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Assessing the Student Use of the Print Collections of Three Suburban High Schools

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Assessing the Use of the
Print Collection of Three
Suburban High Schools:
Implications for
Collection Development

Qualitative
multisite
case study
phenomenological
framework

Investigated how
teachers required
students to use books
from the print collection
of the school

Case 1 or School A:

34-year-old school

student population: 2,216

faculty: 127

Case 2 or School B:

14-year-old school

student population: 1,192

faculty: 90

Case 3 or School C:

1-year-old school

student population: 1,411

faculty: 81

5 Phases of Data Collection

Phase 1: Cross-sectional survey

- Barriers to use of the print collection
- Teacher attitudes, experiences, expectations

Phase 2: student and teacher focus groups

- Teacher perceptions of importance of print collection
- Student perceptions of importance of print collection

Phase 3: Work cited pages

Number of citations from:

- School collection
- Outside sources
- Online sources

Phase 4: Circulation data

Dewey sections used by
students and teachers

Phase 5: Budget and copyright data

- Actual book expenditures
- Copyright age of collections
- Assessment of connection between quality of collection and use of collection

Survey results

- School A: 47 surveys: 61% return rate
- School B: 20 surveys: 22% return rate
- School C: 29 surveys: 44% return rate

Focus groups

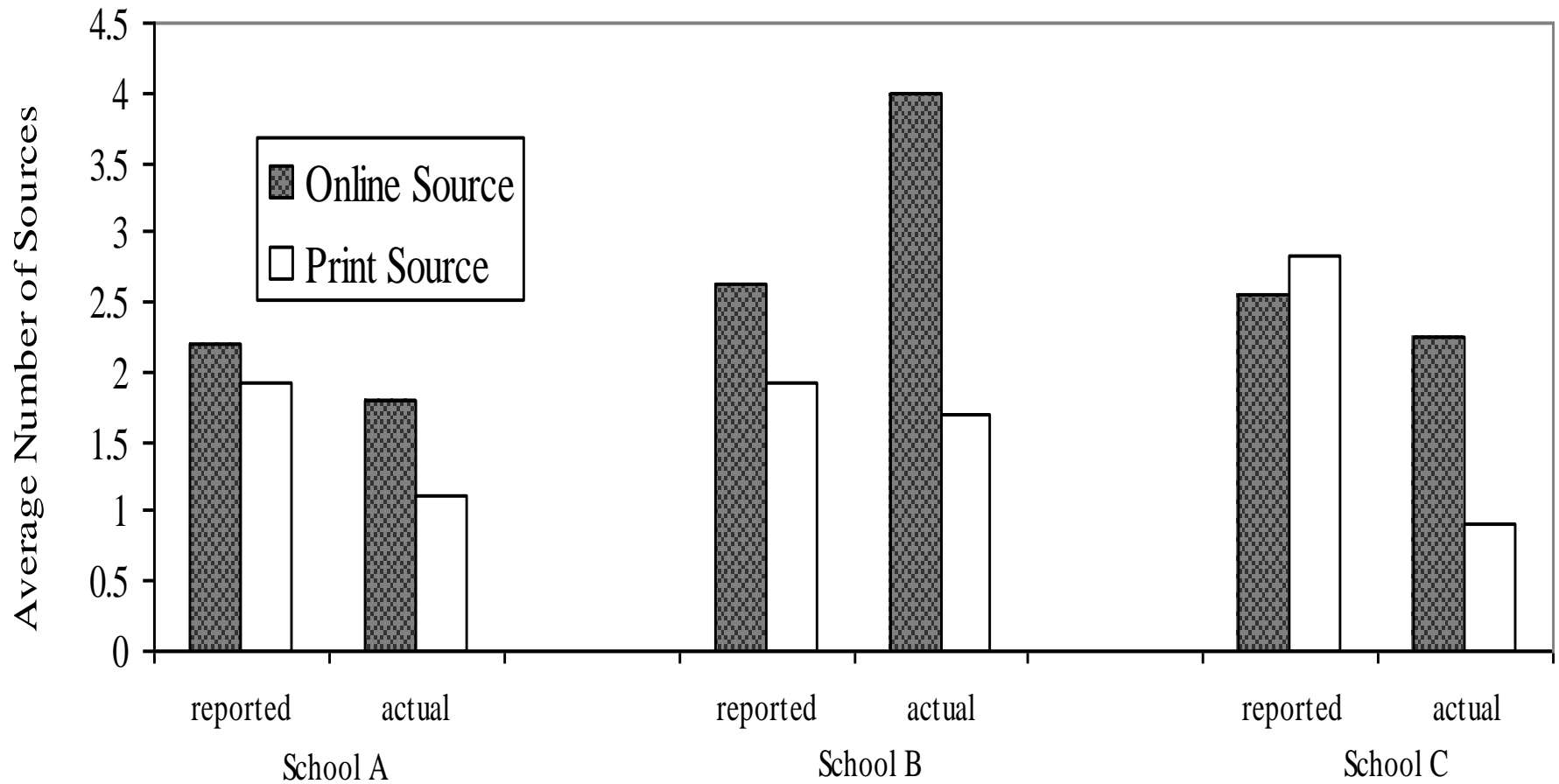
- School A: teachers: 7 participants
students: 5 participants
- School B: teachers: 3 participants
students: 6 students
- School C: teachers: 4 participants
students: 4 participants

