

Rowan University

Rowan Digital Works

Theses and Dissertations

5-1-2001

Integrated thematic instruction and the elementary school library media center

Janeen C. Yacovelli
Rowan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Yacovelli, Janeen C., "Integrated thematic instruction and the elementary school library media center" (2001). *Theses and Dissertations*. 1618.
<https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/1618>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works. For more information, please contact graduateresearch@rowan.edu.

INTEGRATED THEMATIC INSTRUCTION
AND THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

by
Janeen C. Yacovelli

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree
of
the Graduate School
at
Rowan University
April 24, 2001

Approved by: _____

Date Approved: May 1, 2001

ABSTRACT

Janeen C. Yacovelli
Integrated Thematic Instruction and the
Elementary School Library Media Center
2001
Dr. Shontz
Masters of Arts
Program in School and Public Librarianship

The purpose of this research was to: 1.) determine the readiness of the three elementary school library media centers in the Egg Harbor Township public school system for implementation of integrated thematic instruction; 2.) determine the role the school library media specialist will play once integrated thematic instruction was adopted; and 3.) present these findings for other elementary schools where the integrated thematic instruction approaches might be adopted.

The population was made up of the staff of three elementary schools in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey. This produced samples of three principals, three school library media specialists and 140 teachers. Three separate survey instruments were designed and descriptive statistics were used.

This study concluded that the budgets for the elementary school libraries must increase before implementing integrated thematic instruction. This research also concluded that flexible scheduling is necessary in order to adequately implement integrated thematic instruction. Finally, this study suggested that additional staff might be necessary when integrated thematic instruction is adopted because many library tasks will increase or be added.

MINI-ABSTRACT

Janeen C. Yacovelli
Integrated Thematic Instruction and the
Elementary School Library Media center
2001
Dr. Shontz
Masters of Arts
Program in School and Public Librarianship

The purpose of this research was to determine through surveys the readiness of three elementary school library media centers for implementation of integrated thematic instruction and to determine the role of the school library media specialist. It was concluded that library budgets must increase, collections must be increased, and flexible scheduling must be used.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| CHAPTER I. Statement of the Problem..... | 1 |
| CHAPTER II. Review of the Literature..... | 10 |
| CHAPTER III. Methodology..... | 23 |
| CHAPTER IV. Analysis of Data..... | 26 |
| CHAPTER V. Summary and Conclusions..... | 33 |
| APPENDIX A - School Library Media Specialist Survey..... | 37 |
| APPENDIX B - Principal Survey..... | 40 |
| APPENDIX C - Teacher Survey and Cover Letter..... | 42 |
| REFERENCES..... | 45 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| FIGURE 1 - What Percentage Increase in Your Instructional Materials Budget do you Anticipate to Support ITI?..... | 26 |
| FIGURE 2 - How Adequate do you Believe your School Media Center Collection is in the Following Areas to Meet Demands Placed on it by ITI - Media Specialists..... | 28 |
| FIGURE 3 - How Adequate do you Believe your School Media Center Collection is in the Following Areas to Meet Demands Placed on it by ITI - Teachers..... | 29 |
| FIGURE 4 - Which Library Tasks do you Anticipate Will Change or be Added After Your School Adopts Integrated Thematic Instruction?..... | 31 |

CHAPTER I.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Significance of the Topic

There is evidence that many children today do not learn material thoroughly through traditional curriculum design. In a traditional approach to education, learning is broken down into separate and independent curriculum content areas including reading, math, social studies, science, art, music, etc. Relationships among the content areas are not stressed. Children are expected to learn unrelated information and are tested in each subject separately. This traditional approach to education has become less popular in recent years for several reasons. Shanahan, Robinson, and Schneider (1995) noted in their article that "there is growing dissatisfaction with what students learn... student knowledge tends to be profoundly superficial. That is, students lack a depth of understanding of what they learn" (p. 718). They go on to say, "Second, schooling, in the view of many students, often appears to be artificial, irrelevant, and distant from the life of the community" (p. 718). In contrast to the traditional approach to education, integrated thematic instruction merges instruction in a meaningful way by organizing it around themes, instead of separate unrelated subject areas. Kovalik (1994) wrote that integrated thematic instruction was developed around three principles:

First, that human brain research has given us a window on learning never before realized in the history of civilization and that this knowledge

must become the basis for all decisions made to improve student and orchestrate learning in the classroom is both an art and a science... And third, curriculum development cannot be mandated by textbook publishers from afar but must be developed at the classroom level from the knowledge and understanding only the classroom teacher can bring to bear an understanding of the learners and the communities in which they live (p. 1-2).

Integrated thematic instruction has become popular because it can allow for more effective learning through a more indepth coverage of material.

Shanahan, Robinson, and Schneider wrote, "Thematic units are exciting because they encourage students to pursue ideas more thoroughly so that they can develop deeper understanding. They help students to develop an awareness of the connections that exist across ideas" (p. 718). Hancock, (1995) Assistant Director of the Education and Technology Resource Center of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in Alexandria, Virginia, wrote, "The brain naturally and constantly seeks order, integration, and structure in day-to-day experience. A teacher conscious of this phenomenon presents activities that allow students to extract patterns and relationships from initially unrelated or seemingly random information" (p. 32). Integrated thematic instruction has the potential to provide students with a deeper understanding of content because it encourages students to pursue ideas more thoroughly and links subjects together in relevant and meaningful ways.

In an elementary school, integrated thematic instruction relies heavily on children's literature and the school library media center. Lamme and Beckett (1992) wrote, "Children engaged in a theme study use the school library media center to seek information about specific topics... Librarians must work

cooperatively with teachers to assure that resources are available in the media center when needed" (p. 1). It is also widely agreed upon that flexible scheduling in the school library media center is best for schools that have adopted integrated thematic instruction. Doiron and Davies wrote in *Partners in Learning: Students, Teachers, and the School Library*, (1998):

Information skills pervade the curriculum and are learned best when integrated with purposeful activities that give students a sense of ownership and control over their learning. School library programs operate on a flexible timetable that allows classroom teachers access to the teaching skills of the teacher-librarian [school library media specialist] when they want to collaborate for developing specific information skills (p. 4).

Lamme and Beckett (1992) wrote, "Flexible scheduling in the school library media center is also important to the success of theme studies. When the media center is available to individuals and small groups of children virtually all day, children are free to seek information when questions arise" (p. 2).

Although it seems apparent that flexible scheduling in the school library media center and the school library media specialist play an important role in schools that have adopted integrated thematic instruction, few studies have been completed to date describing the role of the elementary school library media center in a school that has adopted the curriculum strategy of integrated thematic instruction.

The public school system in Egg Harbor Township New Jersey is currently considering adoption of such an approach to education and has not yet defined the role of the elementary school library media specialist, nor has it determined if the library collections are ready for such implementation.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research was three-fold. First, the readiness of the three elementary school library media centers in Egg Harbor Township public school system for integrated thematic instruction was established. Second, the role of the elementary school library media specialist in a school that has adopted integrated thematic instruction was determined. Finally, the researcher will present these findings for other elementary schools where integrated thematic instruction approaches may be adopted.

Definition of Terms

Traditional Approach - Lamme (1992) defined the traditional approach in an article entitled, *Whole Language in an Elementary School Library Media Center* as follows: "In a traditional or basic skills approach to education, learning is broken down into small pieces. Children are asked to learn these pieces and are rewarded for their behavior. Teachers diagnose what children know and then remediate by teaching them what they do not know" (p. 1). In a traditional approach to education teachers relied heavily on textbooks and the subjects taught (science, social studies, math, reading, etc.) were not interrelated. The school library media center was normally used to teach library skills that are separate from what is going on in the classroom during the teachers preparation/planning period in school that uses a traditional approach to education.

