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The collaborative relationship between teacher librarians and public librarians

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Abstract

The purpose of this research study is to develop an understanding of the collaborative relationships between teacher librarians and public librarians in Cedar County, Iowa, a region that includes five public school districts, seven public town libraries, and one branch of a county library system. Additionally, this research explores the potential role of public librarians in working with students on school curriculum and/or homework assignments. In conducting research, a survey was given to a variety of participants who serve teens or young adults through either public schools or public libraries in the research study area. Participants included school librarians, public librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators. In addition to the survey, teacher librarians and public librarians were asked to voluntarily participate in a follow-up interview that included additional questions as well as the opportunity to elaborate on survey responses. The research recorded the frequency and percentages of responses, looking for and noting commonalities in the participants' responses. The researcher discovered that a majority of the teacher librarians and public librarians surveyed are engaged in some form of professional relationship. Common current collaborative practices include mutual promotion of youth programs or events and shared resources. A disconnect emerged, however, concerning public librarians and their role in collaboration on school curriculum and student homework assignments. While all participants interviewed believe that the pursuit of collaborative relationships is worthwhile, responses differed concerning the library staff's responsibility in helping students with homework assignments. In general, participants' responses indicated current successful practices in collaboration as well as the potential for stronger relationships, including collaboration on school curriculum and student homework assignments, in the future.

THE COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER LIBRARIANS
AND PUBLIC LIBRARIANS

A Graduate Research Paper
Submitted to the
Division of School Library Studies
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
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by
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has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the
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Graduate Faculty Reader

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Graduate Faculty Reader

Date Approved

Head, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

ABSTRACT

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Every day after school, dozens of middle school students make the six-block walk to the town's public library to socialize with friends and start homework assignments. Students push worktables together and spread out textbooks, assignments, and stacks of papers. Periodically, students approach the circulation desk with questions about using a computer or borrowing a pencil, while other students seek homework help from the Internet or pull books from the shelves for research assignments and independent reading. As the students use the public library's resources, the public library staff works around them, shelving books and assisting patrons while shushing the talkative students. The students have questions about their homework assignments, but no one knowledgeable of the assignments is present to immediately help them. The public library staff members want to assist the students, but they do not have the information they need about the homework assignments to effectively help the students.

Problem Statement

One of the primary roles of any library -- whether it is public or school -- is to provide users with a positive learning environment. The ideas of continuous learning and educational growth are present in mission statements for both public libraries and school libraries (Amann & Carnesi, 2012). The Vision for Iowa School Libraries, written by the Iowa Department of Education Task Force on Libraries, states that school libraries should be "programs that engage the entire school community to elevate the learning experience for all" (Iowa Department of Education, 2013). Similarly, one goal of public libraries, identified as a model goal by the State Library of Iowa, is to provide customers with "the

collections, services, and programs they need to satisfy their curiosity and continue to learn throughout their lives” (Ames Public Library, n.d.). In addition, public library mission statements should also reflect a desire to serve a vital role in the community (Durrance & Fisher, 2005). This connection in goals is also stressed in the article *It Takes Two*, suggesting that school and public libraries should work hand-in-hand to achieve the mutual mission of serving students (Miller & Girmscheild, 2012).

With this strong overlap in mission statements, teacher librarians and public librarians should make excellent collaborative partners. However, the partnerships between public libraries and school libraries continue to be difficult to establish (Kniffel, 2005). Based on a *School Library Journal* survey of public libraries, only 30% of respondents collaborate with local school libraries on book purchases and a shocking nine percent work with school libraries to align materials that support school curriculum and homework assignments (Miller & Girmscheid, 2012). Perhaps because of this lack of collaboration, most students do not view public and school librarians as true colleagues (Amann & Carnesi, 2012). Differences in the roles of school and public librarians may limit the ability of individuals to work collaboratively toward the same goal (Hagen, 2004; Kniffel, 2005), as can various other factors, including lack of time, vision, resources, and/or support from administration (Murvosh, 2013).

These statistics only further highlight that the collaborative relationship between public libraries and school libraries must change to improve the quantity and quality of our customer service to youth (Jones & Shoemaker, 2001). Cooperation, according to the 1986 article, *Laying siege to the “fortress library,”* is essential to libraries; all libraries should work together as “The Library” instead of as separate entities (Gorman, 1986).

School and public libraries are not naturally separate; each should contribute equally to serve patrons with a lifetime of reading and learning (Kniffel, 2005).

The collaborative relationship between teacher librarians and public librarians is not a new topic; collaboration between school and public libraries has existed in its most traditional form, collection sharing, for over 100 years (Woolls, 2001). More recently, Amann and Carnesi (2012) note in their article *C is for Cooperation* that several ALA divisions have already joined to address and promote the collaboration. Founded in 2006, the committee has a primary focus of publishing and promoting the best practices in school and public library cooperation. Even with this national recognition, the relationship between the two types of libraries is predominantly viewed as weak; “many students considered school and public librarians not as true colleagues but as distant kin” (Amann & Carnesi, 2012, p. 11). With the increasing achievement expectations placed on students and the decrease in funding and personnel -- the need for libraries to connect and collaborate continues to be important (Dorril & Fine, 2013). In the article *School and Public Library Cooperation*, Shelley Dorrill and Jana Fine describe a cooperative relationship where both libraries are able to accomplish more together, and the literacy and informational needs of teens are better met. Several factors, including mentors who showed them the “incredible advantage” of working cooperatively with other librarians (Dorril & Fine, 2013, pp. 46), led to their successful partnership. Building strong personal relationships that include mutual trust and respect has also been an important part of successful working relationships (Baxter & Haggeberg, 2000; Hagen, 2004).

A successful partnership between public libraries and schools benefits both library programs. Collaboration can increase the buying power of both libraries’ budgets, as well

as have a positive impact on the libraries' programs for students and the larger communities both libraries serve (Murvosh, 2013). Specifically, school librarians gain value within their school community through collaboration (Kenney, 2005) and can learn strategies to better serve students from those working in public libraries (Dorrill & Fine, 2013). Likewise, public libraries will see more success in their literacy initiatives when they work closely with school libraries (Dorrill & Fine, 2013). Collaboration between school and public librarians strengthens the communities of young people (Jones, 2005), and best serves youth by applying the best of human and professional resources (Jones & Shoemaker, 2001). This strengthening of the community and service of both libraries could additionally have positive educational implications on classroom teachers and, most importantly, their students (Jones & Shoemaker, 2001). Separately, both school and public librarians have something valuable to offer. Therefore by combining knowledge, experiences, and resources, librarians provide students with a broader learning foundation and more effective services (Jones, 2004).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to develop an understanding of the collaborative relationships between teacher librarians and public librarians in Cedar County, Iowa, a region that includes five public school districts, seven public town libraries, and one branch of a county library system. Additionally, this research explores the potential role of public librarians in working with students on school curriculum and/or homework assignments.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do school employees, including teacher librarians and classroom teachers, expect students to utilize public libraries, librarians, and resources?
2. What do public librarians perceive as their responsibility in regard to school curriculum and student homework assignments?
3. What do school employees, including teacher librarians and classroom teachers, perceive as the public librarian's responsibility in regard to school curriculum and student homework assignments?
4. What do teacher librarians and public librarians perceive as their potential roles in collaboration on school curriculum and student homework assignments?

Assumptions

The assumption is made that the collaborative relationship between public librarians and teacher librarians in regard to school curriculum and student homework assignments could be improved. The assumption is also made that the teacher librarian and the public librarian perceive the role of the public librarian in school curriculum differently.

Limitations

This study represents the relationships in one county in Iowa and similar situations but may not represent the relationships between all public librarians and teacher librarians. The study focuses on middle school and high school students and therefore may not represent the needs or situations of elementary school students.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main responsibility of library services, whether of a school library or a public library, is to serve patrons well. Public libraries should strive to serve young adults by working collaboratively with school librarians and utilizing their best human and professional resources (Jones & Shoemaker, 2001). This study aims to explore the current collaborative relationship between school libraries and public libraries in Cedar County, Iowa, including what both the school librarian and public librarian view as their perceived role in the partnership. Previous research related to this study fell into four subthemes: elements of cooperation, school libraries' impact on student learning, the value of public libraries in a community, and public library services to teens and young adults. These four elements were selected as relevant to this research study because they incorporate the two distinct purposes of school libraries and public libraries (school libraries' impact on student learning and the value of public libraries in a community, respectively) as well as general elements of cooperation that potentially play a role in collaboratively connecting teacher librarians and public librarians. The fourth subtheme, public library services to teens and young adults, was included because of this study's specific focus on middle school and high school students.

