HOW A TEACHER-LIBRARIAN ENGAGES HERSELF IN COLLABORATION ACTIVITIES IN HER SCHOOL

Azlina Nashriby Mohd Baharum
MLIS Programme
Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, Universiti
Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
nash_azlina@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Teacher librarian plays a crucial role as a teacher and instructional partner in the teaching/learning activity development to support the teaching and learning innovation. Thus, there is a need to investigate the existence of such relationship in schools in Malaysia, as well as the level of collaboration between the teachers and the teacher-librarian. A single case study was carried out to look at a teacher-librarian involvement in collaborative activities in her school. Participant observation and interviews were carried out in order to obtain the finding. The finding showed a contrast result when two different models were used to identify the extent of collaboration in the school.

Keywords: Teacher librarians; Collaboration; Teaching and learning; Secondary schools; Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Preparing students for the 21st Century is best undertaken through the expertise of many individuals working together - teachers and teacher-librarians. Facing the information age, the students not only need basic resources but a greater access to the information and services which they need to apply into the challenging working environment and their future success. Collaboration is perceived as a way to address these needs and the teacher-librarians play a major role by collaborating with teachers. "Effective collaboration with teachers help to create a vibrant and engaged community of learners, strengthen the whole school program as well as the library media program and develops support for the school library media program throughout the school." (ALA/AECT, 1998).

Professional guidelines have been established to encourage libraries to engage in collaboration with teachers to create a "student-centered" learning environment. It also indicates the mission of teacher-librarians: to ensure the students, staff and

others in the educational community are effective users of ideas and information. (AASL, 1998)

Background information

For the past twenty years, Malaysia has made rapid strides in education. The earliest attempts were concerned with the quantitative development where more schools were built and teachers were trained to provide more places for pupils in schools. Later, in efforts to maintain economic progress, national unity and social stability, the quality of education in its diverse levels and areas are looked upon.

When the *Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Menengah* (KBSM) or New Secondary School Curriculum was introduced, the need for and crucial role of school resource center began to unfold as one understood the aims and objectives of KBSM. KBSM is oriented towards general and teaching/learning strategies focusing on citizenship qualities and national unity. The teaching-learning approaches are based on the pedagogical principles – oriented teaching-learning using a smaller number of text books and placing greater reliance on teachers' resourcefulness.

The demands of the educational strategies towards life-long education call into being new conception and organization of the school library or school resource center as a place for self-directed learning as it is known today. The new concept of a school resource center is now seen not only restricted to students' usage as a source of reference or just reading and writing, but also listening and viewing and a place for self-directed learning. Teachers who traditionally responsible to teach students the basic reading and writing; need to be innovative and enterprising to use a variety of information sources in their daily lessons, to create new knowledge; to make their lessons interesting and informative; in order to fulfill the Malaysia's National Philosophy of Education which aimed at producing citizens who are knowledgeable and competent (Wan Mohamed Zahid, 1994). This philosophy can assist the country's effort to meet the challenges of Malaysia's Vision 2020.

Collaboration

The revision of the 1998 *Information Power: Building Partnership for Learning* (AASL & AECT, 1998) has replaced the word "instructional consultant" to "partner" while the roles of teacher and information specialist remain intact. This change signifies an important shift in thinking about the nature of collaboration relationship between the teacher-librarian and the classroom teacher.

Collaboration between teachers and school teacher-librarian bring various benefits (Russell, 2002). Teachers bring diverse classroom and personal experiences, background knowledge, personal abilities and personalities to curriculum discussion sessions (Doiron, 1999). At the same time, teacher-librarian needs to help teachers understand and realize the benefits of their investment in partnering which help to lighten their load and make teaching more interesting and effective (Milburry,1999). Aronson (1996) explains that when the teacher-librarian works together with classroom teachers, each one contributes his or her own ideas, skills and expertise. When they function as a team, with clear objectives and shared goal, there is a shared sense of responsibility for the mutual partnership of improving instruction which results in better outcomes for all students. Marchionini (1991) added students and teachers are provided instruction in the use of library media resources, how to access to information in a variety of formats and how to develop strategies for seeking, evaluating, filtering and applying information which skills are extremely important to the learning process.

