Books on Shelves, Bytes on Hold
Library Legislation and Information Practices at Two Independent Swedish High Schools

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Svensk titel: Books on Shelves, Bytes on Hold: Bibliotekslagstiftning och informationsaktiviteter på två fristående gymnasieskolor i Sverige

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Abstract: Recent legislation in Sweden mandates that all students be provided access to a school library. In addition, schools are expected to help students become independent and life-long learners. Various national organizations stress the importance of a school library in this process; however, reportedly independent schools use public libraries and the Internet for information activities instead. This study explores: 1) how independent schools in Sweden can meet both government requirements to provide library access and the information literacy demands of their students, and 2) the function of digital libraries in this context. After a comparison of previous research, a qualitative method was chosen based on socio-cultural theoretical assumptions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a principal, a teacher, and a focus group of students from two independent schools. Through a process of open coding, important themes emerged concerning how libraries and information literacy are conceptualized. There is a strong tendency to see libraries in terms of a physical function (books on shelves) over social activities (e.g., integration with teachers, development of information literacies, collection management). Students rely first and foremost on Google during the information seeking process, but also consult each other for help. There are also signs that students are discouraged from asking their teachers for help during the information seeking process. The findings indicate that current educator attitudes may hinder the development of digital school libraries.

Nyckelord: informationskompetens, skolbibliotek, Skolbibliotekslagen, fristående skolor, digitala bibliotek

Keywords: information literacy, school libraries, library legislation independent schools, charter schools, digital libraries
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## ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENSIL</td>
<td>European Network for School Libraries and Information Literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gy</td>
<td>gymnasium, upper secondary school (high school)</td>
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<td>IASL</td>
<td>International Association of School Librarianship</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>information and communication technology</td>
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<td>IFLA</td>
<td>International Federation of Library Associations</td>
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<td>INSU</td>
<td>information needs, seeking, and use</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>information technology</td>
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<td>KB</td>
<td>Kungliga Biblioteket, National Library of Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lpo</td>
<td>läroplan för obligatoriska skolan, curriculum for the compulsory school system</td>
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<td>NE</td>
<td>National Encyclopedia</td>
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<td>PBL</td>
<td>problem-based learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prop.</td>
<td>(government) proposition</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCB</td>
<td>Statistiska centralbyrán, Statistics Sweden</td>
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<tr>
<td>SKL</td>
<td>Sveriges kommuner och landsting, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFS</td>
<td>Svensk författningssamling, Swedish Book of Statutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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1. INTRODUCTION
What does it mean to be information literate in a high-tech, industrialized country? How should schools prepare students for a successful future in the information age? These are a few of the many questions that make up the current debate concerning school libraries today. This chapter provides the rationale for my study, beginning with background information as to why further research is needed and a statement about the specific issues under investigation. After the aim of the study and the research questions are presented, the significance of the study is also addressed. Finally, the organization of the thesis is outlined.

1.1 Background and Problem Statement
In Sweden, recent legislation has mandated that every school, including independent schools\(^1\) (fristående skolor),\(^2\) must provide students with “access to a school library” (Skollag: SFS 2010:800, sec. 2 § 36).\(^3\) However, 1 in 4 high schools does not meet these requirements according to the Swedish Schools Inspectorate\(^4\) (Begler, 2012). Many of these schools are independent. Even when schools report that they have access to a school library, these libraries do not always have the functions, resources, and/or availability to constitute a pedagogic resource. According to an investigation by the National Library of Sweden\(^5\) (2012), only 4 out of 10 students have access to a school library that is staffed at least twenty hours a week. In other words, many students do not have equal access to a librarian.

At the same time, Swedish students are becoming increasingly digital. Young Swedes (ages 12-20) are reported to be in consistent, almost daily, use of social networks, and they represent the population group with the greatest increase of mobile access through Smart-phones (Findahl, 2013). More young people are online while on-the-go than ever before. According to the Swedish National Agency for Education\(^6\) (2013b), there has also been a significant increase in the number of students using computers at school, including personal laptops/tablets (commonly referred to as one-to-one).

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1 The Swedish terms fristående skolor or friskolor are widely translated as independent schools, although some readers may be more familiar with the term charter schools. Independent schools are not legally or financially the same as private schools in the USA or public schools in the UK. See the section 2.1 Independent Schools for a presentation of this type of school.

2 Terminology and quotations in the original Swedish are provided here in the footnotes. All translations are my own.

3 Eleverna i grundskolan, grundsärskolan, specialskolan, sameskolan, gymnasieskolan och gymnasiesärskolan ska ha tillgång till skolbibliotek (Skollag: SFS 2010:800, 2 § 36).

4 Skolinspektionen

5 Kungliga Biblioteket (KB)

6 Skolverket
However, this report explains that the introduction of IT (information technology) is not without its struggles. While students say that they feel they are good at using computers for writing, searching, and presenting information, they feel less capable when critiquing online sources. Moreover, about a third of the principals from the report say they do not have enough IT competence to lead the strategic work of developing the use of IT in teaching. The principals also feel that many teachers do not have enough competence to use and adjust IT tools for those students who need extra help. Because the use of IT technologies in learning situations creates new concerns for those who educate young people, ideas about “digital” and other forms of literacy have also become a focus of research.

In order to meet the increasing demands of an information age, Swedish schools are often expected to teach using problem-based learning (PBL), in which students are encouraged to become independent and life long learners. What role can access to a library play in this process? Library advocates often stress the importance of a well-functioning school library. For example, UNESCO and IFLA assert that:

The school library is essential to every long-term strategy for literacy, education, information provision and economic, social and cultural development.

(IFLA, 2002)

The importance of school libraries has also been noted in a government investigation (Läsandets kultur, 2012), in which the appointed committee called for the dramatic improvement in the ability and motivation of young people to read. In order to achieve such a shift, several actions were recommended, including a proposal that all students should have access to school librarians, not just school libraries (p. 397, my emphasis).

Despite such recommendations and recent legislation, independent school administrators reportedly do not invest in school libraries, opting to use public libraries and the Internet for information activities instead (Westlund, 2008; Lindholm & Asén, 2009). However, according to the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (2011), the following criteria must be met:

- Students shall have access to a school library located on campus or at a reasonable distance in order to make it possible to continually use the library as a part of achieving the objectives of the students' education.
- A library encompasses books, fiction and nonfiction, IT and other media.
- A library is adapted to the needs of all the students in order to encourage language development and stimulate reading (p. 3).

---

7 Eleverna har tillgång till ett skolbibliotek i den egna skolenhetens lokaler eller på rimligt avstånd från skolan som gör det möjligt att kontinuerligt använda biblioteket som en del av elevernas utbildning för att bidra till att nå målen för denna. Biblioteket omfattar böcker, facklitteratur och skönlitteratur, informationsteknik och andra medier.
Several of the concepts above are susceptible to interpretation and discussion. For example, what constitutes a reasonable distance? Does continual use only include physical access or is virtual access an acceptable replacement? What distribution of books versus IT and other media is ideal? Questions such as these will become increasingly relevant since the Swedish Schools Inspectorate has the right to withdraw state approval and public funding if an independent school does not fulfill its obligations in accordance with the rules and regulations.

1.2 Study Aim
This study grows out of a need to further understand how access to school libraries might be augmented or replaced by digital forms. This thesis is specifically aimed at producing knowledge that can function as a foundation for: 1) how independent high schools in Sweden can meet both government requirements and the information literacy demands of their students; and 2) the function of digital libraries in this context.

1.3 Research Questions
The aim will be fulfilled by addressing the following questions:

- In what ways do principals interpret current steering documents regarding school libraries and information literacy?
- How do the educators and students conceptualize and interpret information literacy within the school context?
- How do the educators and students conceptualize and interpret public, school, and digital libraries?

Biblioteket är anpassat till elevernas behov för att främja språkutveckling och stimulera till läsning (Skolinspektionen, 2011, s. 3).

8 Ideas about what constitutes a book can be problematic, since today there are many relatively new formats available (e.g., e-book, self-published). In keeping with a sociocultural perspective, in which tools are carriers of values and discourses (cf. Vygotsky, 1981; Wertsch, 1991; Säljö, 2000), I recognize that form and function are interrelated. For the purposes of this thesis, the term *book* is used when referring to textual production in the general sense and as a contrast to the digital format of *e-books*. Finally, some of the study participants talked about “real” books during the interviews, and the implications of this terminology is explored further in the sections 5.2.2 Approaches to Books and 6.2 Hierarchy of Information Sources.

9 Because both principals have also spent time teaching the students, I chose at times to use the term “educators” to refer to principals and/or teachers. This provided a useful label when all four individuals reported similar ideas. In addition, this term was used for the times when the principals seemed to be reflecting more upon their teaching methods than on their administrative duties. In doing so, I was able to provide a richer picture of the interviews without compromising the integrity of the study participants.

3
In the thesis, information literacy is understood as a multi-faceted and socially situated activity that goes beyond the acquisition of basic skills (see 3.2.2 Conceptualizing Information Needs and Literacies). Libraries are also seen as complex phenomena that can be understood through examination of the activities that take place in such institutions. School libraries in particular have the potential to serve as a dynamic and unique pedagogical tool (see 3.1.3.1 Meanings and RolesAssigned to School Libraries).

The research questions are investigated with a sociocultural perspective through semi-structured interviews with principals, teachers and students at two independent schools in Sweden. Through a reiterative coding process (see 4.3 Data Analysis), the purpose of the analysis is to make visible the ways in which the study participants talk about their information activities, which are seen as embedded in a specific Swedish sociohistoric and cultural context.

1.4 Study Significance
By providing insight into how library legislation and information literacy are conceptualized and applied, this study will help advance understanding of the role digital technology plays in the support of learning activities. My research offers some important insights into the attitudes of a section of the Swedish education system that often goes unexamined, i.e., students and educators at independent schools. Because the number of independent schools and the introduction of ICT (information and communication technology) in schools are both on the increase, this thesis should be of interest not only for library and education professionals but for policy makers and parents as well.

1.5 Thesis Outline
The thesis continues with Chapter 2 which presents the context for my research, including pertinent information about independent schools in Sweden, steering documents related to school libraries, and the national organizations that help define these two institutions. The literature review in Chapter 3 details relevant previous research and the theoretical framework which create the backdrop for my study. In Chapter 4, I explain the method for my study, such as how data was collected and analyzed. Chapter 5 presents the findings of the study, and Chapter 6 discusses how these fit within the research field. The thesis ends with Chapter 7 which provides conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study, as well as suggestions for further research.
2. RESEARCH CONTEXT

In order to provide the reader with a backdrop for the study of this thesis, what follows is a brief introduction to some of the various actors involved with the issue of library access for independent schools in Sweden. This chapter begins with a short description of independent schools in Sweden. Then various steering documents concerning schools and libraries will be reviewed. Secondly, significant national organizations that influence the workings of libraries and independent schools in Sweden are presented. When possible, recent statements made by these different actors about school libraries will also be provided. As will be revealed, the context surrounding Swedish school libraries is complex, with many differing opinions among the various actors involved.

2.1 Independent Schools

In general terms, an independent school represents an alternative education system in which a school receives public funding but operates privately. In Sweden, funding is supplied in the form of school vouchers. The schools may be run as both non-profit and for-profit companies. The independent schools are prohibited from supplementing the public funding with other fees, and students must be admitted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Between the mid 1980s and mid 1990s, Sweden saw several important changes in its educational policy, namely decentralization, the introduction of choice, and the stimulation of private schools. These new policies are best understood against the backdrop of rapidly expanding public expenditure and a relative decline in the Swedish economy (Daun, 2003, pp. 92-96). A result of these reforms is that most of the administration of resources for compulsory and high school education have been left to the municipalities or the schools themselves.

Since 1991, schools are allowed to admit students from outside catchment areas if there are adequate teaching facilities. In order to attract the maximum number of students, schools have begun to market themselves with particular profiles (Daun, 2003, p. 97). In keeping with this trend, the most common type of independent schools during this period were those with a special educational or faith-based approach. Recently, the largest growing group of independent schools have adopted a generalist approach instead (Hellman, 2000; Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006b).

While there is a temptation to do so in public debate, making general statements about the common attributes of independent schools is difficult since the only thing they may share is the fact that they are privately run and follow the same regulations (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006b, p. 46). In short, it can be said that independent schools have greater freedom in organizing their operations than municipal schools; however, independent schools must still provide an education that is generally comparable to one provided by the municipality.

10 Descriptions of the study participants are provided in the section 4.2 Data Collection.
With regards to school library access, it was established at the beginning of the millennium that students in independent schools were at a disadvantage. At independent high schools, 1 in 5 students did not have access to a school library, as compared to 1 in 100 students attending municipal schools (Swedish Arts Council,\textsuperscript{11} 2003).

2.2 Steering Documents
This section briefly presents the steering documents that influenced and regulated libraries in Swedish schools at the time of the study. While some of the documents, such as those representing the national curriculum, have a regulative function, others are more of an inspirational nature, such as proclamations or manifestos, and provide possible goals.

2.2.1 UNESCO/IFLA Guidelines
The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has produced a number of manifestos dealing with libraries in cooperation with the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). These include guidelines for school libraries which can be found in several languages, including Swedish. On the topic of location and space, it is noted that there is “no one universal measurement for school library facilities but it is useful and helpful to have some kind of formula on which to base planning estimates so that any new or newly designed library meets the needs of the school in the most effective way” (IFLA, 2002, p. 7). This can include a central location and close proximity to all teaching areas.

2.2.2 An International Proclamation
In 2010, a proclamation known as “A Library for Every School!” was issued by the European Network for School Libraries and Information Literacy (ENSIL), the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL), and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). The “information age” is noted as presenting many challenges, including “cooping with an Internet information tsunami” that emphasizes the “need for professional libraries and information specialists (librarians) in schools” (Stichting ENSIL, 2010, p. 3). The document concludes with the statement that “the role of a school librarian, operating in a modern multi-media library resource centre, and equipped with the technical and professional skills acquired in an accredited librarianship education programme, is absolutely crucial to the economic and social progress of every country” (Stichting ENSIL, 2010, p. 3).

2.2.3 Legislation
Starting in 1997, Swedish legislation stipulates that municipalities bear the responsibility for school libraries. Special attention is to be given to young people by providing books, information technology and other media suited to their need to develop language and reading according to the Library Act

\textsuperscript{11} Kulturrådet
The most recent Education Act (Skollag: SFS 2010:800)\textsuperscript{13} states that “access to a school library” must be provided by all schools (sec. 2 § 36).

2.2.4 National Curriculum
According to the Curriculum for the Compulsory School System, the Pre-School Class and the Leisure-time Centre,\textsuperscript{14} there are several goals that a school must ensure that students are able to meet. These include being able to “use technology as a tool in their search for knowledge and to develop their learning” (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006a, pp. 9-10). In addition, the head of the school is responsible for the results of the school and as such must ensure, for example, that “the allocation of resources and remedial measures are adjusted to assessments made by teachers of the pupils' development” (Ibid., pp. 17-18). Such resources can be interpreted as including a school library.

Within the Curriculum for the Upper Secondary School,\textsuperscript{15} it is further explained that the responsibility of the school is to ensure that all individual students “can use books, library resources and modern technology as a tool in the search for knowledge, communication, creativity and learning” (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2013a, pp. 8-9). The school has a special responsibility to ensure that “education is organised such that students in order to be able to search for and acquire knowledge, have access to guidance and teaching materials of high quality, and also other learning aids for a modern education where there is access to libraries, computers and other technical aids” (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2013a, p. 13).

2.3 National Organizations
In conjunction with the steering documents and national policies, the following agencies are in place to oversee the administration and regulation of all schools.

2.3.1 The Swedish National Agency for Education
The Swedish National Agency for Education is the central administrative authority for the public school system, from pre-school to adult education. Its role is to guide, support, follow and evaluate the work of municipalities and schools. This is accomplished by setting up frameworks and guidelines on

\textsuperscript{12} ...skall ägna särskild uppmärksamhet åt barn och ungdomar genom att erbjuda böcker, informationsteknik och andra medier anpassade till deras behov för att främja språkutveckling och stimulera till läsning (Bibliotekslag: SFS 1996:1596, § 9).

\textsuperscript{13} Eleverna i grundskolan, grundsärskolan, specialskolan, sameskolan, gymnasieskolan och gymnasiesärskolan ska ha tillgång till skolbibliotek (Skollag: SFS 2010:800, 2 § 36).