Elements of Cooperation

A study conducted by Kluever and Finley (2012) explored the ways in which joint use libraries met the needs of student users and community members. The study, conducted in the Julia Hull District Library in Illinois, identified both the benefits and challenges of the cooperation. The library, which consisted of a single space and

collection but was funded and staffed separately by the community and the school district, was referred to as a partnership.

One of the greatest advantages to the partnership was the merged outreach to teachers and families within the school district. The joint use library was able to combine resources, including publicity and collection budgets, to promote library services and better meet the needs of patrons (Kluever & Finley, 2012). Since the shared library space had operational hours beyond the traditional school day, the joint use library created the Teen Advisory Council (TAC) to connect teens with the library and attract after-school users. As an additional result, teens were able to complete the community-volunteer hours required for graduation at the library. As an additional benefit to the school district, the joint use library was also able to connect different generations of learners through various programs. Through intergenerational programming, the library staff was able to identify benefits to both teen and senior library users.

Although this Illinois example showcased the many positive outcomes of a joint use library partnership, it also identified struggles discovered within the Julia Hull District Library. These struggles include the overexposure of continued library outreach to both students and the community, the intimidation of patrons resulting from the shared common space and elevated noise levels, and the potential censorship because of the differences in selection policies between the school board and the library board (Kluever & Finley, 2012). Also, for the purpose of the current study, the situation in Julia Hull District Library only addresses the benefits and challenges of a joint use library with shared space, not a situation where librarians have a collaborative relationship but separate collections and spaces.

Callison (1997) also examined the mutual advantages of developing school library partnerships, specifically those between school libraries and public libraries. This article focused specifically on whether or not the cooperative levels that exist between teacher librarians and classroom teachers could also exist between teacher librarians and young adult public librarians for reading promotion (p. 37).

Callison (1997) cited a survey completed by the American Library Association's Presidential Committee for Customer Service to Youth in which 50 exemplary library programs, honored in the publication *Excellence in Library Services to Young Adults*, were surveyed. Of the libraries that participated, 27 programs returned surveys that contained usable information concerning young adult services. Of the findings, most relevant to this study was the identification of barriers that prevented cooperation between school and public librarians. School librarians specifically cited lack of time as a major barrier (p. 44). In addition to time, the study also identified a lack of interest in joint collection development as a difficulty. Of those surveyed in the 1994 study, 66% of school librarians were open to the possibility of joint collection development, but 63% of public librarians were not open to a joint policy. The idea of collaborating in this area was described as "unlikely and undesirable" (p. 46).

Despite low numbers, Callison (1997) also cited a study by the National Center for Education Statics, completed only one year later, where libraries and schools reported several ways in which cooperation is increasing. According to the more recent data, 58% of public libraries report resource-sharing activities (e.g. interlibrary loans for schools) and an additional 60% host class visits from schools. Overall, Callison concluded programming aimed at reaching young adults, a group that arguably can be harder to

reach than younger students, requires effort and planning in a collaborative team undertaking.

In addition to the elements of cooperation in librarianship, relevant research that identifies the unique importance of school libraries' impact on student learning and public libraries' value to a community also needs to be examined.

School Libraries' Impact on Student Learning

Lance (2002) published research that synthesized the findings from four different studies - completed in Alaska, Pennsylvania, Colorado, and Oregon - and endeavored to identify the impact of school library media programs on the academic achievement of U.S. public schools. These four studies varied in their grade level focus, but together included elementary, middle and high school students in 1,369 public schools. In each state, data were gathered on school library media programs through surveys at the building level and student scores on academic standardized tests measured student achievement. To measure student achievement, Alaska used the California Achievement Test (CAT) and all other states used their own state standards-based tests.

Although there were variances in the surveys, common topics included: staffing levels, staff activities, collection size, usage statics, and available technology (Lance, 2002). Overall, Lance concluded that students performed better academically in schools where the library media professional was part of the planning and teaching team with the classroom teacher, provided tutoring for students in need, and was active in teaching information literacy. In addition, the study demonstrated the value of quality collections of books and other materials selected to support curriculum, and "the cooperation between school and other types of libraries, especially public libraries" (Lance, 2002).

Limitations have been identified in Lance's (2002) research. The studies do not account for school and community differences. For example, within the studies, higher library expenditures correlated with higher test scores, but higher test scores could also be linked to more prosperous schools that had the funding to increase the budgets of all educational services, not just library media. Also, inherent in these studies is the weakness of correlation analysis to establish causality. Still, some relationship between strengths of school library programs and student achievement was found in these state studies.

Following the previous study, Rodney, Lance, and Hamilton-Pennell (2002) were asked by the Iowa Area Education Agency (AEA) media directors to duplicate the Colorado study of school library media programs in Iowa. This study was designed to determine the connection, if any, between student achievement in reading and the presence of a strong library media program directed by a school librarian (pp. 2-3). The study had three major goals: to identify the characteristics of library media specialists and programs that affect academic achievement, to assess the contribution of collaboration between teachers and library media specialists to the effectiveness of library media programs, and to examine the growing role of information technology in library media programs, particularly licensed databases and the Internet.

Schools that participated in this study were self-selected from all those that serve students in grades 4, 8, and 11 in the state of Iowa. These grades were selected because reading achievement scores for Iowa students are gathered and analyzed annually for each of these grade levels (Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002, p. 29). The tests used to gather data included the reading test of the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills* for fourth

and eighth grade students and the *Iowa Test of Educational Development* for eleventh grade students. In addition to standardized test scores, a survey was also distributed to participating schools to collect data regarding library media success. This study was designed to elicit specific information about the library media program, staff, and resources that in previous studies correlated to reading achievement. Sections of the survey included: *Respondent Information, Hours of the Library Media Center, Library Media Staff, Paid Staff Activities, Library media Technology, usage of Library Media Services, Library Media Resources, and Annual Operating Expenditures for the Library Media Center* (pp. 29-32).

The researchers found that in all three grades, when school libraries were staffed at an average or above average level, reading scores were apt to be at the average to above average level. This trend was also present in the reverse; when library staffing was below average, the tests showed below average reading scores. The school libraries' effect on reading scores, however, was not the only factor identified when determining a connection between student achievement and the library media program (Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002).

At the elementary level, Rodney, Lance, and Hamilton-Pennell (2002) found that, beyond staffing, when librarians collaborated with teachers and oversaw the computer network, reading scores were higher. Reading scores were also more likely to be higher in schools that provided a collection with a greater number of books, periodical subscriptions, and videos. Additionally, an increase in the number of resources used in the library was associated with higher test scores (p. 42). Test scores showed that middle school students were more likely to benefit from an increase in the school library's hours

of operation. The researchers found that before school hours, more hours per week and increased student use of the school library were key to increased reading scores (p. 43). It was also concluded that high school students found benefit from increased time. The factors with the most impact, however, were the weekly hours of library media staffing per student and the hours devoted to reading motivation activities. The researchers also found that higher reading test scores were associated with high school libraries that contained a greater number of audio resources (p. 44).

In addition, researchers also found other factors that impacted reading scores at all grade levels. An increased level of and accessibility to technology was related to an increase in test scores (Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002). Schools that scheduled a librarian for more hours saw an increase in library usage; and an increase in school library use was related to higher reading test scores. Overall, Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell (2002) concluded that the professional school librarian has a far-reaching effect on the school library program. When a school librarian works with other teachers and administrators to create an environment that allows for access to resources, collaborative relationships between the librarian and other teachers and encourages student achievement, students are more likely to be successful (p. 74).

In 2004, Todd and Kuhlthau also completed a study to determine the effectiveness of school libraries in relationship to student learning. This study differed from that of Lance (2002) and Rodney, Lance, and Hamilton-Pennell (2002) in that it was conducted in Ohio and did not measure the effectiveness of libraries against academic achievement measured on standardized tests. In their study, Todd and Kuhlthau (2004) saw a need to conduct a study that explored student learning beyond standardized test scores.

Therefore, they sought to examine how effective school libraries helped students, as perceived by the students; their primary research question asked: “how do school libraries help students with their learning in and away from school?” (p. 63).

