

Dayna N. Durbin. The Effect of Pre-Service Training on Collaboration Between Classroom Teachers and Media Specialists. A Master's Paper for the M.S. in L.S degree. July, 2007. 51 pages. Advisor: Evelyn Daniel

An electronic survey of 40 elementary teachers of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools district in the Triangle area of North Carolina was conducted to determine the effects of pre-service training on how often teachers collaborate with school library media specialists. Teachers were asked if they had received training in the media center and collaborating with media specialists, and were also asked to report the number of times they had collaborated in the previous semester.

Although a statistical relationship between the amount of pre-service training in collaboration and frequency of collaboration was not established, the survey indicated that teachers who had received information about the media center in general were more likely to collaborate with media specialists. In order to increase instructional partnerships, it is recommended that schools of education increase information about the media center in their curriculum to better prepare pre-service teachers to collaborate with media specialists.

Headings:

School libraries--Evaluation

School libraries--Relations with teachers and curriculum

Teachers--Preparation

Surveys—Teachers

THE EFFECTS OF PRE-SERVICE TRAINING ON COLLABORATION BETWEEN  
CLASSROOM TEACHERS AND MEDIA SPECIALISTS

by  
Dayna N. Durbin

A Master's paper submitted to the faculty  
of the School of Information and Library Science  
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Science in  
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

July 2007

Approved by

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Evelyn Daniel

**Introduction:**

The role of a school library media specialist has changed dramatically in the past several decades. Once seen as simply overseers of the school library's collection of resources, media specialists are now trained to be instructional partners who collaborate with teachers to teach students more effectively. *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*, a set of standards for school library media programs developed by the American Association of School Librarians, states, "collaboration is essential as library media specialists work with teachers to plan, conduct, and evaluate learning activities that incorporate information literacy" (50). Research indicates that collaboration between school media specialists and teachers leads to higher student achievement (Lance, Rodney & Hamilton-Pennell, 2000, 2002). Considering the current push in education toward student testing and achievement, activities that increase achievement, like collaboration, become more and more important to implement.

Although all school media specialists are now trained to work together with teachers to provide instruction, their collaborative partners may not receive as much training in collaboration as they prepare to become teachers. Many new teachers begin their careers with little idea of the mission, goals, and purpose of the media center beyond checking out books, and therefore are unaware of the collaborative possibilities available.

Do teachers collaborate more often with their media specialists if they received this information during their pre-service training? Would schools of education teaching

their students about collaborating with media specialists lead to more collaboration taking place in practice? For the purposes of this study, the definition of collaboration given in *Information Power* is used. There, collaboration is defined as “work[ing] with teachers to plan, conduct, and evaluate learning activities that incorporate information literacy” (50). In other words, collaboration happens when a teacher and media specialist work together to plan, teach and assess an educational unit or lesson.

In order to examine the relationship between pre-service training in collaboration and how often collaboration happens in practice, elementary teachers in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro School District in North Carolina were surveyed about collaboration. The survey asked them about the training they received as they obtained their degree(s) in education, as well as their current collaboration activities. The results of the survey provided insight into the collaborative activities taking place between the teachers and media specialists in this school district.

The purpose of this study is to produce knowledge about how often collaboration occurs in practice between classroom teachers and media specialists. This knowledge will add to the literature by demonstrating whether the push for collaboration has been successful in this particular school district. In addition, this study has another, more widespread purpose. If teachers who are trained in collaboration are found to collaborate more, this study can provide an impetus for schools of education to include media center information, specifically training in collaboration, in their curriculum. The study will also provide support for schools of education that currently teach about collaboration with media specialists to keep that information in their curriculum.

This study will also be of interest and value to both individual K-12 teachers and media specialists. Teachers, in the researcher's experience, have been pleasantly surprised to learn about the many roles of the media center and ways in which the media specialist can help them, which they had never considered before. This study may help open teachers' eyes to the value of media specialists. Media specialists will also be interested because their jobs would become much easier if all teachers understood the collaborative instruction potential present in the media center. Media specialists spend a large amount of time marketing themselves and their services, and they would welcome new teachers who are already trained in collaboration and are willing to engage in it.

## Literature Review

Collaboration with teachers is strongly promoted in the professional literature as a vital part of the school library media specialist's job, alongside other library services such as reference and cataloging. *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*, a set of standards for school library media programs developed by the American Association of School Librarians, states "Collaboration is essential as library media specialists work with teachers to plan, conduct, and evaluate learning activities that incorporate information literacy" (p. 50). Although the media specialist's role as instructional partner is encouraged in the literature, instructional collaboration between teachers and media specialists does not always happen in reality. Many reasons are given for this lack of collaboration: an absence of support from administrators, confusion about the role of the media specialist, and lack of time are often cited. An important but often overlooked factor is the lack of training for pre-service teachers in how to collaborate with their media specialists. Few schools of education include information about the media center in their curriculum, and new teachers arrive at their first schools with little idea of the help the media specialist can offer in planning and giving instruction.

School media specialists have not always been expected to engage in collaboration with teachers. Until recent decades, media specialists were expected to serve as the information expert for the school and perform library services such as circulation and reference. Their instructional duties were limited to gathering resources

for teachers, performing read-alouds, and perhaps giving orientation sessions on how to use the library. This shifting view of the media specialist is described in "The Changing Instructional Role of the School Media Specialist, 1950-84" by Kathleen W. Craver (1986). In it, she reviews the professional literature to determine the ways in which a school librarian's role as a teacher has developed since 1950.

During the 1950's, many schools were still without centralized libraries - by 1953, only 37 percent of schools benefited from a library. The push to improve American education in the wake of Sputnik in 1957 led to an increase in centralized school libraries. Throughout the 1950's, librarians were mostly information professionals rather than instructional partners. By the late 1950's, however, the professional literature indicated a call for school librarians to work with teachers to plan curriculum and lessons, not just serve in the "traditional" librarian capacities. In practice, though, Craver felt that "librarians served primarily as providers of materials" (p.184). A study of the activities of school librarians in Oregon in the early 1960's found that only 22.9 percent participated in planning units of instruction with teachers (Craver, 1986).

By the late 1960's and early 1970's, there were large conceptual changes in the definition of a school librarian. In 1969, the American Association of School Librarians issued a new set of standards for school library programs, including standards such as "serving on teaching teams, working with teachers to design instructional experiences" and "working with teachers in curriculum planning" (American Association of School Librarians, 1969). By the 1980's, Craver reports that school librarians were encouraged to participate in instructional design within their schools, as well as teach students and teachers how to use emerging technology.

Craver concluded from her study of the literature that the school media specialist's role had changed substantially by the mid-1980's. Media specialists were now expected to participate actively in planning instruction with teachers, as well as regularly deliver instruction themselves. She notes, however, that actual practice has not always been quick to adapt to the changes in ideas. "An analysis of research studies, however, indicates a possible time lag between the practiced instructional role of the library media specialist and the one espoused in the literature," Craver explains. "In a profession that has undergone such a tremendous amount of change in such a short period of time, this gap is not surprising" (p. 190).