\textsuperscript{14} Lpo 94

\textsuperscript{15} Gy 2011
how education is to be provided and assessed with the aid of syllabuses and subject plans, knowledge requirements and tests, as well as general guidelines. The Agency also helps identify and highlight areas for national development through in-depth studies and analysis. Results of this research are regularly disseminated through knowledge overviews and reports.

While the Swedish Parliament\textsuperscript{16} and Government\textsuperscript{17} set out goals and guidelines through the Education Act (\textit{Skollag}: SFS 2010:800), the Library Act (\textit{Bibliotekslag}: SFS 1996:1596) and the Curricula, the mission of the Swedish National Agency for Education is to actively work for the attainment of the resulting objectives. However, the municipalities and the independent schools are ultimately responsible for implementation within the school system, since they have the mandate to allocate resources and organize activities so that students attain the national goals. Inspection of schools is the responsibility of a separate agency, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, which is described in the following section.

The school library is seen as a “part of the educational operation of the school with the task of supporting students' learning.” Therefore the school library can be seen as “both a material resource that makes up part of the teaching material and equipment of the school and a function that actively contributes to the development of knowledge and is responsible for a certain service” (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2006c, p. 192).\textsuperscript{18}

The latter part of this definition makes the pedagogic role of the school library much clearer. This can be seen to some extent in a modified form in the new Education Act where the importance of the school library for student learning is taken up, but at the same time the point is made that the library should be tailored to the situation of each school: “Students shall have access to a school library but … the organization of how the school library works should be flexible” (Proposition 2009/10:165, p. 284).\textsuperscript{19}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{16} Riksdagen
\textsuperscript{17} Regeringen
\textsuperscript{18} Med skolbibliotek avser Skolverket en gemensam och ordnad resurs av medier och information som ställts till elevernas och lärarnas förfogande med hjälp av kompetent personal. Skolbibliotek är en del av skolans pedagogiska verksamhet med uppgift att stödja elevernas lärande. Skolbibliotek kan därmed betraktas dels som en materiell resurs som är en del i en skolas läromedel och övriga utrustning, dels en funktion som bidrar aktivt i kunskapsutvecklingen och svarar för viss service (Skolverket, 2006, s. 192).

\textsuperscript{19} …eleverna ska ha tillgång till skolbibliotek men […] organiseringen av skolbiblioteksverksamheten ska vara flexibel (Prop. 2009/10:165, s. 284).
\end{flushleft}
2.3.2 The Swedish Schools Inspectorate
As previously mentioned, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate has supervisory responsibility of all municipal and independent schools and checks that legislation is being followed. Schools are provided with advice and guidance and may be penalized if they fail to rectify inadequacies. The Inspectorate may also revoke the license of an independent school to operate if certain obligations are not met.

Although the Education Act (Skollag: SFS 2010:800) does not specify what defines a school library, the Inspectorate refers to an earlier Government proposition that states that a school library:

usually refers to a shared and ordered resource of media and information that are provided to students and teachers with the help of competent personnel (Swedish Schools Inspectorate, 2011, p. 5).

The Inspectorate has interpreted the legislation from the Library Act (Bibliotekslag: SFS 1996:1596) and defined three corresponding demands for what constitutes an adequate school library. The main focus has been placed on language development and encouraging reading through a tailored media collection and a close proximity to the library premises. As mentioned earlier (see 1.1. Background and Problem Statement), school library inspections are based on whether or not schools have access to a library on campus or at a reasonable distance to enable use on a continual basis. Libraries are to include books, both fiction and non-fiction, IT and other media. Libraries should also be adapted to the students' needs so as to encourage reading and stimulate language development (Swedish Schools Inspectorate, 2011).

2.3.3 The National Library of Sweden
The National Library of Sweden (KB) has three main duties:

• To collect and preserve all Swedish publications, and to make the material available to the public
• To serve as the infrastructure for the Swedish research community
• To be a research library, with a primary emphasis on the humanities and social sciences

Within these areas of responsibility, KB has the task of maintaining a national overview of and encouraging cooperation between libraries in Sweden, including school libraries. Among other things, KB is responsible for keeping official statistics for school libraries. KB also has a group of specialists dealing with learning who work to explore issues dealing with the educational role of libraries. According to the most recent national report on school libraries (National Library of Sweden, 2012), not much has changed statistically since the previous report from 2008. Despite the new law concerning school libraries, there has been no significant increase in the number of schools that have access to a school library, and about half of the students in Swedish schools still lack access to a school
library. Even when there is a school library, often there is no qualified librarian there to administer it, or the number of hours that the libraries are staffed is so low that only the most basic administrative tasks can be performed. Reasons given for not investing in a library include lack of time and money, as well as limited support and interest from the school administration. Schools without libraries often claim that students have access to all the functions normally provided by a school library due to: 1) a higher percentage of computer access; 2) use of centralized web functions through the municipalities; 3) cooperation with and use of the public library; and/or 4) use of book collections. In response to the latter, the report counters that a school library is defined as, “a common collection of fiction and nonfiction and other media that are alphabetically/systematically ordered” and does not mean, “just a book room or collection with only textbooks or a class copy of different fiction or fact books, nor some type of collection that is not systematically ordered” (National Library of Sweden, 2012, p. 9).

Recently, representatives from KB and the Malmö Public Library (Lucassi & Gillberg, 2013) have attempted to map, chart and analyze the current situation of school libraries in order to clarify who are the main actors concerned with school libraries. Supposedly, this exercise was necessary due to the confusion caused by the vagueness of the new school law. The report aims to show where the mandate lies for what happens to Swedish school libraries. A mandate is defined as the formal power to “initiate, affect, drive and develop the school library issue, i.e., to create school library organizations that function well” (Ibid., p.3).

Lucassi and Gillberg present various official comments as to what defines a properly functioning school library. By bringing to light the different views about school libraries, the report emphasizes that the library issue is complex. School libraries straddle two institutions, schools and libraries, and no one actor has the final say over both aspects. For example, the teacher unions have expressed the opinion that libraries should be staffed by qualified personnel, a qualification which is missing in current school and library legislation. This division permeates the issue from the level of government authorities all the way down to the day-to-day operations on a local level. On the municipal level, school libraries are sometimes delegated to school boards and at other times to the culture and leisure councils. It is also worth noting that while the government authority regulating libraries (the National Library of Sweden) has been assigned a commission concerning school libraries, the authority regulating schools (the Swedish National Agency for Education) has not. At its best, the school library can be seen as joining two professions with the same target group and goals. Lucassi and Gillberg make it clear that the only direct mandate resides with the school principals.

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20 ...en gemensam samling av skön- och facklitteratur och andra medier som är alfabetiskt/systematiskt ordnad. Här avses inte bokrum/-samlings med enbart läroböcker eller klassesamlingar av olika skönlitterära eller faktaböcker, inte heller någon typ av samling som inte är systematiskt ordnad (Skolbibliotek, 2012, s. 9).

21 Med mandat menar vi formell makt att initiera, påverka, driva och utveckla skolbiblioteksfrågan, dvs att skapa välfungerande skolbiblioteksverksamheter (Lucassi & Gillberg, 2013, s. 3).
2.3.4 Municipalities and Counties
As the member organization for all the municipalities and counties of Sweden, SKL is one of the most influential actors in the school library issue. The SKL recently commissioned a report to assist its members in addressing school libraries, and to provide an overview of the functions of school libraries, now and based on projections for the next five years. Widell and Östling (2012), authors of the report, see the new school law, and in particular its interpretation by the Swedish School Inspectorate, as clearly defining school libraries as physical spaces. Their counter argument is that an ideal collection is impossible to create with only physical rooms and physical books. The authors, therefore, propose digital libraries as a viable solution. Acknowledging the limitations of some municipalities, the SKL report emphasizes that investments should be made in cooperation with content distributors, other municipalities, and on the national level to promote access through digital “rooms”. Principals are singled out as having particular responsibility to ensure that these school library services are made available and visible.

22 Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)
3. LITERATURE REVIEW
In order to better understand the complex relationship between independent schools and libraries, this chapter provides a review of the empirical evidence and the theoretical backdrop that inform my research. The first section of the review will address previous research related to how high school students interact with information in the digital age, and then will focus on research studies within the specific context of Swedish school libraries. The second section details the theoretical assumptions that frame my own study.

3.1 Previous Research
The literature review begins with an exploration of the information activities of those I would label digital youth\footnote{Within academic research, there are a multitude of terms to refer to those individuals who span the gap between childhood and adulthood, such as: adolescents, older/younger children, minors, older/younger teenagers, teens, tweens, and young people. It is worth noting that it is difficult to use age-graded categories to define this social group since the categories are usually not self-imposed. In an effort to avoid too much categorization, this thesis will adopt the convention of referring to all legal minors (under the age of 18 by Swedish law) as youth or young people.}, i.e., individuals who have grown up in modern, industrialized, and information-heavy surroundings in a time permeated by computers and the Internet. After a discussion of the generational stereotypes prevalent in the literature, how students interact with information is examined. This interaction will then be set within the framework of Swedish school libraries.

3.1.1 Contested Digital Youth
Understandably researchers are curious, and at times concerned, about how growing up during a technology and information revolution will impact current and future generations. As a result, the literature is overrun with varying terminology meant to delineate precisely who today's learners are (e.g., “Net Generation” by Tapscott, 1998, 2008; “Nintendo Generation” by Green, Reid, & Bigum, 1998; “Boomers vs. Gamers” by Squire & Steinkuehler, 2005). Many of these labels set up a dichotomy based on a criticism of the younger generation's abilities. For example, Prensky (2001, 2006) attempts to make a distinction between digital “natives” who have grown up with technology and “immigrants” who have come to it later in life. Digital natives are seen as having a very different style of learning, i.e., they crave interactivity, value graphics over words, want random access, and operate at the “twitch speed” of video games. Prensky's claims go so far as to suggest that digital natives have a different brain structure than from that of digital immigrants. In essence, technology has managed to spawn physical evolution within a time span of little more than a decade. The end result is alarming, and he asserts that, “the single biggest problem facing education today is that our Digital Immigrant instructors, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language” (Prensky, 2001, p. 2).
There are also researchers who aim for a more nuanced approach to how young people engage with technology. For example, Rowlands et al. (2008) dispute the assumption that the younger generation, “prefer quick information in the form of easily digested short chunks rather than full text (p. 142).” Such behavior is not limited exclusively to young people; instead, most online users display this type of searching. Deeming young people as proficient by default can also lead to what Helsper (2008) defines as “ostrich tactics” in which young people who are assumed to be digital experts are likely to avoid tackling technology issues. The concern is that rather than face an online problem, these users are more inclined to stick their heads into the metaphorical sand. White and Le Cornu (2011) propose a continuum of “visitors” and “residents” as an alternative to Prensky’s “redundant” Native/Immigrant dichotomy. They argue that “place” and “tool” are a better representation of technology use in modern society since people behave in different ways when using technology depending on context and motivation. As with any continuum, people are somewhere in between these two poles and might be moving in one direction or the other at any time.

Much of the discourse about youth is under the influence of adults, and in many ways continues to be of a technologically deterministic nature. Mainstream media tends to portray new technologies and youth practices in normative terms, which perpetuates an idea of youths as other (Herring, 2008). For my own study, I chose instead to view young people as creative and active social agents who produce their own unique cultures while contributing to the production of adult societies at the same time (cf. James & Prout, 1997). By focusing on research that is more qualitative in nature, in particular those produced from the student perspective, my intention is to see the study participants not as innocent victims or passive recipients of media but rather as agents who actively construct their social and cultural worlds.

3.1.2 Student Information Needs, Seeking, and Use
Knowledge about how young people have been affected by the digital shift is predominately informed by studies from the USA. This is due to: 1) the greater availability of comprehensive, longitudinal research originating from the USA; and 2) the tendency to associate the USA with cutting-edge, technological changes. Nonetheless, whenever possible, Swedish examples of similar trends are provided in this review in order to help illuminate the specific context surrounding the participants of my own study.

When examining how students behave in relation to information, descriptions can be gathered from the research field often labeled *information needs, seeking, and use (INSU)*. In general, the literature within this field shows that students prefer to use online information, and in particular, the search engine Google (cf. Alexandersson & Limberg, 2004; Rowlands et al., 2008; Purcell et al., 2012). Within the Swedish context, Gärdén (2010) confirms that even the adult students in her study see information seeking as conducting research via search engines on the Internet.

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24 The term *information need* has been a topic of debate in the literature. See the section 3.2.2 Conceptualizing Information Needs and Literacies for an explanation of how I interpret the concept.
Researchers also draw a distinction between searches that are motivated by intrinsic or extrinsic sources (cf. Gross, 1995, 2005). Gärdén (2010) explains that this division between self-generated and imposed inquiries is not as clear when working with the educational methods common in Sweden, i.e., inquiry based or problem-based learning (PBL). Since assigned tasks are now expected to entail a large element of individual responsibility, students must work on their own yet still manage to complete and pass the task in some way. Lundh (2011) demonstrates that even very young students are already expected to formulate questions in response to imposed queries but in a way that hints at independence. This can be a cause for concern since Alexandersson et al. (2007) find that teachers underestimate how difficult it can be for students to meet imposed demands to search for information independently, and as a consequence, students are often left without the guidance they need.

Another common finding is that there is a human tendency to be social in the way we search. Meyers, Fisher, and Marcoux (2009) find that young people consult with peers and adults for recommendations on information sources. They also find a level of redundancy in this activity, in which information about the same topic may be gathered from multiple sources for comparison. Their interpretation is that this is, “a kind of information bricolage, gathering and assembling ready-at-hand information from varied persons and media in the course of a single problem” (Ibid., p. 317). Some of the research on social search can be disheartening for library professionals. For example, Agosto and Hughes-Hassell (2005, 2006a, 2006b) find that students do not typically seek out libraries or librarians as sources for information. Instead, several other people rank above librarians, including friends and family, school employees, and mentors. As they summarize, “participants conveyed negative attitudes toward libraries and librarians and reported frustration with many of the same aspects of library service such as strict rules, unpleasant staff, lack of culturally relevant materials, dreary physical spaces, and limited access to technology” (2005, p. 161).

Young people can also be said to interact with information from “multiple genres of participation” (Horst, Herr-Stephenson, & Robinson, 2010), or in other words, students engage with technology and media along a continuum of practices that are both interest-driven and friendship-driven. As an example of this type of dynamic identity, Finn (2010) describes the techne-mentor or a young person who is “successful in learning advanced technology skills through messing around,” and sometimes becomes an “expert” for families, friends, teachers, and classmates (p. 58). She argues that this role only becomes relevant and apparent when the techne-mentor's peers are having problems with technology. In other words, these are ad hoc and informal relationships with a great deal of fluidity. Students may rely on techne-mentors in certain circumstances and act as techne-mentors in other circumstances, where they in turn may pass on knowledge previously gained from other techne-mentors.

3.1.3 Swedish Schools and Libraries
This section explores previous research about the role that a Swedish school library can play in supporting INSU. When examining what is written about school libraries in general, different themes
emerge concerning the various positions, roles, and functions of the institution. A great deal of the research centers around the importance of cooperation between librarians and teachers or school administrators. The focus is often on why a school library is needed and what barriers there are to its use and development.

3.1.3.1 Meanings and Roles Assigned to School Libraries
Significant research has been devoted to evaluating school libraries and the role these play as education tools. There is an ever increasing body of evidence, known as impact studies, to support the claim that school libraries and the people who work there make a difference in student achievement. Ross Todd conducts this type of research and has gained popularity in the Swedish library community (Hell, 2011). Based on some of his most recent work (Todd, Gordon, & Lu, 2011), he asserts that the school library sets the stage for student-initiated inquiry because it allows for serendipitous learning, and it supports hybrid activities that connect the real and virtual worlds of the school community. While Sweden does not have quite the same tradition of broad impact studies, there are several smaller studies that indicate a positive connection between student performance, reading ability, and investment in school libraries (cf. Henning Ingmarsson, 2010 for an overview of such studies; Söderlund, 2009 for an example by a practitioner).

Many of the Swedish studies that assert the importance of school libraries also specify that the role the principal plays is key, and that in order to move toward a more advanced use of the school library, strong support from the administration is essential (cf. Limberg, 1990, 1996; Alexandersson & Limberg, 2003). Limberg (1996) argues that school leaders can be divided into two categories: those that see the library as a part of the school in general, and those that see the school library as a separate entity or function within the school. The former has a tendency to invest most in the school library because they equate the development of the library with overall development of the school. The latter generally invests less since the library is separated from, and therefore competes with, other functions within the school.

