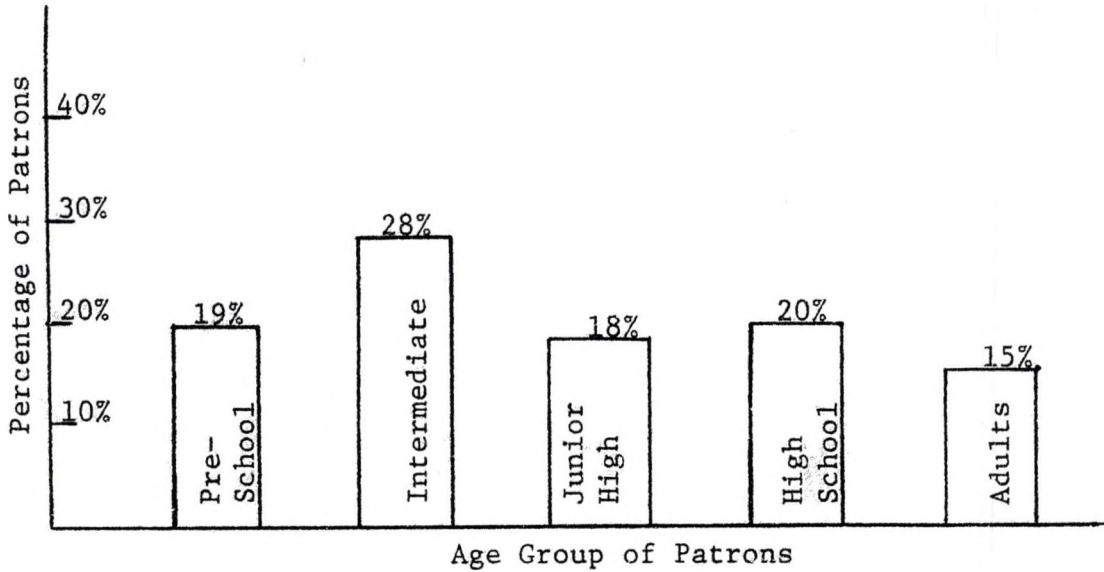
The following graph contrasts the number of patrons living on farms to the number living in towns as well as the percentage of female patrons and the percentage of male patrons.



Graph 2. Contrast Between Male and Female Patrons; Farm and Town Patrons

As can be easily discerned in the preceding graph, approximately 75 per cent of the library patrons are female and approximately 75 per cent are town-dwellers.

All age divisions are represented among the library patrons. However, as is revealed in the following chart, more patrons fall within the intermediate age division than within any of the other groups. Adults account for only 15 per cent of the library patrons.



Graph 3. Percentage of Patrons Within Various Age-Divisions

A further consideration of circulation statistics reveals that fiction circulates much more than non-fiction. Although 14 per cent of the respondents reported that circulation of fiction and non-fiction is evenly divided, 86 per cent reported that fiction circulates more.

For a more precise picture of North Dakota's public libraries, the librarians' qualifications must not be overlooked. It was discovered that their educational backgrounds vary considerably. Table 9 reveals the results.

TABLE 9

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF LIBRARIANS

	Number	Percentage
High school diploma	17	28.8
Two years of college	12	20.3
One year of college	11	18.6
Bachelor's Degree	4	6.8
Three years of college	4	6.8
One-three years of college plus courses in library science	4	6.8
Bachelor's Degree with library science . . .	3	5.1
High school student	3	5.1
Business training	1	1.7

Although the above table indicates more librarians in the high school education division than in any other single group, it also reveals that 66.1 per cent have had education beyond high school. However, only 11.9 per cent have had formal training in library science.

Eighteen librarians, or 30.5 per cent, belong to professional library organizations. Of these, thirteen reported membership in the North Dakota Library Association. Also listed were the American Library Association and the Mountain Plains Library Association.

Only 37.3 per cent of the librarians reported that they read professional library literature. The most frequently quoted were

the Wilson Library Bulletin and Library Journal. Others mentioned were the ALA Bulletin, Publisher's Weekly, and Saturday Review.

Of the above, Library Journal and Saturday Review were also listed as book selection aids. Other selection aids recorded were Wilson's standard catalogs, Booklist, Best Books, Book Buyer's Guide, Reader's Advisor and newspaper book-reviews. State library bulletins, publishers' catalogs, best-seller lists, and requests from patrons were likewise listed.

Nearly 63 per cent of the librarians are responsible to library boards. Others are supervised by the town board, city council, Legion Auxiliary, or community clubs.

Approximately one-half of the librarians reported having one or more assistants.

Naturally, due to the varying characteristics of each library, the librarians' salaries vary drastically. The lowest yearly salary quoted was \$52; however, one of the county librarians reported a salary of \$5300. Over one-half receive less than \$1000 a year. Seven reported working for no pay.

The librarians who are married women total 74.6 per cent. Widows number 16.9 per cent; single women, 6.8 per cent; and divorced women, 1.7 per cent.

Of the 59 respondents, 53 requested a copy of the results of this study.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

The most important finding of this study is that the majority of libraries in rural North Dakota are inadequate. Of the 59 libraries represented, 54 per cent are open less than ten hours per week; 34 per cent fail to add 200 volumes per year; 7 per cent have inadequate book collections.

Of the reading rooms, approximately 80 per cent have a yearly budget of \$500 or less. Half of these are under \$125. With budgets such as these, libraries cannot possibly improve their status.

