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Roles of the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area Media Specialists as Perceived by School Administrators, Teachers, and Media Specialists in the Elementary Schools

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Roles of the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area Media Specialists as Perceived by School Administrators, Teachers, and Media Specialists in the Elementary Schools

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to find out what the role perceptions of the media specialists are and if there is any significant differences held among teachers', media specialists', and administrators' perceptions of the media specialist's role in the elementary school. A sample group of eight teachers were systematically selected from each of the 24 schools in the target group along with all 24 administrators and media specialists. The participants were sent a questionnaire to obtain their perceptions of the three major roles of the library media specialist: instructional consultant, information specialist, and teacher.

The following conclusions were made: (1) no significant differences were found among perceptions by administrators and media specialists about the three media specialists' roles-- information specialist, instructional consultant, and teacher. (2) a significant difference does exist between how media specialists and teachers perceive the instructional consultant role and information specialist role of the media specialist, and (3) no significant differences were found about the three media specialists' roles among the three groups based on gender of the respondent, years of teaching of the respondent, or highest degree held by respondent.

Roles of the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area
Media Specialists
As Perceived by School Administrators, Teachers,
And Media Specialists
In the Elementary Schools

A Research Paper
Presented to the
Faculty of the Library Science Department

Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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The following conclusions were made: (1) no significant differences were found among perceptions by administrators and media specialists about the three media specialists' roles-- information specialist, instructional consultant, and teacher. (2) a significant difference does exist between how media specialists and teachers perceive the instructional consultant role and information specialist role of the media specialist, and (3) no significant differences were found about the three media specialists' roles among the three groups based on gender of the respondent, years of teaching of the respondent, or highest degree held by respondent.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	iii
 Chapter	
1. Introduction	1
Purpose of the Study	1
Problem Statement and Hypothesis	1
Assumptions	3
Significance of the Study	4
Limitations	4
Definitions	4
2. Review of Related Literature	6
Studies in Role Theory	7
Media Specialist's Role	11
Early Perspectives and Development	12
Role as Information Specialist	15
Role as Teacher	15
Role as Instructional Consultant	16
3. Methodology	19
Sample Population	19
Description of Survey Instrument	20
Procedure	20
4. Analysis of Data	22
5. Conclusions, Recommendations, and Summary	30
Recommendations	31
Summary	32
Bibliography	34
 Appendixes	
A. Letter to Superintendents	37
B. Letter of Introduction	38
C. Role Perception Questionnaire	39

Tables

Table

1.	Instructional Consultant Roles As Perceived by Administrators and Media Specialists	22
2.	Teacher Roles As Perceived by Administrators and Media Specialists	23
3.	Information Specialist Roles As Perceived by Administrators and Media Specialists	24
4.	Instructional Consultant Roles As Perceived by Teachers and Media Specialists	25
5.	Teacher Roles As Perceived by Teachers and Media Specialists	26
6.	Information Specialist Roles As Perceived by Teachers and Media Specialists	26
7.	Media Specialists' Perceived Roles by Gender of Respondent	27
8.	Media Specialists' Perceived Roles by Years of Teaching Experience	28
9.	Media Specialists' Roles by Highest Degree Held by Respondents	29

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

School media centers are presently undergoing change. As a result, school personnel - administrators, teachers and media specialists - need to understand the developing new roles of the media specialist. This understanding of the new roles is very important to the success of the entire program.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of this study was to identify the perceptions of the media specialist's roles as viewed by the school administrators, teachers, and media specialists in the elementary schools in the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area. Knowledge obtained on the ways these three groups perceive the roles of the media specialist may give direction for inservice activities to bring perceptions of these roles of the media specialist closer together for the groups being studied.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS AND HYPOTHESES

Answers to the following statements were sought:

1. Do the school administrators, teachers, and media specialists have different perceptions of the roles the media specialist plays in the total school program in elementary schools in the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area?
2. Do the school administrators, teachers and media specialists have different perceptions of the roles of the media specialist based on gender of the respondents.
3. Do the school administrators, teachers and media specialists have different perceptions of the roles of the media specialist

based on years of teaching experience?

4. Do the school administrators, teachers and media specialists have different perceptions of the roles of the media specialist based on the highest degree held by the respondents?

These hypotheses predict answers to the problem statements:

1. School administrators' perceptions of the media specialist's role as an instructional consultant will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists.
2. School administrators' perceptions of the media specialist's role as a teacher will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists.
3. School administrators' perceptions of the media specialist's role as an information specialist will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists.
4. Teachers' perceptions of the media specialist's role as an instructional consultant will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists.
5. Teachers' perceptions of the media specialist's role as a teacher will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialist.
6. Teachers' perceptions of the media specialist's role as an information specialist will not differ

significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialist.

7. No significant difference exists at the .05 level among teachers', school administrators', and media specialists' perceptions of the roles of the media specialist based on gender of the respondent.
8. No significant difference exists at the .05 level among teachers', school administrators', and media specialists' perceptions of the roles of the media specialist based upon years of teaching experience.
9. No significant difference exists at the .05 level among teachers', school administrators', and media specialists' perceptions of the roles of the media specialist based upon the highest degree held by the respondents.