Impact studies seem to make a clear connection between investing in libraries/librarians and student performance. The bulk of library impact research has been based on correlation statistics, and statistical studies merely demonstrate possible associations and the strength of the relationship that one variable might have with another. The argument can be made that perhaps it is not the school library itself that makes a difference in student development, but rather how the school library is understood and used by the various actors at the school (Francke & Gården, 2013). Indeed, most impact studies emphasize that the presence of a school librarian is essential (cf. Kachel & Lance, 2013). There is, nonetheless, adequate support for the cause-and-effect relationship put forth by impact studies, since the results are: 1) continual (over half a century); 2) consistent (similar results show up); and 3) comparable (similar results show up in different environments of the English-speaking world, e.g., all fifty American states, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK, and South Africa).
With a critical eye to the field, Limberg (2003) acknowledges another problem related to the assumption that the school library is always the best alternative. A more objective view is called for since the quality of school libraries vary. Impact will differ significantly between a school library that is well-equipped and staffed with competent personnel who are well integrated with school curriculum and a small school library with few resources this is only open a few hours a week (p. 88).

In the USA, it has been noted that even if young people are heavy technology users (Zickuhr, Raine, Purcell, Madden, & Brenner, 2012), most still read and borrow printed books and thus value library service with a mix of tradition and technology. At its core, a library remains a physical space where students are likely to study or just “hang out”.

Much of the earlier work by Limberg examines the meanings assigned to Swedish school libraries. In a broad analysis of the role school libraries have in teaching (Limberg, 1990), she outlined a scale that went from a passive lower level, where the library is seen as a warehouse for books, to a more active higher level, where the library is seen as a resource in the work of educational development. Additional research (Limberg & Alexandersson, 2003) found that the library was also ascribed meanings such as a place of leisure and refuge, a place of strict order and quiet, and a service area. Many students also saw the school library as an opaque information system. In other words, they found the library incomprehensible and did not fully understand how it works. Because students use computers for information seeking regardless of where they find them – in the library, in the classroom, in the computer lab, or at home – the conclusion is made that the school library implies a physical rather than a virtual space for students as well (Ibid.).

In a new anthology of research, Limberg and Lundh (2013) emphasize the educational role that school libraries play in Sweden. They also note that many of the actors participating in the current debate about school libraries want research providing evidence that the school library works in helping students meet their learning objectives. Another common request is for research to provide a definition of what a school library is. Both of these requests are seen as problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, an unequivocal definition of what makes a school library is not possible. Since the school library is formed and negotiated at a point of tension between different interest groups and forces, what characterizes it will shift over time and space. Secondly, such definitive descriptions fail to solve the issues associated with local activities and/or operations. According to Limberg and Lundh (2013), research should not be carried out in order to find evidence proving the necessities of libraries. Instead, the point is to capture and describe the task of the school library as an educational tool and to bring forth the students' point of view concerning such operations and development. This entails a focus on the activities in the library rather than its physical resources.

3.1.3.2 Student Centered Learning and Information Literacy
Student-centered working methods, in which independent information seeking with a computer is the most prominent tool, have not only brought on an increased use of libraries but also an increased
interest from librarians to more actively deal with educational issues (Alexandersson & Limberg, 2009, p. 85). Despite the recent shift towards problem-based work in information seeking projects, students still tend to understand school work according to what they believe is expected of them (Alexandersson et al., 2007). INSU is seen as merely gathering facts, which means providing the “right” answer without a deeper knowledge of the content (Ibid.). This situation occurs when teachers and school librarians leave students alone during their school projects. The end result is that the process of searching, sorting and summarizing facts overshadows the students’ acquisition of knowledge. The suggested remedy for this situation is for both teachers and school librarians to be more active participants in supporting and mentoring students (Ibid.). In other words, teachers and librarians must provide explicit and consistent guidance towards the students' INSU process (Limberg et al., 2008). Upon investigating what teachers and librarians perceive as important for students to master concerning information, Limberg and Folkesson (2006) found that the focus was not on more complex strategies for information seeking and use, but rather on particular sources and search techniques. They recommend that learning objectives must be made both more specific and broader at the same time – specific, in the sense that they should provide more detailed descriptions, and broader, in terms of the variety of topics (Ibid.). To summarize, although “the school library creates important conditions for learning and offers a rich infrastructure for learning in connection with a student-centered way of working” (Limberg, 2010, p. 7), educators and students often fail to take advantage of this institution.

Through their interviews and observations with Swedish high school students, Francke and Sundin (2012) show how information literacy means different things in different mediums. They noted that some students can search for information on the Internet but experience difficulties looking something up in a printed encyclopedia or a book index. Francke, Sundin, and Limberg (2011) also noted that students appeared to be challenged when asked to include Web 2.0 resources in their assignments and to assess the credibility of these sources in relation to print resources. Students had to create new strategies when confronted with the task of evaluating the credibility of media such as blogs. Because quality control is still strongly associated with printed media, students tended to view online sources as less credible and merely a forum for opinions. The students followed a pattern where they made a strong distinction between fact and opinions, with facts seen as the goal for information seeking within the school context (cf. Alexandersson et al., 2007). In yet another study conducted within the Swedish school context, Olsson (2012) found that most of the school administrators considered information literacy to be the same as criticism of sources, which they also considered as one of the most important information literacy skills. Teachers were seen as having the main responsibility for education about information literacy. The librarians' main tasks were to encourage reading and help guide students through use of databases and the information literacy process in general. One conclusion of Olsson's study is that administrators have insufficient knowledge about how teachers and the librarians work together and therefore do not allocate enough time for such collaboration.
3.1.3.3 School Libraries at Independent Schools
As noted earlier, research within the area of school libraries is comprehensive, but there is a lack of specific research about school libraries within the Swedish independent school context. More often than not, school library research focuses on the dynamics and the activities that take place within the framework of municipal schools. In general, research about independent schools has mainly covered issues such as the impact that segregation and market competition may have on student learning (Ståhle, 2006, p. 18). However, there are a few examples that indicate that there is a growing interest in remedying this research gap. There are three recent studies in particular (Nyberg, 2008; Ahlryd, 2009; Victorin, 2013) that have examined the attitudes at independent schools in Sweden towards school libraries.

In Nyberg's study (2008), the independent school principals had a positive view towards libraries, yet very few of them had actually made the school library a priority at their own school. Instead of having a library housed on campus, most principals chose to take advantage of the local public library. Rather than pay for the services of a librarian, the administration expected teachers to provide reading promotion and to educate the students about information seeking and use. In short, the principals did not acknowledge the role of the school librarian in education and thus failed to include them in school development planning. Ahlryd (2009) also found that independent schools chose to use the public library rather than invest in a library of their own. The two main problems that were identified with this situation were the lack of clear legislation regarding school libraries, and the lack of interest that independent schools seemed to show regarding a more active collaboration with the public libraries. In Victorin's (2013) study, a comparison was made between an independent school without its own library and an independent school that was in the process of creating one. As one might expect, opinions about school libraries were found to be more positive at the school with the staffed library. The role of the principal during start-up was paramount, because to create a school library required a great amount of planning, knowledge, time and resources. The main conclusion of the study was that staffing is an important factor for the success of a school library.

3.1.4 Summary of Previous Research
In summary, the research indicates that young people in countries like the USA and Sweden are heavy technology users. If allowed to chose for themselves, students prefer online resources in general and Google in particular. Students, like other groups, are social in their searching, especially when dealing with imposed inquiry. Friends and family usually rank above librarians as sources for such activity. Within current pedagogic practice, students are increasingly expected to bear the main burden of their own learning. At the same time, the INSU of young people in school environments is characterized by an effort to understand what demands are being made or what constitutes the assignment itself.
3.2 Theoretical Framework
This section of the literature review presents the theoretical framework that informs my research. The sociocultural perspective has a long-standing tradition within the two fields surrounding my study, namely education and library and information science. Because this perspective draws on a number of concepts and has had a wide range of application, it is important to account for how I have adjusted social cultural theories to my own study. First a brief description of the main theoretical concepts used are presented. Next how the theory is adjusted to the areas and of literacy and digital libraries is noted. Finally, the chapter ends with an account of the theoretical assumptions that frame and inform my study.

3.2.1 A Sociocultural Perspective
For this thesis, a sociocultural perspective will be employed as a way of viewing information activities and information literacies. Sociocultural theories are based on initial research by Vygotsky (1962, 1978, 1981), with further developments by scholars such as Lave (1988), Säljö (2000, 2005), Wenger (1998), and Wertsch (1998, 1991). Vygotsky promoted several best practices for teaching, such as observation and mentoring, scaffolding steps for optimal learning, and recognizing the importance of language for learning. Vygotskian inspired theories are based, among other things, on the assumption that higher cognitive functions originate as actual relationships between individuals. Within this theoretical framework, information activities are seen as social activities, and human reasoning and learning is viewed as contextually dependent or situated. As Wenger (1998) explains:

Theories of social practice address the production and reproduction of specific ways of engaging in the world. They are concerned with everyday activity and real-life settings, but with an emphasis on the social systems of shared resources by which groups organize and coordinate their activities, mutual relationships, and interpretations of the world (p. 13).

To better understand how social learning and development work according to such a theoretical perspective, it is important to address several key aspects of human cognitive development: how the mind works, how tools are used, developmental zones in social practice, and cultural practices within communities.

Perhaps the most significant shift in thinking provided by sociocultural theories is the idea that the mind is socially distributed. According to Vygotsky, mental abilities emerge twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; the first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological) (Wertsch, 1991, p. 57). While Vygotsky's research findings were derived from working with and observing children, his important conclusions about how the external and internal, and the social and cognitive processes of the mind are interrelated, have also been applied to adults.
Following the sociocultural perspective involves studying and analyzing the activities of learning, i.e., how people interact with each other and the various physical tools in the activity of knowing. Tools facilitate the communicative and cognitive functions that develop and move from the social plane to the psychological plane. Vygotsky (1981) gave several examples of tools used in human development, such as various systems of counting and works of art. He also differentiated between psychological tools which control thought (e.g., language, teaching styles) and technical tools which control nature (e.g., plows, computers). While technical tools are directed toward the external world, psychological tools are directed internally and are appropriated during activity. As Wertsch (1991) further explains, knowledge is not internalized directly, but through the use of psychological tools.

Essential to this line of thinking is the concept of mediation, or that access to the world is indirect and accomplished through acting in the world. Learning is conceptualized as appropriation (cf. Kozulin, 1998; Säljö, 2005), or the process by which a learner is able to use tools in more or less relevant ways. This process may take a long time and involve resistance to complete mastery. For example, a learner may be familiar with a cultural tool, such as writing, but then be met with new challenges that creates a new situation that demands further development (Säljö, 2005). For this reason, it can be misleading to make claims that we have or have not achieved certain skills. Wertsch (1994) also elaborates on the centrality of mediation in understanding Vygotsky's contributions to psychology and education:

[Mediation] is the key in his approach to understanding how human mental functioning is tied to cultural, institutional, and historical settings since these settings shape and provide the cultural tools that are mastered by individuals to form this functioning. In this approach, the mediational means are what might be termed the “carriers” of sociocultural patterns and knowledge (p. 204).

Such carriers should not be seen as self-evident or natural, because these tools and artefacts are created and used by people within specific social, cultural, and historical contexts. In other words, the assertion is that the way cultural tools are used is shaped through accumulated knowledge and over time. As Lave and Wenger (1991) explain, any activity, “involving technology is especially significant because the tools used within a cultural practice carry a substantial portion of that practice's heritage” (p. 101). Human knowledge about the world is not contained within an object or an event in itself, but rather within the discourses about these artefacts that people create in order to represent the experiences and insight that humans have made. Säljö (2005) emphasizes that this is a reason why learning is such a central activity in a complex society. In effect, learning is seen as a side effect of the activities created by participants' interaction and action.

3.2.2 Digital Libraries and Co-creation
Conceptions of the role of digital libraries have shifted from static storage and retrieval of information to facilitation of communication, collaboration, and other forms of dynamic interaction (Candela et al., 2007). By drawing communities into the consumption and creation of digital content, cultural
institutions can begin to take a proactive role in developing new literacy by enabling direct experience of content production and creating environments for community engagement. This initiative is often termed “community co-creation” and its implementation is comparatively straightforward: the cultural institution provides ICT infrastructure and training programs, and communities provide original content in the form of narratives (Russo & Watkins, 2007).

While the discussion of community co-creation has primarily focused on the tools and training for new literacy, there is literature which acknowledges that digital library initiatives may give rise to new social practices in the same way that the mobile phone has enabled new forms of cultural communication. One suggestion is to consider the meaning of interactivity by envisioning all experiences as inhabiting a continuum of interactivity, separating traditional media experiences, such as reading and talking, from new interactive media experiences where the audience has more apparent control over the tools, pace, or content (Shedroff, 2000). This could provide a simple, yet effective model of how new forms of literacy have shifted the audience's – and indeed the learner's – experience from cultural consumption to cultural production. Although digital libraries are also often seen as being “scholarly” or “esoteric”, they can also be conceptualized as practical and multimedial (Witten, Bainbridge, & Nichols, 2010). Digital libraries have the potential to be more flexible than their physical counterparts, because they can be more portable, extensive, and integrated with information of a more international character. Even if digital libraries are without walls, they should still have boundaries in the form of a well-articulated purpose and a set of principles guiding what is included in the collection (Ibid.).

3.2.3 Conceptualizing Information Needs and Literacies
Because my research concerns the relationship people have with information, it is important to establish what is meant by one of the most established concepts of the INSU field, namely information needs. What follows is a brief explanation of how this concept informs my study. The typology for information developed by Taylor (1968) is commonly cited in library research. His process charts how a need is continuously formalized from something “visceral” (actual and unexpressed) to a “compromised” (presented to the information system) state. Because this model portrays needs as phenomena originating from within the mind, it is at odds with the sociocultural assumption that mental development occurs within social interaction.

In order to keep more in line with the other theoretical assumptions made so far, it is possible to approach the concept of information needs in another way. Sundin and Johannisson (2005, p.112) suggest that these can be seen as collaboratively constructed negotiations instead. In turn, the negotiating and shaping of information needs can also be thought of as a social practice. Information needs are conceptualized as occurring in various communities of justification, or where rules are negotiated and formalized. From this theoretical standpoint, people experience information needs but these originate in the negotiations about what is worth knowing.
A popular argument is that digital developments have disrupted former notions of literacy and replaced them with new competencies such as cultural, visual, consumer, political, or gaming. For example, Rowlands and his colleagues (2008) argue that new forms of reading are emerging within digital environments, such as “power browsing” in which students browse horizontally through pages. As a result, a flurry of publications around the new millennium noted the emergence of “new” literacies (e.g., Snavely & Cooper, 1997; Bawden, 2001; Marcum, 2002). Within this context the use of the term “information literacies” emphasizes the complexity and multiplicity of skills and strategies involved in finding and using information.

Some researchers have even argued for the broadest possible conceptualization of information literacy (Mackey & Jacobson, 2011), in order to take into account the significant changes in the information landscape resulting from “participatory digital environments”. This new “meta-literacy” approach is, however, despite efforts to be inclusive, one where several specific skills are delineated at the expense of contextual awareness. Within the Swedish research community, there has also been talk of new competencies. In addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic, students also need to become literate in new ways of seeking, evaluating, and processing information (Barrett et al., 2010, p. 44; Säljö, 2009, p. 30; Limberg, Sundin, & Talja, 2009, p. 41). The conclusion can be made that there is an interest in working with new concepts of reading on both the international and Swedish level, although much of the literature that pushes the importance of a new concept of literature is of an argumentative or propagandist character (Dolatkhah, 2013).

Traditionally, information literacy has been presented in terms of a cognitive ability or explicit learning goals and interventions in order to enhance the use of information by different groups. This understanding of information literacy has been highly influenced by organizations, where the idea of general, measurable skills takes center stage. Such perspectives are behavioral or skill based, and the idea is that an individual should be able to perform certain tasks in order to prove a certain level of information competence (Pilerot & Hedman, 2009). Such perspectives fail to accommodate sociocultural theories of learning. Specifically, information literacy is best thought of as: situated and distributed as an activity, learned in specific contexts, and achieved through practical activity between people. In this more nuanced approach to information literacy, a popular convention is to refer information literacies in the plural form. This is a way to recognize that the learning of information literacy as part of one practice and in one social setting differs from learning information literacy as part of other practices and in other social settings (Francke, Sundin, & Limberg, 2011).

