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AN EVALUATION OF HOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
TEACHERS PERCEIVE LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS'  
RESPONSIBILITIES IN GLOUCESTER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

by  
Kathleen M. Farrington

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Master of Arts Degree  
of  
The Graduate School  
At  
Rowan University  
May 10, 2007

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor

Date Approved May 10, 2007  
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## ABSTRACT

Kathleen M. Farrington

AN EVALUATION OF HOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS  
PERCEIVE LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS' RESPONSIBILITIES  
IN GLOUCESTER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

2006/07

Dr. Marilyn Shontz

Master of Arts in School and Public Librarianship

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not teachers expected a higher level of responsibility from the library media specialist in schools that employed at least one full-time library media specialist (n=47). Additionally, it investigated whether or not those teachers had a more in-depth understanding or acceptance of the roles of the library media specialist. Specifically it addressed the following research questions: 1.) What roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist did classroom teachers deem important? 2.) Was there a difference in teacher understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist between schools that did or did not have a full-time library media specialist? Data were collected through an email questionnaire that was sent to 267 elementary school teachers in Gloucester County, New Jersey and 67 responses were received. Survey results showed that the presence of a full-time library media specialist was not related to the respondents understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist.

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## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction and Importance

In June of 1976, David Loertscher and Janet Stroud conducted the first professional evaluation of school media center services that was completed by teachers and students. Since then, several researchers have developed other assessments to discover what teachers and students were hoping to gain from the school library media program and the library media specialist. However, the issue of the effect of full-time library media specialists on the expectations of classroom teachers has not been largely studied.

As noted in the Nebraska Educational Media Association *Guide for Developing and Evaluating School Library Media Programs* (2000), “the library media program is an integral part of the total educational program and serves students and faculty in meeting curricular goals,” (p. 143). This being the case, it is essential that school library media programs meet the needs and expectations of the teachers and students being served.

#### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not teachers expected a higher level of responsibility from the library media specialist in schools that employed at least one full-time library media specialist. Additionally, it investigated whether or not those teachers had a more in-depth understanding or acceptance of the roles of the library media specialist.

## Hypothesis

This researcher believed that a full-time library media specialist would have a positive effect on the classroom teachers' understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist.

## Research Questions

1. What roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist did classroom teachers deem important?
2. Was there a difference in teacher understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist between schools that did or did not have a full-time library media specialist?

## Definition of Terms

*Classroom teacher:* Synonymous with teacher.

*Elementary school:* For the purposes of this study, an elementary school was defined as a school housing grades first through eighth located in Gloucester County, New Jersey and not classified as either an early childhood center or a middle school.

*Questionnaire:* "A list of written questions carefully formulated to be administered to a selected group of people for the purpose of gathering information (feedback) in survey research," (Reitz, 2004-6).

*Library media specialist:* "A librarian trained to deliver library services to students in a school library media center on a walk-in basis or at the request of the classroom teacher," (Reitz, 2004-6). Additionally, for the purposes of this study, a full-time library media specialist must work at least 35 hours a week, while a part-time media specialist must



work less than 35 hours a week. The terms library media specialist and school librarian are used synonymously.

*School library media program:* A program that combines effective learning and teaching strategies and activities with information access skills in order to meet the mission and educational goals of the school it serves (AASL & AECT, 1998).

*Role:* “The sum of the expectations that other people have of a person occupying a position.” In this case, that person is the library media specialist. (Pearson Education, 1995-2002).

*Responsibility:* The obligation placed on a person to meet the expectations laid out for him or her by others. (Pearson Education, 1995-2002).

#### Assumptions and Limitations

There were several assumptions and limitations that applied to this study. First of all, not all of the surveys were returned due to the time constraints of the participants or other factors. Secondly, it was assumed that a majority of the surveys were answered honestly. Furthermore, it was assumed that schools with less than 200 students were least likely to have a full-time school media specialist and thus were not included in this survey. Additionally, this study was limited by grade level and geography as it only surveyed elementary school teachers in Gloucester County, New Jersey.

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## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The key to conducting research in the present is understanding what has been done in the past. Unfortunately, teacher perceptions of the roles and responsibilities of library media specialists have been somewhat neglected over the years and the number of studies conducted on this issue was limited. Published research has been especially limited and the majority of the available information can be found through thesis and doctoral work over the past few decades. This chapter is organized chronologically to include research that occurred both before and after the 1998 publication of *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* created by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT).

#### Research Prior to 1998

As mentioned in Chapter I, David Loertscher and Janet Stroud (1976) were the first researchers to complete a study that assessed the views of teachers and actually asked what they expected from the library media specialist. In order to complete this study, Loertscher and Stroud developed what they entitled the *Purdue Self-Evaluation System for Media Centers* (PSES) which was broken down in nine service categories including: accessibility, awareness, professional, utilization, planning, acquisition, production, evaluation, and activity (¶4).

Stroud found that many teachers were unaware of what services were available to them and noted that “if teachers are exhibiting a lack of awareness, those same teachers are not likely to be encouraging the students to use the media center,” (p. 69). She also found that only one-third of media specialists were involved in instructional planning and that “media specialists were successfully communicating their program offerings to about fifty percent of their teachers,” (p. xii).

Drawing from the 1981 publication by Kathryn Mohajerin and Earl Smith, Willodene Scott published her dissertation entitled “A Comparison of Role Perceptions of the School Library Media Specialist among Library Media Educators, School Library Media Specialists, Principals, and Classroom Teachers” in 1988. Scott wanted to find out what effects, if any, the changes in school goals and objectives were having on the role expectations of the school media specialist. To do so, she used the questionnaire previously developed by Mohajerin and Smith to evaluate role perceptions. In the end, she found that most educators tended to perceive the school media specialist in a positive manner. She also suggested further exploration as to why teacher expectations differ so greatly from those of the principal or the school media specialist.

While the focus of this literature review is the 1998 publication of *Information Power*, it is important to briefly mention the initial library media specialist role guidelines set forth in the 1988 publication of the same name. In 1988, three roles were defined for the school media specialist: information specialist, teacher, and instructional consultant. In that same year, Sue Walker published an article in *School Library Media Quarterly* entitled “*Information Power: The Roles of the School Library Media Specialist.*” In that article, Walker pointed out that “previous standards have often set unclear and unrealistic

expectations. This is not the case with *Information Power*,” (p. 23). Thus, the initial 1988 publication of *Information Power* set up the framework for what was to come later.

“What help do teachers want and what will they do to get it?” were the research questions Philip M. Turner set out to answer in his research study published in *School Library Media Quarterly* in the summer of 1996. In order to address these questions, Turner surveyed a group of teachers and asked what services or support they would like from their school media specialists in order to be more effective teachers. Turner reported that “teachers expressed a need for training in a variety of areas, particularly the use of emerging instructional technologies and the design of effective teaching strategies,” (p. 208). Turner also recommended that schools themselves conduct similar studies to find out what the teachers were looking for.

One of the largest studies conducted in the past 10 years was done by Linda DeGroff (1997) from the University of Georgia. Through a 161 item survey, DeGroff evaluated 148 “literacy professionals” from 57 schools located throughout the United States to find out how they perceived the role of the school media specialist. After evaluating the results of the forced choice surveys, DeGroff concluded that

...the school library media specialist’s role is highly valued, today’s school library media specialist regularly practices the roles of information specialist and teacher, teachers and the school library media specialist work together in casual rather than systematic ways, and human qualities are more important for supporting good working relationships between teachers and the school library media specialist. (p. 1)

However, DeGross also stated that teachers saw library media specialists as most helpful in choosing books for units, not in helping with planning the units; thus teachers viewed the library media specialist in a less favorable light than other administrators.