Works Cited Pages

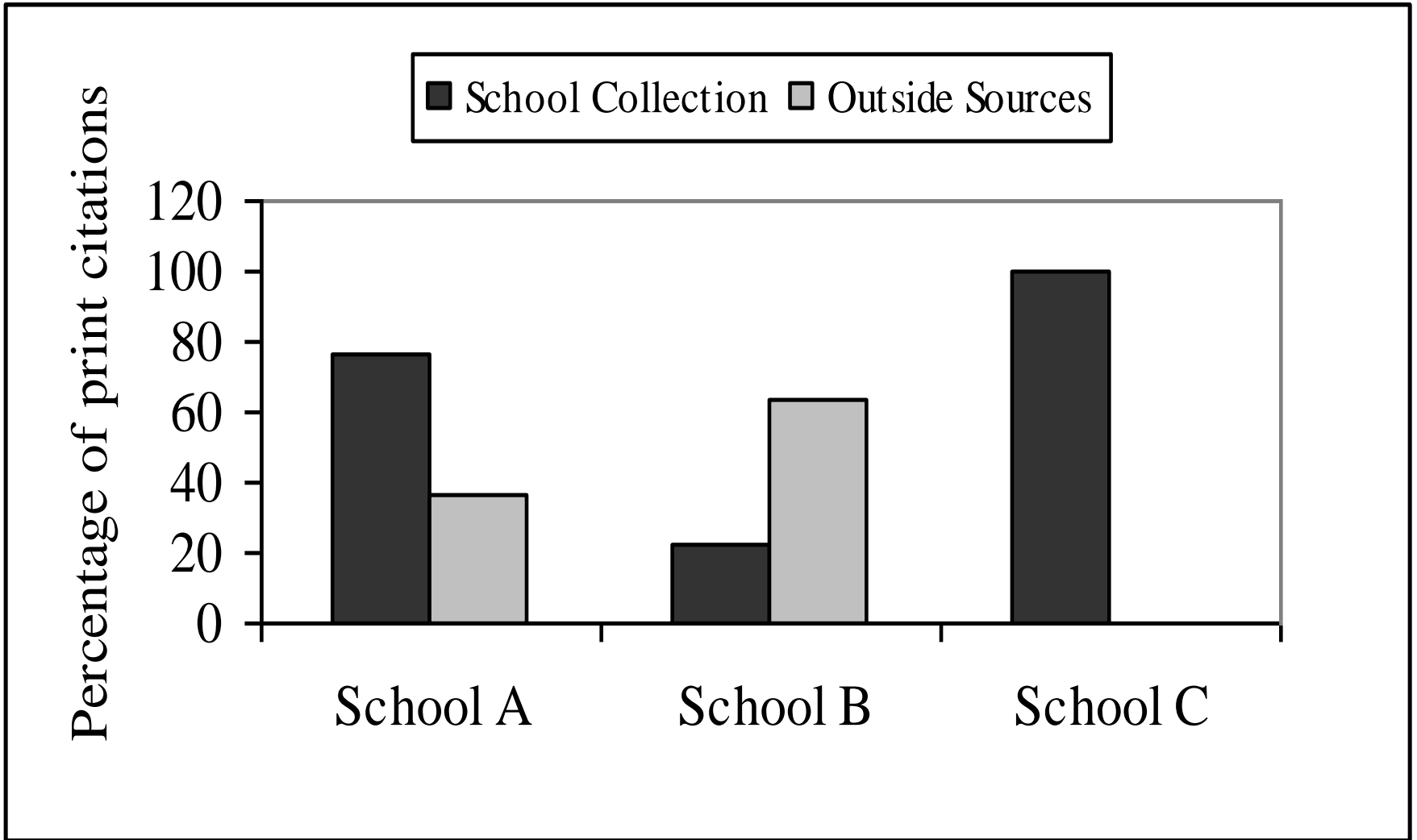
- School A: 237 pages from 5 teachers
- School B: 116 pages from 1 teacher
- School C: 23 pages from 2 teachers

Research Questions

What types of sources do teachers require their students to use for research projects and class assignments?