3.2.4 Resulting Theoretical Assumptions
For the purposes of this thesis, I define information literacies as: how individuals or groups approach the activities of gathering, comprehending, and evaluating information in various, dynamic contexts. In other words, there is a reciprocal relationship between information activities and the people, the places, and the means encompassed by the information activities themselves (cf. Lippincott, 2010; Francke, Sundin, & Limberg, 2011).
Learning and development are seen as embedded within social events and thus take place when a learner interacts with other people, objects, and events in a collaborative environment (cf. Vygotsky, 1978). A consequence of this line of thinking is that human cognitive development cannot be observed in isolation from social, cultural, and historical contexts. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that social practices shape how people learn and, in turn, who they become. However, such social practices grow from, and interlink with, organizational structures. Technology often traverses organizational structures and knowledge domains. From this perspective, it is the social and economic system in which technology is embedded, and not the technical artifact itself, which is important.

At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that a sociocultural perspective implies that tools also bear limitations. The functions of search engines, for example, influence the opportunities to act by offering both resources and restrictions; a user must rely on the economically motivated algorithms and individualized ranking of search hits of Google. The fact that tools are context sensitive means that it is important to make clear the perspectives and values that are connected with a specific tool for information seeking. To embrace such a view means a move from individualistic learning theories that focus on the acquisition and reproduction of knowledge to a focus on the participation aspect of learning. Rather than an individual act of knowledge accumulation, learning constitutes active processes of legitimate engagement in collaborative knowledge production. When observing such learning relationships, it is still important to keep in mind that cultural tools are dynamic and not necessarily constant factors in information activities (Sundin, 2008). In other words, while information activities are closely interrelated with tools and artefacts, such activity is not predetermined by these tools.

Another assumption that results from this theoretical framework, is that learning to read and write – or indeed any other kind of literacy – is not just an individual skill but a social practice as well. In different contexts there are both explicit and implicit norms concerning appropriate behavior. An individual's actions within a particular context will depend in part on previous experience from similar situations and in part on what is seen to be the appropriate behavior for the specific context (Säljö, 2000, p. 128). Therefore, the same individual may act differently depending on the varying contexts where information activities take place. Thus the idea of generic aspects of learning information literacy is challenged because from a sociocultural perspective, learning information seeking within one field, i.e., becoming information literate, does not easily translate into another field.

The theoretical assumptions detailed above inform how I view the social, cultural, and material aspects of my study objects, i.e., how the principals interpret and then implement library legislation and the information activities of the educators and students. Because seeking and using information are seen as social activities, the focus of my study is on what the participants say about how they interact with information, not just as individuals, but also as members of a larger context as well. Since learning is seen as a process of appropriation, the analytical emphasis is not just on if but also on how the students reportedly use the various cultural tools available. Last but not least, the sociocultural framework
shapes my own conceptualization of libraries, including more recent digital forms. As previously noted, the focus will be on how the physical artefacts that constitute a library are used in social activities.
4. METHOD
In this chapter, the method used to collect, analyze, and present the data will be explained. In addition, issues concerning the credibility and ethical nature of the study will be considered. By providing a thorough account of how the study was performed, my hope is that readers may make their own judgments as to the quality of the research conducted.

4.1 Study Design
After a comparison of previous findings and research designs, qualitative research methods were chosen based on the theoretical assumptions that I subscribe to as a researcher. One theoretical claim that informs this study is that people's experiences are shaped by their subjective and socio-cultural perspectives. As the participants in this study tried to actively make sense of their experiences, there are many psychological, socio-cultural and linguistic factors and processes at work. For this reason, an ideal data collection method would permit the participants to express themselves without unnecessary constraints as dictated by the researcher. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) point to the particular suitability of the interview “for studying people's understanding of the meanings in their lived world, describing their experiences and self-understanding, and clarifying and elaborating their own perspectives on their lived world” (p. 116).

The resulting face-to-face interviews were used from the position of what Kvale terms the ‘traveler metaphor’ (1996, p.3). This also falls within the theoretical framework where knowledge is not seen as a given but rather as something that is created and negotiated. The interviewer is thought of as a fellow traveler on a journey with the interviewee(s). The stories that are generated in the interviews are developed through interpretation by the researcher. Ideally, the interviewer will lead fellow travelers to new insights through conversation, and in this way there may even be a transformative element to the interview journey. Based on the belief that interviews are co-created, I have chosen to call the educators and students in this study participants rather than informants or respondents.

Because this study is meant to explore a fairly new phenomenon, namely the implementation of a recent legislation about school libraries, focus groups were seen as a way to elicit information about the current situation by having students reflect on what is and what they wish could be. Focus groups are frequently used as a means to follow up or clarify specific issues arising from another form of data collection, but they can also be used with any topic that needs elaboration or clarification (Wildemuth, 2009). This method is also helpful if there is value in gathering information about the participants' interactions with each other. In other words, because people form opinions through social interactions, it is appropriate to collect data about opinions within a group setting. Another benefit of using the focus group method is that such events can be used to generate new ideas (Wildemuth, 2009). Both of the student groups showed signs of this brainstorming dynamic when they were given room to explore the topics. For example, one group talked at great length about how to increase interest in reading, while the other group was particularly verbal about how they learn and retain information.
4.2 Data Collection

4.2.1 Participant Selection
As with any other means of research, there are pros and cons to a sociocultural approach. Based on the assumption that knowledge is a social construct, it is likely that different participants in different communities will generate different ways of understanding the same issues. Therefore, it is important to select appropriate participants when considering the research design. Selection of the study participants took several steps but was a fairly straightforward process. First, the geographic location was established. The city was chosen not only because it was nearby but also because of its size, which is an average size for a Swedish urban setting. Going into the study I was also aware that there were a number of independent schools in the municipality, including those that had been there for some time and continued to thrive, and those that had only started recently and failed. Therefore, I was confident that I could find schools located nearby that were dealing with the issues I wanted to study.

For the next step, I consulted official statistics from a nationwide survey performed by the Statistics Sweden (SCB) and the National Library of Sweden (KB) in 2012 (just a year earlier than the study I conducted). Schools, both independent and municipal, had been asked whether or not their students had access to a school library. If the answer was yes, follow-up questions were posed about: 1) if the school library was located on the school grounds; 2) if the school library was integrated with a public library; 3) if there was a catalog over the collection; and 4) how many hours the library was staffed.

The municipality in question listed 60 schools, out of which 12 did not have access to a school library. There were 21 independent schools, of which 8 did not have access to a school library. Out of the 21 independent schools, a few had closed down since the survey was carried out. After sorting for high schools, 9 possible schools were identified and the principals responsible for them were contacted by email (see Appendix A). After several follow-up phone calls and emails (see Appendix B and C), 2 schools agreed to participate. Both were located downtown, and while one was gathering steam, the other was closing its doors. One listed itself as having a school library, while the other said it did not have one. Based on these superficial characteristics, I predicted that I would find rich and varied data by asking these schools to participate in the study.

As I became acquainted with the principals, I was able to ask them for help in establishing contact with the teachers and students. While I had originally planned to interview several teachers from each school, it turned out that there was really only one teacher at each school that the principals felt actively worked with literacy issues. Fortunately, these same individuals were willing to participate in the study. Students for the focus groups were selected based on a clear definition of the target group and with the help of their principals. In general, the social science research literature recommends that a focus group of adolescents be homogeneous in terms of age and gender. Ideally, it should also be composed of participants who do not know each other (Wildemuth, 2009, pp. 251-252). Both schools chosen for the study provided obstacles and opportunities in this regard. At the one school, there was
an overwhelming dominance of female students and the only remaining class available was due to graduate after spending three academic years together. So while this group met the first recommendation, it was impossible to achieve the second. Because the other school currently taught all three academic years and there was a more even distribution between female and male students, the decision was made to create a more heterogeneous focus group that reflected the make-up of the school. In other words, this focus group had a mix of gender and age. During the interview it was apparent that the students either knew each other well or “knew of” each other.

The principal and teacher representing School A were both male, aged somewhere between their mid-thirties to mid-forties; the principal and teacher representing School B were both female, aged somewhere between their mid-fifties to mid-sixties. School A was represented by 4 male and 3 female students, ages 15 to 18; all 7 of the students representing School B were female, ages 17 to 18 (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School A</th>
<th>School B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>principal</td>
<td>male, in 30s</td>
<td>female, in 60s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>male, in 40s</td>
<td>female, in 50s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focus group</td>
<td>3 females, 4 males</td>
<td>7 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ages 15 - 18</td>
<td>ages 17 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>represent 6 specializations</td>
<td>same specialization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2 Description of the Participating Schools
The two schools that were selected for the study shared several characteristics. They were both governed by nationwide chains that run independent schools in at least 10 Swedish cities. Both schools were centrally located in downtown high-rise buildings, and the campuses were created out of former office and storefront spaces.

The schools also shared an educational focus on multidisciplinary project work and problem-based learning (PBL). The programs on offer followed the general national curriculum, so the same foundation subjects were taught: English, history, physical education and health, mathematics, natural sciences, religion, social studies, and Swedish or Swedish as a second language. In addition, students could chose what is referred to as a “program specialization” that varies depending on the profile of the school. In order to meet basic entrance requirements for higher education, students were required to study two more courses in Swedish or Swedish as a second language, and a course in English.
School A started in 2011 and was part of a chain that started in the early 1990s. At the time of the study, about 80 students were in attendance and there were 8 teachers. The first graduation was planned for spring 2014. The participating students were studying one of two national programs that included additional specific subjects. The Arts Program included aesthetic communications, art, and culture; the Technology Program included physics, chemistry, and technology.

School B was started in 2010 with 18 students. At the time of the interviews, 15 students remained and were due to graduate in spring 2013. The school was scheduled to close down after this graduation. The students all followed the Natural Resource Program and had 3 or 4 teachers depending on what lessons they took. Specific subjects included biology, entrepreneurship, and natural resource use (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School A</th>
<th>School B</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>location</strong></td>
<td>former gym</td>
<td>former office space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>library</strong></td>
<td>reported yes</td>
<td>reported no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bookshelves in the commons area</td>
<td>bookshelves in a hallway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>status</strong></td>
<td>enrolling its third year of students</td>
<td>closing its doors after graduation 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>no. of students</strong></td>
<td>80 with an additional 70 expected for</td>
<td>18 when school started three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2013/2014</td>
<td>earlier, 15 at time of graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>national programs</strong></td>
<td>theoretical:</td>
<td>vocational:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>Natural Resource Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>program specializations</strong></td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Horse Keeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Game Development/Design</td>
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<td>Music Production</td>
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<td>Photo/Film</td>
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<td>Animation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Horse Keeping</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4.2.3 Interview Location and Length
The educators who participated in the study were given the option to meet at the schools or somewhere else if they preferred (see Appendix A and B), but they all opted for me to come to their schools. Each interview was held privately and one-to-one, behind closed doors in a classroom or office. Presumably, this arrangement was not only more convenient for the educators, but one can also hope that they were also more in touch with their professional selves while on campus.
For the sake of authenticity, it was important to ensure that the focus group interviews were held in a location that was not perceived as controlled by adults (cf. Wildemuth, 2009, pp. 251-252). Since both focus group interviews were held at the schools themselves, one might argue that this criteria was not fulfilled. However, the interviews took place in conference room-like areas and the doors were closed to ensure privacy. The argument can also be made that students felt it was ‘their’ school, and therefore they had more power over the space than if they were made to find and sit in a strange locale.

All of the interviews (both one-to-one and focus groups) were expected to last about 45 minutes; however, the length of the interviews varied because in keeping with good practice, I allowed the participants to “proceed at their own rate of thinking and speaking” (Kvale, 1996, p.148). The interviews were allowed to run as long as was needed for the participants to get comfortable with the subject and for everyone to have his or her say, with the shortest interview lasting 38 minutes and the longest clocking in at 60 minutes. The resulting recorded material amounted to just over 6 hours.

4.2.4 Preparing and Conducting the Interviews
In order to get the most out of meeting with the study participants, interview guidelines (see Appendix G through J) were prepared well in advance. These were based on the literature review and were rewritten several times to ensure proper formulation and efficacy. Naturally, the choice of words used for the interview guide was adjusted according to who was being interviewed. For example, rather than talk about theoretical concepts like information literacy with the students, questions about how they find out what they need to know were posed. Although I had carefully constructed the interview guide ahead of time, I tried to remain aware of whatever new aspects or nuances about the topic the interview participants might introduce. This is in keeping with the idea that in order to actively listen to the content of what is said and hear the various meanings presented, it is important for a researcher to be “sensitive” and “open” (Kvale, 1996, p.149).

Because sociocultural theories propose that mental constructions of reality are based on our views and experiences, the process of this study was seen as an interaction between the individual participants and the researcher. In other words, the interviews themselves represent social interactions. During the interviews, dialog and interaction were used to enable the participants to share their knowledge and experience of INSU at an independent school. The basic structure for all of the interviews was: a short presentation of myself (and during one focus group, my assistant), a brief description of my intended study, an assurance of confidentiality from me as a researcher, and a free flowing discussion around the key aspects originating from the research questions. Throughout the interview, attempts were made to make clear and extend the meanings of statements made by the participants in order to avoid misinterpretation (cf. Kvale, 1996). This was accomplished through questions such as: “Have I understood you correctly that…?” or “Do you mean…?” Towards the end of the interviews, I summarized how I perceived the participants' thoughts and opinions, thus providing further opportunity for them to confirm what they had said.
In my role as the moderator of the focus groups, I was responsible for keeping the group discussion focused on the topic at hand (cf. Wildemuth, 2009); however, I also allowed the students to digress when I felt it helped to create a feeling of trust. For example, one of the sessions began with complaints from several of the students about one of the educators. In order to dissipate the tension within the group, I created a space for them to “let off steam” about this person before guiding them towards the issues I was there to explore. Another responsibility I had as moderator was to balance the contributions of the quieter members by encouraging their participation. During each session, I tried to “break the ice” by having the students briefly present themselves and explain what programs they were studying. I then began by asking questions directed to the group as a whole, but as the interviews progressed, I would ask follow-up questions of each student individually. I saw this as an effective yet non-aggressive way of getting the students who otherwise did not speak up to share their comments.

All the interviews, including the focus groups, were recorded and transcribed so as to ensure that no comments were missed. In addition, during the first focus group interview, a fellow university student took notes. Directly following the first focus group interview, we had a chance to discuss how the interview had gone. This provided me with useful feedback, and I was then able to adjust some of my interview techniques in time for the second focus group interview. So in effect, the first focus group session served as a pilot group interview for the second. Throughout the interview process, i.e., before and after the interviews themselves and as the recordings were transcribed, notes were kept in a research journal (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). This was done not only to keep an awareness of the original research aims, but also to chart my own process of internalization (for more on this see the section 4.3 Data Analysis below).

4.3 Data Analysis
The qualitative analysis that was performed in this study can be described as a series of transformations of the data through different forms of representation. Based on the theoretical assumption presented earlier that data is something that the researcher produces in conversation with the subject of study, I would argue that the process of analysis was more or less a constant activity. My experiential and theoretical lens informed the entire research process, including structuring of the interview guides and reflective note-taking. The process of transcribing the taped interviews allowed for an opportunity to get intimately acquainted with the empirical material. The resulting transcripts were analyzed for relevant themes in a systematic and iterative process. Passages from the interviews were coded or labeled with headings and classifications that might reflect the original research questions, the literature review, and/or theoretical assumptions, e.g., digital aspect and use of libraries. However, a conscious attempt was also made to be open to any new themes that might emerge from careful reading of the transcripts, e.g., books on shelves and techne-mentor. This type of approach has also been termed open coding, and in short it is the process of breaking down an interview into concepts, themes, topics or anything else of relevancy (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). This analysis framework allowed for the examination of the various assumptions held by all of the participants of the study, including myself.
Another principle that underpins this study is the idea that learning and development is part of the process of internalization. As previously noted, Vygotsky (1978) argued that we learn and develop on two levels: 1) through interactions with each other (the social plane); and 2) within ourselves (the psychological plane). In other words, external interaction is internalized into a transformed version of interaction, becoming part of an individual's independent achievement. This internalization is also present in the process of data analysis that took place in this study. The external interaction of conducting the literature review and holding interviews with the participants was reconstructed internally within myself as a researcher. Through this internalization process, the co-constructed data was continuously analyzed through an inductive meaning-making process.

Since the data gathered from the focus group transcriptions was also qualitative in nature, more or less the same methods for data analysis were used. In addition, several suggestions from Wildemuth (2009) on how to conduct the analysis were followed. First, it was important to balance the views of all participants to make sure that the themes represent the whole group and not just the members with the strongest opinions. Moreover, an effort was made to understand when themes were generated from a single comment or were formed from comments from multiple participants. Finally, an attempt was made to take into account the relationships that might have existed between group members prior to the focus group since this might influence who contributed to the session.