The study *Student Learning Through Ohio School Libraries*, conducted between October 2002 and December 2003, included 13,123 students in grades 3 to 12 and 879 teachers in 39 ‘effective’ school libraries across the state of Ohio. School libraries were nominated or self-nominated and then selected by an eleven-person panel that consisted of leaders in school library and the educational community within the state (Todd & Kuhalthau, 2004). Data were collected using a survey through the Rutgers University Web system. The survey consisted of 48 questions organized into the following seven categories:

1. How helpful the school library is with getting information you need.
2. How helpful the school library is with using the information to complete your schoolwork.
3. How helpful the school library is with your schoolwork in general.
4. How helpful the school library is with using computers in the library, at school, and at home.
5. How helpful the school library is to you with your general reading interests.
6. How helpful the school library is to you when you are not at school.
7. General school aspects.

Students were asked to rank each question on a scale of 1 (little help) to 4 (most helpful) or choose “Does not apply.” The study ended with an open-ended question that allowed students to describe a time when they sought assistance from the library and the outcome

(pp. 67-68). A similar survey was given to the faculty and administration of the selected schools, only with the pronoun *me* changed to *student* for adult participants.

Todd and Kuhalthau (2004) collected both quantitative and qualitative data and overall deduced that effective school libraries play an active role in student learning. Based on survey results, almost all students (99.4% or 13,050 students) indicated that the school library and its services had helped them in some way with their learning in or out of school. Only 73 students (.56%) indicated that none of the statements applied to them. As a result of this study, it was concluded that students clearly perceived the library as a helpful part in engaging them in their own learning and inquiry. Further, the study found that adult respondents believed that the school library and its programs were helpful to students and contributed to student achievement; and, when compared to student results, it was found that the adults rated the value of the school library even more highly than the students did.

In general, the three studies identified within this subtheme lay the foundation that libraries play an important role in student learning as well as mention the relationship of the school library to the public library (Lance, 2002). This foundation supports the current study in that the current study endeavors to identify how public libraries can further support student learning and the school curriculum, in addition to the vital role that school libraries already have. In addition to the important base of the school libraries impact on student learning established by the studies in this subtheme, the research studies cited in this subtheme all rely heavily on surveys, as does the current study.

While the three previous studies help to determine the value of school libraries, their programs, and teacher librarians, additional studies have been conducted that examine the importance of public libraries and their value in the communities they serve.

The Value of Public Libraries in Communities

In the years leading up to 2010, public libraries in the state of Ohio had collective success and were labeled “Best in the Nation” by various statistical rankings. A dissertation, completed by Klentzin (2010) as part of the requirements for a doctorate from Robert Morris University, examined the phenomenon of success surrounding the public libraries. For the study, Klentzin endeavored to identify the factors that contributed to the initial and continued success of the Ohio public libraries as well as how the staff of the Ohio public libraries described their experiences with the phenomenon (p. 4). This more in-depth study was preceded by a pilot study in 2009 and included a population of ten participants who had previously or currently worked for the Ohio Public Library System and individually chosen to include as many diverse viewpoints as possible.

Klentzin (2010) conducted qualitative study through interviews with all participants. One of the leading factors cited in the success of the Ohio public library system was the shared identity that the individual branches achieved. The libraries included in the study had increased resources at their disposal because of their collaboration with each other. Klentzin found that at the time, the Ohio public libraries being studied had four times the number of interlibrary loans as the national average. Klentzin also found that the “integral driver for the phenomenon for success” was the funding (p. 142). According to the participants, the state’s commitment to

funding led to (among other factors) higher library salaries, professional development, and a feeling of worth and status among the branches.

While Klentzin's dissertation (2010) outlined the components of a successful library system, it also had its limitations. Participants in this study were limited by geographical area and did not include interviewees from the western side of the state of Ohio or other states; a limitation that could mask significant regional differences. In addition, while the Ohio public library system was deemed excellent, only 13 inner-city libraries served 50% of the state population. These 13 libraries had the ability to make decisions and set the tone for the state's 250 total libraries.

In contrast to Klentzin (2010), who examined the success of libraries from the point of view of staff, both Daurio (2010) and Heuertz (2009) examined the success of libraries in relation to the communities they serve. Daurio, a master's student at Portland State University, conducted a study analyzing the perceptions of collaboration by exploring the opinions and actions of a public library and three community-based organizations (p. 2). In this study, Daurio interviewed 13 adult participants from three different organizations, two library branches, and library administration personnel and studied how collaborations between different groups are formed, what factors contributed to or hindered collaborations, and the role that libraries played in the partnerships.

Daurio (2010) used in-depth interviews with the individual participants along with general information about the various organizations as sources of insight for the study. Throughout the thesis, the words partnership and collaboration were used interchangeably, but favored using the term partnership for two groups working together and collaboration for two individuals (p. ii). Out of the 86 examples of working together

cited, 73 of them began as individual collaboration (one individual from each organization). These positive personal relationships were described as trust building and led to successful partnerships between the organizations as a whole. The study supported having a contact person within the library who patrons and community members can approach about potential partnerships (p. 76). Furthermore, Daurio (2010) found that the community organizations perceived the library as a partner differently than how the library perceived itself. Community organizations did not view the library as a possible partner, even though all library staff stated that one of the goals of the library was to reach out to the community.

Heuertz (2009) also studied how libraries reach out to community members by highlighting three rural library sites attempting to reduce the “digital divide - a phrase commonly used to describe the gap between those who benefit from new technologies and those who do not” (p. 7). Heuertz focused on the research question: What qualities influence the success of these rural libraries that engage in community building? Data were collected using qualitative methods, which included: field visits, interviews, observations and informal conversation, and document and artifact collection (p. 34). Heuertz concluded that through everyday work, the public libraries he examined did build community and both directly and indirectly supported changes in the community.

Although these studies were limited to small libraries over a short period of time, Heuertz identified some of the successful aspects of the community programs. Successful programs were libraries that had welcoming environments and ongoing efforts to stay current with collections, community information, and multi-generational programs. On the other hand, the study also uncovered some obstacles that interfered with the

community-building work. These obstacles included: community leaders' limited view of the library's potential role, difficulty identifying potential partner organizations, and the stereotype that libraries are mostly a place for women and children (p. 261).

Clark and Hawkins (2011) looked at the public library's interaction with students, rather than community members in general. Under the auspices of the National Literacy Trust, this study looked at the correlative link between public library use and school achievement. This study, which concluded in February 2011, surveyed 17,089 pupils ranging in age from 8 to 16 from more than 112 different schools in London, England. Students were given a 32-question online survey to examine young people's use of the library, the factors that influenced their use of the public library, and the link between public library use and students' reading habits and academic achievement (p. 5).

The correlative data showed that students who read below grade level were twice as likely not to be regular public library users whereas students who read above grade level were twice as likely to use public libraries (Clark & Hawkins, 2011). Results also showed that students' attitudes toward reading were analogous; public library users were twice as likely to say they enjoyed reading but non-users were three times as likely to rate themselves as poor readers. In addition, 15.5% of students who were not public library users believed that the public library did not offer any educational advantage, but 38.2% of students who currently use the public library believe that it helped them do better in school. Overall, the study concluded that students who used the public library regularly were more successful academically.

Public Library Services to Teens and Young Adults

Beyond the overall value of public libraries in their communities, examining specific programs and services that public libraries offer to teens and young adults provides important contextual understanding for this study. The following studies look more closely at the reasons why young adults use public libraries, as well as examine the interactions between public library staff and middle school and high school students.

Agosto (2007) completed a study in Pennsylvania and New Jersey that “sought to create a model of various reasons why teens use public libraries, based on information gathered directly from teen library users” (p. 55). The study also examined two related research questions: what are the basic purposes for which young adults use public libraries? And how can public libraries adapt their services to better match teens’ reasons for using them? The multiple-part survey was designed, pretested, and administered in two public libraries. Youth librarians in Sellers Library in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania and Elizabeth Public Library in New Jersey distributed 50 surveys each to teens between the ages of 14 and 17 on a first-come basis. The primary limitation in this study is the use of a convenience sample. The results only reflect the behaviors of the public library users in both Upper Darby and Elizabeth; they do not reflect the general teen population, which includes both users and nonusers.