For many years researchers have been conducting studies regarding the connection between school libraries and student achievement and demonstrating strong correlations between the two. (Graver, 1963; Greve, 1974). Lance et. al (1994, 2000, 2001 and 2005) for example, concluded that the instructional role of the teacher-librarian, or collaboration, is a predictor of test performance in his analysis carried out in many different states. Smith (2001) in his study indicated that library staffing levels, collection sizes, librarian interaction with teachers and students, and library technology levels have a positive association with TAAS performance at the elementary, middle/junior high, and high school levels. Baughman (2002) found students score higher on the MCAS test when there is a school library program. Callison (2004) found the tenure and capabilities of an elementary school's library media specialist is a strong predictor of student proficiency in language arts development in Indiana. Last but not least, Todd, Kuhlthau and Oelma (2004) in their study of *Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries* revealed that 99.4% of students in grades 3 to 12 believe school libraries and their services help them become better learners. The study also showed that an effective school library, led by a credentialed library media specialist, plays a critical role in facilitating student learning for building knowledge.

Conditions favorable to collaborative partnerships
There is a powerful body of literature that underpins the view that the leadership qualities of the school principal are of vital importance to the development and ongoing maintenance of a school culture that provides the basis for school

improvement. Wilkes (1992) argues that the principal is the most powerful and pivotal force behind educational change. She identifies a variety of roles that the principal must play in order to achieve successful change. These include the role of visionary, enabler, role model, and motivator.

The principal is a major factor in effective library programs (Hartzell, 2002) as he or she is a powerful ally for the teacher-librarian by providing budget, molding school culture, allocating time, and creating leadership opportunities. The school library requires significant portion of the school's budget which the principal needs to understand it is for the benefit of the whole school.

Strong leadership on the part of the teacher-librarian is also an added condition that influences teachers to make more effective use of library services. Asselin (2001) stated leadership activities were chairing or serving on school communities, participating or initiating school-based special projects, providing workshops to colleagues, advocating, holding office in a professional organization, reviewing materials and publishing in professional journals.

Branch and Oberg (2001) noted leadership involves "being there" in schools – meeting with school administration, serving on curriculum and other school committees, working with teachers at school-wide staff meetings, and meeting with library-staff at the building, and district level. The teacher-librarians can demonstrate their leadership through technological competence, teacher in-service, and involvement with technology planning by creating connections between the library, administrators, teachers, counselors and support staff, seizing every opportunity to contribute, seeing things through, and putting the needs of the school first (Hartzell, 2003).

Teachers in the 21st century require a revolutionary change in the school culture. With the integration of information literacy, classroom teachers should abandoned their traditional classroom authority, reliance on textbooks, and being seen as experts by their students. Teachers need to accept the idea of working with the teacher-librarian to collaborate in their teaching (Meyer and Newton, 1992). When the teachers discuss classroom practices with each other, observe and analyze one another's teaching, working together to design units of study, and participate in instructional improvement together, they improve the quality of learning in their schools (Oberg, 1990). The principal needs to establish a school culture to support collaboration. Even strongly classroom-centered teachers who have never engaged

in collaborative practice and view it negatively will become more school-centered in a collaborative school culture (Rosenholtz, 1989).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teacher librarian plays a crucial role as a teacher and instructional partner in the teaching/learning activity development to support the teaching and learning innovation. Thus, there is a need to investigate the existence of such relationship in Malaysia, especially the level of collaboration between teachers and the teacher-librarians. However, to have the study being carried out with many schools involvement throughout Malaysia would be costly and involve a longer time. Under this constrain, the researcher intends to focus her study to look at a teacher-librarian of a school in Selangor. The teacher-librarian was chosen because she is one of the coaches for the teacher-librarians in the Selangor state who has more than 20 years of working experience as a teacher-librarian. At the request of the school principal, the school remains anonymous in the study and fictitious names have been used for the teachers. The study intends to look at how the teacher-librarian involves herself in the collaborative activities in her school.

The specific objectives of this study are to:
a) Understand how the teacher-librarian engages herself in the collaborative activities in the school;
b) Identify the extent of collaboration between teachers and the teacher- librarian in the school; and
c) Identify problems faced by the teacher-librarian in collaborating with the teachers in the school.

The research questions for this study are:
a) How does the teacher-librarian engage herself in the collaborative activities with the other teachers?
b) What are the supportive actions the teacher-librarian receives?
c) To what extent or level are the collaboration activities being carried out in the school?