4.4 Data Presentation
The analysis of the interview transcripts and field notes will be presented in what Kvale calls the ad hoc method, by combining the approaches of meaning condensation and meaning categorization (Kvale, 1996, pp. 188-204). Meaning condensation recommends rephrasing and shortening what is said in the interviews into a few words while keeping the main sense of what is said. Meaning categorization entails coding the interviews into categories in order to indicate the (non)occurrence of phenomena. As mentioned earlier, these categories were created based on the rubrics that structured the interview guides and from what arose spontaneously during the interviews themselves. The findings presented in the next chapter will illustrate relevant points with verbatim extracts from the interviews; however, participants will not be identified in keeping with the promises made concerning anonymity. The two participating schools differ in their composition, which can be of interest from an information literacy perspective, but this was not the focus of my own study. Nonetheless, in order to provide access to this rich data, the results are labeled (School A or School B) so that readers will still have the possibility to identify what was said at which school.

Although it is proper use of English to use gender specific pronouns (he/she/his/her), I have chosen to avoid these as much as possible. This is in part because I do not intentionally explore the gender perspective. I was interested first and foremost in how the study participants saw their role in the INSU of the students.
The interviews were conducted in Swedish and the quotations presented in subsequent sections are my own translations. Great care has been taken to avoid making judgments as to whether or not what the study participants said was "correct" when presenting the data in Chapter 5. Instead, the idea is to showcase the participants' stories and their process for creating meaning. These findings are then framed within themes from the literature review and a more critical approach is taken. In Chapter 6, the participants' stories are thus set within a larger context by making connections to a theoretical framework and previous research within this area.

4.5 Additional Considerations

4.5.1 Credibility

Traditionally there are no set standards for evaluating the credibility of conclusions in a qualitative study, but the need to carefully consider the evidence and methods on which conclusions are based is just as great as with other types of research. Kvale (1996) has summarized some of the ‘best practices’ frequently recommended for judging the quality of an interview:

- The extent of spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers from the interviewee.
- The shorter the interviewer's questions and the longer the subjects' answers, the better.
- The degree to which the interviewer follows up and clarifies the meanings of the relevant aspects of the answers.
- The ideal interview is to a large extent interpreted throughout the interview.
- The interviewer attempts to verify his or her interpretations of the subjects' answers in the course of the interview.
- The interview is 'self-communicating’ – it is a story contained in itself that hardly requires much extra descriptions and explanations (p. 145).

I would argue that the interviews that make up this study meet the above criteria, and invite the reader to assess the truth of this claim by comparing the flexibility of the interview guides (see Appendix G through J) with the richness of the findings presented in the next chapter. An example of how the participants responded spontaneously can be seen in the way the students behaved during the focus groups. There were students who cursed, complained about their teachers, and made sarcastic remarks in a joking tone. While this could just be seen as a blatant teenage attitude towards life, I would argue that it was also an indication that they felt relaxed with me and that we had built up a rapport.

As I approached the study, from my initial curiosity to the final writing of this document, an effort was made to recognize and thereby curtail my own personal bias. This was done by acknowledging my own role in the study itself, as well as providing as much clear documentation as possible about what I did and why.
4.5.2 Limitations of the Study

Due to practical constraints and theoretical assumptions, this study will only cover certain aspects of how independent schools do or do not meet the challenge to provide access to school libraries and develop student information literacy demands through digital tools. To begin, the findings of this study do not claim to represent the actual behavior of the respondents. No attempt was made to follow actual learning or teaching practices, so the study can only claim to show how the participants perceive the administrative practices of the principals, the teaching practices of the educators and the information practices of the students. Care must be taken to view these narratives as linguistic constructs that do not precisely mirror reality, even if the interview data does provide the opportunity to say something about the information practices in question (cf. Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000).

In other words, the focus of this thesis will not be on what the individuals at independent schools do about seeking information, rather the emphasis will be on what they say they do during this process. Although it is difficult to comment on what the teens of today actually do when they seek information and what the educators do to try to help them (cf. Alexandersson & Limberg, 2004), it will be possible to put forward something about what both the students and the educators say about the INSU process.

In addition, while the steering documents concerning Swedish libraries are presented in this study (see section 2.2 Steering Documents), no deeper analysis of these artefacts has been performed. This is because the focus of the study is on how the principals discussed the demands placed on them concerning school libraries and not on the organizations that author these documents. The steering documents are thus an essential element of this study but only serve as a backdrop to the study and not as one of its research aims.

The findings of this study will not be used to generalize about how all independent schools in Scandinavia deal with library and information literacy issues, because the observations only originate from two schools. My research can, however, be used to point toward greater trends that might be found in similar situations and to indicate what might be worthy of further investigation. Moreover, the study does not attempt to make broad statements about how different characteristics of the study participants affect the findings, e.g., the educators' age differences, the students' gender, the vocational or theoretical focus of the independent schools.

4.5.3 Ethical Concerns

The ethical considerations I adopted for this study follow those put forth by the Swedish Research Council (2013). Because I was interviewing minors, I also took into account the concerns of dealing with “vulnerable” members of society as outlined by Denscombe (2010). The ethical principle to follow is that consent should be procured from an adult who is formally responsible for the welfare of the youth in question, such as a parent or teacher acting in loco parentis. This approval is needed in
addition to the consent given by the minor. For this study, the principals were interviewed first. This provided them with a chance to meet me face to face and evaluate the seriousness of the study. They were then asked to help further the study by arranging an interview with a small group of students. The students were then sent an email with information about the study. At one school, the principal put up a list where students could sign up for the interview if they were interested. At both schools, the principals took into account when the students would not be too busy with other commitments, and a time was booked during normal school hours.
5. FINDINGS

Based on the interviews with independent school educators and students, several themes emerged concerning how libraries and information literacy are conceptualized. This chapter accounts for the findings which were categorized through the iterative study process. After an initial look at how student use of technology is talked about, the reported forms of information seeking and use, as well as interpretations of current legislation, are presented.

5.1 Perceptions of Digital Youth

The students were also asked to talk about how they felt the adults in their lives – such as parents, teachers, and principals – viewed student use of technology. In general, the students thought that the adults around them were critical of this relationship. For example, one of the students from School A said that the adults think that teenagers only spend their time sitting in front of the computer on Facebook. One student said that, “that to be fair, students really do use the computer for everything, but then again so does everyone else” (School B). For another student, the negative viewpoint from adults even included claims that “they think we don't have the social competence to just talk” (School A).

Both of the schools had a pedagogical set-up, often called one-to-one, in which each student has his or her own laptop and a connection to Wi-Fi. Most of the educators saw this as a big help for the students' work. However, one disadvantage to online access was that, “it's very easy for students to wander onto other things, they are social, Facebook and such things are hard to control, there's a lot of other stuff going on” (School B). While both of the teachers reported trying to “have a grip” on what the students were doing with their laptops, for the teacher from School B it was “not much fun to be like a cop, checking on them all the time”. The other teacher from School A felt that it was acceptable for students to spend a few minutes on social media once their regular school work was already done, but an effort was made to encourage them to do “something more educational” as well.

The teacher from School A also noted that it was very important to be more than just critical about the Internet and technology, and instead one should try to find the opportunities available now that mobile phones and computers were part of the “everyday”. For example, School A had designated a day to talk about how to best use laptops and give tips about what tools could be used to avoid distractions. The idea was to encourage the students to see the computer as a tool for school and to disconnect it from “all that entertainment stuff”. The principal at the other school also reflected that there was a difference in how newer technology is used:

For me it is perhaps my tool for work and for my students it is perhaps a way to relax (School B).
The principal at School A asserted, “the students have found their way online while teachers have remained behind in school.” The same principal felt that it would have been good if it had been acknowledged 15 years ago that teachers should move online, because that is where student interaction now occurs. Instead there has been a focus on what dangers the Internet poses and whether or not online sources are acceptable for school work. When the students were asked about their use of digital tools, some of the students (School A) reported that in their younger years at school, they had used computers and the Internet but only to play games. Such technology had not really been used as a tool for finding information until they had started high school.

Many of the educators observed that students have grown up in a time where “everything is just a click away”. One consequence of this is that everything has to go fast. As one principal said:

Maybe I am the wrong generation? I can't find things on the Internet the same way they can and not as fast as them (School B).

Another educator said “maybe I am too old-fashioned” when asked about working with information sources. The same teacher felt that there were many more demands on teachers to keep up-to-date on how things work and it felt like the teachers were “miles behind the students there”(School B).

Some of the educators in the study felt, nonetheless, that they were better at seeking information than the young people. For example, students were seen as giving up when they couldn't find what they were looking for and as not going as deep in their searches. One teacher described a common classroom situation related to this impatience:

Often students feel it is hard to sit and look for something in a book and will say that they cannot find what they are looking for. ‘I can't find it, it doesn't say anything!’ Then I show them and quite simply, they haven't read it. They don't have the energy to read up and down the page and find the information. Rather they want it, [claps hands] Bam! (School B).

Students were thought to be more daring with technology by their teachers, but they still needed more help with the more technical side of modern tools. The example was given by the principal from School B of having to rush in and help a student whose computer was about to crash because after three years “the trash can had never been emptied.” While the student had an understanding of complex software, simple maintenance of the computer, such as permanently deleting unnecessary files, had been missed. During the interview with the same principal, a student interrupted to ask how to scan a file that was to be submitted to the math teacher. The principal promised to help with the task after the interview and noted:

You help them a lot, sometimes too much. You have to choose when you can…there's a lot to learn in this life, and if you can fit that in, well, that's good, too (School B).
The students (School B) confirmed that their teachers think that the students do not “get which pages are good”, but the students themselves thought they were good, and indeed sometimes better than the educators around them, at critiquing sources.

The interviews also revealed that many of the study participants had a nostalgic reaction to the perception that digital tools were making analog tools obsolete. The principal at School B made the point that when younger, “I would read about one thing and discover another.” Students were seen as losing out on this serendipitous mode of discovery due to the shift to reading online. For the group of students from School A, writing by hand came up as an example of a disappearing art. As one of them put it: “handwriting, that's important in life and we never practice that anymore.” This comment spurred a lively discussion about when people really need in order to write. In short, some students thought that handwriting was only needed to sign things. Even taking short notes was something they did on their cell phones, so using pen and paper was becoming increasingly irrelevant.

In general, the interviews revealed mixed opinions about how the participants use digital tools. Text messages and Facebook were reported as a way to stay connected with friends, and email was only used to “work” or communicate with teachers. Most of the educators felt that students were more daring with newer technology but not as savvy as they could be. Students, on the other hand, felt that they were better at finding information with computers and the Internet than educators gave them credit for. Another common conclusion from all the participants of the study was that everyone – both students and educators – need more technology training.

5.2 Information Seeking

5.2.1 “Google It”

When asked how students go about finding information, the first response by almost everyone interviewed was an emphatic, “Google!” Students explained that they have had Internet almost their entire lives, and that they “find loads” on the Internet. Most students sheepishly smiled or laughed when asked to confirm if they mainly used Google, and some even shrugged their shoulders in a sort of ‘what else did you expect' gesture. Googling was so prevalent that it was more or less equated with searching online. When asked specifically about the use of other online resources such as databases, one student from School B asked, “Does NE count?”

The educators admitted to being more ambivalent about students using the Internet as the first channel for information seeking. Advantages noted included being able to find “good” and “fresh” knowledge (School B). Disadvantages were that students were easily distracted once they were online with

26 *NE* is an abbreviation for National Encyclopedia. The students had access to an online version of this long-standing Swedish publication.
activities such as using Facebook or other social media (School A). One educator from School B explained that the computer is “the natural tool” for students during information seeking; however, the point was made that schools must also “arm computers with the right stuff so that [students] don't just end up on Google and Wikipedia.” The Internet was seen as “wonderful” because “one can get as much information as one could want”, but it was important to evaluate and sort through what was there.

All four educators commented that students overestimate their ability to use information for their schoolwork. Such an ability was said to be a “myth” since students “give up too easily if what they are looking for isn't within the first few hits from Google” (School B). Another respondent from School A said “they aren't good at Google actually” and noted that students will often write the wrong search term and are unable to sort and limit search results. All of the educators said that information seeking was a skill that the schools had to actively and continuously work on to develop among their students. As the principal from School A said, “it needs to be something one works on over a longer period of time so that students take it seriously.” Both principals reported having many discussions with personnel about this issue. According to the principal from School B, some teachers thought this was an obvious part of teaching, while others thought that this was something that the students should already know how to do.

Both of the teachers interviewed said that students still need help in using online resources effectively. In fact, one of the teachers noted how common it was that students “need tips about what to do quite simply in order to find the information they need” (School A). One teacher provided advice to students such as: think things through ahead of time and keep to the main question. This latter skill was reported to cause frustration for the students:

It takes them so much energy, but in the end perhaps they haven't worked with the main task but rather just one perspective or aspect of the overall picture (School B).

5.2.2 Approaches to Books
Both schools had two or three large bookshelves of printed material available for the students. School A had reported to the authorities that they had a school library on campus. This collection consisted of both fiction and non-fiction books. School B had informed the authorities that they did not have a school library. They had nonetheless created what they called a reference library, i.e., the shelves held mostly two to three copies of various non-fiction books related to the curriculum.

Neither school had a formal catalog or loaning system. Instead students were free to take the books as they needed them during school opening hours. One principal (School A) said that this open stack policy had never been a problem, and suggested it was part of the “feeling” that they tried to build up at the school. The other principal explained that they tried not to let the students take home the books,
but in the end they “can't really say no because that's also a way to encourage knowledge” (School B). In fact several of the books originally purchased when the school began a few years ago had now “gained legs” and were not expected to be returned. Instead of being irritated about the loss of the books, the principal chose to “see that they were popular.” Other books were apparently not as sought after and the principal was disappointed to admit that the shelves “still have books that crack…you can hear that they have never been opened.” The teacher at School B confirmed this limited use of books: “We do actually have quite a bit of non-fiction related to their courses so they do actually use books but the most convenient thing for them, what is on hand, is to search with the Internet.”

At School B, an effort had been made to choose books that represented a variety of subjects taught, since “different books will appeal to or work with different students”. The principal said that the collection was built based on what the teachers thought would be most appropriate for the curriculum. However, the teacher at the same school contradicted that most of the books were “already there”. At School A, the collection on the shelves had been created in close conjunction between the students and the faculty. The principal approached everyone in the school and asked for suggestions. One student explained, “it's my library… I chose, like, half of all the books” (School A). The principal at School A was now entertaining the idea of putting up a poster that would say something along the lines of “if you want a book, send me the ISBN number.”

The principal at School A also noted that “the printed form is a little passé because for 95% of the students, all information is in the computer.” One of the students at School A confirmed “we have everything on the computer.” While at the other school, a student explained:

I miss books sometimes, and we don't have that many, because it was more convenient, you knew that inside there [points to imaginary book] is the answer (School B).

While one student would have liked to have a book to be able to work with and scribble in at home (School B), another student said that books just got lost or forgotten at home (School A). Another student did not like reading books on the computer because it caused headaches “to be connected to the Internet all the time” (School A). Some students said it was better to have books because these could be read while commuting on a train or bus, while other students argued that e-books could also be brought anywhere. In general, students agreed that they preferred to have textbooks on the computer but that if they were going to read fiction they would rather have what they referred to as “a real book”. One student from School A thought that books were “a waste of money”. If a book needed to be read, it should be made available online and the opinion was “that whole thing with books, just like, let it go now.”
5.2.3 Teachers, Peers, and Parents as Information Sources

If students cannot find the information they are looking for, there is a common inclination to ask teachers. One student (School B) felt that it was, in fact, the teachers' job to answer questions and that if they did not know, “they should find out.” Another student at School B named a particular teacher as “the best”, while making a hand-heart gesture, because answers would be provided when “you have already shown that you have tried.” However, at both schools, asking teachers for information could be met with resistance. For example, one student (School B) said that questions were always countered with another question, such as: “What do you think?”

For their part, most of the educators said that they were there to help, especially for questions concerning what sources were reliable. One of the educators at confirmed that:

> When students come to me with a question I ask them a question back, such as, ”What does National Encyclopedia say?” (School B).

One of the other educators at School A explained that the students are told that they have other “lifelines” that they should consult first. These include the textbook, online searching, and asking a classmate. This set-up was seen as a way of further helping the students in their learning process, since the student who knows the answer also learns through having to teach others. The goal was to give students the opportunity for independent study:

> I tell them…I will give you the space to work on your own, but will be there to help find sources and evaluate them.