#### The Publication of *Information Power*

In 1998, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) published *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* which outlined the four main roles of school media specialists that are expected today. The roles were defined as follows:

- As teacher, the library media specialist collaborates with students and other members of the learning community to analyze learning and information needs, to locate and use resources that will meet those needs, and to understand and communicate the information the resources provide.
- As instructional partner, the library media specialist joins with teachers and others to identify links across student information needs, curricular content, learning outcomes, and a wide variety of print, nonprint, and electronic information resources.
- As information specialist, the library media specialist provides leadership and expertise in acquiring and evaluating information resources in all formats; in bringing an awareness of information issues into collaborative relationships with teachers, administrators, students and others; and in modeling for students and
- As program administrator, the library media specialist works collaboratively with members of the learning community to define the policies of the library media

program and to guide and direct all the activities related to it. (p. 4-5)

It was intended that through fulfilling these roles the school library media specialist can be an effective member of the school community. Additionally, these roles became the basis for much of the research to follow.

#### Research 1998 and After

In 2000, Gretchen Straessle, a graduate student at Pacific Lutheran University, conducted research for her thesis entitled “Teachers’ and Administrators’ Perceptions and Expectation of the Instructional Consultation Role of the Library Media Specialist.” She conducted surveys, interviews, and curriculum meetings in order to assess teacher and administrator views which prior research had shown to be largely negative. Straessle concluded that library media specialists can change the negative perception by “clarifying their role, being proactive, developing trust and respect, being knowledgeable, encouraging communication, modeling collaboration, and sharing successes,” (p. 83).

A professional study of the role of the school media specialist was conducted in 2003 by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) through an outside company named KRC Research. The goal of the study was to gain insight into teacher, principal, student, and parent views of the school media specialist through the use of focus groups. The focus groups were composed of 8-10 participants and represented diverse populations as they were conducted in both Baltimore, Maryland and Phoenix, Arizona. The study was quite lengthy; however, it did come to some interesting conclusions. The AASL study found that principals and teachers were likely to see the value in school librarians, but were not likely to use them fully. Additionally, teachers and principals “believe librarians are the most important piece of the library experience

and critical to guiding [users] to the information and resources they want or need,” (p. 4). Unfortunately, the study later added that those teachers and principals believed that school media specialists only play a support role in the school.

The most recent study of teachers’ perceptions of library media specialists roles came out of the Ohio school library study on student learning conducted by Ross Todd and Carol Kuhlthau in 2005. They received feedback from 879 faculty members in 39 of the elementary, middle, and high schools in Ohio through a questionnaire comprised of 48 statements. The questionnaire sought to find out in what ways, if any, the school library helped students learn. Even though the survey focused on the school library media program, it came to five conclusions concerning the role of the school media specialist. Those roles were described as 1) an instructional designer who teaches information literacy, 2) an educational partner who collaborates with his or her coworkers, 3) a school library program administrator who implements programs for the entire school, 4) a partner-leader who guides professional development for the good of the school, and 5) a facilitator who works to improve learning and resources throughout the school (p. 102). Perhaps this is a sign that school faculty are finally realizing the importance of the school library media specialist and that teacher/librarian partnerships can lead to great student learning experiences.

In the fall of 2005, Carl A. Harvey, II, a library media specialist in Noblesville, Indiana published an article in *Library Media Connection* entitled “What Should a Teacher Expect a School Library Media Specialist to Be?” In this brief article, Harvey listed 12 roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist that follow those outlined in *Information Power*. They are as follows: teacher, collaborator, resource



locator, has a love for literature, technology literate, staff developer, innovator, manager, a helping hand, flexible, has a love of learning, and does not work alone. Not only do these roles and responsibilities create a well-rounded library media specialist, they also provide for a greater chance of collaboration with classroom teachers.

### Summary

The role of the library media specialist has changed over the years and will continue to change in years to come. As such, it is important for current library media specialists to demonstrate to teachers in their schools an awareness of what roles and responsibilities they currently hold and keep them up to date as those roles evolve. Additionally, until teachers recognize the plethora of services provided by library media specialists they are unlikely to make those services known to their students.

After reviewing the available literature, it seems apparent that the goals set forth in *Information Power* are definitely shaping the way library media specialists view themselves and how they hope to be perceived by others. Furthermore, the literature is stressing to library media specialists the importance of making others aware of the services they offer. It will be interesting to see what results new research discovers in this field as the roles continue to evolve.

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## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Overall Design and Justification

This was a descriptive survey concerning the perceived roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist by elementary school teachers. Data were collected through the use of Survey Monkey online software ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)).

An attitude survey was used to gather information on how elementary school teachers viewed the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist. It gauged responses on four levels which were 1) Don't know, 2) Disagree, 3) Agree, and 4) This is a Critical Responsibility.

#### Purpose and Research Questions

The following questions were answered through this study:

1. What roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist do classroom teachers deem important?
2. Is there a difference in teacher understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist between schools that do or do not have a full-time library media specialist?

#### Population and Sample

The population for this study was comprised of all the classroom teachers in all of the elementary schools in Gloucester County, New Jersey who had valid email addresses (see Appendix A for list of included schools). The randomly selected sample was

purposive to meet the purposes of the study and consisted of all of the teachers who voluntarily choose to respond to an electronic survey sent to their school email addresses. The population of 267 elementary school teachers was chosen at random from the lists of online e-mail addresses provided by their respective school Web sites. Whenever possible, one teacher from each grade level was chosen. The request for participation in the study was sent twice.

### Variables

This study used discrete variables to determine the perceptions of elementary school teachers towards the roles of library media specialists. Those variables were the selected services provided by the library media specialist, and whether the elementary school had a full-time library media specialist.

### Questionnaire Design

A questionnaire (see Appendix B) with content based on the 1976 *Purdue Self-Evaluation System for School Media Centers Elementary School Catalog*, the Nebraska Educational Media Association *Guide for Developing and Evaluating School Library Media Programs*, and the *Information Power* library media specialist role guidelines was electronically mailed (see Appendix C) to the email addressed of the selected classroom teachers in each of the elementary schools in Gloucester County, New Jersey (see Appendix A). The questionnaires asked classroom teachers what they thought the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist were, not what was currently happening in their schools. The results of these questionnaires were then used to determine whether or not the participating teachers from schools that employed a full-

time library media specialist had a better understanding of the library media specialists' roles and responsibilities.

### Reliability and Validity

This survey was pretested by five students in the Rowan University School and Public Librarianship Thesis course and by the course instructor. Any changes in spelling, layout, or questions were made as needed before the survey was finalized. This study was reliable based on the responses from the pretest participants. It was mailed to individual email addresses and the responses were kept in confidence. Any personal information provided by the participants (i.e. - name, grade level, school, etc.) was not used in the study. The study results were considered valid for those who responded as the surveys were sent by email and the responses remained confidential.

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## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Methods and Procedures

Email requests for survey participation were sent to a total of 267 elementary school teachers in Gloucester County, New Jersey. The initial e-mail request (see Appendix C) consisted of 190 email addresses, covering one teacher from each grade level from each of the schools included in the study (see Appendix A). This initial request was sent on January 30, 2007 and then again on February 12, 2007 to elicit more responses. A second e-mail request to 77 more teachers, or two more from each of the original elementary schools, was sent on February 18, 2007. Although the additional group of teachers was not included in the plans in Chapter III, this request was needed in an attempt to elicit more responses. The survey was closed on February 25, 2007 with a total of 67 respondents.