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach using purposive sampling was utilized to look at the activities being carried out at the school library. The subject was a teacher-librarian of a school in Selangor. The data presented were drawn from field notes taken during observation of daily activities in the school library and from interview transcripts with the teacher-librarian. The complete interview schedules and

observation protocols were adapted from Meyers, Nathan and Saxton (2006) and minor adjustments were made to meet the objectives of the study and the teaching environment in Malaysia.

a) The Observations

The researcher used the role of "participant observer". Schwandt (1999) in Baker (1999) defines participant observation in qualitative research as "direct firsthand eye-witness accounts of everyday social action" that answer the question, What's going on? She hopes that by doing this, it reduces the problem of reactivity, people who change their behavior when they know that they are being observed.

The observations, summing up a total of 10 altogether, ranging from two to three hours each, were looking at the teacher-librarian, teachers and the students who utilized the library services. Activities in the libraries were observed at different times of the day (from 9.00 a.m to 2.00 p.m) and different days of the week (Monday to Friday) to permit study of wide range of behavior and to see the actual patterns or any categories emergent from the activities in the library. For each observation period, the researcher focused on either student or adult activities in the library. Hand-written notes on the behavior and language exhibited by the subjects were taken by the researchers during that time period.

b) The Interview

A semi-structured interview were used and around six interview sessions were carried out where the teacher librarian were asked in-depth during school hours or after she has carried out her duty for the day to get a clear picture . The interviews included questions asking her to describe: 1) professional background and training; 2) job description ; 3) her day/s as a teacher-librarian; 4) goals of the library services; 5) students use of the library; 6) collaboration with classroom teachers 7) perceptions of support from the school community (teachers, principal, district and state officials); 8) problems faced by her. During the first rounds, interviews were recorded by hand. The following interviews were audio-recorded to assist the researcher in capturing statements of the subjects verbatim. Around five teachers who were using the library were interviewed too. However, students were not interviewed but their words and behavior were captured throughout the observation periods.

c) The Analysis

Responses were coded and analyses were carried in order to discover patterns or categories that emerged from the interviews. The researcher then compared her

analyses and identified a set of emergent patterns or categories. These were shared with a small group of the respondents to get feedback on the overall credibility of the patterns and any concerns or issues about the analysis, including factual or interpretive errors.

d) The Model

A Montiel-Overall (2005a) Model of Librarian and Teacher Collaboration (TLC) (Table 3) which evolved from Loertscher's (1982, 1988 and 2000) (Tables 1 and 2) classification of teacher and teacher-librarian involvement were used to measure the levels of collaboration among the teachers and the teacher-librarian in the school. It specifies four facets of collaboration: coordination, cooperation, integrated instruction, and integrated curriculum.

Table 1: Teacher's Taxonomy of Resource-Based Teaching and Learning
(Adapted from Loertscher's (1988 and 2000) Taxonomy: *The Teacher's Taxonomy of Resource-Based Teaching and Learning*)

Level 1	No involvement of library media center specialist or use of materials from the library media center.
Level 2	Permanent room collection created. Little need to interact with the library media center.
Level 3	Materials borrowed from the library media center, public library or other sources for classroom use.
Level 4	Library media center specialist provides ideas and suggestions regarding materials for instruction
Level 5	Use of library media center materials to supplement unit content.
Level 6	Library media center materials/ activities are integral to unit content rather than supplementary
Level 7	Library media specialist is a teaching partner to construct unit of instruction (i.e. information literacy).
Level 8	Library media specialist is consulted as curriculum changes are being considered.

Table 2: School Library Media Specialist Taxonomy
(Adapted from Loertscher's Taxonomy. Information on the table summarizes levels in the taxonomies by Loertscher, 1988)

Level 1	No involvement. Library media center is bypassed.
Level 2	Students access information when needed.
Level 3	Specific requests from teachers and students addressed.
Level 4	Materials gathered on the spur of the moment.
Level 5	Informal planning in hall or lunchroom.
Level 6	Advance notice for needed library materials.
Level 7	A concerted effort to promote library.
Level 8	Formal planning with teacher on a resource based project or unit.
Level 9 *	Participation in development, execution, and evaluation of a resource based teaching unit (Level I)
Level 10 *	Participation in resource based teaching units where the entire content depends on the resources of the LMC program. (Level II).
Level 11	Participation and contribution made along with teachers to planning structure of what will be taught in school.