At School B, the educators reported having prepared lists of relevant links to online sources in conjunction with project work. Students at School B mentioned these subject guides as a means of finding out information as well, but added that even if “the links to information are there, you go on and Google anyway.” Another student at School B said that it was a good idea to consult the PowerPoint slides that accompanied lectures, because one could discover what things the teacher thought was most important.

The students at both schools confirmed that they often talk to friends to get help with finding information. For example, one of the students from School B was repeatedly singled out as the school's expert and was jokingly said to be on par with Google. At the other school, one student explained that the process of asking friends and Googling can be simultaneous:

> I usually do like this, the friend and the Net are a bit at the same time, I'm like, I go into Google and then ask at the same time if anyone knows, and then I Google and then maybe someone knows, and I don't have the energy to check through things on the Internet, so then I am happy
to take my friend instead, or else it could be that when I go through Google there are so many links and so much text and then I'm like, eh, does anyone know? (School A).

The idea of getting help finding information from parents got laughs from both groups of students. Parents were said to not “get it” (School B), and it was agreed that “it was a long time ago” (School A) that the students had any information seeking assistance from home.

5.3 Information Use
Both teachers felt that they “continually” discussed evaluating sources with their students, and that “the most important thing to help them with is to make them aware that they need to be critical of sources” (School A). It was vital to show the students how to “evaluate, sort out what is correct, what is good, valuable information, and what is not serious” (School B). This was seen as taking quite a bit of effort since “there is so unbelievably much...to sort and see what is useful can be hard” (School B). There is “a technique for learning how to find things” and such demands were also placed on the teachers themselves, i.e., they also had to have an awareness of working with sources. The teacher from School A also noted that earlier an emphasis was placed on facts in teaching, but that now it was what students did with the facts that was relevant. In essence, “to come up with something that is new, that's what's interesting and important.”

In addition, students had to be reminded to avoid inadvertent plagiarism during a project, because sometimes they discovered that they had forgotten to write up all the citation details (School B). This led to having to try and relocate the sources used, and if this included books from the public library, it might be hard to track down the information again (School A).

Both principals agreed that the schools worked a lot with sources. It was seen as “super important” to always go back to the source, and the principal from School B said that this “is not so easy for them because the original text might be written in a harder language than everyday speech.” This could also mean avoiding sources that were considered inferior: “They are not allowed to use Wikipedia, [laughs, then begins to whisper] but I do” (School B).

While the principal at School B put more faith in printed books than the Internet because “anything can be put out there”, the other principal saw things in a slightly different manner:

The most important thing is that students know that they can trust the information that is there, and there books have a pretty good reputation, but I have never really understood myself why that is, that whatever is in print is always true, instead it's the same thing there, that one has to be a bit wary (School A).

Even if students did not always use books first, these printed sources were seen as superior because “it's credible if it comes from a book” (School A). One student noted in an almost wistful, nostalgic
manner that “with books you knew first and foremost that the source was reliable” (School B). Students also mentioned that a source should be evaluated based on who was behind it, “like a professor” (School B). Information that could be found in several places was also seen as more trustworthy. One student said to “check Wikipedia's sources and use those...that's a good tip” (School A). It was also explained that teachers do not think that students “get which pages are good” (School B), but the students at both schools thought they were good at critiquing sources themselves.

5.4 Libraries – School, Public, and Digital

5.4.1 Principals' Approach to Libraries
Due to contact with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, both of the principals had been forced to consider the role that school libraries play. School A had received and passed an inspection for its library on campus. The fact that it took ten minutes to walk from this school to the public library was seen as acceptable by the government authorities, but the principal was encouraged to continue working with the issue of access to curriculum appropriate material. The principal explained that the school was told to improve the school library collection “significantly”, but that the Swedish Schools Inspectorate had failed to make clear how this was to be achieved. The way the authorities “had interpreted their own guidelines” was more or less that a school library meant “that you should have \(x\) number of books, but we aren't going to tell you what \(x\) is.” According to the principle at School A, it is “unreasonable” that such a library should be built up at each and every school. While the principal accepted that a school library should be a source of relevant information, the visit had raised the question: “Do I actually have a better library just because I have books?” During the interview, the opinion of the principal was that:

It's totally crazy. Not that there is anything wrong with books, but if one is to invest money, I would rather have put the money into something virtual, if that is the idea, to get students to read (School A).

Moreover, the “whole debate about books on a shelf” was seen as taking both valuable resources that could have been used elsewhere and “the joy out of building up a library”.

At School B, the principal also saw the Swedish Schools Inspectorate as prioritizing books. Because of this, the concern was that the “relevance” of what was in the library had not been considered, even if “that's what matters to students.” The principal was, in other words, “critical towards how to interpret the law because it doesn't say anything about the library being used, just that there should be one.” There was a “need to rethink” because students seemed to see the library as a shelf with books. At the same time, the principal also felt bound by this perspective:
When I think of libraries, I think books and that bothers me, it means that somewhere my old image of a library, well, I haven't developed it (School B).

Both principals said that there was a running “joke” among their colleagues that a library could be created by simply picking up titles second hand. For example, the principal from School B had been told to buy “a bunch of pocket books and fill up ten meters worth of shelves, and it would look like a library.” Another alternative entertained for dealing with collections development, was the idea of buying fiction sold in package deals. The problem might be, however, that the titles had only been included because they were cheap. Both principals seriously questioned taking such actions because “unread books don't help, everything that's unread is unnecessary.” At the same time, municipal schools that already had established libraries were not seen providing a better service, because “if you were to remove the books that haven't been read over the last years…it would be the same – empty shelves” (School B).

5.4.2 Use of School Libraries
After the visit from the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, the principal from School A said that their organization had examined the issue of access to a school library and had questioned its purpose. In general, three areas could be ascertained: 1) students' access to information; 2) getting students to read more; and 3) teaching students how a library works and is set up. The school was attempting to take on the first two functions and had decided to delegate the third and final responsibility to the nearby public library. The school made sure that all the students acquired a public library card and were given a tour by the library staff. The other school did the same when students first started at the school.

The principal at School A had thought a great deal about the functions of a school librarian as well: “Often I think what function does this person have that a teacher can't?” The conclusion was that if the school were to employ a librarian, a teaching position would have to go, and in effect the librarian would need to do what that teacher would have done as well. The principal explained:

I don't want to disparage the librarian profession, but if they can do something a teacher can't do, well in that case, I've missed it (School A).

A few other compromises were considered, such as bringing in a librarian once a week or for a limited amount of time to help build up the collection. The idea of a “virtual” librarian via Skype to answer student queries was also entertained. However, the point was made again that:

When you look at the functions of a school library, in particular seeking information, it's something a teacher should be able to do as part of their job. It even says so in the regulatory documents, so I feel that part is taken care of when you have teachers (School A).
The other principal from School B thought that the advantage of not having a school library was that no one “controls” the students and “says that you should look at this and this.” However, this was also seen as the main disadvantage, namely that students “can't be helped in their further development.”

For the teacher from School B, the ideal school library would have student input about the collection even if much is already determined by curricula. The library should offer a wide range of titles in many different genres, rather than lots of copies of the same thing. It is important that when a student arrives at a library, there is a feeling of support and that:

There is someone knowledgeable there who knows a bit about and around books…and can provide tips and suggestions (School B).

A library could also be a cozy, inviting, and secluded place to go to. Instead, students have created “their own little world” in some way by using headphones. One disadvantage of not having a library is that a student might want to read in their free time and not having such a facility on site might discourage this. Convenience and availability was seen as key, “because the more you make something hard to access, the less someone will use it” (School B).

There was a mix between traditional and more contemporary views of what a school library should be among the students. Most of them agreed that a school library should be a cozy and inviting place. Suggestions included providing comfortable furniture like soft sofas or bean bag chairs. Some were looking for the feeling a cafe would provide, with a space to “chill” and “hang” with friends. One of the students thought the library could be modeled on the Google offices, with open spaces and funky design including groupings of colorful footstools (School A). This same student stated that “the books don't matter”. The comment was made by another student that “mega” computers would be a good idea, since the software students would want to use demands a lot of computer memory (School A). Other students pointed to a more traditional view of the library as someplace “calm” where better concentration was possible. Books were seen as belonging to this “older” way of thinking and as providing a sense of historical place.

5.4.3 Use of Public Libraries
Both of the schools had set up similar relationships with the local public library. Students were made to get a library card and given tours by library staff. There were no special arrangements between the schools and the library, in part because “the interest hasn't been so great” (School A). According to the principal at School B, the majority of students had to be “kicked” into going to the library and it was necessary to accompany them on these library visits to ensure that they did not go somewhere else. The principal at School A reported that the students lost interest in the public library once they saw how dated the books were relating to the specialty subjects taught at the school. On the other hand, it was noted that there was plenty of material relating to subjects like economics. There was also a “sea” of fiction available.
One teacher had made it a habit to sit down and discuss how things went for students if they had visited the public library (School A). The opinion of both of the teachers was that there were very few students who turned to the public library, even if there was occasionally a student who went there regularly. Students “often solve things on site” by consulting the Internet, their classmates or the teacher. The teacher from School B also noted that students often avoided using the local library since those materials have to be returned within a certain time frame.

Students did not report being actively encouraged to continually use the public library, although both schools ensured that students got their library cards and a tour of the facilities. Students also confirmed that short loan times were “a pain” (School B), and that the public library was “just a waste of a lot of money” (School A) due to fines for overdue books. On average, the students visited the public library once every academic year. One student said they were “forced” to go there to get a book of fiction to read (School B). Another student said that they “were not allowed to go” to the library because “you only get like ten minutes” (School B). Another student remarked that “even if it isn't far to go there, I would rather borrow books from the school” (School A). One student found it sometimes hard to find books at the local library because, “it's Hbc7, Gbh, Duffy Duff and the others, eh” (School B). For another student, the public library “and things like it are going to disappear...it's so unnecessary to go there” (School A). Despite these many complaints, there were still students at both schools that valued libraries. A student at School A could not explain exactly why but was firm that libraries are something that you “must” have. At School B one of the students explained: “I like the feeling of a library where there are lots of books, someone else has had this before me”. Jokes were then made about the “good old days” when books had pockets for cards in order to record the names of library lenders.

5.4.4 Possible Digital Libraries

Neither school had what the educators themselves considered to be a digital library. The principal at School A explained that instead resources had been allocated to provide the students with books as stipulated by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. When the school had started up, the principal had wanted to invest in a “virtual library”. In this imagined scenario, the school would replace paper textbooks with e-books, and the laptops would already be loaded with “the right stuff.” In addition, as soon as students opened up their individual laptops they would be able to communicate with their teachers and classmates. A virtual library was seen as something that the school could work toward in order to provide the students with good information and encourage reading.

The teacher from School B noted that even though the school had purchased “expensive” online reference works, these were only available during school hours. The ideal digital library would mean that all the resources should be accessible anywhere and at anytime. Hypothetically this type of access could “be the reason that a student changes perspective and gets the urge to become something.” In

27 Although there are now many Swedish libraries making the shift to the Dewey Decimal system of classification, up until recently, the national scheme (SAB) used a system of signums comprised of one or more letters.
fact, a digital library could be a “super tool” to meet recent demands from the Swedish National Agency for Education to teach students how to appreciate and explore different perspectives. For example, links could be provided that covered various points of view related to each school task or project. It was important to have things presented in an ordered fashion. As the teacher pointed out, “you don't need to hide or be secretive about this sort of thing with students.” Students were thought to be more likely to respond to a digital library as well, since:

They recognize that environment. They sit in front of the computer. Everything is digital. They love this. They become more engaged – involved – than if they just flip through books (School B).

The students' responses concerning digital libraries dealt mainly with functionality and form. Some students thought tablets would be a good investment because these are a convenient size and could have “unlimited content” (School B). If a student wanted to read, “computers are clunky” (School A). Many of the students said that more varied media should be made available, such as documentary films and streamed music collections. When considering the possibilities offered by digital libraries, one student described a dream scenario reminiscent of Google Books. The idea was that after entering a few search terms in the computer, links would be provided to the actual pages where the information was to be found (School B).
6. DISCUSSION

Previous research concerning how independent high schools in Sweden deal with information literacies and library legislation is limited; therefore, my research intent was to help fill this gap by offering further empirical evidence in this area. My study sought not only to explore the educators' perspective but also to give voice to the students' opinions. In this chapter, I will answer the research questions by discussing how my findings relate to the literature review.

6.1 Assumptions about Generational Differences

The interviews revealed that there is some evidence that the educators tend to see the students' technological use in terms of generational differences. Like Tapscott (1998), the educators described new technology as something “natural” for young people. This assumption was also found in explanations about how to best reach the students because “they just don't have the energy” for, or the interest in, what Prensky (2001, 2006) refers to as the old styles of instruction. In other words, the students are seen as digital natives who have a new style of learning, because they have grown up in a time where everything is “just a click away”.

The general opinion of the educators was that students were not as good at using online sources as they might say or believe. The students gave voice to this lack of confidence from the teachers, and in general, the students thought that the adults around them were critical of their use of technology. For example, one of the students said that the adults think that teenagers only spend their time sitting in front of the computer or on Facebook. For another student, the negative viewpoint from adults even included claims that “they think we don't have the social competence to just talk”.

While there are obvious differences in the tools that the students have access to compared with previous generations, the presence of this new technology does not mean that students do not have the same needs for guidance and pertinent information. The educators of this study seem to start from a place of overestimating the abilities of these “digital youths”, and then continue on in a discourse about how it is actually the students who have overestimated their own abilities. What is lacking from such a point of view is the idea that different contexts require different sets of skills and knowledge. As one might expect, the students seem to be acting from a set of rules and values that more often than not collide with those of their teachers.

6.2 Hierarchy of Information Sources

The interviews revealed that a fairly cohesive hierarchy of information sources exists. As with many other studies (cf. Rowlands et al., 2008; Purcell et al., 2012; Gärdén, 2010), the students from the two independent schools prioritized using the Internet for their school-related information seeking. Google was the first and sometimes only tool used, indicating that students might indeed equate information seeking with searching on the web (cf. Alexandersson & Limberg, 2004, Gärdén, 2010). While there was mention from one school of work with subject guides, students still reported ending up with
Google in the end. Text books were consulted when made available, but these were not always the obvious choice. It is not clear if this was due to a lack of encouragement from the teachers (cf. Limberg et al., 2008), or the fact that students might prefer a variety of tools.

Although the educators said that the students had access to databases, the students never mentioned these spontaneously and when questioned further some were even unclear as to what databases actually are. This gap might reflect a simple lack of interest among the students, or it may point to a lack of exposure in a systematic way to the opportunities such tools provide. Because both of the schools offered programs that could lead to university studies in the future, the question arises if the students will have adequate experience and preparation for finding and assessing more scholarly reading such as academic journals.

Similar to the findings of Agosto and Hughes Hassell (2005, 2006a, 2006b), the students rarely sought out libraries or librarians for their INSU. According to the teachers, this was because the public library lacked the resources to meet the demands of specific courses studied by the students. Libraries were also seen as a “waste” of time and money by at least one of the students, and several students were put off by short loan times and late fines.

6.2.1 Searching Online
When the students discussed various problems they encountered during online searches, it was apparent that they had created strategies in order to evaluate the credibility of online sources (cf. Francke, Sundin & Limberg, 2011). For example, students suggested starting with Wikipedia to see what sources were listed there or looking to see if a particular source showed up in several places. Since many of the students had only used technology for “fun” before starting high school, it is understandable that they are now meeting new challenges when using familiar cultural tools (computers and the Internet) in the academic context (cf. Säljö, 2005). One common conclusion put forth by all of the study participants was that everyone – both students and educators – need more technology training.

6.2.2 Social Search
As has been noted previously, the students practiced a form of social search, consulting with peers and adults for recommendations on information sources (cf. Meyers, Fisher & Marcoux, 2009). The students at both schools confirmed that they often talk to friends to get help with their INSU. Classmates could, in fact, be the first line of inquiry, and even on par with Google. Fellow students were, however, seen more as a way to find out where to locate the right information, or to compare results (cf. Ibid.), rather than a source of correct facts.

While asking teachers for an answer during a search was a preferred choice, this was generally discouraged by the educators themselves. As Gärdén (2010) found, the boundaries are not always clear as to what information seeking responsibilities fall to the students or to the educators. Based on their
answers, there are indications that the students still need guidance in finding and critiquing information sources.