As previously mentioned, Survey Monkey online survey software ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)) was used to gather the survey results. Once all pending surveys were complete and the survey was closed, the data were exported into the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet program. From there the descriptive data in questions one through ten were coded as follows to prepare for further analysis: 1 = Don't know, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = This is a Critical Responsibility. Coding for question eleven was 1 = Yes, there is a full-time library media specialist and 2 = No, there is no full-time

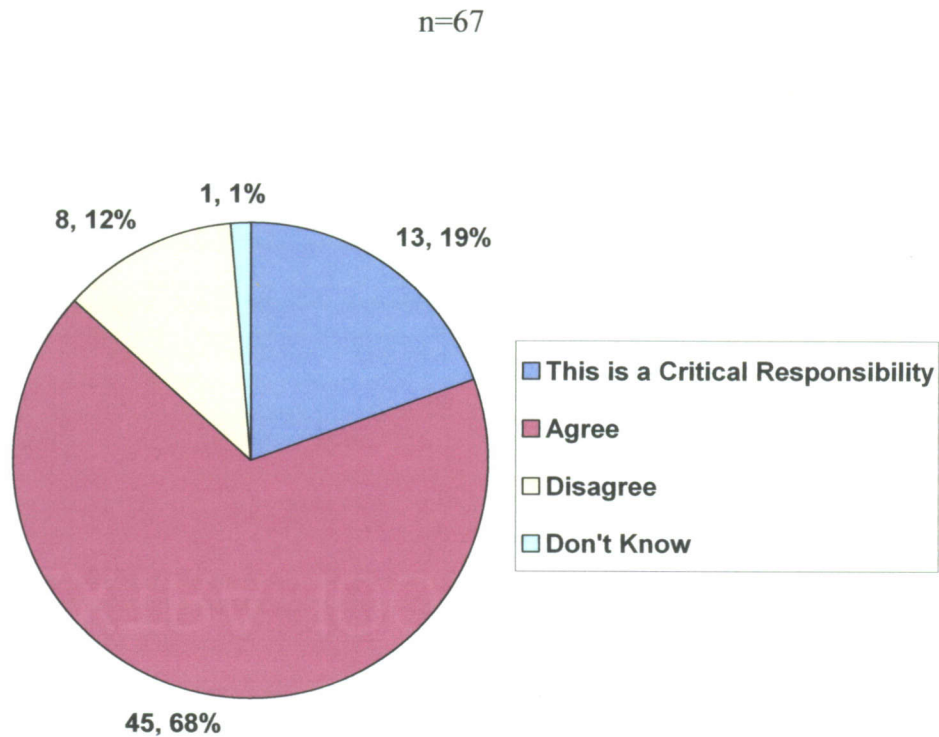


library media specialist. For the final question, a chart was created to show what grade levels the respondents taught.

### Presentation of Results

The 67 respondents were asked several questions related to what they felt the responsibilities of the library media specialist should be. The first question addressed the analysis and support of the curriculum across subject areas and grade levels. Of the 67 respondents, 13 (19%) felt that this was a critical responsibility, 45 (68%) agreed that it was a responsibility, 8 (12%) did not feel that this was a responsibility, and only 1 (1%) respondent did not know (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Analysis and Support of Curriculum



The respondents were then asked whether or not the library media specialist should collaborate with teachers to incorporate information literacy and research skills in all subject areas and grade levels. Out of all of the respondents, 28 (36%) felt that this was a critical responsibility, while 47 (61%) agreed that it was in fact a responsibility, and only 2 (3%) respondents did not know. None of the respondents disagreed that this was indeed a responsibility of the library media specialist. The results of this question can be found in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Teacher Collaboration  
n=67

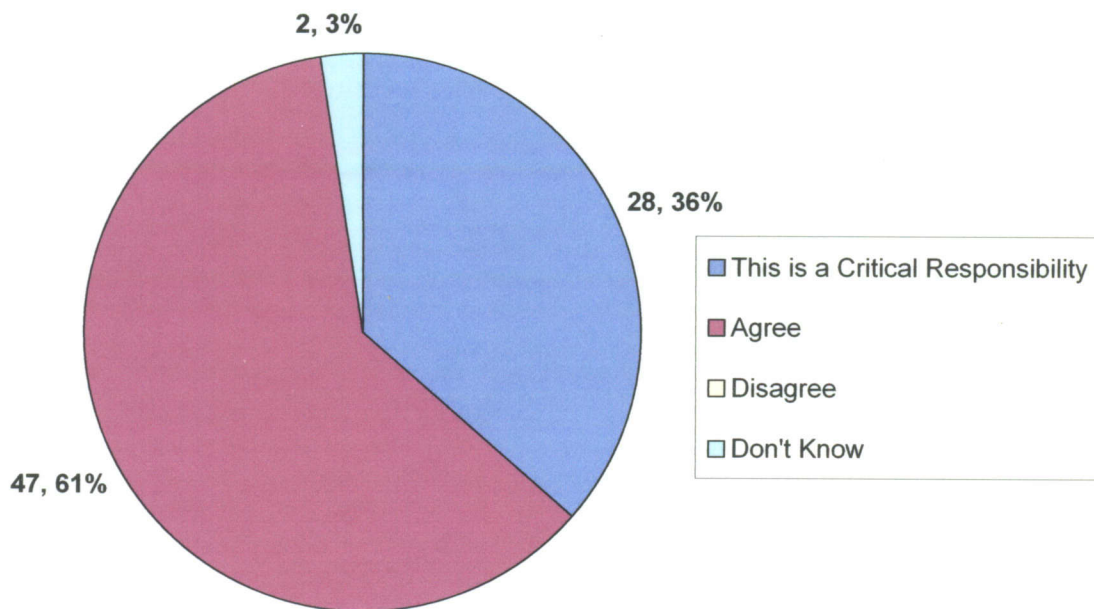
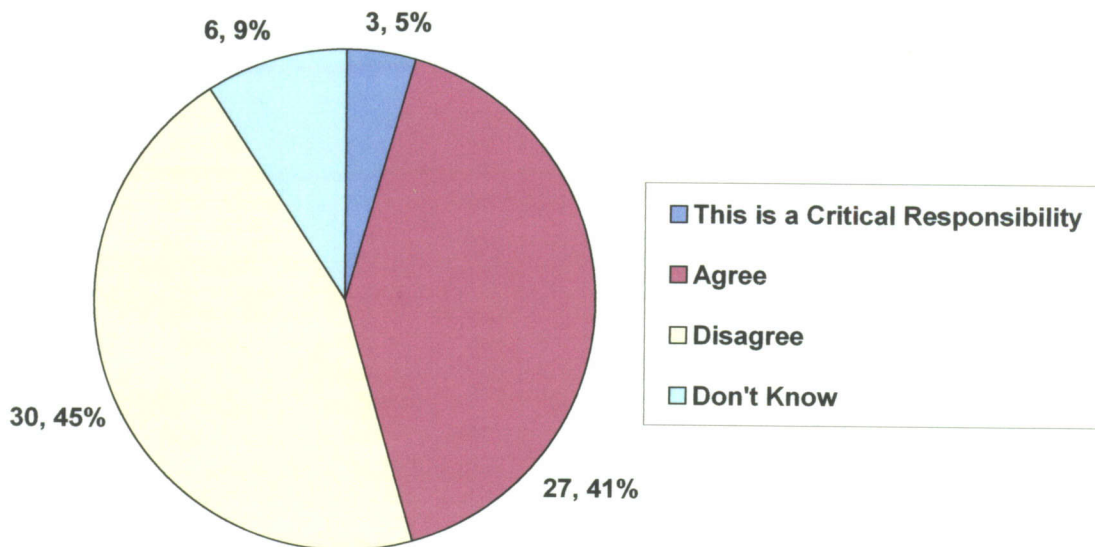


Figure 3 presents results from the question of whether or not library media specialists should provide in-service and professional development opportunities for teachers. Out of all of the survey questions, this was the only one that was skipped by one respondent. The other 66 respondents were split down the middle as to whether or not this should be a responsibility of the library media specialist; 30 (46%) said yes (agree and critical responsibility) and 30 (45%) said no. In addition, there were 6 (9%) respondents that were not sure whether or not it should be a responsibility. Out of all of the questions, this one resulted in one of the highest numbers of Don't Knows.