Part one of the survey asked a number of basic demographic questions including: age, sex, frequency of public library use, frequency of school library use, and home computer access (Agosto, 2007). Part two asked participants three open-ended questions: “Why did you come to the library today?” “What kinds of information do you look for at the library?” and “What kinds of information do you need that you can’t find at the

library?” When asked to rate their frequency of public and school library use on a four-point scale, the researcher found that respondents indicated a much higher public library use than school library use, which was not surprising considering that the 97 respondents to the survey were all chosen because they were users of a public library (p. 57). When asked the question “Why did you come to the library today?” many participants in the survey listed multiple reasons, resulting in 163 total responses. The researcher analyzed the responses using constant comparative method, which narrowed down the qualitative data into 11 categories and three main roles of the public library: the library as information gateway, the library as social interaction/entertainment space, and the library as beneficial physical environment (p. 58).

Overall, Agosto concluded that public librarians need to be considered more than just information providers given that of the responses listed by respondents, only half involved information gathering (Agosto, 2007). Public libraries need to serve as information gateways as well as places for social interaction/entertainment, and a place for personal and community improvement. With this in mind, libraries can “support a fuller range of teen interests and needs and make libraries more significant forces in teens’ lives” (p. 61).

In a recent study conducted in Karnataka, a state in southwest India, Kumara and Nikem (2013) explored the attitudes and perception of young adult public library (YAPL) users. This study, which included only the main central library in each of the state’s five districts, had six main objectives: establishing the purpose for which YAPL users visit the public library, determining the attitudes of the respondents toward the quality of library

staff, and determining their overall attitudes towards the public library services and facilities.

The study was conducted using a survey method. Questionnaires, printed in both Kannada and English languages, were given to a random sampling of YAPL users between the ages of 15 and 40 (Kumara & Nikem, 2013). A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed (100 each at the five central locations) and a total of 384 questionnaires were returned, making the response rate 76.8%. Of the 384 respondents, 36.4% (or 140) were students who identified their main purposes for visiting the library: to use newspapers/magazines and journals, to prepare for competitive exam[s] and quizzes, and to read textbooks and other reading materials (p. 11).

The general attitude of YAPL users toward the quality of the library staff was favorable (Kumara & Nikem, 2013). More specifically, respondents ranked the staff's ability to motivate users and perform services in the right manner as high, but the staff's 'knowledge of culture interest of young adults' received the lowest ranking. Overall, Kumara and Nikem (2013) concluded that, "considering the above parameters the present study reveals that the YAPL users have good attitudes and opinions towards public library services in Southern Karnataka." (pp. 13-14). These findings may or may not be unique to India.

In 2011, Howard also examined the attitude of 12 to 15 year olds toward the public library, in a study conducted in Eastern Canada. This study, conducted between October 2006 and January 2007, asked the research question: "What do twelve - to fifteen-year-olds think of the public library?"(p. 324). The study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, homeroom teachers of grades 7 through 9 distributed print

surveys to 900 students in twelve different graphic districts within the region. Of those surveys, a total of 249 responses were usable (a response rate of approximately 28%). In the second phase, a series of nine focus group discussions were held. Students were randomly chosen from the survey respondents who volunteered to participate and, within the participants, 70% were girls and only 30% were boys. Groups were held during the junior high lunch periods and ranged in size from seven to twelve students.

Howard (2011) identified limitations for the study, including the possibility that, given the age, the response of some respondents could be considered unreliable. It is also noted that over two-thirds of the students who received surveys did not respond. This limited response rate could introduce an element of bias because students self-selected for the study.

Survey results concluded that respondents were fairly low users of the public library on a regular basis. One quarter of teens identified themselves as either nonusers or once-a-year users (17.3% and 18.5% respectively). However, a large number (82.6%) had used the library at least once in the past year (Howard, 2011). The teen users reported a strong overall satisfaction with the public library, with over half (63.4%) of the respondents stating that they were satisfied with the public library and only 15.8% expressing dissatisfaction. When examining the teens' interaction with the public library staff, 75.5% stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the library staff and only 9.4% indicated that they were dissatisfied with library staff. In contrast, teens also indicated that they had very little overall rapport with the library staff, rating them as one of the least important influences on their library or reading experiences.

Howard (2011) concluded that, although teens and young adults in this region of Canada had an overall positive impression of the public library, they were not frequent users. The teens highlighted the lack of rapport with the library staff as a key barrier to library use, along with the lack of appealing facility and teen library website.

Similarly to Kumara & Nikam (2013) and Howard (2011), a 1999 initiative funded by The Wallace Foundation entitled the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development Initiative, found that youth relationships with public library staff is an important factor in teen programming (Spielberger, Horton, & Michels, 2004). This initiative, which included nine sites from across the United States, intended to “support the development of innovative models for public library systems to provide high quality educational enrichment and career development programs for underserved low-income teenagers and children” (p. 2). The four-year evaluation of this initiative included interviews and surveys of youth, library staff, and community members. Evaluators also held more in-depth youth participation studies at three of the sites.

The findings of the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development Initiative were published by the Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago in a discussion paper titled, *New on the Shelf: Teens in the Library* (Spielberger, Horton, & Michels, 2004). As a whole, the study demonstrated that, regardless of financial or human resources, youth programming was more successful when the goal of serving young people was a principal part of the library’s overall mission (p. 3). Key findings also concluded that supporting youth programming is complicated and takes commitment, but that public libraries had the potential to design programs that were valuable experiences for the teens. The benefits they discovered for teens included:

attracting teens that hadn't traditionally been users of the public library (including both boys and girls) and an increase in the positive relationships between teens and program leaders and staff, which included more positive attitudes towards youth among the library staff.

Studies in the subtheme Public Library Services to Teens and Young Adults add to the foundation of the current study in that the current study is specifically looking at how teacher librarians and the public library staff can collaborate and work together to support teens and young adults in homework assignments and school curriculum. The four studies reviewed in this subtheme examine interactions between the public library staff and teen and young adult patrons; these interactions could potentially correlate to what the public libraries included in the current study experience as well as potentially have an impact on the role that the public library staff has in assisting students with homework assignments and school curriculum.

Summary

Previous studies have been conducted to examine current situations of cooperation between school libraries and public libraries. Two different studies explored the advantages and disadvantages of these partnerships; both found that although the potential for successful collaboration exists, barriers also exist. One study specifically explored the joint use library in Julia Hall District in Illinois, while another surveyed young adult librarians in both public and school libraries (Callison, 1997; Kluever & Finley, 2012).

Researchers have also looked at the influences of school libraries and public libraries separately. When examining school libraries, all researchers focused on the

impact school library programs have on student achievement. In all studies reviewed, students were found to perform better academically in schools with strong library media programs (Lance, 2002; Rodney, Lance, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2002; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004). In studies completed by Lance (2002) and Rodney, Lance, and Hamilton-Pennell (2002), standardized test scores were used to show that students are more successful academically in schools with strong library media programs and schools where library media professionals had an active role in planning and teaching. In a different study, it was found that both students and teachers themselves viewed the school library and its services as having a positive impact on academic learning (Todd and Kuhlthau, 2004). Additional studies have examined the importance of public libraries in specific communities. All studies reported that through positive relationships with patrons, public libraries help support positive changes in their communities (Clark & Hawkins, 2011; Daurio, 2010; Heuertz, 2009; Klentzin, 2010). One study looked at the factors that contributed to the success of Ohio Public Libraries while additional studies have explored the collaboration between public libraries and the communities they serve, including the correlative link between the students who use the public library and their success in school.

Lastly, researchers have studied current library services specifically directed toward serving teens and young adults. One study, completed by Agosto (2007), sought to identify the reasons why young adults and teens use the public library, while additional studies examined the attitudes of young adult library users. Studies completed by Kumara & Nikam (2013), Howard (2011) and Spielberger, Horton, & Michels (2004) all identified the patron's relationship with the public library staff as a huge factor in the

teen's attitude toward public libraries. The study completed by the Chapin Hall Center for Children found that youth programs could be successful with support from dedicated staff and a commitment to positive relationships with youth patrons.