Integrated Thematic Instruction - Kovalik (1994) defined integrated thematic instruction as, "the name given to a brain-compatible, fully integrated instructional model developed by Susan Kovalik. The model consists of a central year long theme, monthly components, weekly topics, key points, inquiries, and social/political action" (p. 271). Shanahan, Robinson, and

Schneider (1995) described thematic instruction similarly. They wrote "This is a way of organizing instruction around themes or topics, instead of around subject areas such as math, reading, or history. By teaching thematically, it is possible to integrate instruction in meaningful ways across reading, writing, math, history, science, and the arts" (p. 718). In this research, Kovalik's definition of integrated thematic instruction was used.

Resource-Based Learning - Haycock (1991) described resource-based learning in her article, *Resource-based Learning: A Shift in the Roles of Teacher, Learner*. She wrote, "In resource-based learning, students use resources to broaden their learning base... But the students are the center of the learning environment. The focus is on what the students are doing with those resources to facilitate their learning" (p.16). This definition was used for purposes of this research. Resource-based learning is important because it is closely related to integrated thematic instruction. Integrated thematic instruction stresses a "being there experience" (Kovalik, 1994, p. 6). Kovalik (1994) wrote, "Basing instruction on 'the textbook' when there is no prior experience makes it difficult or impossible for the brain to understand and learn" (p. 39). She went on to write that our schools will be more successful, "...if our curriculum and instructional strategies are based upon *being there* input extended by *immersion* and enriched with *hands on of the real* thing. In contrast, learning based on second hand input - print with some video - is inherently brain-antagonistic because it severely restricts sensory input" (p. 80-81). It is a goal of integrated thematic instruction to provide students with choices for problem solving activities. Integrated thematic instruction stresses that not all people learn at the same rate or in the same fashion. Similarly, resource-based learning is also opposite of textbook-based teaching/learning. Resource-based

learning and resource-based teaching, which is defined below, use “multiple resources in a variety of media formats and technologies to achieve a curricular objective” (Loertscher, 1988, p. 60). This instructional model, like integrated thematic instruction asserts that “working with multiple materials and technologies is much more interesting than repetitious textbook lecture experience” (Loertscher, 1988, p. 60). Supporters of resource-based learning also note that, “each technology has certain characteristics that is unique and serves the learner better than any other medium” (Loertscher, 1988, p. 60). Thus, both instructional strategies suggest using a variety of teaching materials in order to better teach the curriculum.

Resource-Based Teaching - Haycock (1991) also described resource-based teaching in her article. She wrote, “In resource-based teaching, the teacher is using resources to broaden his or her instructional base. In addition to the lecture and textbook, the teacher may make use of other print resources such as films or videos, as well as other human resources such as guest speakers... But the teacher is still the center of that environment. The focus is on what the teacher is doing with those resources to facilitate his or her teaching” (p. 16). Loertscher (1988) defined resource-based teaching in *Taxonomies of the School Library Media Program* as, “the opposite concept of textbook-based teaching. Teachers and library media specialists work together to systematically create sound modules or units for learners using the full resources of the library media center” (p. 2). For purposes of this study Loertscher’s definition was used.

Elementary School Library Media Center - For purposes of this study, an elementary school library media center was defined as a school library that serves grades kindergarten through third and the teachers and administrators of

those grades.

Readiness - In this research readiness was defined as the adequacy of an elementary school library media center collection to meet the demands of integrated thematic instruction.

Role - The 1998 version of *Information Power* clearly defined the role of a school library media specialist. In it the AASL wrote that the school library media specialist plays a role that:

- begins with promoting and reinforcing students' of information concepts, strategies, and abilities students must master to profit from the global resources that are quite literally at their fingertips
- includes developing the full range of abilities that students need to interact effectively with information and to construct meaningful knowledge (p. 3).

In addition *Information Power* stated:

- As a teacher, the library media specialist collaborates with students and other members of the learning community to analyze learning and information needs, to locate and use resources that will meet those needs, and to understand and communicate the information the resources provide...
- As an instructional partner, the library media specialist joins with teachers and others to identify links across student information needs, curricular content, learning outcomes, and a wide variety of print, nonprint, and electronic information resources.
- As information specialist, the library media specialist provides leadership and expertise in acquiring and evaluating information resources in all formats...

- As program administrator, the library media specialist works collaboratively with members of the learning community to define the policies of the library media program and to guide and direct all the activities related to it (p. 4 - 5).

This research will determine which role or roles listed above apply to school library media specialists in schools that plan to implement integrated thematic instruction. This research will also ascertain if the adoption of integrated thematic instruction is perceived to change the role of the school library media specialist or adds any additional functions to the school library media specialist. School Library Media Specialist - Information Power (1998) says, "Just as the school library media specialist has moved far beyond a room with books to become an active, technology-rich learning environment with an array of information resources, the school library media specialist today focuses on the process of learning rather than dissemination of information. The library media program combines effective learning and teaching strategies and activities with information access skills" (p. 1). In this report a school library media specialist will be defined as a professional in charge of the care and management of the school library media center.

Assumptions and Limitations

Several assumptions were made prior to conducting this research. First, it was assumed that integrated thematic learning can have positive effects on student learning. There is a plethora of research suggesting that integrated thematic instruction is a valid and superior teaching strategy. However, studying how students learn best is a difficult task. Developments in brain scans have helped research in that field, but there is still much work to be done. In addition, if there are fifteen students in one classroom, there are fifteen

different brains in that classroom that learn best in fifteen different ways. It was not assumed that integrated thematic instruction is the only way to teach effectively, however it was assumed by the researcher that integrated thematic instruction is a positive teaching strategy.

Second, it was assumed that the school library media specialist has a role to play in integrated thematic instruction. Using children's literature to teach can be much more difficult and time consuming than using textbooks. Thus, it was assumed by the researcher that teachers needed the expertise and help of the school library media specialist to select appropriate books, build the collection in theme areas, and provide materials for teachers easy access.

Third, it was assumed that the themes selected by the schools will generally be the same from year to year within grade levels. It would be difficult, if at all possible, to ever support integrated thematic instruction if teachers randomly selected themes from year to year without previous planning. Finally, it was assumed that existing school library media center materials were up to date and that weeding does not have to take place before integrated thematic instruction is implemented in the Egg Harbor Township elementary schools.

This research was limited to the elementary school library media centers in the public school system in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey. These include E.H. Slaybaugh School Library, which serves about 900 students; Russell Swift School Library, which serves about 450 students; and Davenport School Library, which serves about 650 students. In addition, this research only looked at the readiness of the school library media center collections in the Egg Harbor Township elementary schools for integrated thematic instruction and only attempted to determine the role of the school library media specialist if integrated thematic instruction is implemented.

CHAPTER II.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Four research reports related to the role of the school library media center in schools that have adopted integrated thematic instruction were found and are reviewed here. These include: 1.) *Collaborative Unit Planning - Schedule, Time, and Participants*, 2.) *The Effective Implementation of Resource-Based Learning*, 3.) *The Role of the School Library in Resource-Based Learning* and 4.) *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement*. Much of this research was related to resource-based learning, rather than integrated thematic instruction, but the two were determined to be relevant, as discussed in the definition of resource-based learning in Chapter I.

Tallman and vanDeusen

Tallman and vanDeusen (1994) examined "the relationship among scheduling methods, consultation activity and information skills instruction and specific aspects of the planning process" (p. 33) in their research report, *Collaborative Unit Planning - Schedule, Time and Participants*. In this survey/descriptive research, 381 library media specialists were asked to "list separately each unit in which they had participated as a consultant or teacher, to identify those which were collaboratively planned with the classroom teacher and to specify what planning activities took place" (p. 33). The statistical procedures used were both inferential and descriptive.

Tallman and vanDeusen clearly stated their research questions: "What

relationship was there between scheduling method (i.e., fixed or flexible) and consultation and teaching activities and specific aspects of the planning (i.e., number of planning sessions, time spent in planning, and participants who were either individual teachers or teaching teams)?" (p. 33), but they failed to convince the reader of its importance.