Figure 3: In-service and Professional Development Opportunities  
n=66



The fourth question concentrated on whether or not the library media specialist should serve on instructional and curricular committees. An overwhelming 77% (51) of respondents agreed that this was indeed a responsibility, with another 6% (4) stating that it should be a critical responsibility. Only 7% (5) did not feel that this should be a responsibility of the library media specialist. Overall, this question resulted in one of the highest numbers of Don't Knows with 10% (7) answering that way (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Instructional and Curricular Committees  
n=67

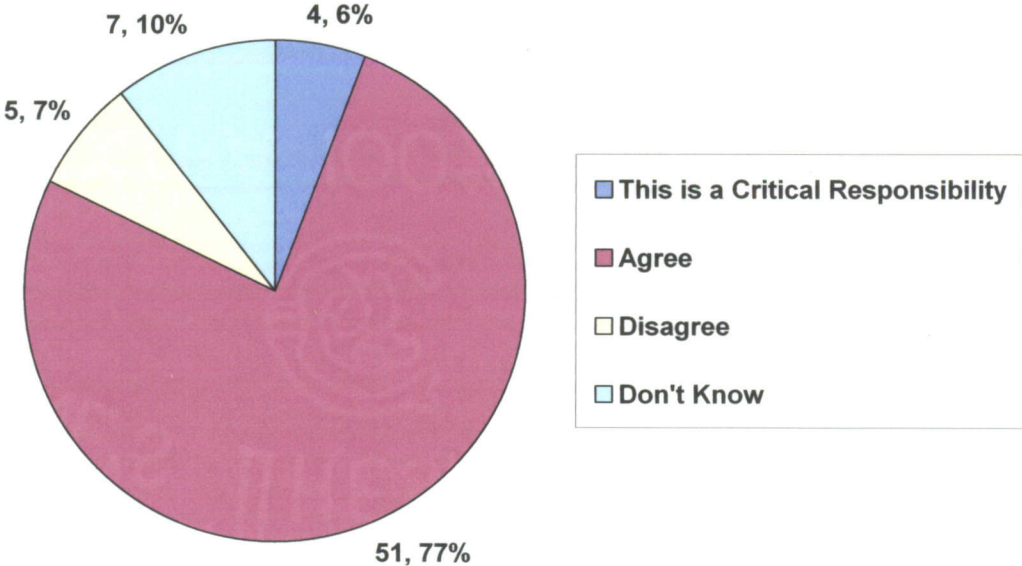
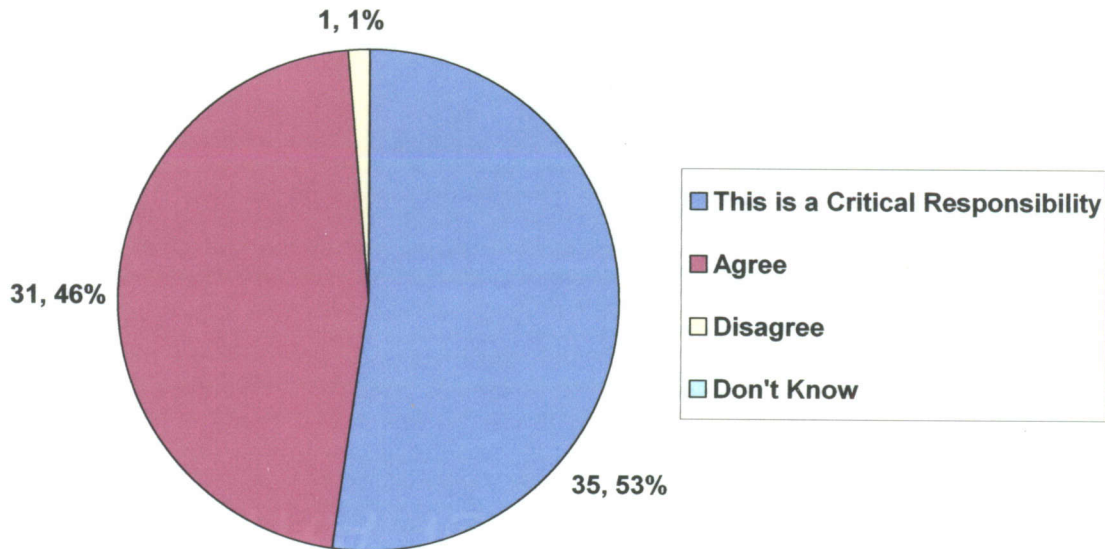


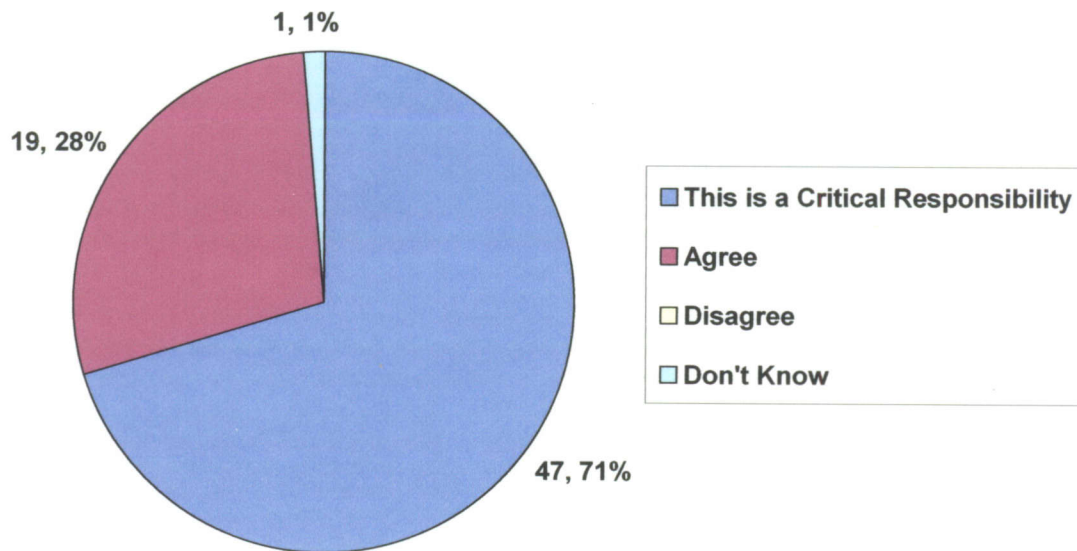
Figure 5 displays the data on whether or not the library media specialist should work individually and/or with groups of students to locate and use resources that meet their needs. Over half, or 53% (35), of respondents felt that this was a critical responsibility while 46% (31) agreed that it was a responsibility. Only 1% (1) disagreed and no respondents stated that they did not know.

Figure 5: Locate and Use Resources  
n=67



The sixth question asked whether or not the library media specialist should promote life-long learning skills by teaching students the value of library media resources and a love of reading. Out of all of the questions, the most respondents, 71% (47), felt that this was indeed a critical responsibility. Additionally, 28% (19) of respondents believed that this was a responsibility of the library media specialist. Only 1% (1) of respondents were not sure and no respondents disagreed (see Figure 6).

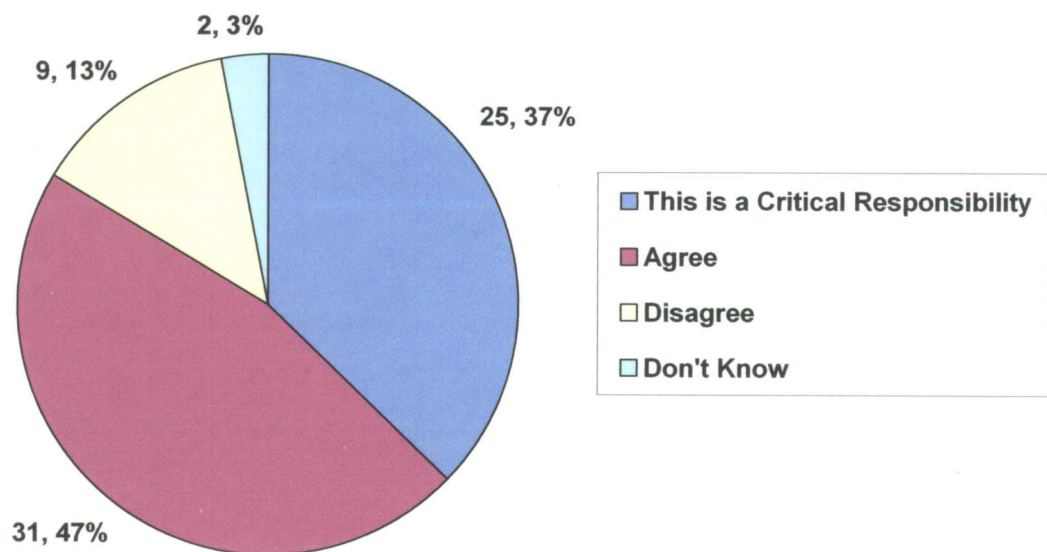
Figure 6: Life-long Learning and a Love of Reading  
n=67