Unfortunately, students from this study showed signs of being left without the extra guidance they need when searching for information (cf. Alexandersson et al., 2007). This is particularly disheartening since there is some indication that the students do not really understand how libraries work (cf. Limberg, 2010). Students would perhaps like to confer more with their teachers than they are currently permitted. While classmates were a preferred source, and indeed friends and the Internet were consulted simultaneously, the impression from the interviews was that teachers were seen as a better source because “they should know”. Yet at both schools, students were explicitly and perhaps implicitly encouraged to become self-reliant. While some of the educators said that they reassured the students that they were there to help, others were reluctant to “serve up” the information so readily.

6.3 Library and Literacy Issues

6.3.1 Independent Learners
Both schools placed an emphasis on students taking responsibility for their own learning, and the majority of lessons were described as multidisciplinary and project-based in order to encourage independent thinking. At the one school, the students had even been given the task of choosing what books to include in the library. While the principal might have seen this as part of the inclusive spirit of the school, it can also be argued that this unique opportunity was also a hefty responsibility that the students were not adequately equipped to handle. When the students failed to list enough books to use the entire allocated budget, this was seen as a sign of disinterest in the library itself. Naturally, it is also possible that the students do not yet know what they need to know or what will inspire them.

If students are given too much responsibility for their information needs (cf. Alexandersson et al., 2007), there is a risk that the search for information is seen as more important than the knowledge gained. The teachers seemed, at first glance, to agree with this standpoint. One of the teachers argued that the most important thing for students to learn was how to analyze information, i.e., how innovative students are with information is what is relevant. The same teacher identified the teaching task as being a “link” between society and the norms set out by the educational authorities. Being a good mentor was talked about as helping students be more critical about a range of activities, including how to deal with information overload to how to avoid distractions by social media. The end result, however, was that the students still seemed to be on the hunt for the right answer, as in the case when PowerPoint slides were used to discover what a teacher thought was essential to know. Despite what the educators reported, there is a possibility that the classroom activities mainly focused on particular search techniques rather than more complex strategies for INSU.
There is evidence that the students engage with technology along a continuum of practices (cf. Horst, Herr-Stephenson, & Robinson, 2010). For example, most of the students said they use their Smart phones to stay in touch with friends, while email was limited to contact with “older” people like teachers. The students noted that analog tools (handwriting, textbooks) were falling out of use in society in general, but there were still those who felt the need to preserve these “older ways”. For some students this seemed to be motivated by nostalgia, while others genuinely felt that printed text was synonymous with a more reliable source. As reported earlier, some students seemed frustrated because “everything is on computers” and wanted books, while others wholeheartedly embraced digital sources and felt books and the libraries associated with them were a “waste” of time and money. This variation of opinions about the tools available at the schools indicates that there are several discourses present about technology (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991). On the one hand, there is a story that “modern” (Internet, laptops, texting by phone) is better because its “natural” for this younger generation. On the other hand, there is a story that “old” (printed books, handwriting, talking face-to-face) is better because it is more reliable and “real”. What seemed to be lacking was a more nuanced discussion about how various tools can be better used to promote interactivity (cf. Shedroff, 1999).

At both of the schools, at least one of the students was singled out as an “expert” (cf. Finn, 2010) by his/her peers. This indicates that the students are indeed engaged in social learning (cf. Wenger, 2000), since there is general recognition by the students as to who is “good” at finding information and, therefore, able to perform well at school. It also appears that one of the teachers encourages students to mentor their peers. In the “lifeline” system of asking questions that was described during the interview, students were explicitly told to ask each other for help before turning to the teacher. However, both of the schools show signs of imparting an implicit understanding about social search, i.e., ask teachers when all else fails. While the educators may see this as a way of encouraging independent thinking in their students, this lack of mentoring may instead be robbing students of an opportunity to achieve higher cognitive ability through a more organized collaboration with the experienced adults (cf. Vygotsky in Gredler & Shields, 2008).

6.3.2 Value of Libraries
While there is perhaps “no one universal measurement for school library facilities” (IFLA, 2002, p.7), the findings of my study indicate that there is a tendency to see libraries (public, school, and digital) in terms of physical space. Libraries were seen by many of the participants as places to “hang out” (cf. Zickuhr, Raine, Purcell, Madden, & Brenner, 2012), and many of the students would have liked to have a cozy, inviting, and secluded place to go to. Some of the students and one of the teachers saw a school library as a “safe haven” (cf. the meaning of place of refuge from Limberg & Alexandersson, 2003) with an emphasis on the fact that such a place could provide a distraction-free environment. At the other school, the reported lack of someplace on campus where students could concentrate might explain the added frustration when students “weren't allowed” to visit the local public library. In any case, both schools had students who saw the library as a place for contemplation and thought.
According to Alexandersson and Limberg (2003), because students used computers in a variety of settings, a school library implied a physical rather than a virtual space. As noted earlier, many of the respondents from this study conceptualize a school library in the same way. One principal felt the “need to rethink” because students and staff saw a library as a shelf with books (cf. the meaning of warehouse for books from Limberg, 1990). The other principal had visions of a “virtual” school library when the school first started, but in the end resources had gone to meeting the demands of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate to provide the students with “x number of books.”

As has been noted earlier, both the literature and various actors in Sweden emphasize the key role that a principal plays in the existence and development of a school library. The principals who participated in this study did not seem to value having a school library, and they made jokes about providing “meters of books” to show off to the authorities instead. The principles had also delegated many of the activities that might take place in a school library to the public library (cf. Ahlryd, 2009; Nyberg, 2008). One principal talked about the public library as a complement to the collection of reference materials at the school, while the other principal talked about the public library as having responsibility for teaching students how a library works. As with Ahlryd's study (2009), the schools did not have set agreements with the public library, indicating that there was no active collaboration in place. The risk in such a situation is that students are again left without the supportive structures for their INSU that continuous mentoring and/or supervision can provide (cf. Alexandersson et al., 2007).

Unlike library advocates who see a school librarian as critical to the “economic and social progress of every country” (Stichting ENSIL, 2010, p.3), one of the principals from my study failed to see the point of having school librarians at all. For this principal, there seemed to be no real awareness of collections management, since the students were given more or less the main responsibility to decide which books should make up the book collection. In terms of extending information literacy, librarians were seen as merely able to help with the evaluation of sources (cf. Nyberg, 2008; Olsson, 2012), and this skill was something teachers should be teaching already. If the school was to hire on a librarian, that would mean less money for employing a teacher. Such attitudes indicate that the school library was seen as a separate entity or competing function within the school (cf. Limberg, 1996). As long as what a school librarian does remains unclear, this principal will have little reason to change this point of view. Perhaps the general opinion about libraries would have been more positive if the school library had been staffed (cf. Victorin, 2013).

From the interviews, it is difficult to clearly decipher what came first in the negative situation outlined above. In other words, the causal relationship is unclear: 1) is the negative attitude of the principals why there is minimal interest in a developing a school library; or 2) is the the lack of positive experiences with a staffed, well-functioning school library why the principals are skeptical about what positive impact a school library could have? In either case, what makes a difference to learning
development is how the school library is understood (cf. Francke & Gärdén, 2013) and not its mere existence. As Limberg (2003) notes, a school library may not always be the best alternative, especially if it is not well-equipped, properly staffed, or integrated with curriculum. For the participating schools of the study, there is a chance that the passive book collections (in one case reported as a library to the authorities, in the other case not) and personal laptops, do more damage than good. Simply providing tools does not mean that they will be put to constructive use, and unused books and an over-reliance on Google appear to contribute to a milieu where facts take precedence over knowledge (cf. Alexandersson et al., 2007). Moreover, the schools could be contributing to the negative opinions of students who already claim that books and libraries “don't matter”.

According to Witten, Bainbridge, and Nichols (2010), digital libraries are often seen as “scholarly” or “esoteric” over practical and multimedial. The educators who participated in this study talked about a possible digital library in terms of a customized and structured online environment, but it was only the teachers who fully expressed what a digital library could be in terms of virtual content over physical space (cf. Witten, Bainbridge, & Nichols, 2010). Both teachers mentioned the need for quality sources in a linked fashion along the lines of subject guides. A high value was placed on accessibility as well. In addition, one teacher felt the need to tailor such a guide to help students develop “different perspectives” in accordance with directives from the Swedish National Agency for Education. For the most part, however, the educators conceptualization of digital libraries was bound by the possible physical units of information that could be accessed, e.g., e-books or link collections. In other words, the tendency to equate a library with a warehouse of books (cf. Limberg, 1990) seems to have colored the participants ideas about digital possibilities as well. There was almost no mention of interactive or co-creative digital practices by the educators (cf. Candela et al., 2007).

6.3.3 Parallel Information Activities
Analysis based on the use of the central concepts that I outline in the theory section indicates that there are several parallel groups at work at the participating independent schools. The students have their own community in which tricks and tips for producing the right answer and making the grade are in focus. In this group, it is more often than not the techne-mentor in the form of a fellow classmate that provides guidance and learning opportunities. This is not because students do not value or desire the expertise of their teachers, but rather students are discouraged from approaching teachers in their social search. At the same time, the educators are struggling to implement new tools into previous teaching practices. The educators are also left on their own to navigate these new challenges. So while teachers often feel that they do not have the technological know-how of their students, it is unclear how they can gain this type of literacy in order to pass it on to their students. This is not to say that teachers must always inhabit the role of expert. Teachers can most certainly learn from their students, but this does not mean that schools should abandon students in the spirit of independent learning. As for how libraries and librarians are conceptualized, there is strong evidence to suggest that these are often seen as increasingly antiquated and useless. Even those study participants who advocated
libraries and librarians did so more often than not with a tone of nostalgia. There was very little talk of libraries and librarians paving the way in the development of information literacies that suit life-long and digitized learning. In short, there is very little awareness as to how a school library, much less a school librarian, can aid in creating an active, integrated community of practice.

6.4 Discussion Summary
This study set out to answer a number of questions in order to better understand the current situation for students and educators at independent schools in Sweden. The principals were asked about how they interpret current steering documents regarding school libraries and information literacy. Libraries are mainly viewed as quiet holding areas for books rather than hubs of social learning activities. The way the Swedish Schools Inspectorate enforces the new legislation is interpreted as validating this emphasis on physicality over other functions. As a result, both libraries and librarians are not seen as a worthwhile investment during this computer age.

These opinions also make up part of the answer as to how the educators and students conceptualize and interpret public, school, and digital libraries. For example, the educators do not value libraries enough to further invest in a staffed library on their own campus or to develop a strong partnership with the public library. Essentially, both libraries have settled for a collection of books. Neither school has developed a digital library, but both provide access to a laptop and Wi-Fi. From some of the students and teachers, there are indications that this one-to-one technology cannot replace the range of reliable sources provided by “real” books. At the same time, the more active pedagogic role that a library can play is missed. There are students and educators who do not understand the purpose of libraries in general.

The old-fashioned role assigned to libraries makes up part of how the educators and students conceptualize and interpret information literacy within the school context. Among the information sources available to the schools, libraries and librarians are barely mentioned. The same holds true for tools such as databases. The interviews indicate that students use Google first and foremost to gain the information they need for school work. Because students are left on their own to become independent learners, information literacy seems to be seen from a behaviorist view of skills rather than along a sociocultural view of a complex process that must be developed in practice. Moreover, because technological abilities are seen in generational terms, students are assumed to have a natural ability to interact with tools like Google. At the same time, the young people are criticized for not being able to be critical or patient in their information seeking. It is questionable whether the schools have provided adequate instruction in a variety of information seeking tools.
7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
This study aimed at understanding how two independent schools in Sweden meet the legislation requirements to provide access to a school library. In addition, the study was designed to explore how the schools conceptualize information literacies, and in particular if digital libraries could assist in these efforts. For this final chapter of the thesis, major conclusions of the study will be presented as well as practical recommendations based on the empirical evidence. In addition, areas for further research are noted.

7.1 Books on Shelves, Bytes on Hold
First, there is a strong tendency to see libraries in terms of a physical function (warehouse of books) over social activities (integration with teachers, a platform for the development of information literacies, a tailored collection). Recent legislation and its enforcement by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate is interpreted by the principals as confirming this passive role and a focus on books. Providing students with access to a school library is conceptualized in terms of providing books on shelves, and as such, this is an obligation that can be delegated to the nearby public library or achieved with a simple book collection on campus. The principals did not feel encouraged to invest in staffed school libraries, and one of the principals even questioned the function of librarians, i.e., what can a librarian do that a teacher shouldn't already provide? Several of the students seem to have internalized similar discourses, and do not value libraries or librarians. Could this lead to fewer advocates of libraries in the future?

While one school reported having a school library, the principal had not appointed anyone to actively develop its collection and its space as a hub for activities. From a sociocultural theoretical perspective, it is reasonable to assume that more complex educational efforts, such as developing information literacies, are not likely to take place in such a passive locale. The educators say that they value information literacy but conceptualize it in behaviorist terms. To be information literate was the same as acquiring better skills in how to find information and critique sources. There was less emphasis, for example, on reading development and the mastery of digital tools for school work. As one might expect, the educators portrayed the students as having only basic computer skills, an over-reliance on Google, and an inability to critique sources. Based on the findings of the study, the schools have not made significant progress in stimulating reading or establishing a curated library collection either. The argument can be made that this is precisely the advantage of having a staffed library and not just a book collection at school.

Although neither of the schools claimed to have access to a digital library, they both provided Wi-Fi access and laptops for each student. If educators continue to ignore the social learning that can take place in libraries, there is a risk that the warehouse metaphor can be transferred to digital forms. In other words, online access to resources may be misconstrued as being all that a digital library can provide. The community building benefits of, for example, co-creation and individualized collections
will be missed. It is not enough to simply introduce new digital tools, someone must ensure that both teachers and students know how to use such technology to enhance learning. At present, the teachers are expected to provide this additional support for both analog and/or digital tools, but the interviews revealed concerns that they are not up to the task.

7.2 Teachers and/or Techne-Mentors

The educators face new challenges as they try to embrace problem-based learning and the introduction of new technologies. Both of the teachers describe their new roles as that of mentors, yet at the same time the interviews paint a picture of students being left on their own to develop the skills they will need for the future. There is little awareness of the more complex concept of information literacies, i.e., that students should be provided with different learning contexts, so they can develop specific competencies for an array of situations.

Instead of turning to their teachers for help, there are signs that students consult each other as techne-mentors. Students revealed that the message they get is to find information on their own or through the help of their friends. In this way, student access to the adult, intellectual world of their teachers may have been limited. Since the students say that they still try to understand what is expected of them in their learning environments, it must be frustrating for them when teachers withhold guidance. The tendency of the schools to encourage students to collaborate with each other but not their teachers, could also be contributing to the idea of youths as other.

Educators may consider that just because they feel uncomfortable with new technology in their teaching practices and the emphasis is on independent learning, there is no need to withhold their subject expertise from students who are still very much in need of guidance. A deeper awareness of the ways social learning takes place could benefit the teachers and their students by fostering a community of exploration. New digital tools could be tested and embraced rather than merely tolerated or ignored.

7.3 Recommendations for Practice

While recent legislation has attempted to standardize school conditions by stipulating that all students should have access to a library, the many interpretations of the law make this nearly impossible. Because principals play a crucial role in the establishment and use of school libraries, it is important that administrators become more educated about the benefits of having an integrated, staffed library as an educational tool. For example, if a school insists on relying on the public library, an agreement should be put into place to assure that students are not just left to fend for themselves in their information activities. If independent schools want to be truly competitive, it would be advisable to build up a collection that truly reflects the specialized profile of each organization.

As discussed in the literature review, one can argue that information literacy is no longer just about finding information, but rather there are several literacies at work when we use and interact with
information to build knowledge. As the information landscape of the modern world becomes increasingly complex, practice with multiple literacies is critical. Students need both clear and continuous guidance in developing these literacies. Ensuring access to a library is a positive step toward this end, but it is also essential to provide for the library activities that actively encourage the learning development of students. To this end, school libraries should be seen as part of the school and located in a space where students can feel both comfortable and motivated. The presence of a school librarian is key if students are to become critical thinkers and not just information gatherers.

7.4 Recommendations for Further Research
The work with this thesis has raised many questions that have not been possible to answer here, but which nonetheless are interesting for further studies. Firstly, research should continue to uncover and challenge current notions about the INSU of young people so as to provide the best education development opportunities possible. My research did not examine the actual information-seeking behavior of the study participants, but rather their behavior as they reported it. An ethnographic user study could provide valuable insight as to the ways students actually go about finding information, such as how and why they conduct social searches. Research that is specifically focused on the INSU of young people parallels the current trend of more user-oriented library services, and should therefore continue to be of increasing interest to library professionals.