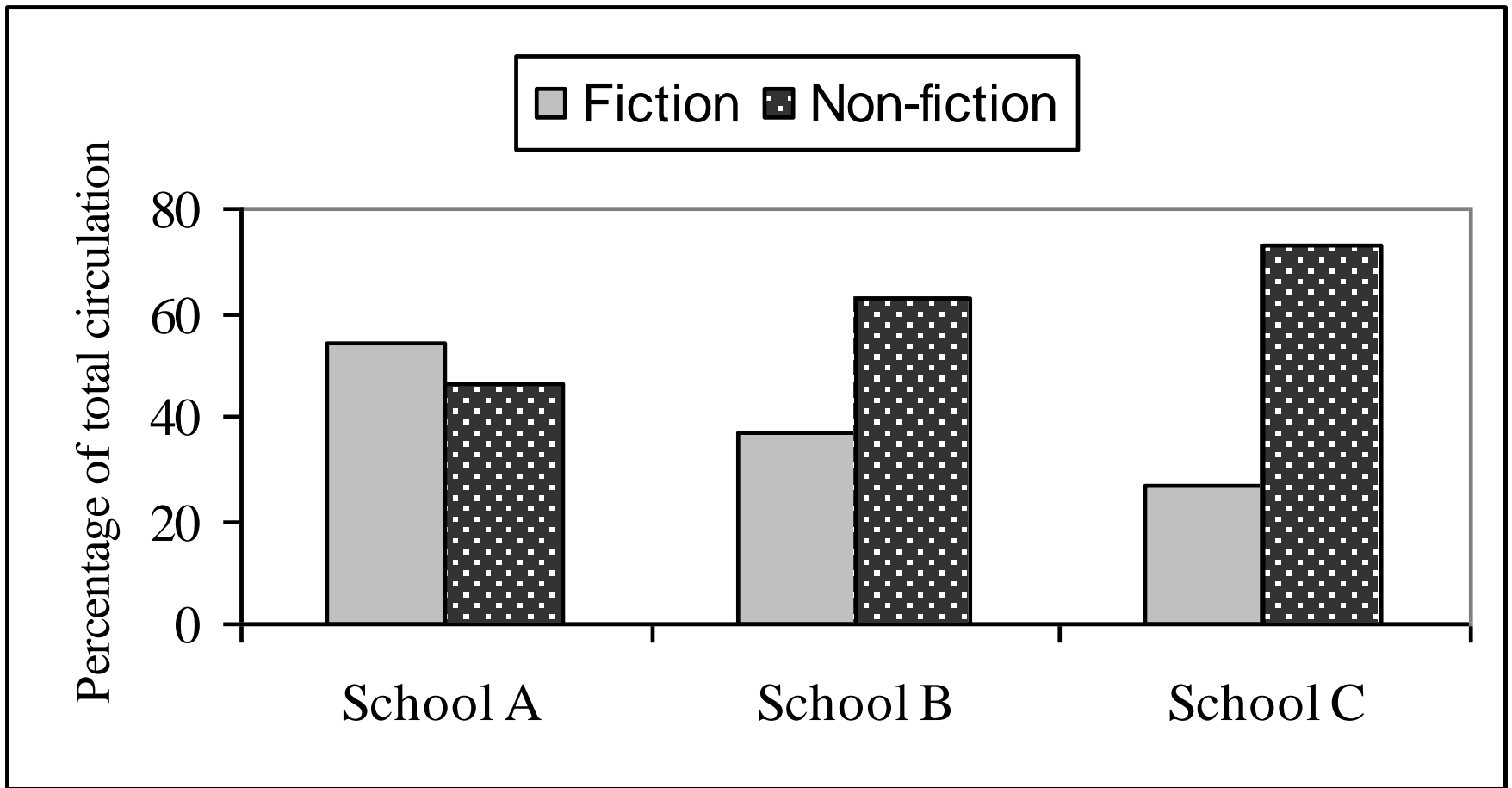


Average number of sources from self-reported survey data and from circulation data