Very few terms were defined in this study. Although the authors reported that the respondents were provided a glossary to explain the terms used in the questionnaire, the glossary was never supplied for the readers of the research report. The authors clearly defined collaborative planning and explained the library media specialists role as a consultant. However, flexible and fixed scheduling, which are the heart of this research, were never defined. Tallman and vanDeusen also neglected to define unit, school library media specialist, teacher, information skills, and objectives, all terms referred to throughout the report.

The limitations of this research were not defined, nor were any assumptions stated. The authors obviously assumed that collaborative planning has positive outcomes and that the school library media specialist should act as a learning consultant to teachers. They also assumed that teachers and school library media specialists want to plan units together, and they tried to prove that they would if more time was made available to the school library media specialists. Finally, the authors assumed that it was the school library media specialist who needs more time to plan with the teachers through flexible scheduling, rather than the teacher who needs more free time in his/her day to plan with the school library media specialist.

There were no relevant previous studies reported in this report. In addition, no bibliography was provided. The research design was described

and was somewhat understandable. However, the sample and population were not adequately identified or described. To whom did the researchers mail questionnaires? How did they choose their sample? What percentage responded? All of this was unclear. In addition, no variables were identified, the procedures for gathering data were not described at all, and the questionnaire was not provided for reference.

One strength of this research report was that the results were clearly presented and the tables and charts were clear and understandable. The results, however, were biased in presentation. It is apparent that the researchers favored flexible scheduling over fixed scheduling from the start. They wrote, "Such an arrangement [fixed scheduling] allows library media specialists and teachers very little time to plan together outside of brief moments in the halls or teachers rooms" (p. 37). Nonetheless, both negative and positive findings were reported, as the authors suggested that although collaborative unit planning between teachers and school library media specialists would increase with flexible scheduling, the teaching of information skills may in fact decrease.

The summary and conclusions were separate from data analysis and were clearly stated. The results related directly to the purpose of the study and were justified. The results of Tallman and van Deusen's research were very important for the research conducted in this study. Integrated thematic instruction moves away from the traditional approach to teaching which is textbook driven. It is this researcher's contention that integrated thematic instruction clearly requires more planning time for both teachers and school library media specialists. As this research indicates, flexible scheduling in the school library media center allows for greater planning time between the

teachers and the school library media specialists for thematic units. Tallman and vanDeusen wrote, "Probably, as long as library media specialists provide planning time for teachers by taking their classes, there will be little integration of the library media program and teaching and learning activities" (p. 37).

Therefore, integrated thematic instruction might not develop to its full potential if flexible scheduling is not in place in the school library media center of the schools that adopt it.

Meyer and Newton

Meyer and Newton (1992) completed a survey/descriptive research study about teachers' experiences with cooperatively planned resource-based teaching. They interviewed 18 teachers in 4 schools of "similar size and age from the same school system" (p. 13), as well as each principal and each teacher-librarian.

The authors justified the importance of this research by explaining that resource-based teaching has "been the central focus for teaching in many newly developed curricula" (p. 13). They continued by saying that changing teaching methods from the traditional approach to cooperatively planned resource-based teaching is a "major challenge for most teachers" (p. 13). While the authors did not clearly state their research problem, they did clearly define resource-based learning and teacher-librarian. They did not, however, define resource-based teaching. Is this the same as resource-based learning? The authors referred to the two in this research as if they were one in the same, but many would argue that they are not. Additionally, the authors did not define learning resource center, school, school system, or cooperatively planned. They used these terms consistently throughout the article.

The hypothesis of the authors was evident:

Crandall (1983) stated that teachers and principals are the crucial link to the successful implementation of a new program and that the classroom teacher plays the most significant role in bringing about the change.

Purkey and Smith (1983) believed that significant change cannot take place without the support and commitment of teachers. Since the final decision to employ cooperatively planned resource-based learning rests with the classroom teacher, this study focused on the teachers' experience with cooperatively planned resource-based teaching (p.13).

The limitations were not defined by the authors, but are nonetheless apparent to the reader. First of all, the sample - 18 teachers - was small for a research report. Second, the study was limited to one school district. Although assumptions also were not addressed by the authors, several were made. First, they assumed that resource-based learning was a good teaching strategy and that teachers should incorporate cooperatively planned resource-based teaching into their teaching repertoire. They assumed that the teachers were being honest in their face-to-face interview as well, never noting that this type of information gathering promotes bias as the person being interviewed is more likely to tell the interviewer what he/she thinks the interviewer wants to hear. The biggest assumption the authors made was that resource-based learning must involve the library. Some of the teachers may have been using other school resources instead of, or in addition to, the school library.

Meyer and Newton referred to Crandall (1983), Purkey and Smith (1983), Fullan (1982), Hall, Loucks, Rutherford and Newlove (1975) and Loertscher (1988) in their research and included them in their bibliography. However, none of these relevant previous studies were evaluated.

The research design was well described and was very clear. The

sample and population, however, were not adequately described. What type of schools were Lakewood, Prairie View, Hilltop and Riverbend? What grade level/subjects did the teachers interviewed teach? The teachers interviewed were not described at all in terms of age, experience, education, etc. The sample and population were very small for such a research study. Many variables were identified, such as teachers' perceptions of innovation, the teachers definition of resource-based learning, administrative support of resource-based learning, the relationship of the teacher and the teacher librarian, and the teachers belief that their students benefit from resource-based learning. However, the authors neglected to report other variables that may have affected their research such as age, education, experience of the teacher or teacher librarian, and the fact the the interview was being tape recorded, possibly affecting the responses of the teachers.

The procedures for gathering data were very well described and the steps taken were clearly outlined for the reader. The interview questions were not provided in the research report. The researchers did however explain the issues that were addressed in the interview. Since no explanation was given, it is unknown whether the research design and instruments were reliable or valid.

The results of the research were clearly presented. Both negative and positive findings were reported and little bias seemed evident. The charts and tables however were not clear at all. They were presented at the end of the article rather than where they were relevant within the text.

The summary and conclusions were separate from the data analysis and were clearly stated. The results may be related to the purpose of the study, but that was never clearly stated. The results were justified and the significance of the study was explained.

The implications of this research for this study were three-fold. First, this research confirmed that in order for teachers to work cooperatively with the school library media specialist to plan thematic units that involve student use of the school library media center, "concerns about lack of time for planning, working rapport with the teacher librarian and covering the curriculum" (p. 17) must be addressed. Second, administrators must "support the system innovations in their schools by providing strong leadership, voicing and demonstrating commitment," (p. 17) and "exerting strong and continuous pressure in terms of clear expectations" (p. 17). Finally, in order for integrated thematic instruction to be successfully implemented, like Mayer and Newton found with resource-based learning, the teachers must acknowledge and believe that students benefit from the method of instruction and believe that it is superior to a traditional textbook approach.

Hambleton & Wilkinson

Hambleton and Wilkinson (2000) looked at the potential of schools in Ontario and Saskatchewan, Canada, to provide programs that support resource-based education in their research study. This applied, survey/descriptive research included sending packets of questionnaires with cover letters to the principals, teachers, and teacher librarians of 54 schools in the western Ontario region and 150 schools from Saskatchewan. The statistical procedures used were descriptive.

Hambleton and Wilkinson did an excellent job of convincing the reader of the importance of their research. They noted that curriculum reform across Canada changed educational goals to include giving students the value of becoming a lifelong learner. This, they explained, resulted in new curricula that includes resource-based learning in both Ontario and Saskatchewan. Their six

research questions addressed "the relationship between the presence or absence of an effective library program in a school,... the ability of that school to implement a resource-based learning program," (p. 2) and "the role of the teacher librarian in the planning and implementation of those programs," (p. 2) and were clearly stated.

The authors defined resource-based learning and human and nonhuman resources. They also described the teacher-librarian, principal, and teacher. The limitations of the research were defined clearly and objectively. The authors noted that no geographic stratification was used and stated "Perth County in the Ontario sample and 15 divisions in Saskatchewan were not represented in the sample" (p. 3). No assumptions were stated, though some were made. First, the authors assumed that it was important to the respondents to achieve the goals of the new curricula in both provinces. Second, they assumed that resource-based learning was a good teaching strategy and that the teachers were interested in implementing it. Finally, Hambleton and Wilkinson assumed that the role of the teacher librarian in resource-based learning is as, if not more, important than that of the regular classroom teacher.