Several studies have supported Craver's claim that the actual time spent by media specialists in collaboration is not equal to the ideal promoted by the professional literature. A study completed by Esther Smith for the Texas State Library and Archives Commission in 2001 indicated that the majority of school media specialists surveyed spend a small amount of their time on collaborative instruction and a large amount on other tasks described as "basic library services". *The School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*, as cited by Smith, recommends that media specialists collaborate regularly with teachers on curriculum-related instruction; this reflects a similar statement in *Information Power*. Perhaps as a result of this recommendation, 80 percent of the media specialists surveyed in Texas did in fact plan lessons with teachers, and 67 to 75 percent reported teaching cooperatively with teachers at some point during the year. However, the total amount of time spent on these collaborative teaching activities was not very high. The study suggested that media specialists spent between 9.9 and 14.9 percent of their time per week planning and



implementing instruction with teachers, while in contrast spending between 43 and 46 percent on "basic library activities" such as shelving, circulation and processing.

In a review of the literature on collaboration between teachers and school media specialists from the Canadian perspective, Karen Lindsay (2006) makes a strong case for the value of collaboration. Like the researchers in the Texas State Library study, she notes that it is not implemented in practice nearly enough. "Whereas no educator could deny that this is a worthy goal, very few engage in the practice," she writes. "Why do so few teachers choose to collaborate with teacher-librarians? Why are principals not using their influence to ensure that teachers and teacher-librarians plan, teach and assess together? Who is responsible for the general lack of awareness of the benefits of the school library program in the education system?"

Lindsay's review of the literature attempts to answer these questions, beginning with the history of research on librarian-teacher collaboration. Early research completed before the 1980's pointed to increased student performance at schools with libraries and librarians, but did not identify the specific activities the librarian was performing to raise student scores. Since the early 1990's, Keith Curry Lance and other researchers have completed numerous research studies attempting to identify what a successful school librarian does and the effect of a good library media program on a school. These studies were completed in Colorado, Alaska, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and several other locations, and all pointed to a connection between the amount of money spent on the library and the students' test scores. The studies also indicated that when media specialists collaborated more with teachers, students at these schools scored higher on achievement tests.

Lindsay makes a case for the importance of information literacy skills, noting that students need to learn these skills in order to compete and be successful in our society. According to her review of the research, teacher-librarian collaboration is an essential factor in students becoming information literate. Given the importance of collaborating, she reviews possible answers to the question of why so few teachers collaborate with their media specialists. School culture is one factor, with a collegial and professional atmosphere leading to more collaboration, according to studies by Oberg and Rosenholtz. The school principal is a major factor, but unfortunately principals often don't understand the role and potential of the school library. Teacher overload is another reason collaboration may not take place (Lindsay, 2006).

Despite the lack of universal collaboration among media specialists and teachers, the value of collaboration is well documented. The Lance studies, reviewed by Karen Lindsay, were completed by Keith Curry Lance and colleagues in various locations across the United States. The studies indicate that students perform better at schools where media specialists engage in collaboration. For example, in a 2000 study of schools in Colorado, researchers found that students scored higher on the Colorado Student Assessment Program if their media specialist had collaborated with teachers (Lance, et al, 2000) . "A central finding of this study is the importance of a collaborative approach to information literacy. Test scores rise in both elementary and middle schools as library media specialists and teachers work together," (p. 78) according to the study. The more hours that media specialists spent planning cooperatively with teachers, identifying materials for teachers, teaching information literacy to students, and teaching information literacy skills to student, the higher their students scored on the assessment.

Another Lance (2002) study, completed in Iowa, indicated a similar connection between collaboration and student achievement. This study looked at the media programs and student achievement at 169 elementary schools, 162 middle schools, and 175 high schools across the state. Media programs at each school were surveyed about their activities, level of staffing, technology and use of services. Among other findings, the researchers saw that fourth grade reading scores were higher for students with media specialists who spent more hours "planning and teaching cooperatively with teachers" (p. 42). They concluded that "a successful LMS [library media specialist] is one who works with a classroom teacher to identify materials that best support and enrich an instructional unit, is a teacher of essential information literacy skills to students, and, indeed, is a provider of in-service training opportunities to classroom teachers" (p. 11).

The 2001 study by Smith for the Texas State Library and Archives Commission also examined the performance of students at each school on a statewide assessment and compared it with the services offered by the school libraries. They found a list of variables that seemed to raise scores when the media specialist engaged in them more often. One of those variables was collaborative instruction. In general, media specialists who spent more hours per week engaged in activities such as planning, teaching, and assessing units with teachers had students who scored higher on the assessments.

If the benefits of collaboration are so clear, why aren't all media specialists and teachers working together on a regular basis? Interpersonal factors may be an influence. In a 2000 article exploring collaboration between teachers and librarians, Shayne Russell identifies a variety of conditions that may increase collaboration in a school, or decrease collaboration if not met. Russell identifies social factors, such as teachers' and

administrators' perceptions of the media center and the social and leadership skills of the media specialist, as influential in the development of collaborative relationships. The attitudes of each participant and a willingness to engage in collaboration are strong factors in how often teachers and media specialists will work together (Coatney, 2005, Muronago & Harada, 1999). Ruth Small (2001) states, "to be motivated to collaborate, all participants must first see some personal value in collaboration and believe that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful collaborative partners" (para. 1).

Another issue identified in the literature about collaboration is the need for time. Bishop and Larimer (1999) state, "when asked why teacher-librarians and classroom teachers do not collaborate more, the most common response is the lack of time" (p. 19). The type of schedule the school employs affects how much time is available for colleagues to plan and teach together. School media centers typically are assigned one of two scheduling methods: fixed, in which classes come to the media center each week at the same fixed time, or flexible, in which teachers and students use the media center as their information needs arise and schedule time with the media specialist accordingly. Haycock (1998) found that media specialists in schools with flexible or a combination of fixed and flexible engaged in more collaboration than those operating under a fixed schedule. He states, "typically, the teacher-librarians on a fixed schedule spend up to five minutes planning with a teacher whereas a teacher-librarian on a flexible schedule spends more than 30 minutes" (p. 28). Without time to meet and plan with colleagues, collaboration cannot easily occur.

A final reason may be a lack of understanding about the various roles of the media specialist. The four roles of media specialists identified in *Information Power* are

teacher, instructional partner, information specialist and program administrator.

Collaborative relationships are part of each of these roles (p. 4). Many members of the school community, including teachers, administrators and even media specialists themselves, may be unclear about these roles (Hartzell, 1997; Dupree, 1996). If teachers don't view media specialists as fellow teachers and instructional partners, it's not surprising that they don't engage in collaboration with them.

One study that explored these role perceptions was a 1997 study of elementary school teachers, principals and media specialists by Linda DeGroff. DeGroff surveyed literacy professionals in K-12 public schools from across the United States to discover perceptions of the role of the media specialist and how that affects the activities of the media specialist. DeGroff chose a sample of 150 elementary schools from a national database of public schools and mailed four surveys to the media specialist at each school, asking them to distribute the surveys to one school administrator, one lower-grade teacher, one upper-grade teacher and to take one survey themselves. Surveys were collected from 57 schools and included answers from 148 individuals.

In the results of her survey, DeGroff compared the responses about the roles of the media specialist, both in theory and in practice, in three areas: information specialist, library-media teacher, and instructional consultant or collaborator. She found that all three groups (teachers, principals, and media specialists) rated the importance of the instructional consultant role lower than they rated the other two roles. In particular, she writes, "Teachers valued the role of instructional consultant less than the other respondents did. They most valued the librarian's help in selecting books for unit experiences; but placed less value on the librarian's help in planning, implementing and

assessing experiences” (p. 20). The results also indicated that the media specialist acts in this collaborative role less often in practice than he or she does in the information specialist or library teacher roles.