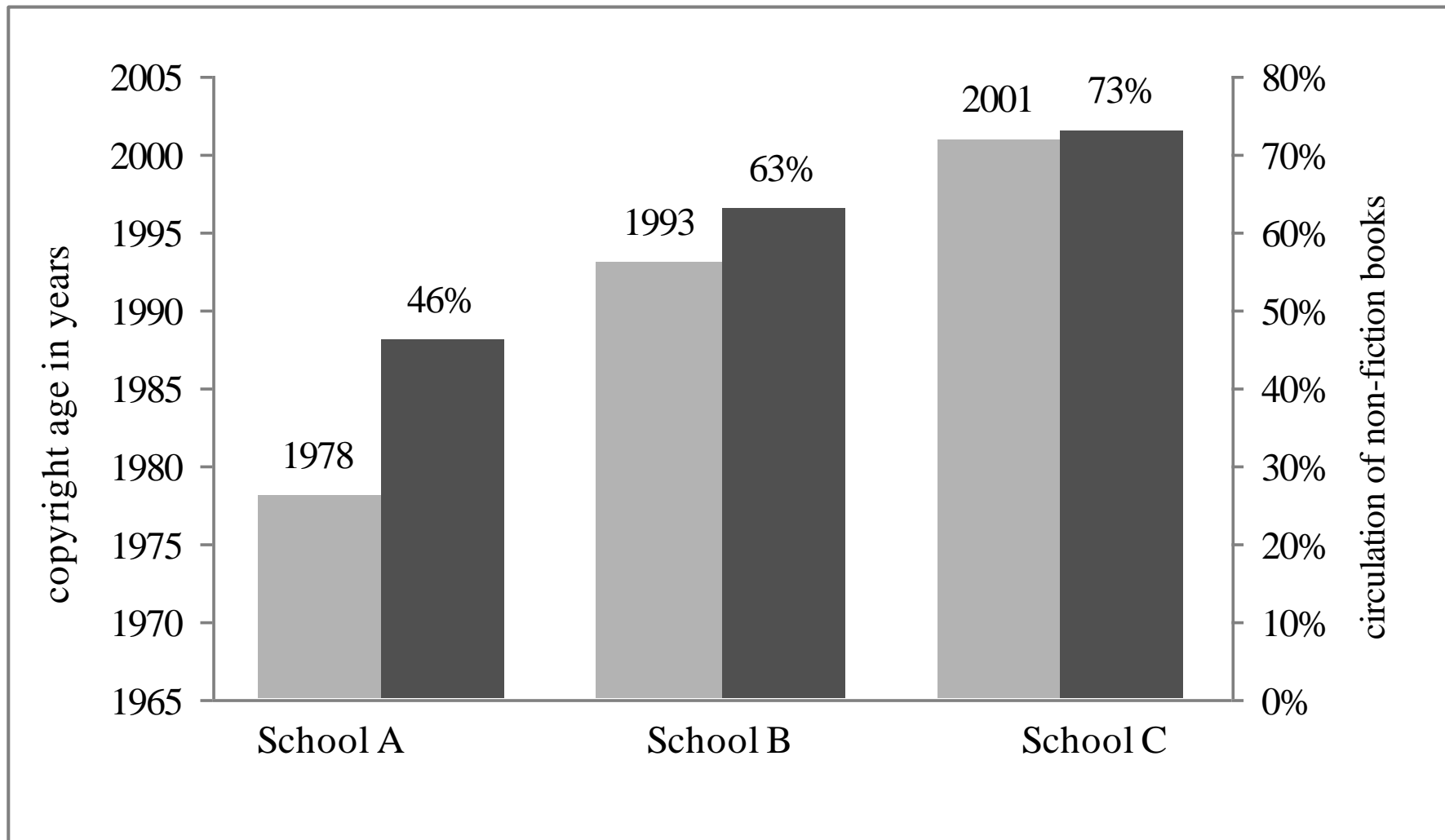


Percentage of print citations obtained from school collection compared to percentage of sources from outside the school