ASSUMPTIONS

Everyone in society occupies certain social positions and has expectations of themselves and of others at the same time (Biddle and Thomas 1966). In this study, one professional position was studied, that of the school library media specialist.

The definition for role, which was used, is the same one used by Olson (1966), "A role is the product of many expectations concerning the functions that a given person will carry out." (p. 1946-A) It is assumed that, if one knows the title of a position, it is possible to ascertain the functions or behaviors that go along with that position from a given list of job descriptors. One can assume, therefore, that the media specialist does have a role in the overall school program and that other faculty and

administrators have some perceptions of the media specialist's role due to some contact with that person in the building.

In any given school district there are formal and organizational relationships that exist among personnel. These relationships are important to the success of the school and/or district. The media specialist, teachers, and school administrators need to have a positive working relationship in order to provide a quality program.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

A perception study of this type has not been done in the Cedar Rapids School District for several years and there needed to be an update to see if the findings of other media specialist's perception studies are valid for the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area.

The results of this study may be made available for educational awareness among the three groups to bring about a better understanding of the media specialist's roles. Any differences or similarities among teachers, administrators, and media specialists about the perceptions of the major roles of the media specialists have been included in the summary of this project.

LIMITATIONS

The major limitations are 1. the population from which the data for this study was gathered: administrators, teachers, and media specialists in Cedar Rapids, Marion and Linn-Mar elementary schools only, and 2. all possible roles of the media specialist have not been covered by the study.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions have been used in this study and are applicable to this study only.

Role Perception: Role perception is the awareness of job responsibilities of an individual in an identified position.

Three media specialist roles: The three majors roles of the media specialist are that of (1) an information specialist, (2) a teacher, and (3) an instructional consultant (AASL and AECT, 1988).

Teacher: A teacher is any staff member who works with students directly, whether on a one-to-one or large group basis, ie., classroom teachers, LD teachers, chapter 1 teachers, or counselors.

Administrators: Administrators are those individuals with the title of principal, associate principal or facilitator in the elementary buildings included in the study.

Media specialist: The media specialist is the individual in the elementary building who administers the library media program. Library media specialist and librarian may be used to represent the same person or position.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

Role theory has been used in many organizations in an effort to better understand and predict organizational behavior. People that work have definite roles to perform, and the people who work and interact with them have perceptions of the roles they perform. Biddle and Thomas (1966) provide the following definition of role theory:

Individuals in society occupy positions, and their role performance in these positions is determined by social norms, demands, and rules; by the role performances of others in their respective positions; by those who observe and react to the performance; and by the individual's particular capabilities and personality. (p. 4)

Role theory allows a particular viewpoint regarding certain behaviors to be measured. This perspective provides a framework of demands and rules, the behavior of others as it facilitates or hinders, and rewards or punishes the person, the position of which the person is a member, and the individual's own understanding of, and reactions to, these factors (Biddle and Thomas, 1966, p.4). Even though it is a relatively new field, role theory has proven to be valid and reliable.

Role theory, itself, is not easy to define and there has been some disagreement in the field over the definition of the term. Although most people that study role theory at least agree that role perception does have to do with the behaviors of the individuals. In order to understand a particular behavior(role), it is necessary to consider not only how all of those who fulfill that role feel they ought to function, but how others who work and

interact with them feel that individual should perform (Cantor, 1975, p. 3).

STUDIES IN ROLE THEORY

The role studies that were reviewed dealt with role perceptions directly related to that of library media specialists. Some concentrated on how media specialists see their own roles. Other perceptions studies were combinations of media specialists', principals', and teachers' perceptions of the media specialist's role.

Of the studies that are reviewed here; three included principals; three included media specialist, teachers, and principals; one included superintendents and principals and one included teachers and principals.

One study reviewed was on the perception of the ideal role of the library media specialist vs the actual role of the library media specialist as perceived by administrators in Wisconsin. Superintendents, district media supervisors, secondary principals, and Educational Media Building Coordinators from forty-one public school districts were given the questionnaire. Edward Lawrence Anderson (1970) used a questionnaire to discover the ideal vs. actual roles as perceived by the principals. Some of his findings were: (1) administrators can serve as a barrier to change, since they perceive the existing role to be near the ideal role, (2) administrators have little preparation in the area of media, and do not have expertise on which to base a decision, (3) library media specialists in different positions have differing perspectives, due to different backgrounds, experience, and interests, and (4) not all media specialists appeared to have

preparation necessary for certification. The recommendation of his study was for all professional educators to plan cooperatively and implement new educational media programs. (p.31)

Lowell E. Olson (1966) studied teachers', principals' and media specialists' perceptions of the role of the library media specialist and the connection between them. An attitude questionnaire was sent out to 246 teachers, 95 principals, and 127 media specialists. Conclusions drawn from the study were: (1) too little is currently known by teachers and principals about the qualifications and work of the school librarian, (2) low social regard for librarians, both in the school and the community, hinders librarians from direct involvement in the instructional program of the school, and (3) until perception of the school librarian's function is changed from technical processing to the more complex and demanding functions of administration, etc., confusion will continue to exist in the perception of his/her role. (p. 1946-A)

Bernell (1978) did a study to determine the perception of high school principals in the state of Iowa on the role of the media specialist. Two hundred principals from the state took part in the study. Bernell discovered that: (1) high school principals perceived a significant difference between the actual role and the ideal performance of the media specialist, (2) principals who had taken some media courses and principals who had not taken any media courses did not differ significantly in their perceptions of the role of the media specialist, and (3) there was a significant difference between perceptions by principals with different tenure toward the actual roles of the library media

specialist. One of her recommendations was to encourage principals to make an attempt to get staff members to become aware of the functions of the library media specialist (p. 8).