One limitation to the reviewed studies to date is that they are not specific to the collaborative relationships between school librarians and public librarians working in separate library spaces but sharing the goal of improved student learning. In addition to the work in previous literature, the current study will examine the potential role of public librarians in school curriculum and student homework assignments as perceived by teacher librarians, administrators, and classroom teachers as it applies to the libraries in Cedar County, Iowa.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Even though evidence indicates that both school libraries and public libraries serve young adult readers in similar ways, the teacher librarian and public librarian's collaborative responsibility in regard to school curriculum and student homework assignments has not been studied. Through this study, the researcher will examine the collaborative relationships between teacher librarians and public librarians in Cedar County, Iowa, including the teacher librarian and public librarian's perceived roles in the relationship and their potential roles in supporting school curriculum.

Research Design

In order to examine both numerical data and narrative responses from all participants, the researcher performed a descriptive study. Wildemuth (2009) explained that one of the purposes of a descriptive study is "to understand a particular phenomenon for the particular purpose of using that understanding to improve a system's or program's design" (p. 28). Wildemuth explained that a researcher engages in descriptive studies to deepen understanding of a phenomenon or behavior. This study explored the current and perceived roles of teacher librarians and public librarians when working collaboratively with students on school curriculum. As stated by Wildemuth, descriptive research questions arise in the beginning stages of a program of study. The research questions in this study have not appeared in previous school library literature and intended to provide a description of the phenomenon being studied and, potentially, the relationships to other library media phenomena.

Procedures

Data Sources

The population in this study included all public school districts and all public libraries in Cedar County, Iowa. Cedar County is located in eastern Iowa and includes five public school districts, seven public town libraries, and one branch of a neighboring county library system. Cedar County, Iowa was chosen as the site for this research study as a convenience sample. A total of 23 participants were invited to participate in the study. To verify data using triangulation, this study included all librarians who serve young adults and teens as well as one administrator and one classroom teacher from each school district.

To ensure privacy of participants and to encourage authentic responses, all identifying information (including library names, school district names, and individual participant names) was changed. Contact information for all participants was taken from online staff directories and/or library websites. Each participant was emailed the link to an online survey comprised of both closed-ended and open-ended questions (see Appendix A). Data collected from the survey was organized using an online tool and returned to the researcher via email. In addition to the survey, librarians were asked to voluntarily participate in a follow-up interview with the researcher. Participants for follow-up interviews were volunteers selected based on their open-ended survey responses in order to achieve a variety of perspectives. The interviews included additional open-ended questions as well as the opportunity to elaborate on survey responses (see Appendix B).

The survey questions and interview questions were carefully designed to be brief and easy to complete, both in wording and in organization, as to not require a large time commitment from participants. Throughout the study, only questions essential to the purpose of the study were asked. Questions were asked in complete sentences to lessen the chance of misinterpretation and were intended to be specific using neutral, unbiased language (Wildemuth, 2009).

Before the survey was distributed, the researcher received Institutional Research Board approval from the Office of Sponsored Programs, University of Northern Iowa. During data collection, the researcher made multiple contacts with participants: an introductory email, distribution of the survey and informed consent document, and a thank you/reminder email one week later. Follow-up interviews were conducted one-on-one and scheduled at the earliest convenience of both the participant and the researcher.

Data Analysis

Using a quantitative data analysis, closed-ended survey question responses were tallied based on the frequency of each response; calculated percentages were then used to analyze overall patterns in responses. This method is appropriate for questions that have specific criteria that can be classified and measured. Responses to open-ended questions were coded and analyzed for patterns and reoccurring themes. Based on initial survey responses, the researcher started with a short list of preliminary themes that reflected common ideas in participant responses. As additional survey data was received, the appropriate themes were noted and highlighted. As new themes emerged, they were added to the list of preliminary themes. This list of preliminary themes can be seen in Table 1. Follow-up interviews with librarians were recorded using an audio digital

recorder, transcribed by the researcher, coded, and analyzed in a similar format. This method of qualitative data analysis allows researchers to understand the data in a subjective but systematic manner (Wildemuth, 2009).

Table 1

Preliminary Themes

Common/mutual goals
Time as a barrier of collaboration
Effective communication
Shared online resources/databases
Supplement (print) collection
Collaboration on summer reading program
Affect of 1:1 schools on library use
Shared curriculum

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the collaborative relationships between teacher librarians and public librarians in Cedar County, Iowa, as well as explore the potential role of public librarians when working with students on school curriculum and/or homework assignments.

Findings

This study included five public school districts, seven public town libraries, and one branch of a county library system. Surveys were sent via email to 23 participants: five school librarians, eight public librarians, five classroom teachers, and five administrators. Completed surveys were returned by 14 participants (five school librarians, five public librarians, and four classroom teachers/administrators), which represent a return rate of 61% of all surveys. Based on participant volunteers and responses to open-ended questions, face-to-face follow-up interviews were conducted with one public librarian and two school librarians.

All survey and interview responses were coded and analyzed for patterns and reoccurring themes (see Table 1). Additionally, the researcher collated survey and interview responses and then examined the range of responses in order to identify emergent trends or differing perspectives for each of the four research questions:

1. To what extent do school employees, including teacher librarians and classroom teachers, expect students to utilize public libraries, librarians, and resources?
2. What do public librarians perceive as their responsibility in regard to school curriculum and student homework assignments?

3. What do school employees, including teacher librarians and classroom teachers, perceive as the public librarian's responsibility in regard to school curriculum and student homework assignments?
4. What do teacher librarians and public librarians perceive as their potential roles in collaboration on school curriculum and student homework assignments?

Teacher Librarian and Public Librarian's Current Collaborative Practices

Given that teachers, librarians, and districts currently have varying practices for collaboration, initial survey and interview questions sought to determine current practices in the collaborative relationships between public librarians and school staff (including teacher librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators). Of the 15 participants surveyed, five teacher librarians and three school staff members indicated that they had contact information for the public library staff; and four public librarians indicated that they had contact information for the school library staff. Of these 12 participants, or 80%, who have contact information, 11 of them have initiated a collaborative relationship by having met or spoken previously. However, as survey and interview questions delved into more specific examples of collaboration (for example collaborative goals and shared curriculum materials) the percentage of public libraries and school libraries currently engaging in those collaborative practices varied. Table 2 summarizes the specific data collected for each collaborative practice.

Table 2

Current Collaborative Practices

Collaborative Practice	Number of Participants	Percent of Participants
Developed a List of Collaborative Goals	1/10	10%
Shared Curriculum Materials	4/10	40%
Notified of Upcoming School Assignments or Events	6/14	43%
Publicized Youth Programs or Events	11/14	78%
Shared Resources	6/10	60%
Collaboratively Developed Materials or Planned Youth Programs	4/10	40%

As indicated above, the most common collaborative practice that school libraries and public libraries currently engage in is the promotion of youth programs or events. The topic of promotion of youth programs or events also came up in each of the three interviews conducted. All librarians shared that the school libraries and public libraries have worked together in the past to promote the ALA summer reading program and events, as well as other programs including Read Across America Week and Star Wars Reads Day. In one particular community, the youth public librarian visits the schools each spring and introduces the public library's summer reading program to all students grades K-8 in the school's media center. The teacher librarian relates that she has definitely seen positive results from this collaboration. Although there are not statistics for number of students involved, every year she receives positive comments about the collaboration.

The second most common collaborative practice between the public library and school library is the sharing of resources, such as books, automated systems, reference materials, databases, etc. Sixty percent of the teacher librarians and public librarians surveyed indicated that they shared resources. Of those, examples of resources shared included: baskets of books from the public library for use in classrooms, website links to automation systems and/or online catalogs, and website lists, lists of award winners, and general book lists. One of the teacher librarians interviewed added that her school shares the usernames and passwords for purchased online databases with the public library staff so that students can access the resources when using computers at the public library.

A majority of the current collaborative practices (sharing of resources, promoting of youth programs and events, etc.) are examples of the teacher librarian and public library staff working together, but are also very low-level examples of true collaboration. Both the teacher librarian and the public library staff have promoted youth programs and events organized by the other, but fewer than half of the schools (40% of librarians surveyed) had instances where school library and public library staff developed the program together and shared in the workload and benefits. Examples of materials or programs collaboratively developed included: Battle of the Books contest, summer reading programs, and Read Across America celebrations.

The teacher librarians and public librarians interviewed were asked to identify what elements they viewed as barriers to a stronger collaborative relationship. All three follow-up interview participants identified common planning time as the biggest barrier to collaboration. Both teacher librarians interviewed work within fixed library schedules, so a majority of their communication with public librarians takes place via email or

outside of the scheduled workday. Additional barriers identified were limited budgets (money), lack of common collaborative goals, and no organized evaluation or improvement process for the collaborative relationship.