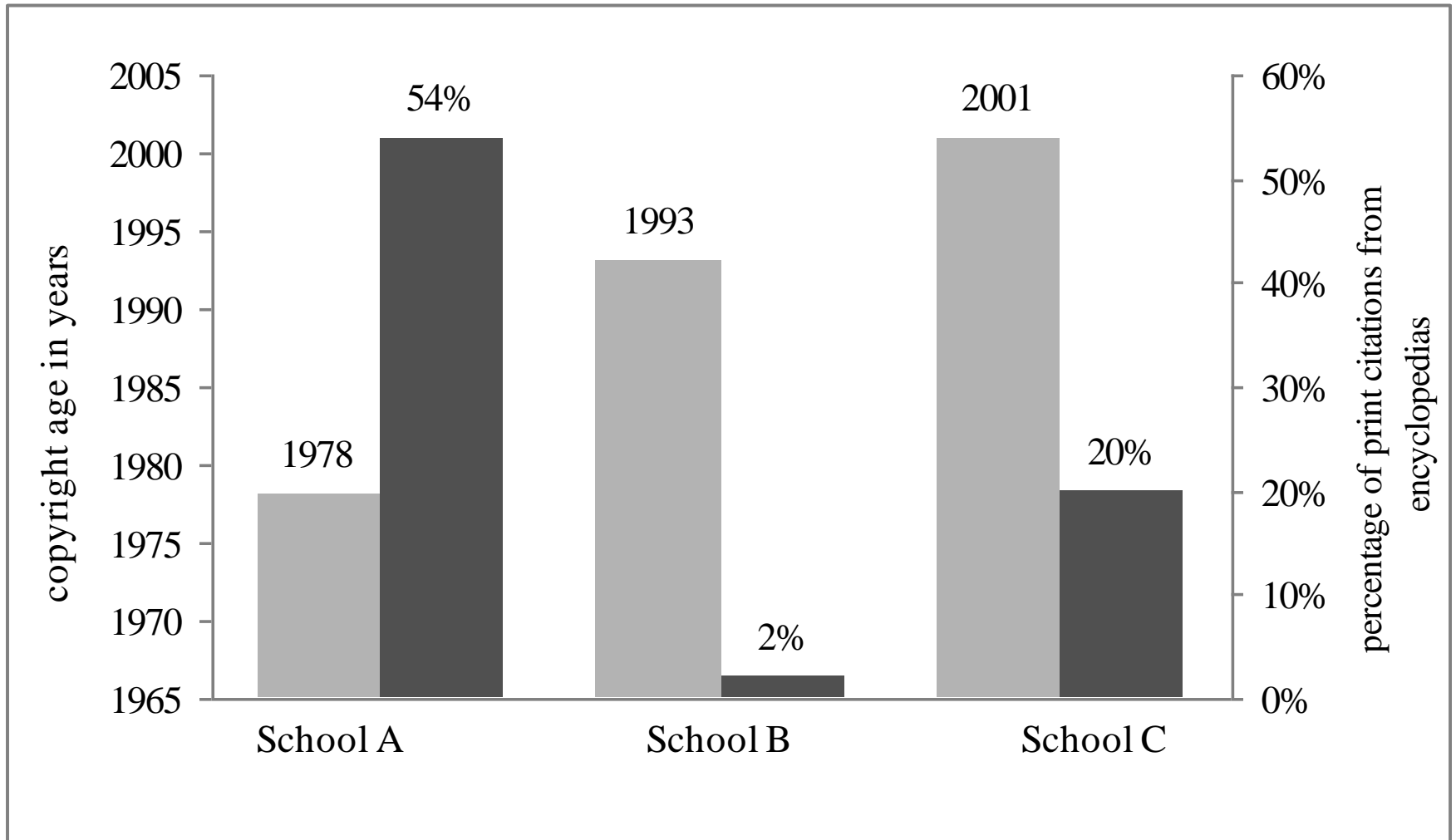
What Dewey subject sections are being used in print citations?