DeGroff feels that these results point to a need for more collaborative relationships to develop between teachers and media specialists. She mentions the call for collaboration in *Information Power*, and asserts that these collaborative relationships can strengthen literacy education.

Another study examined the perceptions of new teachers in regard to the role of media specialists. Katherine Miller interviewed five novice teachers from a school district in Western Canada about their opinions of the media specialist's responsibilities and about their pre-service training. The results of the interviews showed that few teachers receive any pre-service instruction on how to work with media specialists and use the school library. All five of the teachers responded that they never learned anything about media centers as they trained to become teachers. All five interviewees also mentioned that their media specialists could help them by finding and suggesting resources, but none said that the media specialist could help with instruction. The new teachers felt that the role of the media specialist was to find items for patrons and to teach students research skills independent of classroom lessons.

Miller suggests that this study be used to support training for pre-service teachers in how to use the media center and why they should collaborate with media specialists. Some of her suggestions include developing relationships between practicing media specialists and faculty members at schools of education, and mentoring pre-service and new teachers. Media specialists have the responsibility, she says, to advocate for their

skills and for the media center as a place of teaching and learning, not just a book repository.

Miller asserts in her study that teachers are not adequately prepared to use the media center and collaborate with media specialists. Several other researchers have made the same claim about school administrators. Their studies have examined the lack of information about the media center in principal-preparation programs. For example, a 1996 survey of 250 graduate level principal-preparation programs across the U.S. investigated if and how much future principals were taught about school libraries and media specialists. All of the schools surveyed were accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. The survey asked if instruction about the media center was included in their curriculum for students preparing to be school administrators; 82 percent said it was not (Wilson and MacNeil, 1998, 114-15).

In addition, the researchers interviewed 14 professors who teach in principal preparation programs about whether they integrate the library media center into their courses. Six of the professors said that they do include information such as facility planning, budgeting in the media center, and the role of the school media specialist in at least one of the courses they teach. One professor includes library information in all of her courses because she used to work as a media specialist. Eight professors initially indicated that they did include library information in their courses, but further questioning revealed that they meant they assigned their graduate students library research at the university library in order to complete assignments (Wilson and MacNeil, 1998). The reason most often cited for not including media center information is a lack of time to cover all topics necessary. Researchers felt that this lack of information was

troubling, because these future principals will ultimately be media center supervisors and need to understand and facilitate the many roles and values of the media center.

Another study cited by Wilson and MacNeil indicated that more preparation is needed for future principals to fully understand the media center. In this study, 572 school media specialists and 423 administrators were surveyed about principals and principal-preparation programs. Ninety percent of the media specialists and 68 percent of the principals responded that principals do not know enough about the media center. The same 90 percent of media specialists believed that future principals should learn more about school libraries during their training, and 78 percent of principals agreed (Wilson and MacNeil, 1998). The results of this survey demonstrate a lack of training for principals in how to supervise the media center to its full potential.

Although studies have been done on the lack of principal training in regard to the media center and collaboration, very few studies have looked at that dimension of teacher training. Researchers indicate that this is an important factor in why teachers do or do not collaborate, but little formal research has been done on the topic. The professional literature contains many articles espousing the value of training teachers in collaboration, but few statistics exist on if or how often this takes place. Several studies have concluded that school media specialists are adequately trained in collaboration during their graduate studies, but little research has been completed about the collaboration training of teachers (Whedbee, 2002; Harada, 1996).

In her review of the literature on teacher-media specialist collaboration, Karen Lindsay (2005) cites teacher training as an important factor in collaboration. She summarizes the research on the stress that new teachers undergo, and notes that one third



of new teachers leave the field in the first three years. She recommends that media specialists reach out to student teachers and new teachers by holding information literacy and collaboration orientations. By actively promoting collaboration, she believes that media specialists can relieve some of the stress felt by new teachers. She also recommends that training in collaboration should also be offered by schools of education. "Universities with teacher-librarian programs must advocate for the inclusion of teacher-librarians in the instructional team of faculties of education so that prospective teachers learn about collaborative practice and know what to expect of a teacher-librarian both during their practicum and in their teaching careers," she recommends. "Such training would create an expectation of a collaborative school culture as well as placing positive pressure on the school library program."

Reviewing the existing literature on teacher-media specialist collaboration reveals a gap in our knowledge about teacher training. How many education programs on the college and university level include training in how to use the media center, specifically how to collaborate with the media specialist? If teachers receive this training before they begin working in schools, do they collaborate more often? Further research is necessary to answer these questions and to recommend that schools of education include media center training in their curriculum.

**Methodology:**

To complete this research study, surveys with teachers were conducted to determine their pre-service training in collaboration and how much they collaborated in practice. Surveys are the most appropriate method for this study for several reasons. First, surveys permit the greatest number of teachers to be contacted, which allows a larger sample and more accurate data. Second, they are faster to administer than interviews. Time is an important consideration when conducting research with teachers, who have extremely busy schedules. Because an interview can take up to an hour or longer, interviews would not be a realistic choice for this research study with teachers.

The sample for the study was the elementary teachers of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) district in the Triangle area of North Carolina. The sample was limited to classroom teachers, excluding enrichment and support teachers such as music, art, physical education, literacy, and ESL teachers. Although collaboration with all teachers in the school is valuable and is encouraged for media specialists, the study was limited to classroom teachers for several reasons. Collaboration happens most often and on a regular basis with classroom teachers, so surveying enrichment teachers would not result in especially useful data. Also, limiting the sample to classroom teachers would make the data more meaningful for schools of education. The results of this research would more clearly demonstrate a need for training classroom teachers in media center collaboration if the study focused on classroom teachers only.

The sampling technique was first to identify a sampling frame, in this case the district's list of classroom teachers working in their nine elementary schools for grades kindergarten through fifth grade. The CHCCS district, which serves about 10,000 students, was chosen because all of its schools have media centers with certified media specialists who have obtained master's degrees in library science. Contact information for the teachers in the sampling frame was gathered through the schools' websites. Six of the emails were returned as undeliverable, and one school declined to provide email addresses for their teachers, leaving the actual sample to be 185 teachers from eight elementary schools.

The data collection instrument was an electronic survey asking teachers about their education background as well as their collaboration habits. A copy of this survey is included as Appendix A. The survey included both closed questions, in which the respondents chose their answers from a Likert-type scale provided for them, and open questions, in which teachers wrote in their answers to a question. Closed questions were used to collect the majority of the data because they would provide the best responses for statistical analysis. The survey was structured to be as brief as possible and take no more than 5-10 minutes, while still gathering the needed information. If the survey appeared to be long and time-consuming, busy teachers would not bother to complete it because it would take time away from other, more pressing activities.

The first draft of the survey was used to conduct a pre-test with a small sample of respondents. The pre-test was intended to catch any errors in questions, responses, or format that the researcher may have missed. A small sample of three teachers or former teachers, who do not currently teach in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, took the

survey. The participants in the sample were able to provide a teacher's perspective on the survey, and the questions were modified in response to their suggestions.

After the pre-test was conducted and the survey edited as needed, the revised survey was approved by the University of North Carolina's Institutional Review Board. Following this approval, the CHCCS district reviewed and approved the study, allowing the researcher to survey its teachers. The survey was then distributed electronically to teachers via email, because the researcher felt a better return rate would be achieved than if the surveys were in print. It is far less strenuous for respondents to take a survey online than to fill out and mail a print survey, as well as less expensive and time-consuming. The initial recruitment email contained a statement of consent as well as a link to the online survey (see Appendix B).