* Levels were combined in 2000 version.

Table 3: Models of Librarian and Teacher Collaboration (TLC)
(The four models evolved from literature reviewed by Loertscher's Taxonomy (1982, 1988, and 2000). Levels that had similar characteristics were combined to form the models (Montiel-Overall, 2005).

	Model A Coordination	Model B Cooperation	Model C Integrated Instruction	Model D Integrated Curriculum
Degree of involvement	Low	Medium	High	Highest
Loertscher's levels	2-4	5-6	7	8-10

FINDINGS
The data withdrawn from the observations and the interviews were coded manually and independently by the researcher and patterns and categories were re-examined collectively together with the teacher-librarian and the teachers being interviewed to

determine agreement. The coding process resulted in the emergence of two principal categories: 1. nature and extent of collaboration in the school, which will be divided into three sub-categories, and 2. the teacher-librarian involvement in collaborative activities and problems arising. Each category is discussed in turn and then considered together in overall terms. The data analyses were provided below in the form of narratives wherever necessary.

1. The nature and extent of collaboration in schools.
A) Forms of collaborative (The What?)
The most frequent forms of collaborative practices mentioned by the teacher-librarian and the teachers being interviewed included staff meetings, departmental meetings, subject area meetings and curriculum meetings. Some added workshops, coordinating activities, beginning-of-year meeting and teacher professional development program. A few teachers interviewed revealed the forms of collaborative practices took place at this school. The Principal started by stating how the teachers in the school collaborate: *"Collaboration started from the beginning of the year. There would be several meetings which we attended to discuss all sort of things regarding teaching and learning which also involve students' progresses."* He then continued: *"Collaboration continued with the many events planned throughout the year as well as workshops besides the meetings".*

When asked a few teachers who were using the library whether any forms of collaboration done informally between them and the teacher-librarian , they clarified to various forms of "briefings" or "informal gatherings" or "while eating at the canteen" or "when we are passing each other" as the informal get-together. A Science teacher described this meeting by saying: *"Once, I was at the canteen, and when I saw the teacher-librarian, I straightaway approached her to borrow some books for my class that I have to relieve on that day. She was helpful and provided me with enough books for my students that day".* Another teacher intervened: *"Well, you gain a lot from these informal meetings actually as people would just relate their experiences and offer helps whenever they could. I found that meeting the teacher-librarian this way was better because we could actually talk or discuss just anything on earth. "*

Besides collaborating in school, the teacher-librarian also cooperated with the other teacher-librarians from other schools in her district. They worked together to handle meetings, workshops and many of the district's events. They also turned to each other for personal as well as social support.

B) How they collaborate?

According to the teacher-librarian, she helped the teachers by suggesting, locating, acquiring and using resources and teaching materials, recommending strategies, facilitating the use of technologies, using the library as well as helping them with the reading program. All in all the collaboration involved cooperation and coordination in many of the programs by sharing space and students, responsibilities, sharing the work and supporting each other.

The teacher-librarian described how the teachers work together; "coordinating" activities or some special events by sharing the workloads and establishing a partnership in handling the activities planned or carried out among them. She recounted: *"During our staff meeting, the head of each departments has to name some activities or events to be carried out throughout the year that involved the use of school library or some sort of collaboration with me. Each department also chose 'a special week' for them to carry out these activities. During these special weeks, we coordinated to make sure the events were successful."*

Referring to the activity mentioned by the teacher-librarian, the Head of the English Department described how the teachers in her department team up for the English Week: *"We had treasure hunts where students had to find information from the resources available which were scattered around the school. We also worked with the teacher-librarian in order to find the right resources needed and the space to carry out this activity. The rest of the teachers help to share responsibilities and the event was a victory."*

C) People who collaborate (The Who?)

Besides collaborating during special events, the teacher-librarian added that teachers would ask for help for resources they need to use in their lessons. They might be looking for teaching aids, or books or even some sort of references that could help them in their lessons. She further added that they even brought students to use the resources available in the library during the reading period.