Phyllis Cantor (1976) studied thirty-two senior high public schools in West County, New York. She used an attitude questionnaire to discover the values and expectations of library needs and services by administrators, media specialists and teachers. She found similar results to previously mentioned studies; the values attached to these roles were different among the sample population. Her conclusions point to the need for clarification of and improvement of communication about the role of the library media specialist and those who educate and set goals for library media specialists (p. 136).

Kathryn S. Mohajerin and Earl P. Smith (1981) conducted a study to ascertain the perception of the role of the public school media specialist held by media educators (college and university level), principals, teachers, and media specialists in the state of Alabama. The sample included a ten school district consortium with 380 teachers, media specialists and administrators who were sent questionnaires and, 220 were returned. The findings indicated the following: (1) there is a clear difference in the role perception of the media specialist between the media educators and each of the other groups, and (2) some differences between the practitioners did exist (p.161).

Fred Pfister and Karen Alexander (1976) did a study to determine the effects of discrepancies between the actual and ideal role or functions of the librarian by school superintendents in Texas. An interview was conducted with fourteen

superintendents using a six point Likert scale to measure the ideal and actual roles on the questionnaire. Eight of the fourteen were urban superintendents and six were rural. A number of conclusions were drawn: (1) there is not one role in this study that was being carried out by the librarians as well as it could be, (2) the gap in perceptions between the actual and ideal role of librarians are greater for elementary principals than for secondary principals, and (3) media specialists are not participating as fully in management decisions as they could be if they were more assertive (p. 151).

Another study was done by Eisenberg (1989) about teachers' and principals' perceptions of the role of the media specialist in rural library media centers and what they expect in terms of service. Personnel in four hundred rural and small schools in Kansas were identified and asked to participate in the research. Of the 400 schools, 182 responded to the questionnaire. He concluded that attitudes toward media services were encouraging and that there was a significant difference between principals' perceptions of the media specialist's role and that of the teachers'. His recommendation for library media specialists is to know the needs, attitudes and past experiences of his/her teachers, administrators and students (p.99-100).

A study done by Karlene Edwards (1989) on principals' perceptions of the librarian's roles indicated some differing perceptions of the library media specialist's role in the building. A questionnaire was sent to 467 Arizona school principals. Almost half of the principals responded to the questionnaire. Her conclusions showed that the principals and

media specialists differed rather dramatically on how the library media specialists should spend their time. Principals believed that media specialists should spend the most time on instruction but ranked it seventh out of ten for importance (p.31). If perceptions are going to change, excellence in library programs and improved communication with principals is necessary.

Role studies that have been conducted through 1980 seem to indicate that a definite difference of perception exists about the role of the school library media specialist. This disagreement seems to exist no matter what groups are being surveyed and compared. The findings seem to be somewhat conclusive as to the conflicting role perception of the media specialist, indicating there needs to be better communication between administrators, media specialists, and teachers. The only way to change perceptions is to effect excellence in the library media programs and to work toward improving both communication and promotion efforts so that principals and classroom teachers are aware of program excellence and how it affects the entire school community (Edwards 1989).

MEDIA SPECIALIST'S ROLE

School media centers continue to undergo dramatic changes. Some of those changes are due to technology, new methods of teaching and learning, the mainstreaming of students with special needs, or an expansion of the school's role in society. As a result, school personnel--principals, teachers, and media specialists--need to understand the developing new roles of the school media specialist. This understanding of the roles of the media specialist is very important to the success of the school

media program.

Today the school library media specialist plays three major roles in the media center: (1) information specialist, (2) teacher, and (3) instructional consultant. A fundamental responsibility of the school library media specialist is to provide leadership and expertise necessary to ensure that the library media program is an integral part of the instructional program of the school. This has not always been true as we look at the early roles of the school library media specialist (AASL and AECT, 1988).

EARLY PERSPECTIVE AND DEVELOPMENT

As far back as 1839, recommendations for school libraries had been recommended for the purpose of supporting textbook series due to their limitations (Davies, 1979). But, it wasn't until 1925 that a joint committee of the ALA and the NEA defined standards for the elementary school which advocated a well-balanced collection of books, pamphlets, and audiovisual aids appropriate for the objectives and needs of the school (AASL and AECT, 1988).