After a period of one week, a follow-up mailing via email was sent to participants, and is included as Appendix C. This email reminded them of the survey and research study, and again asked for their help in the study as well as provided the statement of consent. It included a link to the electronic survey to make it as easy as possible for participants to respond. It was expected that this follow-up email would increase the response rate. Researcher Earl Babbie explains that "the methodological literature strongly suggests that follow-up mailings provide an effective method for increasing return rates in mail surveys" (2001, p. 260). This same principle applies to electronic surveys. Teachers receive a large amount of email, and the first email may have been deleted, disregarded, or forgotten. The follow-up gave teachers another chance to respond if they had chosen not to after the initial recruitment email.

The survey was created to be as non-strenuous for participants as possible, while still gathering relevant data. Including time to read directions and questions and formulate responses, the estimated time to complete the survey was no longer than 10 minutes. In fact, the majority of respondents completed it in five minutes or less. The survey was administered using Qualtrics survey software available through the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina. Data from the survey was password protected, and no identifying information was collected from respondents.

The survey is a questionnaire with eight questions covering the topics of collaboration and pre-service training, as well as obtaining demographic information. Question 1 asked teachers to identify how many times in the last semester they have participated in collaborative activities with their school's media specialist. Examples of collaboration were provided for respondents: planning a lesson or unit together, teaching a lesson together, and engaging in collaborative assessment were all examples given in this question as a way of defining what was meant by "collaboration". It was important to differentiate between in-depth collaboration of the type that is promoted in *Information Power* and other professional literature, and more casual cooperative activities. For example, a teacher asking the media specialist to find resources for a project, although possibly part of a collaborative unit, is not true collaboration on its own.

Questions 2 and 3 sought to find out how often the media specialist approaches the respondent with collaborative opportunities, and how often the teacher approaches the media specialist to collaborate. This question was asked to determine how active the

culture of collaboration is at the respondents' schools, and to determine if the media specialists those schools are actively promoting collaboration.

Question 4 asked if teachers received information about the media center during their pre-service training, and question 5 asked if teachers received information about collaboration with the media specialist in particular. This question determines the most important independent variable in this study: the level of training a teacher received during pre-service training in collaborating with media specialists. By analyzing these responses in relation to the dependent variable of how often the teacher collaborates, the researcher hoped to examine the relationship between pre-service training and collaboration in practice.

Questions 6, 7 and 8 collected demographic information about respondents. The survey asked them to provide the highest level of education attained, the number of years they have taught in the classroom, and the grade level they currently teach. These questions were included in the survey to determine any trends in collaboration. For instance, certain grade levels may be more apt to collaborate with media specialists due to their curriculum. The researcher also wanted to determine if newer teachers who had recently received their degrees would be more likely to collaborate than those who had received their education degrees several years ago and had a long teaching career.

There were no evident ethical issues presented while conducting the research. The topic is not an especially sensitive one, and all respondents' answers were anonymous to protect their identities and ensure they felt comfortable answering each question honestly. The survey software that collected responses did not collect any identifying information, such as name or email address, so no respondent could be identified by his or her

answers. Participants could, of course, opt out of the survey if they felt uncomfortable answering for any reason and could skip any question they preferred not to answer. There was no financial compensation for participating in the study, and no cost to participants other than the time required to complete the survey. Because the survey was self-administered and online, participants could choose the location to complete the survey, thereby controlling the level of privacy.

Once the data was gathered, it was analyzed using the Qualtrics and SPSS software. Responses were calculated for each question, and the researcher noted any obvious trends or interesting patterns. All data remained password protected and available only to the researcher throughout the process of analysis.

One limitation of the research method used is that it requires self-reporting via self-administered surveys to study teacher behavior. Teachers may have under- or over-reported the instances of collaboration with their media specialist for a variety of reasons. One reason may be the participants' ideas about the researcher's expectations. Teachers may have felt that because the researcher is a library science graduate student, it was expected that they collaborate with school media specialists. They may have felt uncomfortable answering that they never engage in collaboration. In addition, teachers may not have been able to remember exactly how many times they've collaborated during the previous semester and may have provided a rough estimate. Similarly, if the schools' media specialists were to be surveyed, the numbers may not be completely accurate for these or other reasons. When using the self-administered survey method, validity is lowered because the answers are self-reported and there is no way to fully ensure that they accurately represent reality.

Another limitation of survey research in general is that it may not offer the same depth of response that an interview would. In interview research, respondents have much more time to expand on their responses and clarify their answers, simply because they're able to answer at length and in person. By sacrificing this depth of responses, the data becomes easier to analyze but questions and responses are less flexible. Respondents may feel that none of the choices offered represents their answer, or may have difficulty expressing their thoughts in a close-ended answer. Deeper and more complex answers, such as those gathered in an interview, are lost when using close-ended survey questions. However, due to the advantages of using survey questionnaires, such as a larger sample size, the ability of respondents to remain anonymous, and the speed of administering surveys, survey research was the best method to use to conduct this study.



## **Results**

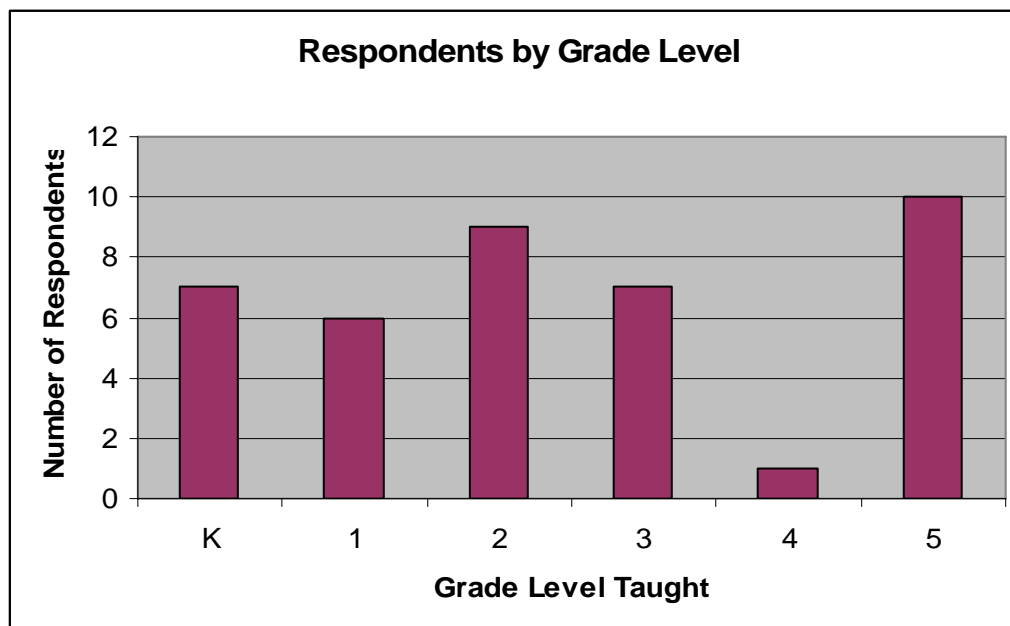
One hundred ninety one surveys were emailed to teachers, and six were returned as undeliverable, leaving a sample size of 185. Forty-one participants completed the survey; one participant failed to complete several of the survey questions and therefore was not included in the analysis. This left 40 surveys in the final analysis, so the response rate for the survey was 21.6%. There may be several reasons for this low response rate, and the most likely explanation is lack of time to respond. Teachers are busy professionals who receive many emails each day; responding to a stranger's request for a survey was undoubtedly less urgent than responding to emails from colleagues and parents. In addition, some respondents may have not desired to respond due to a lack of interest in the topic. Finally, some respondents may have intended to complete the survey at a later time, but did not revisit the email request and take the survey.