The seventh question asked whether or not the library media specialist should teach technology in the media center to improve student access to information. While 25 (37%) respondents felt that this should be a critical responsibility and 31 (47%) believed that it should be a responsibility, 9 (13%) disagreed and 2 (3%) did not know. The results can be seen in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Teaching Technology  
n=67



Question 8 inquired as to whether or not the classroom teacher should communicate with the library media specialist before beginning a unit of instruction. Only 7% (5) respondents felt that this was a critical responsibility while 16% (11) disagreed and 3% (2) did not know. Overall, the majority of respondents, 74% (49), agreed that this should be a responsibility (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Communicate with Classroom Teacher  
n=67

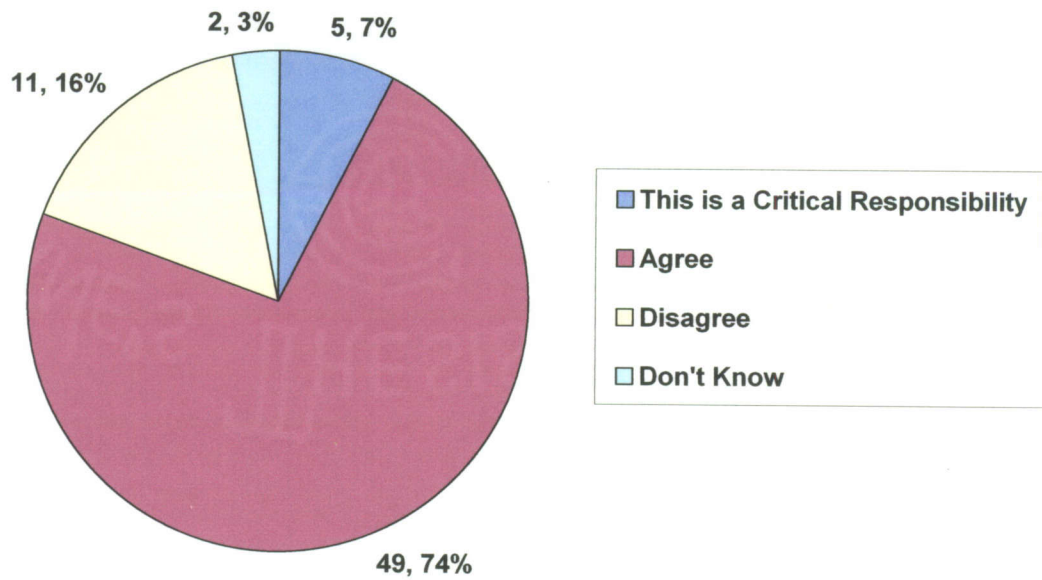
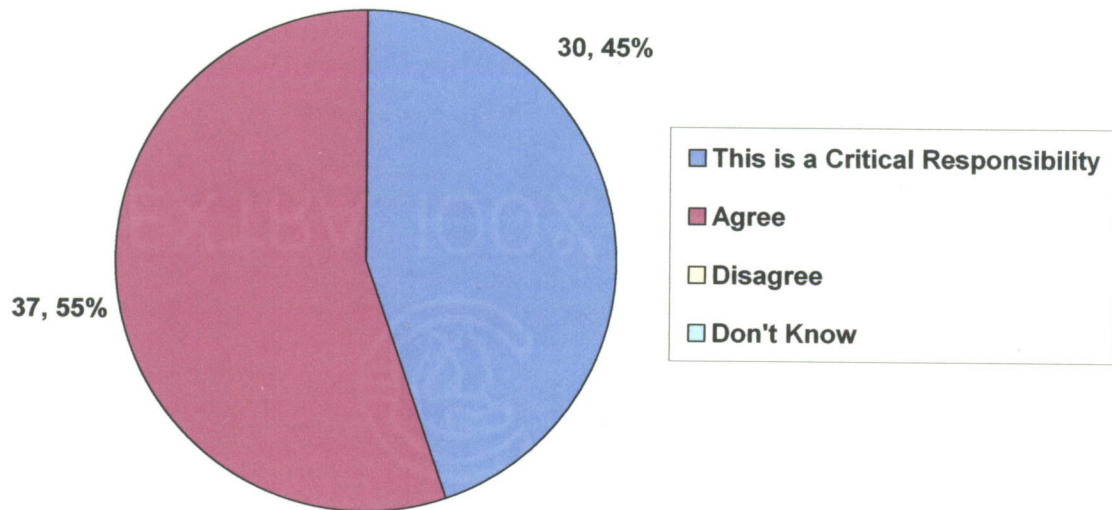




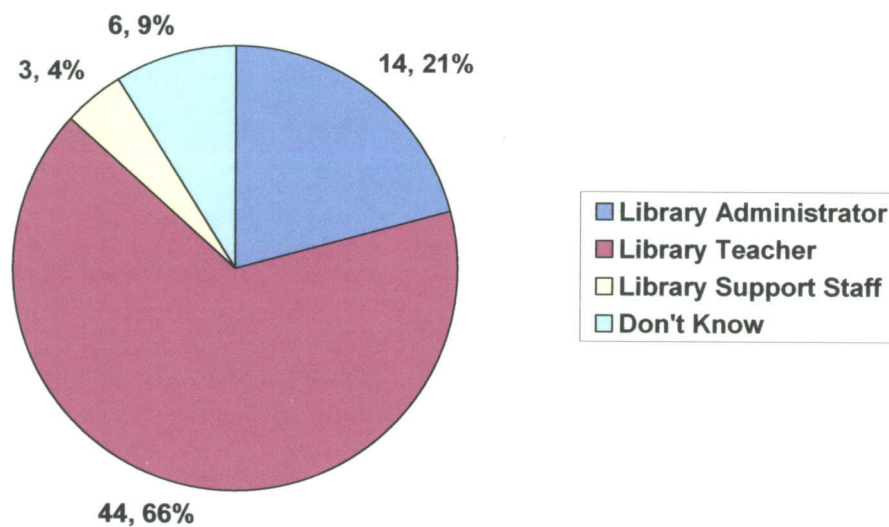
Figure 9 shows the results for question nine which addressed whether or not the library media specialist should select relevant resources for the media center that reflect all of the subject areas and grade levels. All of the respondents saw this responsibility in a positive light. Out of the 67 respondents, 30 (45%) saw this as a critical responsibility and 37 (55%) considered it a responsibility. None of the respondents disagreed or did not know.

Figure 9: Relevant Resources  
n=67



Question ten asked the respondents to choose a title for the role of the library media specialist. A majority (44, 66%) of the respondents felt that the library media specialist should be labeled as a teacher. Of the remaining teachers, 21% (14) labeled the school media specialist as an administrator, 4% (3) labeled him or her as support staff, and 9% (6) did not know which label to choose (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Role of the Library Media Specialist  
n=67



The final two questions asked if the respondents' schools employed a full-time library media specialist (working 35 or more hours a week) and what grade level the respondents taught. Figure 11 shows that out of the 67 respondents, 47 (70%) stated that their school did in fact employ a full-time media specialist. Figure 12 illustrates that the respondents represented all elementary grade levels, with most of the respondents teaching in grades one through six.