Traditionally, planning the library media program has been the responsibility of the local school district. The standard procedure was to let the contents of the textbooks determine what was to be taught in the classroom. The library was used only after learning had taken place in the classroom from single-volume textbooks. The library was just a fringe benefit if one were able to use it. Perceptions of the librarian, a term used to identify the person in charge of the library at this time, has varied greatly over the years.

With this label, the role of the library media specialist

tended to be that of managing the library media center, which served as a supplement to textbooks, such as recreational reading and studying assignments, or a place for viewing and/or listening. The evaluation of the library media program under these circumstances was based on the areas of housekeeping, neatness, visual attractiveness, and quietness. Storing, organizing, and circulating books and other materials were also considered.

As the media program standards continued to be revised, a new role for the librarian was defined and the position label changed to library media specialist. This professional is a curriculum consultant in charge of a multimedia library program, and is, therefore, no longer just in charge of a supplemental program.

The professional literature that deals with the development of the library media specialist does not provide any final answers to what media services are more important than others (Cantor, 1975) but does give us some information on from whence the changing roles of the media specialist has come.

According to Carver, (1986) by the late 1950's schools began to focus on learning rather than teaching, and began to look at curriculum methods. This allowed for a broader instructional role for the librarian. As the 1960's began the schools new emphasis was on diversified learning--using both print and non-print materials--for all levels and, this also brought opportunity for a greater instructional role for the library media specialist than had been possible before.

The Department of Audiovisual Instruction of the National Education Association perceived the role of the media professional as changing from that of a keeper and dispenser of teaching aids

to that of an analyst and designer of instructional systems who must be centrally involved in the planning of learning environments and in providing for related support for learning and evaluative procedures (Carver, 1986).

Many books were written in the 1970's about the role of the library media specialist in the total school program. During the 1970's the media specialist was an integral part of the teaching and learning of students and teachers in the school. But studies by Rosenberg (1978) and Bernell (1978) mentioned earlier, continued to indicate that library media specialists were not practicing their new roles.

As concerns about the library media specialists role continued the American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology felt that the Standards for School Media Programs (AASL and DAVI, 1969) had not addressed sufficiently the role of the library media specialist. New standards Media Programs: District and School (AASL and AECT, 1975) clearly stated that the library media specialist should participate in curriculum development.

Although the role of the library media specialist was not yet clearly defined, the 1980's brought about a new technology, computers, to add to the integration of the media center and classroom partnership. At the same time, the library media specialist of the 1980's was encouraged to consider the computer's educational role within the framework of the total program.

As Alvin Toffler stated, "All education springs from images of the future and all education creates images of the future," (Hannigan, 1978, p. 172). The role of the library media

specialist has evolved as people have looked at what needs lie ahead in the area of media. These perceptions of the future roles of the library media specialist are made apparent in the latest standards, Information Power. (AASL and AECT, 1988). These new standards eliminate prescriptions for the size of the school library media center collections and state that library media collections be based upon user needs. New functions and responsibilities are related to facilities, collections and services. By considering the present and future needs of the library media programs, one can understand the library media specialist's current roles.

ROLE AS AN INFORMATION SPECIALIST

As an information specialist, the school media specialist needs to make sure that individuals can access, evaluate and use information in the media center. The media specialist is continuously determining user's needs through formal and informal assessment. Based on user need, the library media specialist will help students develop strategies to access the information they need.

In this role the media specialist needs to inform the staff of new materials, equipment, and services that will meet their informational needs.

ROLE AS A TEACHER

The school library media specialist serves as a teacher when working directly with students and teachers preparing them for accessing, evaluating and using the information available to them. Teachers and media specialists work together to plan how their instructional activities will take place, depending on student

needs.

ROLE AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL CONSULTANT

In the 1930s and 1940s the American Library Association stressed that school librarians work with teachers and students in selecting and using all types of materials which would contribute to the instructional program (Grazier, 1979). At that time, librarians were to work with teachers and students in selecting materials that were appropriate for learning situations. However, the role of instructional consultant was not defined clearly enough and later had to be clarified. Unfortunately, the definition of the instructional consultant is not always carried out in practice (Eisenberg and Berkowitz, 1988). Some of the reasons are: (1) a curriculum role is undefined, (2) resources are limited, (3) incentives for greater involvement of the library media specialist are lacking, and (4) teachers and administrators do not frequently use school library media specialists as instructional consultants.

The curriculum role is a contrast to other roles from the past. The more traditional roles of organization of materials, performance of clerical tasks, and administration of the library media center started to change to a more direct involvement with students and teachers through curriculum development activities and emphasis on the use of materials.

Although the library media specialist may be involved in curriculum change, the major involvement will be at the instructional level. Instructional development is concerned with determining how teaching should be done. Instruction builds upon the foundation of the curriculum and is guided, in part by it.

Instructional development decisions are made about appropriate resources, learning activities, and evaluation strategies necessary to achieve effective learning. Instructional development is the process of creating the most effective means to meet the curriculum goals (Rosenberg 1978). Involvement in instructional development, in turn, will help to enhance the importance of a library media program.