Although the average public library (excluding county libraries) serves approximately 2,100 people, the majority have less than 100 patrons per week. Since most of these are children and teenagers, one can only assume that the libraries fail to meet adult needs, either because of inadequate book collections or inappropriate hours. Another possibility could be lack of publicity. These theories could also account for the small percentage of farm and male patrons.

Thus, if North Dakota libraries are to improve, there must first be an increase in public interest and financial support. Only then will it be possible to develop appropriate libraries for the citizens of rural North Dakota.

APPENDIX A

615 Sixth Street North
Grand Forks, North Dakota
August 29, 1968

Dear Librarian:

I am a graduate student at the University of North Dakota where I am working on a Master of Science Degree in Library Science. Since the subject for my thesis is a study of rural public libraries in North Dakota, my research will consist mainly of questionnaires to be completed by the public libraries of this state.

Since the validity of my report depends wholly on a 100% return, will you please complete and return the enclosed questionnaire as soon as possible.

Enclosed is an addressed, postage-paid envelope for your convenience.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Merilyn Peterson

This study will make an important contribution to a better knowledge and understanding of libraries and librarianship in this state. Therefore it is hoped that all public libraries will participate in this study.

Ralph Perkins
Chairman of Library Science
University of North Dakota

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING RURAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN NORTH DAKOTA

Name of library _____ City _____

Please complete the following questions by checking the appropriate response or by filling in the correct answer.

1. What is the present status of your library?
 public library meeting minimum library standards
 county and regional library
 branch or station
 library not meeting minimum standards and open only from one to nine hours a week
2. How many volumes are in the total library collection? _____
3. How many new volumes are added each year? _____
4. What percentage of the total collection are children's books?
 (K-grade) _____%
5. What percentage of the total collection are in the reference section? _____%
6. What method of cataloging is employed? _____
 Dewey Decimal System
 Library of Congress
 Other Explain briefly _____

7. If cataloged according to the Dewey Decimal System, how many books are within each division?
 000-099
 100-199
 200-299
 300-399
 400-499
 500-599
 600-699
 700-799
 800-899
 900-999
8. How many periodicals are received? _____ How long are they kept on file? _____
9. How many children's periodicals are received? _____
10. What selection aids are used in ordering books? _____

11. What days and hours is the library open?

Hours

_____ Monday

_____ Tuesday

_____ Wednesday

_____ Thursday

_____ Friday

_____ Saturday

_____ Sunday

_____ Total hours per week

12. Is there a separate children's library or section? ___ Yes ___ No

13. Is there a children's story hour? ___ Yes ___ No

14. Is there bookmobile service? ___ Yes ___ No

15. Is telephone service available? ___ Yes ___ No

16. Is the library a separate building? ___ Yes ___ No

If not, where is it housed? _____

17. What is the size in square feet of the library building or room?

18. Does the library contain reading tables? ___ Yes ___ No

19. Does the library contain lounge chairs? ___ Yes ___ No

20. Are the shelves a reasonable height for the user? ___ Yes ___ No

21. What is the population served? _____

22. How many library cards are presently circulating? _____

23. What percentage of the population served have a library card? _____

24. How many patrons does the library average per day? _____ per week? _____

25. Of those who actually do use the library--at least once a month--
what percentage live in town? _____ What percentage live on farms?

26. What are the percentage of patrons who fall within the following age divisions?

_____ % Pre-school and primary

_____ % Intermediate

_____ % Junior High

_____ % Senior High

_____ % Adult

27. What percentage of the patrons are male? _____

28. What percentage of the patrons are female? _____

29. During which season is the library most used? _____ Least used? _____

30. Which circulates more--fiction or non-fiction? _____

31. What is the annual circulation? _____

32. How long has the library been in existence? _____

33. How large an area in square miles does it serve? _____

34. What is the yearly budget? _____

35. How is it financed? _____

36. Who supervises the librarian? _____

Questions concerning the librarian

37. What is your sex? _____ Male _____ Female

38. How much education have you had?

_____ High School Diploma

_____ Bachelor's Degree Major _____ Minor _____

_____ Master's Degree Major _____ Minor _____

_____ 1 year of college

_____ 2 years of college

_____ 3 years of college

_____ Other Specify _____

39. What is your yearly salary? _____

40. What is your marital status? _____ married _____ single _____ widowed
_____ divorced

41. What is your husband's or wife's occupation? _____

42. Do you belong to any professional organizations connected with library?

Yes List them _____

No

43. What professional literature in the field of library do you subscribe to or read? _____

44. Do you have any library assistants? Yes No If yes, how many? _____

Check here if you would like a copy of the total results.

APPENDIX C

615 Sixth Street North
Grand Forks, North Dakota
September 24, 1968

Dear Librarian:

I recently sent you a questionnaire concerning your library, requesting you to complete and return it as soon as possible. Although I realize how busy a librarian is, I would greatly appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

In the event that you failed to receive the first questionnaire which I sent, I am enclosing another with an addressed, postage-paid envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Merilyn Peterson

APPENDIX D

Questions not Discussed in Paper Due to Inadequate Response

Number 7. If cataloged according to the Dewey Decimal System, how many books are within each division?

_____ 000-099

_____ 100-199

_____ 200-299

_____ 300-399

_____ 400-499

_____ 500-599

_____ 600-699

_____ 700-799

_____ 800-899

_____ 900-999

Number 29. During which season is the library most used? _____
Least used? _____

Number 32. How long has the library been in existence? _____

Number 41. What is your husband's or wife's occupation? _____

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