Student Use of Public Libraries, Librarians, and Resources

Further survey and interview questions about current practices addressed the level to which students currently use the public library for school assignments. Of the nine teacher librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators surveyed, 100% indicated that they currently encourage students to use the public library. However, none of the teacher librarians, classroom teachers, or administrators are currently aware of homework assignments given by the schools that require students to use the public library resources or directly seek help of the public library staff.

On the other side of the collaborative relationship, four different public librarians (80%) indicated that helping students with homework assignments is currently part of their daily duties. When asked what types of support students typically require, survey responses included: finding books for reading assignments, finding information and books for reports, and placing interlibrary loan requests for students. The most common support, however, was providing free Internet access and printing services to students. The public librarian interviewed noted that students are asking the public library staff for help on homework assignments less than in the past, and that she also observes fewer students working on homework assignments at the library. She attributes the shift away from students using the public library's resources for homework to the school's implementation of 1:1 laptops for each student. She observed that students are more likely to use Internet resources for research instead of nonfiction books. The

implementation of 1:1 laptops could also correlate with student's increased use of free Wi-Fi and printing services at the public library.

Public Librarian's Perceived Responsibility in Student Academics

One area where participant responses varied the most was the topic of the public librarian's role in helping students with homework assignments and school curriculum. As indicated in Table 3, 100% of the public librarians surveyed believe that providing academic support is part of their responsibility, but none of the school staff (classroom teachers and administrators) believe that providing academic support is part of the public library staff's responsibility. Teacher librarians were divided on the issue with three librarians (60%) who believe that providing academic support is part of the public library staff's responsibility). These results indicate a disconnect between how public librarians perceive their role in collaboration on school curriculum and student homework assignments and how school staff members perceive that same role.

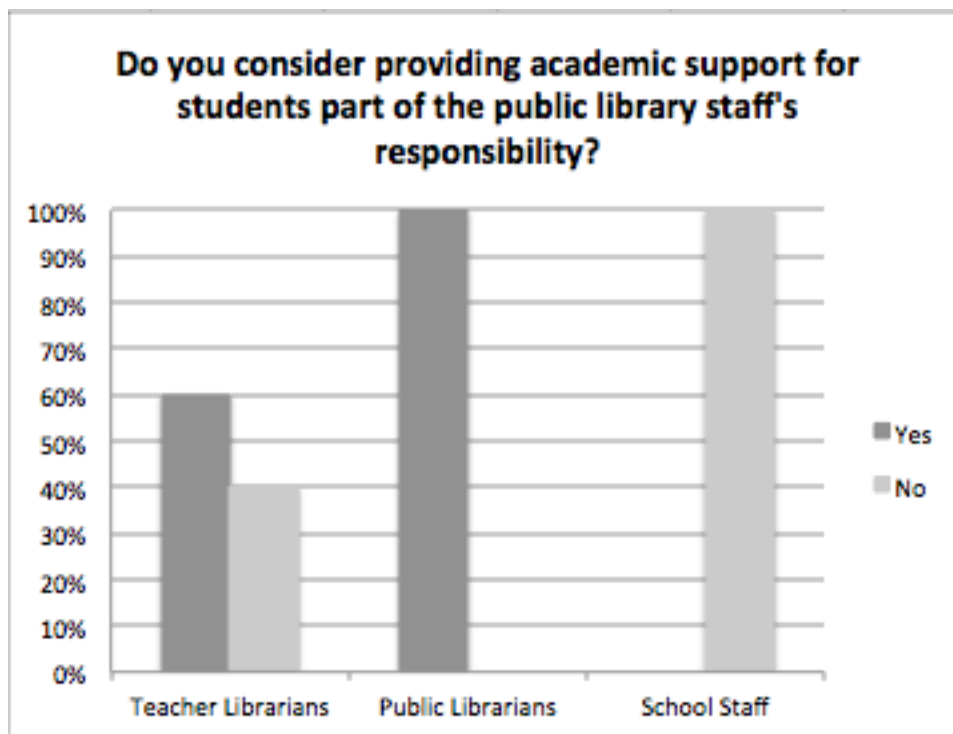


Figure 1. Bar graph showing participants' responses to the question: do you consider providing academic support for students part of the public library staff's responsibility? Responses are separated by participant's position.

To gain some insight into this topic, all participants who were interviewed were asked to elaborate on why they believed that public librarians shared some responsibility for student academics. The public librarian interviewed explained that she does consider providing academic support to her patrons a part of her job and, although it is not specifically indicated in her job description, she does rise to the occasion when students using the library seek help. The teacher librarians interviewed were two of the three teacher librarians who consider providing academic support for students as part of the public library staff's responsibility. One explained that her answer to this question stemmed from the current practice in which the public librarian in her community

provides academic support to students. The other teacher librarian explained that it depended on the academic support needed. For example, assisting students with locating a book or information for a homework assignment is part of the universal role of helping patrons find information that all librarians share. Two additional teacher librarian participants shared that the public library in their school districts provide tutoring services and/or homework help to students after school on a limited basis.

Additional survey questions asked participants about specific ways the public library staff could become more involved in student academics and school curriculum. Of the 15 participants surveyed, 93% (14 participants) indicated that, if given the opportunity, they would feel comfortable sharing curriculum objectives and/or academic expectations with the public library staff as well as have the public library staff attend curriculum planning meetings. These results suggest that, although several teacher librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators do not view academic support as part of the public library staff's responsibility, they would be willing to allow those same staff members to learn more about the academic expectations for students and the school curriculum.

Furthermore, all three librarians who participated in follow-up interviews stated that they believed that the young adults and teens in their community could benefit academically from an improved collaborative relationship between the public library staff and the school library staff. One of the teacher librarians interviewed went on to explain that an improved collaboration on student academics could also provide students with emotional support by having a safe place to study and an additional caring adult to go to for encouragement.

Summary

Overall, the data collected showed that a majority of teacher librarians and public librarians surveyed are currently engaged in a professional relationship as well as 100% of the public librarians, teacher librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators surveyed indicated that they believed that the pursuit of further cooperation between school library staff and public library staff is worthwhile.

Analysis of the current practices in the collaborative relationships between public librarians, school librarians, and school staff indicated that the most common practices were mutual promotion of youth programs or events and shared resources. Deeper collaborative practices, such as having common collaborative goals, and collaboratively developing materials or planning youth programs are current practice in only a few schools. This study identified common planning time as the biggest barrier to deeper collaboration. Several factors contributed to a lack of shared planning time, including fixed school library schedules as well as the limited working hours of the public librarians. Time, as well as budget limitations, was viewed by the librarians interviewed as a barrier that could not be overcome under the current circumstances.

The study also identified that while teacher librarians, classroom teachers and administrators are encouraging middle school and high school students to use the public library and its resources, they do not make it an academic expectation for students. Similarly, the public librarian interviewed identified a decrease in the number of students using the public library, librarians, and resources for help with school curriculum and/or homework assignments. In addition to current practices, participants were also asked what they viewed as the public library staff's role in helping students with school

curriculum and homework assignments. Public librarians surveyed view helping student patrons with homework as part of their role, while a majority of teacher librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators did not view that as part of the public library staff's responsibility. Both public librarians and school staff, however indicated that they would be willing, if given the opportunity, to have public librarians attend school planning and curriculum meetings to learn more about academic expectations and play a greater role in helping students with their academics.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

Purpose Statement

This study sought to explore the current collaborative relationship between school libraries and public libraries in Cedar County, Iowa, including what both the school librarian and public librarian view as the public library staff's role in working with students on school curriculum and/or homework assignments.

Conclusions

Similar to the previously reviewed study by Callison (1997), this study found that teacher librarians and the public library staff have had success with resource-sharing activities, classroom visits to the public library, and mutual promotion of youth programs or events. However, the data collection also showed that while most teacher librarians and public librarians are engaged in professional relationships, the level of collaboration is primarily limited to surface examples of working together. For example, current practices include networking or cooperation, rather than a partnership or true collaboration. Also consistent with the reviewed studies by Callison (1997) and Kluever & Finley (2012), this study found that barriers to successful collaboration currently exist. Participants cited several different barriers to collaboration (limited time, limited budgets, lack of common collaborative goals, no organized evaluation or improvement process) and, in addition, interview participants implied that a lack of formal communication made it difficult to foster a strong collaborative relationship. Interview participants indicated that a majority of the communication between teacher librarians and the public library staff happens informally via email or in passing during classes or other events. Several

participants specified that, based on individual job requirements and schedules, there is currently no designated formal planning time between teacher librarians and the public library staff.