Hambleton and Wilkinson offered no real evaluation of previous studies related to their research. At the end of the report, they did discuss Brown and quote from an unnamed article she wrote, Wilson, Blake and Lyders (1993) and the research they conducted that is related to research based learning, and Meyers' master's thesis on classroom integration of cooperatively planned resource-based learning. They did not evaluate these related research findings in detail and no bibliography was provided.

The research design was very well described and was understandable. The sample was adequate, appropriate and was well defined. The procedures

for gathering data were clearly described as well. The research instrument was not provided for the reader, but was described as follows: "The data for the study was gathered through the distribution of questionnaires asking responses to statements pulled from literature relating to school library programming and service. Respondents were instructed to check a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree" (p. 4). While it sounds valid, one cannot be sure without seeing the actual instrument. The only variables the authors identified were location and educational qualifications of the respondent. The overall methodology seemed excellent except where the authors wrote, "In addition to obtaining data from the questionnaires, the researchers jointly conducted interviews with the principals in selected schools in an attempt to obtain information which would supplement the survey results" (p. 18). This suggests that the research instrument was not adequate, which may be why the researchers did not provide a copy of it in their report.

The results were very clearly presented and little bias seemed present, although one can discern that the researchers prefer fully qualified teacher librarians over nonprofessionals or teachers working in the library who do not have the appropriate education. The authors described the results at length and reported both negative and positive findings. Tables and/or charts would have been useful due to the immense size of the results reported in the study but none were present.

The summary and conclusions were separate from the data analysis and were clearly stated. The conclusions were related to the purpose of the study and the results were justified - they were also fair, as the researchers did not like some of the results they found. The significance of the study was also explained and justified.

Hambleton & Wilkinson's study related to research on the role of the school library media center in schools that have adopted integrated thematic instruction in several ways. First, it pointed out that principals, teachers, and school library media specialists did not agree on the role of the school library media program which would seem to be necessary in the implementation of any program involving the school library media center, including resource-based learning or integrated thematic instruction. Second, this research demonstrated that extensive in-service programming was necessary in order to outline the "role of the school library, the role of the teacher-librarian [school library media specialist], and the role of the principal in the development of school library programs and services" (p. 22). This was necessary, according to the researchers, to implement an effective resource-based learning program. Thus, one can conclude that it will also be necessary in order to implement an effective integrated thematic instruction curriculum. Finally, the findings from this study suggested that "without school libraries and qualified teacher-librarians [school library media specialists] schools are unable to deliver an effective resource-based curriculum" (p. 1). This researcher asserts this would also hold true with a school trying to implement an effective integrated thematic instruction curriculum.

Lance

Lance (1994) completed an applied research study examining the relationship of the school library media center and the academic achievement of students. He looked at school library media centers in Colorado that responded to a survey in 1989 and used the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) or the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP).

Lance's statistical procedures were descriptive, though he presented

them as if they were inferential. His findings were generalizations that would need closer examination before one applied them to other school library media centers/school districts.

Lance clearly stated the problem, "Most studies of this relationship were conducted between 1959 and 1979, were limited in scope, and usually used a small number of subjects in a limited geographical area" (p. 1). However, Lance did not convince this reader of its importance, as he also conducted a study that was limited in scope and used subjects in a limited geographical area - Colorado. Lance defined several terms in his research including at-risk factor, career-teachers, LMC size, LMS role, LMC use, LMC computing factor, and LMC expenditures per pupil factor. Nonetheless, several terms, including school library media center, 1989 survey of school library media centers in Colorado, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Tests of Achievement and Proficiency, public elementary and secondary schools, rural and urbanized populations, median family income, poverty level, support services, community services, supplies and materials, endorsed staff, minority students, LMC staff, and instructional role of the library media specialist, remained unclear and should have been defined.

Lance stated his research questions clearly in the conclusion and defined the limitations of his research after the listed conclusions. No assumptions were listed, although some were made. First, Lance assumed that the preexisting "1989 survey of school library media centers in Colorado", which he based his study on, was valid and reliable. Second, he assumed that the 1989 ITBS and TAP scores were reliable and valid. Finally, he assumed that the scores remain consistent year to year.

Lance did not provide any formal review of relevant previous studies. He

did, however, supply an extensive "Selective Bibliography." Lance described his methodology at the beginning of his research report. Nonetheless, it was not well described and nor was it understandable. He identified and described the sample and population. Two hundred twenty-one schools in Colorado alone was not adequate if Lance wanted to apply his findings nation-wide, which it appeared he did. Lance identified the variables clearly. However, he did not clearly detail the procedures for gathering data. The steps in his research were not clearly understandable and no research design or instruments were provided. A copy of the "1989 survey of school library media centers in Colorado" would have been helpful.

The results of the research were presented in broad generalizations in narrative form. There were no tables or charts and no specific percentages were supplied. Lance only provided general remarks like, "The size of a library media program, as indicated by the size of its staff and collection, is the best school predictor of academic achievement," or "Library media center expenditures and staffing vary with total school expenditures and staffing" (p. 5).

The conclusions were separate from the data analysis and were clear. The results were related directly to the purpose of the study, but the significance of it was never explained or justified.

Lance's research is related to this study because he clearly identified that there was a relationship between expenditures on library media centers and reading scores. He concluded that, "Students at schools with better funded LMCs [library media centers] tend to achieve higher average reading scores..." (p. 5). This can be compared to schools that have adopted integrated thematic instruction. Lance's findings imply that schools that have better funded school library media centers will better implement integrated thematic instruction. In

addition Lance concluded, "Students whose library media specialist played [an instructional] role tended to achieve higher average test scores" (p. 5). This also applies to this study, as it asserts the importance of the library media center and the library media specialist. It also suggests that if flexible scheduling is put into place in schools that have adopted integrated thematic instruction, it is imperative that the library media specialist collaborate with the classroom teachers and continue their vital instructional role.

Summary

Integrated thematic instruction requires more cooperative planning time for teachers and school library media specialists. Results from Tallman and van Deusen indicated that flexible scheduling in the school library media center will allow for the extra time necessary to plan thematic units. The results from Meyer and Newton also confirmed the idea that teachers and school library media specialists need to plan lessons cooperatively. They pointed out the specific concerns that must be addressed before teachers will be willing to work cooperatively with the school library media specialist. The results from Hambleton and Wilkinson showed that the role of the school library media specialist must be clearly defined and understood by all before any program involving the school library media center was implemented. Their results also indicated that in-servicing on the role of the school library media center and the school library media specialist was necessary before implementing a new program like integrated thematic instruction. Finally, the results from Lance suggested that in order for programs like integrated thematic instruction to be successful, they must be well-funded. Lance's research also implied that the school library media specialist should maintain an instructional role.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

Overall Design and Justification

Survey, or descriptive research was selected as most appropriate for the purposes of this study. It was an efficient way to determine contemporary data about the elementary school library media centers in the Egg Harbor Township public school system. The information sought was about conditions, behaviors, and attitudes which is appropriate for survey research. In addition, survey research ensures confidentiality. Finally, survey research also allowed the researcher to obtain data from three groups: the elementary school library media specialists, teachers, and principals.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

To date, few studies have been completed describing the role of the elementary school library media center in a school that has adopted the curriculum integration strategy of thematic instruction. The public school system in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey is currently considering such an approach. The purpose of this research was to: 1.) determine the readiness of the three elementary school library media centers in the Egg Harbor Township public school system for integrated thematic instruction; 2.) determine the role the school library media specialist should play once integrated thematic instruction is adopted; and 3.) present these findings for other elementary schools where integrated thematic instruction approaches may be adopted.

Population and Sample

The population of this survey was made up of the three elementary schools in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey. This produced samples of three elementary school principals, three elementary school library media specialists and 140 elementary school teachers.