The instructional consultant role provides the opportunities for the school library media specialist to reach the highest level in Loertscher's library media taxonomy (Loerstscher 1988). Loertscher's top three levels are (1) curriculum development, (2) instructional design, level I, and (3) instructional design level II which put the media specialist in a leadership role when providing help for staff and implementing instructional activities that support the curriculum for students and staff (p.11).

The new role of the library media specialist has the user (student, faculty, staff,) working as an integral part of the curriculum and instructional development by collaborating on selection of texts, workbooks, filmstrips or other material that support the curriculum. Media specialists accept more responsibility for leadership and should always be looking for new ways by which to inform faculty and administrators of services. They should stimulate interest in good reading for students, arouse intellectual curiosity, and broaden student and staff knowledge.

Summary

The school library media program should clearly involve a partnership among the school district administrators, the

principal, the classroom teacher, and the library media specialist. This partnership will help to provide for the student the best education possible and that is our ultimate goal in the educational process.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This study was designed to discover what are the perceptions and importance of the currently defined roles of the media specialist in the elementary school. Information has been secured from a sample population of teachers, media specialists and administrators.

Sample Population

The sample population included the Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Linn-Mar School Districts' teachers, administrators and media specialists. The personnel completing the questionnaire represented the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area, and included employees in 24 elementary schools. The three school districts were selected from a contiguous metropolitan area. All administrators, all media specialists and eight teachers from each school were selected from the following schools and were asked to complete the questionnaire: (1) Arthur, (2) Cleveland, (3) Coolidge, (4) Erskine, (5) Grant Wood, (6) Harrison, (7) Hiawatha, (8) Hoover, (9) Johnson, (10) Kenwood, (11) Madison, (12) Nixon, (13) Pierce, (14) Polk, (15) Taylor, (16) Truman, (17) Van Buren, (18) Wilson, (19) Wright, (20) Emerson, (21) Novak, (22) Starry, (23) Bowman Woods, and (24) Indian Creek.

A list of all teachers was secured from each of the buildings in the sample group. A systematic sample of eight teachers from each building were drawn from an alphabetical list of teachers for each school. Questionnaires were then sent to the identified sample group of teachers along with building principals and media

specialists.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

At the beginning of the questionnaire the purpose of the study was explained and the directions for completing it were given (See Appendix C). The major portion of the questionnaire consisted of 29 statements representing the three major roles of the media specialist: (1) information specialist, (2) teacher, and (3) instructional consultant.

Statements on the questionnaire (See Appendix C) that represented the information specialist role were: 3, 4, 6, 10, 14, 15, 19, 20, 26, and 28. Teacher role statements were: 1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 27, and 29. The third role, instructional consultant, statements were: 5, 7, 11, 16, 24, and 25..

Responses to the questions were indicated on a Likert-type scale following each question with a numerical value of one to four assigned to the responses.

- A. Absolutely Important (1)
- B. Probably Important (2)
- C. Probably Not Important (3)
- E. Absolutely Not Important (4)

The last section asked for information about gender, years of teaching experience and highest degree held of the participant.

Procedure

Permission was secured from Dr. Ziomek, Director - Research, Evaluation and Planning and Ellyn Wrzeski - Exoecutive Director of Elementary Schools in the Cedar Rapids School District, Glen Easterday - Superintendent of Linn-Mar Schools, and Harold Hullman

- Superintendent of the Marion Schools to conduct the survey.

(See Appendix A)

To validate the instrument before the actual survey was sent to the participants, two Cedar Rapid's middle school media specialists, two middle school principals, and three classroom teachers were asked to respond to and evaluate the instrument. The information from this evaluation was used to change terminology and eliminate one of the questions that was a repeat.

The finalized questionnaire was sent to the 24 schools on May 6, 1991. A cover letter (See Appendix B) was included explaining the study and seeking participant's cooperation and a prompt return of the questionnaire. Two weeks were given for the participants to respond to the questionnaire. A code number, which identified membership in one of the three groups, was included on the questionnaire to assist in identifying those who had not responded to the questionnaire in the given time period. A follow-up letter was sent as a reminder to those who had not returned the questionnaire.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The number of questionnaires sent to the three groups on May 6, 1991, was 240. Follow-up letters were sent out two weeks later to those not returning the questionnaire. Of the 240 questionnaires sent, 210 were returned; 23 of 24 media specialist (96%), 21 of 24 administrators (88%), and 166 of 192 teachers (86%). The return for all questionnaires sent to the respondents in the three groups was 88%.

The t-test was used to find out whether the means were significantly different for responses compiled for hypotheses one through seven. A .05 level of significance was selected and used for all hypotheses.

The first hypothesis was "School administrators' perceptions of the media specialist's role as an instructional consultant will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists". Table 1 shows the data for administrators and media specialists for the six statements related to the instructional role.

Table 1
Instructional Consultant Roles As Perceived
by
Administrators and Media Specialists

Respondents	Number	Mean (6) statements	S.D.	t
Administrators	21	10.000	1.871	1.915*
Media Spec.	23	8.957	1.745	

* Not significant at .05, 42 df. Table Value = 2.021

When the t-test was performed on the data a value of 1.915 was obtained. The difference is not significant at the .05 level and, therefore, the hypothesis was accepted. The data showed that school library media specialists and administrators had similar perceptions of the role of the media specialist as it pertained to the instructional consultant role.