This lack of profound collaboration seems to contradict the belief, from all participants, that collaboration between teacher librarians and public librarians is a worthwhile pursuit. This study had a high number of participants who would be willing, if given the opportunity, to attend planning meetings and work together to meet the curricular needs of students. But, based on survey and interview results, the teacher librarians and public library staff in Cedar County, Iowa appear to be comfortable in their current practices of collaboration. Without formal meeting procedures or an evaluation process, steps are not currently being made to move toward an even more productive collaborative relationship in the school districts and communities surveyed. In addition, many participants indicated on their responses that they were content with the current collaborative relationship and felt that current practices were yielding positive results with students. While there have been some successes in the current collaborative practices between teacher librarians and the public library staff, it is evident there is also the potential to develop an even stronger collaborative partnership.

The largest variance, in both the opinions of participants and in current practices was in the areas of students utilizing the public library's resources and in the public librarian's role in regard to school curriculum and student homework assignments. Study results indicated a strong disconnect between how public librarians view their role in helping students with school curriculum and/or homework assignments and how school librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators view that same role. In addition, there

is also disconnect between the actions of teacher librarians and the school staff toward the use of public libraries. All teacher librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators indicated that they encourage students to use the public library resources, but none of the participants have given students homework assignments that directly require the use of the public library. Several factors, including more formal lines of communication, could attribute to the variations in the area of collaboration on student homework assignments and school curriculum. An additional conclusion, also reached by Herertz (2009) in a study that looked at partnerships between the community and public library, is that the school staff members surveyed have a limited view of the library staff's potential in relation to school curriculum.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although this research study used survey information from several different school districts and participants who serve as school librarians, public librarians, classroom teachers, and administrators, four of the five school districts are of similar size (serving between 700 and 950 students PK-12), and all school districts are located in rural communities. It would be interesting to see if these same conclusions could be drawn if the research included a greater number of districts of varying sizes and/or geographical settings.

In future studies, it would also be intriguing to analyze how the collaborative relationships between teacher librarians and public librarians would be affected by a more structured format of collaboration, including written goals and an evaluation process. Would these collaborative relationships benefit from a structure similar to what is currently used statewide for Professional Learning Communities (PLC)? In addition,

student opinions of perceptions of both use of public librarians, librarians and resources as well as their perceptions of the collaborative roles of teacher librarians and public librarians would offer an additional, and potentially beneficial, perspective.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER LIBRARIANS

Select the answer that best describes your situation or fill in the blanks as requested.

Completion of this survey includes implied consent to your participation in the research study; if you would prefer not to participate, please do not complete the survey.

School District: _____

How long have you been in your current position? _____

Would you consider your library schedule fixed, flexible, or both? _____

Are you assigned additional duties outside the library? YES NO

Please briefly describe your typical weekly schedule (including how your time is divided between libraries, if applicable): _____

Current Collaborative Relationships

Do you have the contact information for the public library staff? YES NO

Have you ever met or spoken on the phone with the public library staff? YES NO

Have you visited the public library in your capacity as school library staff? YES NO

Do you feel comfortable asking the public library staff for help? YES NO

Have you developed a list of goals for cooperation with the public library staff? YES NO

Have you shared curriculum materials with the public library staff? YES NO

Have you notified the public library of upcoming school assignments or events? YES NO

Have you publicized youth programs or events for the public library? YES NO

Have you taken students to the public library? YES NO

If you answered yes, please list reasons: _____

Do you currently share resources such as books/automated systems/reference materials/databases/etc. with the public library? YES NO

If you answered yes, please list what you share: _____

Have you developed materials for student use or planned for youth programs with the public library staff? YES NO

If you answered yes, please list the materials you have developed or programs you have planned: _____

Do you have a cooperative purchasing agreement with the public library? YES NO

Student Use of Public Libraries, Librarians, and Resources

Do students in this school district use more than one public library? YES NO

If you answered yes, what are the names of these libraries? _____

Do you currently encourage your students to use the public library? YES NO

Have you given assignments that require students to use the public library resources?

YES NO UNSURE

If you answered yes, please list the resources you required students to use: _____

Have you given assignments that require students to seek the help of the public library staff? YES NO UNSURE

If you answered yes, please explain: _____

Do you consider providing academic support for students part of the public library staff's responsibility? YES NO

If given the opportunity, would you feel comfortable sharing curriculum objectives and/or academic expectations with the public library staff? YES NO

If given the opportunity, would you feel comfortable having public library staff attend curriculum planning meetings? YES NO

Do you believe the pursuit of cooperation between school library staff and public library staff is worthwhile? YES NO

Additional Thoughts and Information

Would you be willing to meet with the researcher for a follow-up interview? Questions will further address collaboration between school librarians and public librarians as well as provide opportunities for you to elaborate on your survey responses. YES NO

If you answered yes, please provide your email address: _____

If you would like to share any additional thoughts or information, please do so in this space: _____

Thank you so much for your time and attention to this survey. Your input is greatly appreciated!

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIANS

Select the answer that best describes your situation or fill in the blanks as requested.

Completion of this survey includes implied consent to your participation in the research study; if you would prefer not to participate, please do not complete the survey.

Library Name: _____

What is your title? _____ Length of time at this position? _____

How many hours per day do you work at this library? _____

Please briefly describe your typical weekly schedule (including how much of your time is devoted to youth services): _____

Current Collaborative Relationships

Do you have the contact information for the staff of the school library? YES NO

Have you ever met or spoken on the phone with the staff of the school library? YES NO

Have you visited the school or school library in your area in your capacity as public library staff? YES NO

Do you feel comfortable asking the school library staff for help? YES NO

Have you developed a list of goals for cooperation with the school library staff? YES NO

Has the staff of the school library shared curriculum materials with you? YES NO

Has the staff of the school library shared upcoming assignments or events? YES NO

Have you publicized youth programs or events for the school library? YES NO

Has the staff of the school brought students to visit the public library? YES NO

Do you currently share resources such as books/automated systems/reference materials/databases/etc. with the school library? YES NO

If you answered yes, please list what you share: _____

Have you developed materials for student use or planned for youth programs with the public library staff? YES NO

If you answered yes, please list the materials you have developed or programs you have planned: _____

Do you have a cooperative purchasing agreement with the public library? YES NO

Student Use of Public Libraries, Librarians, and Resources

In what district(s) do students in your community attend public school? _____

Do you currently assist students with assignments at the public library? YES NO

What type of support do students typically require? _____

Have you assisted students with assignments that require the use of public library resources? YES NO

If you answered yes, please list the resources: _____

Do you consider providing academic support for students part of the public library staff's responsibility? YES NO

If given the opportunity, would you feel comfortable discussing school curriculum objectives and/or academic expectations with school staff? YES NO

If given the opportunity, would you feel comfortable attending curriculum planning meetings for the school library or classroom? YES NO

Do you believe the pursuit of cooperation between school library staff and public library staff is worthwhile? YES NO

Additional Thoughts and Information

Would you be willing to meet with the researcher for a follow-up interview? Questions will further address collaboration between school librarians and public librarians as well as provide opportunities for you to elaborate on your survey responses. YES NO

If you answered yes, please provide your email address: _____

If you would like to share any additional thoughts or information, please do so in this space: _____

Thank you so much for your time and attention to this survey. Your input is greatly appreciated!

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Select the answer that best describes your situation or fill in the blanks as requested.

Completion of this survey includes implied consent to your participation in the research study; if you would prefer not to participate, please do not complete the survey.

School District: _____

What is your current position and/or what grades and courses do you teach? _____

How long have you been in your current position? _____

Current Collaborative Relationships

Do you have the contact information for the public library staff? YES NO

Have you ever met or spoken on the phone with the public library staff? YES NO

Have you visited the public library in your capacity as school staff? YES NO

Do you feel comfortable asking the public library staff for help? YES NO

Have you notified the public library of upcoming school assignments or events? YES NO

Have you publicized youth programs or events for the public library? YES NO

Have you taken students to the public library? YES NO

If you answered yes, please list reasons: _____

Student Use of Public Libraries, Librarians, and Resources

Do you currently encourage your students to use the public library? YES NO

Have you given assignments that require students to use the public library resources?