Variables

One independent variable in this research was the teachers' estimates of the readiness of the school library media center collection for integrated thematic instruction. The dependent variable was the readiness of the collection for integrated thematic instruction according to the school library media specialists. A second independent variable was the teachers and principals perceptions of the changes needed in the role of the school library media specialist as a result of implementation of integrated thematic instruction. The dependent variable was the role of the school library media specialist in a school that has adopted integrated thematic instruction, according to the school library media specialists.

Method of Data Collection

Three separate survey instruments were designed by the researcher. They were mailed to the school library media specialists, principals, and teachers of the three public elementary schools in Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey, along with a cover letter describing the study.

Prior to mailing the survey, the researcher discussed the project with each building principal, at the request of her immediate supervisor. The survey was mailed in January to two elementary school media specialists, three elementary school principals, and 140 elementary school classroom teachers. The researcher is one of the school media specialists in the Egg Harbor

Township school system, thus she also completed one of the school library media specialist surveys.

All three of the school library media specialists responded to the survey, as did all three of the principals. One hundred and sixteen teachers responded for a response rate of 83%. Respondents were asked to respond anonymously. Copies of the surveys can be found in Appendices A, B, and C.

Reliability and Validity

The survey instrument attempted to obtain consistent measurement of data and could be replicated in other school districts. In order to test the reliability of the survey, it was pretested by several colleagues, potential users of the results, and members of the population. These pretests determined that the survey instruments measured what they were intended to measure: the readiness of the three elementary school library media center collections for integrated thematic instruction and the role a school library media specialist will play in a school that has adopted integrated thematic instruction. All of the terms were similarly interpreted by respondents. Thus, for the purposes of this study, the survey instrument was both reliable and valid.

CHAPTER IV.
ANALYSIS OF DATA
Design Implementation

The initial response rate for both the school library media specialists and the school principals was 100%. However, the response rate for the teachers surveyed was lower. Originally, only 43 teachers out of a sample of 140 responded, 28 of them from the researcher's school. This gave a response rate of 30%, which was not sufficient for this type of research. Therefore, on a teacher in-service day the survey instruments were redistributed to all of the teachers in both the Davenport and Swift elementary schools. Teachers who had already completed them were asked not to finish a second survey. This produced 73 additional teacher surveys, for a final response rate of 83%. Once the response rates were deemed acceptable, descriptive statistics were used.

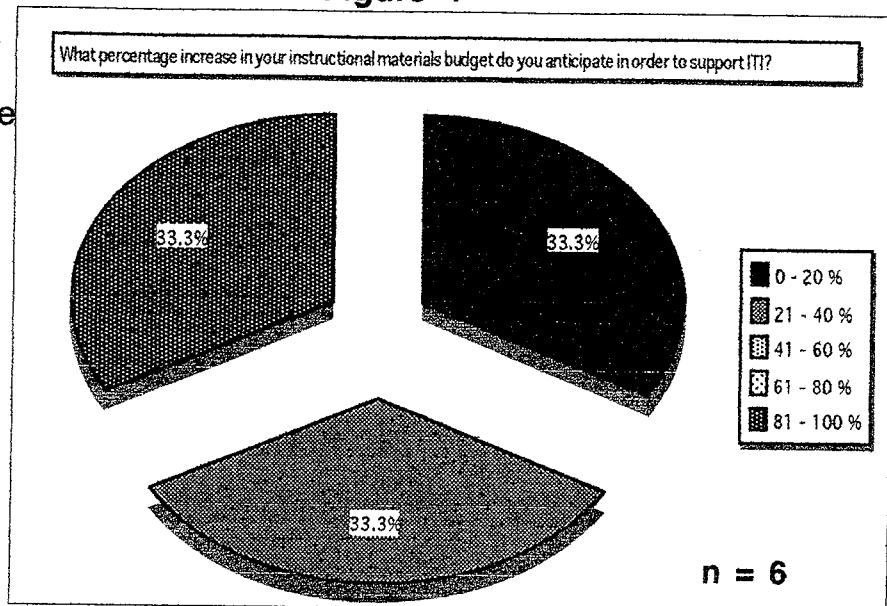
Presentation of Results

The principals, teachers, and school library media specialists were all given separate survey instruments containing questions that pertained to them. However, many of the questions overlapped, which provided for an interesting comparison of results.

The principals and school library media specialists were both asked what their current school library media center budget for instructional materials was and they both gave the same responses. Two principals and two school library media specialists answered that their budgets were between \$10,001 - \$15,000, and one principal and one school library media specialist said that

their budget was between \$15,001 and \$20,000. The principals and school library media specialists also responded similarly to the question asking, "What

Figure 1



percentage increase in your instructional materials budget do you anticipate in order to support integrated thematic instruction?" One principal and one school library media specialist answered 0 - 20 %, one principal and one school library media specialist answered 21 - 40 %, and one principal and one school library media specialist answered 81 - 100%. Both the school library media specialists and the principals were also asked what impact they thought integrated thematic instruction would have on their school library media center budget. The principals all agreed that the impact would be large because much of the collection should be built up. Two of the school library media specialists agreed with the principals and one only felt that the impact would be moderate.

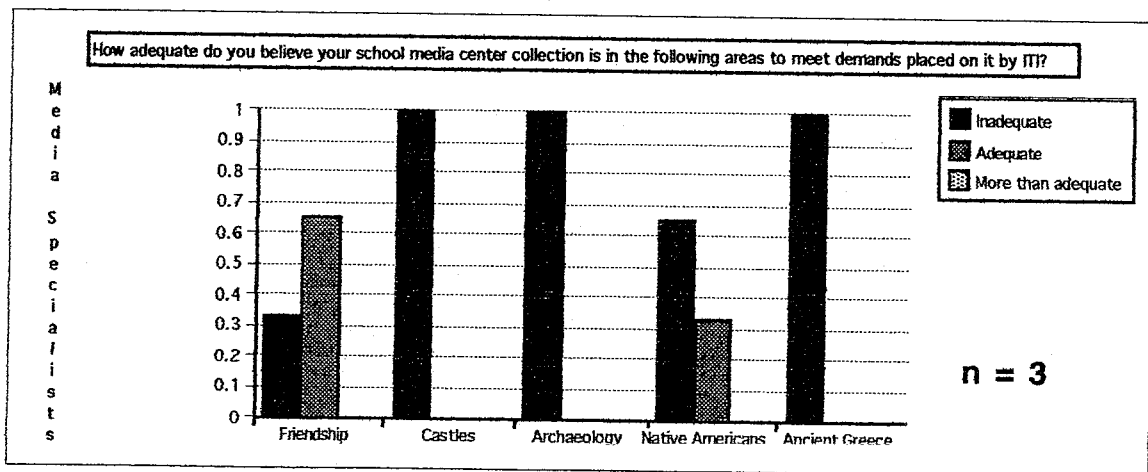
All of those surveyed were asked what type of schedule they had in their school library media center. It seemed that only the school library media specialists were aware of the fixed schedule that exists in the Egg Harbor Township elementary school libraries, as they all answered fixed. On the other hand, two of the principals thought it was flexible, as did 23% of the teachers. One principal was aware of the fixed library schedule, as were 55% of the

teachers. Fifteen and a half percent of the teachers responded that they didn't know what type of schedule existed and 6.5% of the teachers surveyed didn't answer the question.

When asked if they believe there is sufficient staff in the school library media center to implement integrated thematic instruction all of the school library media specialists responded no. Two of the principals and 30% of the teachers, on the other hand, responded yes. Only one principal along with 40% of the teachers felt that additional staff would be necessary before implementing integrated thematic instruction. Twenty-nine percent of the teachers responded that they did not know if the staff was sufficient and 1% did not answer the question.