Figure 11: Full-time Library Media Specialist  
n=67

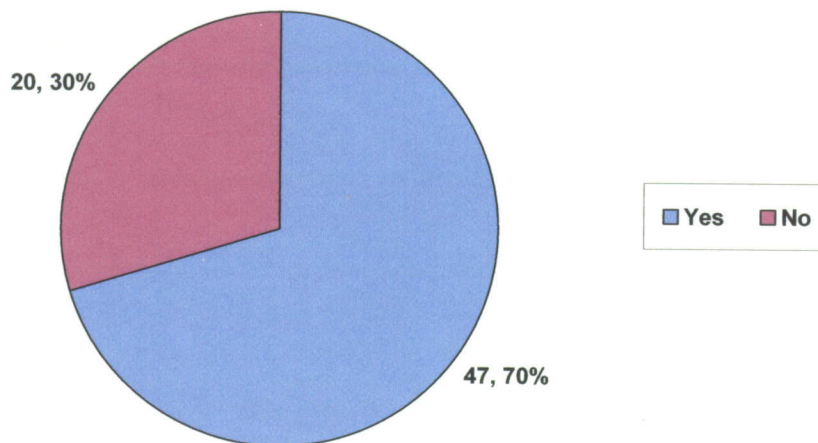
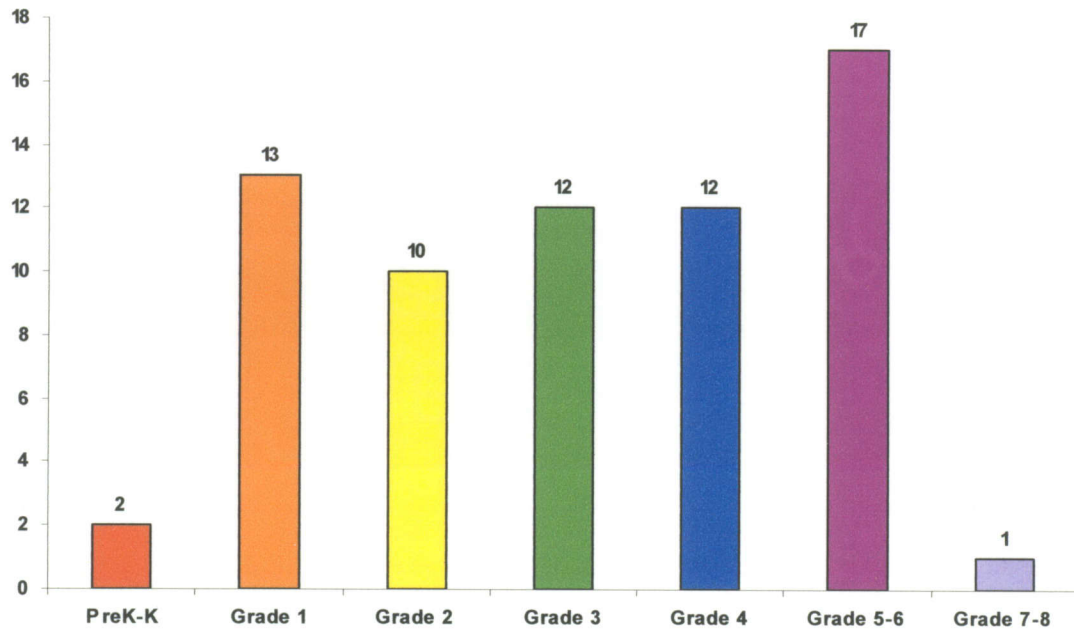


Figure 12: Grade Levels Represented  
n=67



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### Summary

The first research question asked what roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist the teachers deemed important. After reviewing the results, the only responsibility that teachers did not deem important was the media specialists' involvement in providing in-service and professional development opportunities. Regarding all other responsibilities, the teachers showed overwhelming agreement that the tasks listed were indeed responsibilities of the library media specialist. However, questions five (should the library media specialist work individually and/or with groups of students to locate and use resources that meet their needs) and six (should the library media specialist promote life-long learning skills by teaching students the value of library media resources and a love of reading) were the only tasks on which more than 50% of the respondents agreed that they were critical responsibilities.

The second research question asked whether or not there was a difference in teacher understandings of the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist between groups of schools that did have a full-time library media specialist (n=47) and those that did not (n=20). In order to address that question, the researcher included here comparisons of the results from five out of the ten survey questions.

Figure 13 compares results from question one which asked whether or not the library media specialist should analyze and support curriculum in all subject areas and grade levels. Results showed that while respondents from schools in both groups agreed that this should be a responsibility, respondents from schools lacking a full-time library media specialist agreed to a higher degree (25% vs. 17%) that this should be a critical responsibility. Only one respondent was unsure.

Question three asked whether or not library media specialists should provide in-service and professional development opportunities for the teachers and resulted in the highest number of disagreeing respondents in both groups. Surprisingly, when broken down into schools with and without a full-time library media specialist, the respondents from the schools with a full-time library media specialist (n=47) disagreed to a higher degree (49%) than those who did not have a full-time library media specialist (n=19, 37%). While respondents were asked to answer about what should occur, not what was currently being practiced in their library media center, these results suggest that either the full-time library media specialists were not providing in-service and professional development opportunities for their teachers or the opportunities simply did not exist (see Figure 14).