The second hypothesis was "School administrators' perceptions of the media specialist's role as a teacher will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists". Table 2 shows the data for administrators and media specialists for the 13 statements related to the teacher role.

Table 2
Teacher Roles As Perceived
by
Administrators and Media Specialists

Respondents	Number	Mean (13)statements	S.D.	t
Administrators	21	20.810	2.657	2.015*
Media Spec.	23	22.522	2.952	

* Not significant at .05, 42 df. Table value = 2.021

When the respondents were asked to respond to the thirteen statements related to the teacher role a value of 2.015 was computed. The difference is not significant at the .05 level and, therefore, the hypothesis was accepted. The data showed that the administrators perception of the media specialist's role as a teacher did not differ significantly from that of the media specialist.

The third hypothesis was "School Administrators' perceptions of the media specialist's role as an information specialist will

not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists". Table 3 shows the data for administrators and media specialists for the 10 statements related to the information specialist role.

Table 3
Information Specialist Roles As Perceived
by
Administrators and Media Specialists

Respondents	Number	Mean (10)statements	S.D.	t
Administrators	21	15.619	3.106	.450*
Media Spec.	23	16.044	3.140	

* Not significant at .05, 42 df. Table value = 2.021

When the t-test was performed on the results of the raw data a table value of .450 was computed for mean differences about perceptions of the information specialist role of the media specialist. The difference is not significant at the .05 level and, therefore, the hypothesis was accepted. School administrators and media specialists show a very similar perception of the role of the media specialist as an information specialist in the greater Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area.

The fourth hypothesis was "Teachers' perceptions of the media specialist's role as an instructional consultant will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists". Table 4 shows the data for teachers and media specialists for the 6 statements related to the instructional consultant role.

Table 4
Instructional Consultant Roles As Perceived
by
Teachers and Media Specialists

Respondents	Number	Mean (6) statements	S.D.	t
Teachers	166	10.398	2.245	2.955*
Media Spec.	23	8.957	1.744	

* Significant at .05, 187 df. Table value = 1.975

When the t-test was performed on the data from the six statements related to the teachers' perceptions of the media specialist role as an instructional consultant the t value indicated that there was a significant difference at the .05 level and, therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. The data showed that media specialists perceive their role of an instructional consultant as being more important than do the teachers.

The fifth hypothesis "Teachers' perceptions of the media specialist's role as a teacher will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists". Table 5 shows the data for teachers and media specialists for the 13 statements related to the teacher role.

Teachers and media specialists, according to the data, view the media specialist's role as a teacher in a similar way. The t value indicated that the difference is not significant at the .05 level and, therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Table 5
Teacher Roles As Perceived
by
Teachers and Media Specialist

Respondents	Number	Mean (13)statements	S.D.	t
Teachers	166	23.663	3.931	1.340*
Media Spec.	23	22.522	2.952	

* Not significant at .05, 187 df. Table Value = 1.975

The sixth hypothesis was "Teachers' perceptions of the media specialist's role as an information specialist will not differ significantly at the .05 level from that of the media specialists". Table 6 shows the data for the teacher and media specialist for the 10 statements related to the information specialist role.

Table 6
Information Specialist Roles As Perceived
by
Teachers and Media Specialists

Respondents	Number	Mean (10)statements	S.D.	t
Teachers	166	14.771	2.461	2.242
Media Spec.	23	16.044	3.140	

* Significant at .05, 187 df. Table value = 1.975

When a t-test was performed on the data the t value indicated that there was a significant difference at the .05 level and, therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. There appears to be a significant difference in how teachers see the media specialist's role as an information specialist when compared to how the media

specialists see that role.

The seventh hypothesis was "No significant difference exists at the .05 level among teachers', school administrators', and media specialists' perceptions of the roles of the media specialist based on gender of the respondents". Table 7 shows the data for administrators, media specialists and teachers based on the 29 statements related to the media specialist as an instructional consultant, teacher and information specialist combined.

Table 7
Media Specialists' Perceived Roles
by
Gender of Respondents

Gender	Number	Mean (29) statements	S.D.	t
Men	36	49.222	6.974	.317*
Women	174	50.862	30.778	

* Not significant at .05, 208, Table Value = 1.975

When the t-test was performed on the data by gender the t value indicated that the difference was not significant at the .05 level and, therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

The eighth hypothesis was "No significant difference exists at the .05 level among perceptions of the roles of the media specialist based on years of teaching experience of the respondents". Years of teaching experience was broken down into seven categories as follows: 0-5(13), 6-10(16), 11-15(40), 16-20(51), 21-25(38), 26-30(33), and 30+(19). Table 8 shows the data for school administrators, media specialists and teachers based on 29 statements related to the media specialists role as an

instructional consultant, teacher and information specialist combined. One-way ANOVA was used to test this hypothesis and hypothesis nine.