A Form Two teacher who teaches Bahasa Melayu to her class noted to bringing the students into the library to use the resources. She described by saying: *"I am used to bring my students here to utilize the dictionary for their grammatical exercises or to read the magazines to find points and ideas for their writings as well as to look up answers to questions that "pop up" in my classroom. Sometimes, we use the past year exam papers to look at the trends or to discuss possible answers if such*

questions come out in the next exam. Some of the resources available really help me in my teaching".

The students were also seen using the library and seeking help from the teacher-librarian. The library was always full during recess and at other time too even though it was situated on the forth floor of the building. The students access and make use the materials in the library. Dictionaries, magazines, reference books and past years exam questions were among the popular resources being used by the students.

As a conclusion, there were many other sorts of collaborative activities which were similarly to the above carried out in the school. They coordinate and cooperate with each other in many events to make sure they were successful. Some of these joint-efforts may or may not directly relate to student learning. The coordination and cooperation somehow include shared resources, fund, time, space or students which established the definition of collaboration. However the extent of collaboration would be discussed in the conclusion.

2. Her participation and problems arising:
The teacher-librarian described her involvement with the school teachers "like planting a tree". According to her three stages were involved:
A) The planting stage
The teacher-librarian revealed that she tried to be involved in many of the collaborative activities. She said *"First of all. I will try my best to win them over. You see… whatever I do is not meant for a-day-of-relationship with them. We got a project to handle, I got their help to get the project done and then, finish. You go your on way and I, mine.   No! That is NOT the way. The process started months or years earlier. What I am trying to do is more like an investment. I planted a tree, cultivate it and get to eat the fruits later. I have to make myself approachable by being friendly to all the teachers. They have to see the attitude I am trying to project towards them 'the ever willing to help' person and 'the person in the know' to whom one may turn for suggestions and advice".*

She paused and continued: *"At first I would be the one doing the most work before getting any cooperation from the teachers. This is the worst stage. I have to go after them to get things done. I have to prepare the template of many things before assigning any work to the teachers so that they just follow my template in order to get the jobs done. I don't expect much from them at this stage. To have them complete the task is more than anything in the world. At times, I even have to get*

endorsement from the Principal to put weight to the instructions given to them because at this moment, only words from the authority managed to put an impact on them".

When asked whether the administrators were helping, the teacher-librarian revealed by stating that she received supports from them, from time to time as the school resource center is a central learning resource that supports the culture and curriculum of the school. She stated *"If I did not receive any support from them, I don't think we could carry out many activities collaboratively. I think the principal's support is the key to keep me moving on. You really need that initial support and I had that."*

She also mentioned on some of the problems faced by her at this stage. *"Some teachers do not want to cooperate as they complain of having so many programs and activities and they have a lot of responsibilities and not enough free time. Well...there are also the hard-core cases who prefer to work alone or I guess they are comfortable enough to stay in their comfort zone and do not like changes".*

She also added problems raised from her inner self *"...at times I experience periods of uncertainty. I confide the other teacher-librarians or my colleagues for support. These happen usually when I realize that I have to face challenges in communicating the school's vision towards the teachers".*

B) The cultivating stage
At this stage, according to the teacher-librarian, the bondage between the teachers and her is 'flourishing'. *"They started to trust me a bit at the earlier stage. Somehow, some of them accepted me as part of them and would want to cooperate by joining efforts in some of their events. Usually I help them by suggesting resources, locating and acquiring needed materials, recommending strategies, facilitating use of technologies and even providing space for them to carry out the activities. If I am too busy and unable to assist the teachers, I make sure to assign the librarians on duty to help them. I need to have good rapport with the librarians too. When the teachers have some extra work, I make sure there are also a group of librarians to assist these teachers. As far as possible, I don't want the teachers to feel that they are being burdened by some extra work when they are collaborating with me".*

When asked whether she still need the Principal's 'help' to get things done at this stage, the teacher-librarian smiled and said, *"the authority of the principal's voice is*

mostly needed only with those who are still reluctant to move from their comfort zone". The teacher-librarian also remarked the principal's support by providing a clerk who is being paid by the Parents and Teachers Association of the school to help her with the clerical part. *"I was really glad when the principal called me one day to tell me about this. At least I have somebody to rely on regarding the clerical part"*.

When asked about the problems faced by her, she replied *"More or less at this stage, many have been willing to embrace school-oriented practices and goals. I just need to move on with what I have started in hoping that those reluctants; to open their eyes"*.