Figure 13: Comparing Question One

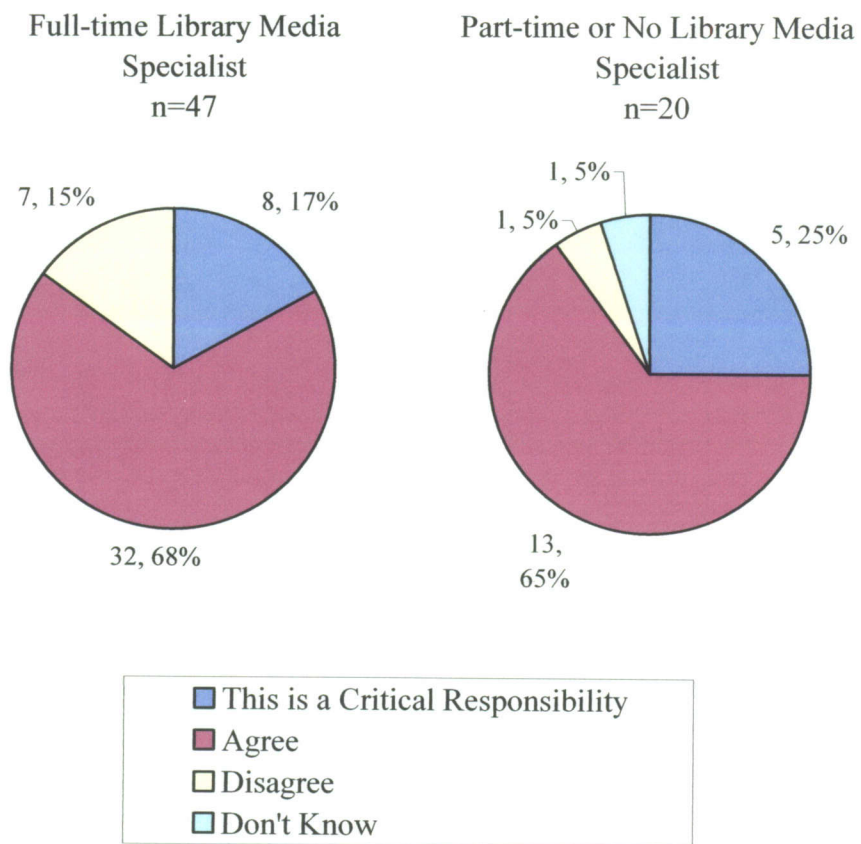


Figure 14: Comparing Question Three

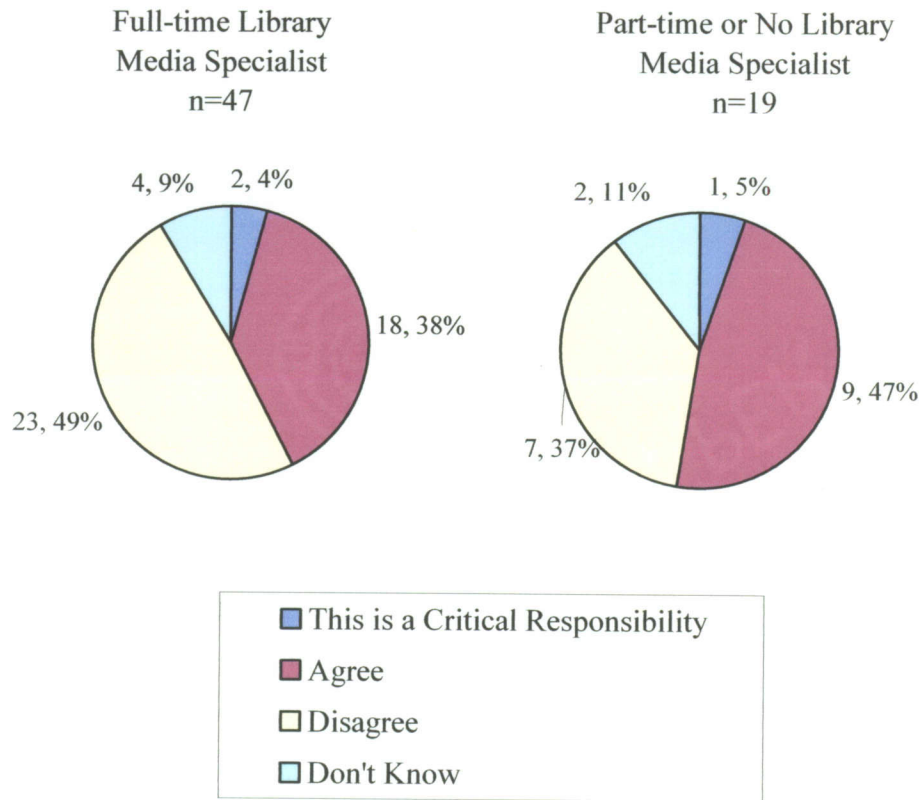




Figure 15 presents the results from question seven which asked whether or not the library media specialist should teach technology in the media center to improve student access to information. It seemed unlikely to the researcher that anyone would disagree with this responsibility, yet respondents from schools with a full-time library media specialist were more likely to disagree (15% vs. 10%). However, a large percentage of respondents from both categories did agree that this was a critical responsibility (38% and 35%).

Another question that proved interesting for comparison was question eight which asked whether or not the classroom teacher should communicate with the library media specialist before beginning a unit of instruction (see Figure 16). Similar to the previous comparisons, respondents from schools that employed a full-time library media specialist disagreed to a higher degree (n=10 or 21%) than those at a school lacking a full-time library media specialist where only 5% disagreed.

The final question chosen for comparison was question ten which asked respondents what role the library media specialist should hold in the media center. While most respondents in both groups answered that the library media specialist should serve as a library teacher, respondents from schools that did not employ a full-time library media specialist were most likely to say that the library media specialist should serve as library support staff (10%). It was also interesting to note that about 10% of respondents from both groups were not sure what role the library media specialist should hold (see Figure 17).