Comparison of circulation of fiction and non-fiction

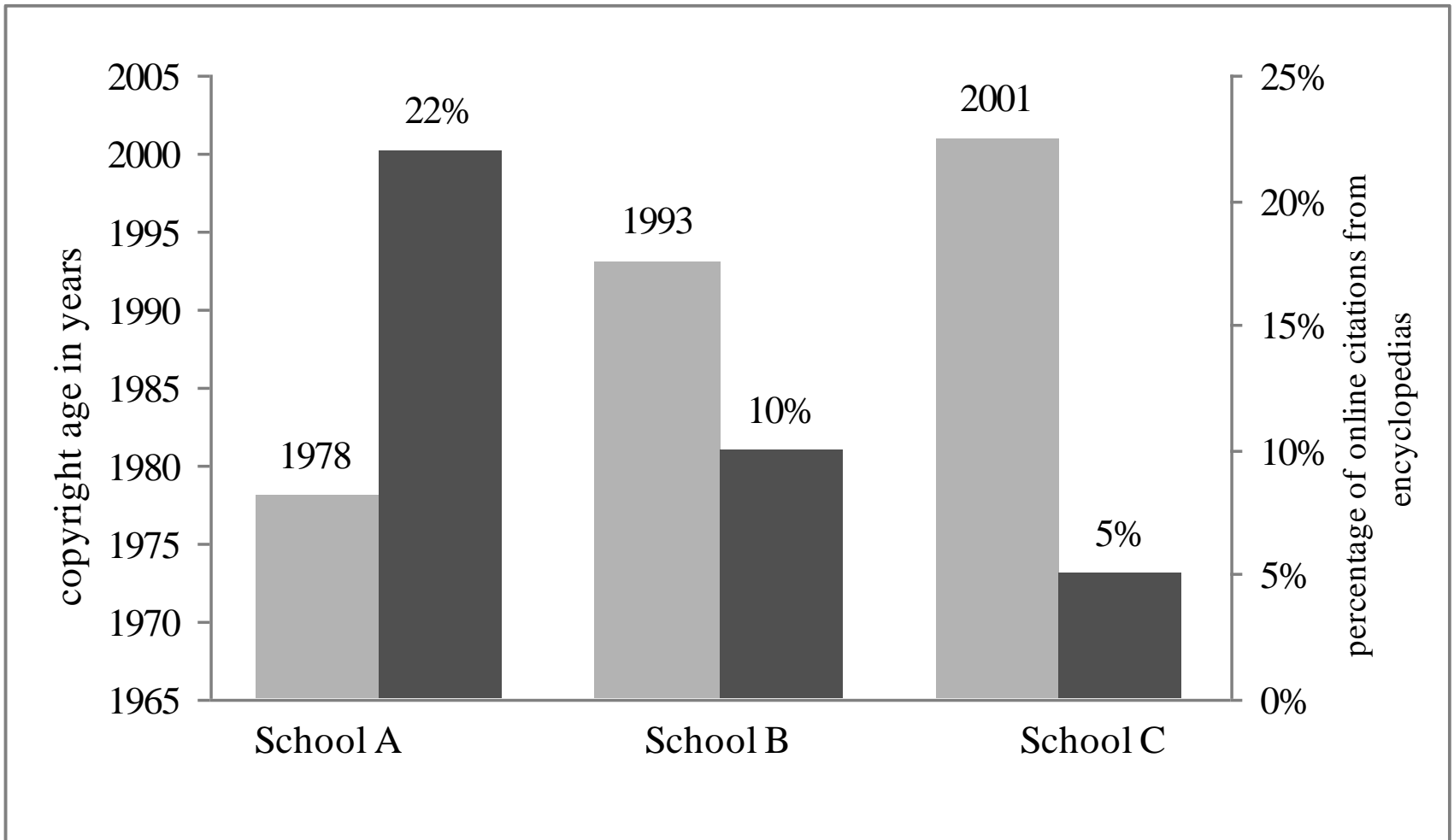


Percentage of total circulation of non-fiction books compared to the average copyright age of the collection



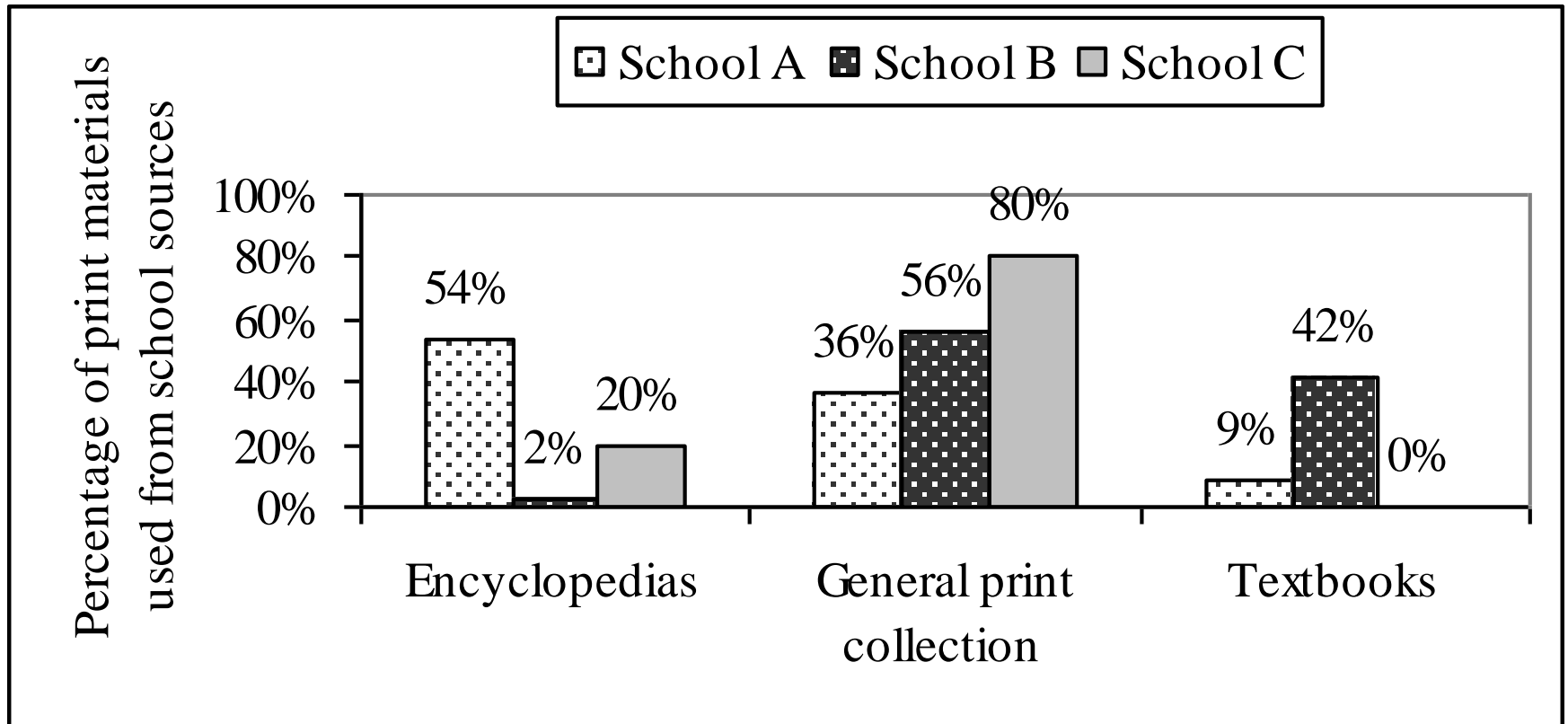
Percentage of print citations from encyclopedias compared to average copyright age of collection

What Dewey subject sections are being used in electronic citations?