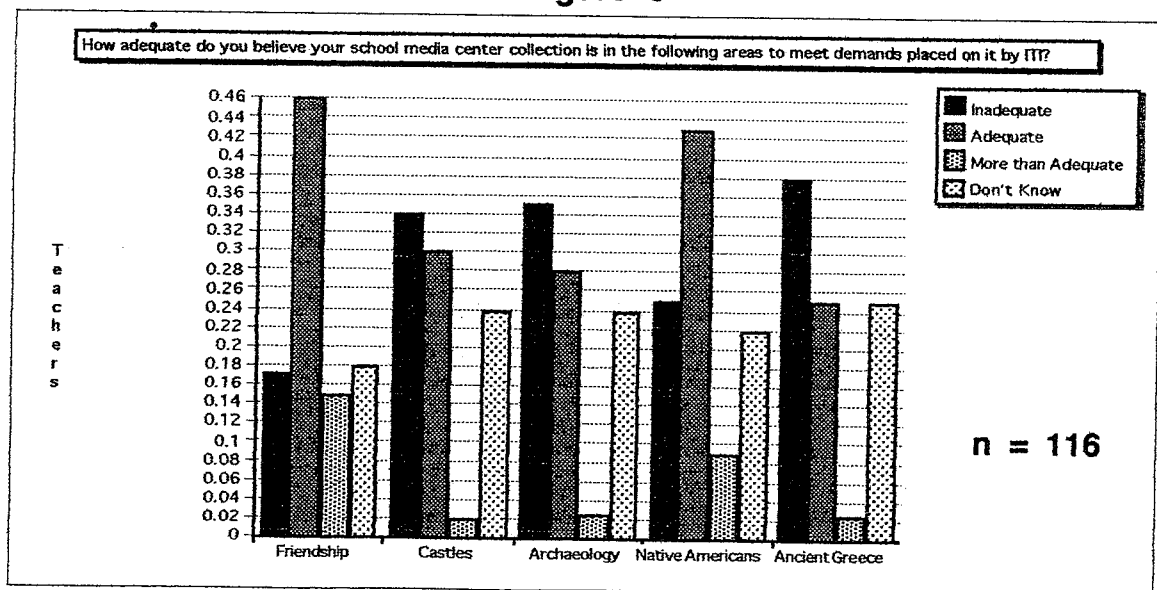
The school library media specialists and teachers were both asked to evaluate their school library media centers collection in the areas of friendship, castles, archaeology, Native Americans, and ancient Greece, which are themes that may be used if integrated thematic instruction is adopted by the Egg Harbor Township school system. The responses of the school library media specialists and teachers were for the most part similar. Two school library media specialists felt their collections were adequate in the area of friendship, as did

Figure 2



46% of the teachers surveyed. One school library media specialist answered that her collection in this area was inadequate. Seventeen percent of the teachers also felt their collections were inadequate, whereas 15% said they felt the area of friendship was more than adequate. Eighteen percent of the teachers said that they did not know how adequate their collection was in this area and 4% didn't answer at all. In the area of castles, all of the school library media specialists felt their collection was inadequate. Thirty four percent of the teachers agreed that their school library media center collection in the area of castles was inadequate, 30% felt it was adequate, 2% felt it was more than adequate, 24% didn't know, and 10% did not answer. In the area of archaeology, the school library media specialists again thought that all of their collections were inadequate, with 35% of the teachers agreeing. Twenty-eight percent of the teachers disagreed and said they thought their school library media center collection was adequate in the area of archaeology, 2.5% said that it was more than adequate, 24% did not know if their collection was adequate and 10.5% didn't answer the question. In the area of native Americans, the school library media specialists again thought that all of their collections were inadequate, with 42% of the teachers agreeing. Twenty-eight percent of the teachers disagreed and said they thought their school library media center collection was adequate in the area of native Americans, 2.5% said that it was more than adequate, 24% did not know if their collection was adequate and 10.5% didn't answer the question. In the area of ancient Greece, the school library media specialists again thought that all of their collections were inadequate, with 36% of the teachers agreeing. Twenty-eight percent of the teachers disagreed and said they thought their school library media center collection was adequate in the area of ancient Greece, 2.5% said that it was more than adequate, 24% did not know if their collection was adequate and 10.5% didn't answer the question. The school library media

Figure 3



specialists were split in their opinion in the area of Native Americans. One felt her collection was adequate in this area, as did 43% of the teachers surveyed. The remaining two school library media specialists felt their collections were inadequate, with 25% of the teachers agreeing. Nine percent of the teachers felt their school library media center collection was more than adequate in the area of Native Americans, 22% did not know and 1% didn't answer. In the final area of ancient Greece, all of the school library media specialists agreed that their collections were inadequate, with 38% of the teachers in agreement. Nonetheless, 25% of the teachers felt their collections were adequate in this area, 2.5% thought their collections were more than adequate, 25% didn't know and 9.5% didn't answer the question.

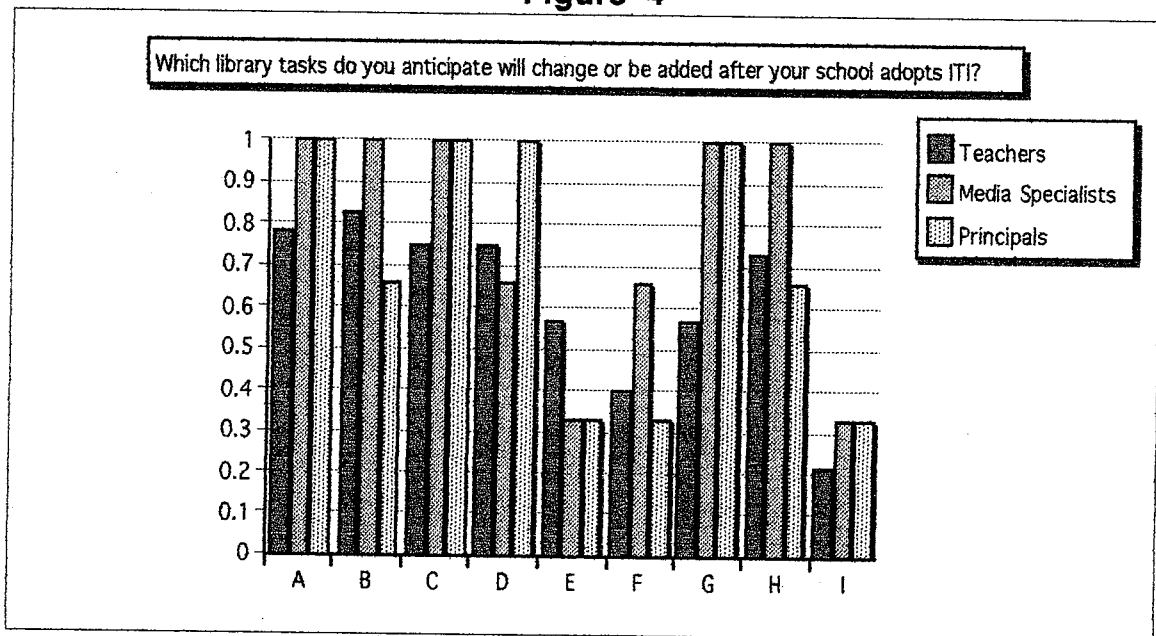
Two principals, all of the school library media specialists and 74% of the teachers believed that the implementation of integrated thematic instruction would change the role of the school library media specialist. Only one principal and 4% of the teachers responded that the school library media specialist role would not change if integrated thematic instruction was adopted. Seventeen percent of the teachers answered that they did not know if the role of the school library media specialist would change and 5% didn't answer the question.

When asked if they plan on a regular basis curricular content with classroom teachers so that instruction was integrated into the total school instructional program, all of the school library media specialists and principals responded no. When the teachers were asked the same question 19% responded yes, that the teachers and school library media specialists do plan cooperatively, 34% answered no, 38% said that they did not know, and 9% didn't answer at all. Two media specialists estimated that they only spent 16-30 minutes per week planning with teachers for instruction and/or other services.

One media specialist said that she spends approximately 31-60 minutes per week planning with teachers.