Table 8
Media Specialists' Perceived Roles
by
Years of Teaching Experience of Respondents

Source	df	S.S.	M.S.	F
Among Groups	6	606.371	101.062	2.083*
Within Groups	203	9849.119	48.318	

* Not significant at .05, 6 and 203 df. Table Value = 2.901

When the ANOVA was performed on these data a F-ratio of 2.083 was obtained and was not significant at the .05 level, therefore, the hypothesis was accepted. The data showed that there was not a significant difference among the groups for the three perceived roles of the media specialist.

The ninth hypothesis was "No significant difference exists at the .05 level among school administrators', media specialists' and teachers' perceptions of the role of the media specialist based upon highest degree held by respondents". The three groups were as follows: Bachelors(97), Masters(104), and Post Masters(9). Table 9 shows the data for school administrators, teachers, and media specialists based on the 29 statements related to the media specialist's role as an instructional consultant, teacher, and information specialist.

Table 9
Media Specialists' Roles
by
Highest Degree Held by Respondents

Source	df	S.S.	M.S.	F
Among Groups	2	88.075	44.038	.880*
Within Groups	207	10354.954	50.024	

* Not significant at .05, 2 and 207 df. Table Value = 4.713

When ANOVA was performed on these data a F-ratio of .880 was obtained which indicates there was not a significant difference at the .05 level by highest degree held, therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY

Administrators, media specialists and teachers who responded to the questionnaire provided data to support all of the hypotheses except for teacher's perceptions of the media specialist in the roles of an information specialist and an instructional consultant.

After examining the results of the administrators' perceptions of the media specialists' roles and the media specialists' perceptions of their roles, the data showed that there was no significant differences in how either of the groups perceived the three roles dealt with in this study. Either administrators have more opportunity to observe the media specialists in their roles or, they are viewing the roles in new ways because of changing curriculum. Administrators are responsible for the performance evaluation of all professionals in their schools and, therefore, have an opportunity to learn about the varied media specialists' roles.

The role that was most similar when comparing the means of administrators' perceptions and media specialists' perceptions was that of the media specialist in the information specialist role, the role similar to the traditional media specialist role. Administrators and media specialists chose the instructional consultant role as most important.

When comparing teachers' perceptions of the media specialists' roles and media specialists' perceptions of their roles, some interesting results were found. The media specialists

ranked their perceived role as an instructional consultant substantially higher than did the teachers. Teachers perceived the role of the media specialist as a teacher as the third most important role. Teachers need to begin to view the library media specialist as a partner in planning and coordinating units of study rather than only as a person to find materials. Media specialists will need to work harder at making themselves available so they can become involved in beginning level planning for curricular units of study. This concept can work well with the move into whole language curricula today by many school districts.

When information regarding gender, highest degree held and years of teaching experience was analyzed there were no significant differences in how the groups viewed the three roles of the media specialists.

Cedar Rapids, Marion and Linn-Mar schools all have library media specialists and media secretaries for every building. Media specialists in these three districts have the opportunity to influence administrators' and teachers' perceptions of their roles. Media personnel in districts without a similar level of staffing will not have the same opportunity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Results of the analyzed data indicated some specific actions that could be taken.

1. Library media specialists need to improve their image as instructional consultants among teachers.
2. Library media specialist need to work at being a part of the team in a 'teacher role' after planning has taken

place and a unit of study has begun.

3. Library media specialists need to be available as a support person when teachers are implementing new units.
4. Library media specialists also need to ask for the support of administrators in helping them improve the perceptions of teachers about the specialists' instructional consultant and teacher roles.

Other major roles of the media specialist could have been included, such as that of an administrator. The library media specialist has many administrative duties within their job description. A larger list of statements that represented the three media specialists' roles may help to detect perception differences not possible with a list of 29 statements.

It would be interesting to compare the information in this study with another area in the state where there are not library media specialists or media secretaries in every building.

SUMMARY

The purpose of the study was to find out what the perceptions of the media specialists' roles are and if there was any significant differences held among teachers', media specialists' and administrators' perceptions of the media specialists' roles in the elementary schools in the greater Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area.

The sample population included the Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Linn-Mar School District elementary teachers, administrators and media specialists. Twenty four elementary schools were included in the sample with all administrators and media specialists from each building along with eight teachers from each building that

were systematically selected. Questionnaires (240) were sent and 210 were returned which accounted for an 88% return.

No significant differences were found among perceptions by administrators and media specialists about the three media specialists' roles--information specialist, instructional consultant, and teacher.

A significant difference was found between teachers' and media specialists' perceptions of the library media specialists' roles as an information specialist and an instructional consultant. No significant differences was found on their perceptions of the library media specialist's role as a teacher.

No significant differences were found among perceptions of the library media specialists' three roles as an information specialist, instructional consultant and teacher based on gender of the respondent, years of teaching experience of the respondent or highest degree held by the respondents.

Administrators, media specialists, and teachers in the greater Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area, based on the results of this study, have similar perceptions of the roles of the library media specialist with the exception of the teacher's view of the library media specialist as an instructional consultant and an information specialist.