C) The harvesting stage
The teacher-librarian described her relationship with most of the teachers has 'bloomed'. *"When they have started to trust me, my jobs would be easy after that. We would come together to help one another to make our work run more efficiently. We would cooperate and coordinate in many programs as to avoid redundancies. The programs sometimes might not directly relate to student learning, however we share resources and time. We also share space or even students. We share responsibilities, working on our part which contributes to an end product. We don't feel the burden when we are sharing the work and support each other"*.

When asked on her reflection of this stage, she said, *"This is the stage where I get to taste the fruits like I mentioned earlier. My relationship with the teachers has reached the pinnacle where we can actually establish a partnership in handling the activities planned or carried out. However, I always remind myself not to be satisfied with what we are achieving today. I will still work together with the administrators to get their cooperation in helping me running the school resource center as we are interdependent of each other. In addition, besides getting support from the school-level administrators, I also get the support from the district level and states as well. I also turn to other teacher-librarians in the district to share our problems"*.

DISCUSSION
One significant finding in the collaborative patterns listed out by the teacher-librarian and the teachers were mostly of joint or shared in servicing as many mentioned of "sharing resources, time, space or even students" and none of them ever mentioned of "shared classroom instruction". Even though there were many

collaborative efforts carried out, it was found that the level of the collaborative activities was only the 'co-ordination or cooperation' level as referred to Montiel-Overall's (2005) TLC Model. This model denotes the idea of efficiency in working together. For these two levels according to her, teacher and teacher-librarian can help each other for mutual benefit but they do not necessarily have to be involved in thinking together, co-planning, co-teaching, or even co-evaluation, which are developed independently of each other. According to Himmelman (1997), cooperation and partnership involve setting goals and reflect a philosophy of teamwork, cooperation, and net working which suggest "interdependence among members of the team" (Pollard, 2005) which was reflected in most of the collaborative activities carried out at the school. The finding supported Azura and Majid (2006) on collaborative partnership in Singapore schools which found that the level of collaboration was very low and teachers had yet to regard the teacher-librarian as an educational partner who could add value to the school curriculum.

Looking at the real situation in Malaysia's education system, a true collaboration between teacher-librarian and teachers has yet to be developed in the schools. The extent of collaboration between the two remained at the cooperation or co-ordination levels. One needs to know that in spite of the many positive outcomes of collaboration, it has not been practiced widely here between the teacher-librarian and the teachers. Firstly, through researcher's experience, observations and discussions with colleagues, there were no information-literacy skills as being carried out in many higher institutions here was executed at schools to enable corporation between the two parties. Even though much considerable attention has been given to the school resource center as being the 'foundation of the curriculum' (Hamidah, 2002); and the curriculum (KBSM) has been planned such that the use of the school resource center and its' resources are integrated in all subject areas (Hanafi, 1996), information literacy skills as a subject has not being introduced to the teachers as well as the students. Because of this, subject teachers do not rely on the teacher-librarian in their school to intervene in their teaching and to collaborate in classroom instruction. However, the teachers are aware of the roles of the teacher-librarian – as the school resource center coordinator. So basically, anything to do with the resources (teaching aids) in the school will be referred to the teacher-librarian.

McCracken's (2001) study of role perceptions of media teacher found that many educators, including principals and teachers, harbored misconceptions about the media teacher's role in the instructional process. Media teachers were generally seen in the traditional role of resource provider, rather than as a fellow teacher. These perceptions of teachers and principals prevented media teachers from taking a more

active role in instruction. Bishop and Larimer's (1999) findings justified the above by saying, the teacher-librarian are often viewed as storytellers and providers of resources rather than co-teachers who share common goals.

Secondly, most schools in Malaysia are managed by teacher-librarians who have not been trained in school librarianship but are entrusted to develop the school resource center by attending the 35 hours course in library science (*Kursus Asas Sains Perpustakaan*) (Abrizah, 1999) accommodate by the State Educational Resource Center. Besides holding this job, the teachers are assigned to their regular teaching workload as full-time teachers. Based on the above, it was not surprising that teachers were not willing to collaborate with the teacher-librarian. Brown (2004) mentioned mutual trust and respect as two factors attribute to successful collaboration. She stated "for a group of people to share a vision, they must hold each other in respect, and trust one another's professional judgment". Quoting a comment from an interview response in her study mentioning " ...people must trust and see you as an expert in your field in order for them to invest the valuable time it takes to collaborate and plan with you..."