When asked which library tasks they anticipated would change or be added if integrated thematic instruction was adopted all of the school library media specialists and principals, and 78% of the teachers checked "assist the school curriculum committee by recommending resources and media program activities for units and curriculum guides." All of the school library media specialists, two of the principals and 83% of the teachers believed more time would be "needed to collaborate with teachers in coordinating media program activities and resources with subject areas, units, and textbooks." One hundred

Figure 4



- A - Assist the school curriculum committee by recommending resources and media program activities for units and curriculum guides.
- B - More time needed to collaborate with teachers in coordinating media program activities and resources with subject areas, units, and textbooks.
- C - Help teachers develop, select, implement, and evaluate learning activities requiring various types of media.
- D - Increase in providing reference assistance to teachers and students.
- E - Increase in collection management (mending, circulation, shelving).
- F - More participation in evaluation of student work.
- G - More time spent in selection activities.
- H - More time assembling class sets/unit materials.
- I - Less time spent with students.

percent of the principals and school library media specialists and 75% of the teachers surveyed thought more time would be necessary to help teachers “develop, select, implement, and evaluate learning activities requiring various types of media.” All of the principals, two of the school library media specialists and 75% of the teachers believed the implementation of integrated thematic instruction would bring about an “increase in providing reference assistance to teachers and students.” When asked if the implementation of integrated thematic instruction would cause an increase collection management activities one principal, one school library media specialist and 57% of the teachers said they believed it would. Two school library media specialists, one principal and 40% of the teachers noted that integrated thematic instruction would involve more participation from school library media specialists in evaluation of student work. All of the principals and school library media specialists and 57% of the teachers felt that integrated thematic instruction would require more time spent on selection activities. All of the school library media specialists, two of the principals and 73% of the teachers believed that more time assembling class sets/unit materials would be necessary if integrated thematic instruction were adopted. Finally, only one principal, one school library media specialist, and 21% of the teachers believed that integrated thematic instruction would result in the school library media specialist spending less time with the students.

CHAPTER V.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Importance of Study

This study was important for several reasons. First, it demonstrated that although the elementary school principals and school library media specialists in Egg Harbor Township agreed that the impact of integrated thematic instruction on the school library media center will be large because the collections need to be built up. However, they did not agree on how much the budget should/will increase. Second, this study showed that many were unaware of the type of schedule that exists in the school library media center and that flexible scheduling would be necessary in order to adequately implement integrated thematic instruction and meet the new demands that will be placed on both the school library media centers and the school library media specialists. Finally, this research suggests that additional staff may be necessary in the school library media center if integrated thematic instruction was adopted because many library tasks will increase or be added by the demands of integrated thematic instruction.

When the teachers and school library media specialists were given five possible themes that may be used if integrated thematic instruction is adopted by the Egg Harbor Township school system, most agreed that their school library media center resources were inadequate. This suggested that if several teachers were teaching a thematic unit like ancient Greece or castles, without traditional textbooks, the school library media centers would not have sufficient

materials to provide all teachers. Therefore, the research also demonstrated that school library media center budgets must be increased in order to build up the media center collections in the thematic areas chosen by the school district. What was interesting was that although both the principals and school library media specialists agreed that the impact of integrated thematic instruction will be large on the school library media center, no one agreed on how much the budget should/will increase. One principal and one school library media specialist said the budget will probably increase 0 - 20 %, one principal and one school library media specialist answered 21 - 40%, and one principal and one school library media specialist responded 81 - 100%.

This research also documented that flexible scheduling in the school library media center is necessary in order to adequately meet the demands of integrated thematic instruction. When teaching with a fixed schedule school library media specialists do not have time to regularly meet with teachers on a regular basis to plan curricular content so that instruction is integrated into the total school instructional program. In addition, if the Egg Harbor Township school system adopts a thematic approach to education, there will be many new demands placed on the school library media specialists. The school library media center must become the hub of the school where hands-on research and learning takes place. If a fixed library schedule remains, not only will the school library media specialists not be able to plan cooperatively with teachers, students will not be able to use the school library media center freely, classes will not be able to come in for research with the help of the school library media specialist, and the school library media specialists cannot meet all of the new demands placed on him/her by integrated thematic instruction.

This study also suggested that additional staff may be necessary in the

school library media center in order to adequately meet the demands of integrated thematic instruction. Currently, all of the other school library media specialists in the Egg Harbor Township school system have flexible scheduling in place and have full-time aides. The elementary school library media specialists, on the other hand, have fixed schedules and no aides. This may be the reason for all of them responding that they do not believe there is sufficient staff in the school library media center to implement integrated thematic instruction. However, only one principal and 40% of the teaching staff agreed with the school library media specialists, even though two principals and 74% of the teachers answered that the implementation of integrated thematic instruction would change the role of the school library media specialists and many responded that tasks would be added or would increase. They may not feel that additional staff is necessary because they really are unaware of what a school library media specialist does, or they may assume that flexible scheduling alone will be enough.

Results of this research concluded that the school library media center and the school library media specialist will play an integral role in the implementation of integrated thematic instruction. Results also indicated that many changes are necessary before integrated thematic instruction can be adequately implemented in the Egg Harbor Township school system.

Possible Use of Results

The results of this study should be looked at by the administration of the Egg Harbor Township school system before final adoption of integrated thematic instruction takes place. The results should be considered carefully before making changes to accommodate integrated thematic instruction. This research may also be used by other elementary schools who are considering

the integrated thematic approach to instruction. Finally, perhaps Susan Kovalik, the creator of integrated thematic instruction, and her associates could use the results of this research when they promote and teach others about benefits of integrated thematic instruction and when they train others in the steps necessary before the adoption of integrated thematic instruction.

Recommendations for Further Study

This research could be expanded to determine how much an average elementary school must increase its school library media center budget in order to meet the demands placed on it by integrated thematic instruction and to determine if additional staffing, beyond one certified school library media specialists, is necessary in the elementary school library media center to adequately implement integrated thematic instruction. The study could also be replicated in another school district to determine if their results are similar.

APPENDIX A

School Library Media Specialist Survey

Media Specialist Survey

Role of the School Library Media Center

This survey is designed to help determine if our elementary library media center collections will be adequate to meet the demands of integrated thematic instruction and to establish the role of the school library media specialists in Egg Harbor Township public elementary schools in integrated thematic instruction. For most of the questions, you just need to circle or check your answers. All information should be for the current school year (2000-2001). All individual responses are confidential.

1. What is your current school media center budget for instructional materials? (circle one)
 - a. less than \$10,000
 - b. \$10,001 - \$15,000
 - c. \$15,001 - \$20,000
 - d. \$20,001 - \$25,000
 - e. \$25,001 - \$30,000Other _____

2. What percentage increase in your instructional materials budget do you anticipate in order to support integrated thematic instruction? (circle one)
 - a. 0 - 20%
 - b. 21-40%
 - c. 41 - 60%
 - d. 61 - 80%
 - e. 81-100%Other _____

3. What impact do you think integrated thematic instruction will have on your school library budget?
(Circle one)

- a. none – you have enough materials
- b. slight – you need to make some purchases, but not many
- c. moderate – you need to make several purchases
- d. large – you need to build up much of your collection

Other _____

4. What type of schedule do you have? (Check one)

Fixed _____ Flexible _____

5. Do you believe you have sufficient staff in the library media center to implement integrated thematic instruction? (Check one)

Yes _____ No _____

6. The Egg Harbor Township school district is considering beginning implementation of ITI possibly using these themes. How adequate is your school media center collection to meet demands placed on it by the integrated thematic instruction program? (Check one for each theme)

A. Friendship
_____ inadequate _____ adequate _____ more than adequate

B. Castles
_____ inadequate _____ adequate _____ more than adequate

C. Archaeology
_____ inadequate _____ adequate _____ more than adequate

D. Native Americans
_____ inadequate _____ adequate _____ more than adequate

E. Ancient Greece
_____ inadequate _____ adequate _____ more than adequate

7. Do you think integrated thematic instruction will change your role as a library media specialist?
(Check one)

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

8. Do you plan on a regular basis curricular content with classroom teachers so that instruction is integrated into the total school instructional program? (Check one)

Yes _____ No _____

9. If yes, approximately what percent of the total faculty plan with you at some time during the year?
(Circle one)

a. 0-10%

b. 11-30%

c. 31-70%

d. 71%+

Other _____

10. Estimate the number of hours you spend during an average week planning with teachers for instruction and or other services. (Circle one)

a. 0-15 min

b. 16-30 min

c. 31 min - 60 min

d. 61 min - 75 min

e. 76 min - 90 min

Other _____

11. What additional tasks do you anticipate will change or be added after your school adopts integrated thematic instruction? (check all that apply)

_____ Assist the school curriculum committee by recommending resources and media program activities for units and curriculum guides.