### *Demographics of Respondents*

Surveys were returned from teachers at every elementary grade level from kindergarten to fifth grade. Seven kindergarten teachers, six first grade teachers, nine second grade teachers, seven third grade teachers, one fourth grade teacher, and ten fifth grade teachers were included in the analysis. Surveys were distributed to the same number of teachers at each grade level, or approximately 32 teachers at each grade. The low response rate for fourth grade teachers is surprising; one possible explanation is that

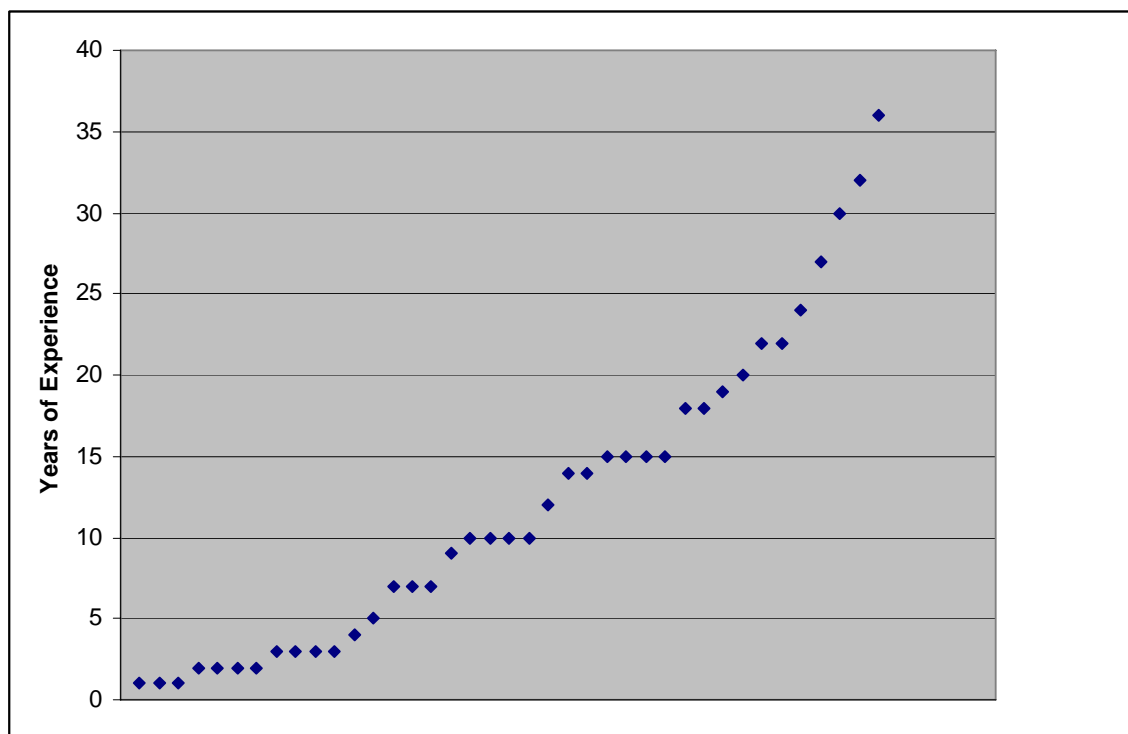
the time frame of the survey may have been an especially busy time for teachers at this grade level.

**Figure 1 – Respondents by Grade Level**

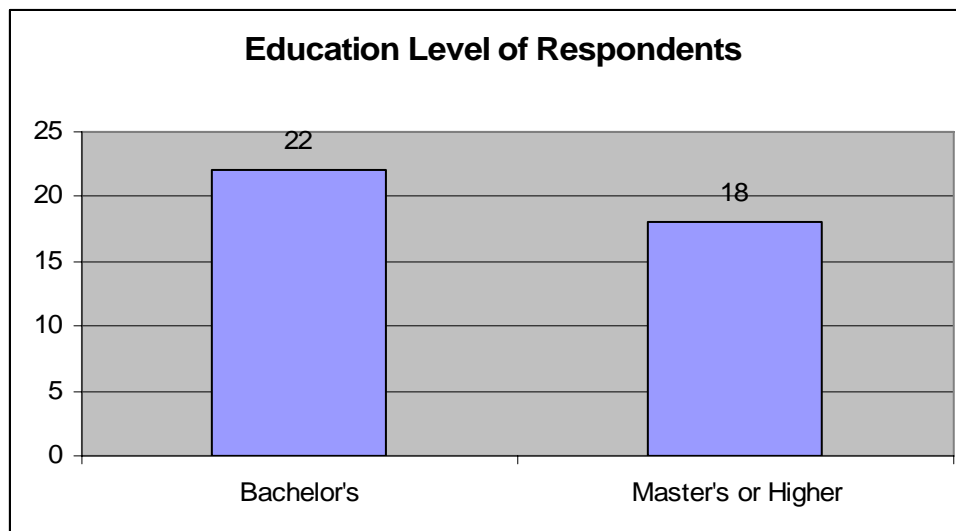


The experience level of respondents varied. Slightly over half, or 21 of the 40 respondents, had been teaching for ten or fewer years, and 13 of those had taught for less than five years. Eleven respondents had been in the classroom for 11 to 20 years, and 5 had been teaching for 21 to 30 years. One respondent had 32 years of experience, and one had 36 years. The mean number of years of experience was 12.05; the median number of years of experience was 10; and the mode was 2 years. The responses are illustrated by the scatter chart in Figure 2.

**Figure 2 – Years of Teaching Experience of Respondents**



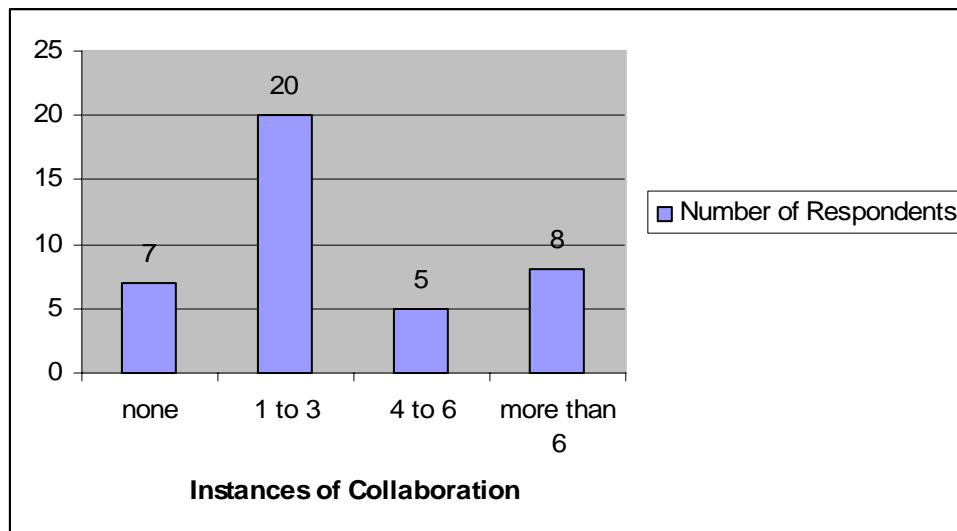
Respondents were asked to provide the highest level of education they had attained. Twenty-two, or 55% of respondents, had earned a bachelor's degree. Eighteen respondents, or 45%, had earned a master's degree or higher.