The finding also showed that the extent to which the teacher-librarian engaged herself in leadership activities had an impact to the administrators and the teachers as well. Her priority to be involved in the school-wide leadership activities won many of the teachers' hearts to start collaborating some activities with her. Even though the level of coordination and cooperation describe low-end collaboration, it is a starting point for her and the school. Muronaga and Harada (1999) stated that the journey toward establishing a collaborative culture required a teacher-librarian who was equally willing to lead or to be an active member depending on the situation and the need.

However, upon looking at Loertscher's (1988, 2000) Taxonomy of Tables 1 and 2, the collaborative activities carried out in this school however, showed a contradictory result to the above finding, where higher levels of collaboration (Level 2 up to Level 8) were applicable in the finding. These levels included some of the activities mentioned through the observations as well as being mentioned by the teachers and the teacher-librarian. From the finding, it showed that Montiel-Overall's (2005) TLC Model is not applicable to the situation here in Malaysia.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
The main area of weakness of this single case study was in the number of the respondent where the researcher was only looking at a teacher-librarian. The

findings and discussion derived from the analysis may not be typical of the other teacher-librarians in Malaysia. For instance, the primary, the smart schools and the boarding schools teacher-librarians were not included in the investigation as they might have different activities to follow suit their schools' missions and visions. If more teacher-librarians from many other schools were involved, the findings could be more representative and the discussion could be carried out with more confidence.

Another area, in which this research could be improved, would be to include the administrators themselves. As collaboration activities must be fully supported by them, the administrators' opinions and perceptions would prove to be valuable information. It would be useful to elicit such details from this group, so that clearer picture of the overall situation could be formed. This would be vital information for future planning and reform purposes.

In addition, it might be useful to include interviews with the teachers who refuse to collaborate to elicit details from this group so that a clearer picture of the situation could be formed as to why they refuse to do so and enable to help the teacher-librarian to overcome the problems.

Gender is not an issue here even though the subject was chosen from a lady teacher-librarian because the roles of a teacher-librarian are the same without referring to any specific gender.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

There are many approaches that have been recommended in order to establish effective and productive collaboration between teachers and the teacher-librarian. Firstly, is employing full-time, qualified school librarians to work at the school libraries throughout Malaysia. These professional librarians would have adequate time and necessary knowledge and skills for promoting collaboration with teachers.

Secondly, it is time for the Education Ministry of Malaysia to seriously implement what have been introduced once; the information literacy program as a subject to schools. A few years back an attempt was made to introduce this subject (Circular – KP (BTP-PSP) 8810/11/1(03) dated 6th July 2004) and the school resource center coordinator was the one responsible to handle the program in the school. Due to some shortcomings, the program was discontinued. There is a need to incorporate the information literacy component again as it would help teachers realize the

important role of the teacher-librarian and the use of the school resource center in augmenting the learning process for students.

Thirdly, the administrators, particularly the school principal should initiate more collaborative educational partnerships to take place between the teachers and the teacher-librarian. He or she has to set a school culture that sufficiently supports teachers to work with their colleagues on both teaching and learning. Montiel-Overall (2005) stated that the principal is responsible for opening up opportunities for faculty to take an active role in decisions involving curricular planning. Belisle (2004) stated that principals can create many strategies to nurture collaboration and support teacher-librarian leadership. Activities as simple as a time of sharing at staff meetings, recognition of in-service participation, and encouragement of innovative classroom practice can demonstrate that the teacher is a valued professional capable of leading.

As a conclusion, the teacher-librarian's role in the collaborative partnership must be realized, but this task is impossible without the whole-school support. It is not possible for a teacher-librarian to work alone to create successful collaboration activities. A successful collaborative activities require a whole-school approach and the teacher-librarian lacks the authority to affect school-wide change. To have effective school and to meet shared goals of education, the school must be a community which all participants play an important role in the educational success of its students. The principal support, teacher-librarian leadership, and the school culture; each element is as complex and as interdependent as the reeds in a tightly woven basket. Just as a house divided will not stand, a collaborative partnership needs all of these strands to function optimally.

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