While I agree with Limberg and Lundh (2013) that an unequivocal definition of what makes a school library is not possible, and my own thesis makes no attempt in this regard, much could be gained by more research about how the various actors, such as the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, engage in discourses about what characterizes proper or adequate access to a library. In particular, it would be helpful to further explore how decision-makers approach the recent legislation. At present there is no legislated demand for access to a staffed library, despite the significant research which indicates the importance of a librarian.

Last but not least, the digital aspect of library access should be more thoroughly examined. Ideally, a study should be designed with participants who report using one-to-one teaching methods as a way to augment or even replace library access. My own research indicates that current educator attitudes may hinder the development of digital school libraries; therefore, it would be of particular interest to assist several schools in conducting Action Research. In this way, teachers could examine and reflect upon their own role in the information activities of their students, resulting in improved digital library implementation and use.
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Hej!


Om det är något du undrar över, utöver det jag har beskrivit i det ovanstående, så är jag naturligtvis beredd att förse dig med ytterligare information om projektet och mina intentioner med det. Jag hoppas att du överväger mitt förslag och att du snart ska höra av dig, så att vi kan komma överens om tid och plats för intervjun. Om jag inte hör något från dig avser jag att ta kontakt med dig per telefon inom en snar framtid.

Mitt forskningsprojekt sker inom the Swedish School of Library and Information Science, där jag har Ola Pilerot som handledare. Han kan nås på följande:

ola.pilerot@hb.se  http://www.adm.hb.se/~opi/index.html
033 435 40 00 (växel)  033 435 43 29 (direkt)  0733 012 779 (mobil)

Vänliga hälsningar
Elisabeth M. Nylander
RE: Interview request

Dear **

I am studying Library and Information Science with a focus on digital libraries and information services at the University of Borås. This spring I am writing my Master's thesis on independent high schools and school libraries. I am turning to you now in the hope that you are able to take part in an interview within the framework of my study. More specifically, I am interested in how principals meet both the demands from the Swedish National Agency for Education and students' information needs.

To participate in the study would mean that you would agree to be interviewed at a time that suits you. I estimate that the interview should not take more than about 45 minutes, probably less. In order to conduct the interview, I can come to your place of work, unless you would prefer that we meet somewhere else. We can also talk over the phone. As a participant, you are guaranteed full confidentiality; I am the only one who will know the participants by name. I plan to record the interview, but I am the only one who will listen to these recordings.

If you have any questions, beyond what I have described above, I would be happy to provide you with extra information about the project and my intentions. I hope you will consider my request and that you will contact me soon so that we can agree on a time and place for the interview. If I do not hear from you, I will contact you by phone within the near future.

My research project is under the direction of the Swedish School of Library and Information Science, where I have Ola Pilerot as my supervisor. He can be contacted as follows:

ola.pilerot@hb.se  http://www.adm.hb.se/~opi/index.html
033 435 40 00 (switchboard)  033 435 43 29 (direct)  0733 012 779 (cellphone)

Best Regards,
Elisabeth M. Nylander
Förfrågan om deltagande i intervjustudie

Hej!


Om det är något du undrar över, utöver det jag har beskrivit i det ovanstående, så är jag naturligtvis beredd att förse dig med ytterligare information om projektet och mina intentioner med det. Jag hoppas att du överväger mitt förslag och att du snart ska höra av dig, så att vi kan komma överens om tid och plats för intervjun. Om jag inte hör något från dig avser jag att ta kontakt med dig per telefon inom en snar framtid.

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Vänliga hälsningar
Elisabeth M. Nylander
Appendix D: Interview Request to Teachers (English translation)

Elisabeth M. Nylander  
Högskolan i Borås  
(cell phone) 0730 32 97 99  
elisabeth.m.nylander@gmail.com

RE: Interview request

Dear ******

I am studying Library and Information Science with a focus on digital libraries and information services at the University of Borås. This spring I am writing my Master's thesis on independent high schools and school libraries. I am turning to you now in the hope that you are able to take part in an interview within the framework of my study. More specifically, I am interested in how you as a teacher view the role of school libraries and your students' information needs.

To participate in the study would mean that you would agree to be interviewed at a time that suits you. I estimate that the interview should not take more than about 45 minutes, probably less. In order to conduct the interview, I can come to your place of work, unless you would prefer that we meet somewhere else. We can also talk over the phone. As a participant, you are guaranteed full confidentiality; I am the only one who will know the participants by name. I plan to record the interview, but I am the only one who will listen to these recordings.

If you have any questions, beyond what I have described above, I would be happy to provide you with extra information about the project and my intentions. I hope you will consider my request and that you will contact me soon so that we can agree on a time and place for the interview. If I do not hear from you, I will contact you by phone within the near future.

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ola.pilerot@hb.se  http://www.adm hb.se/~opi/index.html  
033 435 40 00 (switchboard) 033 435 43 29 (direct) 0733 012 779 (cellphone)

Best Regards,  
Elisabeth M. Nylander
Hej!

Jag studerar vid Högskolan i Borås där jag läser om digitala bibliotek. Just nu skriver jag en uppsats om fristående gymnasieskolor och skolbibliotek, och jag vill be dig hjälpa mig med min studie. Jag är intresserad av hur du tänker runt olika sätt att få information inför skolarbete och vilken betydelse ett skolbibliotek kan ha för dig.

Att delta i studien innebär att du intervjuas ihop med en grupp av 6-12 elever från din skola. Jag tror att intervjun kan ta ungefär en timme. Jag och min assistent garantera dig full konfidentialitet, vilket betyder att jag kommer sammanställa era kommentarer och inte lämna ut något specifikt om vem som har sagt vad.

Jag kommer att bandera in intervjun, men det är bara jag som får lyssna på den. Som tack för din tid kommer jag att bjuda på fika.

Om det är något du undrar över, så får du gärna ta kontakt med mig. Jag hoppas du kan tänka dig vara med, och i så fall kommer din rektor att skriva upp dig på en deltagarlista.

Med vänliga hälsningar,
Elisabeth
Hi!

I am studying at the University of Borås where I am learning about digital libraries. Right now I am writing a thesis on independent schools and school libraries, and I would like to ask you for help with my study. I am interested in what you think about the different ways to get information for school work and what a school library might mean for you.

To take part in the study would mean that you were interviewed together with a group of 6-12 other students from your school. I think the interview should take about an hour. My assistant and I guarantee you full confidentiality, which means that I will summarize your comments and not reveal specifically who has said what.

I will record the interview, but I will be the only person who is allowed to listen to it. As a way to say thank you for your time, I will provide snacks.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I hope you will consider taking part, and if so, your principal will add you to a list of participants.

All the best,
Elisabeth
Appendix G: Interview Guide for Educators (original Swedish)

Bakgrund
Först några frågor av allmän karaktär om den skola du företräder.
Hur många elever finns på skolan i nuläget?
Vem är huvudman för skolan?
Vilken inriktning har skolan?
Er skola har…inriktning, kan du beskriva era arbetsmetoder lite övergripande?
På vilket sätt särskiljer ni er från den kommunala gymnasiesskolans arbetsmetoder?
Följer ni läroplanen Lpo 94, eller har ni en egen?

Informationskompetens
Elever behöver ju skaffa information för sina studier.
Vad tror du att de behöver i den vägen?
Hur möter ni dessa behov?
Hur tillgodosier ni behovet av fack- och skönlitteratur i undervisningen?
(kanske: eget skolbibliotek / bokbestånd, lån från andra bibliotek, annat/förklara)
Hur inhämtas information och litteratur som eleverna använder i skolan?
(kanske: läraren och eleverna inhämtar tillsammans, läraren inhämtar, eleven inhämtar själv)

Digitala aspekten
Den nya tekniken har medfört nya sätt att få tillgång till information.
Skapar det nya förväntningar och krav? På vilket sätt?
Har detta på något sätt påverkat undervisningen på din skola?
På vilket sätt använder ni datorerna?
Vilka möjligheter och svårigheter ser du i de utmaningar som den nya tekniken innebär beträffande informationssökning?
Vad har den tekniken inneburit konkret för er skola beträffande informationssökning?
På vilket sätt tycker du att den nya tekniken (ex. internet och databaser) skulle kunna ersätta ett skolbibliotek med personal?

Med skolbibliotek
Hur har ni tänkt och resonerat kring skolbiblioteket på er skola?
Kan du beskriva vad ett väl fungerade skolbibliotek är för dig? Förtydliga.
Vilka funktioner bör ett skolbibliotek innehålla enligt dina åsikter?
Vilken roll anser du att ett skolbibliotek kan få i en skolas verksamhet?
Hur ser du på din roll i förhållande till skolbiblioteksfrågan?
Finns det personal som är ansvarig för biblioteket/boksamlingen?
Om ja, hur mycket tid har den biblioteksansvarige avsett för att sköta verksamheten?
Vad ingår i den ansvariges uppgifter?
Är den biblioteksansvarige utbildad bibliotekarie eller har personen på något annat sätt fått kunskap om hur man sköter biblioteket?
Vilka öppettider har skolbiblioteket?
Får elever och lärare ta del av skolans boksamling eller bibliotek under hela dagen?
Gör klasserna/eleverna regelbundet besök på andra bibliotek?
Finns det önskemål om utökat samarbete med andra bibliotek? På vilket sätt?

Utan skolbibliotek
Hur har ni tänkt och resonerat kring skolbiblioteket på er skola?
Kan du beskriva vad ett väl fungerade skolbibliotek är för dig? Fortydliga.
Vilka funktioner bör ett skolbibliotek innehålla enligt dina åsikter?
Vilken roll anser du att ett skolbibliotek kan få i en skolas verksamhet?
Hur ser du på din roll i förhållande till skolbiblioteksfrågan?
Vilka för- respektive nackdelar ser du med att skolan inte har skolbibliotek?
Har ni samarbete med något bibliotek, och hur långt är det dit?
Finns det önskemål om utökat samarbete med andra bibliotek? På vilket sätt?
Gör klasserna/eleverna regelbundet besök på andra bibliotek?
Går eleverna dit av eget initiativ eller uppmanar ni dem att gå dit?
Tror du att dom går dit mer på fritiden än elever som har skolbibliotek?
Har biblioteket inblick i er undervisning? Har de beredskap inför elevernas besök?

Skolbibliotekets framtid
Vilka möjligheter och svårigheter finns det för er som friskola att satsa att satsa ytterligare på ett skolbibliotek?
Anser du att era möjligheter skiljer sig från de kommunala skolorna?
Vilket stöd tror du att friskolorna är i behov av när det gäller skolbiblioteksresurser?
Om det fanns möjlighet att utveckla skolbiblioteket, vilka funktioner eller delar av skolbiblioteksverksamhet skulle du då vilja satsa på?
Hur ser du på skolbiblioteket i framtiden på er skola?

Styrdokument
Har du kommit i kontakt med några styrdokument rörande skolbibliotek som du anser har varit betydande för din syn på skolbibliotek?

Avrundning
Finns det något mera som du vill berätta eller tillägga?
Appendix H: Interview Guide for Educators (English translation)

**Background**
First some general questions about the school you represent.
How many students are there at the school now?
Who runs the school (e.g., private company, board of directors)?
What focus does the school have?
Your school has a … focus, can you describe your working methods in general?
In what way do these differ from the working methods of municipal high schools?
Do you follow the national curriculum or do you have your own?

**Information Literacy**
Naturally, students have to gather information for their studies.
What do you think they need to accomplish this?
How do you meet these needs?
How do you meet the need for fiction and non-fiction during instruction?
(Perhaps: own school library/book collection, loans from other libraries, other/please explain)
How is the information and literature that students use during school acquired?
(Perhaps: teacher and students get it together, teacher gets it, students get it on their own)

**Digital Aspect**
New technology has brought on new ways of accessing information.
Has this created new expectations and demands? If so, how?
Has this affected teaching at your school?
How do you use computers?
What opportunities and difficulties do you see in the challenges that new technologies bring concerning information seeking?
What has technology meant in concrete terms for your school concerning information seeking?
In what way do you think that new technology (e.g., Internet and databases) might replace a staffed school library?

**With a School Library**
What are your thoughts and discussions about school libraries at your school?
Can you describe what a well-functioning school library is for you? Expand/clarify.
What functions should a school library have in your opinion?
What role do you think a school library can have in the activities of a school?
What is your role in relationship to the issue of school libraries?
Is there someone responsible for the library/the book collection?
If so, how much time does the person responsible for the library have allocated to take care of tasks? What are the responsibilities of this person?
Is this person educated as a librarian or has this person in some other way gained knowledge about how to run a library?
What are the opening hours of the library?
Can students and teachers use the book collection or library all day?
Do you have some form of cooperation with another library? If so, how far is it to get there?
Do the classes/students visit other libraries regularly?
Is there a desire to increase cooperation with other libraries? In what way?

Without a School Library
How are school libraries thought about/discussed at your school?
Can you describe what a well-functioning school library is for you? Expand/clarify.
What functions should a school library have in your opinion?
What role do you think a school library can have in the activities of a school?
What is your role in relationship to the issue of school libraries?
What are the advantages and disadvantages concerning the lack of library at your school?
Do you have some form of cooperation with another library? If so, how far is it to get there?
Is there a desire to increase cooperation with other libraries? In what way?
Do the classes/students visit other libraries regularly?
Do you think they go there more during their free-time than students who have a school library?
Does [this other] library have knowledge about what you are teaching at your school? Are they prepared for the students' visit?

The Future of the School Library
What possibilities and difficulties are there for you as an independent school to invest further in a school library?
Do you feel that your opportunities differ from those at a municipal school?
What support do you think that independent schools need concerning school library resources?
If there was an opportunity to develop the school library, which functions or activities would you want to invest in? How does the future look for a school library at your school?

Steering Documents
Have you come into contact with any steering documents concerning school libraries that you feel has been important for your view of school libraries?

Summing Up
Is there anything else you would like to say or add?
Appendix I: Interview Guide for Students (original Swedish)

Vem är jag/assistenten; hur fokusgruppen är tänkt att fungera

Skolsituation (program, årskurs)
Om jag var en ny elev på er skola, hur skulle ni förklara för mig hur saker och ting fungerar här när ni ska lära er saker?

När man håller på med skolarbete behöver man ju ofta få tag på information av olika slag. Kan ni berätta hur ni har gått till väga då ni har tagit reda på saker och letat efter uppgifter för era studier?

Vad är det oftast ni behöver ta reda på? Hur ofta hittar ni den information du behöver? Hur vet ni att den är bra/pålitlig? Vad gör ni om man eventuellt inte kan hitta det man söker?

Vad är det viktigaste när ni ska få hjälp med skolarbetet?
- lärare
- föräldrar
- kompisar
- något annat?
- böcker
- datorer
- internet
- Wikipedia
- Google
- databaser

När jag var i er ålder hade inte jag mobiltelefon eller Internet eller en PC. Hur tror du att sådana uppfinningar har påverkat ditt sätt att söka och skaffa information?

Ibland kallas ni för ”nätgenerationen”; vad tänker ni om det?

Går ni ofta till bibliotek? (I sådana fall) Varför det? Vad är det som är bra med bibliotek?

Om du skulle skapa ett drömskolbibliotek, hur skulle det se ut? Vem/vad skulle vara där? Vad skulle det har för funktioner?

Okej, om jag har förstått rätt, ni … Stämmer det?

Är det något annat ni tycker att jag borde veta, är det något ni vill lägga till?
Appendix J: Interview Guide for Students (English translation)

Introduce me/assistant; how focus group is supposed to work.
School situation (program, year)
If I were a new student at your school, how would you explain how things work around here when you learn?

When you do school work, you often have to get different kinds of information. Can you tell me what you do when you find out things and look for information for your studies?

What do you often need to find out? How often do you find the information that you need? How do you know that something is good/reliable? What do you do if you can't find what you are looking for?

What is the most important when you are looking for help with school work?
- teachers
- parents
- friends
- other?
- books
- computers
- the Internet
- Wikipedia
- Google
- databases

When I was your age, I did not have a cell phone or the Internet or a PC. How do you think such inventions have affected the way you seek and gather information?

Sometimes you are called the “net generation”; what do you think about that?

Do you go to the library often? Why or why not? What is good about a library?

If you were to create a dream school library, how would it look? Who/what would be there? What functions should it have?

Okay, if I have understood you correctly, you... Is that right?

Is there anything else you think I should know? Do you want to add anything else?