**Figure 3 – Education Level of Respondents**

### *Collaboration*

Respondents were asked in Question 1 to provide the number of times they had collaborated (defined here as “planned a lesson or unit together, taught a lesson together, engaged in collaborative assessment or other in-depth collaboration”) with their school’s media specialist in the past semester. A typical semester for this school district lasts 15 weeks. Seven respondents had not engaged in any collaboration with their media specialist during this time period. Half of the respondents answered that they had collaborated a moderate one to three times; based on observation of teacher-media specialist collaboration in schools and the literature on collaboration, this result was expected. Five respondents answered that they had collaborated four to six times, or approximately once every three weeks. Eight respondents reported collaborating seven or more times during the semester.

**Figure 4 – Responses to Question “How many times in the previous semester have you collaborated with your school’s media specialist?”**



Questions two and three asked teachers how often the media specialist approaches them to collaborate, and how often they approach the media specialist to collaborate. When asked if the media specialist comes to them with opportunities to collaborate, participants were divided; 27 answered yes, while 13 responded negatively. When asked whether they approach the media specialist to collaborate, a clear majority (32 respondents, or 80 percent) answered yes. Among the group of teachers surveyed, the teachers seem to be more often the initiators of instructional partnerships.

### *Pre-Service Training*

Teachers were asked about their pre-service teacher training programs at the college or university they attended. Question four asked, "Was information about the school library media center introduced or discussed during your education classes at your college or university?" Fifty-six percent of teachers responded that they had received some information about the media center during their pre-service training, while 44

percent had not. These responses reveal a divide in the preparation of teachers. If a majority of respondents completed a teacher training program in which the library media center was never mention, are they adequately prepared to use the media center and collaborate with the media specialist?

Responses about pre-service training in collaboration with the media specialist were also varied. Thirteen teachers responded that this topic had never been mentioned or discussed during the education courses they took at college or university. Fourteen responded that collaboration with the media specialist had been discussed "a few times", while seven answered that it had been discussed "several times". Only three teachers had taken courses in which collaboration was discussed often. The responses here clearly indicate a lack in teacher training. Only 10 of the 40 participants had taken courses in which collaboration was mentioned regularly. Altogether, 67.5% of respondents had only heard about collaborating with media specialists "a few times" or had not learned about it at all during their pre-service training. These few or non-existent mentions of collaboration are not enough to prepare teachers to view media specialists as instructional partners.

#### *Level of Education and Pre-Service Training*

Do teachers who have earned a master's degree learn more about collaboration than teachers who have earned a bachelor's degree? The results of this survey indicate that they do, somewhat, although a statistically significant correlation was not able to be determined. Two respondents did not answer the question regarding degree and were not

included in this analysis. Ten percent of those with a bachelor's degree had never or only once received information about collaborating during their education courses, and only four had received this information "several times" or "often". Teachers who had earned master's degrees were less likely to have received little or no information about collaboration: only four had experienced this lack of training. Among teachers with master's degrees, 77% had received information about collaborating at least "a few times" during their education, and 27.7% had received this information "several times".

**Figure 5 - Responses to Question "How many times was collaboration with the school media specialist introduced or discussed during your education classes at your college or university?" Crosstabulated By Degree**

	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree or Higher
Never	9	4
Once	1	0
A few times	6	8
Several times	2	5
Often	2	1
Totals	20	18

Interestingly, there was no relationship between the level of degree earned and the number of times the library media program *in general* was mentioned during pre-service training. Approximately half of all respondents, both those with bachelor's and those with

master's, had received information about the media center during their education courses. Respondents with bachelor's degrees were slightly less likely to have received information about the media center in their education courses; ten of the respondents who had not gotten this information had bachelor's degrees, while seven had master's degrees. However, this relationship is not statistically significant. Whether teachers earned a bachelor's or went on to earn advanced degrees, they seemed to receive about the same level of information about the media center during their education.

#### *Pre-Service Training and Collaboration*

Statistical analysis was performed on the survey data to determine if there was any relationship between the amount of pre-service training a teacher receives in collaboration with the media specialist and the number of times he or she collaborates in practice. There is a very slight negative relationship between the two variables - in other words, it would appear that as the instances of times collaboration was mentioned in education courses goes up, the instance of times the teacher collaborates goes down. However, this relationship is not statistically significant with a p value of less than .05 or .01. Therefore, the relationship between the two variables cannot be stated as being statistically significant and a correlation between the variables can't be drawn based on this data. Figure 6 below illustrates the crosstabulation of the responses to these two survey questions.



**Figure 6 – Crosstabulation of Instances of Collaboration with Number of Times Collaboration With Media Specialist was Mentioned in Education Courses**

	How many times was collaboration with the school media specialist introduced or discussed during your education classes at your college or university?					Total
	never	once	3	4	5	
How many times in the last semester have you collaborated with your school's media specialist?						
0	0	0	4	2	0	6
1	5	0	3	1	0	9
2	2	1	2	0	0	5
3	1	0	1	3	0	5
4	1	0	0	0	1	2
5	0	0	1	0	0	1
6	1	0	0	0	1	2
more than 6	3	0	3	1	0	7
<b>Total</b>	13	1	14	7	2	37

A relationship between the level of degree attained and the amount of collaboration a teacher engages in was also not demonstrated. After performing the Pearson's R statistical analysis, a positive relationship of .241 was determined; however, again due to a p value of more than .05, this relationship cannot be stated as statistically significant.

There does, however, seem to be a positive relationship between the amount of collaboration a teacher currently engages in and whether he or she received information about the media center *in general* during pre-service training. After performing a t-test using the data from these two variables and determining a t value of 9.56 and a p value of less than .01, a correlation between the variables is indicated. However, due to the non-random sampling method and low number of respondents, this correlation is descriptive rather than authoritative or generalizable. The figure below illustrates the responses to these two questions. There are some interesting patterns that can be seen from this data. Nine respondents, or 21.9%, had received information about the media center in education courses but did not collaborate or collaborated only once. On the other hand, five respondents, or 12.5%, had received no information at all about the media center, yet in practice they achieved a high level of collaboration at 6 or more instances of collaboration. It can be assumed that other factors, such as time or interpersonal reasons, also contributed to the amount of collaboration in which these teachers engaged.

**Figure 7 – Crosstabulation of Instances of Collaboration and Whether Information About the Media Center was Taught in Pre-Service Education Courses**

		Was information about the school library media center introduced or discussed during your education classes at your college or university?		
		Yes	No	Total
How many times in the	0	5	2	7
last semester have you	1	4	5	9
collaborated with your	2	2	3	5
school's media	3	4	1	5
specialist?	4	1	1	2
	5	1	0	1
	6	1	1	2
	more than 6	3	4	7
Total		21	17	38

## **Discussion**

### *Limitations of study*

Due to the small sample size and selection of sample, the results of this study are largely descriptive. The sampling method used was a non-random, purposive selection; participants were pre-selected because they were teachers at public elementary schools with certified school library media specialists. The response rate for the survey was 21.6%. For most social sciences research, a response rate of around 50% to 60% is encouraged (Babbie, 2002; Punch, 2003). “Response rates in the 30-40% range or less are not uncommon,” according to researcher Keith F. Punch. However, “a low response rate raises the additional question of whether the responses received are representative of the sample chosen or are in some way biased” (p. 42). Because of the sampling method and because of the relatively low number of participants, the results are not generalizable. They describe the collaboration present in a school district in the Triangle area of North Carolina during one semester in the 2006-2007 school year.