_____ More time needed to collaborate with teachers in coordinating media program activities and resources with subject areas, units, and textbooks.

_____ Help teachers develop, select, implement, and evaluate learning activities requiring various types of media.

_____ Increase in providing reference assistance to teachers and students.

_____ Increase in use of technology or equipment

_____ Increase in collection management (mending, circulation, shelving)

_____ More participation in evaluation of student work

_____ More time spent in selection activities

_____ More time assembling class sets/unit materials

_____ Less time spent with students

Thank you for your time and assistance.

APPENDIX B

Principal Survey

Principal Survey

Role of the School Library Media Center

This survey is designed to help determine if our elementary library media center collections will be adequate to meet the demands of integrated thematic instruction and to establish the role of the school library media specialists in Egg Harbor Township public elementary schools in integrated thematic instruction. For most of the questions, you just need to circle or check your answers. All information should be for the current school year (2000-2001). All individual responses are confidential.

1. What is your current school media center budget for instructional materials? (circle one)
 - a. less than \$10,000
 - b. \$10,001 - \$15,000
 - c. \$15,001 - \$20,000
 - d. \$20,001 - \$25,000
 - e. \$25,001 - \$30,000Other _____

2. What percentage increase in your instructional materials budget do you anticipate in order to support integrated thematic instruction? (circle one)
 - a. 0 - 20%
 - b. 21-40%
 - c. 41 - 60%
 - d. 61 - 80%
 - e. 81-100%Other _____

3. What impact do you think integrated thematic instruction will have on your school library budget?
(Circle one)

- a. none – you have enough materials
- b. slight – you need to make some purchases, but not many
- c. moderate – you need to make several purchases
- d. large – you need to build up much of your collection

Other _____

3. What type of schedule do you have in your library? (check one)

Fixed _____ Flexible _____ Don't Know _____

4. Do you believe you have sufficient staff in the library media center to implement integrated thematic instruction? (check one)

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

5. Do you think integrated thematic instruction will change the role of the school library media specialist? (Check one)

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

6. Does your school library media specialist plan on a regular basis curricular content with classroom teachers so that instruction is integrated into the total school instructional program? (Check one)

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

7. Which library tasks do you anticipate will change or be added after your school adopts integrated thematic instruction? (Check all that apply)

- _____ Assist the school curriculum committee by recommending resources and media program activities for units and curriculum guides.
- _____ More time needed to collaborate with teachers in coordinating media program activities and resources with subject areas, units, and textbooks.
- _____ Help teachers develop, select, implement, and evaluate learning activities requiring various types of media.
- _____ Increase in providing reference assistance to teachers and students.
- _____ Increase in use of technology or equipment.
- _____ Increase in collection management (mending, circulation, shelving).
- _____ More participation in evaluation of student work.
- _____ More time spent in selection activities.
- _____ More time assembling class sets/unit materials.
- _____ Less time spent with students.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

APPENDIX C
Teacher Cover Letter and Survey

Slaybaugh School Library

11 Swift Drive
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234

February 6, 2001

Dear Colleague:

I would like to ask you to participate in a study about the role of the school library media center in schools that have adopted integrated thematic instruction. The survey attached should take no longer than five minutes to complete.

Your help is greatly appreciated and will help me complete my master's thesis. Please fill out the survey and return it to your school media specialist by Friday, February 23, 2001. Thank you in advance for your valuable input.

Sincerely,



Janeen Yacovelli, Librarian

Integrated Thematic Instruction

Teacher Survey

Role of the School Library Media Center

This survey is designed to help determine if our elementary library media center collections will be adequate to meet the demands of integrated thematic instruction and to establish the role of the school library media specialists in Egg Harbor Township public elementary schools in integrated thematic instruction. For most of the questions, you just need to circle or check your answers. All information should be for the current school year (2000-2001). All individual responses are confidential.

1. What type of schedule do you have in your library? (check one)

Fixed _____ Flexible _____ Don't Know _____

2. Do you believe you have sufficient staff in the library media center to implement integrated thematic instruction? (check one)

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

3. The Egg Harbor Township school district is considering beginning implementation of integrated thematic instruction possibly using these themes. How adequate do you believe your school media center collection is in the following areas to meet demands placed on it by the integrated thematic instruction program? (check one answer for each theme)

A. Friendship
_____inadequate _____adequate _____more than adequate

B. Castles
_____inadequate _____adequate _____more than adequate

C. Archaeology
_____inadequate _____adequate _____more than adequate

D. Native Americans
_____inadequate _____adequate _____more than adequate

E. Ancient Greece
_____inadequate _____adequate _____more than adequate

4. Do you think integrated thematic instruction will change the role of the school library media specialist? (Check one)

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

5. Does your school library media specialist plan on a regular basis curricular content with classroom teachers so that instruction is integrated into the total school instructional program? (Check one)

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

6. Which library tasks do you anticipate will change or be added after your school adopts integrated thematic instruction? (Check all that apply)

_____ Assist the school curriculum committee by recommending resources and media program activities for units and curriculum guides.

_____ More time needed to collaborate with teachers in coordinating media program activities and resources with subject areas, units, and textbooks.

_____ Help teachers develop, select, implement, and evaluate learning activities requiring various types of media.

_____ Increase in providing reference assistance to teachers and students.

_____ Increase in collection management (mending, circulation, shelving)

_____ More participation in evaluation of student work

_____ More time spent in selection activities

_____ More time assembling class sets/unit materials

_____ Less time spent with students

Thank you for your time and assistance.

References

- American Association of School Librarians & Association for Educational Communications and Technology. (1998). *Information power : Building partnerships for learning*. Chicago : American Library Association.
- Doiron, R., & Davies, J. (1998). *Partners in learning : Students, teachers and the school library*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.
- Hambleton, A.E., & Wilkinson, J.P. (n.d.). *The Role of the school library in resource-based learning*, [Online]. Available:
<http://www.ssta.sk.ca/research/instruction/94-11.htm> [2000, October 23].
- Hancock, V. (1995). Information literacy, brain-based learning, and the technological revolution: Implications for education. *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, XII, 31 - 34.
- Haycock, C.A. (1991). Resource-based learning: A Shift in the roles of teacher, learner. *NAASP Bulletin*, 74, 15 - 22.
- Kovalik, S. (1994). *ITI : The Model integrated thematic instruction* (3rd ed.). Kent, WA : Author.
- Lamme, L.L. & Beckett, C. (1992). *Whole language in an elementary school library media center* [Online]. Available :
http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed346874.html [2000, December 8].
- Lance, K.C. (1994). *The Impact of school library media centers on academic achievement* [Online]. Available:
http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed372759.html [2000, December 8].
- Loertscher, D.V. (1988). *Taxonomies of the school library media program*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.

Meyer, J., & Newton, E. (1992). Teachers' views of the implementation of resource-based learning. *Emergency Librarian, 20*, 13-18.

Shanahan, T., Robinson, B., & Schneider, M. (Eds.). Integrating curriculum: Avoiding some of the pitfalls of thematic units. *The Reading Teacher, 48*, 718 -719.

Tallman, J.I., & van Deusen, J.D. (1994). Collaborative unit planning - schedule, time, and participants. *School Library Media Quarterly, 33-37*.

Wills, C. (1995). Voice of inquiry: Possibilities and perspectives. *Childhood Education, 71*, 261 - 265.