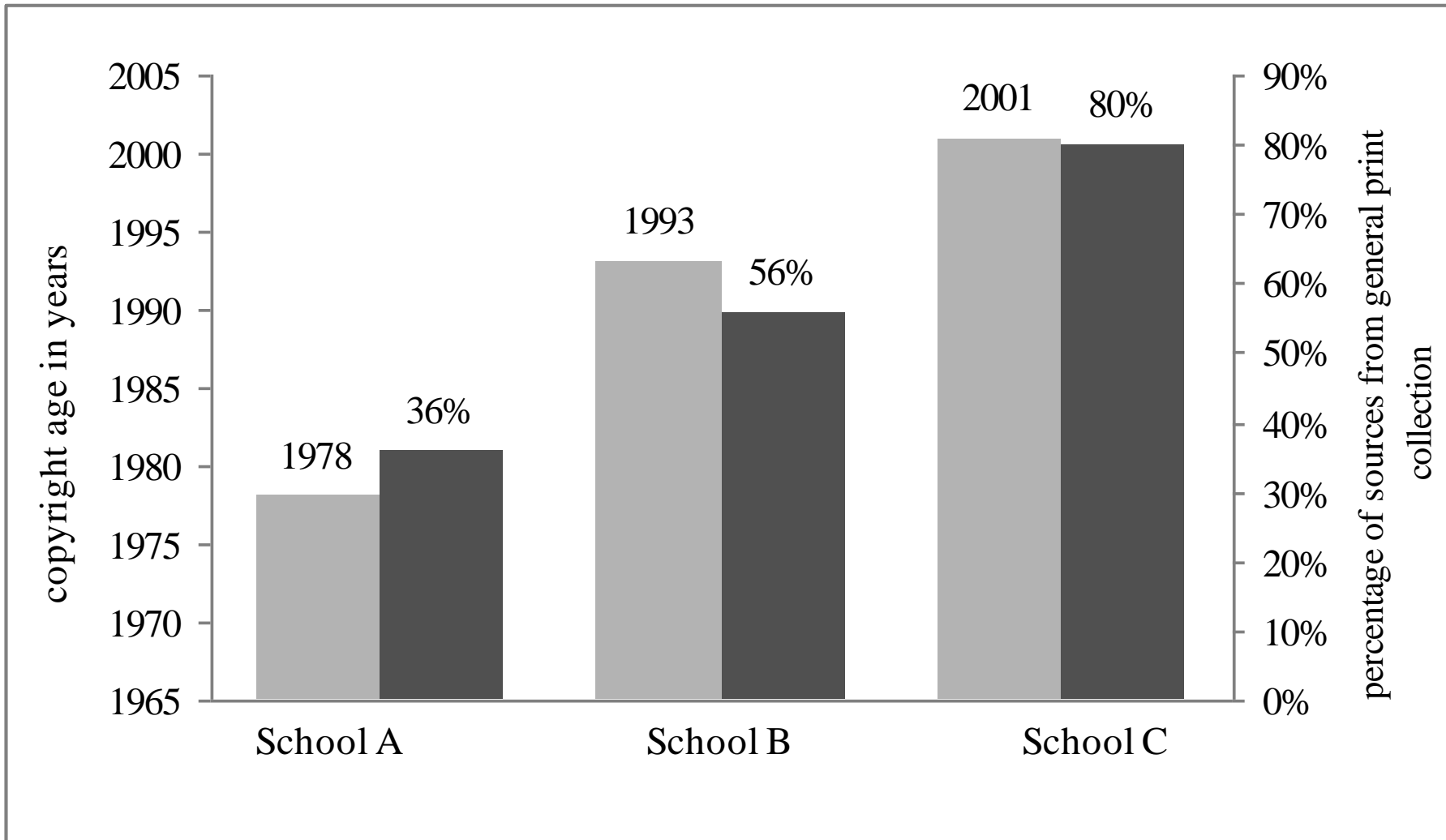


Percentage of online citations from encyclopedias compared to average copyright age of collection

What percentage of print citations is actually from the print collection of the school media center?



Types of print materials used from school sources



Percentage of print citations obtained from the general print collection compared to average age of collection

What are the perceptions
of teachers regarding the
usefulness and
importance of the print
collection?