Another limitation of this study is that certain effects, such as hypothesis guessing or researcher expectations, may have been in place. These effects can be a threat to the construct validity of a study. For instance, in this study, participants may have noted that the researcher was a library science student and concluded that the study was intended to find out about teacher and media specialist collaboration. Participants may also have reasonably concluded that the researcher supports collaboration, and may have felt uncomfortable answering that they never collaborate. This type of guessing what the

researcher expects or what hypothesis he or she is testing can influence self-reported survey answers.

### *Implications*

The data collected about how often teachers collaborated was fairly encouraging. Only seven respondents did not engage in collaboration at all: 82.5% of teachers in this study did collaborate to some degree. This indicates that, in general, teachers and media specialists are working together as instructional partners. However, half of respondents could be placed in the “moderate” range of collaboration, working together with the media specialist only one, two, or three times during the semester. Reaching this level of collaboration may be viewed as satisfactory, but not exemplary. In an ideal world, where time, space, and planning permit, teachers would collaborate more often with their media specialists. Eight teachers in this survey had reached this high level of collaboration, working with their media specialists an impressive seven or more times during the semester.

The questions asking about the initiation of collaborative relationships reveal an interesting perspective. When asked if the media specialist approaches them with opportunities to collaborate, 27 answered yes, while 13 said no. Despite the strong push for training media specialists to initiate collaboration with their colleagues, one-third of the teachers in this survey said that their media specialists do not approach them to work together. This indicates that, at least from the respondents’ perspective, media specialists are not fully achieving the goal of becoming collaboration leaders. When asked whether they approach the media specialist to collaborate, a clear majority (32 respondents, or

80%) answered yes. In general, the teachers in this survey seem to be the initiators of collaboration more often than the media specialists in their schools. This may reveal a desire on the part of teachers to collaborate more often, or a need for the instructional assistance of the media specialist. It may also reflect the reality of the numbers involved; each school surveyed has one media specialist, and approximately 25 teachers.

Considering these numbers and time constraints, it is not surprising that the media specialist does not approach each teacher with collaborative opportunities as often as teachers approach him or her.

The survey data revealed some interesting patterns in the pre-service education of teachers, and how much information about the media center and collaborating with the media specialist they received during their education. Teachers who had earned master's degrees or higher appeared to receive this information more often than teachers who had earned bachelor's degrees. This is perhaps an obvious conclusion; teachers who earn master's degrees take several more courses than those with bachelor's, and are likely to be exposed to more information about education in general during these additional course hours. Topics such as the media center may be viewed as non-essential and not included in course syllabi in favor of other topics during the few short years that undergraduates have to prepare to become teachers. Graduate level courses allow more time to explore a wider breadth and depth of topics, and teachers who earn master's degrees may be exposed to more information about collaboration while taking these courses.

Although a relationship between the amount of pre-service training and the amount of collaboration a teacher participates in was not able to be determined, there are some interesting patterns which emerge in the data collected. For instance, four

respondents, or 10%, received no training in collaboration with media specialists, yet they collaborated six or more times during the semester studied. This indicates that they collaborate with the media specialist at least once every two or so weeks. It is interesting to posit reasons for this high level of collaboration without any formal training. The reasons may be interpersonal: these participants may have formed strong professional relationships with their media specialists. They may work in schools which actively foster collaboration, or have media specialists who are strong advocates for instructional partnerships. The reasons may also be specific to those particular respondents: they may be strongly personally invested in collaborating. Regardless of the explanation, this aspect of the data indicates that, even without formal training in collaboration with a media specialist, teachers can become prolific and enthusiastic instructional partners through avenues other than pre-service training.

A positive relationship between the amount of information the teacher receives during pre-service training about the media center and the number of times he or she collaborates was determined. It's interesting that the amount of training in collaboration did not have an effect on the amount of collaboration a teacher practices, but the amount of training in the media center in general did appear to have a slight effect. This could perhaps be attributed to a greater awareness of the many roles of the media specialist that teachers gained when they learned about the media center. The more information pre-service teachers learn about the media center, the more prepared they may be to use it to the fullest. The positive relationship between these two variables is support for increasing the information pre-service teachers learn about the media center.

If teachers do not receive preparation to collaborate during their pre-service training in college or university, or if this preparation does not seem to increase collaboration, in what other ways can collaboration be encouraged? One important way is through orientations at individual schools led by the media specialist. The media specialist cannot control the amount or type of pre-service training a teacher receives. What the media specialist *can* control is the instruction and preparation he or she gives to colleagues, as well as the collegial attitude he or she brings to the media center. Orientation sessions led by the media specialist before the school year begins or during teacher professional development time can inform teachers about the wonderful instructional resource they have at their fingertips: the media specialist. During these sessions, the media specialist can offer training in collaboration, as well as convey an open and welcoming attitude. In this way, the media specialist is able to supplement teachers' pre-service training in collaboration and open the way for instructional partnerships.



## Conclusion

*Information Power* presents four roles a school library media specialist should perform as part of a successful and effective media program: teacher, information specialist, program administrator, and instructional partner. Part of the responsibilities of an instructional partner are to be “committed to the process of collaboration” and “[work] closely with individual teachers in the critical areas of designing authentic learning tasks and assessments and integrating the information and communication abilities required to meet subject matter standards.” (p. 4-5)

Furthering collaboration between teachers and school library media specialists is a goal often touted in the professional literature, and research has shown that students perform better in academic measures when their teachers and media specialists collaborate. When the media specialist functions as an equal partner in the instruction process - helping with planning, meeting curriculum goals, teaching, and assessment – all parties involved benefit from this process. Limiting media specialists to simply retrieval of information and program administration limits the help they can provide teachers and students.

Although research has shown the benefit of collaboration, studies have also indicated that collaboration is not taking place in all media programs. Several reasons have been offered for this lack of collaboration. Lack of time is one potential explanation: media centers on fixed schedules, as opposed to flexible schedules, don’t allow media specialists the planning and instruction time needed to collaborate. Another explanation

frequently put forth is a misunderstanding about the multiple roles of the media specialist. Teachers and principals may view the media specialist in only his or her information specialist and program administrator roles. Fulfilling instructional and collaborative duties may not be a priority in such schools. Another possible set of reasons are interpersonal: the media specialist may not possess the social or leadership skills to start and build collaborative relationships with colleagues, or the professional climate of the school may not foster collaboration.

One explanation that is not frequently discussed is a lack of training in collaboration. Studies have indicated that school media specialists receive adequate training in how to collaborate with teachers during their education in school library media graduate programs. However, their instructional partners, teachers, don't seem to be receiving a similar preparation in their teacher education courses.

This study surveyed 40 teachers at eight public elementary schools in North Carolina about their pre-service training and their engagement in collaboration. Teachers from all grade levels and of various years of experience and educational background were surveyed. The results of this study indicate that teachers and media specialists in this district do collaborate: only 17.5% of respondents engaged in no collaboration at all. The teachers surveyed felt that they approach their media specialists to collaborate more often than media specialists approach the teachers. This may indicate a lack of time to collaborate or a lack of leadership skills among the media specialists in these schools.