YES NO UNSURE

If you answered yes, please list the resources you required students to use: _____

Have you given assignments that require students to seek the help of the public library staff? YES NO UNSURE

If you answered yes, please explain: _____

Do you consider providing academic support for students part of the public library staff's responsibility? YES NO

If given the opportunity, would you feel comfortable sharing curriculum objectives and/or academic expectations with the public library staff? YES NO

If given the opportunity, would you feel comfortable having public library staff attend curriculum planning meetings? YES NO

Do you believe the pursuit of cooperation between school library staff and public library staff is worthwhile? YES NO

Additional Thoughts and Information

Would you be willing to provide an example of an assignment that could be completed with student use of the public library and its resources? The assignment will be used during follow-up interviews with school librarians and public librarians. YES NO

If you answered yes, please provide your email address: _____

If you would like to share any additional thoughts or information, please do so in this space: _____

Thank you so much for your time and attention to this survey. Your input is greatly appreciated!

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What led to your desire to have a collaborative relationship between the public library staff and school library staff?
2. Briefly describe the current collaborative relationship between the public library staff and the school library staff. What is your current role in this relationship?

Current Collaborative Relationships

3. Who were the key people who initiated the collaborative relationship? Who supported or endorsed the key people? Has the support continued?
4. How is the collaboration organized, when are decisions made, and who makes them? How is the collaborative relationship evaluated and improved?
5. What are some of the major elements of the collaborative relationship? Which elements seems pivotal to the continuation of the relationship?
6. What barriers have you encountered during the development of the collaborative relationship? How were these handled in the past? Are there any barriers that still need attention? Are there barriers that you feel are impossible to overcome?
7. What are some examples of materials for student use or youth programs you have collaboratively developed? What do you see as the positive results of this collaboration?

Student Use of Public Libraries, Librarians, and Resources

8. To what extent do you observe students utilizing public libraries, librarians, and resources while completing school curriculum and homework assignments? What

factors do you believe will improve student use of public libraries, librarians, and resources?

9. [Provide a sample homework assignment.] What resources does your library currently offer to assist students with this assignment? How would students benefit from shared resources or collaboration between the public library and school library on this assignment?
10. Overall, do you feel that the young adult and teen users could benefit academically from an improved collaborative relationship between the public library staff and the school library staff? In what ways?
11. What do you perceive as your ideal role in collaboration on school curriculum and/or student homework assignments? What do you perceive as other's (public library staff, school library staff, classroom teachers, and/or school administrators) ideal role in this collaborative relationship?

Additional Thoughts or Information

12. Are there any additional thoughts or information you would like to share?

APPENDIX C

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
HUMAN PARTICIPANTS REVIEW
INFORMED CONSENT**

Project Title: The Collaborative Relationship Between Teacher Librarians and Public Librarians

Name of Investigator(s): Jennifer J. Keltner

Invitation to Participate: You are invited to participate in a research project conducted through the University of Northern Iowa. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project. The following information is provided to help you made an informed decision about whether or not to participate.

Nature and Purpose: The purpose of this research is to develop an understanding of the collaborative relationships between teacher librarians and public librarians in Cedar County, Iowa, a region that includes five public school districts, seven public town librarians, and one branch of a county library system. Additionally, this research will explore the potential role of public librarians when working with students on school curriculum and/or homework assignments.

Explanation of Procedures:

The interview will include twelve (12) open-ended questions as well as the opportunity to elaborate on any previous survey responses and should last no longer than 20 minutes. Follow-up interviews will be conducted one-on-one at the school and public libraries in Cedar County, Iowa, and will be scheduled at the earliest convenience of both the participant and the researcher. Follow-up interviews with librarians will be recorded using an audio digital recorder. Audio recordings will not be available to anyone other than the researcher, and will be deleted after interviews have been transcribed, coded and analyzed.

Discomfort and Risks: This study is of very low risk to participants. There is no risk of injury for participants. There is a low chance of normal work-related stress or anxiety while participants complete the survey and/or interview. There is minimal risk of invasion of privacy because participant identification will be removed and replaced with codes or pseudonyms. There are no foreseeable physical risks to participants.

Benefits and Compensation: It is assumed that the collaborative relationship between public librarians and teacher librarians in regard to school curriculum and student homework assignments could be improved. It is then hypothesized that participation in this research could lead participants to self-reflection and an increased level of productive collaboration between public librarians and school librarians as well as an increase of public librarians working with students on school curriculum and/or homework assignments.

Confidentiality: Your responses to all survey and interview questions are confidential; any personal information (e.g. participants' name or email address) will be saved separately from responses. In addition, all identifying information (including library names and school district names) will be not be included as part of the audio recording. The summarized findings with no identifying information may be published in an academic journal or presented at a scholarly conference.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw: Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time or to choose not to participate at all, and by doing so, you will not be penalized or lose benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Questions: If you have questions about the study you may contact or desire information in the future regarding your participation or the study generally, you can contact Jennifer Keltner at 563-249-5099 or kundej@uni.edu or the project investigator's faculty advisor, Joan Taylor at the Department of School Library Studies, University of Northern Iowa 319-273-2050 or joan.taylor@uni.edu. You can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

Agreement: Include the following statement:

I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement. I am 18 years of age or older.

(Signature of participant)

(Date)

(Printed name of participant)

(Signature of investigator)

(Date)

(Signature of instructor/advisor)

(Date)

APPENDIX D

RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear [Participant],

My name is Jennifer Keltner, and I am a graduate student at The University of Northern Iowa and, as part of my master's program in School Library Studies, I am conducting a research study to develop an understanding of the collaborative relationships between teacher librarians and public librarians in Cedar County, Iowa. You are being asked to complete this survey because you are either: an employee of one of one of the five school districts in Cedar County, holding the position of either teacher librarian serving young adults and teens, administrator, or classroom teacher; or a public librarian at one of the eight public libraries in Cedar County.

Participation is voluntary. The survey will take less than 20 minutes to complete. You must be at least 18 years old to take this survey. This study involves no foreseeable serious risks. Additionally, there are no direct benefits for individual participants, but it is hypothesized that, through this study, the trends of successful collaborative relationships will emerge, leading to more successful relationships, collaboration, and an increase in assistance to students in regard to their school curriculum and/or homework assignments.

I ask that you try to answer all questions; however, if there are any items that make you uncomfortable or that you would prefer to skip, please leave the answer blank. Your responses are confidential to the degree permitted by the technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties. Any personal information (e.g. participants' name or email address) will be saved separately from survey responses and used only for follow-up contact with consent. In addition, all identifying information (including library names and school district names) will be removed and replaced with codes or pseudonyms.

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact my faculty advisor or myself:

Jennifer (Jen) Keltner
Graduate Student
(563)249-5099
kundej@uni.edu

Dr. Joan Taylor
Advisor, School Library Studies
(319)273-2050
joan.taylor@uni.edu

You can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

If you would prefer not to participate, please do not fill out a survey.

If you consent to participate, please complete the survey within the next two weeks using the link below:

<hyperlink to Google Forms survey>

THANK YOU/REMINDER EMAIL

Dear [Participant],

One week ago, you received an email from me inviting you to participate in a research study as part of my work as a graduate student in the School Library Studies master's program at the University of Northern Iowa. I am conducting a research study to develop an understanding of the collaborative relationships between teacher librarians and public librarians in Cedar County, Iowa. You were asked to complete a survey as either: an employee of one of the five school districts in Cedar County, holding the position of either teacher librarian serving young adults and teens, administrator, or classroom teacher; or a public librarian in one of the eight public libraries in Cedar County.

Thank you to those participants who have already completed the survey – your time is greatly appreciated, and I will be following up with those of you who indicated a willingness to either participate in a follow-up interview or provide a sample assignment.

If you have not yet completed the survey, I ask that you still consider completing the survey. Once again, participation is voluntary. The survey will take less than 20 minutes to complete.

If you would prefer not to participate, please do not fill out a survey.

If you consent to participate, please complete the survey within the next week using the link below:

<hyperlink to Google Forms survey>