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Appendix A
Permission Letter

Superintendent,

As a graduate student in the Department of Library Science at the University of Northern Iowa, I am conducting a research study concerning the perceived role of the media specialist serving the greater Cedar Rapids Metropolitan area: **Cedar Rapids, Marion and Linn-Mar.**

The primary purpose of the study is to determine whether or not elementary school administrators, media specialists and classroom teachers have similar perceptions of the role of the media specialist in education. The design of the study requires data to be collected from all elementary school administrators, elementary media specialists and a random sample of classroom teachers. Because the research is confined to Cedar Rapids Metropolitan area your district personnels' participation is vital to its success.

Would you please take a few minutes and evaluate the questionnaire. Please fill out the form at the bottom of this letter indicating your response to conducting this study in your district. You may mail it to me using the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Thank you for your cooperation and contribution to this study.

Sincerely,

Roger Halstead
Media Specialist
Grant Wood Elementary School
645 26th Street SE
Cedar Rapids Community School District

Role Perception Questionnaire

I, _____ give my permission for Linn Mar personnel to respond to this questionnaire.

I, _____ do not give my permission for Linn-Mar personnel to respond to this questionnaire.

Appendix B
Cover Letter

As a graduate student in the Department of Library Science at the University of Northern Iowa, I am conducting a research study concerning role perceptions of media specialists in the greater Cedar Rapids Metropolitan area elementary schools: **Cedar Rapids, Marion and Linn Mar.**

The primary purpose of the study is to determine whether the school administrators, media specialists and classroom teachers have similar perceptions of the role of the media specialist.

All the responses will be used for statistical analysis purposes only. The names of school districts, principals, media specialists and classroom teachers will not be revealed in the study. All responses will be treated confidentially. The results of the study will be made available through the appropriate channels when the data have been collected and analyzed.

The success of the study depends on your cooperation and your answering the questionnaire as accurately as you can. Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed questionnaire.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the self-addressed envelope and drop in the school mail by Monday May 13, 1991.

This research study has been approved by Ellyn Wrzeski, Executive Director of Elementary Schools and Dr. Robert Ziomek, Director of Research, Evaluation and Planning in the Cedar Rapids Community School District, Glen Easterday - Superintendent of Linn Mar Schools, and Harold Hulleman - Superintendent of Marion Schools.

Thank you for your cooperation and contribution to this study.

Sincerely,

Roger Halstead
Media Specialist
Grant Wood Elementary School
645 26th Street SE
Cedar Rapids Community School District

Appendix C
Questionnaire

ROLE PERCEPTION
OF
LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS
QUESTIONNAIRE

The general purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of the role of the media specialist in the elementary schools as perceived by administrators, media specialist, and elementary teachers.

Below is a list of services or tasks media specialists might perform. Please circle the appropriate number on the response scale to indicate how important you feel each of these services/tasks is as related to the performance of the media specialist.

How important do you feel it is for the media specialist to...	Absolutely Important	Probably Important	Probably Not Important	Absolutely Not Important
1. work with students to develop research skills?	1	2	3	4
2. teach children to be more selective in choosing materials?	1	2	3	4
3. provide library orientation for incoming students?	1	2	3	4
4. provide information on new materials to staff and students?	1	2	3	4
5. participate in district curriculum development and revision?	1	2	3	4

6.	provide a professional collection for staff?	1	2	3	4
7.	compile lists of materials for teachers when requested?	1	2	3	4
8.	supervise the computer lab?	1	2	3	4
9.	provide computer instruction for small and large groups.	1	2	3	4
10.	monitor complete inventory of materials housed in the media center?	1	2	3	4
11.	meet with teachers to identify needs?	1	2	3	4
12.	develop themes to encourage students to read.	1	2	3	4
13.	schedule materials and equipment?	1	2	3	4
14.	help students select appropriate materials for their grade level?	1	2	3	4
15.	purchase materials for all levels of readers: slow, average and excellent?	1	2	3	4
16.	assist teachers in using information resources?	1	2	3	4

17.	be available to conduct workshops for teachers?	1	2	3	4
18.	plan, teach and evaluate units of study with teachers?	1	2	3	4
19.	provide assistance in locating information for students?	1	2	3	4
20.	develop procedures that encourage and maximizes use of materials?	1	2	3	4
21.	provide opportunities for students to help in selection of materials for media center?	1	2	3	4
22.	build positive attitudes towards the library media center?	1	2	3	4
23.	provide instruction in the use of the library media center for small groups of teachers and students?	1	2	3	4
24.	keep staff up-to-date on current trends and directions in curriculum design?	1	2	3	4
25.	identify learner styles that could aid the teacher in selection of instructional material?	1	2	3	4
26.	involve faculty in the selection of materials for the	1	2	3	4

library media center?

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 27. | provide visual materials to be used for classroom instruction? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 28. | shelve books, type cards, run circulation desk? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 29. | work with children, not with books? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

GENERAL INFORMATION:

No. of years of teaching experience (including the current year): _____

Highest degree held: Bachelors ___ Masters ___ Ed. Specialist ___
 Doctorate ___

Sex: M ___ F ___