Figure 15: Comparing Question Seven

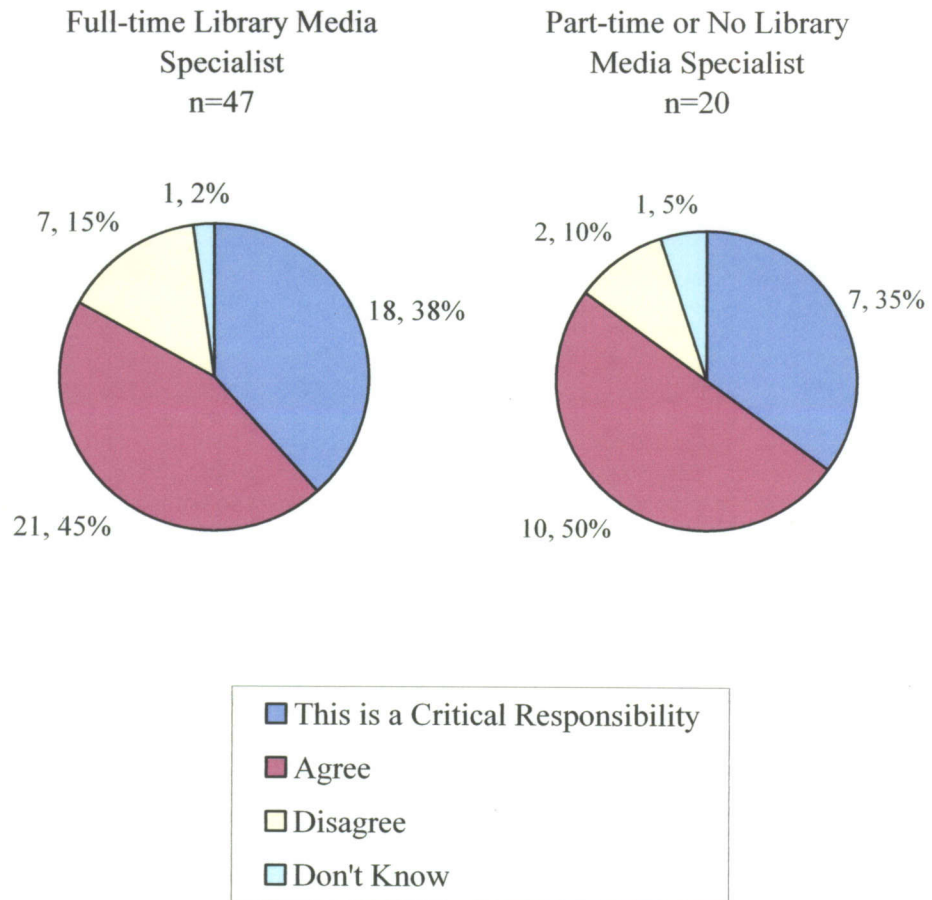


Figure 16: Comparing Question Eight

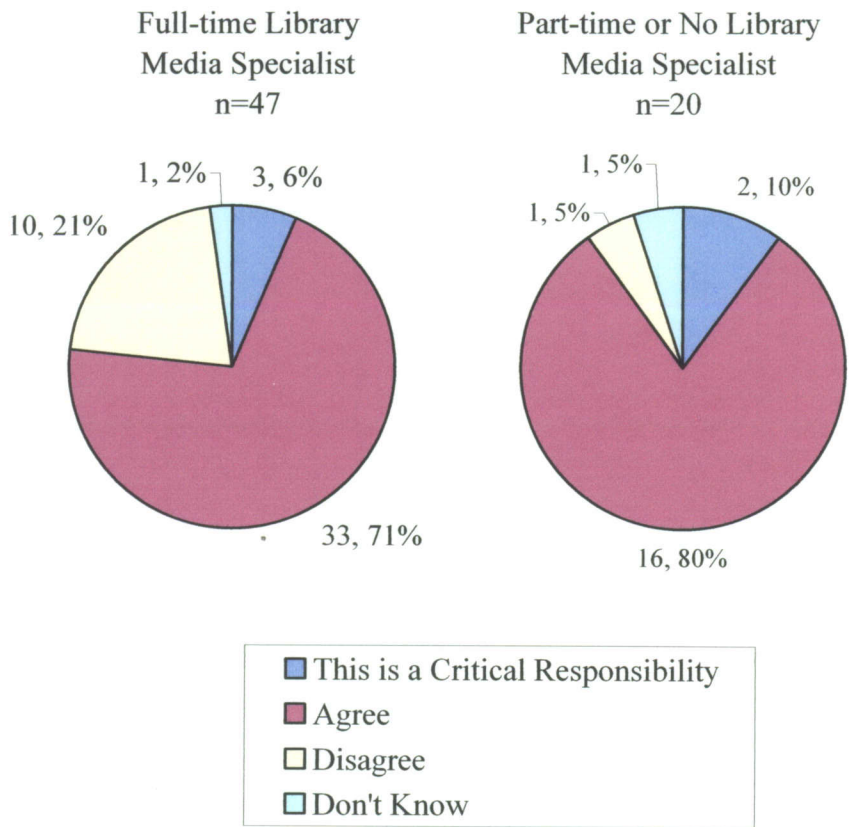
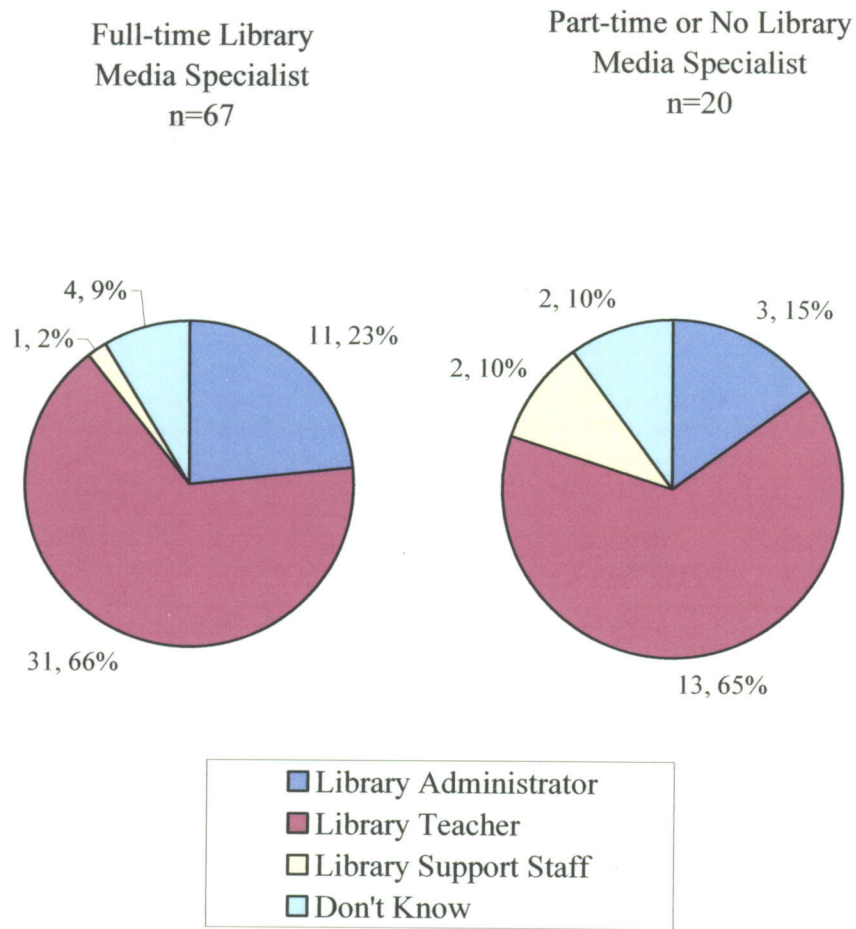


Figure 17: Comparing Question Ten



## Conclusion

In Chapter I it was hypothesized that a full-time library media specialist would have a positive effect on the classroom teachers' understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist. After reviewing the results, it appears that this hypothesis was not fully supported. The results were largely opposite of what the researcher expected in that the respondents from the schools that did not employ a full-time library media specialist often responded in a more positive light than those from schools with full-time library media specialists. The only area that seemed to be positively affected by the presence of a full-time library media specialist was determining what the role of the library media specialist should be (Question 10). As a result, this researcher has concluded that the presence of a full-time library media specialist was not related to the respondents understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist.

## Recommendations for Further Research

Due to the minimal amount of literature available for review on this topic, it is recommended that further analysis of available materials be done at a later date. An additional review would allow for a new perspective on the roles and responsibilities of the library media specialist.

It is also recommended that the study be repeated to include a larger population of possible respondents. This study was limited geographically and it may be interesting to see how teachers in other counties in New Jersey or even other states would respond. Increasing the population would not only allow for a larger response rate, but also increase the reliability and validity of the study.

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APPENDIX A  
LIST OF SCHOOLS



Aura School, Elk Township  
Bells School, Washington Township  
Birches School, Washington Township  
Caroline L. Reutter School, Franklin Township  
Centre City School, Mantua Township  
Elwood Kindle School, Pitman  
Evergreen Ave School, Woodbury  
Good Intent School, Deptford Township  
Green Fields School, West Deptford Township  
Greenwich Township School, Greenwich Township  
Harrison Elementary School, South Harrison Township  
Herma S. Simmons Elementary School, Clayton  
Holly Glen Elementary School, Monroe Township  
Hurfville Elementary School, Washington Township  
J. Mason Tomlin School, Mantua Township  
Lake Tract School, Deptford Township  
Logan Elementary School, Logan Township  
Loundenslager School, Paulsboro  
Main Road School, Franklin Township  
Memorial Elementary School, Pitman  
National Park School, National Park  
Oak Knoll Elementary School, Monroe Township  
Oak Valley School, Deptford Township  
Oakview School, West Deptford Township  
Parkview School, Westville  
Radix Elementary School, Monroe Township  
Red Bank School, West Deptford Township  
Samuel Mickle School, East Greenwich Township  
Sewell School, Mantua Township  
Shady Lane School, Deptford Township  
South Harrison Elementary School, South Harrison Township  
Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, Washington Township  
Walter H. Hill School, Swedesboro-Woolwich  
W.C.K. Walls School, Pitman  
Wedgwood School, Washington Township  
Wenonah School, Wenonah  
West End Memorial Elementary School, Woodbury  
Whitehall School, Monroe Township  
Whitman School, Washington Township

APPENDIX B  
QUESTIONNAIRE

## Responsibilities of the Library Media Specialist [Exit this](#)

Please answer concerning library media specialists (school librarians) in general, not about the library media specialist in your school, if there is one.

To select an answer, simply click on the circle below it.

**1. The library media specialist should analyze and support curriculum in all subject areas and grade levels.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**2. The library media specialist should collaborate with teachers to incorporate information literacy and research skills in all subject areas and grade levels.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**3. The library media specialist should provide in-service and professional development opportunities for teachers.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4. The library media specialist should serve on school instructional and curricular committees.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**5. The library media specialist should work individually and/or with groups of students to locate and use resources that meet their needs.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**6. The library media specialist should promote life-long learning skills by teaching students the value of library media resources and a love of reading.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7. The library media specialist should teach technology in the media center to improve student access to information.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8. The classroom teacher should communicate with the library media specialist before beginning a unit of instruction.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. The library media specialist should select relevant resources for the media center that reflect all of the subject areas and grade levels.**

Don't Know	Disagree	Agree	This is a Critical Responsibility
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10. The library media specialist should serve as:**

Library Administrator	Library Teacher	Library Support Staff	Don't Know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**11. Is there a full-time library media specialist at your school (working at least 35 hours a week)?**

Yes	No
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**12. What grade level(s) do you teach?**

**Thank you for participating in this survey!**

**Please feel free to contact me at [farrin90@students.rowan.edu](mailto:farrin90@students.rowan.edu) or  
Dr. Shontz at [shontz@rowan.edu](mailto:shontz@rowan.edu) if you have any further questions.**

**Done >>**

APPENDIX C  
E-MAIL COVER LETTER

Dear Valued Educator,

As an elementary school teacher, you know that you have a variety of potential resources available to help you in your teaching. There are numerous Web sites that allow you to share lesson plans and an endless collection of online databases with a wealth of information. But did you know that one of the biggest resources available to you is your library media specialist (i.e. school librarian)? In an attempt to find an answer to this question, this research study hopes to determine what teachers typically expect the responsibilities of the library media specialist to be.

I am a graduate student in the School and Public Librarianship program at Rowan University, and I am conducting research as part of my Master's thesis, under the direction of Dr. Marilyn Shontz. Surveys are being sent via email to selected classroom teachers in all of the elementary schools in Gloucester County, New Jersey. Participation in this survey is strictly voluntary and all of your responses will be kept in strict confidence. Once the survey is returned to me, it will no longer be linked to your email address or school information.

This survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete and can be easily accessed by clicking the following link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=56453208228>

If you have any questions please email me at [farrin90@students.rowan.edu](mailto:farrin90@students.rowan.edu) or Dr. Shontz at [shontz@rowan.edu](mailto:shontz@rowan.edu). Additionally, if you are unable to access the survey, please contact me so I may send it to you as an attachment.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Farrington