- Valued print materials
- Knowledge of and familiarity with print materials important
- Unable to require print sources
- Obligation to provide access

Problems:

- Days media center closed for testing
- Small size of media centers
- Use of computers for word processing

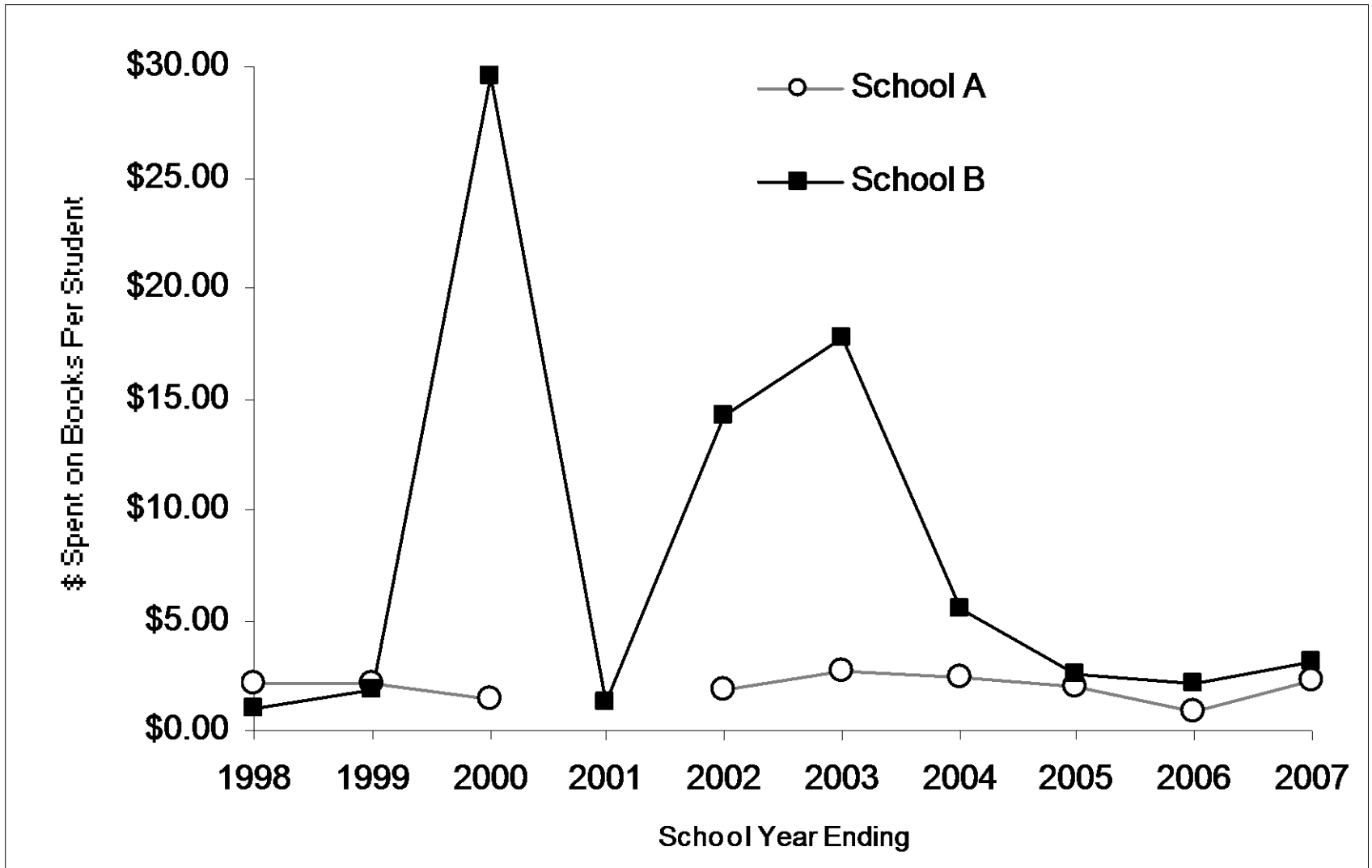
What are the perceptions
of students regarding the
usefulness and
importance of the print
collection?

- Books were important
- Preferred internet
- Extensive use of encyclopedias
- Books old, outdated,
uninteresting

Is there a connection
between the quality of the
collection and the use of
the collection?

Currency of material more
important than total number
of books per student

How much of the state budget allocation is actually spent in developing and maintaining the print collection of the media center?



Money spent on books per student for
of the last 10 years.

Is there a relationship
between the money spent
on books and the quality
of the collection?

Money influenced quality
of collection in terms of
maintaining currency of
the collection

Is there a relationship between teacher demographics and teacher attitudes and requirements of print or electronic source use in research projects and class assignments?

- Younger teachers valued electronic sources
- Subject taught had most influence on preference
- English teachers equally preferring print and electronic sources
- Science teachers preferred electronic sources

Findings

In order for teachers to require students to use books:

- Books must be current
- Must have sufficient books to support curriculum
- Books must be appropriate
- Must have access to media center resources

Unexpected Findings

- Extensive use of print and online encyclopedias by high school students
- Inappropriate use and citation of web pages

Recommendations for action

- Education of teachers and students
- Weeding of outdated books from collection

Recommendations for further study

- Citation study
- Media specialists
- Similar study in school districts with different socioeconomic status