The survey results showed that a little over half of the teachers had learned something about the media center during their pre-service training. However, the majority of participants had not learned anything about collaborating with media

specialists or had only learned about it once during their pre-service education. This reveals a deficiency in teacher-preparation programs; teachers are expected to engage in instructional partnerships with media specialists but are often not taught that these partnerships are even a possibility. Many teachers still view media specialists as only retrievers of information and library administrators.

Teachers in the survey who earned master's degrees or higher received more information about the media center in general during their education courses than those teachers with bachelor's degrees. However, 22 of the 40 participants have not earned master's degrees, and indeed, many excellent teachers hold a bachelor's but not a master's degree. This indicates that further information about the media center and collaboration should be included in undergraduate education courses, not just reserved for graduate-level instruction.

A correlative relationship between the amount of training in collaboration and the number of times a teacher collaborates was not determined. However, a positive relationship between the amount of training about the media center in general and the number of times a teacher collaborates was indicated. As a result of this finding, schools of education should be encouraged to include more information about the media center in their curriculum. Professors of education should increase the time spent teaching about the media center in their course syllabi for both undergraduate and graduate education students. In order to supplement this pre-service training, or make up for its possible deficiency, media specialists should hold regular orientation sessions on collaboration for their colleagues. In this way, media specialists can increase the amount of

collaboration happening within the school, regardless of the teachers' pre-service training or lack of training.

By increasing training, through both education preparation programs and media-specialist-led orientations, teachers' awareness of the media center and the ways in which the media specialist can help them may increase. The media center is often described as the intellectual center of teaching and learning in the school, and the media specialist is promoted in the literature as a full instructional partner. However, teachers cannot take advantage of this incredible resource if they're not aware that it exists.

### *Recommendations for Further Study*

More research, both qualitative and quantitative, is recommended to determine the effect of pre-service training on collaboration. This quantitative study was limited in its depth of information about teachers' views of the media program and collaboration. Qualitative studies could add this depth of knowledge: interviews and case studies would add a further dimension to the knowledge about training and collaboration and allow participants to answer researchers' questions with a richness not found in a quantitative survey. For example, the survey data showed that 21.9% of respondents had received information about the media center during their pre-service training, but did not collaborate or collaborated only once per semester with their media specialist. It would be valuable to know other reasons that those respondents did not collaborate. In this study, teachers were limited to saying only how often they collaborated; in a qualitative study

such as interview, participants could provide further reasons for a lack of collaboration, such as interpersonal, time management, or other reasons. This type of qualitative data would indicate areas of further study.

Research in this topic is also recommended with a larger sample of teachers who are randomly chosen. A study of teachers from several different geographic locations and from all grade levels, kindergarten through high school, would be valuable in learning more about the effects of training on collaboration levels. For future qualitative studies, random sampling and a large sample with a higher response rate would allow for statistical analysis that could determine correlations between training and collaboration. Along with qualitative research, future quantitative studies could provide insight into the effects of training teachers in collaborating with media specialists. This insight could improve teacher training programs at schools of education, and could highlight ways in which media specialists could increase the collaboration taking place at their schools.

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## Appendix A

### Survey Questionnaire

**1. How many times in the previous semester have you collaborated with your school's media specialist? (e.g., planned a lesson or unit together, taught a lesson together, engaged in collaborative assessment, or other in-depth collaborative activities lasting one hour or more)**

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      more than 6

**2. Does your school media specialist approach you with collaborative opportunities?**

Yes                      No

**3. Do you approach your school media specialist with collaborative opportunities?**

Yes                      No

**4. Was information about the school library media center introduced discussed during your education classes at your college or university?**

Yes                      No

**5. How many times was collaboration with the media specialist introduced or discussed during your education classes at your college or university?**

never                      once                      a few times                      several times                      often

**6. What is the highest degree you hold?**

Bachelor's                      Master's or higher

**7. How many years have you been a classroom teacher?**

**8. What grade level do you currently teach?**



## **Appendix B**

### **Email Implied Consent Script**

Dear Teacher:

I am a graduate student at the School of Information and Library Science at UNC-Chapel Hill, and am interested in studying collaboration between teachers and school library media specialists. As part of my master's research, I am surveying approximately 250 elementary teachers about how often they collaborate with their school's media specialist. To participate in the study, you would click the link below and complete the online questionnaire. This questionnaire is composed of 8 questions asking about your pre-service training, your collaborative activities, the number of years you have been in the classroom and the grade level you currently teach. The survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. You are free to answer or not answer any particular question and have no obligation to complete answering the questions once you begin.

Your participation is anonymous, and you will not be asked for any identifying information during the questionnaire. All data obtained in this study will be reported as group data. No individual can be or will be identified. The only persons who will have access to the data are myself and my faculty advisor, Dr. Evelyn Daniel.

Because we want to encourage the participation of as many teachers as possible, I will be sending a reminder email to encourage you to fill out the survey if you have not already done so.

There are neither risks anticipated should you participate in this study nor any anticipated benefits from being involved with it. However, there will be professional benefit from this study, as the information I obtain will be published in my master's thesis and will contribute to the literature on collaboration in education. There is no cost to you or financial benefit for your participation. By taking the online survey, you indicate that you have read the above information and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to [IRB\\_subjects@unc.edu](mailto:IRB_subjects@unc.edu).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions by email at [ddurbin@email.unc.edu](mailto:ddurbin@email.unc.edu) or by phone at (919)259-4855. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Evelyn Daniel, at [daniel@ils.unc.edu](mailto:daniel@ils.unc.edu) or by phone at (919)962-8062.

I know how precious time is for teachers, and I truly appreciate your consideration to participate in this study. I hope to use your responses to better understand how collaboration can benefit teachers, school library media specialists, and their students.

Thank you,

Dayna Durbin  
Master's Candidate, MSLS  
School of Information and Library Science  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

{insert link to online survey}

## **Appendix C**

### **Reminder Email Script**

Dear Teacher:

My name is Dayna Durbin, and I recently contacted you about participating in a survey as part of my master's research at the School of Information and Library Science at UNC-Chapel Hill. This survey was regarding collaboration between teachers and school library media specialists. If you have not yet had a chance to do so, you may click the link below to complete the online questionnaire. The questionnaire will take no longer than 10 minutes to fill out, and consists of 8 questions asking about your pre-service training, your collaborative activities, the number of years you have been in the classroom and the grade level you currently teach.

You are free to answer or not answer any particular question and have no obligation to complete answering the questions once you begin. Your participation is anonymous, and you will not be asked for any identifying information during the questionnaire. All data obtained in this study will be reported as group data. No individual can be or will be identified. The only persons who will have access to the data are myself and my faculty advisor, Dr. Evelyn Daniel.

There are neither risks anticipated should you participate in this study, nor any anticipated benefits from being involved with it. However, there will be professional benefit from this study, as the information I obtain will be published in my master's thesis and will contribute to the literature on collaboration in education. There is no cost to you or financial benefit for your participation. By taking the online survey, you indicate that you have read the above information and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to [IRB\\_subjects@unc.edu](mailto:IRB_subjects@unc.edu).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions by email at [ddurbin@email.unc.edu](mailto:ddurbin@email.unc.edu) or by phone at (919)259-4855. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Evelyn Daniel, at [daniel@ils.unc.edu](mailto:daniel@ils.unc.edu) or by phone at (919)962-8062.

I know how very busy teachers are, and I truly appreciate your consideration to participate in this study.

Thank you,

Dayna Durbin  
Master's Candidate, MSLS  
School of Information and Library Science

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

{insert link to online survey}